

Free and Compulsory Primary Education in the Context of Education for All



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Abbreviations

BCPEP	Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Programme
BCPEP	Basic and Primary Education Programme
BM	Banepa Municipality
BPEP	Basic and Compulsory Primary Education Programme
CAP	Community Action Process
CERID	Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development
CEMIS	Community Based Educational Management and Information System
CBO	Community Based Organization
CPE	Compulsory Primary Education
CLC	Community Learning Center
DEC	District Education Committee
DEO	District Education Office
DDC	District Development Committee
DEP	District Education Plan
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FCPE	Free and Compulsory Primary Education
GOS	Government Office Service
HMG	His Majesty's Government
INGO	International Non-government Organization
KBEP	Kabre Basic Education Project
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NGO	Non-government Organization
NGOS	Non-government Organization Service
OSP	Out of School Programme
PIP	Programme Implementation Plan
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RCPEP	Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SSA	School Self Assessment
UN	United Nations
VDC	Village Development Committee
VEC	Village Education Committee
VEP	Village Education Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The major objectives of this study were: to document the past CPE experiences, to analyse how the initiatives were conceived, planned, executed and monitored and to assess the impact of these initiatives in order to draw lessons for the future EFA plan.

The study was carried out in the Banepa Municipality, in the then Ratnanagar VDC and in the Chitwan district. For the study, altogether 8 schools were observed, 2 in the Banepa Municipality, 2 in the Ratnagar VDC and 6 in the Chitwan district. Interaction programmes were held at DEO/Municipality. Interactions with parents, teachers, SMCs and other stakeholders were also organized. Interviews were arranged for central-level authorities to elicit their views on the project programmes.

The findings of the study are as follows:

Case studies of the Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Programme and the Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme had underlined the importance and necessity of the program prerequisites, individual leadership and commitment at local level for program implementation. Although both of them used the same inputs from the Center, Banepa was highly successful while Ratnanagar could not achieve much – in the first year.

The role of community-based organization such as CLC was important for the execution of the program. The study found the roles of CLCs in literacy and CPE activities in the Banepa Compulsory Primary Education commendable.

It was essential to involve several stakeholders in the monitoring system. For good monitoring, the role of each stakeholder should be defined and each should have a separate responsibility. The experience of Banepa revealed that weekly monitoring helped to find out the program direction on time.

Parents were aware about the value of education and many parents had been sending their children to school. But the existing system failed to address the problems of various special needs children such as *janajati* and child workers. The study found that the number of child workers were on the rise.

Difficulties in adjusting overage children to learning in the second language and seasonal migration of certain families were two primary causes of the dropout of children.

The present practice of charging high fees in some government schools had discouraged the enrolment from poor household in these schools. Parents were forced to admit their children to a cheaper school of an adjoining school catchment area to avoid having to pay high fees.

SMCs, VECs and Municipality Education Committees had been formed. SIPs had been prepared and VEPs were in the process of preparation. But SMCs and VECs were not actively involved in the planning process as they considered plan as a statistical profile rather than a dynamic program document.

Teachers felt that schools had no environment where they could use the inputs they received from their trainings. Likewise, classes were overcrowded and teachers were overloaded. Teachers also held the opinion that the Continuous Assessment System had created a feeling of exam phobia in the students. However, such problems were not recorded in Banepa.

Local-level partnership was being built in the districts. For example, the Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACA) was working for quality education in both the districts. But local governments were not involved in such activities.

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Chapter I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The basic and primary education sector attracted much attention over the past several decades consequently it received support in the form of grants and (substantial) domestic allocations of resources.

The 1980s and 1990s saw an emphasis on Education for All. In fulfilling its mission of universal primary education, Nepal undertook the following important measures: free primary education, free textbook distribution, scholarship programs, requirement of one female teacher, continuous assessment system, removal of gender disparity, decentralized planning and piloting of free primary education to make it compulsory (gradually).

During this period, success had been achieved in increasing the number of schools and enrolments at the primary level. The net enrolment ratio at this level increased to 82.3% in 2002 compared to 70.5% in 1998. Girls' net enrolment ratio increased to 75.8% in 2002.

Despite these improvements, 17.14% of school-age children do not attend school. Likewise, 23.20% of the school-age girls are out of school.

A large number of students had at best gone through a few grades of primary school since the primary cycle completion rate improved from 42% in 1998 to only 57.2% in 2002.

The participation and retention of school-age children in the first cycle of education had appeared most resistant to change. The problem of access and retention is obviously linked to *dalits*, girls and various special needs children: the disabled, street children, child workers, etc.,

Thus, the major challenge to achieving the EFA goals relate to reaching the disadvantaged and deprived children, removing gender disparity and addressing the needs of special needs children of different categories.

To increase the volume of schooling opportunity for such children, the government has taken several measures: scholarships for girls and *dalit* children, school feeding program, school improvement and school expansion program, and alternative schooling program.

One of the alternative measures to ensure access is the introduction of Free and Compulsory Primary Education Program in the context of Education for All.

Nepal's commitment in this regard is reflected in the framework outlined by the National Plan of Action (2001-2015) after the EFA goals set by the Dakar Forum. One of the major objectives of the Plan is: "Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to the ethnic minorities have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality" (MOES, 2003: 4).

In the context of the launching of the CPE program, the National Plan of Action states: "His Majesty's Government of Nepal will make primary education compulsory in phases in collaboration with the local government bodies and

community-based organizations” (MOES 2003:24). The document clarifies that the CPE program will reach all parts of the country by 2015. The program proposes legal provision for enforcing CPE by 2012, which means that children of the age group of 5 to 10 years must complete the five years of schooling.

The EFA core document (2004-2009) underscores the importance of CPE. It underlines access of all children to basic and primary education, free of cost, as the most pertinent challenge. It has set out to meet this challenge by 2009 for most parts of the country.

The analysis of the CPE-programs piloted in the past is important in this context. A study of the development of the CPE programs implemented in the country and an account of its implementation and achievements, time scale and factors affecting its success seem reasonable. Thus, the study attempts to document the various CPE initiatives undertaken in Nepal and explore the problems and issues surrounding them. It also draws lessons from the experiences of program-implemented areas to encourage the implementation of CPE program in the context of Education for All.

Research Questions

The following research questions have been developed to guide the study:

How were the CPE programs planned, executed and monitored?

What were the strong and weak experiences of the CPE program?

What lessons can be learned from these initiatives for the future EFA?

Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

To document the various CPE initiatives undertaken in Nepal

To analyze how these initiatives were conceived, planned, executed and monitored

To assess the impact of the initiatives

To draw lessons for the future EFA plan.

Methodology

The prime objective of this study was to examine the approach to CPE as stated in various plans and programs and to identify factors that must be considered in the implementation of CPE.

For this, the study drew upon the experiences of two CPE-implemented areas, the Banepa Municipality and Ratnanagar VDC in particular and the Chitwan district in general.

The approach of the study was document analysis, school observation, and formal and informal interactions/discussions and scheduled interviews. .

Separate sets of guidelines were prepared for the discussion programs, one each for parents, headteachers, teachers, SMC, DEO, Municipality/VDC, and central-level authorities. School observation forms were also developed.

For the first phase of the study, the team visited the Banepa Municipality and Kavrepalanchowk district.

The discussion program in the Banepa Municipality was participated in by the Mayor Dr. Surendra Bahadur Bade, the then coordinator of BCPEP Mr. Bimal Lal S. K. Shrestha, the then motivators Ms. Shuva Laxmi Bhochebhoya and Mr. Indra Narayan Bhaila, and the Municipality staff Mr. Chiranjibi Aryal, who was working during the BCPEP program period.

A discussion session comprising of teachers, SMC, and parents of Azad secondary school and Chandeswori Bal Bidhaya Sadan School was organized. Finally, an interaction was conducted in the DEO office.

On completion of the first phase of the study, the team prepared a preliminary report and organized a discussion program at CERID. The outcomes and the comments made in the discussion were incorporated for the second phase of the study.

For the second phase of the study, the team visited the Chitwan district.

An interaction was held with the 1995 CPE program coordinator and then VDC chairman Mr. Nijanand Malla and the program supervisor Mr. Saroj Lamichhane of the Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary education Program. Later, a discussion program was organized at the DEO office with the program coordinator and staff of the DEO office. Six schools were observed (after their selection); Bakular Lower Secondary School and Rastriya Primary School Debauli from the Ratnagar Municipality, Malpur Lower Secondary School and Rastriya Primary School Mainaha from the Bachhaulli VDC, and Rastriya Primary School Magani and Sarasoti Primary School from the Khairahani VDC.

Discussion/interaction sessions were organized with the headteacher, teachers, parents, and SMC members at each observed school.

