

Support to Basic and Primary Education

**His Majesty's Government
Ministry of Education & Sports**

NEPAL

**BI-ANNUAL REPORT NO. 18
for BPEP II¹
by the Chief Advisor
1 July 2002 – 1 January 2003**

TO ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY

Danida
104.Nep.39

Karsten Jensen, Chief Technical Advisor
BPEP II

¹ The Biannual Report also refers to the preparations for Danida assistance to Secondary Education in Nepal, the Secondary Education Support Programme, prepared jointly between HMG, ADB and Danida.

KEY DATA

Country: Nepal

Project Title: Basic and Primary Education Programme (BPEP II)
(EDUSAP: Education Sector Assistance Programme)

Report No: 14 Danida Ref: 104.Nep.39
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Next report due: 07 - 2003

Contribution US\$ mill:	Danida grant:	DKK	300,000,000²	Budget 2002/03	Replenishment from Special Account July 02 – Dec 02
Danida			9.8		3.6
• Basket Funds			8		3
• Direct Funds			1.8		0.6
HMG			1		0.08
Others: CIP Donors					
IDA			5.7		0.44
EU			4.1		1.3
NORAD			4.9		1.8
FINNIDA			1.5		0.58

Source: Budget: HMG/N budget for BPEP II 2002/2003
DANIDA Long Term Advisers are over and above the grant to BPEP II

Government agreement signed: 29th May 1998

Project period: 1998– 2003 (has been extended to 2004, following the annual negotiations Nov. 2001)

Implementing agency: Department of Education under Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), Kathmandu, Nepal, together with other central line agencies of MOES.

² As per the “Styrelsesoplæg” of 12th. November 1997

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

BPEP II is a HMG reform program for basic and primary education. The programme is pursuing to consolidate the achievements of 1st development phase (1993-1998) i.e. provide access to quality primary education in a sustainable manner to all children of Nepal. It is in line with the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and government's poverty reduction strategy as stated in the ninth development plan and reiterated in the development of the tenth plan. The program has national coverage from 2001.

In line with the World Declaration on Education for All, the focus of BPEP II is to improve the quality of primary education, increase access to basic and primary education and strengthen management efficiency of education in Nepal. The Mid Term Review, conducted in December 2001 and March 2002 respectively strengthened the conditions for the programme to impact here through more emphasis on decentralisation and devolution of authority.

The assistance for Secondary Education in the form of the Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP) is seen as an extension of the support to the Basic and Primary Education Programme.

As such the programme builds on the achievements and experiences of current and previous programmes in the education sector and is intended to be fully complimentary to the Government's decentralisation programme.

OBJECTIVES AND PROGRESS OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The overall program objective of BPEP II is to alleviate poverty by increasing economic productivity, health and sanitation practices and community awareness on development issues. The MTR of March 2002 (second leg) resulted in a restructuring of the program that now holds 5 components³:

- Physical facilities
- Access and retention
- Quality education
- Institutional strengthening
- School improvement plan based local development

Earlier, the program held 17 components. This was widely seen a main reason for the compartmentalisation and fragmentation of educational development activities, which eventually has resulted in underachieving programme objectives.

One of the MTR findings was a need to redefine institutional roles at central, district and sub-district levels in the education system in a way that supports the new focus on the school and the community envisaged in the Education (Seventh Amendment) Act. It is generally understood that it is necessary to attract more resources to primary education. This eventually leads to capacity building initiatives at both central and district levels.

A decisive addition to the educational reform is the design of a Secondary Education Sector Programme (SESP). Danida support to the SESP is designed to facilitate poverty reduction

³ Consequently, the bi-annual report no longer refers to 17 components of the original Program Implementation Plan.

through the improvement of access to secondary education for the population as a whole and for females, the poor and disadvantaged groups in particular.

Danida assistance will pursue two complementary strategies within the overall programme design of SESP.

The first strategy is a series of interventions with national coverage. These are in all four areas of the learning environment, curriculum development and assessment, teacher education and development, institutional management and capacity building. Programme activities undertaken in these areas will be implemented with a view to achieving improvements at the national and school levels across all 75 districts before the conclusion of the first five years.

The second strategy to be pursued with Danida support is a more intensive set of activities to be undertaken in 10 districts during the first five-year phase. The purpose of these more focused activities is:

- To target poor districts and poor schools within these districts for poverty education;
- To promote institutional and financial sustainability through the provision of more intensive systemic capacity. Here the emphasis will be upon the institutional modalities of planning and programme implementation at district, VDC, and community school levels;
- To promote a feasible programme in logistical terms;
- To revise the implementation of the programme on the basis of first phase experiences.

The intensified assistance to 10 districts will be chosen among the 20 most poverty stricken districts (primarily in Far-West Nepal) and be funded through DANIDA direct funding.

The outcomes at school levels of the national strategy will however be quite dependant upon the schools' capacities to utilise the new techniques of school improvement plan (SIP) to secure resources through the education system and to mobilise local resources through community associations, local NGOs, local government organisations amongst others. As many schools currently receive support from such sources, the combination of improved resource provision and improved school management by SMC's and head teachers should provide a basis for further improvements in secondary education amongst a significant section of secondary schools in many districts. However, these are not likely to be the poorer schools in poorer communities in resource poor districts.

Since the introduction of the basket modality, PAT provides technical assistance to all areas of Department of Education and thus, the bi-annual report of the CTA to RDE covers all components of BPEP II.

The following is a description of the program component progress.

1. School Physical Facilities

Building more classrooms and carrying out extensive rehabilitation at schools have increased access significantly. MOES is and has been investing in physical infrastructure at school level. It is acknowledged that a good physical learning environment is one of the major factors for improving the quality of teaching-learning environment and therefore there is a need to improve the existing situation by:

- Assessing the need of the individual school for physical environment improvement.

- To introduce and ensure regular maintenance is done with community participation.
- To rehabilitate existing physical buildings and external environment including hygienically installations.
- To replace temporary and or add new classrooms on need based criteria's including furniture.
- To provide supporting facilities for cluster training and district administration.

Each school shall have a Construction Committee and this committee is involved in the activities, based on the Schools Physical Improvement Plan (SPIP). The information to the community regarding budget and scope of work has increased, however, still more effort has to be done to reach the community fully.

