



ANNUAL STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2005 – 2006

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ANNUAL STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2005/06

1. **Background:**

Nepal initiated the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) in July 2002 with the overall objective of achieving poverty reduction by adopting integrated strategies of faster and equitable human resource development. The point of departure of the plan is a shift from the conventional income-poverty strategies to empowerment approach emphasizing on individual enlightenment, capabilities, rights and freedom. Education is considered as one of the main vehicles for poverty reduction. The inherent assumption is that opportunities are enhanced with access to relevant and responsive education system, focused on women, disadvantaged and deprived sections of social strata with a view to building human capability for stimulating people to actively involve in socio-economic activities. Human development entails empowering people with knowledge and skills for voicing their concerns and securing their rights for leading a dignified life, which is dependent on faster and sustained social-economic growth leading to poverty reduction.

Upon the footings of the goals, policies and strategies of the national development plan, Nepal is embarking on improving school sector education aiming at ensuring equitable access to and completion of quality education (primary and secondary) with special emphasis on the disadvantaged groups -the females, dalits, people with disabilities, and ethnic and linguistic minorities.

A number of education reform initiatives have been initiated as means for realizing the plan visions. Among others, the Education for All (EFA 2004-2009), Secondary Education Support Program (SESP 2003-2008), Teacher Education Project (TEP, 2002-2007), Community School Support Project (World Bank, 2003-2006), Food for Education (WFP 2002-2006), the Construction of Primary Schools in Support of EFA (JICA, 2003-2006), Decentralized Action for Children and Women (UNICEF), Community Learning Centre (UNESCO), Population Education Project (UNFPA), Scholarship for Dalits and Sons and Daughters of Martyrs including Girls Education Fund are some of the eminent education reform initiatives currently being implemented in Nepal.

In this regard, the Community Owned Primary Education Project (UNDP), support extended by I/NGOs and other civil and humanitarian organizations including the contributions of the parents are most significant for the total educational development of the country.

The most recent initiatives of the MOES in the form of Business Plan for Education Sector, Education Sector Financing in Nepal and School Sector Wide Approach along with Fast Track Initiative (FTI) intend to plan for the total requirements of education sector with financial gaps for achieving educational goals by improving the education system.

Given the developmental context, the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) 2005-2006 is prepared. It endeavours to align resources with the time bound activity plans linked with the benchmarked program outputs well tuned with national policies and strategies. It also provides an intensive framework for monitoring and tracking program progress, facilitating to identify factors responsible for successes or failures in the past and using the lessons for choosing best options for utilizing resources for securing utmost results. To this end, the ASIP intends furnishing guidelines to education managers and education practitioners for managing, monitoring and evaluating the program in operation and providing continuous adjustments and improvements to secure the program objectives.

The process of preparing ASIP went through a series of workshops at regional levels. Planning officers from central, regional and district levels participated in the discourse of national policies, issues and problems of the districts and the framework for diagnostic process was agreed. The consultation was further extended to schools, RCs and district levels with a view to capture locally felt needs and aspirations on the footing of which each district prepared its ASIP. The district ASIP was again appraised at regional levels and collected at the central level and compiled. All these processes were followed aiming at improving the responsiveness of the national ASIP to the contextual needs where it is actually implemented for bringing about the anticipated program outcomes and realizing the resultant national vision.

The ASIP is structured within the third Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF III) and outlines strategies, policies and the key activities aligned with program outcomes intended for the fiscal year 2005-2006. However, the effect of this ASIP transcends beyond one fiscal year paving ways towards achieving the overall program objectives for the whole plan period and influencing future endeavours of educational development in the country.

In this respect, the emphasis by the pooling partners on developing the ASIP as a sector-wide document to enhance coordination, consistency, and coherency with Secondary Education Support Program, Teacher Education Project and other types of assistance as well as following the structure of the MTEF is worth-mentioning (Aide Memoire, First Consultative meeting, Education for All, December 9, 2004, Para 12). The need of designing a mechanism that ensures participation of non-pooling partners in the process of developing the ASIP for 2005/06 is stressed to encourage national dialogue with a holistic perspective.

The development partners have agreed to an indicative contribution of \$35 million for a total EFA requirement of \$175 million for ASIP 2005/06 in line with the principle of pro rata shares and subject to successful utilization of the EFA budget allocation in 2004/05. Based on the analysis of the districts' requirements, 20% increase in the teachers' allowance, carry over of the JICA supported construction program and fluctuation in the exchange rates; this year's primary education budget is estimated to be \$195.1 million.

In the case of SESP, the partners have agreed that the budget for the fiscal year 2005/06 would be increased to \$19.6 million. This should be considered in the total secondary education context of \$72.3 million requirement including secondary teachers' salary, school grants for providing tuition free secondary education to disadvantaged students, free textbooks and instructional materials to targeted groups and secondary education support program including recurrent as well as capital expenditures.

The government commitment is demonstrated through increased share of education sector budget from 16.2% to 16.9%, which should be considered as a positive development for the delivery of quality education to the future citizens of the country.

Planning premises play important roles for creating an environment necessary for fostering effective implementation of any plan. In order for enhancing enabling conditions for successful implementation and ensuring visible changes from the developmental endeavours, prevalence of peace and security is most vital. In this context, the proposed ASIP keeps vigilant eyes on the persisting conflict situation, which is severely affecting people's access to social services and basic human rights.

The on going conflict over the past ten years is compelling the children to grow amidst the fear of violence, loss of lives and deprivation of belongings continuously attributing the psycho-social development of future citizens.

Moreover, the repeated calls for strikes and rampant abduction of students, teachers and their parents are creating far reaching impacts in the efficiency of educational programs.

The conflict situation relates very much with the governance processes of the development endeavours. It is not only limiting people's power for voicing concerns in order for securing their inherent interest in the education reform process but also impacts on development partners' further contribution to the total education development, which is perceived as vehicle for ensuring democracy, human rights and good governance.

Therefore, the ASIP 2005-006 looks forward to develop a common point whereby educational institutions are considered as zone of peace by all with a view to nurturing continuous and uninterrupted curricular transactions for enhanced learning and development of all children. The conflict is characterized by abundance of displacement of people and children, orphaning children, and depriving them of educational resources. Finding ways as to how to respond to the education needs of such groups is another complex question that this ASIP strives to find a viable answer. In such a situation, usual approaches to strategies for addressing the educational issues seem no longer effective. Rather, new and more flexible and innovative strategies for quickly responding to the demand of changed context are indispensable.

The strategic planning demands a rational relationship between system goals and system performance. This entails upon a strategic trade offs between objectives as stated in the educational programs (Tenth Plan, MTEF, EFA –Pool as well as Non-Pool Financing Plans and Programs and SESP), and operationalized and scheduled in the annual work

plan, on the one hand, and the allocation of resources, on the other hand. This requires appropriateness between goals and allocation of human and material resources dictated by the program plans and by reviewing current allocation and expenditure patterns relative to those plans.

2. **Vision:**

The education sector is to equip the children and the youth of the country with knowledge and skills compatible to the emerging science and technology for effectively coping up the challenges of national as well as international economy, fostering their employability and personal development, nurturing social values in them with a view to promoting social harmony and equity. It is to contribute to sustained national development and poverty reduction by enhancing the knowledge and technological bases enabling the nation to compete to the global economy.

