

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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Introduction to the case studies undertaken in 2007

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

Educational reform has been the main agenda of national development programs. For this, the Ministry of Education and Sports has implemented many policies and programs focused on extra roles and responsibilities regarding the system and structural provisions at the local implementation level. So this study mainly intends to explore the information gap between the central level and the implementation level. The Formative Research Project studies have found that the implementation level did not accept the central level guidelines because of the communication hiatus between the policy level and the implementation level. The main objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze institutional system and structural provisions for development of infrastructure

orientation, training, financing and staffing

2. To examine the system and provisions of communication stated in the EFA implementation strategy for the reform programs of the local level
3. To explore the existing mechanism and practices of reciprocity of feedback for program implementation.

The research design followed is empirical, descriptive and qualitative. Primary data have been collected from two schools each of Ilam, Nuwakot, Mustang, Jumla and Kanchanpur districts which represent the five development regions of the country. Information has been collected through observations, focus group discussions (FGDs), and interviews with the local agencies and program implementers.

Understanding School Autonomy: A Study on Enabling Conditions for School Effectiveness

Education development takes place with community initiatives where local people contribute their time and efforts for constructing school buildings, hiring teachers, and getting resources for the operation of the

schools. So local institutions must be granted autonomy for better school management so that they get operational freedom to function independently and make decisions without any central intervention. The

autonomy should include clarity in functional responsibilities, elimination of uncertainties in financing and independence from unwanted interventions by high level authorities in the day-to-day decision making.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out how and to what extent the major stakeholders have understood what school autonomy is
2. To discover the existing realities and contexts of school autonomy pertaining specifically to planning and decision making, and to school, teacher, curriculum and resource management
3. To find out what the schools have been doing to achieve functional autonomy
4. To determine the major roles and

responsibilities of the major stakeholders

5. To explore the effectiveness of the provisions of capacity building for giving autonomy.

Primary data and information have been collected from nine schools from Chitwan, Synagja, and Darchula districts. Research tools such as interview, observation and discussion have been used with DEO staff members, parents and teachers. Moreover, reviews of school documents and records have been conducted.

Basic Enabling Conditions for Quality School Education: A Study on the Successful Schools for Developing Norms and Standards for School Monitoring

Improving the quality of school education has become a matter of great concern. The EFA program has also focused on quality education. However, the term 'quality education' has not been defined precisely. So it means different things to different people. This study thus intends to find out the basic enabling conditions for quality education and to develop norms and standards for school monitoring. The main objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the perceptions of key stakeholders at policy and practice levels
2. To identify the basic requisites for quality education in terms of physical facilities, learning

materials, training, classroom operation and monitoring

3. To develop basic norms and standards for ensuring quality education
4. To suggest ways to achieving the norms and standards of quality education.

Primary data have been collected from three schools (in every district), two community schools and one institutional school. Basically, the research will be done in Illam/Morang, Kabhre, Kaski/Myagdi, Banke, Dadledhura districts. Research tools such as interview schedule, focus group discussion, school survey, and observation have been used.

Classroom Transformation for Better Conditions of Pedagogical Processes and Student-centered Learning

Child-centered education has been a vision for teaching-learning at the primary level of education in Nepal. Efforts have been made to render the classroom activities child-centered but

success has not yet been achieved. On the other hand, classroom transformation is necessary from students' and teachers' perspectives. This study mainly aims at identifying

the factors of changing the pedagogical process. It suggests that education-related agencies, community people and school management should actively participate in the transformation process. The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the successful cases of pedagogical processes adopted by various innovative programs
2. To find out the requirements for classroom transformation, i.e. making the teaching-learning child-friendly
3. To examine how and to what extent the local stakeholders have been involved in the transformation process.