Although the Physical Service Section of DOE has employed a consultant to monitor the progress at district level, the monitoring by the department still remains an issue.

This financial year, it has been difficult to retain technical staff in remote districts. This has to some extent been solved by increasing the salaries significantly. It is still to be seen how the supervision at schools in areas controlled fully by Maoists will be implemented.

The progress in 2001/02⁴ at district level is, based on information from DoE:

- Rehabilitation of classrooms: Target 2684, progress: 2962 (110%).
- External environment (Toilets, water and compound fencing): Target 1255, progress: Toilets 1089 (87%) Water supply 991 (80%) and Compound 1083 (86%)
- New classrooms construction: Target 812, progress 500 (62%).
- 3 District education offices completed and 3 are under construction.

Activities are planned for 42 districts, however, the level of activities varies from district to district.

The budget to support the achievements of the above for 2002/03 was set at Nrs. 1.050.000.000 or approximately DKK 100.000.000. It will only be possible to describe levels of spending some time 2003, but it is anticipated that 80% or more this budget line will be utilised.

Table 1 displays the biannual achievements:

Table 1: Biannual Achievements

	District level	Target	Progress July –Dec 02
1	Rehabilitation of classrooms	2,900	Schools identified
2	External environment	1,550	Schools identified
3	New Classroom construction (NCR)	3,060	School selection in progress
5	Resource Centre (RC) building construction	75	Tender is ongoing
6	Resource Centre Furniture	121	Quotation on procurement in progress
7	District Education Office Building construction	17	- 3 under construction. - 6 contracts are signed and work to start

⁴ Latest available figures

			- 4 are in bidding process. - 4 are in planning process.
8	Furniture DeO buildings	6	
9	Maintenance training at Cluster schools	135	Clusters identified.

Construction of new Department of Education building is delayed with some months due to some tender problems. The contracts are expected to be signed early 2003.

Purchase of materials for 2600 new classrooms are also delayed. 10 contracts for supplying various materials, such as steel structures, window- and doorframes were signed early December 2002. However, a Letter of Credit was not opened in 2002.

Contract for supplying roofing sheets for 2600 classrooms is expected signed early 2003.

In late 2001 a project to rehabilitate some 297 schools in 38 districts, which were damaged by either earthquake or excessive flooding were initiated through Danida direct funding through DoE. The support did not cover the full repair but was given as an incentive to schools. The allocated amount was based on surveys and minor funds were provided for the extra supervision etc. An agreement was signed between the school/SMC and the District Education Office. A total number of 290 schools signed such an agreement. The end of 2002 has made final settlement for 216 schools in 2002 and 39 schools will be completed early 2003. 35 schools from Kalikot district (hit by Maoist insurgency) has not yet responded to the Department's completion inquiry.

The district headquarter of Jumla was in mid November severely damaged by Maoists. Many government building were completely destroyed. The District Education building (rented) was completely destroyed including all equipment and files inside.

The DEO is temporarily located in some small and unfit rooms. A list over urgent needed support to the DEO office was prepared and submitted to the DOE. Minor funds were used for buying urgent office stationeries so as the office somehow can function.

A hostel connected to Secondary Education Development Unit training centre was also destroyed. Estimates to dismantle the hostel are being prepared.

Due to shortage of funds, a TOR for assistance to physical planning and monitoring, forwarded to RDE/CPH has been postponed indefinitely.

2. Access

Students with disabilities, girls and disadvantaged children: The outcomes of the MTR such as the revised component structure of BPEP II and renaming of the Special Education Section to Special Needs Education Section together with the recommendations of the Gender Audit and the launching of SESP in summer 2003 calls for restructuring of DOE and the work of the sections engaged in improving access and retention to the Nepalese educational system.

As stated in the Bi-Annual Report, July 2002, the consequences of the renaming of the Special Education Section is the extension of the target groups from solely children with disabilities to all kinds of learners who are facing barriers regarding access to education.

Moreover as also stated in the Bi-annual Report, July 2002, the recommendations of the Gender Audit in which it is stressed that gender issues have to be anchored in all BPEP II sections and line agencies, should be followed up by awareness raising activities, discussions and implementation.

In order to meet those challenges since July 2002, PAT has been involved in a number of activities together with respectively SNES and WES. Activities such as:

- Support to study on Dalit participation in Danida programmes, including BPEP II. The Report aiming improvement of Dalit participation in Danida supported programmes is now very close to be finalised.
- An institutional linkage with County of Copenhagen and the Danish University of Education aiming to develop a comprehensive strategy for improvement of access and retention including all children who experiences barriers regarding access to formal education has continued in the shape of Inclusive Education pilot activities at 12 schools in 4 districts. Minor deviations from the planned activities have been necessary caused by the security situation in the 4 districts involved. However, since July 2002 consultancies have been carried out in Banke and Kavre districts and monitoring visits have been carried out in Udayapur and Banke districts. A base line research has been conducted in Sindhupalchowk district.

Moreover, the formative research related to the development of Inclusive Education has resulted in a report on the Joint Workshop conducted May 2002 and is in process of finalising a base-line study encompassing all pilot schools and districts.

- It has been stated in several Donor Mission Aide Memoires that special attention should be provided for Primary Education of children of former Kamaiyas. A final proposal for collaboration between BASE and MOES/DOE regarding support to basic and primary education of former Kamaiya's children in Banke and Kailali districts has now been developed.

The proposal still has to be final approved by the MOES/DOE and the involved DEO's.

- In order to follow up on the Gender Audit the findings and the recommendations have been translated to Nepali and distributed to all districts and concerned sections and agencies of MOES/DOE together with a cover letter. Moreover a task group with the assignment to prepare a plan for the further implementation of the recommendation is in the process of being established.
- Finally the discussion on how to incorporate SESP in the ASIP and AWP/B for year 2003-2004 has been initiated. This will without any doubt constitute one of the main assignments in the first months of 2003.

