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**Danida Sector Programme Support –
Secondary Education, Nepal**

**Technical assistance in preparation of Secondary Education Support Programme
Danida Interim Project**

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance
FOE	Faculty of Education
HMG/N	His Majesty's Government/Nepal
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
SDSP	Sector Development Support Programme (Danida)
SEDEC	Secondary Education Development Centre
SEDU	Secondary Education Development Unit
SESP	Secondary Education Support Programme

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report is concerned with identifying competences and related capacity building strategies to support quality teacher education and head-teacher development. The report is the outcome of a consultancy assigned by Danida within the Interim Project for Danida Support to Education in Nepal designed with the 'principal aim .to prepare the institutional ground in certain key areas in order to allow the start of the SESP as planned in 2003'.
2. Improving quality of education is one of the top priorities of the Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP) in Nepal jointly undertaken by His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N), Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) and Asian Development Bank (ADB).
3. The Danida Sector Programme Support Document specifying Danish assistance to SESP emphasise the extensive role and commitment that Danish assistance places with institutional and professional capacity building to be promoted through institutional linkage in combination with specialist consultancies.
4. The critical role of teacher education in promoting quality education is recognised internationally as well as in Nepal. The quality of teacher education is thus closely linked to the improvement of quality of education in schools and classrooms.
5. According to several studies, generated experiences and the majority of statements collected from a variety of Nepalese stakeholders the quality of teacher education in Nepal is poor. Teacher educators and trainers have had little exposure to contemporary theory, developments and trends in teacher education. Curricula and teacher training packages represent a rather instrumentalist approach to what it means to be a teacher. A more generic approach to developing teacher competences is required.
6. Most teacher educators/trainers have little insights into the realities of classroom practices across the country and thus find difficulties to link teacher training to proper approaches to improve teaching and learning in classrooms. Institutions at different levels engaged in teacher education are under-resourced.
7. Against this background the proposal outlined in this report recommends the development of a *competence-based approach to teacher education and professional development*. The report identifies five main areas of competences to guide further teacher education in Nepal: Curriculum competence, teaching and learning competence, assessment and evaluation competence, collaboration competence and professional competence. The competence-based thinking in teacher education aims to establish a *generic approach* to professional development in accordance with the particular characteristics and challenges of the teaching profession rather than seeing competence as pure instrumental or methodological issue.
8. Achieving this goal, however, requires the building of a critical mass of highly qualified teacher educators/trainers and teacher education developers. This critical mass should be drawn from those institutions in Nepal currently engaged in teacher education and training in order to facilitate sustainable and institutionally anchored capacities. The development of this critical mass would through an institutional linkage arrangement with international partners be supported by an intensively trained core-team of Nepalese teacher educators. This core-team

would also form a key resource in developing teacher and head-teacher curricula, training programmes and materials.

9. The role of head-teachers in improving quality of education, teacher performance and overall school improvement is increasingly recognised internationally as well as in Nepal. In Nepal the importance of highly competent head-teachers is becoming even more important in the light of the process of decentralisation in the education sector.

10. As stated by Nepalese stakeholders and in accordance with international experience the efficient head-teacher is competent not only in administrative functions but is also highly competent in teacher supervision, educational innovation and overall school improvement, including the ability to promote good collaboration with the parents and the community at large.

11. As is the case in teacher education Nepal is short of highly qualified institutions and staffs supporting adequate head-teacher training reflecting the new challenges facing the head-teachers. Thus this report recommends that the above mentioned core-team is engaged in training in the field of head-teacher development as well as been involved in the development of training programmes and materials for head-teachers emphasising a generic competence-based approach.

12. It should be noted that the present report basically aims to outline a general frame and strategy for capacity building and reform in teacher education for the secondary school level and thus more detailed descriptions and clarifications on key issues and implementation plans need to be worked out in close collaboration with Nepalese stakeholders.

INTRODUCTION

13. Improving quality of education is one of the top priorities of the Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP) in Nepal jointly undertaken by His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N), Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) and Asian Development Bank (ADB).