Realizing such vision is contingent to the improvements at all levels of education sector – primary, and secondary, technical and vocational education including tertiary education.

Improvement is secured best, if teachers with high morale, professional dedication and qualification, abreast to curriculum transaction technology facilitate students for learning and development in a conducive and encouraging learning environment for securing high learning achievements within a responsive and relevant curricular framework.

This ASIP upholds the philosophy that education is a human right. This sets in to strive for securing the right to education and gender equality in the spirit of the ‘Convention on the Rights of the Child’ (1990), which stresses an inclusive education (IE) - child-friendly approach to teaching and learning. All efforts of the nation and local communities will be geared towards achieving all aspects of education development in relation to ensuring universalization of primary education (UPE) followed by universal transition to secondary education, which is relevant to the socio-cultural realities of learners, to their aspirations and to the well -being of the nation.

The year 2005 is the year for girls’ education. This ASIP sets the gender disparity debate on education in the district as well as local community (Village Development Committee –VDC and Municipality) context and suggests preparing a map for understanding, monitoring and improving parity by providing quality education to all children, especially girls and disadvantaged. This requires focusing on disadvantaged groups within educationally backward pockets targeting reform in each school for improved learning outcomes corresponding to the quality goals and indicators of primary and secondary education.

3. **Key Objectives:**

The key objective of school sector education is to ensure equitable access to and completion of quality basic as well as secondary education with anticipated efficiency.

More specifically, the primary education strives for universal access to education for all irrespective of gender, ethnicity, caste, socio-economic status and geographic location

ensuring that all accomplish the education cycle within the stipulated time. Similarly, the secondary education aims at increasing access and equity for girls, poor, disadvantaged and minority groups and enhancing its quality for qualifying the graduates for accessing further education or equipping them with market oriented skills for helping them for wage earning jobs.

Hence, the key policy objectives relate to providing quality school education to all children and students of the country within a benchmarked timeframe. The expected outcomes in key educational indicators for school education during the plan period are annexed (Annex 1).

The ASIP 2005/006 will, among others, specifically focus in bringing about tangible outcomes in the following key objectives:

- Expanding ECD program in pockets of vulnerable groups,
- Increasing NIR, NER of girls, Dalit, and Janjati at primary and GER at lower secondary and secondary levels,
- Improving learning outcomes at Grade 5 and pass rates at Grade 8 and SLC examinations,
- Increasing the percentage of trained teachers, and
- Increasing survival and completion rates in primary education.

Based on the expected outcomes and an analysis of past trends (see annex 1), this ASIP aims to achieve the following outcomes in 2005.

- i) The GER of ECD/PPCs will increase from 39 % in 2004 to 42% in 2005 contributing to the improved number of children in Grade 1 with pre-primary education experiences.
- ii) The NER in primary education will increase from 84.2% in 2004 to 88% in 2005. The girls' NER will increase from 78% to 82%.
- iii) The GER in lower secondary education will improve from 80.3% in 2004 to 82% in 2005. In secondary education, it will achieve the intended level of 55% in 2005 from the present level of 50.4%.
- iv) The survival rate in primary education will increase to 78% from 76%.
- v) The learning outcomes in Grade 5 will increase by 4% in each subject. The SLC result will continue improving.
- vi) The percentage of fully trained teachers in primary education will increase from 30.1% to 35%.
- vii) The gender parity in net enrolment will achieve the level of 0.90.

In order to achieve the above objectives, following policy measures will be adopted:

- i) The government will continue supporting ECD/PPCs for enhancing the access and quality of community schools as per the available resources and prioritise partnership and collaboration with UN agencies and I/NGOs and other civil society organizations for its expansion.
- ii) The government will provide scholarship to all dalit children (girls as well as boys), 50% of girls enrolled, and all children with disabilities in primary education in view of equity and gender concerns. Moreover, booster scholarship will be provided

- aiming at out-of-school children in targeted areas of districts with lowest enrolment rates.
- iii) Similarly, in secondary education, the government will provide grants to each lower secondary and secondary school based on the number of dalit students in Grades 6-10 on the condition of not charging any fees (even school as well as SLC examination fees) under any pretext. This provision will prevail upon all students in Grades 6-10 enrolled in districts with lowest HDI. Together with this, the government will also provide scholarships to students based on agreed criteria with a view to providing support to disadvantaged groups for meeting the indirect costs of secondary education.
 - iv) The government will also provide residential scholarship to orphans and conflict affected children/students to support for completion of school education in partnership with NGOs and look forward to supporting other marginalised groups lagging behind in educational indicators.
 - v) The government will focus on creating conducive environment for enhanced learning achievements by creating additional spaces in schools.
 - vi) Performance grants to schools demonstrating their achievement in terms of NER and survival rate to grade five will be reviewed and continued as the crux for securing the EFA objectives. This will apply in secondary education with incentive grants for achieving best results in the SLC examination.
 - vii) The government will focus on reducing adult illiteracy through targeted interventions on the principle of payment by results.
 - viii) Teachers' training will receive adequate priority for enhancing their capabilities for child- friendly teaching with a view to increasing learning outcomes including SLC performance. Inclusiveness and gender sensitivity will form the basis of teacher education and development.
 - ix) All children in primary education will receive free textbooks in the beginning of school year from the grants provided to schools. This will extend to all students in lower secondary and secondary schools in the lowest HDI districts and 20% disadvantaged students based on the six major variables in the NLSS 2004.¹
 - x) School improvement planning process will continue as a means for developing school autonomy and community participation in school governance in primary as well as secondary education based on agreed transparent criteria.
 - xi) Schools not receiving any support from the government will be facilitated with grants for enhancing school performances. Schools with highest STR will receive additional grants for teacher support.
 - xii) Efforts towards mainstreaming the religious institutions will be focused.
 - xiii) Empowering communities through transfer of school management will continue to be at the top of the government agenda.

¹ The characteristics are: student attended private school, availability of toilet, availability of electricity, use of cook stove – open fireplace, kerosene and the types of floor (cemented, etc);.

4. **Lessons Learned:**

The resulting experiences of primary and secondary education programs based on a thorough analysis and their reflection are considered critically in the ASIP 2005-06. Despite tremendous efforts, the issues of access, completion and learning achievement together with social equity and gender parity remained largely unaddressed to which, this ASIP would strive to be responsive with following considerations:

It has been learnt from the past that effective plans aligned with adequate resources are not the only factors to affect on securing desired results. Ensuring efficiency in the delivery is vital for transforming the planned into actual. There must be a coherency between what was planned and what happened in the reality. This necessitates an inbuilt monitoring system, quick access to information on what is happening at the implementation level and mechanism to put corrective measures by using feedbacks in appropriate time. The persisting gaps between policies and practices must be bridged.

The Ministry of Education's Vulnerable Groups Plan, 2004 recommended a host of actions to be taken across the education sector that would be coherent to a more inclusive educational sector. In order to embrace and concretise actions to be taken over the next years, an Inclusive Education Core Group has recently been formed. The group has representation from all line agencies.

Of major concern is the group of children with disabilities. After nearly 12 years of intervention only few children have access to education. It is imperative that children with disabilities benefit from the new inclusive educational approach. For this to emerge it is fundamental that district Assessment and Support Teams' capacity is built so that they can truly start delivering technical support to teachers and schools.