Beside these general activities PAT has, since July 2002, been involved in a number of other specific development activities within the area of access and retention in co-operation with DOE, SNES, WES and relevant NGO's. It is activities such as:

- Support and advisory functions in relation to procurement and implementation of regular programs. Procurement of Braille material to students with visual impairment still causes

problems and the implementation of the regular programmes was postponed from mid July to mid October due to delay of approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget. The Special Needs Education Section is aiming to launch programmes in 12 new districts and extend the number of resource classes from 222 to 266.

- As stated in the Bi-annual report July 2002 there is a need to review BPEP II incentive programmes. Since 1999, the Women Education Section has been piloting incentive programmes for girls and students from disadvantaged groups in a limited number of VDCs (girls 34 VDCs and disadvantaged groups 24 VDCs). The effects of these incentive pilots should now be thoroughly assessed so the experiences can be used for preparation of a more comprehensive incentive strategy that encompasses both BPEP and SESP. A situation paper on BPEP incentive programmes has just been finalised and the formative research centre at CERID are in progress with a study on BPEP incentive programmes.
- Training of assessment teams working at the newly established district assessment centres continues. The third of five courses was planned during in November 2002 and will be conducted February 2003.

As planned and stated in PAT Annual Work Plan and Budget a number of development activities have been carried out in co-operation with disability NGO's since July 2002. The following activities can briefly be listed:

- Awareness raising regarding the UN Standard Rules on equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, where the UN Special Rapporteur Mr. Bengt Lindquist was invited and participated from September 3 to September 8 in a number of meetings and workshops with politicians, Government officials, NGO representatives and other stakeholders. Mr. Bengt Lindquist has forwarded a letter with his findings and recommendations to the Prime Minister of Nepal.
- Nepali sign language development, where a sign language dictionary containing 1000 signs for abstract concepts used in secondary education has been developed in collaboration with the Naxal School, Kathmandu in order to facilitate secondary education of children with hearing impairment. Moreover, as a result of financial support from Danida direct funding and thorough planning and discussions between SNES, ESAT, NGO's and Tribhuvan University a sign language development centre is finally in the process of being established at Tribhuvan University.
- Capacity building of disability NGOs, where advisory and financial support to relevant workshops and linkages between Danish and Nepalese disability NGO's has been provided. In November, a DSI delegation visited Nepal and co-operation agreements are now established between 4 Danish and 4 Nepalese disability organisations
- Vocational Training, where a number of literacy and vocational training programmes for people with disabilities have been implemented by local NGO's with direct funding financial support. Since July 2002 vocational trainings programmes monitored by SNES have been conducted in Nuwakot, Nawalparasi, Dhading and Bhaktapur districts.
- In co-operation between and with financial support from direct funding, the National Federation of Disabled Nepal and DOE have prepared an information folder to raise awareness of how access to schools for children with disabilities can be improved. The

“access awareness” folder has been published and will be distributed to 25,000 schools all over Nepal.

Re-designed literacy programs:

The government of Nepal has made many efforts to achieve the goal set by Jomtien Conference (1990), aimed at achieving universal primary education, and reduce adult literacy by half at the end of this century.

In the entire developmental planning such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, literacy is reflected as a major priority area of HMG Nepal. The major objectives related to non-formal education in Tenth Five-year development plan is to utilise education as a powerful medium in order to eliminate poverty by developing human resources, and to achieve economic as well as social development. Similarly another objective is to improve the living standard of illiterate people, especially women, by conducting functional literacy program (NPC draft doc. 2002). In order to fulfil this ambitious goal and commitment, HMG has increased public expenditure in primary education.

However, it is evident that non-formal education is given little priority in HMG's program and policies as only 2% of the education budget is set aside for non-formal education. Recent studies indicate that gaps between regions, castes, gender and urban and rural are widening.

Non-formal education programme is continuing the quota based planning system. The exact numbers of quotas are sent to the districts, and the district literacy committees distribute them to different VDCs and communities. On the basis of the guideline provided by the NFEC, quotas are implemented through other agencies including NGOs and CBO's like Red Cross Society. This kind of centralized quota based system is one of the major problems in NFE sector. Community ownership is completely lacking in this centralized model.

A need-based programme would be one of the good starting points to achieve community involvement. An initiative to articulate a need-based non-formal education policy and planning modality has been taken.

Theoretically, multi-layer supervision and monitoring system has been applied for the monitoring of Non-formal classes. Local supervisor, ward level literacy committee, VDC level literacy committee are expected to monitor the NFE classes regularly. In reality, such mechanisms to monitor the programs are yet to be strengthened. There are very few examples of evaluation of the performance of service providers at the implementation level. Similarly, data gathered at central level are not utilized effectively for future programme development. Reliability of the collected data is a complicated issue in this sector. Assessments of which programs have been carried out in which year and given the maximum service are not made and it is not possible to find the results.

After one year piloting of monitoring tools, a database was established at the central level and will gradually be transferred to the decentralised level. Facilitating the strengthening the monitoring system is one of the important issues in this sector.

This far, the program has not been able to target the 24 educationally backward disadvantaged communities and/or relate literacy programs with income generation and enrolment of children in schools in an efficient manner. Likewise, relationships between what the partici-

pants learn in classes and the problems they have to face in their daily life have to be strengthened.

The literacy classes still have no provision for lanterns and kerosene oil although they are conducted in the evening. Teaching materials like textbooks, training manuals etc. do not reach districts in time. There is compulsion to conduct training even without the use of training manuals. Improvements in the consistency between planning cycles and class cycles are imperative, through guidelines, rules and norms as well as checklists.

Most of the research studies and experience undertaken on no-formal education tell that dropouts, irregular class, lack of quality supervision and late arrival of materials (Training and WEP) are the main problems in this field. Similarly, centralized curriculum and textbooks, structured training program, quota base system; less interactive classroom and less contextual learning materials are the main weakness of this program. In the present context, quota system should be replaced by decentralized, locally designed literacy program, which can address the local needs of the specific group. Therefore, literacy program (WEP and OSP) will be re-designed according to the needs of local people and implemented in disadvantage community.

