

BASIC AND PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME II

**Joint HMG/N - Donor Technical Review Meeting
11-13 December 2002**

Joint Aide Memoire

BACKGROUND

1 The eighth Joint HMG/N – Donor Technical Review Meeting on the Basic and Primary Education Programme II (BPEP II) was held between 11-13 December 2002. The first and third days of the meeting were held at the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) in Kathmandu and the second day at the Department of Education (DOE) in Sanothimi. Sessions were chaired by Mr Chuman Singh Basnyat, Acting Secretary of MOES, Mr Laba Prasad Tripathee, Joint Secretary of Planning Division, and Mr Satya Bahadur Shrestha, Director General of DOE. The meeting was attended by:

- a) representatives from MOES, DOE and other central level agencies;
- b) a representative from the Ministry of Local Development;
- c) representatives from the Asian Development Bank, Denmark, EC, Finland, IDA, JICA, Norway and UNICEF.

2 The Review had three purposes:

- a) To analyse critical areas of BPEP II implementation in relation to strategic shifts recommended by the Mid-Term Review 2002 (MTR) and to review and endorse the Status Report for the Financial Year 2001/02;
- b) To contribute to the process and development of the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) and the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for the Financial Year 2003/04, which is also the final year of the programme;
- c) To contribute to the development of effective strategies and modalities for sustained school improvement and discuss the HMG/N Concept Paper on further support for basic and primary education after the completion of BPEP II in July 2004.

3 The expected outputs of the review were:

- a) To suggest modalities for improving the implementation of BPEP II, taking into account the technical reviews conducted as part of the preparations for the Review Meeting and discussions during the Review Meeting;
- b) To recommend strategies to improve the implementation of BPEP II for the aid management Mission to take place in March 2003;
- c) To generate suggestions based on the Status Report and the reviews to be incorporated into the ASIP and AWPB 2003/04 for the final year of the programme;
- d) To generate suggestions for sustained school improvement as input to the Concept Paper.

4 Reports from 16 technical reviews were circulated to participants before the meeting as resource materials for the group discussions (available from R&D Section in DOE). The Status Report, the draft NPA for EFA, and the draft Concept Paper were also made available to participants before the meeting.

5 Additional reports were presented during the meeting, including a discussion paper on Education in Difficult Circumstances, a report on the Literacy Situation in Nepal, a review of the implementation of the Gender Audit, an assessment of the Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector, and the status of Capacity Building in Donor Coordination.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING BPEP II IMPLEMENTATION

6 Following the MTR, BPEP II has been reorganized from 17 into 5 components. Working groups on each of these components were established to generate recommendations, drawing on the 16 review reports as appropriate. The outputs from the working groups included a number of suggestions including the following:

- a) A framework for implementing the MTR recommendation for a shift from a component-driven approach to a holistic child/school/community focused approach should be taken into account in the preparation of the AWPB for the Financial Year 2003/04. Mechanisms for replicating experiences from bottom-up planning districts and for scaling up alternative schooling and incentive programmes should be developed and adopted during the Financial Year 2003/04. Additionally, BPEP should provide support to Community Schools (Institutional Schools of Public Trust Type according to the classification of the Seventh Amendment to the Education Act).
- b) Based on experiences from 5 pilot districts and Community Managed Schools, MOES/DOE should intensify the process of decentralization. Implementation should focus on outcomes, the use of Education Management Information System (EMIS) and capacity building of persons involved in the school transformation process.
- c) There is a need to accelerate implementation, facilitate the application of procurement procedures and smooth out delays in obtaining funds from HMG/N. The meeting highlighted the need to improve the allocation of resources in future planning focusing on the relationship between inputs and outputs. A plan should also be prepared to cater for unspent resources and activities that will be incomplete after July 2004, and this should be discussed at the March Mission.
- d) The meeting noted some progress in gender related issues, and suggested to implement the recommendations in the Gender Audit Report, especially the establishment of a Gender Focal Point at each level. It was also recommended that the Women's Education Section should be renamed as the Gender Development Section during the restructuring of MOES
- e) BPEP implementation will need to be flexible to reach affected areas, particularly in more remote districts, and deliver services to the clients at school and community level to mitigate the impacts of conflict and bring about harmony.