Finally, a workshop of the head teachers of six observed schools, DEO officials and program coordinator and supervisor of the Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Program -1995 was conducted in the DEO office.

For documents analysis, the team collected Banepa/Ratnagar Compulsory Primary Education program related materials such as guidelines for Community Learning Centers, program documents, news bulletins, CPE report, CPE guidelines, disability reports and other relevant documents.

Central-level information was obtained through a scheduled interview with the then BPEP director Dr. Thirtha Khaniya, the then staff of the CPE section Mr Lavadev Aawasti, Mr Jaya Lamsal and the then CPE program executor Mr Ramananda Mishra.

Structure of the Report

The report is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the rationale of compulsory primary education in the context of Education for All, the study objectives and the methodology used for collecting information. Chapter 2 presents the various compulsory primary education initiatives taken by the central and local governments. A review of CPE-related documents has also been presented in the chapter. Chapter 3 presents the impact of the various compulsory primary education programs implemented in Nepal. In this chapter, the opinions of the central and local level stakeholders and the findings of the study are included. Chapter 4 contains a synthesis of the experiences of compulsory primary education programs. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter II

COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN NEPAL

To date the CPE program has been implemented in the country in three phases on experimental basis. In the first phase, the program was implemented in selected VDCs/Municipalities and districts. The program was run from 1963 to 1970. In the second phase, two local government bodies, the Banepa Municipality and the Ratnanagar Village Development Committee, launched the CPE program on their own in 1994/95. In the third phase, the program was launched in the Chitwan and Ilam districts in 1997/98 and in the Kanchanpur, Shyangja, and Surkhet districts in 1998/99. This chapter introduces all these CPE initiatives launched in Nepal and also provides review of CPE documents.

Free and Compulsory Primary Education (FCPE) Prior to the National Education System Plan 1971

The Free and Compulsory Primary Education Program was launched in 1963 in 109 VDCs on experimental basis. In 1964, it was implemented in Palpa, Butwal, Ilam, Mahendranagar, and Chhintang. In 1967, it was extended to Chitwan and Jhapa. For its execution and operation, free and compulsory primary education committees were formed at the Panchayat level.

Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Programme (BCPEP) 1995

The importance of Compulsory Primary Education for achieving the target of Education for All was realized by the Banepa Municipality and its then Mayor Ram Bhakta Khoka Shrestha. The consensus of local-level social workers, educationists, intellectuals, and political leaders and cadres was reflected in the outcome of the workshop held on September 8, 1994 which decided to launch the CPE program in the Municipality. Accordingly, the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) decided on December 20, 1994, to pilot the BCPE program from the academic year 1994/95 with the financial assistance of DANIDA.

Objectives

To provide and expand quality education and inclusive special education to children 6-10 years of age

To provide informal education in order to enroll children in primary schools

To manage resources to give continuity to primary education after 3-5 years (community's responsibility)

To give continuity to CPE implementation step by step with the active involvement of the communities (BMDBCPEP, 1995:5).

To achieve the objectives, the program adopted broad-based participation, local involvement and information-based management as its main strategies. For participation, it aimed at orienting social workers, educationists, local people, and political leaders and cadres. For local involvement and implementation right from the grassroots level it opened a community learning center in each of the 11 wards. CPE was not viewed from quantitative parameters alone. Rather, for qualitative improvement of education, the program aimed at helping communities in upgrading

physical infrastructure, providing teaching-learning materials, teacher training, adopting necessary measures to help both formal and non-formal education.

Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme (RCPEP) 1995

The Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Program was launched in 1995 on the guidance from BPEP and support of DANIDA.

Objectives

To enroll primary school age children in schools

To enroll out-of-school children 8-14 years of age for child classes

To make the 15-40 age group literate through adult education

To conduct post-literacy classes for neo-literates in order to bring them into income-generating programs

To implement CPE from 1994/1995(RNVDC, 1995:2).

To achieve the objectives the following programs were planned:

Child education: Classes were planned for unschooled children --2 hours a day, 6 days a week, for nine months. The completers were recognized as equivalent to grade 3 completers. The textbook was "Naulo Bihani" 1 and 2.

Adult education: The program was meant for the 15-45 age group illiterate adults. Classes were run 2 hours a day, 6 days a week, for 6 months. The textbook was "Naya Goreto" 1 and 2.

Female literacy: This program was planned for women, 15 and above.

Post-literacy education: This program was meant for those who had completed grades 3-4 or for those who had become literate from the literacy program. The participants were to be taught skills of their interest and given assurance of loan for income-generating activities. Classes: 2 hours a day, 6 days a week, for 6 weeks.

Community learning center: Five community centers were proposed for the VDC.

Besides, the VDC also planned to operate a special education program, early childhood class and adult education in the following year ((RNVDC, 1995:3).

To teach a class of up to 10 students, the facilitator had to be a student of grade 8 or 9 or any person beyond this level. To teach a class of 10 to 25 students, the instructor had to have a minimum qualification of SLC test pass. There was a provision of training (of a few days) for the facilitators.

A Ward Cooperation Committee was formed and given the following functions and responsibilities:

To send school-age children to school

To visit homes of illiterate people to motivate them for participation in literacy programs

To develop and implement literacy programs at ward level with the help of ward-based organizations, schools, educationists and social workers

To monitor program execution/operation and solve problems

To submit the report (with suggestions) to the VDC

To approve ward-based programs and issue budgeted amounts

To manage/organize training for instructors, supervisors and *sahyogi karyakarta*.

To seek help of local people and organizations

To advocate for the program (extensively)

To award participants on the basis of evaluation

To give recognition and awards to people or organizations assisting in the program

To form a class operation committee for a class of 10-25 students with the provision of a female member selected from among the participants. The responsibilities of the class operation committee were: regular operation and management of the classes and solution of problems related to class operation.

The program was inaugurated on January 8, 1995.

Compulsory Primary Education Programme 1998

To regulate the CPE program initiated in the Chitwan, Ilam, Shyanja, Surkhet and Kanchanpur districts, BPEP issued a program regulation in 1998. The objectives of CPE program were: mandatory enrolment, quality education and management, and preparation of a pragmatic strategy (BPEP, 1998:2).

The program strategies included:

Partnership building between the central level and the local level for program initiation and expansion

Improvement of teacher quality and emphasis on effective teaching

Local participation in the development of school physical facility

Effective monitoring

CPE committee formation

Initiation of CAS and ECD

Strong EMIS

Provision of special education

Policy to increase the proportion of girls

Teaching aids preparation

Flexible school hours

Bottom-up planning

Identification of students requiring special education

Reduce educational expenditure of low-income families

The program regulation had outlined the functions and responsibilities of the central-level committee, school-level committee and CPE-related organizations including DEO.

The various programs conducted under CPE were: (a) scholarship, (b) student motivation, (c) CPE reward, (d) school outreach, (e) CPE awareness, (f) EMIS and (g) teaching aids preparation.

The CPE program was publicized through a note copy advising both students and guardians. The copy was distributed only in two backward resource centers of the Ilam and Chitwan districts in the year 1998.

Review of Compulsory Primary Education Programme Documents

The study analyzed the related documents of Educational Commissions, National Development Plans, Acts and Regulations and study reports of BPEP and EFA – for review.

The following reports of the national educational commissions have outlined the importance of CPE for Nepal:

In an attempt to identify the kind of education required for Nepal, the Nepal National Education Commission Report 1956 explained that education should be imparted based on the populist view of equity in order to distribute education opportunities equally among members of the society. It should be free for an equitable distribution and compulsory to intervene careless parents.

The All-round National Education Committee 1961 recommended free and compulsory primary education, a uniform educational system, and a singular medium of instruction, among others.

In 1998, the report of High Level National Education Commission emphasized the importance of CPE programs. It recommended phased implementation of the program beginning with the areas where primary education enrolment was at the universal level and where there was a sound infrastructure development. It also recommended the introduction of a legal base for CPE by the end of the Tenth Plan.

The Acts and Regulations had encouraged the implementation of CPE as follows:

The Town Panchayat Act 1962 reflected the version of compulsory primary education with the provision that it could force out-of-school children, 6-10 years old, to enroll in the schools operating under it.

The Town Panchayat Regulations (Karyavyavastha) 1963 provisioned for an additional education tax. For raising the tax it had to pre-inform the town citizens regarding the number of 6-10 year old children, the total tax amount, and the tax rate.

The Education Act 1970 provided regulations for implementing FCPE. The District Panchayat, Village Panchayat and town Panchayat could implement the program on the approval of the Department of Education. The Act made the provision of compulsory attendance of children of 6 and 10 years, failing which the guardians might be fined up to Rs 15. Besides, the act included rules regarding the formation functions, and responsibilities of the FCPE committees.