A comprehensive functional literacy and continuing education program oriented to the basic needs of the disadvantaged group/community will help to reduce the gap between poor and the more well-offs. Different studies done at national and international level show that there is a high relevancy between the education level and productive income, health, and poverty of population. The poor population usually concentrates in areas with very low adult literacy rate. A great vicious circle of illiteracy, poverty and ideological backwardness is always being with disadvantage area. The only way out for this is education. The basic approaches to the eradication of poverty, therefore, are to consciously impart the disadvantaged population with various surviving skills through functional literacy programme.

Alternative modalities of literacy programme owned by the local community, inclusion of functional knowledge and integrating with other activities like income generation activities, early childhood development (ECD), Women empowerment, scholarship program, girl's enrollment and other relevant activities under BPEP II will be developed and piloted in 2/3 poorest and accessible district. In this way literacy programme will help to develop quality of life of the family from disadvantage/dalit community. Community Learning Centre (CLC), Women's group, NGOs/CBO's and Village Development Committee are the basic mechanisms for the implementation of newly designed literacy programme

Strong monitoring system, effective localised supervision programme and collaborative working model with NGOs/CBO's will also be piloted in same area. Likewise, this programme will linked with research Group/Company for the finalisation of the pilot programme.

International experience is needed for, some of the activities, mentioned above, to be developed and piloted under this project. Illiteracy mapping, re-design the need base literacy programme, participatory curriculum and training materials development and action research are the main activities where international input is needed.

Due to shortage of funds, a TOR for assistance to development of a needs-based policy and planning modality, forwarded to RDE/CPH has been postponed indefinitely.

3. Learning and Achievements

As many studies have indicated, textbooks are one of the major important tools in achieving quality improvements in schools. The present production and distribution of textbook are central/district based and create many problems at school level. Many schools receive textbooks late, if at all, not in sets and right quantities. The present textbook distribution is not based on the receiver/use – the schools/pupils need. It is therefore imperative if quality of the teaching learning is to take place, that textbook is delivered on time and in correct quantities.

An evaluation report on various distribution modalities for textbooks (Re-use, Bulk, LPO and Coupon) has been submitted and a one-day workshop conducted to discuss and disseminate the findings. The report clearly recommends the Bulk distribution and further gradually introduces the Re-use textbook by starting with the Mountain districts, as they are the most difficult and expensive to reach.

MOES has established a task force to come up with recommendations for the future policy on distribution of free textbooks for grade 1-5, based on the report. The task force has decided that a survey should be done to determinate durability of re-use textbook in the third year, as the survey only covered two years. The third-year survey of re-use textbooks has been slightly delayed and is expected delivered early January 2003.

Due to shortage of funds, a TOR for assisting the Department in establishing a proper distribution system, including manuals and training forwarded to RDE/CHP has been postponed indefinitely.

Funds were provided for supporting the four-distribution experiment; Grade 1 textbooks in the three re-use districts and the consultancy company, which did the monitoring, evaluation report.

A project for improving the teaching learning at school is under implementation. The project is covering 150 schools in three districts. They are Kanchenpur with 60 schools, receiving each NRs. 45,000, Doti where 50 schools receive each NRs. 50,000 and Humla where 40 schools receive each NRs. 55,000. Cost of local transport is included. The project consists of 9 packages, five "hardware" and four "software". Each school/SMC/Community has to choose among the packages, which they think is most needed; however, minimum two software packages must be chosen. The hardware package will be bought locally. Each school must sign an agreement with the DEO regarding the utilisation of the funds.

Funds for the hardware packages and local transport within the district have been released to the DOE, who will forward the funds to the districts.

Purchase of the software packages are in progress from central level. When ready, the software packages will be sent to the three respective districts.

A well equipped and function library system with access for all MOES staff is essential in supporting researchers, textbook writers an other educational staff with good possibilities for collecting up-to date background materials and other relevant information. At present, there are several libraries systems; however, their functions and equipment is in need of an overhaul. Due to shortage of funds, a TOR for assistance to established necessary library functions has been postponed indefinitely.

A one-year contract with the NGO, The Nepalese Association of School Librarians (NASL), was initiated on October 1, 2002. A working Committee is established under the DOE to look after activities and undertake quality control. NASL is a sister organisation of the Danish Association of School Librarians (DASL). The contract covers establishment of school libraries in 12 government schools in the Valley and training of teachers on library and information science. The project will eventually provide DOE with suggestions and ideas on policies, national rules and regulations for establishment, maintenance and well-functioning libraries in primary schools with a special focus on poor schools outside Kathmandu valley, low-cost implications and networking systems.

Most schools do not have libraries and if, they often do not function well due to lack of proper training and knowledge. Through libraries and cooperation between parents, students and teachers, students should achieve higher levels of literacy, reading skills, learning and problem solving along with information and communication technology skills.

During a meeting with the Charge d’Affaire of the Royal Danish Embassy, the Secretary of Ministry Education and Sports ventilated a proposal for Danida support for production and distribution of durable textbooks to 16 remote districts (300.000 children). The PAT office initiated estimations on the cost and production feasibility in collaboration with the respective section in DOE. A terms of references was submitted for internal approval in MOES. However, due to shortage of funds, the project has subsequently been shelved.

4. Institutional strengthening

In August, at the request of the Director General, an internal work group drafted a proposal for the reorganisation of the Department of Education. Facilitated by PAT, the work group came up with a proposal that emphasises teamwork and a sector approach to primary and secondary education rather than component and funding focus. The proposal further stresses an Education Division encompassing both the existing primary and secondary divisions as well as the establishment of new Planning and Budgeting Division. The proposal has been forwarded to the MOES and is currently being perused by the Ministry of General Administration before Cabinet decision.

An important follow-on to the reorganisation proposal will be the drafting of new regulations and procedures as well as capacity building of staff to work in the new environment. Also in August, the Local Donor Group dropped the idea of a Formulation Team and a Technical Review mission to produce materials that could facilitate a possible BPEP III concept paper. Instead, it was chosen to let Ministry of Education and Sports develop a proposal for a concept paper.

Facilitated by the PAT office, a group of government officials from MOES and DOE produced a draft concept paper, based on the draft 10th. Plan and National Plan of Action for Education for All 2015 and presented it for the technical mission in December 2002.

At the mission, it was decided to consolidate the paper through civil society consultations and submit a revised paper for the joint donor mission in March.