- f) Physical facilities should take into consideration the needs of the whole school, and design to facilitate the access of disabled children.
- g) There should be greater emphasis on outcomes including equity, access and quality, particularly relating to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and First Grade.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STATUS REPORT 2002/2003

7 The Status Report was welcomed as a comprehensive and high quality document, and was endorsed by the meeting. The technical review meeting suggested the following measures to improve future Status Reports:

- a) A shift in focus to performance at grass root level, focusing on schools rather than central level activities, and including greater outcome/impact assessment.
- b) An analysis of bottlenecks, successes and failures, and a description of how lessons learned will be applied in future plans and the sequencing of activities. It may also be useful to include one or more thematic areas illustrated by case studies.
- c) A comprehensive expenditure analysis, from which a plan for the future is derived.
- d) Activities should be summarised briefly and the report should focus on the most important indicators of achievement.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ASIP/AWPB 2003/2004

8 The ASIP and AWPB for the final year of BPEP II need to be prepared before the March Mission. The meeting suggested the following points in the preparation of these plans:

- b) The ASIP and AWPB should focus on four or five specific areas in which impacts in terms of outputs and outcomes can be achieved.
- d) Pilot districts should prioritize their activities based on perceived needs.
- e) In line with the recommendation in the Aide Memoire of the December 2001 Mission that Technical Assistance (TA) should be addressed in a comprehensive manner, mechanisms for including TA in the ASIP and AWPB should be investigated and implemented.
- f) The ASIP should contain a clear monitoring plan for the effective implementation of activities and spell out support services to be provided to the teachers and beneficiaries by school supervisors and resource persons. Information of educational status at local level should be disseminated to concerned stakeholders using all means of communication and media.
- g) A more practicable approach to work in partnership with INGOs/NGOs /CBOs should be included in the ASIP.
- h) There should be more flexibility with the budget to enable implementation of unforeseen activities and activities resulting from emerging needs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CONCEPT PAPER

9 Participants commended the work that had gone into the draft Concept Paper on further support for basic and primary education and the approach to education that it represented. There were, however, a number of suggestions for changes to the document that should be made before the March Mission:

- a) The Concept Paper should include sections on the overall vision for basic and primary education and the policy framework consistent with the 10th Plan, MTEF, and NPA for EFA.
- b) The Concept Paper should adopt a sub sectoral approach covering the whole HMG/N plan for Basic and Primary Education, including both recurrent and development expenditure. HMG/N should decide whether or not to include lower secondary education in this analysis.
- c) The Concept Paper must present a realistic judgment of HMG/N and local capacity, propose achievable outcomes, and indicate practical strategies to meet them.
- d) The plan should be based on a flexible rolling budget with a one-year ASIP/AWPB. This budget should conform to HMG/N timetables and indicate where there are resource gaps in which donors can contribute in line with their own funding modalities.

NEXT STEPS

- 10 The following actions were agreed at the meeting:
- a) A revised Concept Paper on further support for basic and primary education will be circulated to development partners by MOES/DOE by **15 February 2003**;
 - b) The ASIP and AWPB for the next Financial Year will be made available at least one week before the March Mission, and no later than **10 March 2003**;
 - c) New potential donors will be identified by MOES before the **end of February 2003** and invited to attend key sessions of the March Mission.
 - d) A meeting between HMG/N and donors will be arranged by FACS in **early January 2003** to discuss donor processes required for future commitments, and approaches to achieve greater harmonization in donor support;
 - e) An initial joint appraisal of the Concept Paper should be conducted by donors **before or during the March Mission**.
 - f) HMG/N expects an initial indication of future commitments from potential donors **during the March Mission**. These commitments will be finalised in October or November 2003 following a full joint appraisal.