Two studies, "Primary Education in Nepal" (1983) and "Mobilization of Teachers, Educators and Their Organizations in Combating Child Labor" (1996), presented an analysis of the CPE programs implemented in the mid-60s and mid-90s as follows:

The study "Primary Education in Nepal" presented a brief account of the CPE program implemented in the mid-60s. The Free and Compulsory Primary Education

Program was introduced in two districts, Jhapa and Chitwan. Besides, a few Town Panchayats also introduced the program. During implementation, the compulsory part was not strictly followed owing to various technical difficulties.

The legal and management provisions made for the implementation of this experimental program included decentralized operation of the school and authorized local bodies to collect revenue and appoint teachers. The program was financed centrally as well as locally. The government contributed only 25 % of teachers' salary. The report found the program fairly successful in Dharan, Pokhara, and Tansen Town Panchayats. The program was successful in increasing enrollments including that of girls but faced severe financial difficulties. With the introduction of the National Educational System Plan (NESP) in 1971, the CPE program was abandoned.

The study "Mobilization of Teachers, Educators and Their Organization in Combating Child Labor" analysed the CPE program implemented in the Banepa Municipality. It found the basic aspects of this program such as community mobilization, local initiatives and active participation of social workers, educators and others for inquiring, discussing and identifying the root causes of illiteracy as very encouraging. Community learning centers and Women's Group Banepa were the two key grassroots level units to mobilize people and to conduct literacy and non-formal education classes. The major characteristics of the program included information-based management, formation of working groups at grassroots level, and programs for out-of-school children. The project achieved success in increasing the literacy and female literacy percentage rates.

Nepal's National Development Plans have accorded CPE a priority:

The Seventh Plan (1985-1990) recognized primary education as one of the basic needs of people and made a provision for the initiation of compulsory education by municipalities. The Plan put forth various programs such as free education up to grade 5, free textbook and female education, to achieve the target of primary education expansion policy by 2000. However, massive illiteracy (60%) and the low proportion of girls' participation in primary schools emerged as a challenge by the end of the plan period.

The Eighth Plan (1992-1997) reiterated the government's commitment to achieve the goal of universal primary education and of raising the literacy rate to 67% by 2000. The plan envisaged empowerment of local government bodies to launch compulsory primary education on pilot basis if, however, they decided to implement the scheme. Besides, it also made the provision of one female teacher in each primary school and of literacy program for girls unable to attend formal school.

The policy of the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) was to upgrade the quality of basic and primary education with focus on gender equity and educational opportunity to disadvantaged communities. In the context of making primary education compulsory, the plan adopted the expansion policy on the basis of experiences gained from the field. The various programs envisaged in the plan document include: gradual implementation of the Continuous Assessment System, implementation of the Liberal Promotion Policy up to grade 3 on experimental basis, preliminary effort to provide primary education in the mother tongue and simple and efficient distribution of textbooks.

Following the objectives of Ninth Plan, the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) laid stress on decentralization for quality education, and on providing day-meal and scholarships to disadvantaged groups – for attaining 90 % (net) enrolment. The implementation of free and compulsory primary education would be gradually followed as per the government proclamation and commitment. For this, the Plan made a provision for the development of institutional, managerial and physical infrastructure framework.

The Basic and Primary Education Program and Education for All have incorporated the following CPE-related programs in their documents.

BPEP (Master Plan) anticipated the launching of the CPE program on pilot basis in one VDC/Municipality of each of the 40 project districts. Selection of the VDC was entrusted to DEC, based on eight different criteria such as access and availability of physical facilities, etc. The VDC /Municipality committee was to perform tasks such as organizing parents' meetings, compilation of statistics and mobilization of resources for school facilities.

As a future direction, the Master Plan Phase-II envisaged empowering, encouraging, rewarding the VDC, DDC, and Municipality for introducing CPE. For equitable access, it identified the CPE program as the first option. The second option was scholarship/feeding programs.

BPEP-II Program Implementation Plan (PIP) proposed a legal provision for compulsory schooling with full enforcement within its program purview. The plan purposed three types of program activities for the CPE districts for the plan period: first, a trial piloting of preparation, evaluation and approval of SIP in selected clusters; second, application of SIP approach to the structuring of the district primary education plan; and third, formulation of primary education development plans by aggregating and screening SIPs. Besides, BPEP II felt the need of piloting different modalities in SMC formation in the CPE districts.

To ensure free and primary education for all, the EFA Plan of Action (2001-2015) Nepal posed questions of reaching the disadvantaged and deprived children, removing gender disparities, and addressing the needs of various special needs children. It also outlined the measures taken by HMG such as school improvement and expansion program, school feeding program, and special programs for girls and disadvantaged communities. It also highlighted the role of NGOs, CBOs and grassroots organizations to implement the program successfully. It put forth strategies and time-bound action plans. The major strategies were: (a) use of a mechanism to ensure free and compulsory primary education with legal provision, (b) decentralized approach and partnership, (c) sustainability and financial autonomy, (d) phased implementation, (e) quality and relevance for basic education, (f) school mapping, and (g) mainstreaming of out-of-school children

Education for All 2004-2009 set the objective of bringing all children to the fold of free basic and compulsory primary education in most parts of the country. The major policy includes: reduction of direct and indirect cost of education of the disadvantaged community, development of inclusive education, decentralization in education planning and implementation, information system for tracking the status of children, scale-up SIP and VEP to all schools, participatory planning, collaboration with INGOs and NGOs, new and improved scholarship and freeship schemes.

Chapter III

FUNCTIONING AND IMPACT OF THE COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION INITIATIVES

This chapter analyzes the operation and impact of each CPE initiative undertaken in Nepal. The analysis of the CPE program implemented in the first phase (1963-1970) and the third phase (1997/98-1998/1999) has been based on the fieldwork done in Chitwan district. The analysis of the second phase (1994/95) has been based on the fieldwork carried out in the Banepa Municipality and Ratnanagar VDC. The second and third phase programs have been observed as required for the central level authorities through opinion collection. Finally, this chapter introduces the current district level efforts at achieving the EFA goal.

Free and Compulsory Primary Education Prior to the National Education System Plan 1971

To provide the knowledge of the Free and Compulsory Education Program implemented prior to the National Education System Plan, discussions with the then official from the Education Department for the initiation of the program, the then ex-officio secretary of Free and Compulsory Education Program of Padampur VDC, Chitwan, and two teachers of Malpur and Bodrani Primary schools, Chitwan were held. The purpose was to explain how the program was launched in Chitwan. The following findings have been recorded.

An inaugural ceremony was held in Rampur in which all head teachers and Pradhan Panchas were invited to participate. In that ceremony, the CPE program was declared open and two program-related announcements were made: (a) Village Panchayats were authorized to raise land revenue in proportion to individual land-holding and fix the land tax rate and (b) Village Panchayats were entitled to operate and manage schools and to appoint and transfer teachers. Government teachers, who earlier received their salaries from the District Education Inspector's office, would now onwards receive their salaries from the Village Panchayat.

Education expenditures were divided in two categories: recurring and non-recurring. Recurring expenditures covered to teacher salaries and education materials and non-recurring expenditures the physical infrastructure development of schools. The government would provide fund for non-recurring expenditures and for recurring expenditures Village Panchayats would collect the budget as passed by the Village Assembly. Other sources of income (apart from land tax) were Dhuri Kar, Cart tax, Radio tax, Mill tax, Tractor tax, etc. The tax amount raised per one Bigha of land in the Padampur Village Panchayat ranged from Rs.15 to Rs 20. In the Bachhauri Village Panchayat it was Rs. 5 per Bigha. Students were not charged any type of fee. Textbooks were made available through the District Education Inspector's office. The schools gave poor students pens and paper.

At that time bringing children to school was very difficult. Parents were not much aware about the importance of education. Parents would hide their children when teachers and Village Panchayat authorities would so to their doorsteps to motivate them to send their children to school. Therefore, students' admission and dropout were considered normal. Teachers had to work hard preparing parents to enroll their children. They even had to resort to rumouring that parents of non-schooled children

would be subjected to legal action. Because of these measures, student numbers in the schools doubled.