Still in process, dissemination of the Seventh Amendment to the Education Act has been undertaken and valuable feedback from all levels in all regions compiled. Seven months consultancy with the media company Thompson Nepal is coming to an end during the month of January 2003, where the final report is due. Evaluation on experiences gained dur-

ing this period is expected shortly. The provided feedback is particularly in terms of lack of clarity and contradictions between the amendment and by-laws. During this process, on-the-job communication training of DOE officers in the regions has been carried out.

Radio spots have been broadcasted, articles in newspapers printed and a folder produced and distributed. Several journalists were invited to participate in workshops and relied info to the public at large. Spots and jingles produced by Thompson Nepal were passed to local radio stations in Butwal, Palpa and Pokhara for reuse to reach a broader audience. Networking and exchanging already produced programmes, spots and jingles is a way of sharing and utilising resources optimal.

Taking into consideration the comments and suggestions made by the Mid-Term Review in March 2002 on the preliminary draft of the HRD Plan (March 2002), a process of finalizing the HRD Plan was initiated in June. Three national consultants were hired. This HRD team held many consultative meetings with central line agencies and MOES officials. In addition, a one-day workshop was held on July 13, 2002 in which 64 participants consisting of teachers, head teachers, SMC members, NGOs, DEOs, students, women's groups, supervisors, and elected representatives of local bodies took part. The aim of this workshop was to gather feedback and suggestions on the HRD interventions, proposed in the draft plan and to identify the HRD needs of local actors and stakeholders.

The revised HRD Plan has integrated gender issues as well as developed a detailed prioritised and sequenced implementation plan, including target group, responsible institution, service provider, unit cost, total cost, duration, approach, assumptions and time schedule for each proposed HRD activity.

The Core Committee and the Steering Committee for the HRD Plan have met several times after the submission of the HRD Plan in August in order to determine the process of officially finalizing the document. This Plan (i.e. August 2002 version) has been distributed to all BPEP II donors, heads of all central line agencies, all MOES joint secretaries and undersecretaries, all DOE directors and under secretaries, and of course the members of the HRD Plan Core committee, Steering Committee, and the Review Committee. The HRD Core committee decided to give this Plan a thorough reading and hence formed three reading groups. These groups have submitted their comments, which are in the process of being compiled. These comments will be submitted by the Core Committee to the Steering Committee which will make a decision on submitting this Plan to the Minister of Education and Sports for final approval.

To improve the overall quality of primary education, devolution to district and sub-district is imperative. A need is found to provide central and local decisions makers with reliable information and data of a school catchments areas in relation to pupils and their age, underserved and disadvantages groups etc in order or ensure schools are established and or expanded (not only physical infrastructure) on need based criteria's. At present, a lot of data are collected at school and community level but not used in for planning purpose in most districts, if any. Many schools tend to in- or decrease figures in data as to obtain financial and other support from HMG. At present, no reliable system is in place.

An improved and more reliable Educational Management Information System (EMIS) data collection system and a better capacity in analysing the data will provide a tool for decision makers at all level in improving the quality of education. Therefore, provision and procedures must be made for internal use of data as well as for publications/disseminations of the

very same data. In order to that a development of a School Mapping and micro planning and EMIS system is being undertaken at central, district and sub-district level.

To support MOES/DoE in this, IIEP (UNESCO, Paris) has supported by direct funding in mid 2002 started a comprehensive training programme. The support programme, planned for three years, will be conducted with all relevant stakeholders and will be coordinated closely with the support from other programmes (NIEPA) towards decentralisation as well as all communication initiatives.

A contract with Unlimited Ltd. to design the software for the DOE was cancelled, as they were unable to deliver the software as required. A new provider has been identified.

Several workshops/seminars has been conducted at central and district level. GIS software and digital data-maps and other equipment have been purchased. Redesign of DOE data entry software and dissemination information papers is in development. Printing of EMIS data was also supported.

Further, it was planned to establish an institutional linkage to develop a comprehensive restructuring of DOE monitoring abilities at central, district and sub district level as well as physical planning instruments for the same. The overall objective was to establish at central level a proper monitoring system for all DOE activities within both the basic, primary, and secondary sub-sector. Unfortunately, as reported earlier, this initiative has now been postponed due to lack for funds.

Good monitoring – for both primary and secondary sub-sectors – will enable stakeholders to make informed decisions leading to efficient and effective use of resources. Particularly, in a sector programme with basket funding it is not possible to differentiate between Government and donor-funded activities. It is therefore imperative that MOES/DOE has a good and well function monitoring systems so as to ensure the best utilization and transparency of funds. It is here important that activities within the improvements of schools physical learning environment receive high priority, as this component is by far consuming the largest amount of funds of all components.

With the objective of enhancing the financial management capacity of the from all 95 cost centres for BPEP II, the following training/workshops for accountants has been organized:

Date	Place and Venue	Participants
Sept. 8-10, 2002	Biratnagar, Morang district	32 (out of 32 targeted) accountants working in RED, different DEOs and PTTCs in the Eastern Dev. Region
Sept. 13-15, 2002	Hetauda, Makwanpur dist.	28 (out of 35 targeted) accountants working in RED, different DEOs and PTTCs in the Central Dev. Region (excluding accountants from CLAs, DEOs from the 3 districts of Ktm valley
Sept 21-23, 2002	Pokhara, Kaski dist.	36 (out of 38 targeted) accountants working in RED, different DEOs and PTTCs in the Western Dev. Region
Sept 29-Oct. 1, 2002	Nepalgunj, Banke dist.	25 (out of 28 targeted) accountants working in RED, different DEOs and PTTCs in the Midwestern Dev. Region
Oct. 3-5, 2002	Nepalgunj, Banke dist.	22 (out of 26 targeted) accountants working in RED, different DEOs and PTTCs in the Farwestern Dev. Region

This training/workshop focused on the following areas:

- Resolving existing problems, issues, confusions of cost centres regarding budget, auditing, and program implementation.
- Current fiscal year's budget, plans and programs, norms, budget classification, budget release and expenditure, IDA procurement and disbursement procedures, reimbursement and replenishment procedures, basket funding modality, SOE preparation, updating and clearance of irregularities.
- Functional relationship and coordination between DTCO and cost centres, and coordination between accountants and DEO management.