Joint efforts, building partnership and collaboration with agencies within and outside the government setting for bringing additional expertise, innovation, best practices and generation and utilization of resources are the best ways for securing predictable successes. To this respect, the initiatives of NGO/CBO partnership and collaboration taken by the DOE and the guidelines for directing the process must find appropriate acknowledgement in the ASIP.

Alternative modes of operation, flexible to changes, innovative approaches rather than the traditional and rhetoric approaches can be effective to combat the problems of changed contexts. Equity, transparency and accountability are equally important at all levels. The shift towards school based management with the implementation of school grants within a national framework guided by school grants operation guidelines, program implementation manual and procurement plan must be supported by close monitoring, documentation and consolidation of results.

National ownership of the program interventions has been strengthened substantially and requires continuous improvement for developing common understanding among stakeholders by opening their access to major policy decisions and strategies.

One of the successful experiences of the past has been an increased capacity in the participatory planning processes at all levels improved and modified through primary to secondary education. The participatory approach to SIP, ASIP and DEP has been an effective vehicle for bringing on board community stakeholders in the planning and managing of schools. However, there is still a need for broader participation.

5. Strategies:

The ASIP 2005-006 sets decentralization, inclusion and capacity building as the main strategies for realizing the policy objectives of education sector.

5.1 Decentralization:

Decentralization is considered indispensable for ensuring equitable access to quality education for all. Decentralization in education is understood as devolving decisions of educational management from central level to schools. This entails school autonomy for ensuring democratic environment encouraging teachers and parents to take school based decisions relevant to the felt problems and experiences. It facilitates quick decisions, enhances accountability and fosters community contribution and ultimately builds capacity at the local levels. In this context the role of elected SMCs leading to School Based Management is seen crucial.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) will form the vehicle for bringing on board the community stakeholders to analyse and diagnose the problems faced by schools within their community, devise plans to bring about visible reforms and changes in school management, participate in monitoring and evaluating the school performance targeting further improvement. In this respect, the provision of earmarked, block and performance grants is considered most important for putting the resources in the hands of school management committees with autonomy and flexibility over allocation and reallocation, prioritisation and reprioritization of resources for achieving highest possible learning achievement of their children. The newly established school evaluation and social auditing system needs strengthening and consolidating as a means of ensuring transparency and increased accountability. This requires immense capacity at the local level.

Escalation of internal displacement and migration of people from highly conflict affected districts to the safer tarai zone and to the headquarters from remote areas is the ground reality of the present context. Addressing the education needs of such groups is possible when opportunities for entering into the strategic decisions of school governance are ensured for the representation of the affected communities along with the civil society and humanitarian organizations.

The importance of decentralization is to get more actors to work together towards EFA. Collaboration between all can make a difference. The different actors under decentralised setting of school governance will be provided with professional training for ensuring the use of resources (human, financial and time resources) and for continuous improvement in providing good school education to all children starting from pre-primary to secondary education.

5.2 Inclusion:

One of the greatest problems faced by the country today is that growing number of people are yet to be included in the meaningful participation of the economic, social,

political and cultural life of their communities. In such a context, inclusion is seen as an approach to education that endeavours to promote equality and quality education while considering the diversity of students' needs. Hence, it is seen instrumental to contribute to the development of a more tolerant and democratic society.

The ASIP 2005-006 has adopted inclusion as one of the main strategies for achieving Education for ALL basically acknowledging that some children and communities are presently excluded from participating in the education system. Inclusive education is a pedagogical approach that strives to develop child-friendly schools of high quality education while celebrating the diversity of all students' needs. Consequently, the development of inclusive education demands wide-ranging changes involving the whole education system.

Over the past, the concept of inclusive education has moved from being understood as an approach only relating to children with disabilities to being defined in much broader terms as follows:

Inclusive education in Nepal must secure the right of all children to relevant education in their own community. It must promote an educational system that celebrates the rich cultural differences of the country upholding non-discriminatory environments. Inclusive education acknowledges the demand and the necessity for community ownership of the school.

Inclusive education believes that all children can learn given the appropriate environment and support. It is a strategy that identifies children who for any reason are excluded or are at risk of dropping out from schooling in a particular context. These groups should be identified at both national and local levels. Moreover, inclusive education facilitates a process that meets the social, cultural and academic needs through a child centred approach.

Groups presently identified in Nepal at national level, facing exclusion are:

*Girls/women, Children with disabilities, Dalit, Janajati, Street children, Child labourers, Children affected by conflict, Children trafficked for sexual and other purposes, Children without parents/guardians -*orphans, Children whose parent/s are in jail, Sick children e.g. HIV/AIDS, leprosy, Children in poverty.*

These groups should not be considered as permanent rather they would change over time.

5.3 Capacity building:

Institutional Capacity Building and enhancing Management Efficiency are cross cutting across all themes of education sector. Management capacity entails decision-making to ensure effective utilisation of resources for attaining quality education. Research and development is seen instrumental for undertaking a careful and systematic investigation on the program interventions and providing information to decision makers with regard to what went effectively and what went wrong with a view to policy reforms and targeting adjustments of corrective measures in the program.

Over the years, the DOE has undertaken several research activities. As part of BPEP II, CERID under Norwegian Technical Assistance undertook a series of formative studies,

the recommendation of which have significantly influenced the policy directions towards improving the effectiveness of educational reform initiatives.

In 2004, the DOE coordinated studies on the development of textbooks in Nepali and Social Studies of Primary Grades, an assessment of mathematics teaching and learning Nepali at primary grades for Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) and a study on effectiveness of prevailing Non-formal Educational delivery modalities and their impacts in enabling NFE graduates. The findings and recommendations of these studies will have two fold implications –in the development of capacity in the program management by policy reforms and in the pedagogical improvements for enhancing learning achievements through targeted interventions.

Similarly, the publication of school level Educational statistics of Nepal 2003 and Flash report I of 2004 have been commendable with respect to providing a comprehensive information on the functioning of school level education and providing necessary information to planners, decision-makers, research scholars and students of education including primary stakeholders at the grassroots level.

In the year 2005 the R&D activities will focus on discovering relationships between variables in educational settings, assessing impacts of planned interventions at the targeted levels and recommending decision makers for transforming the interventions to be more relevant and responsive to the needs of target groups.

Similarly, flash reporting of the DOE will be improved to provide quicker access to quality information to decision-makers for focussed and objective decisions towards improving program effectiveness. The EMIS will be strengthened for improved quality and reliability of information, which is robust for its use in planning and monitoring and basis for decisions contributing to enhanced equity and quality of education. To this, following interventions will be prioritised:

Integrated capacity building will be focussed on VDCs and schools within it involving chairpersons and members of SMC/PTA and head teachers. Elements of school management, school grants, ECD, inclusive education, gender sensitisation, girls' education and women literacy and other parental awareness will form the part of a comprehensive package of the integrated capacity building.

Social mobilization and orientation to parents, NGO/CBOs, and civil society members will be undertaken.

Benchmarks on the status of enrolment and survival on the VDC and school levels with a view to ensuring desired access to and completion of school education disaggregated by gender and ethnicity (Dalit and Janajati) will be prioritised.

All interventions on capacity building at district as well as central level will apply the above principle of integration and comprehensiveness.