The monitoring of program was effective. It was done under the District Education Inspector's office. The District Education Inspector himself visited the school at least once in two months. During his visit, he would inspect classes and ask the teachers whether they received their salaries. He would also count students for the sanction of books. But the program soon fell into trouble as it faced problems in raising taxes. One of the major reasons was that big landholders would send their children to cities. Therefore, it was very difficult to bring them into the land tax system. Finally, the revenue from land tax could not be raised as estimated and it became difficult to pay the teachers. After that the Education Department made a request to the District Revenue Office not to accept land tax from those who did not pay the CPE land tax. The Revenue Office complied with the request but recorded a decrease in revenue collection because those who defaulted did not pay the land tax either. Finally, the District Revenue Office became indifferent to the CPE land tax. The District Education Inspector's office took this attitude very seriously and its staff set a chair and bench in the District Revenue Office and asked the taxpayers to pay the education tax simultaneously. Finally, the education land tax could not be raised to the extent required (for teachers' salary). After that the government gave lump-sum amounts to Chitwan and Jhapa districts and the following year the Free and Compulsory Primary Education Program was abandoned in these two districts after the initiation of the National Education System Plan.

The Banepa Literacy Campaign Program, Kabhre Basic Education Project and Women's Group of Banepa were in operation even before the introduction of the Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Program (BCPEP) in the Municipality. All these programs prepared a good background for the implementation of BCPEP. The literacy program put greater emphasis on BCPEP by including the CPE program in its objectives. All these programs were launched in the context of Education for All.

Banepa Literacy Campaign Programme 1993

Realizing that illiteracy was a major obstacle to the development of the person, family, village and the nation, the Banepa Municipality committed itself to the Banepa Literacy Campaign Program in order to eradicate illiteracy in the context of Education for All by providing education to all in the Municipality area within 3 years' time. (The program was initiated in 1993). Keeping in view the achievement of the objectives of student enrolment, informal child education, adult literacy and post-literacy classes, the literacy program adopted motivational approach, child and adult literacy classes, and post-literacy activities. The target age group identified for child education was 8-14. And for the first two years, it identified a target age group of 15-60 for the adult literacy program. In the third year, it reduced the upper age limit to 45. The achievement of the program was found encouraging. The literacy rate rose to 94 % in 1995 as against 65 % of the BM survey conducted in 1991.

In 1995, the literacy program included the implementation of the CPE program as one of its objectives. The Banepa Literacy Program prepared a sound groundwork for the implementation of BCPEP.

Kabhre Basic Education Project 1994

Kabhre basic education project launched in 1994 aimed at equal access to basic education. The major objectives of KBEP were to carry out a comprehensive household survey over the whole of Kabhre so that information obtained from the survey could be helpful in generating other projects. KBEP identified problems in primary education such as non-enrolment, high dropout, lack of awareness in parents, schools lacking in basic facilities, untrained teachers with low motivation, and lack of proper supervisory support. KBEP intended to work with teachers and communities to identify problems and remove hindrances to the development of primary education.

Women's Group - Banepa 1993

The activities of the Women's Group/Banepa included organizing, monitoring and evaluation of 18 Banepa Literacy classes, counseling parents to encourage children's attendance at school through home visits, and conducting training in food processing.

Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Program 1995

Given the above program pre-requisites, the Banepa Municipality launched the CPE program in a fully planned manner. The following were the major steps taken to implement the program:

A five-member Municipality-level committee was formed, which included the Mayor, Deputy-Mayor, representative of KBEP, representative of the Women's Group/Banepa, in the presence of BPEP representative. The KBEP director was the member-secretary.

To promote BCPEP, two motivators and one program coordinator were appointed.

The Municipality prepared a plan to launch the program in each ward

From household survey the number of out-of-school children (6-10 years of age) was determined and detailed statistics covering the disabled and disadvantaged and girls were recorded. The data were analyzed to identify their educational needs.

A Community Learning Centers (CLC) was formed in each ward to implement the CPE Program.

The Municipality sent a guideline to each ward, defining the functions of CLC such as enrolment of school-age children (including the disabled children) and making each individual literate. BM granted RS 10000 to each ward (for CLC). Wards contributed the same amount too.

For monitoring, the Municipality-level committee, BPEP representative, KBEP director, motivators, program coordinator, CLCs and headteachers were made responsible. Every Monday they sat in a meeting in the Municipality building. The major agenda of the meeting included enrolment, dropout, Municipality support, CLC support, and evaluation and supervision of the program. The role of the Municipality was also discussed in terms of financial support for educational materials and scholarships (from its budget).

CLC and sub-CLC meetings were held once in a month. CLC and sub-CLC were made fully responsible for the advocacy of schooling and literacy. Therefore, the

agenda of these meetings comprised school enrollment and dropout and logistic support to the literacy program. Wards were not directly involved in the program.

The overall evaluation of the program was fairly successful. Before BCPEP, 112 school-age children were out of school. The program provided these children access to primary schools and out-of-school program (OSP). Mainstreaming of OSP children was also accomplished. In the follow-up study carried out in the second year, no dropout case was recorded, except that of two unruly children who sold eggs and chowmien in the bus stop. Likewise, only 12 children did not attend schools during this period for reasons of migration and home school distance. Even though indicators for quality assessment were developed, no evaluation study was attempted.

Six CLCs out of eleven were successful in implementing the BCPEP program. The Municipality later awarded an additional amount of RS 10000 to the successful CLCs. CLCs were found defunct in all wards except Wards 4 and 11. During field visit, the CLC of Ward 11 was found involved in literacy and post-literacy classes, community forestry, and saving and credit activities (by forming various saving groups). According to the CLC, no non-enrollment and dropout case was found in the ward even after the launching of BCPEP. However, it was found that the CLC of Ward 4 was limited to the operation of a library.

The implementation of BCPEP was well planned. It included programs of awareness, motivation, interaction and regular (monthly) monitoring that led to the success of the program. A teacher training of 150 hours added strength to the program. Individual efforts of the co-coordinator, motivators, Mayor and Ward Chairmen were found commendable. The program received more community support than was expected. Equally contributive to the success of the program was the adequate financial support that DANIDA provided.

The program was successful in bringing the poor, disadvantaged, *dalits*, and girls to school. Children who were deaf also got a school-going opportunity. Forty students, who were admitted to OSP classes, were mainstreamed. Literacy classes were run for seasonal migrant children whose parents worked in brick kilns. The program helped parents to realize the importance of enrolling children in schools. The program's coverage of income generating activities aroused the interest of parents in the program. After the CPE program, school enrolment increased almost 100 %, which was 60 % before. The program helped to generate the feeling of ownership of the program at the local level. It also pointed to the need for partnership with local NGOs.

Though the program was successful, it had some limitations. The data collection was comprehensive, but it needed details. For example, if the cause of non-attendance was poverty, the causes of poverty should have been recorded. Because of this, it became difficult to identify the pupil who was in urgent need of scholarship for school attendance. Awareness programs could have been launched at broader and deeper levels but they could not cover all the wards equally. Separate motivation initiatives could not bring the expected result so that both mothers and fathers were kept together for motivation. Over-age children caused difficulty in enrolment and retention.

The program could not address the problem of children whose parents migrated to the Kathmandu Valley for 6 months to work in brick kilns, taking their children along with them. This was one of the major reasons for the high dropout rate. The

program could not retain intractable children (who sold eggs and chowmien in the bus stop) to school. Likewise, quality of education was not considered as was lower than expected during the program period. The provision of inclusive education for 6-10 year old children did not materialize even though the program assisted in the operation of one deaf school. It did not pay any attention to the ECD programs either.

BCPEP planned to expand CPE to adjoining VDCs in phases: 22 schools in the second year and 33 schools in the second year. However, the activity could not go beyond the survey of VDCs.

BCPEP was discontinued after two years although it was initially envisaged for a period of five years. The Municipality confined itself to allocation of budget to schools for the remaining 3 years.

Findings of Banepa Compulsory Primary Education Programme

In order to assess the impact of BCPEP two schools, Ajad Secondary School and Chandeshwori Bal Bidhya Sadan, were observed. Teachers, SMCs members and parents were involved in an interaction session.

Ajad had enrolled 90(46 girls) students in 2003 (Grade1-5). Most (82) of these students came from outside the school catchment area. The school clearly knew that every child (6-10 year old) within the school catchment was enrolled. Of the total enrollees in the school, 13 were *dalit*, but most (11) came from outside the school catchment area. Since it was located in the Municipality area, the school had been a 'choice' school for the students of adjoining villages. The school had categorized the castes Kami, Damai, Sarki, and Diwali as *dalit*.

The school had a record of dropout (only of *dalit* children). Altogether, three dropouts had appeared, two boys and one girl (Grades 1 to 5) in 2003. The schoolteachers did not visit the homes of dropout students as part of the school system; however, they collected secondhand information by asking the friends of dropout students. Two students dropped out because the family moved back to its native places. One girl student dropped out because she could not pass the annual examination of Grade 5.

The school had a student-friendly environment comprising library, laboratory, computer, female teacher and adequate physical facilities. It provided incentives to two *non-dalit* students. One mild handicapped student was studying in the school.