Primary data have been collected from the schools or districts where programs to improve classroom teaching-learning has already been implemented by various agencies such as UNICEF, USAID, CDC, SC/Norway and COPE program of UNDP. Field work was conducted in 28 schools of 6 districts namely Kapilvastu, Kabhre, Morang, Nuwakot, Rasuwa and Sunsari.

Rights-based Education and Structural Reforms in Basic and Primary Education: A Study on Institutional Needs and Community Readiness

Rights-based approach to education is a conceptual, analytical and methodological framework for identifying, planning, implementing and monitoring development activities based on international human rights standards. Nepal has made a commitment to achieve the goals of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals that ensure for all children access to primary

education. The main aim of this study is to explore both legal and structural adjustment programs required for ensuring quality primary education by 2015. In other words, all children, children in difficult circumstances and children belonging to ethnic minorities must have access to complete, free and compulsory quality education. The main objectives of this study are:

1. To identify preconditions for rights-based education

2. To assess the situation of the country in terms of the preconditions
3. To find out proper ways to ensure expanded access to basic education
4. To recommend policy strategy and programs needed to achieve changes in the existing situations.

Primary data have been collected from three schools of five districts

representing the Mountains, Tarai and Hills and Kathmandu Valley. Research tools such as observations, questionnaire sheets and focus group discussions have been used. The tools were used to collect information from the members of School Management Committees, teachers, parents and guardians and school students in each district.

Institutional Scope and Need of Mainstream Education in Madrasas and Its Autonomy

Madrasas are socially recognized but they are isolated from modern educational development. The Madrasas were doing well with Islamic education but they have not been capable in the mainstream subjects like Nepali, English, Mathematics and Science. Nevertheless, they are looking for full support of the government for reorganization of the curriculum and administration, and they even expect financial support. However they are opposed to any type of external intervention which may harm hamper

the religious teaching and cultural identity. Thus, this study is intended to explore the ways to obtaining guarantee of autonomy for the Madrasas during their registration as formal schools. The main objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the perceptions of Madrasa organizers about the autonomy
2. To assess their views regarding the government provisions to register Madrasas as formal schools

3. To assess the capability of Madrasas to accommodate mainstream subjects.

Two Madrasas each from Rauthat, Banke and Kapilbastu district have been selected for collecting primary data. Research tools such as observations, interviews, and focus group discussions have been conducted with Madrasa headteachers, management committee members and other stakeholders.

Education in Gumbas, Vihars and Gurukuls in Nepal: Linking with Mainstream Education

Gumbas, Vihars and Gurukuls have been places of traditional teaching and learning in Nepal. Gumbas and Vihars refer to monasteries. Gurukul is an education system in which learners get education in full guidance of the Guru or Teacher in his house. In one sense, all the religious institutes including Gumbas and Vihars are Gurukuls. After the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, the increase in the number of the followers of Buddhism led to an increase of Buddhist institutions. In Nepal, Gumbas and Vihars educate the learners in Buddhist philosophy

through activities such as preaching, worships and classes. The main objective of the Gumba teaching is to help the learner achieve Nirvana, i. e. release from suffering, desire and sense of self. Some monasteries are also providing skills education. Formal education is also provided. Hence, formal courses are integrated into the religious education curriculum. In fact, these institutions have been providing spiritual, cultural and formal education in places where access to school is difficult. Basically, this study intends to examine how formal education is being provided in the

Gumbas, Vihars and Gurukuls of Nepal and how this education can be linked with the mainstream education. The main objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the types of educational programs conducted in Gumbas and Vihars
2. To identify the contents of the Gumba and Vihar curricula and analyze their relationship with formal education curriculum
3. To examine in what way the educational program is organized in Gumba, Vihar and Gurukul

4. To underline the contributions made by the Gumbas and Vihars to extending educational services
5. To explore the possibilities of and challenges in mobilizing the Gumbas, Vihars and Gurukuls towards mainstream education.