School grants categorized into earmarked, block and performance grants need massive advocacy and orientation. Capacity development to utilize these funds properly and demonstrate outcomes/results in enrolment, regularity, survival, completion and learning outcomes will be the primary focus.

Computerized information of grants of each school at district level will be piloted.

6. Core Themes:

The whole school education is comprehensively described in the following 6 themes:

6.1 Expanding Early Childhood Development (ECD):

ECD is one of the major concerns in education as 'there is growing awareness regarding the potentials of early childhood program to serve as an integrated response to the right of young children (Bernard Van Leer Foundation 2001). Research findings on impacts of ECD program have demonstrated a range of benefits; higher rates of school enrolment, higher achievement in early years of schooling, especially for girls and children from excluded groups (Evan 1993).

ECD/Pre Primary Classes (PPCs) form one of the important constituents of school education sector. It is considered nurturing children's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development and is also seen as preparing for primary education. The underlying assumptions are that the early years of life are a key period for the development of intelligence, personality and behaviour, which can be enhanced by ECD programs. The effects of such programs are greater for children from disadvantaged backgrounds than for their more privileged peers and good programs are sensitive to differences in cultural, social and economic contexts.

The Tenth plan targeted to establish 13,000 ECD centres, orient teachers and head teachers of primary schools on approaches to pre-primary education and early childhood care and development and impart parental orientation to 266,000 parents within the plan period.

Considering the spirit of the Tenth Plan, community as well as school based 7,023 ECD/PPCs have been, so far, established by 2004 and are functional contributing to the improved access and retention of children. In addition, 1,079 ECD centres are supported by INGOs and NGOs. The Flash I reported that 11% of children enrolled in grade one in 2004 had ECD experience and the GER of ECD aged population (3-4 years) was 39.4.

The DOE in 2004 formed a council supported by a national networking of task and sharing groups with a view to consolidating the ECD program. To this end, a strategy paper and a guideline for ECD program have also been developed.

Towards assessing the progress in the year 2004, a total of 114,460 children received ECD facility, and 125,000 parents were orientated. As for encouragement, a provision of awarding model ECDs has been initiated.

As expansion of ECD follows demand driven approach, effective advocacy program to generate demand from the vulnerable community is most instrumental. Additional support for developing community ownership is preferred both from government and non-government agencies as decentralization has been the major thrust behind this. For this, the role of REDs is seen instrumental for developing capacity at local level.

The issue of expansion of ECD as per community demand has been voiced frequently even by UN agencies and INGOs working for ECD which needs an assessment of the functioning of existing ECD/PPCs. The spirit of Education Act to encourage communities by ensuring support to establish ECD centres on a partnership basis is yet to be realised.

The dropout of facilitators has been a major issue for quality operation of ECD requiring intensive strategies for their retention.

Targets for 2005-06:

The ASIP 2005-006 will strive for achieving a target of 42% GER with improved transition to grade one by adopting the following strategies:

Partnerships with INGOs, NGOs, and private enterprises for training and managing ECD/PPCs with a view to promote inclusion will form the main strategy.

Cross sectional linkage to cognitive development, nutrition, health and parental education with other relevant agencies for co-ordination and synergy will be emphasized.

Effective utilization of mass media will be emphasised for parental education and awareness and their participation in children's learning.

The refresher training will be ECD based, while the training of new facilitators will be RC or district based. The trainings will aim at developing capacity of ECD facilitators for creating a joyful environment for the children for fostering their physical, mental, social and emotional development.

Monitoring ECD should relate to its access especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and its contribution to enhancing learning outcomes in early grades of primary education.

Focus of ASIP 2005-006:

The ASIP aims to consolidate 7,023 old ECD centres and expand it by establishing 4000 new ECD/PPCs with a view to providing pre-primary education to more than 200,000 children in community schools. This will positively impact upon reducing the under age children from overcrowded Grade 1 providing more spaces to correct age children contributing to joyful learning.

All new facilitators will be locally recruited from females, preferably married and will receive an intensive training of 16 days at district or RC level. This training will also be provided to newly recruited facilitators in place of old who have dropped out. In addition, all old facilitators will benefit from refresher training course that they will themselves procure as per their felt needs from the roster of experts prepared by the master trainers of the district education offices (DEOs).

The program will match NRs.40 million to the funds generated by the community members, which they will use as block grants with a view to providing qualitative childhood development services and pre-primary education.

The detailed description of all components including the ECD program illustrating activities for each district with targets, unit costs, timeframe, nature of grants (i.e. earmark or block grants), total budget requirement and cost category as in the Red Book along with assumptions is annexed (Annex 8-26).

6.2 Ensuring equitable access to education:

Access to schooling:

The quantitative expansion of schools since the mid-1980s was notable in the sense that 91.4% children have an access to primary school within 30 minute's of walking distance

from their home to school. However, there are still some pocket areas where physical access to primary school is a major problem and children have to walk more than one hour to reach a primary school (Nepal Living Standard Survey, NLSS 2004). After each secondary school there are two lower secondary and for each lower secondary, there are three primary schools (Flash 1, 2004). This is an indication that there is still a need of expanding lower secondary schools for securing universal transition of primary school graduates to lower secondary education. This necessitates undertaking resource/school mapping for rationalising the distribution of schools for delivering equitable educational services to the marginalized sections of the population.

Participation in primary and secondary education:

In 2004, the total primary school age population was 3.1 million, of which 2.5 million children were enrolled in schools. This means that 600 thousand children could not attend schools and among them 330 thousands were girls representing 67% of out-of-school children. The NER of primary education scaled up to 84.2, whereas the GER of Lower Secondary and Secondary were 80.3 and 50.4 respectively. The girls' NER in primary education and GER in Lower Secondary and Secondary levels were 78, 73.9 and 45.2 respectively during the same period. Most of the groups presently out-of-school belong to the tarai community in general and far and mid-western regions in particular.

Gender parity in school participation:

One of the encouraging scenarios over the past is that the enrolment ratio of girls is rapidly increasing. The GPI in terms of NER in primary level increased from 0.77 in 1998 to 0.87 in 2004. Similarly, the ratio in terms of GER in lower secondary and secondary levels increased from 0.71 and 0.63 to 0.85 and 0.82 respectively. However, these figures vary widely across the districts and groups of population. For instance, the poorest participation of children is illustrated by the GER of girls in Karnali zone, which was 85%, followed by 18% and 8% in primary, lower secondary and secondary education respectively in 2003 (School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, 2003).

The percentage of girls in primary, lower secondary and secondary is 46%, 45% and 44% respectively indicating that girls continue participating once they are in school albeit parity constitutes a challenge in view of achieving gender parity in primary net intake in 2005 and retaining them throughout the cycle for ensuring gender equality in 2009. This necessitates the re/strengthening of a more accurate, reliable and user-friendly information system with a view to developing baseline information for each VDC and school for comparing achievements in the successive years of program implementation.

Survival:

The universal survival of all children enrolled in grade one to grade five is a prerequisite for achieving the completion of at least five years of primary education by all. In 2004, the survival rate to grade five was 76.2 highlighting high dropouts leading to wastage of scarce resources. In the same year, the pass rate in grade one was 50%, which stresses the need of enormous improvement.