The 2003 records of Chandeshwori Bal Bidhya Sadan Primary School showed that the school had an enrollment of 115 students, most of them (66%) from the adjoining catchment area. There were only 30 children (6-10 years of age) in the school catchment area. Of them, 20 studied in this school and 10 went to private schools. 'Choice' students also came from adjoining villages. The school had enrolled one mildly disabled student

The school records showed an unusual dropout figure (2003). A total of 22 students had dropped out from Grades 1 to 5. Of that a number large position (12) occurred in Grade 1. Insufficient family income was the root cause of the dropout. Of the total, 20 students belonged to the families who went seasonally to the Kathmandu Valley for work in brick factories. There, these families worked from November to April. When they come back, they again enrolled children in the same Grade. For example, Shreejana Lakhhe Shrestha enrolled three times in Grade 3 because of the regular

seasonal migration of her family. Two students dropped out to engage in income-earning activities. Currently, they are working as servants in private homes.

The school had 2 female teachers, a small laboratory and a separate toilet for girls. It prepared its first SIP in 2003 (for the period 2003-07). There was no parent-teacher association in the school.

The teachers of both Ajad and Chandeswori schools were familiar with the BCPE program. The school received stationery and training on methods of teaching during the project period. The school physical facility was also improved. However, teachers felt that the program could not meet the demand for ECD classes and school feeding program.

SMCs did not have any idea of how the CPE program was planned, implemented and monitored.

SMCs assumed that all the children (6-10 years old) living in the school catchment area went to school. But they had only a faint idea about the dropout situation.

In the interaction, SMCs pointed out several flaws in the educational activities. The school Improvement Plan (SIP) was actually not a plan for school improvement. It just provided statistics of teachers, students, and furniture. It did not analyze the problems of girls and the disadvantaged. The government school curriculum fell too short of the private school curriculum.

The schools charged fees despite the fact that primary education was free. Teachers said that fees were essential for the payment of utility service and education materials. It was argued that the practice of raising school fees as school income had discouraged those with lowest home resources. The present fee structure is shown in Table 6 in the Appendix.

Parents were not involved in the planning, execution, and monitoring of the CPE program. What they knew was that female literacy classes were run in their ward as part of the CPE program.

Defining the importance of education, parents said that an uneducated person could not engage in any gainful economic activity. Their perceptions and expectations about education were high. They were aware that every child (6-10 years of age) of the school catchment area was in school, but they were ignorant regarding dropout.

The parents said that their children were learning in a safe and friendly environment. In reality, parents had no problem sending children to school; they did have financial ability and personal willingness for this. They seem to be confident about the future of their children.

When asked about parents' role in children's learning they said that their responsibility was to send their children to school on time and support them with books and stationery.

Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme 1995

To launch the CPE program, the Ratnanagar VDC collected data on literate and illiterate males and females classified by age group. Nijanand Malla, Co-coordinator of the Compulsory Primary Education Program also made a pamphlet appeal to various stakeholders to provide reliable data for the successful implementation of the program.

The CPE committee was formed by BPEP. It consisted of 5 members: VDC chairman (co-coordinator), campus chief of a local campus (member), representative of DEO (member), an educationist (member), and VDC secretary (member-secretary).

For awareness, 60 committees were formed in 9 wards, each consisting of 7 members (2 of them women). The program was also publicized through hoardings in 4 places.

For the supervision of the program, a supervisor was appointed.

A 12-day training on methods of teaching was given to all head teachers and 2 teachers of each school. The VDC adopted the policy of enrolling school age children in schools and child education classes free of charge. Those who did not show their interest in school were admitted to child education classes. A nine-day training was given to the facilitator of child education and female education classes.

The VDC had adopted the policy of non-recommendation of citizenship for those whose children were not enrolled in school or child education institute. But this did not materialize.

BPEP itself sent the first year programs to VDC. In the second year, VDC demanded quota on child education (20), women education (40) and adult education (10), which were not fully supplied by BPEP.

The CPE program coordinator, the chairman of Ward Committee, and the supervisor did the supervision of the program. The program coordinator visited the field only occasionally and the Ward chairmen visited their wards once in a month. Since they did not get any financial benefit, Ward members did not perform their supervisory duties well. In the regular monthly meetings of VDCs the committee only talked about the CPE program and did not minute any decision.

It was mandatory for the supervisor to visit the classes 3 times in a month. The supervisor had to enter the number of students in the class and the lessons taught (in the inspection book) on the day of his supervision. For salary, the facilitators had to carry with them the inspection book signed by the supervisor. In this way a check and balance system of supervision had been in practice.

VDC sent an annual report to BPEP every year.

According to the baseline survey conducted in the VDC, 4681(1398 males and 3283 females) were found illiterate. In the 8-14 age group there were a total of 487 illiterates (166 males and 321 females). In order to make them literate, ten child education centers were operated in the first year and ten other child educational centers and twenty women classes in the second year.

By 1997, the program made 933(20%) literate: 197 from the first year child classes, 193 from second year child classes and 543 from the second year women education classes. Of the 543 literate women, 170 were given training in tailoring and 20 were given beautician training.

CLCs were set up in 5 places of the VDC. A CLC only served as a reading hall. CLCs were provided 2 newspapers (by VDC). The supervisor visited the CLCs once in a month to see whether or not they received the newspapers regularly.

The program mainstreamed 310 pupils. During the program time, DEO opened a school in the Sishahi VDC for the RCPEP students.

The program could not be operated as envisaged because of inadequate orientation (by the Center), lack of active involvement of DEO and insufficient local capacity.

On the women education side, all the women enrolled were not regular in classes except on the days of distribution of stationery and supervision. Most classes had no blackboard and a supply of 4 lanterns for a class was inadequate for 25 students. In places where electricity was available there was no budget for electricity. Since the women classes were conducted in the evening (between 5 and 7), the participants had to return home late and drunkards bullied them. Even when the classes were shifted to daytime, the numbers of participants continued to decrease.

Adult Literacy classes were opened in 3 places in the second year of the program. But the classes were soon discontinued because the participants could not be adequately motivated.

A survey was conducted in 1998 to extend the program to the Panchkanya VDC.

This 5-year program was run for only two years (1995-1997). After the VDC became Municipality in 1997, the program continued only over the next 5 months and then terminated.

Findings of Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme

To find the impact of the program, Bakular Lower Secondary School and Rastriya Primary School of Debauli were chosen from the then Ratna Nagar VDC (now Ratna Nagar Municipality) and teachers, parents and SMCs of these schools were invited to participate in an interaction session.

In the two schools of the Municipality, the total enrolment was 642 and the enrolment of the disadvantaged was 34. Bishowkarmas, Pariyars, and Sarkis belonged to the disadvantaged groups.

The dropout rate in the sample schools of Ratnanagar Municipality appeared much lower (3.1 %) than the district average of 16.6 % for Grades 1 to 4 in 2002. (DEP Chitwan 2004-08). However, the interpretation of dropout should be done carefully as some of the dropouts attended other schools. In the present study, dropouts identified through an interaction with headteachers, teachers and thus, did not show up in the data.

The major reasons for the dropouts in the Municipality were: frequent change of residence by rickshaw pullers and move out-of vegetable growers to leased lands on termination of their contracts. In the Ratnanagar Municipality, Indians have been growing vegetables on leased land for the last 20 years and their number has increased over the last couple of years. Low income, internal migration, and overage were other reasons of the dropout

In the two schools 50% of the disadvantaged students received scholarships. In schools, PTA and SMCs were formed. SIP had been prepared but SMC did not participate actively in the preparation of SIP.

The Bakular school was situated in the main town, while the Debauli school was located in the outskirts. Therefore, the cases of these schools are presented separately.

In the Bakular school there was the problem of admission because every year 15-20 families came to settle in the school catchment area. Muslim students of this area went to Madarasas, and only 8 or 10 of them attended this school. (At present, 3-4 students of the catchment area are not attending school). About 20 students from the

Bakular school catchment area had shifted to a nearby school because of the higher fee charge of the school.

It was revealed in a discussion session of parents, teachers and SMC that in the catchment area of this school the problem of child labor was serious. The number of non-schooled children was increasing year by year. For them, orientation was not sufficient. A legal provision did not allow the use of child labor. A scholarship program was essential; failing which it would not be possible to bring all the children to school.

The observation of SMCs, parents and teachers that Ratnanagar is facing the problem of child labor is supported by the news report published in the *Kantipur Daily*, (Sunday June 1, 2004). The paper has reported that there were 635 child labours in two Municipalities (Ratnanagar and Bharatpur) and three VDCs (Khairani, Bhandara and chainpur) referring to a joint survey of children under 14 conducted by the Youth Club Narayangarh and Rapti Dun Society. Of them, 473 were household servants, 59 street children, 73 porters, and the rest were involved in undesirable works of low grade.