This study followed the qualitative

method. Separate case studies were developed. The study used both primary data and secondary data. The Gumbas, Vihars and Gurukul were selected after consultations with the officials at the Department of Education, Department of Buddhist Studies (Tribhuvan University), and people involved in Buddhist and

Hindu religion and education. The research tools such as interviews and observation forms were used to collect data and information from monks, nuns, administrators, management committee members, and local people. The field study was conducted in Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Mustang districts.

Organization of Meetings and Workshops

Organization of FRAG Meetings

Two Formative Research Advisory Group (FRAG) meetings were held. The meeting held on February 18, 2007 reviewed the research proposals for the current year. The FRAG members provided valuable suggestions for improving the proposals. The other meeting held

on June 21, 2007 reviewed the progress of project activities. The meeting was also attended by Prof. Kristin Tornes, Norwegian Consultant to FRP. In the meeting Prof. Tornes presented her experiences of undertaking FRP in

Norway and Nepal. She also presented her views on important roles the FRAG is expected to play in FRP, especially in finalizing action steps based on the research studies. Dr. Ishwar Prasad Upadhyaya chaired both the meetings.

Organization of FRP Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Formative Research for EFA was held between Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) Nepal and Ministry of Education and Research (MOER) Norway on June 1, 2007. The meeting was attended by, Mr Arjun Bahadur Bhandari, Joint Secretary, Mr Diwakar Dhungel, Under Secretary and Dr Lawa Awasthi,

Under Secretary from MOES, and Mr Halfdan Farstad, Senior Adviser from MOER Norway, and Prof. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Executive Director of CERID and Dr Kishor Shrestha, FRP Coordinator. The meeting was also attended by Ms Elin Gjedrem and Ms Kamala Bisht from the Norwegian Embassy,

Ms Marit Vedeld from Norad and Mr Surya Bahandur Mulmi from CERID as observers. The meeting reviewed the progress of the project activities and passed the program activities and budget for the fiscal year 2007-08. The meeting was held at the Ministry of Education and Sports, Keshar Mahal, Kathmandu.

Regional Dissemination Seminars

Two-day long dissemination seminars (with workshops) were organized in Surkhet (Mid-western Region),

Makawanpur (Central Region), Kalilali (Far Western Region), Rupandehi (Western Region and Jhapa (Eastern

Region). A list of the dates, venues and participating districts are given in the following table.

Date	Venue	Participating Districts
April 26-27	Surkhet	Surkhet, Pyuthan, Jumla and Dailekh
May 6-7	Makawanpur	Makawanpur, Bhaktapur, Dhading and Parsa
May 17-18	Kailali	Kailali, Kanchanpur, Doti and Baitadi
June 13-14	Rupandehi	Rupandehi, Arghakhanchi, Palpa and Tanahun
June 25-26	Jhapa	Jhapa, Taplejung, Sunsari and Terhathum



In the seminars the major findings and recommendations of the research studies of the year 2006 were presented, reviewed and discussed. In the later part of the workshop key questions were identified by the participants through group work.

The programs were jointly organized by CERID researchers and the officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Department of Education.

The seminar participants included Regional Educational Directors, District Education Officers, Section Officers, School Supervisors, Resource Persons and Account Officers from REDs and DEOs.

Representatives of District Development Committees, Municipalities, Village Development Committees, Teacher Unions, Indigenous and Janjati Unions, Dalit Unions, Women and Mother Groups, NGOs, INGOs, Local Journalists, District Education Committees, Civil Societies, Trainers of Educational Training Centers, Chairpersons of School Management Committees, members of Parent-Teacher Associations, Head Teachers, Teachers and Female Teachers, and representatives of Political Parties and Education Campuses also participated in the seminars. About 50 people took part in each seminar.

Visits to and from Norway

Dr. Roshan Chitrakar, researcher from CERID, who is leading the SIS Longitudinal Study team, paid a visit to Norway from March 20 to 30, 2007. During his visit Dr. Chitrakar visited Statistics Norway, NIFU-Step, Akershus University College, University of Oslo, Udir and MOER. His visit was found fruitful in sharing the FRP SIS study findings and in learning how similar studies are being undertaken in Norway.