Alternative schooling facilities:

With a view to providing access to schooling for those children who are not in the system due to various reasons, the alternative schooling programs including outreach and flexible

schooling targeted 1042 classes in 2004. This year the program aims to support 1162 classes that will provide primary education to 30000 children. The new outreach will cater services in remote mountain areas with scattered population whereas the flexible schooling will be located in urban and semi-urban areas where working children are expected to be benefited.

An alternative schooling approach in support of JICA was initiated on a pilot basis with a view to mainstreaming out-of-school children for securing UPE in Siraha and Dhading districts.

Learning environment:

During the BPEP II period, 10794 classrooms were rehabilitated, 5392 new classrooms and under external environment improvement 5231 toilets, 5093 drinking water and 5226 fencing were provided.

In 2004/05, new classroom construction and furniture for 2048 classrooms, external environment improvement of 1464 schools with provision of drinking water, toilets, and fencing, rehabilitation of 1360 classrooms and 61 Resource Centres were targeted. Besides, 500 temporary classrooms are also targeted for providing support to internally displaced children due to conflict. In addition, 90 schools within 10 Program Intensive Districts (PIDs) are in the process of construction.

Provision of separate toilets is seen contributing to girls' participation in school education. Considering the lowest participation rate of girls, separate toilets for girls in all schools in Rautahat, Mahottari, and Sarlahi were targeted in 2004. Similarly, more than 50% schools in Dhanusha, Saptari and Siraha and all lower secondary and secondary schools in 10 PIDs totalling 534 were also targeted in 2004/05.

Targets for 2005-006:

All educational programs implementation in 2005/06 will contribute to achieve net intake rate to 83%, primary net enrolment to 88%, lower secondary GER to 82% and secondary GER to 55% and raise the survival rate to Grade 5 to 78%. Similarly, the girls' primary net enrolment will grow to 82. This target for 2005/06 will contribute to ensure the overall targets of EFA and SESP by 2009. A comparative table displaying the expected outcomes for districts in 2005 and the status in 2004 for selected indicators is annexed ([Annex 4](#)).

In 2005/06, 3398 new classrooms with furniture, rehabilitation of 1500 classrooms, the external environment improvement of 1978 schools with provision of drinking water, toilets and fencing along with construction of 106 Resource Centres with furniture are targeted. In addition, 150 including 90 schools carried over from 2004/05, within 10 Program Intensive Districts (PIDs) will also be constructed.

Presently, there are 52 DEOs with their own building. The target is to build 11 new DEO buildings with 5 this year.

Besides, 1000 temporary classrooms are also targeted for providing support to internally displaced children due to conflict. This will also take care of out-of-school children enrolled due to booster scholarship, Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and Welcome to School initiatives

In 2005/06, alternative schooling will be focused to the 30 identified districts with low literacy rate for accessing the groups of children to education who, due to various reasons, have not joined the mainstream.

This year 320 resource classes for providing services to children with severe disabilities were targeted, which will continue to operate with 10 additionality.

Focus of ASIP 2005/06

One of the strongest factors recognised for restricting especially girls and disadvantaged groups has been the socio-cultural barriers. In order to address this issue, inclusiveness in all aspects of education will be emphasized.

Social mobilization programme to reach the marginalized groups for awareness raising and empowering to articulate issues related to early childhood development, non-formal education, gender, indigenous groups and linguistic minorities will be emphasized.

The experiences of piloting alternative schooling will be analysed and documented in order to draw successful lessons for wider replication.

Grounded in experiences yielded by the four years' inclusive education pilot program, the Department of Education has developed manuals for district based whole school short-term training in the fundamentals of inclusive education. At district level, forty trainers have now been trained. In eight districts, cross professional groups have been formed in order to support the development of inclusive education. It is recommended that all schools receive this training over the next years.

Although the initiatives under flash reporting to capture disaggregated data for gender and ethnic groups (dalit and Janajati) for portraying participation of different groups in school education is commendable, a robust and strengthened EMIS for improved quality and reliability of information is urgency. Such a system will require use of information in planning and monitoring and should form the basis of all educational decisions contributing to the equitable participation of all.

6.3 Meeting learning needs of all

In order to addressing the learning needs of all, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) has been developing a National Curriculum Framework with 20% of the contents based on local context. This curriculum frame adopts rights-based approach to education with emphasis on cognitive skills development and respect for diverse cultural values. Elements of peace building, conflict resolution, and information on HIV/AIDS along with extra curricular activities form an integral part of the newly developed primary education curriculum within a broad curriculum framework of holistic school education.

With a view to respond to the needs of linguistic minorities, efforts to deliver primary education in mother tongue have been acknowledged. So far, textbook materials in 12 minority languages have been developed in close collaboration with ethnic and linguistic minorities.

However, limited production of textbooks in diverse languages has been a constraint to serve the needs of local clientele groups.

With a view to addressing the learning needs of conflict-affected children, DOE collaborated with district based NGOs. This includes residential facilities to children

whose parents were killed in the conflict and provision of temporary classrooms providing access to internally displaced children.

Focus of ASIP 2005/06

Textbook writing and teachers training packages will reflect the changes made in the curriculum.

Stakeholders and linguistic minorities will be brought on board in designing and implementing instructional materials and bilingual education programmes in school.

The policy of school-based management providing a basis for addressing learning needs by using the local cultural and linguistic potentials as resources is emphasized and strengthened with a view to celebrating the diversity.

With a view to updating sellable skills among youth and adolescents, skills development program is designed. This will be extended to benefit secondary students, SLC failures and dropouts of secondary education in support of Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) program.

A mechanism for identifying and supporting children affected by conflict will be in place at district level. Allocation for addressing this issue has been planned in the district level ASIPs.

6.4 Reducing adult illiteracy:

Although there has been significant progress in levels of literacy over the 1990's, as exemplified by the census results of 1991 and 2001, the challenge to reduce the national adult illiteracy by 50% to fulfil the promise committed at Dakar appears to be most daunting. Nepal narrowed its adult illiteracy from 70% in 1990% to 52% in 2001 through sustained efforts on school education with emphasis on girls' education. This means that adult literacy improved from 30.4% in 1990 to 48% in 2001. But the challenge is to improve the adult literacy rate to 66% by 2009 and 75% by 2015, which calls for dramatic reduction

In 2002, there were nearly 800 million illiterate adults in the world, representing 18% of the world adult population. Out of this, 64% of adult illiterates were women. The Nepal Living Standard Survey 2004 shows that the total adult literacy rate is 48% with 33.8% females. The Literacy Map displays that literacy is very unevenly distributed geographically in Nepal with an overwhelming majority of tarai districts in central and eastern development regions and hills and mountain districts in the mid west and far west development regions. One of the most striking facts is that while Nepal's share in the world's adult population is only 0.4%, its contribution to the world/s illiteracy is 0.9%, which sets out to make most serious efforts with strategic planning focusing on disadvantaged segments of the population.

An analysis of census data, 2001 suggests to implement programs by VDC in 30 lowest literacy districts with focus on female illiterates, ethnicity and specific age groups capturing socio-economic diversity and gender aspects holistically.

The analysis of 600 VDCs within 30 low literacy districts illustrates that female illiterates are higher in all age groups compared to male illiterates with the highest number of

illiterates among 26-45 age groups and the lowest numbers among 11-14 age groups. The gender-disaggregated data in the same VDCs reveal that female illiterates are 62% compared to their male illiterate counterparts who are only 38%.

