



Fact Sheet

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An update on events, facts and figures about non-formal education in Nepal

Background

Literacy and non-formal education are categorically mentioned in no. 3 of the Dakar Goals. The Education for All (EFA) document has referred to non-formal education as an instrument to bring out-of-school children to formal school and provide literacy opportunities to educationally deprived youths and adults.

The budget for the fiscal year 2063/064 mentions various programs like Child Education First, Child Education Second, Alternative Education, Non-formal Primary Education Program for the out of school children, which were implemented in the past and are being continued to this day. Under the EFA program several activities such as ECD, ensuring access for all, meeting the learning needs of all, reduction of illiteracy, elimination of gender discrimination, improvements in all aspects of quality have been carried out. With a view to providing opportunities of basic and primary education to all out-of-school children, Alternative School Program and Flexible Schooling Program were implemented in 66 districts in FY 2005/06. Intensive Literacy Program is on-going in 15 districts in the current FY 2005/06 in areas and districts where literacy is gradually improving. In this FY 600 Village Education Plans (VEPs) - in 30 districts - have been prepared and 119 Community Learning Centres (CLCs) have been established.

However, there is yet the lack of a concrete model to address the needs of the grassroots level. CLC seems viable to be a means to meet the development needs, particularly in the context of economic poverty and educational deprivation.

Community Learning Centres: An Assessment

United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), which commenced in 2003, has

emphasized the need for widespread operation of CLCs by increasing their number through community participation. The EFA Plan of Action has looked at CLC as one of the major delivery mechanisms of human development activities including basic and continuing education. APPEAL's recent initiative to involve some of the CLC project countries in undertaking a study to assess the existing dynamics of CLCs and to suggest strategies for toning up their efficiency in the future is a matter of expediency at this stage of project implementation.

Essentially, the focus of the study *CLC: A Project Assessment* (CERID, 2005) covers programs/activities, management, policy linkages, outcomes and impacts. In Nepal, around 201 CLCs are coming into existence under the initiative of the Government, NGOs and UNESCO Country Office.

The Tenth Development Plan and Education for All: Core Document (2004-09) are the two documents which enunciate the government's policy regarding non-formal education and CLCs as alternative strategies for the expansion of learning opportunities for empowerment. The Local Self-Governance Act (2055) and the amended Education Act (2049) support the concept of community organizations like CLCs. According to the Tenth Plan, CLCs will be established in each of the 205 constituencies of the country - especially for dalits, women, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups in the hamlets and areas with very low literacy rates.

Suggested Strategies

To develop CLC as a community-owned model in a prompt way, the following strategies are suggested:

- Currently, envisioning CLC as a potential development arm of VDC is

lacking. So link CLC to VDC which is a sustainable local body. CLC can run better with the support of VDC. The prospect for financial support to CLCs from VDC should be explored, broadly.

- There is a lack of accountable organization at all levels - central, district and local. A national-level coordination committee comprising the civil society, NGOs, I-NGOs, academic institutions/academicians, and development ministries of the government is now a felt need. The committee can catch up with the existing reality, predict the future course in tune with the emerging international trends, and formulate relevant CLC policies. It can also help to generate functional coordination even of grass-roots level organization. CLC can turn up as an implementing agent for all line ministries.
- Decentralized delivery mechanism is necessary to take CLC ahead. It needs to have a legal base. A clear-cut national policy on government financial commitment, consolidation of the CLC structure, and formulation of a legal based for CLC is to be developed. Inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination is to be sought. Some amendment to the existing Education Act and Regulations is essential for.
- There is no policy regarding equivalence and accreditation of CLC program completers. There should therefore be a provision to enroll CLC completers in the formal education system.
- Model centres should be started on an experimental basis. The model centre should proceed with a vision that helps CLC replication in other places.
- To accelerate CLC initiatives, budgetary provisions should be

linked up with development ministries and development agencies.

- Table talks, seminars, interactions, dialogue sessions, orientations, media projections should be frequently conducted for all levels (grassroots to central) to drive home the concept of CLC.
- Structure, management framework, need-based empowering programs, learner-centered methods, avenues for establishing linkages, networks with various development partners, stress on the role of the people in the entire CLC operation should be insisted on.
- Needs assessment is to be done in the local context. CLC personnel

should be capacitated for conducting the needs assessment independently.

- Monitoring from a distance is far from enough. An effective mechanism with all accessories and tools be developed for system-based methods and identification of indicators. Participatory approaches such as inter-CLC monitoring, group reflection, inter-CLC sharing and exchange, and joint team be adopted.
- CLC should operate, using community perception, insight and skills - in an interactive way.
- For achievement, capacity building of the concerned personnel including the facilitators is vital.