Various materials, discussed during the training/workshops, were also distributed to the participants, such as the format of quotation documents, HMG/N Financial Rules and Regulations Act, current classification and explanation of budget expenditures, annual plans and programs, circulars of FCGO and other HMG agencies, IDA procurement guidelines, accounting manual for SOE preparation, etc.

A one-month training for the 25 best performing accountants of 95 BPEP II cost centres focused on procurement procedures of World Bank, ADB and HMG, Program Accounting Information System (PAIS), auditing system, program planning, budgeting and funds release procedures, as well as loan disbursement policies has been postponed indefinitely due to lack of funds.

The necessary preparatory works to organise procurement training for DOE officials have been completed. A total of 6 DOE officials are scheduled to participate in procurement training in the Administrative Staff College of India from January 20 to January 31, 2003. This training will focus on the project cycle and loan/credit agreements, procurement policy of the World Bank, guidelines for procurement, and the procurement process and purchaser/contractor relationship. The trained DOE officials will become trainers on this topic for other staff of DOE, CLAs and districts.

Regular staff meetings among DOE staff have been initiated to increase communication internally and to have a forum for info sharing and updates of programmes and activities. Staff meetings were previously held, but they have apparently not been carried out for a long period. They appear to be both needed and appreciated and have involved approximately 20 officers from different line agencies. The Director General or the Education Director chairs meetings.

A newsletter (under DOE annual program) has been produced in 2,000 copies and distributed. An editorial board of 7 members including one female is established in DOE with involvement of line agencies and MOES. The main target group is the RCs at sub-district level, though issues relate to the education sector as a whole. This is the first issue to be published quarterly.

The topics covered in this edition are:

- Publisher's note by the Director General,
- Editorial - "First effort",
- Educational administration and journalists agreed to work together, Education Minister announced 29-point program,
- Curriculum textbooks and continuous reviews,

- School management handed over to the community,
- Government – donor joint meeting positive,
- SIP workshop completed,
- Immediate relief program on education,
- Matching fund: self sustained RCs,
- Ranking of RCs completed,
- Distance education centre and it's programs,
- Textbook distribution reuse system effective,
- An introduction of non-formal education program.

Press articles on education from different newspapers are steadily being compiled for a future regional level exhibition.

A Communication Unit in DOE is on the way with the restructuring of DOE.

Late November, at the request of the Director General of DOE, a joint RED, DOE and PAT field trip was undertaken 2 weeks after the serious Maoist attack to Jumla. The purpose was to assess the situation after the attack and the complete destruction of government facilities. The trip revealed a critical situation, which an education system practically unprepared for this kind of event or similar catastrophes.

As a follow-up to the field trip to Jumla, the Secretary of Ministry of Education and Sports requested the PAT office to assess the educational situation in three other districts, attacked and government functions severely hampered. Another objective was to receive information on the use of the HMG/N Relief Package. The districts were Arghakhachi, Accham and Solukhumbu as well as Jumla again (to assess progress). The Charge d’Affaire and the Counsellor of the Royal Danish Embassy joined the delegation that visited Accham and Jumla.

As part of the follow-up, a team consisting of physical experts was dispatched to Jumla soon after the first to assess feasibility of rehabilitating damaged building.

Reports on all field trips are in the process of finalisation and will be submitted shortly.

5. School Improvement Planning

The decentralisation process is assisted with the involvement of the NIEPA institution. During NIEPA's last mission in Nepal, a contract between PAT and NIEPA was signed on September 10, 2002. A MOU between the two institutions was not signed due to internal factors, but promised finalized during the following week, which has not been adhered to, even as to date 4 months later. The MOU between the MOES/DOE and NIEPA is unfortunately still pending. However, the MOES has instructed the Director General of DOE to sign the MOU.

The implementation schedule and planning will need revision, which means additional and unnecessary costs. The serious delay of the implementation of the decentralisation process and consequent lack of capacity building in the five bottom-up districts is raising questions on the MOES/DOE commitment to devolution and decentralisation. As this contract constitutes direct funding worth NRs. 20 million and has vast practical and educational importance, the delay is most unfortunate and damaging.

As information and especially access to information on educational issues is imperative to participation and involvement of stakeholders, initiatives on information and dissemination of educational news in the broadest perspective and with various initiatives has been tried out in a coordinated manner as mentioned in the last biannual report in order to support the drive for devolution and decentralisation. The rationale is that access to information and knowledge on education is a precondition for involvement and participation.

DOE requested DANIDA for an extension of the media consultant assisting the DOE/ MOES in strengthening relationship with various media. This was granted through direct funding. Services and experiences of the consultant are still proving beneficial to the MOES and DOE. With a well-consolidated network to media institutions and representatives', initiatives and ways of cooperation and implementing activities has resulted in improved dialogue between the public at large and the MOES/DOE. Additionally, working modality and daily presence in DOE makes this consultancy different from others in the sense that planning and coordination throughout has been closely linked with MOES and Department staffs. This contributes to building actual capacity in terms of knowledge transfer, problem solving and on-the-job-training.

A one-year consultancy is being undertaken with the private radio station Hits FM. The contract period runs from July 25, 2002 to July 24, 2003. A steering committee was established to overlook, monitor and approve the content and quality of the educational spots. Acknowledging the importance of education along with exercising the partnership with BPEP, Hits FM has provided free radio time for a monthly Saturday education program as a complimentary service. 12 Saturday Prime Time programs will be broadcast during the contract period. Special IDs and Promos are also being aired to promote the programme and to inform as well as solicit listener ship. Nepali education songs, previously produced by DOE, are aired everyday on the Nepali breakfast programme, 6:15-7:00. All radio presenters on every programme throughout the day incorporate material related to education in their scripts, such as recent education statistics and relevant info. Regular meetings are held with Hits FM, whereby feedback was provided, for instance in terms of listeners calling the station appreciating the approach. Five education spots have been broadcasted continuously throughout the day and lately 3 new were approved and on air. During this period, 5 Saturday programmes have been on air.