Given available resources, 20 lowest literacy rate VDCs of each 30 program districts are identified on the basis of composite index for program implementation, which is constructed giving 50, 20, and 30 per cent weight to illiterate percentage of dalit, janajati and female respectively in each VDC of these districts and ranked accordingly.

Based on the 2001 census data, the number of illiterates in 30 districts is identified and annexed (Annex 2 & 3), which shows that these districts have the lowest literacy rates compared to the national average of 53.7% (male literacy 65.1% and female 42.5% in the 6+ literacy rates). In these districts, the NFEC will launch intensive literacy program in line with EFA Core Document.

The 30 districts with lowest literacy rate (less than 38%) are presented in the map (Annex 4). The map reveals their names, which includes 10 out of 20 districts in tarai (including Rupandehi as a pilot district), 10 out of 36 districts in hills and 10 out of 16 districts in mountain zones representing mostly the central (13), mid-western (9) and far-western (4) development regions.

The total number of illiterates in these 30 districts (total 3345523 with 2069097 females representing 61.8%) represents more than 50% of total illiterates of the country (total 6592823 with illiterate females 4220997 forming 64% and the total illiterates 50.7%). The total illiterate females in 30 districts form 49% of the total women illiteracy in the country. This means if all women in 30 districts are made literate, it will contribute to raise the national women literacy to more than 60% by reducing it to 32%. By the same standard, if all illiterates in 30 districts (males as well as females) are made literate, this will raise the total national literacy rate contributing to achieve the unfulfilled promise made at Dakar ie to reduce the country's illiteracy by half (50%) by 2015 from the present position of 64% female illiteracy and 36% male illiteracy.

The five year indicative plan developed by NFEC with long term policies for the promotion of literacy, basic education and non-formal education will form a part of VEP at the grassroots level, DEP at the district level, and the EFA Core Document 2004-2009 at the central level.

The program implementation in 2004/05 aims to make 78000 women literate, provide functional literacy to 35000 including skills training to 3400 women on income generation (IG).

In 2004/05, NFE primers for WEP and training materials have been revised in tune with the spirit of the new policy direction.

Targets for 2005-006:

In 2005/06, 129,000 adults (mostly females) and 60000 women will be literate with 47000 more receiving functional literacy. Altogether 4095 adults and 5700 women will benefit from skills development training contributing to their level of earning. The existing Community Learning Centres (CLCs) 51 in number will be expanded to 150 focusing in the constituencies within 30 program districts. The present policy of payment by results will be reviewed based on the assessment of its effects.

Focus of ASIP 2005/06

A benchmarked time bound plan to declare identified 30 low literacy program intensive districts as literacy free zones would be prioritized. This will include a comprehensive approach through Village Education Planning process adopting Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) combining non-formal basic as well as functional literacy program into a whole along with the formal and alternative schooling facilities. The Food for Education program with oil distribution to girls will also be associated with this approach.

Synchronization of NFE programs to SIP and VEP/VDP/DEP with 70%, 20% and 10% for literacy, post literacy and other non-formal education programs respectively will form the basis of block grants.

Tailor made materials will be prepared to respond to the contextual needs of the clientele groups.

Social auditing to assess the ongoing NFE activities will be adopted involving primary stakeholders ensuring transparency.

Participatory mechanism for monitoring and supervision to secure and maintain people's enthusiasm and create competitive environment among stakeholders for rewarding best performing individuals, institutions, I/NGOs and VDC/Municipalities will form the integral part of the program.

Expansion and use of best practices will include adopting practical and innovative measures with documentation.

NGOs, CBOs and CLCs will be mobilised as complementary or alternative channels for NFE management.

6.5 Eliminating gender disparity:

Nepal has committed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015. The year 2005 is characterized for assessing the achievement of this objective at the global level in terms of opportunities for girls' participation in school as well as tertiary education, relevance of curriculum and status of women in social, political, economic and administrative echelons of society. Achieving gender equality corresponds to achieving social equity and EFA policy goals.

Although the achievement over the past has been encouraging, the status of gender equity illustrates that the commitment made at Dakar and of Millennium Declaration is likely to remain far from realization. This implies revisiting the timeline with viable and realistic strategies supported by concerted efforts establishing balance between objectives and resources.

There are only 30.1 per cent, 16.3 per cent and 8.6 per cent female teachers in the primary, lower secondary and secondary level of schooling respectively. In whole school education, the percentage of female teachers is 24.7% portraying one of the poorest participation of females in the education system against the spirit of educational programs and targets of the 10th plan

The GPI in terms of NER of primary education and GER of school education sector (Annex 5) was 0.87% (school education constituting grades 1-10) in 2004. Similarly, literacy rate for females (6+) was 43% as opposed to 65% for males. Gender parity index for teachers in school education sector has been 0.25.

In 2004/05, in primary education 635,380 girls, 559,668 dalit children (including 233,023 girls) and 116682 out-of-school children with focus on girls were provided scholarship aiming at both retention and mainstreaming. An additional number of 14000 children in community-managed schools were also provided scholarship.

Each lower secondary and secondary school was provided grants for providing fee waving support to all dalit students – 112,504 (with girls 41702) contributing to the completion of secondary education. Similarly, 37220 poor and intelligent students three each in lower secondary and secondary school received scholarship. Moreover, 400 girls from remote areas also benefited from residential facilities to accomplish their secondary education. One hundred twenty five female teachers received accommodation facility to work in school away from their family.

A meaningful partnership between UNICFE, World Education, ESAT/DANIDA and MOES/DOE was initiated to enhance quality and equity in primary education.

Welcome to School initiative combined with enrolment campaign in the broader alliance of Global Campaign for EFA (GCE) network has created enthusiasm putting pressure on the school system to provide more spaces, learning materials and teachers for increased number of girls and children from disadvantaged communities.

Targets for 2005-06:

This ASIP intends to provide scholarship to 613427 dalit children, 851275 girls (50% of total girls), 10800 children with disabilities and 121366 out-of-school children in primary education. Similarly, in secondary schools, 124350 students (including 50774 girls) will benefit from tuition free secondary education. Besides, 65014 students will also receive scholarship in secondary education in addition to 440 girls who will benefit from residential scholarship facility in feeder as well as mountain hostels.

Focus of ASIP 2005/06:

A baseline to portray the status of female participation in education in the context of each VDC and school will be established at each district by using Flash survey.

Analysing and documenting the experiences of partnership and alliances will be undertaken in order to draw lessons to enhance female participation in education.

Social mobilisation campaign will be conducted for raising awareness on gender issues.

Mechanism for timely disbursement and utilization of scholarship facilities will be strengthened with a view to ensuring the reach of such facility to the real target groups. School Management Committee networking with the involvement of target communities will monitor the distribution and utilisation and its effects on the attainment of educational policy objectives.

The school evaluation based on agreed and transparent criteria for accrediting schools into basic, level I and level II will take into account the gender aspects of education in a holistic perspective.

Packages of encouragements for increasing the percentage of female teachers in primary and secondary education and provision of training for them will be prioritised.

Gender friendly atmosphere in schools will be emphasised.

6.6 Improving quality education:

The goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) of a comparable quality has been continuously on the international agenda since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which affirmed that elementary education must be made free and compulsory for all children. This objective was reemphasized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1990) as well as the Declaration on the Millennium Development Goals (2000) setting out the commitment to achieve UPE by 2015.

