

Background and Qualification of Teacher Trainers at SEDUs and Satisfaction with SEDU System

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Acknowledgement

Without a high level of commitment and professional efficiency in teachers no one can expect notable changes in the teaching style and its effectiveness and subsequent learning outcomes on the part of students. With the aim of promoting the quality of education from grade 6 to 10, Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDEC) and the Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs) were institutionalized under the umbrella of Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP) in 1994. In this connection twenty-five SEDUs are currently involved in delivering in-service training to the lower secondary and secondary school teachers in the core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, Nepali and Social Studies), management training for head-teachers, and curriculum dissemination/orientation. These SEDUs have been instrumental in motivating teachers for pedagogical capacity building. However despite the provision of the TOT, the trainers are not fully capable of providing effective in-service training to the secondary and lower secondary school teachers. In this context, Danish Support to Secondary Education sponsored for a study on "Background and Qualification of Teacher Trainers at SEDUs and satisfaction with SEDU System".

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CHAPTER I: THE CONTEXT

1. Background of the Study

A thorough knowledge of the subject to be taught is a necessary condition for being a good teacher, but is not sufficient in itself. In order to teach subject properly, one must also know how to impart it effectively to others. Hence, besides good qualification a teacher needs a good training. Process of training schoolteachers varies from country to country. In some countries, they are usually trained either at the universities or at secondary college of education or by some separate training centers. In Nepal two types of teacher education/training are in practice: pre-service and in-service. Pre-service teacher education is given at Faculty of Education in Universities; in-service training is given in government institutions: Primary Teacher Training Centre (PTTC) trains primary teachers and lower secondary and secondary teacher training by the Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs).

With the mission of promoting the quality of education from grade 6 to 10 Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDEC) and the Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs) were institutionalized under the umbrella of Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP) in 1994. Currently 25 SEDUs are operating in different parts of the country covering all districts of Nepal. As envisaged in Secondary Education Perspective Plan (1997-2011), the major functions of SEDU are to (1) deliver training to practicing teachers of secondary schools (2) provide professional advice and support to the secondary school teachers and managers (3) develop partnership among schools (4) mobilize local resources for secondary education (Secondary Education Perspective Plan, 1997:B7). In this connection, SEDEC has developed in-service training packages for the lower secondary and secondary school teachers in the core subjects like English, Mathematics, Science, Nepali and Social Studies, management training for headteachers, training to using science equipment and curriculum dissemination/ orientation. The SEDUs have been instrumental in delivering these in-service training packages to the schoolteachers throughout the country.

The Eighth Education Act has made training mandatory for schoolteachers. Both administratively and academically the need of training is highlighted for the schoolteachers. At the same time there is a question on the quality of training. It is obvious that the quality of teacher training relies on the knowledge and skills gained by the teachers and the skills transferred by the teachers in classroom instruction. In this connection several studies have been conducted by different agencies to examine the effectiveness of various training programs. CERID in association with SEDP conducted an evaluative study of in-service training of lower secondary and secondary education teachers in 1999. According to their report the trained teachers and head teachers expressed that the training was useful and beneficial. However, only about 42 per cent mentioned that their ability for clear presentation have been enhanced, 43 per cent perceived that they gained skills, and 50 per cent mentioned that they are satisfied with the teaching materials used in the classrooms (CERID and SEDP/MOE, 1999 40-41). This study revealed the need for reform in training program, better teacher handbook and provision of adequate resource materials (Ibid, 1999:43). However, no attempt has been made to examine how the trainers have been trained, what educational and

professional background the trainers have, how are they perceived by the beneficiaries of the package and what the problems and limitations of the trainers are. Another study done by Baidya et al (1999) in a study “ Financial sustainability of secondary school resource centres” indicated extremely positive feedback of the head teachers and teachers who had attended short training course. It further revealed that the training courses were found to be suitable in terms of building confidence and motivation (Baidya et al, 1999:9) but not in terms of duration, timing and availability of trainers. Problems like headteachers hesitation to release teachers for such a long time, the domestic and professional burden of female teachers attending the training, the lack of coordination between DEO’s and SEDUs in the selection of participants, absence for follow-up training and supervision have been identified.

Another study “ Gender and Secondary Education” conducted by CERID (1997) has revealed that in general there exists a cordial and harmonious relation between trainers and trainees during the training, but in a few cases trainers were reported of not being cooperative and competent enough. A few trainees had also shown dissatisfaction about the relevancy of the training package. The study has also indicated that the participation of the female teachers, both as trainer and trainee, was less than that of the male teachers (CERID, 1997: 40-42). The study pointed out crowded classroom environment and lack of equipment and space as the major deterrents for the effective implementation of the pedagogy suggested in these in-service training.

A report on “Rise of Class Education” prepared by Mr. Ramesh Khadka for Action Aid Nepal (2000) states that the government has been training teachers, but these training have not been able to bring about the expected change. According to the report, almost every teacher has received the training of some form even though the official record states that only 41% of the teachers are trained. Despite this fact, teachers have not been able to apply what they have learned in the training (R. Khadka, AAN: 60). Thus, this report raises a question in the quality of training.

A report on “ Secondary Education Development Project Evaluation” prepared by METCON Consultants and Education for Change Limited (2000) has highlighted a number of issues from the management and operation of SEDUs to the selection of trainers and trainees, reliance on school teachers as trainers, facilities in SEDU, number of support staff in SEDU, duration of training, cost of training, relationship of SEDU with DEO, availability of trainers and the sustainability of SEDU (METCON Consultants and Education for Change Limited 2000: Appendix 5).

Draft Report of World Bank, 2000 on “Improving National Curriculum”, states that the government spends a good deal of educational budget in teacher training every year and it is hard to find permanent teachers without any form of training. However, the impact of training on classroom teaching is hardly noticeable. “... The teacher training are neither effective nor fruitful, they are inadequate in terms of quality, length, content and follow up. They are merely theoretical, and not keeping with the needs of the curriculum as there is no proper coordination between CDC, TTB. Most of the time is spent on teaching theories on interactive teaching rather than on practicing and developing skills of interactive teaching. (Draft report of World Bank, 2000 on “Improving National Curriculum”: 24) This report indicates several

defects in our teacher training system, but it has remained silent about the quality of trainers involved in training, who could have been one of the possible causes for the lack of effectiveness of the training.

At present, the project terminated last year. Now, DFID has supported financially to continue the training program as usual making contract with the government. No new program has been designed by SEDP in this year.

All these stated issues about SEDU training system compel to seek answer whether the existing SEDU system is suitable to conduct in-service training and the trainer's quality suitable to carry on this task.

2. Rationale of the Study

Teachers play a vital role in the education system. In Nepalese education system teacher is one of the main determinants to indicate the teaching-learning situation and students' achievement level. A number of factors associated with the working condition influence the teachers' commitment and their role in teaching. Therefore, besides providing favorable working conditions there is a need for professional support to teachers. With the introduction of SEDP and institutionalization of SEDUs in 1994, the SEDU system has been providing in-service training to lower secondary and secondary schoolteachers. In pursuit of disseminating in-service training packages developed by SEDEC for secondary and lower secondary schoolteachers, a training of trainers (TOT) program was developed. The purpose of TOT was to upgrade selected teachers and mobilize them as trainers to provide quality training to their fellow teachers. The basic philosophy of using secondary school teachers as trainers was that they would have the best understanding of the teaching learning environment of the Nepalese secondary and lower secondary schools, and the attitude and perception of their colleagues towards daily teaching. However, there may be a number of problems associated to this model. One very fundamental problem to be perceived from the comments heard by the people is that despite the provision of the TOT, the trainers' are not fully capable of providing effective in-service training to the secondary and lower secondary school teachers. It is equally vocalized by the people that the help the trainers have been providing teachers to address differing needs of students and school environment in course of teaching in the class has not been satisfactory. On the other hand, the trainers who are schoolteachers have to spend most of the time in school setting as teachers have little exposure to the outside world and limited opportunities have been provided to them for institutional capacity building as a teacher-trainer within the SEDUs system. Above all, the lack of substitute teachers to take over the trainers' in secondary school teaching has been stressful not only for the trainer to complete students' course in time but also for head teacher to manage the school effectively.

