Country Report of Nepal Presented to Asia and the Pacific
Seminar/Workshop on Educational Technology

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1. Country Background

1.1. Nepal is a small landlocked mountainous country bound on the East, West and South by India and North by China. It covers an area of 147181 square kilometers. Ecologically it has been divided mainly into three regions-Terai (about 17% of the land), Hill belt (about 68% of the land) and Mountain (about 15% of the land). Accordingly, to the 2001 National census a total population is 23.4 million. About 8% populations live in the Mountain region, 47% in the Terai and 45% in the Hill belt. Administratively the country is divided into 5 development regions, 14 zones and 75 districts. Each district has divided into several village development committee and municipalities.

1.2. Nepal is an agricultural country. According to the 1991 census, the economy of 82.6% of its population directly depends upon agriculture. There are more than 36 language groups. Similarly, there are 63 social groups based on ethnicity, cast and language differences. 43.3% of the 143 thousand teachers are trained and the literacy rate is 53%. The growth rate of GDP in 5 years (1997) has been recorded as being 4.3% and per capita income is US$ 220.

2. Background / Development of teacher training

Educational history of Nepal is not so long. When we turn in to the history of teacher training, we have to consider the programme of Radio Education Teacher Training Programme (RETTP) on 1978. The objectives of this programme were to train under SLC teachers of remote areas. The programme installed 1000,000 Watt short-wave transmission in Radio Nepal for broadcasting the radio programme, Self Instructional Materials (SIM) and radio wear distributed to the trainees.

The Government realized the importance of education for rural development and designed a pilot project in Seti-Zone. Teacher training was one of the main components of this project. The main objective of this programme was to help teacher for to acquire skills in classroom teaching and practical skills in health care and agriculture. The project expected that the teacher would be the change agent of the community.

The Seti project motivated the government to design Primary Education Project (PEP) in 1984. This project gave emphasis on the quality of education through improving
physical facilities and skill-based teacher training. It prepared 12 days training package and conduct training in resource centres by resource persons (RPs).

The basic qualification for the primary teacher is school leaving Certificate (SLC), lower secondary is intermediate or 10+2 and secondary is bachelor or equivalent. Pre-service training is mandatory for to join all levels of teacher.

Open university is one of the important means for to disseminate the education training and programme. It generates new ways of teaching and learning process. Because of its close link with information technology, it is close to development of new learning and new patterns of information and application. Unfortunately, Nepal has not established the university yet.

3. Current System of In-service Teacher Training

To conduct in service teacher training, there are mainly four organizations involved. They are National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), Basic & Primary Education Project II (BPEP-II), Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDC) and Distance Education Centre (DEC). Though all these organizations are for teacher training, the mode and the programmes are somehow different. Basically, BPEP II and NCED are involved in face to face training programme and Distance mode is used by DEC. Among these organization, DEC, NCED and BPEP II are involving to provide the training for the primary level teachers whereas SEDC conducts the training for the secondary level teachers.

3.1. NCED

NCED has been established with the purpose of preparing school level education manpower. It has started providing in-service training for primary teachers through its 9 Primary Teacher Training Centres (PTTCS). The training centers are providing in-service teacher training.

At present, the National Centre for Education and Development Centre (NCED) has developed 10-month training package for Primary teacher. The package is split in to four packages of 330 hours / 2.5 month duration. All the primary teacher training agencies using the packages.

The first package is a face-to-face training programme conducted by NCED itself. The second and the third package are organized by DEC through distance mode and the fourth package with a project work and conducted by NCED.

It delivers Training of Trainers (TOT) for instructors. There is a provision of an examination at the end of the training of each package so the center prepare questions and conduct the examination to evaluate the achievement of the trainees. The center also formulates the training policies.
3.2. BPEP-II

Basic and Primary Education Project II (BPEP-II) has been conducting various type of training for in-service teachers through its Resource Centres (RCs). The project has adopted a strategy to support teacher's ability to implement the curriculum through a cluster based training programmes. Every teacher will receive a 10 days recurrent training each year. The RCs are the delivery centers of the recurrent training. The training is provided either through modular training, where all the training programme is conducted at the RC site or the whole school approach giving four days of training programme for all teachers from the respective schools followed by six days residential school-based training. Department of Education (DOE) develops the modules. Recurrent modules is revised and implemented to promote efficient and pedagogical utilization of teaching learning materials including textbooks, supplementary readers, teacher's guides and instructional materials.

3.3. Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDC)

Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDC) is established to enhance the quality of Secondary level education to provide science-equipments for the training of secondary level teachers, especially in English, Mathematics and Science subjects. The project provides in-service training for the teachers. For this purpose, there are 25 Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs) across the country.