It was learned from teachers, parents, and SMCs that not all children of the Deaubali school catchment area were enrolled in the school although a Narayangarh NGO had admitted about 25 students to its school. Even after that 20 to 30 students did not attend school because of predominance of Tharus and Dalits in the area. Similarly, there were 4 to 5 dropouts. The dropout students could be rehabilitated to school if persuaded and given school uniform. But their parents held them back for household works.

In the Debauli school catchment area there was a problem of dropout of Tharus, Magars, Bishowkarmas and Pariyars. The SMC and parents had felt the need of education in the mother tongue, particularly for overage children because of their failure in the exam caused by the difficulty of learning through a second language.

SMC and parents were aware of the CPE program launched in 1995, but they were not aware about the program of 1998. Parents were aware of the difference between an educated person and uneducated person and were of the opinion that children should be sent to school. They said education had a positive impact upon income and living standard. Not all PTA members had the idea that primary education is compulsory and free. In the opinion of PTAs of both the schools, schools did not have as many teachers as are required. There were no separate toilets for girls. Despite this, they thought their children were happy in the schools. They thought that CPE program had created and increased education awareness.

Opinion on Banepa and Ratnanagar Compulsory Primary Education Programme

The views of the then BPEP director on how the CPE programs were conceived and launched in the Banepa Municipality and Ratnanagar VDC are paraphrased below:

As one having participated in many international seminars, the director developed the notion of how 100% literacy could be achieved. So he developed the idea of implementing the CPE program on pilot basis in one Municipality and one VDC. Since CPE did not fall within the regular yearly program, the Danish government was requested for financial support for its implementation and the Danish response was positive. In order to expand CPE all over Nepal, the program was first launched

in Banepa and Ratnanagar for a period of five years. At that time the Banepa Municipality was already operating its literacy program. The director also personally knew the then Mayor and was also confident about his capability to implement the program. So, the program was taken to Banepa on the request of the Mayor. The Ratnanagar VDC was selected because it was the director's own area. Apart from that, the VDC was in the process of being upgraded to the Municipality status.

Banepa was prepared for the program, while Ratnanagar did not have any idea of the program. Banepa conducted a survey and prepared a survey report showing a demand for the program. Ratnanagar conducted a survey but only sent a survey form without preparing a survey report. The center sent the program to Ratnanagar. For program implementation, Banepa formed the CPE committee in the presence of the BPEP representative. The center formed a similar committee in Ratnanagar on the request of the VDC. Banepa successfully implemented the program in the first year itself, while Ratnanagar could not even perceive the nature of the program. The center did not monitor the program in either place because the programs were conceptualized as locally developed programs. The scale and strength of the program were different as one place was a Municipality and the other a VDC. Banepa was more relied upon because it was a Municipality and hence was given jurisdiction over schools.

The mayor of Banepa gave special priority to the BPEP program as he had the experience of working as a headmaster. The Ratnanagar program coordinator, on the other hand, had no such experience.

Banepa municipality spent the whole budget (Rs 414000) in the first year of the program but Ratnanagar spent only about Rs 200000 out of Rs 7 24000.

The programs could not run for five years because the BPEP director was changed, and new local government tops were elected. The new tops set new priorities for their respective areas.

Opinion on Compulsory Primary Education Programme of Chitwan 1998

On the Free and Compulsory Primary Education Program of Chitwan, the then program coordinator expressed the view that the basis of CPE introduction was both domestic and international. Externally, Nepal bore the impact of the World Conference held in Jomtien in 1990. Internally, it placed priority on basic and primary education from the beginning. After the Banepa and Ratnanagar experiments, BPEP selected two districts (one from the Hills and the other from the Terai) on trial basis for a gradual expansion of CPE nationwide. The selection criterion was the higher net and gross enrolment rates of the districts. In both the districts the Program was inaugurated by the Center. Considering access as the main component of CPE, the program was implemented as a campaign for creating awareness rather than as a program. Before the launching of the program, comprehensive household surveys were conducted in both the districts for the needs assessment of the schools. The program intended to support the school physical improvement plan and supply of teachers. For the operation of the program, the Center provided CPE program regulations, additional scholarships and education materials to remote-area schools. For bottom-up planning SIP was introduced, and a continuous assessment system was started. The strategy also included ECD and special education. The program also emphasized the role of the resource center in the education management information system and gave more responsibility to it. The

program also introduced the concept of effective teaching and gave priority to increasing the number of girls in schools. The program also encouraged partnership development between the Center and the local authority. It also conceptualized the student tracking system. Student motivation and scholarship programs were also introduced. It also tried to bring focus groups to the program. It also put forward the concept of school outreach programs. For monitoring a unit was established under BPEP but the programs were not systematically monitored by the Center. Chitwan demanded more educational infrastructure such as teachers and school physical facilities but the center provided neither. Under this program teachers were redeployed in the district

Even the National Planning Commission did not evaluate the programs from the point of view of expansion. BPEP I term expired. There was change in leadership in BPEP. So the program could not be continued. However, this program was successful in increasing enrolment though only a little in Ilam and 10% to 20% in Chitwan.

The CPE program was expanded to three more districts in 1999. However, it could not be continued in all the five districts. The programs in these districts had to be abandoned due to the lack of political commitment and non-participation of the local government.

Since the sample schools under study were run under the Jhuwani resource center, the resource person of this center was requested to tell about the experiences of CPE 1998. Her account of the program is as follows:

In Chitwan, a two-day workshop of headteachers, teachers and SMC chairpersons was organized at the resource center for orientation. Later, in a meeting of August 31, 1999 the resource center decided on the formation of a school-level committee for the implementation of CPE. But no monitoring was done to see whether the committee was formed or not. However, some activities related to access, retention and improvement of physical facilities were conducted.

Findings of Compulsory Primary Education Programme of Chitwan

In order to collect information about the CPE program, head teachers, teachers, SMCs and parents of Malpur Lower Secondary School, Rastriya Primary School Mainaha, Rastriya Primary school Magani and Saraswoti Rastriya Primary School were brought to meet for an in-depth interaction. The first two schools were chosen from Bachhauli VDC and the rest from Khairahani VDC. In all these schools the government-regulated Compulsory Primary Education program was launched in 1998. The outcomes of the programs are summed up below.

The dropout rate in the Bachhauli VDC (1.4%) and Khairahani VDC (0.2%) appeared much lower than the district average of 16.6% for Grades 1 to 4 in 2002 (DEP Chitwan, 2004-08). It was still lower than that of the Municipality. The dropout rate of disadvantaged children in the Municipality (11.8%) was much higher than that of the VDCs (1.8%). Details are given in Table 5 in the Appendix.

Teachers, SMC and parents listed the major causes of dropout in the VDCs. Students of Grades 4 or 5 from the Mushar and Bote families went to fish in order to support their families economically. The elder children looked after their younger brothers and sisters when their parents went out to work. Parents engaged their children in

cattle grazing and provided neither pen and pencil nor the school uniform. Alcoholic parents did not pay any attention to the education of their children.

Scholarships were not given to all schools having disadvantaged students. Only 55.9% of the disadvantaged students of certain schools received the scholarship. *Dalits* and the physically handicapped, and *Mushars*, *Bishowkarmas*, *Pariyars* and *Sharkis* were the beneficiaries of the scholarship program.

In CPE 1998, head teachers and one or two teachers from these schools were invited to participate in a teacher training. However, the provision of development of school physical facilities and additional teacher quotas did not materialize. This program added 2-4 students from the literacy program. All schools received the program regulation guide but the access and retention aspects were not given due attention as required and these activities were carried out on general basis, neither was the CPE school Committee formed in the schools.

Only two SMC chairmen had the idea of the 1998 CPE-program. Similarly, parents knew little about it.

The CPE program increased the student number in the schools of *Khairaini VDC* optimally. In the *Bachauli VDC* 25 to 30 students were still not going to school. According to an ex-VDC chairman, about 50 children of the VDC did not go to school (most of them are *Dalits*, *Janajatis*, *Tharus*, and *Sukumbasis*). According to him, to get children enrolled in the school a legal ban should be imposed on the use of child labor and children should be given admission, school bag and uniform, and education materials-all free.

CPE 1998 created awareness to some extent, though. This program also developed the concept of ECD. Even though a continuous assessment system was introduced under this program, the student numbers rose excessively to 60 students per class in place of 30 in Grades 1, 2, and 3. Grade 3 pass students found it difficult to recognize the joint letters of Nepali and suffered from exam phobia. Teachers and physical facilities were not increased in proportion to the increase in the student number. The teachers were of the opinion that teacher training could not be of much benefit either to the schools or the students.