A media workshop bridging education and media was conducted on December 2-4, 2002. The aim was to initiate collaboration between education and the media. The 48 participating media people were invited from the whole country and represented the general media (TV, newspapers, national, local and private radio stations) including Dalits and 6 female participants. This is the first time media and the education sector has met in a prepared manner.

The MOES/DOE provided recent and updated information and data from the education sector to the media. Discussions and sharing on the role of media was found fruitful. A 24-page info-folder "Educational reforms in Nepal. An introduction of Basic and Primary education and secondary education support program" was developed for the purpose and printed in 1,000 copies and distributed to participants. The workshop was highly appreciated. A noticeable outcome from the workshop was a strong interest and initiative in linking the radio media together and strengthening the education network by learning and utilising each other's endeavours. Participants decided that the journalist Dalit organisation, Jagaran Media Centre, was to take the lead as coordinator. Interested radio stations have already submitted proposals for further coordination and elaboration. It must be underlined here that actual outreach or number of beneficiaries of such programmes are hard to estimate.

During the last 6 months, a press meeting was held in DOE and another in MOES. The assistance of the media consultant in this respect and particularly in methods of conducting such activities, has qualitatively improved these important interactions.

Crosscutting issues

HIV/ AIDS: The HIV/ AIDS Impact study on the education sector has been conducted and the final report is expected during the first quarter of 2003.

The MOES established a working group with participation of DOE, Ministry of Health, European Commission, UNICEF and Danida to plan, monitor and assist in carrying out the study in a collaborative and thorough manner. Decisions, adjustments, support and reporting mechanisms have proved rewarding in qualitative results, despite a complex and time consuming beginning. The national posts were publicly advertised and objective and transparent selection procedures and criteria involved all stakeholders. Danida supported 3 national consultants, 2 male and 1 female, for the 4 months period, which started September 18, 2002. The consultants covered the areas of Education Specialist, Social Analyst and Communication Specialist. Each national consultant linked up with an international consultant in the same area for capacity building reasons. UNICEF supported one international consultant, and European Commission two.

On January 8, 2003, Danida funded the HIV/AIDS dissemination workshop: "An assessment of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector in Nepal", where findings were disseminated and comments and suggestions collected. Ideas and questions were plenty from the many invited secondary students and teachers. "This is the first time in MOES history of such workshops that the real beneficiaries take part and it is very important to include their viewpoints", one MOES official said. More than 123 people participated, 88 male and 32 female. This HIV/ AIDS study has definitely been an exercise in fruitful collaboration and capacity building on a broader scale.

Assistance to HMG reform of Secondary education:

The Interim Project is intending to bridge between the finalisation of the Core Document and the formal initiation of the program support.

Yet, it was obvious and highly necessary to raise attention to the content of the SESP. SESP contains no implementation document, contrary to the BPEP II PIP. For this reason, a new approach was needed to cater for a common understanding on all levels. Facilitated by PAT, a number of sessions encompassing joint document reading and discussions to dig out weaknesses, share concerns and pose questions to unclear matters in the SESP document were organised with staffs of central line agencies. Further, the Core Document was translated into Nepali and publishing in a combined Nepali/English version in 2000 copies. The copies have been distributed to all central and regional staff as well as a certain number of copies for District Education Offices. A copy of the Nepali/English Core Document has also been distributed to each of the 1330 Resource Centres.

The Interim Project consists among others of 5 international consultancies, described below.

One consultancy provides support to management upgrading of JEMC and preparation to establish a security printing press for School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and secondly and the second, a possible merger of the primary and secondary publishing cell/units at CDC/DoE, Sanothimi.

The JEMC consultant has been here twice. During the visits extensive discussion on management issues were done including a visit to some modern printing houses in Singapore to give the upcoming management of JEMC an insight in modern printing. An action plan was made after the first visit which is divided into three time frames: immediate, medium-term and long-term.

After the second visit the consultant expressed that improvements has taken place at JEMC. The production capacity has increased, the wasted of paper has been reduced etc. However, the consultant also expressed that with the present framework and set up of JEMC management structure etc further progress would limit.

A third and last visit is scheduled early 2003 to follow up on activities discussed.

Security of printing SLC papers is feasible in Nepal both in terms of technical and security. However, to establish and implement a popper security system is entirely up to the HMG/N. JEMC will be recommended as the location of the security printing press as they have the manpower (some training is needed in operating the new machines) and to a large extend the technical back up. Funds were provided for the Singapore visit for six JEMC staff.

The consultant for merger of the publishing cells has completed the work. The final report is still pending. However, during the debriefing in Sanothimi it was clearly indicated that the conclusion would be that a merger is recommended, as it will benefit all parties concerned. The proposed merger will require some upgrading of equipment, additional and training of staff etc.

Two consultancy missions on the SIP/DEP component have been completed. Work is linked up with BPEP experiences and relevant documents. The missions found a need for assistance and more information within the areas of district capacity profiles, education sector financing and training capacity for education planning at local level. Three local consultants were hired and are presently working. It must be stressed here that it has taken much time to find consultants who are both qualified in undertaking the job and at the same time willing to go to Humla and Doti. For reference and access, the BPEP SIP training package manual, which is currently in use, has been translated to English together with two examples of actual SIPs; a qualitatively weak school improvement plan and a stronger school improvement plan.

As the Human Resource Development Plan focuses on BPEP, a supplementary plan for the secondary education sub-sector is being developed under SESP Interim Project. Needs assessment of the secondary education sub-sector through a district capacity assessment survey was carried out starting in November 2002. MOES and DOE personnel along with those from NCED, CDC, DEC, SEDEC, and OCE have been consulted extensively in order to get their input specifically in identifying their needs in the context of SESP.

In addition to meetings and consultations at the central level, visits to Kaski and Parbat were conducted and discussions were done with RED personnel, SEDU, RCs, DEOs, SMCs, and school supervisors, teachers, HTs, students, parents and SMCs. District Capacity Assessment Survey is also being carried out in Dhanusha (a Terai district), Dhankuta (a Hill district)

and Solukhumbu (a Mountain district). Reports of this survey will be finalized and submitted to international consultants developing the supplementary HRD Plan in January 2003.

The supplementary HRD plan is expected to be ready by March 2003.

One of the five areas under the Interim Project of SESP is formative research on the four components identified for SESP. Consultants from Centre for Development Research (CDR) were fielded to Nepal in September. A MOU was signed between CDR and the Faculty of Education (FOE) for FRP. A five-member working team has been formally formed in DOE to facilitate and guide FOE researchers who will be conducting field work in Doti and Humla, the two selected Program Intensive Districts (PIDs) for SESP. Each of the four research teams of FOE (each focusing on one SESP component) prepared research protocols with input from CDR consultants. Research instruments were developed and inputs to finalize them were provided to the research teams of FOE by the 3 CDR consultants in a one-and-a-half-day workshop in November 2002. FOE translated its research instruments into Nepali and pre-tested them in December 2002. All four-research teams of FOE have planned to start fieldwork in Doti from January 23rd and in Humla from February 15th.

Further, through the Interim Project, support has been given to regular cost of the Secondary Education Development Centre. This came to an end January 15, 2003.

Assumptions and Risks

Immediate risks:

The political situation seems quite confusing and overwhelming. The decision not to hold elections but rather to install a “care-taker” government puts a serious question mark to the efforts to devolve authority and activities to local levels as well as questions the political stability. However, a number of devolution activities in BPEP II such as the decentralisation in 5 districts have been undertaken. Low levels of activities were witnessed in October and November due to festivals and the instability of the political situation. This, of course, will impact the implementation of the programme at all levels.

HMG has reduced budgets for the coming fiscal year. The office is still to receive detailed information on the budget. Yet it seems that the educational and primary education share of national budget are to be maintained. However, at a lower level all together. The free textbook provision has been reduced drastically.

The reduction of the Danida budget poses a risk as Danida has been – and still is – seen as a leading as well as flexible contributor to the development of basic and primary education in Nepal. The drastic reduction – DKK 50 million of the initial contribution of DKK 300 million - of the allocations for the BPEP II will no doubt impact on the standing of and confidence towards Danida in the education sector in Nepal.

Year	Earlier proposed country frame BPEP II + SESP	Now country frame BPEP II + SESP
2003	DKK 54	DKK 35
2004	DKK 79	DKK 48

It should also be taken into consideration that the country frame prevents the programme, due to the expected replenishment requests to fulfil the basket commitments. Other donors will have to take over the Danida commitments. At the time of reporting, this “taking over” is uncertain and not concluded.

During the annual negotiations in 2002, it was agreed that with the initiation of the PRSP/10th. Plan, the education allocations of the country frame would occupy 40%. The PRSP/10th. Plan has been launched in 2003; yet the education allocation only occupies 23%.

If, the programme had been allowed to fulfil its basket commitments, only DKK 10 million of the initial allocation of DKK 300 million would have remained unspent at the end of the programme in 2004.

Finally, the reduction will reduce the ability of the education programme to reach out to those presently out of school and hard to get to. Areas – especially the Mid-West and Far-Western parts – with high poverty density will be impacted. Costs of operating in remote areas – experiencing severe poverty and the effects of the insurgency – are higher than normal as more experimental operations and initiatives are necessary. An example could be the lack of opportunity to print durable textbooks for 16 remote districts; another could be that 11 terms of references for international linkage and assistance, concerning issues like decentralised planning and decentralised financial management, has been idle in Copenhagen for more than 8 months.

Long-term risks:

The assessment of long-term risks, important for, programme implementation, is relatively unchanged and given below:

- General uncertainty in the Nepal because of the continued insurgency and far-reaching policy changes effect the program implementation. The lack of political stability is of overall importance to all components. However, it seems that some understandings of joint politician directions are slowly emerging, according to rumours in the capital.
- The situation in the districts is deteriorating due the political-armed conflict. Starvation is reported in a number of districts. Accessibility to districts and beyond district HQ's are still questionable, making it difficult – but not necessarily impossible – to monitor district developments through field visits.
- Stability and implementation capacities of involved central and districts institutions, NGO's and disability NGO's are still questionable.

The SESP is a high-risk programme with particular high risks emanating from the lack of capacity on the part of the Government, a weak fiscal base and the deteriorating security situation.

Considering especially the first issue, well-functioning teams need to be built at all levels of the service in order for SESP interventions to be successful. This requires training in particular to be organised on institution rather than seniority lines, and for issues of caste and ethnicity to be faced up to and handled within SESP interventions (both in terms of clients and the deliverers).

As the parties have still not signed the Government-to-Government agreement concerning the SESP, no specific planning of activities has taken place.

Without a clear commitment by the Government to retain people within their posts, there is no prospect a building a critical level of institutional capacity and memory, necessary to sustain and build on the achievements of the programme.

This also concerns the anchoring of the SESP. It should be seen, as a clear condition that the SESP is located within the existing DOE structure in order to establish and profit from the synergies with basic and primary education apart from the fact that it is does not make sense to have two physical sections etc.

Recommended actions

A number of recommended actions, covering support for both primary and secondary education are proposed:

- To continue the build-up for an ASIP and AWP&B for secondary education, if possible, combined with the one for primary
- To continue dissemination of the SESP Core Document
- To focus more on devolution of authority and social mobilisation
- To focus and internally clarify, how ESAT is going to relate to post-conflict education, in order to advise best possibly the DOE, among others design a possible Task Force
- To develop a plan for direct funding of the SESP and integrate it with the direct funding plan BPEPII
- To strengthen ties to Danida programmes in Nepal for decentralisation and human rights with respect to improving coordination and collaboration.

Also it is recommended that the job descriptions of the Danida advisors be formally adopted and forwarded to these as soon as possible, as they were discussed during the bilateral review in March 2003 and later approved by the Prime Minister of Nepal in June 2002. Finally, it is recommended that the successor of the current Special Needs Education Advisor be appointed as soon as possible in order to avoid voids.

Review and Evaluation

The following reviews and evaluations seem to be in the pipeline for the calendar year 2003:

April/May	Inception workshop for SESP (ADB)
May	Technical negotiations
June	Pre-appraisal of the concept paper
July	Annual negotiations
August	Mission by the Danish Auditor General
September	Appraisal of the concept paper Mission on SESP
Sept-Nov.	Evaluation of BPEPII (Danida)

November Mission on BPEP II