In consideration of underlying issues, there is a need for an understanding the effects of the in-service teacher training through SEDU system on secondary education. Therefore, it is significant to have a study on the background and qualifications of teacher trainers at SEDUs and satisfaction with SEDU courses from the perspective of the people involved in SEDU training, chiefly the SEDU Chiefs, the trainers, the trainees, and the related head teachers. The conclusion drawn from the study certainly help to bring the necessary revision in the existing SEDU system of in-service teacher training to soothe the heated issues regarding the effectiveness of the training.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are:

- To prepare a profile of the SEDUs so as to assess the capacity to undertake the training effectively.
- To describe the SEDU trainers in terms of their educational and professional background.
- To assess the effectiveness of the training of trainers (TOT) provided to the SEDU trainers by SEDP/SEDEC.
- To describe the main problems of the SEDU system as perceived by the trainers.
- To evaluate the performance of the trainers and the SEDU system in relation to the aims of the program when viewed from the perspective of trainees and the head masters.

More specifically this study will answer the research questions "to what extent the quality of the SEDU trainers and the in-service training they provide are satisfactory".

4. Methodology

4.1 Sources of Data

This is a qualitative study based on the fieldwork in three purposely-selected districts- Baitadi, Morang and Palpa. Baitadi represents Far-Western Region and mountain region. Morang represents a Terai region and Eastern Development Region. Palpa represents Western Region and mid-hills. It is also the resource centre. Baitadi SEDU represents a remote area SEDU, Morang SEDU a medium type of SEDU in terms of operation, and Palpa SEDU a resource centre. Required data and information have been collected from the following sources :

- Review of previous studies in SEDP, SEP and SEDU documentation.
- Newsletters published by SEDUs.
- Interview with selected trainees, trainers, and head teachers from secondary and lower secondary schools and SEDU Chiefs of the study districts.
- Focus group discussion (FGD) with the trainees and trainers.
- On the spot observation of in-service training.

4.2 Instruments used

The instruments used in this research are interview schedule and a set of guidelines for focus group discussion.

4.2.1 Structured and Semi-structure interview schedule:

Structured and semi-structured interview schedules were administered to trainees, head teachers, trainers and SEDU chiefs. The purpose of the interview schedule was to solicit the views and perception relating to:

- the operation of SEDU system in providing in-service training
- effectiveness of the training packages and trainers
- the criteria and process of selecting trainers
- the performances of the trainees
- the recommendations for strengthening the SEDU system and the TOT program

4.2.2 Guidelines for Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

The FGD guidelines included questions the discussion on which could help to draw critical and comprehensive views of the trainers as well as trainees on

- the theoretical and pedagogical background of the trainers,
- the present operation of SEDU system, the professional and educational background of the trainees, their selection, and
- The possibilities of involving other agencies to increase the access of in-service training.

4.3. Data Collection Procedure

Observation, interview and focus-group discussion were the techniques used in collecting data/ information necessary for the accomplishment of the study objectives. When Concisely stated the objective of the study is to identify the effectiveness of the training and the quality of the trainers in SEDUs. One of the major determinants of effectiveness of in-service training is the performance of the SEDU trainers which in tern is mainly decided by their educational and professional background and the effectiveness of TOT they attended. Thus, it was felt necessary to find out strengths, limitations, feelings and perceptions of the trainers. Twenty-six trainers from three selected SEDUs were interviewed on various issues regarding the SEDU system, SEDU trainers and the effectiveness of SEDU's training. Similarly, one of the best evaluators of the quality of the trainers and their performance is their own trainee. It is believed that interview and focus group discussion with the trainees would reveal certain aspects of SEDU system, its training and the trainers. Therefore, 32 trainees were interviewed on several issues like achievement, relevancy and effectiveness of SEDU training, qualification and performance of the trainers involved in training and factors affecting their performance in classroom teaching. Smaller focus group discussions were also organized.

Head teachers are partially responsible for selecting trainees for any SEDU training, and they are directly responsible for ensuring that the knowledge and skill learned in the training are being transferred to the classroom teaching effectively. Even though they are not directly involved in the selection of SEDU trainers they can still put impediments in sending them to conduct the training program, It is obvious that headteachers have to face several managerial problems in the absence of teachers (trainers and trainees) from the school. Therefore, it is felt

necessary to get the opinion of some of the headteachers, particularly the head teachers from the trainers' schools. Eleven headteachers were interviewed in the course of this research. In the interview they were requested to evaluate trainers and training based on their empirical perception and interaction with the trainees informal discourse about the training in SEDU. They were asked mainly about how trainee teachers have been coping with the problem of teachers' long absence.

No other than the SEDU chiefs would have a better knowledge of the activities, strengths and limitations of SEDUs. Therefore, SEDU chiefs of all three sample SEDUs were interviewed and their opinion on issues like effectiveness of SEDU training, qualification and selection of trainers and achievements, sustainability and problems of their SEDUs.

CHAPTER II: Findings and analysis

Findings and analysis is done under the seven major headings; SEDU profile, SEDU system, evaluation of TOT, Trainers, possibilities of involving other organizations in in-service teacher training and possibilities of involving SEDU in physical maintenance and rehabilitation of schools

1.SEDUs Profile

Quality education in a country depends upon the competency of the teaching force that is possible only through training. Study has shown that 6.6% teachers join in lower secondary and secondary schools in each year (Teacher Education for 21st Century: Problems and Prospects, A Study Report, January, 1998, 44). Among these figures some significant numbers of them may be untrained. Therefore, in-service training of the teachers is necessary. Now in-service training is regarded as the function of Ministry of Education (MOE). SEDUs are responsible for providing training to lower secondary and secondary in-service teachers. In order to bear the responsibilities a SEDU should be rich in human resource, physical resource and educational facilities. Based on the study of the three sampled SEDUs (Baitadi, Palpa, Morang), the existing conditions of physical facility, trainer's availability and their qualification, educational facility and the achievements made during the last four years are analyzed below.

1.1 Physical Facility

The physical facility in a SEDU is explained in terms of buildings, rooms, furniture, and other necessary things.

1.1.1 Building and Rooms:

Two SEDUs have adequate but poor quarter facility to the chiefs, two have adequate facility of training halls. Similarly two SEDUs have inadequate and poor trainees quarter. All SEDUs have no facility of trainer quarter and the reading/preparation room. Almost all SEDUs have poor physical facility. All SEDUs chiefs agreed that every thing is in need of repairing. However, the budget allocated in this topic is inadequate.

1.1.2 Furniture and Instruments:

The educational materials available are good in two of the three SEDUs where as OHP and other instructional materials and the instrument for conducting workshop are in poor condition. In one SEDU instruments for workshop are not available. The number of furniture available in the SEDU units are adequate but in poor condition. They need to be either replaced or repairing.

1.2 Access of Trainers and their Qualification

From the recorded data of the trainers, the number of trainers in mathematics, science, and social study are more or less equal but comparatively more in languages. By qualification,

most of the trainers are B.A. or equivalent. Furthermore the data shows 41.6% trainers in math, 33% in science, 42.8% in Nepali, 0.06% in English and 55.5% in social study are Master Degree holder. On average 32.8% trainers of SEDUs have qualification of Master Degree in the sampled SEDUs.

1.3 SEDUs Achievement

In this study the achievement of SEDUs are measured in terms of the number of training conducted and the production of trained teachers. All SEDU chiefs reported that they conduct two training sessions in each year. The number of trained teachers in the first 2 years is larger than later 2 years. One thousand nine hundreds and forty teachers have been trained in four years. This indicates that on average 162 teachers have been trained per year per SEDU. The set target of each SEDU is to conduct training two sessions 26 participants in each core subject (Nepali, Math, science, English, social study) in each year. At this rate a SEDU has to train 260 teacher each year. Comparing the minimal target and the trained teachers from each SEDU on average only 62.7% target have been fulfilled. However, the SEDUs have not completed their targeted training program for 2057 B.S. Had it been completed the achievement rate would have been increased.

2. SEDU System

2.1 SEDU's Role and Contribution

There are various ways by which a SEDU can contribute to the development of secondary education system in Nepal. Some of them are: delivering training to secondary school teachers, developing partnership with schools and developing itself as a resource centre in terms of human and material resources. The trainers, trainees and SEDU chiefs that were interviewed, had the following opinion on these aspects of SEDU.