Some parents do not know that primary education is free nor do they have any (clear) idea about the annual school charges. Parents spent money on both school-related and non-related things such as school annual fees, books, paper and pencil, and uniforms to send children to school. Annual school fees and exam fees were not uniform and the refunding of the payments for the books took as long as up to six months. Parents pleaded for 100 % free education at the primary level. The annual and examination fees of the sampled schools are shown in Tables 6 and 7 of the Appendix.

Efforts for Achieving Education for All

District Education Office, Kavrepalanchowk

Several efforts were underway to provide momentum to Education for All in the district. SMCs had been formed in the district. Out of 467 schools 390 schools had PTAs. Each school had prepared SIP. VEP preparation began this year and by now 39 VDCs have completed their VEPs. The Second District Education Plan was in the process of preparation. DEO had not compiled statistics on non-enrolled and non-

completers of the district. It argued that the number of non-attenders and non-completers had decreased in recent years. According to DEO officials, the total number of children of 6-10 years of age in the district was 53045 and 15 % of them were out-of-school.

DEO had been working for EFA in Mahendra Jyoti VDC. This VDC was selected because it stood low in terms of access. In this VDC, all preliminary works such as baseline survey, door-to-door visit, SMC training, modular teacher training, interaction among various stakeholders, SIP preparation, and VEP preparation had been completed. The base line survey reported two types of problems in VDC: first, a total of 48 children 6-10 years old were not enrolled; and second, a large number of pupils were studying outside the village. As per the need identified, a school outreach program had started in the village.

Inclusive education program was in operation in two schools of the district.

NGOs and INGOs were also involved in the field of education in the Kavrepalanchowk district. Seto Guras had been working for the ECD program in the Mechhe VDC since 2002.

Save the Children/ Norway was also providing educational support to DEO for both ECD and Grades 1,2 and 3 of the primary schools. The primary goal of this INGO was to give sustainability to the educational programs for imparting quality education. It had a child-tracking system as well. At the outset, Save the Children/Norway introduced the educational support program in Mechee VDC in 2003. This program was extended to the Kurubas VDC in 2003.

Incentives were given to *Dalits* (3123 quotas in 2003/04) and the disabled (50 quotas in 2003/04). The total number of school-going *Dalits* in the district was 3640.

The DEO of Kabhre in collaboration with UNICEF had proposed to review DEPs, prepare guidelines for VEPs, support the preparation of 22 VEPs in CAP VDCs and help the district education information system. It had also proposed to provide support for the development of the information system in four resource centers. The other programs were: improvement in quality of education of 27 primary schools and training for SMCs of 134 schools. All these programs were proposed for quality education under the Decentralized Action for Women and Children (DACAW) program 2004.

District Education Office, Chitwan

In the Chitwan district, the draft report of District Education Plan (2004-08) was being prepared. According to the draft report, the total population of 5 to 9 year old children in the district was 62712 and the population of out-of-school children 5 to 9 year old was 6751(10.77%). The dropout rate of Grades 1,2,3 and 4 were 17.8 %, 14 %, 19.2 % and 15 % respectively in 2002.

The efforts currently being made for EFA in Chitwan include the following:

VEP Funding: DEO gives a block grant of Rs 20000 to the VDC that prepares the Village Education Plan (VEP). VDC, on its part, contributes the same amount as the matching fund. The goal of this fund is to increase access of children and develop school physical infrastructure. 12 VDCs and 32 VDCs benefited from this program in 2003 and 2004 respectively because only these VDCs were able to submit their VEPs.

The Decentralization Action for Children and Women program has agreed to add Rs 30000 to this fund beginning this year.

SIP Funding: DEO provides SIP funding to each school that prepares SIP. Under this program each school receives Rs 150 per student. The goal of the program is to enhance the quality of education. The funding started in 2001.

Incentives: DEO annually provides incentives to improve access and retention of *Dalits*, focus group, and physically handicapped children. In Chitwan, *Dalits* cover social castes of Bishwakarma, Parihar and Sarki, and the Focus group includes Prajas and Bote.

Table 1: Incentive programmes, Chitwan 2003

Types of Incentive	Quota	Amount per student (Rs)	Remarks
Dalits	1954	250	Enrolment of <i>dalits</i> was 8984
Focus Group	2300	200	Enrolment of Prajas was 3562
Physically Handicapped	50	500	Enrolment of physically handicapped was about 250

Grade 1 Focused Teaching Material: Since 1960 DEO had been providing a sum of RS 9000 to each primary school for the preparation of teaching materials for grade 1. The objective of this program is to help retention.

Alternative Schooling: Under the Alternative Schooling program, DEO had run school outreach programs in 16 centers and flexible schooling for the age group of 8-14 in 13 centers. Students were given stationery support in both types of schools. Child laborers were currently benefiting from flexible schooling.

Community Learning Center: DEO had been operating two community-learning centers in Sharadanagar and Kumroach VDCs since 2001 and 2003 respectively. These community centers were set up to carry out both developmental and educational activities.

Women's Education: Under this program literacy classes were conducted in 25 centers in 2003.

Awareness Program: In 2003, DEO organized five street dramas, five children rallies, five awareness programs and mothers' gatherings, focusing particularly on access and retention.

Focus on Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program: DEO had been running 226 ECD centers and this year it was planning to add 55 centers.

The Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACAW) had been in operation in the Chitwan district in collaboration with the Chitwan DDC and the central region field office of UNICEF.

The overall project objective of DACAW was to contribute to the attainment of the district goal of uplifting the status of children and women. Among the 11 specific objectives to achieve this end, two were directly related to education: quality and early child hood development.

The major strategies of DACAW were: strengthening the Community Action Process (CAP), responsive local service delivery and decentralized governance.

The annual objectives (for 2004) relating to “increase access to quality basic education especially for girls and disadvantaged groups” were as follows.

To make 75% of SMCs functional and to assist 15 VECs to prepare VEPs

To upgrade the performance quality of 600 head teachers, to increase access and decrease dropout, to enhance the quality of education and to help enrolment slide up to 96%

To make available alternative learning opportunities to 200 children.

To meet the stated objectives, the DEO will conduct an orientation program for VEC for the development of VEP, update the Education Management Information System (EMIS), and conduct orientation for SMC chairpersons, HMs and PTAs on effective supervision and monitoring as a support for quality primary education. It will also run alternative classes as a support for non-formal education. Currently, the community action process has reached 22 VDCs in the district.

DEO was planning to set up inclusive education centers in 4 areas.

DEO was planning to declare the Fulbari VDC as having achieved the access target of EFA this academic year.

Chapter IV

SYNTHESIS OF COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

This chapter presents a list of research findings collected from desk analysis and field visits to the Banepa Municipality, Ratnagar VDC and Chitwan district.

In 1963 and 1964, FCPE was launched in 109 VDCs and in a few Municipalities. This program was initiated in the Chitwan and Jhapa districts in 1967. For its execution, committees were formed at the local Panchayat level, which were entitled to operate and manage schools and authorized to raise land tax and appoint teachers. The program was monitored by the District Education Inspector's office. It also provided free textbooks to the students.

The program succeeded in doubling the number of students in schools but failed to collect land tax as anticipated. Finally, the program was abandoned after the introduction of the National Education system Plan in 1971.

The Banepa Municipality and Ratnagar VDC launched the CPE program on their own in 1995. The features, outcomes and weaknesses of the program are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Major findings of Banepa and Ratnanagar compulsory primary education programmes

Banepa	Ratnanagar
Programme features	Programme features
The Municipality involved in planning and execution	VDC involved in execution
The programme was based on survey report	The programme was based on survey data
The Municipality adopted the whole education approach; accordingly, schools, literacy programmes and alternative schools were run under it.	VDC adopted the single education approach, so only literacy programmes were run under it.
The Municipality mobilized community- based organizations; (for example, community learning center) for school advocacy.	VDC did not mobilize community-based organizations; it presented CLCs only as a reading hall.
The Municipality evaluated the programme on weekly basis.	VDC conducted a monthly discussion in its regular meeting.
The Mayor gave strong leadership and considerable attention to the programme.	The chairman did not pay any special attention to the programme.
The programme was supported by DANIDA	The programme was supported by DANIDA
Small size of population	Large size of population
Programme outcomes	Programme outcomes
The programme made 94 percent literate	The programme made 84 percent literate
The programme enrolled almost all (112) non-schooled children in schools and alternative schools.	The programme enrolled 390 children out of 487 out-of-school children in child education center.
Programme weaknesses	Programme weaknesses
The programme could not retain children of	

seasonal migrant families.	
The programme of inclusive education did not materialize as conceived, although it helped to operate special education classes for deaf children.	
The programme could not expand to adjoining VDCs as planned.	The programme could not expand to adjoining VDCs as planned.
The Municipality did only one follow-up study in the second year.	VDC did not carry out any follow-up study.
The programme duration was short (1995-1997).	The programme duration was short (1995-1997).