14. Quality of education must eventually be measured against the quality of learning in the classrooms, i.e. the quality of student achievements. That is whether referring to classrooms in primary, middle or secondary schools or in colleges and universities.

15. The quality of education and education itself at all levels is influenced by wide ranging and often interrelated factors, e.g. education policy and the provision of resources for education, curriculum, textbooks, physical school environment, teachers' qualifications, teachers' social and professional working conditions, teacher supervision and support, school management, parents' and communities' attitudes towards education etc. etc. Improving the quality of education must thus incorporate all these factors and ideally address them simultaneously and with equal attention.

16. However, international experience informs that such a holistic approach is a rare phenomenon. Although education reform may be informed by concerns and demands arising from the academic and professional communities within the education sector, reforms are

mostly driven by political agendas reflecting political interests and priorities, which in turn may also reflect financial and human resources available for the reform processes.

17. In low income countries where financial resources and institutional and professional capacities are limited the possibilities for embarking on a holistic reform in education are less realistic. Large scale sector support programmes with substantial international donor assistance is, of course, likely to tackle some of the limitations, however, also such programmes have their limitations in terms of financial resources and political priorities. Although sector support programmes aim to address a broader field of elements restricting or supporting quality of education than the traditional development projects did, they cannot achieve equal and simultaneous improvements across the wide range of issues that need attention.

18. Against this background it is important to identify those issues that are likely to have the most significant impact on improving the quality of education.

19. Contemporary international experiences and research claim that the one most single important factor influencing quality of education in the classrooms is the quality of teachers. This claim does not ignore the importance of, for example, curriculum and textbooks of high quality. It does, however, reflect the understanding that poorly qualified teachers are unable to properly utilise – not to say optimise – the presence of good quality curriculum and textbooks.

20. Referring to the earlier stated complexity of quality education the performance of teachers and the quality of their practice is affected by many factors, e.g. recruitment and deployment and promotion policies and practices, salaries and overall social living conditions and status in society. In the broader perspective there is no doubt that proper recruitment and promotion policies and practices as well as reasonable social living conditions for the teachers are crucial motivational factors in improving professional performance.

21. However, there are also substantial claims emerging from international research that the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher education and training plays a very critical role in improving teachers' practice in the classrooms.

22. It is largely against these assumptions that the objectives for the current assignment within the Danida Interim Project for SESP are formulated to 'help define adequate levels of teacher competences needed for secondary school teachers'. The specific objectives of the consultancy are:

- To prepare a first draft for specification of teacher competences to guide teacher education and training development;
- To develop a set of proposals for programmes to meet the needs for achieving these competences in line with the general proposals in the SESP documentation.

23. The consultancy has included several focus group meetings with key Nepalese stakeholders and analysis of existing teacher education curricula and teacher training packages.

COMPETENCES VERSUS QUALIFICATIONS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

24. The very concept of competences is subject to varying definitions. The following aims to give a brief introduction to the concept as it is understood and used as a guiding framework for

the object of specifying teacher competences to guide teacher education for secondary teachers in Nepal.

25. The introduction of the concept of competences is closely attached to the rise of Human Resource Management theory and practice originally emerging within business and organisational management and development. The ever more rapidly changing conditions and challenges in modern societies and their material and human reproduction and developments demands a workforce *competent* to adjust to new circumstances and to creatively and flexibly utilise, e.g. new technologies and the vastly extended sources of information. As such the competency concept challenges the traditional notion of qualifications. To be competent is different from being qualified. Within this new [competences] thinking qualifications are considered to be rather static and rigid in nature and to be closely linked to division of knowledge into certain and narrowly specified [academic or professional] disciplines. In this perspective qualifications are largely about knowledge and skills achieved through training and education while being competent is seen as the ability to do the right thing at the right time in a specific context. In other words, the competent person is able to transform knowledge, insights and skills into proper action in a specific situation. Thus it appears that although competence is distinct from qualifications in its traditional interpretations it certainly involves knowledge and skills.

