

Minutes of the 9th Executive Committee meeting of SSA

The 9th Meeting of the Executive Committee of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was held on 5th December, 2013 at 3 pm under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. M. M. Pallam Raju. List of other members who attended the meeting is at Annexure I. The following agenda items were discussed:

1. Confirmation of minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting

No comments were received in response to the circulation of minutes of the meeting held on 27.09.2012. The EC confirmed the minutes.

2. Update on progress of SSA

A brief presentation was made on the progress made in implementation of SSA which is placed at Annexure II. The representative from Ministry of Women and Child Development suggested that their beneficiaries under SABL scheme should be targeted for enrolment in regular schools. Professor K. Subramaniam enquired about interpretation of learning achievement under National Achievement Survey (NAS) and ASER. Additional Secretary (D/o School Education & Literacy) explained that in both the assessments the learning levels were low, but where ASER was showing no change in the learning levels, in NAS there was incremental change for the better.

Ms Shaheen Mistry enquired about the applicability of child protection principles in SSA. Additional Secretary clarified that training of teachers that is conducted under SSA has modules on sensitising teachers on this important aspect. Director NCERT also informed that a Manual on Corporal Punishment had been prepared and circulated by them.

Dr. M. N. G. Mani suggested that enrolment of girls with disability in KGBVs should be encouraged to mainstream girls with disability. An explicit mention in the scheme guidelines in this regards will be helpful. In a recent UNESCO report it was mentioned that one third of the children now out of school are children with disability, hence a specific mention of CWSN along with SC, ST and Muslim girls should be considered. He also suggested that if we calculate the PTR of special teachers to the enrolled CWSN it works out to 37:1 at the national level. He suggested that the government should consider not only recruiting support staff/teachers for inclusive education in higher numbers but also more research on teaching CWSN. He cautioned that the no detention policy for CWSN could result in large learning gaps for the CWSN and teachers should be extra vigilant in this regard. He lauded the Ministry's initiative to put in place curricular and evaluation adaptations for CWSN and underlined the urgent need for completing and rolling out the same.

Director NCERT Prof Sinclair stated that NCERT had been conducting a multi-disciplinary module for training teachers on handling CWSN which got discontinued due to lack of approval by RCI. It was based on the principle that 60% teachers in a block should be trained on multiple disabilities and 40% on specific disabilities.

Additional Secretary clarified that the module could still be used as an in-service teacher training module by NCERT and need not necessarily be a RCI recognised certificate course.

Ms Annie Namala cautioned the committee that though the guidelines for non-discrimination had been put in place, the percolation of these principles in the field still remained a challenge. She stated that discrimination was one reason why children did not learn and a plan of action should be put in place for these guidelines to reach the school level. She also voiced concern about ensuring the effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanism at the field level. She stressed on the importance of capacity building of School Management Committees by constant training. She requested the Ministry to explore the possibility of a person dedicated to promote quality, on the lines of a Tola Sewak in Bihar but functionally more like the enabling support in Mahila Samakhya. She also stated that there should be a formal engagement of the Education Department with the private unaided schools as after the 25% admissions there is a complete disconnect and a methodology for this needs to evolve.

Joint Secretary Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation stressed upon the need to converge and build up the hand washing campaign which their Ministry had initiated with UNICEF. He stressed that maintenance of toilets also has to be provided for.

Professor Fatima Ali Khan stated that Hyderabad had many urdu medium schools which have shut down in the last two decades and these were primarily aided schools. Additional Secretary explained that aided schools are within the domain of the State government concerned and SSA does not provide teacher salary for aided schools.

Ms. Binny Yanga stated that in Arunachal Pradesh inappropriate NGOs were being allocated KGBVs and also extra number of girls are being enrolled in these KGBVs while established NGOs with experience in setting up and running KGBVs are being side lined. She stated that the Ministry should evolve a criterion for choice of NGO or enhancing KGBV seats.