BPEP initiated the CPE program in the Chitwan district in 1998. The major findings of the programs are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Major findings of compulsory primary education programme, Chitwan

	Definitions	Problems
CPE objective	(a) Mandatory enrolment, (b) quality education and management and (c) preparation of a pragmatic strategy	A significant number of <i>Janajati</i> and child workers had no access to school
CPE strategy	Partnership building (between center and local level)	-
	Effective teaching	-
	Local participation in the development of school physical facility	-
	Effective monitoring	Weak monitoring
	CPE committee formation	No CPE committee
	Initiation of CAS and ECD	Only a few ECD classes
	Strong EMIS	Weak EMIS
	Provision of special education	-
	Policy to increase the proportion of girls	-
	Teaching aids preparation	Under process
	Flexible school hours	-
	Bottom-up planning	Under process
CPE programmes	Adequate scholarship	Inadequate scholarship
	Student motivation programme	No student motivation
	CPE award	No CPE award
	School outreach programme	-
	Teaching aids preparation	Insufficient teaching aids
	SIP, VEP, Municipality plan and DEP	Line committees were not involved in planning (SIP, VEP, etc)
	CPE awareness campaign	Only a few awareness campaigns

Note: dash (-) indicates no information.

The CPE program succeeded in bringing expected results in the Banepa Municipality within a short period of time. However, the overall evaluation of all the three

programs indicated that these programs failed to address the needs of various special needs children such as *Janajatis*, child workers, and the children of seasonally migrant families. Overall, the current practice of informal school fees, seasonal migration of families together with use of second language in learning and rise in the number of child workers stood as the most obvious barriers to CPE programs and activities. Likewise, the study finds these factors as pre-conditions for CPE: political commitment, strong individual leadership, strong data base, local level partnership, community-based organization, and school advocacy program for special need children.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents conclusions and recommendations based on the research findings presented in chapters IV and V. The conclusions of the study are grouped into following headings.

Conclusions

Initiation, Planning and Execution of the Programme

Case studies of the Banepa Compulsory Primary Education program and Ratnanagar compulsory Primary Education program pointed sharply to the importance of program prerequisites, individual leadership and commitment at local level (prior to program implementation). Having the same inputs from the Center, Banepa was highly successful while Rastnanagar could not even understand what the program was actually like and what it aimed at.

The role of community-based organizations, such as CLCs was important for the effective implementation of the program. It helped to develop a feeling of program ownership at the local level. The role of CLCs in literacy and CPE activities in the Banepa Compulsory Primary Education was commendable. However, in Ratnanagar CLCs were run not as community-based organizations but as reading halls.

A strong monitoring mechanism was essential for the success of the program. For example, Banepa first identified monitoring agents and defined their responsibilities. The agents visited program sites, carried out follow-up studies and attended meetings every Monday to catchup the program direction. All these activities benefited the program. However, such activities were not conducted in Chitwan.

Mechanism to Ensure Free and Compulsory Primary Education

Interactions with parents revealed that the perception about education had been changing since the mid-60s when the cases of parents hiding their children from motivators were plentiful. Now, parents had valued education and were eager to send their children to school. But a great majority of *Janajatis* and child workers had no access to school. The number of child workers was on the rise.

The difficulty in adjusting overage children to second-language teaching and seasonal migration of parents were two primary causes of dropout.

The present practice of charging high fees in some government schools had discouraged the enrolment of children of poor families. Parents were forced to admit their children to a cheaper school of an adjoining school catchment area to avoid having to evade expensive fees.

Decentralization and Sustainability of the Programme

SMCs, VECs and Municipality level education committees had been formed for local level planning. SIPs had been prepared and VEPs were in the process of preparation. But the SMC, VEC and Municipality level educational committees were not actively

involved in the planning and they considered plan as a compilation of some statistical facts rather than a dynamic program document based on school needs.

Quality of Education

In Chitwan, teachers felt that the school had no environment where they could use their training skills. They stated that the continuous assessment system had created exam phobia in the students. Besides, classes were overcrowded and teachers overloaded. However, such problems were not recorded in Banepa.

Local-level Partnership

In districts, the program partnership of local level had begun. For example, the Decentralized Action for Children and Women (DACAW) was working for quality education in both the districts. Save the Children/UK had been engaged in Kavrepalanchowk.

Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations as immediate support measures for mainstreaming various special needs children such as *Janajatis*, child workers and the children of seasonal migrant families. But for a long-term measure, there should be legal provisions to achieve FCPE.

Community based organizations should be mobilized to encourage the schooling of *Janajatis* and child workers and children of migrant families.

Special scholarship quota should be granted to areas where enrolment is still a problem.

It is imperative to develop mechanism for providing education in the mother tongue.

SMCs should be encouraged to waive school fees for poorer children.

Training, and orientation to line committees should be arranged to ensure their active participation in planning activities.

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Appendix

Table 1: Enrolment and class size, by grade, of six primary schools of Chitwan, 2003

Grade	Enrolment	Classes	Average class size
1	59+45+81+112+52+52 = 401	1+1+1+2+1+1= 7	57
2	47+52+72+68+49+45 = 333	1+1+1+1+1+1= 6	56
3	68+80+73+84+54+56 = 415	1+1+1+1+1+1= 6	69
4	60+103+147+57+50 = 417	1+2+2+1+1 = 7	60
5	68+60+118+91+39 = 376	1+ 2+2+2+1 = 8	47
Total	1942	34	57

Table 2: Enrolment and class size, by grade, of two primary schools of Banepa, 2003

Grade	Enrolment	Classes	Average class size
1	21+37 = 58	2	29
2	16+19 = 35	2	18
3	9+24 = 33	2	17
4	21+17 = 38	2	19
5	23+18 = 41	2	21
Total	205	10	21

Table 3: Student-teacher ratio and class-teacher ratio of six primary schools of Chitwan and two primary schools of Banepa, 2003

District	Student	Teacher	Classes	Student-teacher ratio	Class-teacher ratio
Banepa	205	11	10	18	.9
Chitwan	1942	35	34	55	.97

Table 4: Enrolment and dropout in Banepa, 2003

VDC/ Municipality	School	Total Enrolment	Disadvan- tagged	Total Dropout	Disadvantaged
Banepa	Ajaad Secondary School	90	13	3	3
	Chandeshori Bal Sadan	115	-	22	-

Table 5: Enrolment and dropout in Chitwan, 2003

VDC/ Municipality	School	Total Enrolment	Disadvantaged	Total Dropout	Disadvantaged
Ratnanagar Municipality	Bakular (L)	302	25	14	2
	Debauili (P)	340	9	6	2
	Total	642	34	20 (3.1%)	4 (11.8%)
Bachauli VDC	Malpur (L)	491	54	5	1
	Mainaha (P)	224	-	5	-
	Total	715	54	10(1.4%)	1 (1.8%)
Khairahani VDC	Magani (P)	432	24	1	-
	Saraswoti (P)	153	24	-	-
	Total	585	48	1(0.2%)	-

Note: Figures in parentheses show percentage. (L) means Lower Secondary and (P) means Primary School

Table 6: Annual tuition fee and annual examination fee (gradewise) of Banepa, 2003
(Fee in Rs.)

School	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee
Ajad Secondary school	160	90	160	105	160	105	160	150	160	150
Chandeswori Bal Bidhya Sadan Primary School	--	60	--	60	--	60	--	105	--	105

Note: In Chandeswory School, a minimum of RS 50 is charged. The school collects about Rs. 7000/- annually from the students.

Table 7: Annual tuition fee and annual examination fee (gradewise) of Chitwan, 2003
(Fees in Rs.)

School	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee	Annual Fee	Exam Fee
Bakulahar Low. Sec. School	120	30	140	45	160	60	180	90	200	105
Rastriya Primary School Debauili	25	30	25	45	25	60	50	75	50	90
Malpur low. Sec. School	-	-	200	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Rastriya primary School Magani	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	-	65
Rastriya Primary School Mainaha	-	15	-	30	-	45	-	60	-	75
Sarasoti Rastriya Primary School	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Sarasoti Rastriya Primary School also charges school fees. Last year, the school collected Rs. 3000 from students. Only Rastriya Primary School Magani, Khairahni charged no admission fee.