26. The concept of competences is context bound. Hence, it is necessary to relate the question of teacher competences to the context in which teaching takes place.

27. Contemporary writings on teaching and teacher education emphasises that teaching is much more than a technical activity where knowledge and skills possessed by the teacher is transferred to the students. The teacher is not merely a technician. The complex nature of teaching suggests that it is difficult to establish simple formulas, which could guide effective teacher education and other means to enhance quality in the teaching profession. No class and no lesson are exactly like any of the previous. Teaching represents a professional culture which emphasises personal and practical experience. It is action-oriented, meaning that much of the teachers' knowledge about teaching emerges through practice in classrooms. The competent teacher typically posses a wealth and variety of knowledge and skills emerging from extensive time spent in classrooms. Thus a teacher needs to be able to combine accumulated knowledge and skills and transform them into emerging teaching-learning situations and properly address new issues and problems in the students' learning.

28. It is often claimed that teaching is distinct from many other professions by being also a *moral endeavour*. Teaching involves caring for children and young people, considering their interests and preparing them to become good citizens in the future society. The ethic of caring has thus been suggested to be a core issue in teaching. In this perspective several studies suggest *the close relationship between the personal and the professional in teachers' work*. Teachers approach teaching with different sets of beliefs about teachers' work. Often their perceptions of teaching are rooted in metaphoric understandings emerging from their own experiences as students in primary and secondary school, their role as parents or in their broader childhood experience. Any child is continuously placed in teaching-learning relationships with adults. The personal-professional relationship in teachers' work further suggests that the teachers' personalities are an import aspect of their work as teachers. Teaching involves establishing good working relationships with students, parents, school leadership and the wider local

community. Such elements of the broader characteristics of teaching intrinsically involves teachers' personalities and they require that teachers engage in self-learning and that they become aware of their personal qualities and how other people respond to them.

29. Stating that the good and competent teacher largely develops through years of practice in classrooms could indicate that initial teacher education and in-service teacher training does not matter much when considering how to improve the quality of teaching in Nepal. This would, however, be a major misunderstanding. The complex nature of teaching and the need for continuous professional development also indicates the requirement for a strong foundation. Without an adequate knowledge base on, for example, subject content, pedagogy and teaching methodology and educational psychology and sociology the teacher will remain a technician depending merely on available instructional materials and teacher guides, which will be used rigidly and not adequately adopted to the always unique classroom and local settings.

30. The above introduction to the general concept of competences and its relation to teacher education aim to frame the following discussion on what competences could guide teacher education and training in Nepal and to identify possible strategies and programmes to support the emergence of such competences.

Teacher competences as identified by Nepalese stakeholders

31. The Nepalese stakeholders consulted during this consultancy widely share similar ideas on what characterises the competent secondary school teacher. The following represents a compilation and categorisation of the many proposals collected through numerous meetings and focus group discussions.

32. The competent teacher should:

- have a good knowledge and command of the subject content,
- know the curriculum and its intentions and be able to adjust it to local context and needs,
- be able to develop locally relevant curriculum elements,
- master a variety of teaching methodologies,
- know how to assess the students,
- be able to understand the students' specific learning needs and organise teaching accordingly,
- understand the social and psychological needs and developments of the students and assist them accordingly,
- pay attention to students with special needs (various learning difficulties) and help them accordingly,
- be able to critically reflect on own teaching practice and improve practice according to identified shortcomings and problems,
- communicate and collaborate with parents and local community,
- manage classrooms well and maintain discipline in the classroom

- understand and apply problem and conflict solving methods

33. In addition to the above competences all stakeholders emphasised that teachers should be sincere about and honest in their profession and personal behaviour. The question of dedication and commitment to the teaching profession was raised over and over again in all conversations.

34. Also the well-known criticism of politicisation among teachers was stressed in every meeting. Across all stakeholders it was strongly stated that misuse of political connections and of the teacher position as platform for party-political campaigning must come to an end.

35. While the above-mentioned competences may represent the ideal of a good secondary school teacher it is necessary to hold this ideal against the realities in curriculum, classrooms and schools and in teacher education institutions and programmes. The view on teachers' knowledge about the curriculum varies according to the position from which this knowledge is approached. Central institution staffs (DEO, NCED and CDC) tend to criticise teachers for not being able to understand the curriculum and for inefficient transfer of knowledge and skills from training courses to classroom practice on the teachers and the teacher trainers.

36. DEOs, teachers, head teachers and teacher association representatives mainly point to the challenges emerging from the ever-changing curriculum. The secondary school curriculum was recently revised under the Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP) and is now supposed to be thoroughly reformed again under the upcoming SESP. Teacher trainers, teaching training programmes and related materials as well as textbooks and assessment/examination methods do not fully and easily comply with the new curriculum. It takes time for everyone involved in teacher training and development to understand and efficiently transform the new curriculum into adequate implementation in classrooms.

37. Particularly the examination system and methods are criticised for not reflecting the new curriculum, which heavily undermines teachers' interest and possibilities in adopting the new curriculum. Teachers in secondary schools are above all concerned with ensuring the highest possible pass rate at grade 8 exams and at SLC.

38. Further, the in-service training is claimed to represent classroom scenarios and teaching possibilities, which are largely detached from the realities in secondary schools. This, it is claimed, is one of the reasons for the poor impact from training on classroom practices.

39. Another reason for the commonly acknowledged low influence that training has on teachers' practice is the absence of follow-up support and supervision. Supervision in general does hardly exist. Supervisors, it is said, very seldom visit schools and if they do, they do not observe teaching or support the teachers.

40. The distinctions in understanding and approach between central administrators and planners on the one side and teachers and head teachers and others more close to practice on the other are not a Nepalese particularity. Rather, such differences in viewpoints seem to be a phenomenon prevailing world wide. Also the claimed inefficiency of initial teacher education and of in-service teacher training is observed in public and academic discourses on teacher development round the globe.

41. One statement about Nepalese teachers has, however, reached near to mythological status. That is the often heard view that basically all Nepalese teachers are performing poorly and that

they are not committed to their profession. This judgement is largely based on the poor achievements of students in SLC examinations and other forms of assessment. Further, the perception reflects analysis of the poor quality of teacher education programmes and the observation that teachers do not use new teaching methodologies introduced during in-service training programmes. The lack of commitment and dedication to the teaching profession refers to the absence of teachers in classrooms and the experience that teachers misuse political connections to their own benefits.

42. There is little doubt that there is plenty of room for improvements in teachers' performance. But the understanding that nearly all teachers are performing badly is probably a heavy overstatement. And it widely ignores to critically reflect the basis on which the judgement is made. SLC pass rates may not necessarily say everything about teachers' performance. Maybe the SLCs themselves are badly designed and detached from the curriculum, i.e. from what the students are supposed to have studied. Maybe some new methods in SLCs are poorly prepared and teachers and students given very little time to apply new methods and procedures, which for example was the case with the introduction of multiple-choice tests, which by the way were withdrawn due to shortage of funds the following year. Maybe the students did not have full access to all textbooks. Maybe new curriculum and recommended teaching methods are not easily practicable in the Nepalese context. For example, the concept of child-centred teaching, which on the one hand is a concept emerging with highly individualised cultures in the West and on the other side requires a variety of supplementary teaching materials, low student-teacher ratios and other elements, which are completely absent in Nepalese schools. Another example, mentioned by some of the interviewed stakeholders, is the science curriculum, which assumes the availability of science labs in secondary schools. Labs that are simply not there. Maybe the learning environment in schools undermines proper learning. Maybe students' social living conditions undermine their ability to study and learn properly. Maybe the teachers' social living conditions and their professional outlooks obstructs true commitment and dedication to teaching and require that they undertake other income generating activities, which draws them away from the classrooms. Maybe corruption and the often questioned moral standards among society leaders and the widespread politicisation of all aspects of Nepalese life influence how teachers think about their profession and their personal commitments.

43. It needs to be noticed that some of the stakeholders met were opining that teachers are not interested in training. This understanding was based on the low attendance in many in-service training courses and on recent plans received from the districts showing that only 7 out of 75 districts had included in-service teacher training in their forthcoming plans. Others rejected the viewpoint that teachers were uninterested in training. They pointed to the feeling among many teachers that the current training was irrelevant, that it was not followed by support and supervision and that there were no incentives to enrol in training programmes. They argued that more practicable training programmes, systematic follow-up supervision and fair incentives would facilitate a stronger interest on the side of the teachers. It was, for example, mentioned that experienced teachers found much of the training irrelevant but all training seem to assume that all teachers were unqualified and inexperienced.

44. All stakeholders express awareness about the multiple and interrelated factors influencing the quality of education in Nepal. Further, they point to the need for clarity, stability and

efficiency in policy making and implementation in the field of education and particularly in issues like teacher recruitment and teacher education, in curriculum and textbook development and in assessment and examination. Nevertheless, teachers are typically given most of the blame for the declining quality in Nepalese education.

REFRAMING OF TEACHER COMPETENCES BASED ON NEPALESE INPUTS

45. As stated earlier and as demonstrated in the comments and viewpoints given by Nepalese stakeholders during this consultancy the improvement of quality in education is a complex and time-consuming process. A wide range of factors need to be addressed and it is also indicated in the SESP Core Document. This consultancy is, however, only supposed to deal with the issue of adequate teacher competences to guide further developments in teacher education and training and with the need for strengthening head-teacher training in this respect.

46. The competences listed by Nepalese stakeholders serves as a good platform to further explore the issue. The following is an attempt to re-categorize and elaborate the previously listed competences and link them to international trends within the field of discourse on teacher competences. Although the below competences are listed under separate headings it should be emphasised that they are closely and dynamically interrelated. One competence does not work efficiently without due attention to other competences. Further, it should be noticed that the following represents a tentative description only and further discussion, elaboration and specification is required as the curriculum design and capacity building progresses.

Curriculum competence

47. Teachers should be able to understand and evaluate the content and structure (sequencing) and the intent of the curriculum. This requires on the one hand profound knowledge of the subject (content) and on the other an understanding of the overall aims and objectives of the curriculum (intent) including what students are supposed to learn. The overall understanding of the curriculum and of curriculum analysis and design should enable teachers to design and implement lesson plans with adequate aims and objectives with due respect to the overall curriculum framework and its intent.

Teaching and lesson planning competence

48. This competence is concerned with teachers' capability to develop, organise and implement specific teacher-learning courses or sequences, i.e. lesson plans reflecting relevant aims and objectives.

49. This competence implies that teachers should be able to create varying teaching-learning situations identifying and practising multiple assignments and challenges for the students and optimise the use of available teacher-learning materials and to develop teaching-learning materials from various sources within the wider community. Teachers should be able to take into consideration that students learn at different speeds and in varying ways and students may have special needs that require special attention. Further, this competence implies that teachers are capable to explain and discuss with their students the aim and objectives and intent of the curriculum and a particular lesson plan and to motivate and inspire students' learning activities and thus also provide room for inter-active communication within the classroom.

Assessment and evaluation competence

50. This competence refers to the teachers' ability to select or design and to utilise a variety of student assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques throughout the lesson sequences and at the end of these. Any assessment and evaluation instruments and techniques have their own limitations in discovering the learning outcomes and the learning difficulties of the students and thus teachers also need to be capable to critically examine the reliability of validity of the tools in question and the conclusions that may be drawn from using particular assessment and evaluation approaches.

51. Further, this competence implies that teachers should communicate the assessment and evaluation outcomes to their students with the aim to motivate and inspire further progress in learning.

Collaborative competence

52. There are basically two dimensions to collaborative competence. One, teachers need to collaborate with their colleagues and the head-teacher in order to support (i) improvements of the teaching within their particular subject(s); (ii) improvements of the overall teaching-learning activities and environment within classrooms and the school and (iii) an overall understanding of students progress. Second, teachers should be capable of communicating and collaborating efficiently with parents, School Management Committee and the wider community and with school authorities.

53. Given the 8 years of armed conflict in Nepal, which came to an end early 2003 and the emerging peace process teachers should have competence also in promoting reconciliation and collaboration within their communities in order to further promote a collaborative and peaceful atmosphere in society.

Professional development competence

54. Teachers themselves are closest to identifying strengths and weaknesses in their own professional performance provided that they possess competences in this respect. Professional development competence thus refers to teachers' ability to critically examine and reflect upon their own teaching, share their experiences with colleagues, head-teachers and supervisors and on this basis identify and express needs for further training and other forms of professional development. Professional development competence should also apply to teachers' ability to support the development of good learning environment within their respective schools.

55. Considering the process of decentralisation and the use of School Improvement Plans to guide investments in education in Nepal teachers' professional development competence is crucial to supporting the emerging demand-driven approach in e.g. in-service teacher training. The emergence of professional development competence should be guided by systematic use of self-study or action-research.

COMPETENCE-BASED APPROACHES – IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

56. It has been stated earlier in this report that competences are closely related to context and thus to particular situations. This implies that competences are embedded in practice and develop through practice, which in turn is influenced by multiple factors. In relation to teacher

education and training it further indicates that the development of proper teacher competences is closely related to the quality of teacher education curriculum and of teacher educators and trainers and supervisors, the quality and efficiency of teacher education and training institutions and last, but not least, to the quality of teaching-learning environment in classrooms and schools and thus also to the quality of school management.

57. In this perspective the following recommendations for action to support quality development in teacher education in Nepal within the SESP framework aims to address what is considered the most critical support to be provided to bring about a platform from which Nepalese teacher educators and institutions can operate in order to develop a competency-based approach to teacher education and to the benefit of long-term and sustainable interventions with reduced reliance on external assistance. Thus recommendations will be made to support the development of

- a critical mass of teacher educators/trainers and teacher education developers and designers and the simultaneous drafting of teacher education curriculum to guide pre-service education and in-service training;
- training programmes for head-teachers to enable them to provide proper supervision of teachers and support for continuous improvement of classroom practices.

A critical mass of teacher educators

58. The competency-based approach to teacher education is indeed rather challenging. It implies a break away from the Nepalese and donor supported tradition of developing teacher training packages with rather narrow objectives and an instrumentalist approach to teacher education. Education policies and priorities and curriculum and textbook design have been changed regularly over the last two decades in Nepal and will most probably do so also in the future. Most changes have taken place within donor supported projects and programmes and with the involvement of extensive international technical assistance. However, such interventions and investments have shown to be short-living and thus relatively ineffective in the broader and long-term perspective.

59. Throughout the years little attention, if any, has been given to develop a critical mass of highly qualified teacher educators/trainers and teacher education curriculum designers and developers. A critical mass that could represent a sustainable and continuously developing human resource to support the development of teacher education and gradually reduce the need for external assistance to this critical area of educational development.

60. The proposal to support the development of such a critical mass of highly qualified teacher educators is considered to be fully in line with the requirements for developing national capacity in teacher education as outlined in the Core Document and the Danida Sector Programme Support Document. Referring to the latter the proposal further reflects Danida SPSP's emphasis on provision of technical assistance to capacity building in the field of teacher education and the underlining of such assistance to be provided through institutional linkages and specialist consultancies.

The development of a critical mass of teacher educators should be sequenced in two phases:

61. In the *first phase* (2003-2005) a core-team of *up to* 30 teacher educators should through an institutional linkage arrangement with continuous specialist consultancies be engaged in

intensive upgrading of their qualifications. Simultaneously this team will together with their international partners be given the responsibility to (a) further develop the competency-based secondary teacher education curriculum and related syllabuses, (b) identify literature to support the new curriculum; (c) develop a competency-based certificate training programme for the critical mass of teacher educators drawn mostly from the teaching ranks with demonstrated evidence of successful teaching and (d) a five year framework plan to ensure the training of approximately 300 -350 teacher educators.

62. The core-team should be drawn from the currently most qualified teacher educators within NCED, SEDEC and SEDUs, FOE and other teacher education providers. The selection of the core-team should be based on clear and rigorous criteria established with due respect to the aim and spirit of the capacity-building approach. The critical mass of teacher educators should as well be identified within the mentioned institutions and the Secondary School Resource Centres. This would ensure that capacity is developed within the existing institutions and structures in Nepal as emphasised in the Core Document and the Danida SPSD.

63. It is anticipated that the upgrading of the core-team will involve at least six months of intensive teaching and supervision provided through the institutional linkage arrangement and an additional six months of self-study and development activities with continuous supervision through Internet and face-to-face consultancies with the international partners.

64. In the *second phase* (2005-2008) cohorts of the critical mass of teacher educators will continuously be engaged in certificate training assumingly of two sequences of two-three months intensive face-to-face teaching and supervision with continuous self-study in between. The core-team will be responsible for the training and supervision. During the second phase the core-team will further be engaged in assisting the new NCED (the result of the merging between NCED and SEDEC as envisaged in the Core Document) in developing high quality competency-based teacher training for the teacher training licensing programmes and for re-current in-service teacher training. Furthermore, the core-team will assist in developing training programmes of head-teachers.

65. Throughout the second phase the team of international partners will work with the core-team for two-three weeks annually to assess the overall process and to provide critical feedback. It is further recommended that formative research on the entire development process is launched from the outset and that it continuously provides feedback to the core-team, MOES, Danida and other stakeholders to the capacity building efforts.

66. It is envisaged that the work of the core-team and the critical mass of teacher educators involves systematic use of *self-study on own and the collective's practice* (action research). Self-study is in this perspective perceived as a way of creating a practice and an atmosphere of continuous reflection and critique to the benefit of continuous quality improvement. Self-study would further provide highly valuable inputs to the ongoing formative research and also serve as a sound basis for the discussions with the group of international partners. Self-study approaches would be introduced through the upgrading of the core-team and the training of the critical mass of teacher educators.

67. Rather than developing 'package-like' reference-materials for teacher education it is recommended that relevant existing literature for the extremely rich international bibliography

in this area is identified and where necessary translated in to Nepali and made available as separate collections or compendiums.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN TEACHER PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

68. Internationally as well as in Nepal the role of school leadership is attracting increased attention. In a simplistic way it could be argued that there are mainly two concerns behind the increased focus on school leadership. One is the implications related to decentralisation of the school system, which typically changes and extends the role and functions of school leadership. Principals and head teachers under a decentralised system are supposed to manage and administer within certain frameworks of rules and regulations and budgetary schemes. A decentralised system typically places more decision-making with the school leadership and school management committees or boards. The school leaderships carry wider roles and responsibilities in this respect and are less guided by centrally established regulations. The other concern, which to a large extent is closely related to the former, refers to the assumption that school leadership has a greater role in facilitating and supervising quality improvements of teaching and learning within the school and its classrooms. This adds the role of educational change facilitator to the traditional role of administration with the principal and head teacher. There is extensive research and experience emphasising the role of school leadership in successful quality improvement of classroom practice and the overall performance on any given school.

69. All international experience and trends are not necessarily relevant to the Nepalese context. However, Nepal is undergoing far-reaching decentralisation of the education system and the existing school supervision system does not work efficiently. Further, much debate in Nepal over the recent five-six years has addressed the need for developing the roles and responsibilities of the head teachers and of the school management committees. And, many observe that in-service teacher training has little impact on classroom practice. Thus, there seems to be good reason to reflect some international experiences in the ongoing Nepalese debates on head teachers' competences.

70. Inputs from Nepalese stakeholders during the consultancy and positions stated in several other documents identifies the following competences to be hold by the efficiently working head teacher:

- General management and administration, including planning and budgeting. Transparency in management and ability and willingness to make decisions and to solve problems and conflicts;
- Good command of one or more subjects and in teaching methodology;
- Good knowledge about the curriculum and its underlying intentions;
- Collaboration and coordination with local community and parents and the School Management Committee, including skills in resource mobilisation;
- Change management and supervision of teachers; knowledge and skills in educational innovation and teacher development;

71. Further, it has been stressed that head teachers should demonstrate a strong dedication to education and the school system and have an honest and sincere attitude towards their roles and responsibilities.

72. As is the situation in teacher education Nepal is lacking qualified staff to train head-teachers in accordance with the competences required. This is particularly the case in the light of the decentralisation process under way in the education sector where decentralisation inevitably will place more and new roles and responsibilities with the head-teacher.

73. As stated previously in this report increased capacities of the head-teachers are also considered critical to improve teacher performance and development. In full accordance with most international experiences and trends Nepalese stakeholders envisage a strong role for the head-teachers in supervising teachers and in promoting overall quality improvement of education within their respective schools. Nepalese institutions and professionals in charge of head-teacher training have little experience and capacity in training head-teachers in their functions as teacher supervisors and educational improvement initiators and managers.

74. Thus it is anticipated that the core-team of teacher educators as mentioned above will also be involved in intensive upgrading of their capacities to develop, design and implement quality training of head-teachers. The upgrading activities will be included in the *first phase* activities as described in the previous section. Subsequently, the core-team will be assisting the NCED in reviewing head-teacher training programmes and in developing the required course outlines and training manuals.

ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

75. In line with the Core Document and the Danida SDSP it is assumed that the core -team members will be drawn from existing institutions in Nepal and that they will remain in positions where they are entirely engaged in teacher education as educators/trainers and/or teacher education programme developers. This approach will combine the need for focussed capacity-building to serve the particular requirements of SESP with the need to support sustainable capacity-building within teacher education and head-teacher training institutions in Nepal.

76. In accordance with particularly the Danida SDSP it is further assumed that the capacity-building of the Nepalese core-team and the critical mass of teacher educators as well as the various development activities will be undertaken within institutional linkage arrangements ensuring consistency, continuity and efficient coordination of the international partner inputs.

77. In light of the merging of NCED and SEDEC and the role of FOE staff also in primary teacher education the extensive capacity-building and development activities for secondary teacher education is very likely to support quality improvement in primary education as well.

78. Based on previous experiences the major risk appears to be instability in staff retention. Thus it should be made a clear condition to the materialisation of the above capacity-building strategy that involved staff will remain in their positions throughout the SESP. Otherwise, the efficiency and sustainability of the perceived interventions will be heavily damaged.

79. Principles and procedures need to be established to ensure substitution for teacher educators/trainers involved in the extensive capacity-building activities in order not to hamper the daily activities within their respective institutions.

80. It is assumed that future developments in teacher education and head-teacher development carefully and systematically involves Teachers' Associations in the process. During talks under this consultancy representatives from MOES and DOE and their affiliated institutions and from the Teachers' Associations have expressed their keen interest in such collaboration.

81. It should be emphasised that this report is presenting an initial framework for developing a competence-based approach to teacher education and head-teacher development *and* recommending a strategy to develop a critical mass of highly competent teacher educators and teacher/head-teacher development professional supporters. It does not intend to address the many other factors influencing quality education and quality improvement in teachers' performance. These factors are dealt with extensively in the Core Document, the Danida SESP Document, the Institutional Analysis Report and the HRD Plan for BPEP. Thus this report primarily addresses two very critical and deeply interrelated issues in supporting quality development in education, namely the development of a generic and competence-based approach to teacher education and head-teacher development *and* the emergence of a critical mass of highly qualified teacher and head-teacher educators and professional development supporters.

BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION IMPLICATIONS

82. It is beyond the scope of this consultancy to work out a detailed budget for the proposed activities outlined above. If/when agreement is reached to push ahead along the lines indicated in this report detailed budgeted activity plans should be worked out identifying costs for in-country capacity building and development activities and international assistance.