Mr. Halfdan Farstad, Senior Advisor of MOER, visited Nepal in connection with FRP from May 23–June 6, 2007. During his visit Mr. Farstad had a series of working meetings with officials from MOES,

Workshop on Capacity Building



Scheme developed in Year 1 and Year 2 of FRP for EFA 2004-09 and discussed and identified four specific issues for the next round of capacity development activities. The issues are: (1) Thematic arrangements, (2) Educational information/communication, (3) Monitoring and finance

reporting, and (4) Coordination with stakeholders. The officials involved in the capacity building activities were grouped for each of the issues. The group then prepared action plans for each issue.

Under the capacity building activities a two-day workshop on Communication Strategies was conducted on June 2-3, 2007. The workshop was attended by 24 persons from MOES, DOE and CERID including Secretary of MOES Mr. Balananda Poudel, Senior Advisor of MOER, Norway Mr. Halfdan Farstad, and Executive Director of CERID Prof. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya,. In the workshop seven thematic groups involved in capacity building activities presented their progress reports. The participants then reviewed the Capacity Building



Executive Director of CERID and FRP Coordinator. He was involved in reviewing the progress of the FRP activities. He also participated in the annual meeting held at the MOES, Keshar Mahal on June 1, 2007. He also participated in the EFA Donors' Annual Meeting held from May 29 to 31, 2007. Mr Halfdan facilitated some of the sessions on capacity building workshop held at Dhulikhel on June 2 and 3, 2007. He also visited a sample school in Kabhre district included in the FRP study.

Prof. Kristin Tornes visited Nepal from June 14 to 22, 2007. During her visit she spent most of her time in reviewing the draft research reports prepared by the FRP researchers. Prof. Tornes had a series of meetings with the

researchers, individually as well as in group. During her visit she had a series of discussions with the

Executive Director of CERID and Coordinator of FRP. She also reviewed the progress of the project

activities and discussed the upcoming anthology on FRP. She also met MOES and DOE officials and FRAG members.

Study Visit to Asian Institutions

Researchers and MOES Officials Visit to India

A visit to various educational institutions in Mumbai, India was made by CERID researchers/officials and MOES officials from March 18 to 25. The team included Prof. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Dr. Kishor Shrestha and Ms. Rekha K. C. from CERID and Mr. Diwakar Dhungel and Mr. Geh Nath Gautam from MOES. The team visited SNDT Women' University, Don Bosco



Apostolic School, KID Zee, DAV (Dayananda Anglo Vedic) school, Dayananda Institute of Education Management and Research, VIBGYOR KIDS, Podar Happy Kids, and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The visit was found highly beneficial in terms of gaining knowledge of various innovative initiatives being undertaken by private and public educational institutions in India.

FRP Support Staffs' Visit to Sri Lanka

A group of CERID staff supporting the execution of FRP activities visited Sri Lanka from June 3 to 10, 2007. The team included a total of 6 persons. Prof. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Executive Director of CERID, led the visiting team. The team visited the National Institute of Education, the Faculty of Education, Colombo University and Sarvodaya Shramadana Society, a non-governmental organization in Sri Lanka. The visiting team had an opportunity to learn Sri Lanka's experiences in undertaking a Longitudinal Study, which was

being undertaken by the National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka. The visit had also provided opportunity to get exposure to various educational researches being



undertaken by the Faculty of Education, Colombo University and helped to develop an institutional linkage between the Faculty of Education, Colombo University and CERID. In Sarvodaya the team visited various projects being undertaken in Sri Lanka. Sarvodaya's involvement in early childhood development services, special education for disable children, women's education, literacy and vocational training programs were highly encouraging and good learning experiences for the visiting team.



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