2.1.1. Delivering training to secondary school teachers:

For many SEDU Trainers SEDU's role in delivering training to secondary teachers has been satisfactory only to some extent. They believe that it has trained many teachers but its effect in Nepal's education system has been minimal. Some trainers are not satisfied even with the number of teachers it trains every year. They say that a particular SEDU trains 26 teachers per year per subject at the most, and at this rate when will it finish training thousands of teachers in hundreds of secondary schools in its area! SEDU chiefs expressed the similar feelings. Moreover, the turnover in almost every session is low and many quota go unfulfilled.

2.1.2. Providing professional advice and support to secondary teachers:

Only a few trainers showed dissatisfaction towards the role of SEDU in providing the professional advice and support to secondary teachers. Many of them said that it has helped raise the confidence and moral of teachers. Majority of the trainees had similar opinion and added that most of the SMT, SEDU chief and trainers are always willing to extend their

professional support. According to Morang SEDU chief, if a teacher comes to SEDU with specific problem related to his/her profession SEDU facilitates the meeting with the expert from whom the teacher can get the necessary help.

2.1.3. Developing partnership with schools:

Trainers, trainees as well as the head teachers opined that SEDU has done too little to develop partnership with schools. Its only effort in this area has been to organize quiz contests and science exhibitions for schools once in a while. But, SEDU chiefs argued that there is some form of partnership as SEDU is helping the schools by training its teachers and schools are helping SEDU by releasing their teachers, trainers, when we need them. However, they accepted that a lot more could be done in this area should budget and time permit.

2.1.4. Developing SEDU as a resource centre in terms of human and material resources:

According to the trainers, SEDU has developed as a human resource centre, to some extent, but not as a material resource centre. Once in a while it provides the opportunity for the teachers to get professional help from the experts by bringing the two parties together. In terms of material resources, schools seldom borrow teaching aids like reference books, charts and science equipment from its limited stock. All trainers stressed that SEDU should develop itself as a resource centre in terms of human as well as material resources. Headteachers said that schools would benefit a lot if SEDUs could be more resourceful in terms of teaching materials and facilitates the schools to borrow them freely.

2.1.5. Mobilizing local resources for secondary schools

The common opinion of all the interviewees was that SEDU's contribution in mobilization of local resources for secondary schools is minimal. It has done nothing more than facilitating the local experts (trainers) to impart their knowledge and skill to the local teachers (trainees) through SEDU training.

2.2 Achievements of SEDU Training

When asked about the notable achievements of SEDU, there was a very mixed reaction from the trainers. However, most of them opined, both in individual interviews and focus group discussions, increased access to training and some improvement in pedagogy can be considered as the most notable achievements of SEDU. Some other achievements, as perceived by the trainers, are dissemination of the curriculum, confidence building in teachers, sustained role of head teachers in school management, and improvement in inter-school relation because of the interaction of teachers and head teachers in training sessions.

The trainers feel that SEDU training has introduced teachers to different modern teaching-learning methodologies with the hope that they will be able to select and apply the right method at the right situation. It has stressed on student-centered practical-oriented teaching

approach as opposed to the old fashioned teacher-centered or textbook-centered teaching style. The trainers could not claim SEDU training to have brought significant improvement in school results but claimed the increase in student participation and use of curriculum and in classroom teaching. One of the participants in focus group discussion said “At least many teachers have become more conscious about their responsibilities.”

Trainees too reported that SEDU training acquainted them with the new curriculum, broadened their content knowledge in the related subject and introduced them to the new teaching-learning strategies and techniques of classroom management. Some of the trainees mentioned that because of the SEDU training they have become better at selecting and preparing the appropriate teaching aids and using them effectively. Majority of them said that SEDU training has boosted their self confidence as well as positive attitude towards the profession. Only a few were pessimistic about SEDU training and said it made no difference at all.

2.3 Effectiveness of SEDU Training:

Regarding the effectiveness of the training, most of the trainers opined that they have no idea about the effectiveness of the training because the evaluation and supervision are rare. One of the trainers said “... It appears as if SEDU is only focused on providing training annually without even thinking of its effectiveness.” Despite the absence of formal system of evaluating and supervising a trainee's classroom performance after the completion of the training, many trainers (about 75% of those interviewed) said that they have supervised a few lessons of a few of their trainee's performance in classroom. They noticed some positive change in teaching method, the use of appropriate teaching materials and in teacher's confidence. The trainee teachers looked better prepared and more competent in subject matter than an ordinary untrained teacher. The teaching was well planned and student-centered and students were well disciplined. One of the trainers even said that one trainee of his showed him more than 100 lesson plans. However, they stressed that these changes were noticed only at the time of supervision and can not be generalized to all trainees for all times. SEDU chiefs shared the same opinion and said that trainees mostly apply the knowledge and the skills learned during the training when they know their classes are being observed. And in normal classes, they revert to their own traditional lecture method. The Head Office reported that an additional 6 week long school based training for lower secondary level teachers has been implemented in pilot basis in some SEDUs as a follow up activity. However, none of the interviewees from the sampled SEDUs mentioned of such activity.

In the focus group discussion with the trainers, it was expressed that most of their trainees have not been able to bring about any notable change in their teaching. They say that some of them have not even tried, mainly due to lack of follow up system and appropriate incentives or motivation. Some tried to adopt the new techniques but failed primarily due to lack of suitable environment and necessary physical facilities at the school, and lack of budget for the purchase or development of necessary teaching materials. Crowded classrooms with excessively large number of students, lack of free time for teachers to prepare the lesson, and the need to rush for the completion of the vast course in limited time have discouraged the teachers further. According to them, completion of the course in time gets priority over

quality education. Therefore, they believe that the achievement of in-service training could be somewhere between 10 to 15% depending on the subject and location of school. SEDU chiefs had similar opinion as well. One of the SEDU chiefs backed it up with the following case study.

A volunteer, who was a trainer in one of the training of Baitadi's SEDU, made a follow up study to find out how far the teachers use the training output in their classroom teaching. In his study he found that only 10% teachers of English utilized the training in their classroom teaching.

None of the headteachers claimed of noticing any significant change in the teaching style of their teachers eve after attending the training. One of them even said that he is least surprised by this because “ ... no body cares how a teacher teaches, and whether the teaching is effective or not.” This indicates that the lack of proper supervision, evaluation and a system of reward and punishment in the Nepalese educational system has helped reduce further the effectiveness of SEDU training.

In the focus group discussion with the trainees, all trainees agreed that their teaching has become more student-centered and they have started using teaching aids more frequently and confidently. Some trainees even claimed that their skill of evaluating students' performance has increased. However, they agree that the degree of change is far below even their own expectation and it is mainly due to the constraints related to school but also due to some shortcomings of SEDU trainers and training package. These shortcomings are discussed later in the chapter.

Trainers and head teachers suggested that effectiveness of SEDU training could be improved by motivating the trainers and trainees by increasing incentives and facilities for them, by incorporating an effective system of feed-back, follow-up and evaluation, by organizing regular interactions between trainers, SEDU chief and school supervisors, by arranging follow-up workshops for trainees once or twice every year.

The trainers on one hand, reported that teachers were using teaching materials and student centred teaching methodology when their classes were being observed, and on the other hand, they said trainees were unable to apply new skills in their teaching because the school environment was not favorable. Thus, it seems that many of the trainees have failed to show change in their teaching style simply because they lack commitment and taking advantage of the absence of proper follow-up and evaluation from the concerned authority. The training has not made the trainees as responsible as the trainers claimed.

2.4 Relevancy of SEDU Training,

One of the objectives of the research was to find out the relevancy of SEDU training to the new curriculum, need and environment of the school, and need and ability of the trainees.

2.4.1. Relevancy to the National Curriculum:

Trainers reported that curriculum dissemination is a part of the training package and familiarizing the trainees with the national Curriculum is often the first objective of every training. Every element of the curriculum are discussed in detail and teachers are encouraged to base their teaching on the curriculum. Trainees, in their interviews, expressed their satisfaction about the dissemination of the curriculum in the training, and also the fact that SEDU training emphasizes on practical-oriented-teaching as expected by the national Curriculum. But, they also expressed their unhappiness about the mismatch between training package and the latest version of the National Curriculum. According to them, the training packages in several subjects have not been updated according to the latest change in the National Curriculum. Consequently the topics where majority of the teachers have problem, the topics that have been added in the latest curriculum, are not dealt with in the training. Some trainees pointed out that it would have been better if the training packages were in Nepali. Both, trainers and trainees, reported that the existing training package is based on the previous version of the curriculum that stressed more factual learning and treated several branches of humanity as separate subjects, where as the latest curriculum is integrated and stresses the practical oriented teaching. More is discussed about the training packages later in chapter. Every body stressed on the need for revision in SEDU training in order to make it completely relevant to the National Curriculum.

2.4.2 Relevancy to the need of the trainees:

Most of the trainers believed that the training is relevant to the need and ability of the trainees on the whole, except those trainees who come from the different faculty. All the head teachers who were interviewed reported that trainees in their schools are not satisfaction with the training. When the focus group discussion with the trainees revealed that the training had made the trainees more resourceful in subject matter but the given pedagogy was not compatible to their working environment. Thus, it did not help solve most of their problems. To add to that, most of the trainers neither had the time nor were resourceful enough to provide individual help to the trainees. One of the things they liked is that the training was able to provide a lot of help in teaching strategies, preparation and use of instructional materials.

2.4.3. Relevancy to the need and environment of the public schools:

According to the head teachers and the trainees, the teaching-learning methodologies suggested in the training were too theoretical and the skill developed could not be practiced in an ordinary public schools which have limited physical and educational resources. They were suitable only in those schools where class size is small and physical and educational facilities are in plenty. Obviously this is not the case with average public schools. In the focus group discussion with the trainees, one of the trainees from Morang remarked "A teacher's first priority is to complete the course in time, otherwise we will have to be answerable to the student union. And, it is impossible to complete the course in time by teaching with the

technique suggested in training.” As for the preparation of the teaching aids, according to the trainees, neither the teachers have time nor the school has the necessary budget. One of the head teachers from Morang remarked “If teachers are obliged to use their own traditional method of teaching after being trained then the investment is a waste.”

According to the head teachers, ability to teach effectively in large crowded classrooms with limited facilities, ability to construct teaching materials from the locally available resources and the skill of effective management of time are the needs of the public schoolteachers. And SEDU’s training had not been able to cater for these needs. The trainers, too agreed that the training is not exactly relevant to the school needs and blamed the training package for it. They suggested that it should be made more relevant to the local needs, environment and resources. Trainees, trainers, MTs , SMTs, teachers and headteachers should be consulted for this.

It was pointed out by all that the concerned authority should either develop a clear policy on making the schools well-equipped or revise the whole training package so as to suit the realities of the public schools.

2.5 Evaluation of Training Packages

The training packages of the four core subjects meet most of the needs of present curriculum, but all the interviewee expressed the necessity of revision in view of the changes in the National Curriculum, the needs of the trainees and the school environment. The surprising thing is that the revised packages for secondary level are already ready at the head Office, but none of the personnel at any of the three sampled SEDUs were aware of it. According to the SEDU chiefs, trainers do not have the right to modify the training package to suit the local needs and many of them are not capable of it either, but they do make adjustment in the number of sessions as per the needs of the trainees. The suggestions made by the chiefs, trainers and trainees are discussed separately on each of the packages.

1. Social Study package:

Social study package now has become irrelevant to the existing curriculum. This package was developed based on the subject teaching principle. Now different subjects such as geography, history, economics etc. are not taught separately in secondary school. A new course social study has been developed consisting of the subject matters from different disciplines of social science. The teaching learning approach in the curriculum is set differently for the social study course. Therefore the existing training package of social study does not meet the requirement of the new curriculum. The types of the teachers in our schools are not resourceful to teach the social study curriculum. Most of the teachers recruited in our schools are specialized in one or two subjects of social study viz. geography, history, political science, economics etc. The training package has been designed assuming that the teachers have good content knowledge and needs only the pedagogy. Teachers need content knowledge in the field that they have not specialized. Therefore, the training package has to be designed such that along with providing the general pedagogy, it also helps strengthen trainee’s content

knowledge in the those areas of social studies which are not their areas of specialization, for example- in geography or economics for the teacher whose area of specialization is history.

2. English package:

Both trainers and trainees like this training package. But so as to suit the qualities of the trainees, some things are to be added and reshuffled in the package. This package is very suitable for the teachers who have good English. The teachers can not improve their speech; pronunciation, stress and intonation during the short course of the training. To make the pronunciation good, a strategy of pronunciation improvement therapy should be included in the training package.

3. Mathematics and Science packages:

These two packages are comparatively representative to the existing curriculum. However, there remains some inadequacy and unnecessary materials. Duplication is found in mathematics package. Both the trainers and trainees have demanded the details of the newly introduced contents of optional mathematics. Present package is focused on the compulsory course. One example considered by a SEDU chief during discussion to justify the package is not in the line of the existing curriculum is ‘the training package of mathematics does not deal with binary number system and set theory but the curriculum requires them and very often trainees demand sessions on these contents. To the science package the practical activities stated in it are impossible due to the unavailability of the materials and instruments. Therefore, these two packages should be revised making relevant to the present curriculum by ensuring the availability of the instructional materials and addressing the needs of the trainees.

2.6 Satisfaction and Complaints of Trainees:

Regarding the satisfaction and complaints of the trainees about SEDU training and the trainers, the interview with the trainees revealed that they were impressed by the friendly nature, commitment, command in the subject matter, and the skill of some of the trainers. On the other hand, they did not appreciate the attitude of a few of the trainers. Those trainers lacked commitment, did not appear enthusiastic and neglected their responsibilities. The trainees complained that the teaching aids and materials provided during the training were not adequate in the practical sessions of mathematics or science, and the new topics in which they lacked confidence were not dealt with. The major complaint of the trainees was about the training allowance. According to them, the allowance is not adequate to purchase even the basic necessities, especially for those who had to come from far away. They also reported of lack of enthusiasm in attending SEDU training due to the absence of any direct benefits, in terms of salary, grade or promotion, in recognition of SEDU training. The headteachers, however, disagreed to this. According to them, teachers are highly enthusiastic to attend the training because this is perceived as one of the rare opportunities for learning something new, getting away from the monotony of teaching and above all earning some extra allowance (particularly true for the local teachers). The headteachers believed that should the training

allowance be stopped the number of participants will fall drastically unless a better alternative is thought of.

2.7 Problems of SEDU

Some of the prominent problems faced by the SEDU are as follows:

1. Shortage of support staff:

The SEDU chiefs, trainers as well as trainees reported of shortage of manpower at the SEDU. Only two staff, SEDU chief and his assistant, found in two of the sample SEDU and four in the third, Palpa SEDU. Due to the lack of right man in right work, chiefs themselves have to take the responsibility of managing the lab and other materials during training period. The important task of supervising the training program is missing.

2. Lack of Physical facility:

The SEDU chief, trainers and trainees reported of inadequacy of physical facilities in the SEDUs. Most of the SEDUs have only one training hall and a single hostel (ref. SEDU profile). Due to this, according to the SEDU chiefs, it is difficult to conduct more than one training at a time. Also, the participation of female is very poor in training as they have a problem of residence. All the three parties mentioned above stressed on the need for addition of ladies hostel and other physical facilities in every SEDU in order to make its target realistic. Separate training for female teachers only exists in the policy of SEDU system but conduction of no such training were reported at the sampled SEDUs.

3. Lack of sufficient budget:

Most of the things in the SEDU are in damaged and deteriorated condition. They need immediate repairing or replacement (ref. SEDU profile). SEDU chiefs explained that because of the limitation of the allocated budget repairing and maintenance of the building, furniture, wiring, bedclothes etc is being impossible. Trainers from Baitadi reported that their SEDU has not been able to conduct the targeted number of training every year because of the shortage of necessary funds. The SEDU chief concerned accepted this as one of the causes. Another SEDU chief added that the budget a SEDU gets can barely meet even the cost of stationary and other educational materials used in training. Almost everybody interviewed were of the opinion that budget for SEDU must be increased for its effectiveness.

4. Shortage of good trainers:

Most of the schools have limited numbers of teachers. The headteacher, therefore, some time does not accept the request of SEDU to send their teacher as a trainer. Because of this reason sometimes the SEDU has not enough trainers to conduct the training. Of those who come, most of them arrive at the centre only on the day of the training. They are not prepared for the session. Consequently their delivery of the contents becomes less effective. Trainers who

come from the nearby places attend schools as well as the training. The double burden of the trainers affects the quality of their presentation. These were the general view of the SEDU chiefs regarding the problems of trainers. Some of the trainees reported of some SEDUs not having competent trainers. The SEDU chief of Baitadi regarded this as a genuine problem for SEDUs like his. His problem was that the trainers of Nepali language in his SEDU can not avoid using the regional dialect during the training session. As a result the trainees do not get the opportunity to learn the standard Nepali pronunciation. On the other hand, hiring a native Nepali-speaking trainer from other parts of the country is difficult as many of them don't want to come to such a remote area.

5. Inadequate Educational facility:

Trainers stressed that a good library is a must in the training centre. According to them, SEDUs don't have a proper library and reference materials are barely available. "Whatever that is available is dumped in a corner in the storeroom.", said the assistant of Morang's SEDU chief. Trainers from some SEDUs complained that SEDUs do not have adequate science equipment and materials to carryout the activities suggested in the training package and the new textbooks. Morang's SEDU chief said that his SEDU has sufficient science equipment and materials but they are not compatible with that available in the schools.

6. Disagreement in training schedule:

Every head teacher suggested the training program to be conducted during vacations so that there will be no problem of classes going unattended. Trainees, too suggested the same but with the condition that they are compensated, in some form, for the loss of vacation. SEDU chiefs rejected these proposals on the ground that with the available physical facilities it is impossible to conduct training of all subjects in a single vacation. But, they asserted that they have been trying to maximize the number of training during the time when teaching at the school will be least disturbed, in Shrawan and Bhadra for example.

7. Training allowance is the main attraction for many trainees:

According to the SEDU chiefs, trainers and headteachers many trainees attend training simply for the allowance and break from teaching. As a result, many of them either turn up late or abandon in the middle, or show no interest for learning. The chief of Morang SEDU opined that should the training allowance be stopped, there will be a drastic fall in participation. To support this opinion, he reported of a case from few years back. According to him, *an American volunteer wanted to run a short term training course in Biratnagar for female teachers. She planned to buy tea and biscuits for the participants with the small allowance she had received from coca-cola company. Unfortunately, only 2 showed up, simply because there was no allowance for attendance.*

Trainees denied the accusation and stressed that they attended training to learn something new. However, during the course of interview, majority of them complained about training allowance not being attractive, indirectly indicating that allowance is an important aspect of SEDU training.

8. SEDU Committee - obstacle or support!

According to one of the SEDU chiefs, "... SEDU Committee has become an obstacle rather than a supporter for the enhancement of the SEDU program. Its formation itself is fundamentally flawed as the appointment of committee members is largely politically biased." According to him, personal and political differences of the SEDU Committee members have often been the obstacle for the smooth running of SEDU. Other chiefs, too, agreed that there is an undue political interference in the functioning of SEDU committee.

9. Role of SEDU Chief: administrator or support staff?

The role of SEDU chief in the unit is multi-facet right now. As reported by the SEDU chiefs, because of the shortage of support staff at the SEDU, they have had to work as a manager, administrator, clerk, lab assistant, trainer, monitor, and even a watchman. However, their actual role is to act as an administrator, training manager and coordinator between the DEO and SEDU, but they said that they have not been able to perform any of these roles effectively due to the above-mentioned reason.

10. DEO's role in SEDU system:

The study has revealed that the coordination between SEDU and DEO needs to be improved. Every interviewee showed concern about this. According to the trainers most of the appointments and policy level decisions are made by the DEO. Such decisions are more susceptible to political and non academic influences. In the current system, DEO is responsible for the selection of trainers and trainees for SEDU training. Everybody, including the trainers, agreed that at times wrong people have been selected as trainers. Such trainers are incompetent and lack commitment.

All interviewees pointed out the urgent need for either making provision for SEDU to function independently or improving the coordination between SEDU and DEO.

11. Selection of participants for training and problems associated with it:

Problems like participants arriving late for training, turnout being low, teachers attending the wrong training and the same trainer repeating the training - often in different subjects were frequently reported. SEDU chiefs verified them as genuine problems of SEDU. When asked about how the list of participants for training is prepared, SEDU chiefs explained that in the early years of SEDU, the practice was that a team from SEDU would visit schools, identify the needy and prepare the list. This practice however, was opposed by DEOs as they perceived this as interference into their territory. Since then DEOs have been carrying out this responsibility.

According to the SEDU chiefs, teachers do not receive the information from DEO in time since the list is prepared only at the last minute; hence they arrive at the training centre late to start the session. Some times proposed teacher does not come at all and the quota goes vacant because they are officially not allowed to admit anyone outside the list.

The following case study reflects some of these problems.

While the SEDU chief of Morang SEDU was being interviewed for this study, a headteacher from a nearby school brought a teacher with him and requested the SEDU chief to include him in the training session that had started a day before. He pleaded that no teacher from his school had been trained in that subject and this particular wanted to attend the training. The SEDU chief promised that he would try his best but he would have to wait till the next day. Apparently there was another lady teacher waiting for the same opportunity. The chief then explained to the interviewer, "See our training session started yesterday, but so far only 13 out of 25 trainees have registered their names. These people are interested but I can not admit them, not at least till tomorrow. By then, two crucial sessions would have been missed. Teachers are interested and there is a vacancy, but it gets wasted because of the defect in the system."

A similarly case was reported of Palpa SEDU. Only 16 candidates out of 25 had registered and some were trying to register on the 6th day of the training.

2.8 Follow-up and supervision

The trainers said that evaluation and supervision from the SEDU are rare and often done by inexperienced and untrained personnel. None of them reported of having their performance evaluated ever by the SEDU officially nor any one of them been officially asked to follow-up the performance of their trainees. In spite of the lack of provision for follow-up and supervision, many of the trainers said that they have observed a few lessons of some of their trainees and noticed some limited changes as discussed earlier.

The opinion of all the trainees was similar to that of the trainers. They said that their classes have never been officially observed and assessed by anyone from either the SEDU or DEO. A few trainees mentioned that their trainers did observe their classroom teaching once and they found it very helpful. The head teachers reported the same. The SEDU chiefs accepted that SEDU has a lot to do in this aspect. They also suggested that the DEO's supervisors can be utilized for this task. They, in the process of their normal supervision, can evaluate whether the SEDU trained teachers are utilizing the learned skills of teaching as a part of their supervision. They also added that inviting the DEO's supervisors in the training program of SEDU as a guest participant might help them to carryout this additional duty effectively.

The literature review too showed that SEDUs lack a proper system of follow-up, supervision and evaluation. As referred in the first chapter, only on such evaluation seems to have been done by CERID in association with SEDP and MOE in 1999. Surprisingly, not many of the people met in the process of research were aware of this evaluation. Similarly, they were unaware of the implementation of the additional 6-week long school based training for Lower

Secondary Teachers as a follow up in some SEDUs. However, all of them felt that proper follow-up training, regular monitoring and supervision could be instrumental in increasing the effectiveness of the SEDU training.

2.9 Strengthening the Role of SEDU

To strengthen SEDU's role it is necessary to provide SEDUs with more facilities, manpower and funds. This is the common opinion of Trainers, trainees and SEDU chiefs.

Trainers, trainees and the head teachers suggested that the recruitment of permanent trainers at SEDU, conduction of training sessions at times when school teaching might not be hampered much, and recognition of the SEDU training as equivalent to other training may also help strengthen the role of SEDU. According to them, a proper follow-up and evaluation system, frequent interaction programs between trainers and trainees, and research programs on prevailing local educational problems should also be introduced. Both the trainers and trainees expressed the need for improvement in the training module, package and manual. They suggested of designing different training packages for rural and urban schools so that they become more effective. It was also expressed that the performance of both the trainee and trainer should be evaluated during the training, exam should be taken at the end of the training, and the result should be reflected in grade, promotion or salary. Trainers as well as SEDU chiefs stressed that improving the motivation and quality of the trainers is a must for strengthening the role of SEDU. According to the trainers, this is possible by providing better incentives and facilities, frequent refresher training, and opportunities for professional development (for example, educational visits and higher study opportunities within the country or abroad) for SEDU trainers.

In the focus group discussion, trainees suggested SEDU to be developed as a National Training Institute by keeping it free from the political influence and making it purely an academic area. It should be promoted and expanded systematically by developing its own group of trainers. Headteachers suggested that either the SEDU should revise its training package in view of the realities of the public schools, or the Government or any other organization, should provide the necessary financial and technical support to the schools to create the suitable environment for practicing the pedagogy taught in SEDU training.

2.10 SEDU's Sustainability

The trainers and trainees strongly voice the opinion that to make SEDU sustainable, it is necessary not to treat SEDU as a project and make it donor dependent. According to them, there should be a long-term support policy supported either by the Ministry of Education or any academic institution/s like Faculty of Education (FOE). Similarly, timely release of sufficient budget for SEDU and proper selection and motivation of the trainers are necessary for its sustainability. Trainers pointed out the possibility of encouraging the trainees to participate in SEDU training even at their own cost, consequently helping SEDU's

sustainability, by making some provision for the trainees to receive a some training allowance as part of their regular salary.

All SEDU chiefs claimed the existing model of SEDU as being very good. In their opinion, involving FOE and other organization in its activities are a very good idea since that can provide more theoretical openness to the trainees.

All stressed the District Education Office (DEO) should not be directly involved in the SEDU model of teacher training. The logic behind this is the fact that, according to the interviewees, the recruitment of the manpower for SEDU by the DEO is often politically influenced, thus reducing the effectiveness of SEDU's activities. The recent change in this system is the appointment of a desk officer at DEO to look after the SEDU matter. This may help improve the relation and coordination between SEDU and DEO.

3. Evaluation of TOT

The teacher nominated as a SEDU trainer by the DEO attains a training session called "Training of trainers" (TOT). It is 7-12 day long training designed specially to develop the quality of trainers in handling the training package successfully. In TOT, the prospective trainers would receive training on "How to train teachers". It is a fact that greater the efficiency in the TOT, the better the trainer performance in the training session. All the trainers asserted that TOT is essential because it helps the trainer to acquire more knowledge on subject matter and pedagogy. According to them, TOT they attended provided the opportunity to learn more about modern teaching-learning methods, for example- student centered teaching, activity oriented teaching and practical application oriented teaching, and be able to select teaching method appropriate to the content and classroom situation, to learn about effective evaluation and class management (how to motivate students). It taught them how low cost local materials can be used in teaching. It made them aware of importance of gender issues in teaching and learning. It provided the trainers with the up-to-date information on the curriculum, textbooks and other resource materials. It boosted their self-confidence by solving some of their personal problems and curiosity. The other aspect that was appreciated by many trainers is the opportunity it provided for exchanging problems and ideas with subject experts, expatriates and colleagues from different parts of the kingdom. As for the Master Trainers, many trainers liked their positive and helpful attitude, the resourcefulness and the preparedness.

In spite of these strengths of TOT, more trainers expressed dissatisfaction about its effectiveness. Only a small number of trainers, particularly those who had attended the SEDU training prior to TOT, were found fully satisfied. In the opinion of majority of the trainers, TOT was unable to equip them fully with the knowledge, skill and confidence that was necessary to become effective trainers. All the trainers agreed that 7-12 days for TOT is too short a time to produce an effective trainer. Due to this tight schedule, everything is done in haste and often the package is left incomplete. The trainers reported that the TOT package lacks harmony with the latest version of the curriculum. It does not cover the newly

introduced topics in which the teachers need special help. The manual available in the SEDUs are rich in technical errors and the SEDU chiefs, those interviewed, are unaware of the existence of the amended version. The lack of evaluation and supervision, poor quality of some of the Master Trainers, insufficient teaching aids and poor management of the training session are some of the other aspects of TOT that were not appreciated by the trainers. Similarly the lack of competence in subject matter, insincerity towards responsibility, lack of creativity, and the tendency of avoiding questions are the things that the trainers did not like about some of the Master Trainers. It was also reported that some of the Master Trainers make the trainers go through the package on their own and ask the matter difficult to them. Some trainers in turn replicate the same procedure in SEDU training. Trainers pointed out the need for the Master Trainers to go into school teaching from time to time in order to remain in touch with the school realities.

SEDU chiefs too were of the opinion that duration of TOT is too short to prepare the trainer effectively. They reported that they have received comments from the trainers on some of the Master Trainers not being competent and committed. They stressed that the Master Trainers should be a subject specialist, have good delivery skills, be committed and not try to hide behind excuses like " I don't have time" or "you discuss it among yourselves and find the answer". One of the SEDU chiefs added that something 'adult learning' should also be taught since the trainers will be dealing with adults in their training.

The SEDU chiefs as well as the trainers suggested for change in the duration of TOT, it should be at least 15 to 30 days long. The revision of TOT package and manual as per the changes in the curriculum and suggestions from the trainers and SEDU chiefs, introduction of an effective system of evaluation and follow-up after the completion of TOT, making provision for practicing micro teaching in TOT, maximize the accessibility to teaching-learning resource materials and giving more stress on the teaching of the topics newly introduced in the curriculum were the some other suggestions. Improving the quality and commitment of some of the Master Trainers was recommended, too.

4. Trainers

4.1 Selection Criteria and Process

4.1.1 Process:

When inquired about the process selecting SEDU trainers, all interviewees reported that it is done by the DEO and SEDU has a little role to play on it. The standard mechanism to be practiced while selecting SEDU trainers, as described by one of the SEDU chiefs, is as follow:

On the request of the Head Office, SEDU proposes the names of the candidates to DEO (District Education Office) and DEO should send the selected candidates for TOT training. The criteria for selections are permanent secondary teacher having experience of teaching the related subject in secondary level for more than 5 years, Bachelor's degree or more and training from SEDU.

Nevertheless, the SEDU chiefs complained that the DEOs do not take into account the recommendation made by SEDU. They reported that at times a person who neither meets the criteria nor has SEDU's recommendation is selected as a trainer, simply because of his/her personal relation with the DEO or political faith. Morang SEDU chief cited a case to justify this complaint.

Two years ago, the SEDU and the DEO received letters from the Head Office, regarding the selection of a trainer in mathematics. SEDU chief recommended a person who had been working at the SEDU as a volunteer for several years, but the DEO sent some one else who neither had B. Ed. or attended the SEDU training. This person did not even have the required experience. SEDU chief then reported his grievances to the Master Trainer at the Head Office. The MT explained that he had no right to over-rule the DEO's decision but he could accommodate both the candidates if necessary. Thus, both of them attended TOT. After the completion of TOT, however, the DEO's candidate was made the trainer and the other was not because the DEO did not approve of him.

As for who should be responsible for the selection of trainers, SEDU chiefs and trainers stressed for greater role of SEDU, where as trainees and headteachers were of the opinion that it does not really matter who does it as long as the selection is purely on merit based and set guidelines and criteria are strictly observed.

4.1.2 Criteria:

No trainer could tell exactly why he or she was selected as a SEDU trainer, nor could they tell the exact criteria on the basis of which SEDU recruits its trainers. They could only speculate. The most highly rated criteria for a trainer are qualification, experience and pedagogical skill. They believe that SEDU looks for someone who is highly qualified in the related field and has gained plenty of pedagogical and managerial skill from teaching, training and managerial work, headteachers for example. When asked what should be the criteria, they opined the trainer has to have a good command of language, leadership qualities, competency, professionalism and knowledge of the curriculum. They added gender and ethnicity too might have to be considered in special circumstances.

The SEDU chiefs view, a permanent teacher specialized in the related subject with positive attitude towards training should be the most important criteria. To identify such teachers, SEDU's recommendation, based on the concerned individual's performance in the SEDU's training, is a must. They felt that academic qualification, teaching experience, types and number of training taken, energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the person must also be considered.

It was everybody's feeling that the trainer has to be a school teacher, working or retired, and political faith of a person or personal relation to the DEO, SEDU chief or SEDU committee must not matter. In their opinion, a university teacher could provide a higher level of exposure to the pedagogy and subject matter, but more important than that, a school teacher would provide training that is more realistic to school needs, environment and problems. A

competent and committed retired teacher could be appointed as the trainer so that schools are not affected by the absence of teachers.

As for the academic qualification, the standard requirement is Bachelor degree or better in the related subject. Majority of the trainees and headteachers, however, were of the opinion that a trainer should have a superior academic qualification than that of the trainees as far as possible. That would mean at least a Bachelor degree for the lower secondary level and Master degree for secondary level. They also expressed the need for a trainer to have a substantial training or a degree in education.

The research found all the trainers in the three sample SEDUs holding BA or equivalent degree. The detailed analysis showed 73.86 % of the trainers who train lower secondary level teachers were holding the Bachelors degree and 26.32 % with the Masters degree. Similarly, 54.17 % of the trainers involved in training secondary level teachers were holding the bachelors degree and 48.83 % with the Masters degree. 63% of the trainers recruited for secondary level were looking after the lower secondary level as well (ref. Table 4 and 5). Therefore, in terms of academic qualification, the trainers meet the expectations of SEDU, and even the expectations of trainees and headteachers to large extent. In terms of experience, the least experienced trainer had 5 years of teaching experience, but majority of them had been teaching for more than 20 years.

4.2 Trainers' Efficiency

“What can anyone expect from a trainer who is less experienced than trainees and was trained only for a week!”

One of the trainees made the above remark when asked about the efficiency of trainers. This was a general feel of other trainees as well. Head teachers reported that many of their trainees had expressed their dissatisfaction over the competency in effectiveness of the trainers. They had complained about the trainers' competency, pedagogy and managerial skills. Trainees, in their interviews and focus group discussions, reported that majority of the trainers were not effective because either they were not prepared, motivated and confident or they did not have sufficient resource materials. They reported that resourcefulness and dynamism were seriously lacking in most of them. Nevertheless, a few trainers were reported of being exemplary and exceptionally good in pedagogy. They were the ones who had attended ten months' SEDU training in the related subject prior to TOT. However, such trainers were rare, and even they were not very effective in dealing with the new content of the curriculum.

4.3 Problems and Limitations of Trainers

Head teachers hesitation to release the trainer on time, difficulty in arranging a substitute teacher and difficulty in completing the students' course in time are some of the major problems faced by SEDU trainers, as reported by the trainers and SEDU chiefs. According to the trainers, they often need to teach students on holidays, mornings and evenings in order to complete their course. They are also bothered by the thought of the work that gets piled up at the school during the training session. Shortage of reference materials, teaching aids and

resources at the SEDU, participants of not turning up in time and very discouraging allowance and facilities for the trainers are the notable problems faced by the SEDU trainers during the training sessions. Sometimes the trainers have been disturbed by the presence of trainees who do not even have the preliminary knowledge due to the mismatch between the subject of the training and the trainee's teaching subject. The trainers and SEDU chiefs expressed that presence of such trainees makes it very difficult to conduct the training, finish the package in time and meet the expected goals.

4.4 Effective Mobilization of SEDU Trainers

The trainers, headteachers and SEDU chiefs were inquired about how SEDU trainers could be prepared and mobilized effectively. They all stressed on the need for proper follow-up mechanism and a system of evaluating the performance of the trainers and the trainees and rewarding or punishing where necessary. In the name of supervision and evaluation, it was warned, supervisors and evaluators should not limit themselves to the easily accessible place but also reach even the remotest school. Necessity of evaluating the effectiveness of the program and making the necessary adjustments in the program from time to time was also pointed out. Every interviewer saw the urgent need for moral boosting of the trainers and suggested that increasing the remuneration and other facilities, recognizing their service in one way or the other and providing opportunities for their own professional development may help.

Headteachers strongly recommended that should recruit a team of permanent trainers and use them for supervision, evaluation and follow-up programs when they are not being used in training. They added that SEDU trainers should be actively involved in conducting on-the-spot workshops and research activities related to local educational issues such as development of low cost teaching materials, indigenous teaching methods, etc.

5. Problems for Schools

Schools have to face several problems while their teachers are away from school, for a considerably long period, as SEDU trainers. On average, a teacher as a trainer or a trainee, becomes absent for up to 2 months. Most of the schools have limited recruitment of the teachers, and hence every teacher is loaded with maximum number of lessons per day. Thus, arranging a substitute teacher is very difficult. Consequently, many classes go unattended and students from such classed disturb the whole school teaching. The quality of student learning, too, is directly affected because when the trainers are at the school they tend to rush to cover the vast course in time that is far less than prescribed by the curriculum. The teaching style of such teacher is very good, but its effectiveness is still low because of the pace. This is how the headteachers explained the problems the schools have to face for having their teachers as SEDU trainers.

When asked about how the schools have been coping with these problems, the headmasters explained that they normally request other teachers, who are already over-loaded, to mind the students. Teachers don't appreciate this extra work because they get nothing for it. Very often teachers from lower levels are used for this purpose. Such substitute teachers do nothing but

mind the students. If the substitute teacher happens to be a secondary teacher then, he/she is asked to continue with his/her own teaching subject. Later on, upon the arrival of the trainer, the substitute teacher's lessons are also given to the trainer so that he/she can finish his/her course in time. Some headteachers suggested the use of the project work to engage the students during teachers' absence in the class. Most of them expected some form of help from SEDU to cope with this problem, for example, arrangement of substitute teachers or some financial support to hire substitute teacher, help to develop self-study packages for students, and help for building proper library in schools. They all agreed that the problem would be permanently solved should SEDU conduct training only in school vacations or recruit permanent trainers. SEDU chiefs accepted that it has created some problems for schools and often the headteachers are reluctant to release the trainers when they are needed by SEDU. They also accepted that SEDU has not done much to help reduce this problem, except trying to organize maximum activities at the time when school activities are affected the least. The SEDU chiefs were positive about hiring a group of permanent trainers.

As for the strengths of the schools having SEDU trainers, such schools can take pride on the presence of skillful, competent and resourceful teacher from whom other teachers as well as headteacher can get professional help when needed, opined the headteachers. Students too can be benefited from their skill and experience, if they wish to. When asked how much the school has made use of the trainers in schools, both the trainers and the headteachers reported that trainers have not contributed much to the professional development of their colleague. They could have organized internal training and workshops for their colleagues and provide some form of in-service training. But, nothing of this kind has taken place because of lack of interest of the school management as well as the school staff.

6. Possibilities of involving other organizations in in-service teacher training

All the interviewees thought the involvement of FOE and other similar organization in in-service teacher training would be beneficial to the country. They said that SEDU alone can not meet the country's need. They however, stressed that all of them work together, follow the similar guideline and provide the similar service. They should not be made an alternative to SEDU but rather a partner. All organizations should use secondary teachers as trainers. Should FOE be involved, it should develop a separate department and either provide specially designed practical oriented training, similar to that of SEDU, or use SEDU's package. A few of the trainers warned that FOE must make sure that anarchy, similar to that seen in its colleges, is not brought into in-service teacher training. As far as NGOs and INGOs are concerned, majority of the interviewees suggested that they should not be involved for the sake of sustainability.

CHAPTER III: Conclusion

SEDU has been able to meet partially the objectives of deliver training and providing professional advice and support to practicing teachers of secondary schools and lower secondary school. However the functions of SEDU in reference to developing partnership among schools and mobilizing local resources for secondary education has remained far from expectations. SEDU has not been successful in establishing coordination with DEOs for selection of trainees and trainers, and follow-up the trainees to see the effects on the part of teaching learning situation at classroom level. SEDUs capacity to provide training to huge number of untrained teacher within present capacity is simply impossible. To meet the country's demand provision of its own trainers group, expansion of SEDUs in other districts and increased financial and physical inputs are essential. Bodies such as FOE, PTTF, and so on should also be involved in in-service teacher training. Private training institutes should also be encouraged.

The trainees feel that the training provided the up-to-date information on the curriculum, textbooks and other resource materials and it boosted their self-confidence. However, in terms of real change in the teaching style of teachers, the effectiveness of the training is minimal. The training has not been able to bring any significant change in the educational system of the country. It is mainly because it has failed to motivate and commit the trainees. The lack of suitable environment and facilities at the school, the training package and the trainer's not being able to deliver exactly what the public school teachers need, lack of facilities at the SEDU, and above all, the absence of effective follow-up and evaluation of the training as well as the performance of the trainers and trainees can be held responsible for poor effectiveness of SEDU training. Insufficient budget, manpower and physical as well as educational facilities at SEDU is also contributed to the problem. Unnecessary political and personal influence at various stages of SEDU system has not been helpful either.

As for the system of hiring of trainers from the pool of school teachers, SEDU chiefs have had to hear some grumbling from some of the headteachers and at times the trainers had faced difficulties in being released from the school on time, but it has not created any major problem for SEDU and seems to be working well. It has however, created several management problems for the head teachers and teaching has been stressful not only for the trainers but also the students. Despite these problems, everybody was positive about school teachers being the trainers.

SEDU trainers are qualified to be trainers, as far as their academic qualification is concerned and many of them have impressive background. But, in terms of the quality of their performance, it appears that SEDU has not been able to tap their potential. Some of them have been wrongly selected by the DEOs and hence, they lack the quality of a trainer. Others, however, are inefficient because of the absence of a system that motivates as well as commits them to their duty. The training, the facilities, incentives, the working environment and the technical support trainees have been receiving are not adequate to obtain the quality output from them.

The selection of trainers, and even the selection of participants for the training, is not transparent, dominated by DEO's influence, and often flawed. The criteria are too flexible. A fixed policy and proper monitoring of the implementation of that policy appears to be urgent in order to increase the effectiveness of SEDU training as well as to win the confidence of people related to it.

Trainers feel that TOT was unable to equip them fully with the knowledge, skill and confidence to become effective trainers. The package lacks harmony with the latest version of the curriculum. Due to the tight schedule, everything is done in haste and often the package is left incomplete. Besides lack of competence in subject matter, insincerity towards responsibility, lack of creativity, and the tendency of avoiding questions were drawback of the resource persons of TOT. They have to be made more responsible and committed to their work.

Lack of commitment, sincerity and feeling of responsibility in everybody related to SEDU system is the heart of the problem. Better incentives, regular supervision and effective system of evaluation are necessary to make SEDU training more effective.

Despite the poor effectiveness of SEDU training, the general feeling is that SEDU training has been instrumental in broadening the content in the related subject, the techniques of classroom management, the teaching-learning strategies in the concerned subject, and the good pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, SEDU system should be strengthened and expanded and other organizations such as FOE should be encouraged to work along with SEDU to provide in-service training to the huge untrained population of teachers.

CHAPTER IV: RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to the findings, described above, following recommendations are made to strengthen the SEDU operation and mobilization of SEDU trainers to achieve objectives of in-service teacher training.

1. Capacity of every SEDU should be expanded to increase the access of training to meet the growing training requests of school teachers. The quality of SEDU's library, the teaching aids and other facilities should be improved. Number of support staff at the SEDUs should also be increased. For all these, sufficient budget should be allocated for SEDU.
2. Provision should be made for separate ladies' hostel in each SEDU in order to encourage more female teachers to participate in SEDU training. If this is not feasible or cost effective then the policy of conducting separate training for female teachers should be strictly enforced.
3. Authority concerned should either develop a clear policy on making the public schools well equipped or develop and deliver a pedagogy that is relevant to teacher's time, budget, resources and other constraints of an average public school. A detailed survey and study is necessary before designing such pedagogy. Trainees, trainers, MTs , SMTs, teachers and headteachers should be consulted for this.
4. In order to provide more training opportunities to the huge number of untrained teachers alternatives to SEDU should be sought for. Faculty of Education and other organizations should be encouraged to join hands with SEDU. However, such organizations should develop a separate department and either provides specially designed practical oriented training, similar to that of SEDU, or use SEDU's package.
5. SEDU training should equip teachers with the skill to teach effectively even in large crowded classrooms with limited facilities, to construct teaching materials from the locally available resources and to manage time effectively.
6. SEDU training in social studies, along with providing the general pedagogy, should help strengthen trainee's content knowledge in the those areas of social studies which are not their areas of specialization, for example- geography or economics for the teacher whose area of specialization is history. The teacher guide for social studies should also be redesigned in similar line.
7. Trainers of Nepali language should be native Nepali speakers where possible. This will provide opportunity to the trainees with different mother tongue to learn the true pronunciation and language structure.
8. Every SEDU should run more than one training at a time, especially during school vacations. SEDU should think seriously about the possibilities of recruiting permanent trainers and developing a trainers' pool.

9. It is urgently necessary to raise the motivation and quality of the trainers. This is possible by providing better incentives and facilities, frequent refresher training, and opportunities for professional development for the trainers. Evaluation of the performance of both the trainee and trainer should be done during, as well as after, the training and the result should be reflected in grade, promotion or salary.

10. A fixed and a practically realistic policy regarding the selection of trainers must be formulated, shared with stakeholders and practiced. Everybody involved should follow the policy strictly and not be guided by any vested political or personal motives. While selecting the trainers the higher educational qualification, competence and commitment rather than long years of experience should be sought for. Retired, but competent, teachers could also be used as trainers. The SEDU trainer has to be a school teacher specialized in the related subject, working or retired, should have a good command of language, leadership qualities, competency, professionalism and knowledge of the curriculum, and should have attended SEDU training, preferably a long term training. To identify such teachers, SEDU's recommendation, based on the concerned individual's performance in the SEDU's training, is a must. Gender and ethnicity too might have to be considered in special circumstances.

11. There should be a scheme which provides opportunity to SEDU chiefs and the trainers to visit and observe better programs and institutions inside or outside the country.

12. SEDU should incorporate the effective follow-up or supervision system. The role of school supervisor in follow-up and monitoring of the trainees in actual classroom situation should be revisited. DEO's supervisors could be used where possible. They could be invited to one of the SEDU trainings as guest participants to familiarize them with the SEDU system and approach. This would help them evaluate and supervise the performance of the SEDU trainees at schools. The pilot test six-week additional training programme's effectiveness should be evaluated soon and launched throughout the nation if found effective.

13. The coordination between DEO and the SEDU should be strengthened. The DEO should not be involved directly in the SEDU system. It should remain only as an advisory and supervisory body. SEDU itself should be made responsible for the recruitment of its manpower as well as running the training program.

14. The TOT should be revised and its length increased as deemed necessary by the trainers. The training packages should be revised and update so as to make them consistent with the latest version of the National Curriculum. The length of package should be based on the diversity of the contents in the package.. Package should give special emphasis to the content newly introduced in the curriculum. If possible, they should be in Nepali language.

15. The training module, package and manual should updated in line with the latest changes in the curriculum. Similarly, the teacher training packages of FOE should also be updated. If possible, different training packages should be designed for rural and urban schools paying special attention to their specific needs. The training should be made need-based. The corrected versions of the training packages should be sent to the respective SEDUs immediately.

16. SEDU should be developed in the form of resource centre, both in terms of human and material resources. From time to time, it should provide a forum for subject teachers to meet regularly to share ideas, analyze problems and discuss results. Frequent interaction programs between trainers and trainees, and research programs on prevailing local educational problems and issues should be introduced.

17. In order to keep up with SEDU's spirit in in-service training and reducing the cost of training, SEDP should revisit its strategy of providing allowances for trainees and motivate the teachers to pay for the training. For this, the SEDU training has to be made more attractive. The value of training in upgrading of the teachers or increment in salary could be some points for thought.

18. SEDU should be developed as a National Training Institute by keeping it free from political influence and making it purely an academic area. It should be promoted and expanded systematically by developing its own group of trainers.

19. SEDU should not be treated as a project and made donor dependent. There should be a long-term support policy either by the Ministry of Education or any academic institution/s like Faculty of Education (FOE).

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