The policy goal 2 of the Education for All commits the country to the provision of primary education 'of good quality', and goal 6 includes commitments to improve all aspects of education quality 'so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills'.

The SESP has equally emphasized on the improved equity of access, as well as quality and relevance of secondary education so that all learners' achieve cognitive development along with knowledge and skills and promote commonly shared values with creative and emotional development fostering respect for human rights and assisting to enter into world market with enhanced competence for higher earning to lead a dignified life.

To the extent the qualities and objectives are being met, judge the overall functioning and effectiveness of the school education system. Quality and equity are interrelated. Any shift towards equity represents an improvement in the quality of education. The school education system with gender inequality and discrimination against disadvantaged groups on economic, ethnic or cultural grounds is dysfunctional

From a policy perspective, it is equally important to focus not only on the quantitative dimension of the school education but also on its qualitative aspects for reducing the enormous gaps prevailing between the numbers graduating from schools and those among them with a minimum set of cognitive skills. This sets out to start by placing learners at the heart of the learning experience by prioritising inclusive policies as well as inclusive pedagogical practices responding to the diverse needs and circumstances of all learners.

This requires adequate space and an encouraging environment where teaching and learning actually take place, based on the broadly agreed benchmarks for minimum instruction time as in the school education curriculum hours per year spread over the year. The basic inclusive education package, which highlights girls and bilingual students' needs, should be delivered to maximum number of schools.

The traditional 'chalk - and - talk' teaching method requires a shift to 'open-ended instruction' for providing structured teaching. This should form a combination of direct instruction, guided practice and independent learning.

Regular assessments are also a key to improving both teaching and learning. This should build upon the study findings of national assessments on grade five going beyond the realm of primary education to grade eight and SLC examination for ensuring minimum quality standards by all. In this regard, the ongoing SLC study will suggest viable policy options for paving ways to overall quality reform of secondary education.

Investment in teachers promoting their service conditions and career path along with the training and ongoing professional support is a key policy question. Mapping of teacher requirements to each and every community, primary, lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary level of schooling is most vital for addressing the issue of quality enhancement in each school. In this respect, there is a critical need to strengthen the emphasis on school-based training related to institutional as well as refresher training courses. To this direction, with a view to effecting classroom practices, a school based supervision; monitoring and teacher support system will be developed through policy decision. This entails repositioning of the existing resource centres to make them school based.

In 2004/05, all community primary schools in 12 districts covering all schools and in 63 districts covering schools within two resource centres received basic funding based on School Improvement Plan (SIP) on per child basis differentiated between students and eco-zones. This extended to 6627 primary schools with funding for 1.02 million children. Similarly, all lower secondary and secondary schools were funded as per their SIPs amounting to Rs.25900 for each level in addition to 90 program intensive schools within 10 PIDs, which received Rs.222000 each.

There was a point of departure in regard to making free textbooks available to all primary children through an earmark grant scheme on per child basis for every grade, where by each school had autonomy to procure and provide books to all students in time.

Book corners for Grade 1 were established in 24491 schools with a view to secure the availability of books for use in the classroom and continue teaching learning even at time when books are not available in the market. In the years to come, this practice will expand in subsequent grades with extended support from block grant funds.

The similar number of community primary schools received support on fixed costs (Rs 3000 per school) and variable costs (Rs 100 per child for 32.04 million children) basis for learning materials to support supplies in each school including stationeries (exercise books, pens and pencils) to students.

In secondary education, 11000 lower secondary and 3000 secondary schools received Rs 20000 for each level for teaching learning materials.

Refresher training for working ECD facilitators and 25% of primary teachers and six-day management training to three members of each SMC including head teachers was provided focussing on school based training approach.

For ensuring transparency and promoting good governance, social auditing of schools was provisioned and school evaluation initiated. In this respect, the school grants operation guideline was introduced.

Training in relation to methodology of District Education Planning (DEP), preparing ASIP and strengthening use of data in planning, monitoring and decision making was provided to all district level planning officers and education personnel from REDs.

Nearly 4,088 schools in 21 districts low in educational indicators and with food deficit benefited through mid-day snacks for 450,000 children. This enhanced the enrolment, retention and learning achievement of disadvantaged children and especially of girls by providing edible oil to mothers as an incentive and encouragement for their girls children to attend school regularly (at least 80% of school days).

The national assessment conducted in Grade 5 in 2003 highlighted satisfactory achievement in social studies and environmental science with average marks 61 and 67 respectively. Although the achievement level in mathematics was the lowest with average marks 33, the average marks in Nepali and English were 56 and 45 respectively. The study revealed high regional variation with lowest achievement in mathematics in the far west being 19 and 23 in the mid-west. However, girls were found equally competing with boys in all subjects in all regions.

The Flash survey also revealed that 2421 primary, 1905 lower secondary and 967 secondary schools are still waiting for receiving government support although their contribution to increasing access to schooling is immense. In the year 2004, such schools catered a total of 204,135 students in the three levels. This is posing a challenge to the government's commitment towards ensuring equitable access to quality education for all.

Institutional capacity is seen crucial for securing all aspects of capacity building. Acknowledging this, NCED has come up with a comprehensive Institutional Capacity Building Plan (ICBP), which in the year 2005-06, will be widely consulted and finalised. The idea is to bring together all capacity building endeavours into one holistic package with a view to avoiding fragmentation and duplication and ensuring coordination and synergy.

In the year 2004, NCED developed a comprehensive and competency based secondary teacher training curriculum keeping tune with the National Curriculum Framework, which was developed by CDC. Efforts are being made to develop and further improve all training materials in line with the training curriculum.

Accordingly in primary level, 600 females opting for joining teaching profession were supported with scholarship to access teachers training, 500 teacher trainers produced and 12,000 received phases 1 and 3, while 7000 received phase 2 training. Similarly, 600 head teachers received management training, 720 special training and 115 education personnel benefited from management training.

During the same period in the lower secondary and secondary level, 2700 teachers received 1-month and 5200 1.5-month training, 660 HTs management training and 35000 received 7 person-days of demand-based training. A comparative table depicting the achievement with respect to training status of teachers and student teacher ratio (STR) is annexed (annex 6 & 7).

Target of 2005/06

All primary schools in 28 districts as well as in 47 districts covering all schools within 4 resource centres will receive basic level block grants funding based on School

Improvement Plan (SIP) on per child basis. This will extend to 11301 schools with funding for 1.76 children. Similarly, all lower secondary and secondary schools will receive block grants as per their SIPs amounting to Rs. 25000 for each level. The school improvement planning will also extend to 60 program intensive schools within 10 PIDs with a block grants allocation of 222,000 for each school.

Altogether 7023 ECD facilitators and 19731 primary teachers will receive refresher course in line with the principle of school based training approach.

Six days' workshop in EMIS, planning and management with a view to building capacity of education managers at school level will be prioritised. This will develop the capacity of 3 members of each SMC including chairperson, head teacher and one woman or dalit member of SMC. In total, 53136 in primary and 33900 secondary education will benefit from this management orientation.

School evaluation and social audit will be expanded

NCED through its ETCs networking will provide in-service training to 23905 primary teachers. In addition, 17075 lower secondary and secondary teachers will receive in-service and pre-service teachers training. Similarly, a total of 58975 person days of demand-based training will be provided.