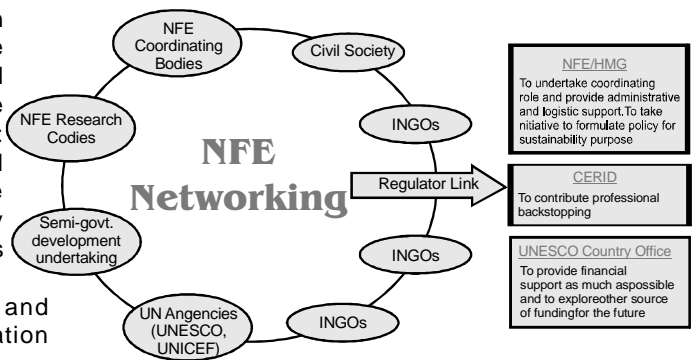
- Government's commitment to operate CLC is a felt need. Similarly, the need is to cultivate operation modalities, as per the local context, that can generate resources in a continued manner.
- Stakeholders' involvement in the task of designing is very essential for free flow of ideas and management of activities - grassroots level to central level.
- Establishment of functional relationship with various community development partners with regard to resources, skills and ideas in the location.

NFE Networking

A perspective plan of literacy reflecting on EFA literacy UNLD (United Nations Literacy Decade) goal priorities and perspectives has been developed. For this, it is essential to forge a network involving I/NGOs, development ministries of the government, UN Agencies and the civil society. Meanwhile, a technical committee has been formed consisting of representatives from NFEC/HMG, CERID, UNESCO NGOs and I/NGOs. With the objective of activating the network a day-long national workshop in Kathmandu and regional workshops on Building a Sustainable Literacy and Non-formal Education Network were organized in Banke and Morang. The specific objective was to mobilize the potential network partners to generate ideas for the development of a perspective on NFE

literacy which can contribute to attaining the EFA literacy goals, emphases, priorities and targets.

In this connection four themes were developed and discussed. These themes were: Concept and Structure of the Network, Capacity Building, Functions of the Networking, and Resource Mobilization and Sustainability.



A diagrammatic modality for the regulation of the NFE networks was recommended. The modality is presented below.

Some Reflections

Existing situation and potentialities	Challenges	Suggestions
<p>NFE is part of I/NGO efforts not their preference</p> <p>Enough human resource</p> <p>Need for a collective attitude</p> <p>Infrastructural development for capacity building and program continuity</p> <p>Smaller local NGOs are working in coordination with GOs, INGOs and other national level NGOs in terms of agreement, description and responsibility</p> <p>INGOs have their own policies and strategies. But interaction among GOs, I/NGOs is lacking</p>	<p>Local NGOs hesitate to take up the responsibilities and establish credibility of the networking because of financial constraints</p> <p>Newly set up NGOs have no opportunities for capacity building</p> <p>Duplication in the target groups for lack of dissemination of information about the program</p> <p>Lack of transparency in resources and information</p>	<p>Discussion among stakeholders prior to the formation of networking</p> <p>Strengthenment of collective ownership of stakeholders</p> <p>Program transparency, coordination and communication among organization</p> <p>Flexibility and elaborative process for program continuity</p> <p>Proportionate representation of GOs, I/NGOs and Civil Society in the networking</p> <p>Economic resource for networking management.</p> <p>NFE should not be dependent on donors for resources. It should raise local resources</p> <p>A certain percent should be separated for networking in the plan/proposal</p> <p>Shared leadership in networking</p> <p>Research/action research, review, monitoring/evaluation and flow of information should be organized to revitalize the networking process</p>

<p>DEO only provides a quota of NFE programs</p> <p>No appropriate documentation of illiterates in the districts</p> <p>National level I/NGOs have their own networking (between organizations) to meet their objectives</p> <p>Government policy helps to bring uniformity in matters of information and coordination</p> <p>Lack of coordination among central level organizations</p>	<p>No common interest among organizations</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>NGOs prepare their plans/proposals in the interest of donors</p> <p>Lack of NFE-based organizations</p> <p>Fund for network operation</p> <p>Lengthy and round- about decision process</p>	<p>VDCs should be activated in the networking for database</p> <p>Networking should be participatory, responsible and transparent</p> <p>Capacity building of the networking personnel.</p> <p>DEO is to be accountable and responsible regarding the NFE networking. It should play the major role and mobilize NFE NGOs to meet the EFA goal</p> <p>The networking should have its own basket-fund. Similarly, donors// NGOs/GO line agencies should allocate some funds for NFE networking from the NFE program/activities</p> <p>The networking should have a legal identity and be autonomous. Guidelines should be made through the participation of the stakeholders, for effective operation. There should be participatory monitoring and evaluation through networking. For this, DEO should take the initiative</p> <p>Network partners should be capable enough for proposal writing, social mobilization, activity implementation and reporting as well as leadership development, management and accounting</p>
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Access to Disadvantaged Children to Education

CERID has conducted a study, titled *Access of Disadvantaged Children to Education*, under the Formative Research Project (FRP). The study focuses on the issues and challenges underlined in the EFA Core Document and the present action-based activities of the government. It dwells on indigenous groups such as Musahars from Bara, Tamangs from Rasuwa and Danuwar from Kavre. The main objective of the study is to examine the access status of educationally deprived children in the country and to analyze the social, economic, cultural and political problems related to access.

Suggestions drawn from the study are as follows:

- Establish (after piloting), temporary community schools or outreach programs (on local initiatives) for the Musahars.
- Provide mobile teachers for the children of seasonal migrants.
- Provide teaching jobs to local dalits, females and the disadvantaged
- Appoint female motivators to articulate the community and the school.
- Introduce the play-way method to bring out-of-children to school. This method should also be introduced into the curriculum.
- The word 'disadvantaged' should be used for dalits and non-dalits. This will help delete the feeling of social oppressedness from Dalits' minds.
- Provide leadership orientation to Danuwar and Musahar parents.

Meeting the Learning Needs of Children of Indigenous Peoples and Linguistic Minorities

CERID has conducted a study *Meeting the Learning Needs of Children of Indigenous Peoples and Linguistic Minorities* under FRP. The scope of the study is delimited to a situational analysis, for instance, of curriculum, mother tongue as the medium of instruction and classroom process. The study concentrates on indigenous people and linguistic minority groups in the schools – Botes in Chitwan, Tamangs in Rasuwa, and Santhals in Morang.

The study comes up with the following suggestions:

- Employ mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Launch a parental awareness campaign in this respect.
- Give emphasis to behavioral change rather than to knowledge accumulation for life skill education.
- Introduce the inclusive approach into the local curriculum and adopt the frontline approach.
- Make primary education child-centered.

Situation Analysis of SOP and FSP in Dhading and Siraha Districts

The current Alternative Schooling Program (ASP) is a renewed commitment of the government to provide equitable access to out-of-school children, particularly to those from the disadvantaged communities. ASP consists of two programs: School Outreach Program (SOP) exclusive to children aged 6–8 years living in hamlets and isolated areas and Flexible

Schooling Program (FSP) meant for children of 8–14 who could not joint school for various reasons. This study is therefore an attempt to analyze the situation of the ASP programs implemented in Dhading and Siraha districts with focus on SOP and FSP modalities.

The study was undertaken to identify the situation of SOP and FSP graduates, analyze the factors that helped the children to remain in the school or led them to drop out, and recommend measures to improve the content and quality the SOP and FSP programs.

The study has drawn the following conclusions:

- The materials prepared for the SOP and FSP programs address the needs of the target children of SOP and FSP. According to the study, the overage enrolment in the SOP and FSP programs prevails visibly. In this context, the existing materials need to be reviewed to specifically address the learning needs of the children of diverse age groups.
- The presence of female teachers in the schools and facilitators in the SOP and FSP centres has increased the enrolment of girls, especially of girls from disadvantaged communities. (Therefore, recruitment of female teachers from the disadvantaged community can be recommended).
- The enrolment rate of children in the SOP and FSP programs in Siraha is very high. In some communities the enrolment in these programs has been increasing every year. This indicates that more SOP and FSP centres need to be opened in the communities where the number of children is likely to increase every year.

- There is often a debate on whether or not SOP and FSP should be permanent. Therefore, the SOP program has to be redefined; it is to be treated as an alternative form of the formal school (in places where SOP enrolment is almost regular every year, e.g. Siraha).
- According to the present SOP and FSP provision children need to complete a three years' cycle to qualify for the formal school. Thus, some children who are over-age and have completed the course in a

shorter period of time have to wait until the cycle completion time. Should everyone wait until the cycle is complete or should an alternative arrangement be made for those children who complete the course before time and are over-age? This is one of the questions that NFEC needs to address.

- In the present SOP and FSP mechanism, there is no student-tracking system. In order to assess the effectiveness of the program, the

tracking system needs to be introduced through the mother schools. (See the report 'Situation Analysis of SOP and FSP in Dhading and Siraha District' TESON, Kathmandu, for details).

We hope our efforts will draw attention of all concerned for a critical reflection. We request our readers to share with us ideas and feelings regarding this publication so that we could make it more contributive. ■

Emancipation from Impoverishment through Professional Partnership

CERID Motto

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