Secondary Education Development Centre provides training for the Unit Chiefs (Chief of the SEDU) and the trainers of the related subject as a resource person. In addition, SEDC also provides short-term recurrent teacher training.

3.4. Distance Education Centre DEC

After realizing the insufficiency of radio programme, Distance Education Centre (DEC) came into existence in 1994 with a broader concept to expand the educational programme at various ways and to enhance the quality of education by conducting well-prepared and effective programmes. In a mountainous country like Nepal interaction among teachers is difficult so the concept of distance education has become very essential. The objectives of the programme are to train the primary teachers through radio and other modes to broadcast useful non-formal education programmes. So that a maximum number of people different communities will involve in educational activities, to conduct programme to help the higher and school level education available to all and to expose them to the wider educational activities.

There are many programmes conducted among them, primary teacher training program is conducted through radio for the in-service teachers. To implement the training programme, the District Education Office has an important role to play. The District Education Office appoints resource teachers. The resource teacher conducts contact session for the trainees at the resource center to come across their views and
make them understand the lesson more clearly. Other responsibilities of the resource teachers are providing demonstration of practice teaching and evaluation of the practical lessons. After completion of the training, the trainees are required to take a final test.

The main focus of the center is to conduct the 2nd and 3rd package of the primary teacher-training programme through the distance mode. To conduct the programme the center uses radio scripts, self-instructional materials (SIM) and contact session.

To make learning more effective and easy to understand, self-instructional materials and summary book of the radio lessons are distributed to the trainees free of charge. Radio scripts are prepared in the center based on the curriculum approved by Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES). The DEC produces its audio programme in house and sends them to the Radio Nepal for broadcasting. Resources Centres have been established in the relevant districts keeping in the fact that the trainees may find some lessons difficult to grasp or they may sometimes miss the radio lesson for some reasons. The trainees have to construct plans with the help of the resource teacher and they have to undergo teaching practice.

4. Current System of Pre-service Teacher Training

For providing pre-service teacher training, there are mainly 3 organizations involved. They are the Faculty of Education (FOE) under Tribhuvan University (TU), 19 Private Primary Teacher Training Centres (PTIs) and Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB).

4.1. Faculty of Education (FOE)

Faculty of Education was established with the aim of providing pre-service and in-service teacher training. There was 10 months training programme in the beginning but in these days, in-service training programmes are conducted under MOES. These are several education campuses under Tribhuvan University, which provide pre-service training for the teachers. There are I. Ed., B. Ed. And M. Ed. Programmes in many subjects. I. Ed. Programme is of 2 years and after passing SLC, the students can enroll for it. B. Ed. Programme is of three years and there is a specialization course of 2 years in M. Ed.

4.2. Private Training Institutions (PTIs)

As the need of providing pre-service training is realized to be crucial and urgent MOES/NCED has authorized 19 private training institutions (PTIs) to conduct training for prospective teachers. The institutions are providing training under the training package and curriculum consists of 1320 hrs. of teaching or 10 month programme. At the end of the programme, the examination is conducted under the
direct supervision and monitoring of NCED. The evaluation and certification is also the responsibility of NCED.

4.3. Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB)

HSEB is also providing pre-service teacher training programme. There are about 150 higher secondary schools, which are providing education courses as equivalent to intermediate (I. Ed.) level and it is the basic qualification for being lower-secondary teacher.

5. Educational Technology & Materials

The modern educational technologies play vital role in the effective and efficient delivery of the teaching learning skills. But the economic status of Nepal doesn't easily permit the adequate use of modern educational technology in daily classroom teaching learning. NCED is providing learning packages and resource books for the trainees. Under BPEP-II teachers guide and training packages are prepared and distributed. SEDP provides science equipment in secondary schools. Under DEC, radio, cassette and SIMs are used and distributed to the trainees. There are two recording studios in DEC. SIMs and radios are distributed to the trainees free of charge. The DEC produces audio programmes also and sends them to the radio for broadcasting.

Some private schools of urban area are using computers and other electronic devices also for teaching. Through the government has decided to provide the Internet facility to the public school free of charge. Only some of the schools are using this facility. To encourage the use of electronic devices like computer, the government has provided the facility of buying computer free of custom charge.

The government is providing computer training for 19 selected public secondary school teachers throughout the country. The government has developed the computer science curriculum in secondary school level as an optimal subject.

Electronic media like Radio and Television are also being used in Nepal. The Radio is becoming the most cost-effective and efficient means in the context of Nepal.

Conclusion

In the present context of Nepal, because of the economic, geographical and social situation, there should be fixed training policies. There should be the strict policy of the government to recruit the trained teachers and there should be the provision of providing recurrent training for the recruited teachers. The educational materials/technologies which are used at present are not adequate therefore the government should emphasize on the use of modern educational technologies in the
classroom so that the students will get an opportunity to face the forthcoming challenges.

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