In 2005, the draft ICBP of NCED will be shared, revisited based on the feedbacks received and finalised. Consultancy services are targeted to provide expertise services for enhancing the system capacity in classroom assessment and examination reform, strengthening EMIS, teacher training materials development and teacher training. All these efforts including those continuing from previous year (CONCIA/TEP) will come within the purview of the ICBP. A networking with renowned institutions at international levels will be established in order for providing continuous technical backstopping on the endeavours of capacity building of educational human resources, especially focused to teacher education.

Altogether 24237 primary schools will receive support on fixed costs (Rs.3000 per school) and variable costs (Rs.100 per child for 3.6 million children) basis on learning materials with a view to providing supplementary materials, exercise books, pens and pencils to all disadvantaged children.

Book corners for 24257 Grade 2 classes will be established schools. All children in primary education will receive free textbooks within two weeks of the first month of the school year. Funding for this will be disbursed to each school in the second trimester of the fiscal year 2005-06.

Performance grants with a view to achieving universalization of primary education and retention of children are expected to benefit 1225 primary schools. Similarly, 300 secondary schools will receive performance grants for demonstrating best SLC results based on transparent criteria as reflected in the School Grants Operation Guideline and Program Implementation Manual.

All district education officers, planning officers, and district education personnel involved in EMIS and monitoring at central, regional and district and sub-district levels will benefit from workshop on EMIS, SIP, VEP/MEP and ASIP.

National Assessment on Grade 5 and Grade 8 will be carried out.

Focus of ASIP 2005/06

Improving quality and equity will form the central theme of the ASIP 2005. The benchmarks established at VDC and school levels will provide a common point for enhancing quality and equity in school education.

Ensuring adequate space with an environment fostering for learning and development of children in each school will be achieved by continued support for book corner, education materials and SIP based funding. This is seen instrumental for bringing meaningful community participation in school management, which is critical for departing from the traditional 'chalk - and - talk' to an 'open-ended instruction' leading to structured teaching learning.

Mapping of teacher requirements to each and every primary, lower secondary and secondary school will be undertaken for quality enhancement. In this respect, school-based and demand-driven training will be emphasised. In order to create direct impacts in classroom practices, a school based supervision; monitoring and teacher support system will be enforced. The student teacher ratio needs revisiting in order to make it compatible with the 'echo-zones' reality, classroom teacher ratio and subject requirements for mapping out the total needs of teachers

A comprehensive student assessment system to continuously monitoring the learning achievements of students and putting timely remedial adjustments in the teaching learning process will enhance the efficiency of the school education system. The recommendations of the ongoing SLC study will provide benchmarks for improving the efficiency of secondary education.

A benchmark for Grade 5 and 8 examinations will be established in order to measure the improvement in the pass rates of terminating examinations. The SLC study findings will be used as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of secondary education.

It is not necessary to reiterate the low performance of schools at remote mountain districts over the past. With a view to upbringing their level of performance, especially improved learning achievement verified by national assessments, possibilities of transforming some into residential schools equipped with improvised quality inputs in some of the sparsely populated mountain districts will be explored.

7. Monitoring and reporting:

ASIP is meant to provide an effective tool for monitoring which takes into account the consistency between the planned and actual. The ASIP will strive developing a monitoring mechanism whereby consistency is secured between planning and programming, budgeting and disbursement, auditing and reporting the implementation and performance in the context of what was intended and what was actually achieved.

ASIP and AWPB will cover all the activities detailing out the timelines for implementation and specifying the outputs/outcomes to be secured with the amount of resources and processes for undertaking the planned interventions to provide a meaningful tool with which to monitor consequent performance. Therefore, the

monitoring mechanism will be aligned with ASIP and AWPB and the established rules, norms in line with Financial Administrative Regulations.

The main intention behind is to analyse the implementation of strategic priorities within the established financial discipline and efficiency of service delivery to facilitate an overview of actual and past performance, feasibility of future plans across programs and trends to assert effective allocations and better use of resources

Collaborating with inter ministerial, development partners and other agencies, adjustments will be ensured. This will ensure consistency between resources allocated and agreed in the ASIP and the resources in the Red Book.

The School Inspectorate of the MOES will document the norms and standards of schooling system that are scattered in the curriculum, Education Act, Regulations and other relevant documents and develop additional norms and standards not covered so far. Such norms and standards will be widely consulted, shared and agreed upon so that both the inspectors and inspected are aware of the measuring rod and what they are expected to perform. Each year one third of the schools in operation in the country will be evaluated in a scheduled manner and recommend for further improvements based on the findings. The report will be analysed, interpreted and feedbacks publicized with a view to transparency and take policy and corrective measures both at decision levels and grassroots levels.

The efficiency of service delivery at all levels will form the prime agenda of monitoring. Especially, information on the time when the resources for the targeted interventions reached to districts/schools and when and how they were put in practice with information on anticipated results. Deviations between the planned and actual will be analysed, interpreted and corrective measures will be undertaken. This can be done through planned monitoring and effectively mobilising the existing machinery with specified tasks at different levels.

REDS will form teams with the involvement of retired teachers to undertake activity monitoring. The DOE will support the REDS' efforts with adequate resources and technical backstopping. REDs will report in the first week of successive trimester in a specific and agreed format.

DEOs will focus on RCs where as RCs will focus on school and community level activities.

The school will report to DEOs on a regular basis through flash I and II for outcome monitoring as well as through FMR formats for program monitoring. The DEOs will report to the RED and DOE following Financial Monitoring Report (FMR) formats on a trimester basis and prepare and disseminate outcomes and results achieved during the year/s through its Status Report (SR) as well as Flash I and II analysed at RC level and consolidated at district level.

The DOE will report to the MOES and the donor agencies following the FMR on a trimester and annual basis and through its annual Status Report, Flash I and II, portraying the overall educational achievement of the country over the period.

This practice will require a strong team work combined with strengthening of capacity for education personnel working in the areas of planning, statistics, financing and monitoring.

8. Risks and Key Challenges

The success and sustainability of the school education programs depend on the capacity and active participation of parents in the school affairs through the School Management committees and Parent Teacher Associations. The capacity of school management to deliver quality education and the meaningful interest of parents in providing support are equally important for creating a safe, healthy and enjoyable atmosphere at schools for their well functioning and effectiveness.

To the extent, this prevails in each and every school of the country would determine the effectiveness of this ASIP. However, the deteriorating security situation as a result of conflict has affected the overall performance of the school education system resulting in poor transaction of curriculum and education services. Addressing this with a view to guarantee minimum learning outcomes even in critical situation is a key challenge.

The achievement of the social equity and gender parity as targeted by this ASIP correlates the acceptance of and respect for the school as a zone of peace by all.

9. Conclusion:

The endeavours for ensuring universal and equitable access to quality school education, responsive to the needs of all by addressing the heterogeneity of all kinds is considered most favourable for social integration and harmony. The opportunity to education, especially for the deprived, disadvantaged and marginalized is favourable to the social-economic integration reducing the gaps and enhancing social equality, which this ASIP acknowledges. The inculcation of the notion that a beautiful blend of hundreds of mythologies, beliefs, values and dialects comprise the holistic nationality of Nepal can bring about a new tomorrow based on mutual love, affection and respect resulting into peace, coexistence and prosperity of the nation.