3. Proposal for amendment of SSA Framework

The proposed amendments to the SSA Framework were discussed. Director NCERT Prof Sinclair stated that in the proposed amendments/additions distinction between learning outcomes and learning indicators be made clear. As we are following NCF 2005, which mentions indicators, it should be made clear that indicators mean that children learn at their own pace and children can be evaluated over time on those indicators and not every year. Dr. Mani also suggested that words like 'mastered' should be rephrased but otherwise supported the proposal as well written, succinct and relevant. He also lauded the proposal for curricular and evaluation adaption for CWSN to be inserted at Sl. 24 of the programme norms of SSA.

Professor Surbamaniam suggested that the monitoring mechanisms in Chapter 7 of the SSA Framework should be kept intact and it was clarified that no change had been proposed in the same. He also suggested that at Sl. 12 of the programme norms relating to training of teachers and head teachers, there should be a component on head teachers being trained for supporting teachers in the school as not all training needs to be child-centered.

It was decided to incorporate the suggestions made to the proposed amendments. The final version of amendments is at Annexure III. This indicates changes in Chapter 4 of the SSA Framework of Implementation. Annexure IV indicates proposed changes in the programme norms.

The amendments in SSA framework of implementation indicated at Annexure III and IV of the minutes were approved by Executive Committee of SSA.

4. Proposed methodology of merger of Mahila Samakhya with SSA

The Additional Secretary explained briefly that in case of merger of SSA and Mahila Samakhya (MS), the funds for MS will flow to the State MS societies as at present. The Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor concurred that this was the best option immediately for the first year and other options of merger can be explored in 2014-15.

5. The HRM was requested to and he released the DISE 2012-13 Flash Statistics which NUEPA has published.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Shri M.M. Pallam Raju - In the Chair
Minister for Human Resource Development
2. Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State – HRD
3. Shri R. Bhattacharya, Secretary (SE&L)
4. Ms. Vrinda Sarup, Additional Secretary (SE)

Non-Officials

1. Prof. Fatima Alikhan, Banjaara Hills, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
2. Prof. K. Subramaniam, Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Mumbai
3. Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
4. Ms. Annie Namala, CSEI, New Delhi
5. Ms. Binny Yanga, OWA, Arunachal Pradesh
6. Ms. Shaheen Mistri, CEO, Teach for India, Mumbai

Planning Commission

1. Dr. C. Chandramohan, Sr. Adviser (Education)
2. Ms. Kiran Gupta, Planning Commission

Representative of State Governments

1. Shri Hirdesh K. Singh, Secretary (School Education), Jammu & Kashmir
2. Shri A. Shajahan, Secretary, General Education, Kerala
3. Shri A.D. Kale, SPD, SSA, MPSP, Mumbai, Maharashtra
4. Shri Siddesh Wadkar, SPO, MPSP, SSA, Maharashtra

Representative of Ministries

1. Shri Saraswati Prasad, Joint Secretary, M/o Drinking Water & Sanitation, New Delhi
2. Ms. Lopamudra Mohanty, Director, M/o WC&D, New Delhi
3. Shri C.V. Sarada, US, M/o PR, Sardar Patel Bhawan, New Delhi
4. Shri Shalender Sharma, Adviser Education, M/o Tribal Affairs, New Delhi

Representative of Institutes

1. Prof. P. Sinclair, Director, NCERT, New Delhi
2. Prof. Arun C. Mehta, NUEPA, New Delhi
3. Prof. J. Tilak, NUEPA, New Delhi
4. Shri Naveen Bhatia, System Analyst, NUEPA, New Delhi
5. Prof. Shri Yogesh Kumar, Professor, DEE, NUEPA, New Delhi
6. Shri Arun Joshi, Project Consultant, NUEPA, New Delhi

Ministry of HRD

1. Shri Yogendra Tripathi, JS&FA
2. Shri Nagesh Singh, EA, SE&L
3. Ms. Maninder Kaur Dwivedi, Director
4. Ms. Meenakshi Jolly, Director
5. Shri Virender Singh, Dy. Secretary

PIB

1. Ms. Dayawanti, Media Officer, PIB, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
2. Shri Aswathy, IA (HRD), PIB, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi