

NEWSLETTER

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ANTRIEP Activities

The first issue of the ANTRIEP Newsletter received a warm welcome. We are encouraged by the positive response and are grateful to all those who showed active interest in the Newsletter.

This issue focuses on planning and management of Primary Education. We had requested the member institutions to send a brief write-up on the efforts towards decentralization in their own countries.

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We received responses from many of our member institutions. The notes sent by these institutions are edited and incorporated in this issue of the Newsletter. We express our gratitude to all the member institutions for their contribution to this issue.

Two institutions expressed their eagerness to be members of the ANTRIEP. We are happy to inform that these two institutions - South - East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SAMEO INNOTECH), Quezon City, Philippines and centre for Multi Disciplinary Development Research (CMDR) Dharwad, India- have joined the ANTRIEP family. We take this opportunity to welcome the new members. This issue also includes an item carrying a brief introduction to these two institutions.

The Second Annual Meeting of the ANTRIEP will be held at Seoul, South Korea in April 1997. This meeting will be hosted by our member institution Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI). This issue also carries a boxed item containing announcement of the Second Annual Meeting of ANTRIEP. More details on the Annual Meeting will be available from IIEP, Paris.

We would like to thank all member institutions for their active interest and participation in ANTRIEP activities and contribution to this issue.

Decentralization of Planning and Management in Primary Education in South-Asia

Decentralizing educational planning and management has been one of the major reform measures adopted in the South-Asian region to achieve universal primary education and to improve its quality. In this regard, the IIEP implemented a project between 1994 and 1996 with the assistance of several institutions who are presently members of ANTRIEP, focussing on decentralized management of primary education in South-Asia.

As part of this project, a review of existing policies and practices for strengthening decentralized planning and management of primary education programmes was undertaken in five countries: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with a stress on training needs at national, provincial and local levels for effective implementation of decentralization strategies. In each country, a national team was set up consisting of senior-level managers in-charge of basic education and specialists from the national training institutions involved in the programme. In addition, a discussion paper was prepared by IIEP incorporating a comparative analysis of the status of decentralization in the five countries.

The results of these studies were discussed at a seminar in Kathmandu in December 1994. The workshop also served as a launching pad for preparing draft operational projects in the area of capacity-building for decentralized planning and management. On the same occasion, the idea was mooted by the heads of the institutions which had been involved in the project to launch the ANTRIEP network.

The IIEP has now published a volume, containing

various case-studies undertaken within the framework of the project and a comparative analysis of the South-Asian experiences in decentralized management of education (R. Govinda, *The Decentralization of Educational Management, Experience from South-Asia*, IIEP/UNESCO, Paris). Without doing injustice to the scope of the study, we attempt to summarize here some of its salient points.

Decentralisation Policies

Decentralization efforts in one form or the other were initiated a long time ago. In Sri Lanka decentralization efforts began in the 1960s. It has consistently and systematically moved from decentralization to delegation of powers, to decentralization of planning and management of primary education to divisional levels. The efforts in India were also initiated in the sixties but they gained momentum only in the eighties. The National Policy on Education (1986) and the subsequent development plans emphasised the need for decentralization of education. Such efforts are supported by the required constitutional amendments and legislative measures. The former empower local-level bodies to initiate the development and implementation of local level educational plans.

The Educational Policy of Pakistan adopted in 1992 recommended delegation of powers to the district level and advocated the creation of School Managing Committees. The Primary Education Act of 1981 in Bangladesh proposed to set up local education authorities and School Managing Committees in order to ensure participation of local communities. Another attempt was made in 1982 to decentralize education through the Upazilla System.

Further, in 1980 the government proposed to establish School Managing Committees and Parent Teacher Associations in all schools. According to the Education Act and Education Regulations (1992) of Nepal, the District Education Officer has the power to open or close down primary schools, to appoint/transfer or even dismiss a primary school teacher. All these Acts and regulations in these countries show the emergence of an environment in which steps may be initiated to facilitate decentralization of planning and management of primary education.

One of the major focuses of efforts towards decentralization of planning and management of primary education in these countries is on promoting participation of local communities in decision-making process. The institutional mechanisms envisaged for this purpose, no doubt, vary among countries of the region. The School Development Board in Sri Lanka, School Managing Committees in Bangladesh and Nepal and Village Education Committees and Parent Teacher Associations in India are examples of such mechanisms to facilitate participation in decision-making.

Some Lessons Learnt

The rationale for decentralizing educational management has changed over time and is in many countries composed of different factors. While the issue of decentralization entered the political debate as part of the liberation ideology, in the post-independence atmosphere it re-emerges now as a management solution to improve the efficiency of the education system. There is also a link with the issue of financing primary education, which is mostly funded by the Government in all countries of this region. As financial constraints affect the funding of education, Governments are seeking alternative sources of funding. Local mobilization of resources and the promotion of private sector in education have thus become more common.

In some countries, the role played by outside agencies in promoting decentralization is worth mentioning. Many of the countries in this region have, indeed, major externally funded projects in primary education. The General Education Project (GEP) of Bangladesh, the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) of Nepal, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) of India are examples of such projects in this region. These projects work increasingly with lower levels of the educational administration and include capacity-building at regional and local levels in their objectives.

A close look at decentralization efforts in the region shows that enabling conditions are created and decentralization processes are initiated in almost all countries. However, the capacity-building efforts even now continue to be centralized. Unless conducive conditions are accompanied by local-level capacity-building, decentralization efforts may not be sustained in the long run. Therefore, countries in this region may have to provide local-level capacity-building. The networking of institutions within each country and within the region should help strengthen training capacities at all levels.

Two points are worth stressing. Firstly, there does not exist any ideal decentralization scenario. What is appropriate and feasible in one country or one region, is not necessarily so in another. Secondly, political commitment is indispensable. But even when such commitment is present, changes will still take a long time to take deep roots. This is intrinsic to education. However, if the process initiated in the region continues without setbacks, there is a strong hope that it will contribute to improving the quality and efficiency of education.

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Recent Trends in Decentralization of Planning of Primary Education in India

India has one of the largest networks of primary schools in the world. The primary education system in India consists of 577 thousand schools, nearly 108 million children and 1.8 million teachers. At present, nearly 95 per cent of the rural areas have access to primary education within a walking distance of one kilometre. The system continues to expand since a large number of children still remain un-enrolled. Planning and managing such a large and expanding system remains challenging.

India has adopted planning within a mixed economy framework as the basic strategy for its economic and social development. Under the framework, the public sector plays a dominant role in directing the pattern of development and private sector operates within the confines of the public policy. Nearly 93 per cent of the primary schools are financed and managed by the government.

India has a multi-level planning framework. Planning in India is initiated and carried out at the national, state and district levels. Planning activities at the national level are initiated by the Planning Commission. Planning Boards carry out planning activities at the state level. The recent efforts of decentralization focus on planning at the district level. Therefore, at present decentralized planning in education is synonymous with district level planning. Constitutional amendments and legislative measures are adopted in the recent past to facilitate planning at the district level.

There does not exist well developed mechanisms or arrangements to carry out planning at the district level. The decentralization efforts in education in India, therefore, focus on (i) creating institutional arrangements for developing educational plans at the district levels, (ii) developing planning compe-

tencies at the district level; and (iii) provision of resources at the disposal of district level authorities. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is one of the most recent efforts to decentralize educational planning efforts in India.

The DPEP is a programme sponsored by the Government of India with funding support from various external agencies. The bases for selection of the districts under this programme are (i) educationally backward districts identified in terms of female literacy rates lower than the national average; and (ii) districts which have successfully completed Total Literacy Campaigns where demand for primary education has increased. At present this programme is being implemented in about 64 districts in the country.

The DPEP is an exercise on decentralized planning and disaggregated target setting to promote local initiatives and to facilitate participatory process in educational planning. Under this programme, the plans are prepared by the people at the local level. State and national level institutions and governments provide professional support and guidance to prepare the plans. Some of the following features of the programme are very helpful to promote local initiatives and participatory process of planning:

- (i) an assurance of financial resources after appraisal of plans for its quality, technical rigour and local specificity;
- (ii) each school is assured of Rs.2,000 per annum to equip the school better;
- (iii) each teacher is assured of an amount of Rs.500 per annum to develop local specific teach-

ing-learning materials,

(iv) school management is local-based through Parent Teacher Associations and Village Education Committees;

(v) focus on education of girls and deprived groups;

(vi) civil works component is restricted to 24 per cent of the allocation to the district.

The plans were prepared at the district level based on the guidelines which provide enough scope for flexibility and local initiatives. At each stage of preparation of the plans, professional support, if

needed, is provided by the resource institutions. In any case, the plans prepared at the district level are closely scrutinized and appraised for their internal consistency, local specificity and feasibility before funds are released. Normally these plans are prepared for a period of 6-7 years with a provision for annual plans which gives scope for revision of the plans during the process of implementation. India's experience of the previous three years in developing district plans shows that the local level capacities, if properly oriented and professionally supported, are sufficient enough to prepare decentralized educational plans.

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Decentralization of Planning and Management of Primary Education in Korea

Decentralization of Educational Administration and Local Educational Autonomy

The organizations responsible for educational administration in Korea comprise of three layers of administrative authority, namely the Ministry of Education at the national level, district offices of education at the regional level, and those at the county level.

The Ministry of Education is the central authority of educational administration. It makes policies with regard to education at the national level, assimilates and adjusts educational policy measures in cooperation with other Ministries, takes action for implementation of educational policies and guides regional educational bodies.

An office of education, the core unit of the autonomous educational system, has been established in

each municipality and province to guarantee independence and individuality of regional education. As of 1996, fifteen municipal and provincial offices and 175 district (county) offices of education have been established and are in operation.

To realize the ideal of local educational autonomy, a municipal or provincial office of education has a superintendent as an executive body and the board of education as a decision-making body, which makes major decisions on important educational matters.

The superintendent is involved in the following matters:

(i) making regulations; (ii) budget planning; (iii) making account reports; (iv) making educational rules; (v) establishment of schools, moving and closing schools; (vi) management of school curriculum; (vii) fostering science and technical education, social education, physical education, health education and environmental education; (viii) acquisition and disposal of assets; (ix) financing related commissions,

management fee. etc.; (x) personnel management of civil officers.

As the local educational authority, the county offices of education are responsible for advising and guiding everyday primary school management. Superintendent represents executive body of county office of education.

The Superintendent is involved in the following matters: (i) Public kindergarten, public primary and middle school teacher employment. Dismissal of public schools including kindergarten, primary and middle school, technical school, civic school and higher civic school; (ii) termination and recruitment of Vice Principal and teachers; (iii) in-service training of teachers; (iv) supervision of private kindergartens, primary and middle schools; (v) establishment of social education institutes; (vi) supervision of various non-profit oriented organizations; (vii) establishment and abolition of kindergartens, civic schools and higher civic schools; (viii) Establishment of school-based management of primary school.

School Management Committee

From the beginning of 1996 a "School Management Committee" has been operated in every national or

public primary and secondary school to guarantee autonomy of school management, and to maximize the community participation in the school management. The committee consists of 7-15 members, of which 40-50 per cent are parents, 30-40 per cent are school staff including the principal and 10-30 per cent are community members. Representatives of parents and teachers are recommended to be selected by direct election by their groups. Community representatives are recommended by the President, representatives of the parents and teachers. The term of the representatives is one year and could be renewed.

The School Management Committee deliberates on management matters such as financial issues including school budget, improvement of curriculum, management of extra-curricular activities, cooperative activities between school and community, students welfare etc. The committee also advises the school principal on matters related to everyday operation.

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in 1995-96. Literacy rate for urban and rural areas is 58.3 and 28.3 per cent respectively. The number of primary schools in 1995-96, including mosque schools, are 1,15,744 with an enrolment of 11.5 million. Thus enrolment in these institutions improved by 1.3 per cent at the primary level.

Policy Initiatives

In order to improve efficiency of the school system, school education will be decentralized to district levels. Efficiency of the system will be improved through motivation and better supervision with the involvement of local community who will also be made responsible for maintenance of school buildings. Efforts are underway for reforming the curriculum and courses to make them demand-oriented. Side by side evening shifts are being introduced in the existing school buildings for imparting income-generating skills in trade schools. With the decentralization of the school education to the district level and participation of the local community as well as local bodies in provision, maintenance of educational facilities and supervision of educational institutions, there should be a qualitative change. In order to achieve Universalization of Primary Education (UPE), the motivational and supervisory role of the local community will be made corner-stone, specially for increasing the participation rate of girls and reducing the drop-out rate. The ratio of number of schools to supervisors will be reduced from the existing level of about 1:50 to 1:15. The teachers will be motivated through various incentives including national awards for outstanding performance. Management training will be mandatory for all administrators of education from secondary school to higher education level through the Academy of Educational Planning and Management. The AEPAM will be further strengthened to enable it to expand its training programmes and extend them to the provinces.

In order to remove the imbalance of male-female enrolment ratio and improve female education, innovative approaches both in the formal and non-formal sectors have been made. Efforts are being made for increasing the educational access to females in general and vocational education facilities in particular. Prime Minister's Literacy Commission is establishing 100 centres for rural families. Social Action Programme (1993-

98) lays special emphasis on the needs of women and girls and on women's training programmes. During 1993-1995, out of total of 123 participants of training of programmes organized by the Academy of Educational Planning and Management, 47 were females. Sixty-five per cent of all new schools to be established during the 8th Plan will be for girls. In order to increase girls' participation at primary level, text-books will be provided free of cost to all girls of the rural areas in Grade-1. Suitable incentives will be provided for development and production of quality textbooks through private sector. For each course, multiple textbooks under integrated curricula will be approved while the institutions will be authorized to select any of these textbooks on competitive basis. Examination system will be reformed. A National Testing Service (NTS) is being established to develop and administer standardized tests for various educational levels. This would moderate the distortions arising from disparate examination standards.

Incentives for Private Sector and Non-Government Organisations

At present, private sector is permitted to open educational institutions almost at all levels. Primary schools have to be registered but the certificates of most of private schools are not recognized by the Government except those of secondary schools which get recognition from Boards of Secondary education. Special legislation is to be enacted for minimum standards and norms. Incentives for non-commercial educational institutions are mainly in the form of normal tax exemptions and marginal grants for a few of them from the recently established Education Foundations at Federal and Provincial levels. During the 8th Plan, fiscal incentives for NGOs and private sector participation in the educational endeavour will be reviewed and made more attractive.

In addition, following policy actions are envisaged. The school certificate of children of most private schools are not recognized for their transfer/admission in the government school. There is no institutionalized arrangements for uniform examination at the end of Grade-V for children of private primary schools specially for those studying in English Medium schools.

Decentralization of Planning and Management of Primary Education in Pakistan

Introduction

The existing education system is faced with serious managerial and financial problems and deficiencies in quality of education. The management and financing of existing education system is highly centralized. The curriculum lacks relevance. The quality of textbooks is far from satisfactory. The outmoded examination system characterized by malpractices provides little motivation for talented students and teachers for hard-work. During the 8th Plan, suitable policy initiatives were undertaken and implemented to overcome the above noted shortcomings.

The Government is making every effort for improving literacy rate and providing primary education to all school-age children within a minimum possible period. Education reforms such as introduction of Compulsory Primary Education Act 1994 by the Punjab Government, increased financial outlay for education sector, conversion of National Education Training Commission into the Prime Minister's Literacy Commission and introduction of Social Action Programme (SAP), are some of the manifestations of high priority accorded by the government for promotion of Basic Education in the country. Establishment of 10,000 literacy centres/schools have been launched by starting 1,000 such centres first in the series throughout the country. NGOs have also been encouraged to participate in the area. Pakistan's literacy rate is estimated at 37.9 per cent (50 per cent male and 25.3 per cent female) Steps are being taken to devise a system of testing and recognition of the ability/certificate of students from

private schools for their transfer/admission in Government schools at the terminal levels.

Most of the private schools are in urban cities where land is expensive and beyond the reach of NGOs interested in opening new schools. Incentives in the form of provision of land at subsidized cost to non-profit oriented educational institutions enrolling more than 500 to 1,000 students, will be considered. Recently the Punjab Government has decided to denationalize 1,442 schools which would go back to their previous managements under certain terms and conditions laid down by the Government.

The profit-oriented technical training institutions enrolling more than 100 trainees in various vocational and commercial trades, will be declared small business and made eligible for loans.

Role of Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPAM)

Government pays due attention to improve human resources in the education sector. For the training of educational planners, administrators and supervisors, an Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPAM) was established in 1981. The Academy has so far conducted 125 in-service short-term training programmes, in addition to the five long-term training programmes of 12 weeks duration in Educational Planning and Management. About 2,311 persons have been trained in these courses. More than 150 research studies, surveys and reports in the areas of primary, secondary, higher, vocational, female education, teacher educa-

tion, system of education, financing of education, educational statistics, documentation of education, educational policy and planning, decentralization of education system, have been completed. The Academy has also established Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) for collecting, consolidating, analyzing and disseminating the school educational statistics for planners, policy-makers, educationists and researchers under Fed EMIS Project. Consultancy services are being provided to the provinces. Comprehensive educational documentation and special bibliographic services are also extended to update the institutions and users in the country. The capacity of the AEPAM Library has been upgraded as fully automated National Documentation Centre in Education with latest educational technology, Research Databases on CD-ROMS, Computer applications. Reproduction equipments and National Education Database is available for exchange/use with other relevant organizations.

Major Steps Taken

Over the years, several initiatives have been taken by the Government to improve the situation of primary education and adult literacy. The following specific steps have been taken to promote primary education in Pakistan; (i) budget allocations are being enhanced; (ii) the government of the Punjab has recently re-enforced the existing legislation with suitable amendments to ensure compulsory primary education in the province; (iii) for the promotion of primary education, the government has mustered the support of the private sector in providing primary education facilities to the children. For this purpose, Education Foundation has been set up; (iv) to achieve the goal of 'Education for All' by the year 2000 A.D. and to increase the literacy rate by the end of this century, government has already taken some major steps; (v) one of the major steps is the reorganization of Prime Minister's Literacy Commission; (vi) hundred per cent literate

Islamabad programme (100 NFBL Centers/Schools to be established in Islamabad; (vii) establishment of a National Institute of Training and Research for Literacy as an organ of PMLC; (viii) Government has increased allocation for education from 2.2 per cent in 1993-94 to 2.5 per cent of GNP during 1995-96 and is committed to increase it to three per cent by the year 2000, as per "World Declaration" on Education For All; (ix) legislation to make literacy compulsory; (x) establishment of community centres and libraries in all villages and NFBL centres with Audio-Visual aids; (xi) non-formal education centres to be set up in remote rural areas with special emphasis on rural females; (xii) providing vocational and technical education by AIOU and other organizations to meet the demand of skilled labour in foreign countries (xiii) private/Donor agencies to be motivated for funding in Education Sector; (xiv) Islamabad Literacy Corps; and (xv) Quranic Literacy Project (Revised 1995-97).

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Decentralized Planning and Management of Primary Education in Sri Lanka

The Provincial Councils

The Provincial Council Act of 1987 led to an island-wide devaluation of political and administrative functions in Sri Lanka. These provinces were given more autonomy and independence to manage their affairs. The provision of facilities to schools became a provincial function. Appointment of principals to type 2 and 3 schools, implementation of non-formal education programmes, construction and maintenance of buildings, libraries, playgrounds, procurement and distribution of teaching aids, visual aids and audio-visual materials, furniture and other equipment became provincial functions. (Types of Schools are: Type LAB - Schools with G.C.E.A/L. Science Classes, Type 1C - School with G.C.E.A/L Arts and Commerce Classes, Type 2 - School with Class up to year 11, Type 3 - Elementary schools and Primary schools with classes upto the year 5 to 8)

The Zonal Organisation

Considering the geographical location of divisions in the provinces and their numerical largeness as well as the multiplicity of functions, they needed to have strong linkages between the centre and the periphery. As such, a number of divisions were grouped together to form a Zone. The head of the education zone, the zonal director, was responsible to the provincial director of education, for the implementation of quality improvement programmes. The zonal director of education was expected to strengthen the vital linkages and play a pivotal role in coordinating educational development. The zonal

organization was an innovative mechanism set in motion to strengthen the links as well as coordinating educational development.

Zonal Education Offices

The zonal education offices were created in 1995 to carry out duties pertaining to quality improvement in education as well as all administrative and establishment work. For quality improvement in education, the zonal director is assisted by a team of specialist officers and master-teachers. The team consists of about eighteen persons specialized in different subject areas. An officer/master-teacher specialized in primary education is also in the team.

Training of Principals

Since 1994, a regular training programme has been carried out provincially to train principals of type 2 and 3 schools. This programme is of 20 days duration. Each province has three to four trainers specially prepared for this task by the Department of Education Management Development. This training programme is specially designed to meet the challenges faced by principals of small schools. The methods used are lectures, discussions, debates, brain storming, role play, video/audio presentations, group work and individual assignments.

The main contents of the programme are as follows:

(i) Leadership; (ii) Organization; (iii) EMIS; (iv) Planning; (v) Curriculum Management; (vi) Supervision; (vii) Administrative Practices and Education Law; (viii) Financial Management; (ix) Communication; (x) Guidance and Counseling; (xi) Re-

source Management; (xii) School and the Community; (xiii) Staff Development; and (xiv) Evaluation. About ninety per cent of type 2 and 3 school principals have been already trained in these programmes.

Functional Decentralization

Decentralization in educational administration, demonstrates a willingness of a country to strive at improving its education system through greater participation of local personnel. Through a process of decentralization, it is expected to maximize the efficiency of the education system. Sri Lanka, on a number of occasions restructured and reorganized its educational administration with this in view. One of the features over the past few years has been to shift the geographical units of administration from the central to the middle levels, but the schools which are at the periphery have almost remained unchanged. Decentralization was not viewed as a strategy for improving functional efficiency. The Department of Education Management Development is now engaged in an intervention strategy by which a group of selected primary schools are helped in the process of organizational renewal.

The programme is typical in the sense that it seeks to develop school based professionalism and flexibility. The core of the programme is the school based in-house sessions. Ten sessions are held in each school over a period of two years. A resource person specially trained for this task serves as a facilitator. The whole school staff is present at work sessions held on non-working days. The sessions aim at: (i) individual development of each participant; (ii) inter-personal development where team oriented approach to work is strengthened; and (iii) school development.

Since in-house school sessions are held once in two months, the efforts achieved by them are supplemented by the use of 'Activity Books'. These books contain practical activities designed with different

aspects of management. The principal and the staff get together for one and a half hours per week, on school days to carry them out. Here learning will take place by sharing experience, group interaction, experimental learning, job redesigning, individual and group assignments. Since the in-house work sessions are held on non-working days, school visits are made on working days.

Four hundred schools are covered by the programme and this number will be increased. The life span of this programme is too short to undertake an evaluation of impact. However, a team is involved in continuous monitoring of the programme and have found the outcomes to be positive and encouraging. Collegial relationships have developed in most schools and participatory approaches are evident when faced with problems and developmental tasks. Attempts are being made to tackle problems at school level rather than passing them to higher levels in the hierarchy and stronger links have been built with the immediate community for mutual benefit.

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