

**Regional workshop on education of equitable quality**  
**Phase II**  
**Pedagogy Unit, TSG, SSA**  
**Second workshop**  
**Chandigarh, 24-27 November, 2010**

The workshop on Education of Equitable Quality II, was held at Chandigarh State Guest House, during 23 ó 27 November, 2010. This was the second workshop in a series of four workshops. The first was held at Pudducherry. The workshops were facilitated by the Technical Support Group, MHRD. The participating states/UTs included ó Assam, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Sikkim, Mizoram, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Chandigarh. The participants of the workshop comprised of State teams with representatives from quality/pedagogy team at SPO, DIET, and BRC/CRC. During the final phase, SPDs of some States also participated (see Appendix A: List of participants). The purpose of the workshop was to enable State teams to develop a commitment plan that would guide each State as it aims at mandatory quality improvements in school education to meet requirements of RTE (Appendix B: Background note) and the Annual Work Plans for the years to come.

Day one comprised of orienting the State teams to the equality and quality mandates of RTE and the bearings they will have on the outcomes, processes and relationships in school education, with a specific focus on the underlying shifts in the vision and approach to teaching and learning. Through various activities, followed by deliberation sessions, the group was familiarized with the ethos of the child-centered approach to teaching-learning and the changes it would call for in school education.

Day two involved intensive group work where participants organized in teams discussed specific doable action steps to attain the outcomes that implementation of RTE in schools will involve.

On the third day, the teams were introduced to pillars of bringing about these changes/initiations. State groups were facilitated to work on their State Plans based on a situational analysis. These were presented on the final day (for structure of the workshop see Appendix C (B.): EEQ II Workshops). A detailed report of day-wise proceedings of the workshop is presented below.

## ***Day I***

### ***Session I***

#### ***Inaugural session:***

The workshop was inaugurated with a Welcome note by the SPD Chandigarh. He expressed the need for a constructive partnership between academicians and practitioners, the gaps between what should be done and what is being done. He shared that the present workshop will enable this understanding by guiding the States in - developing action plans vis-à-vis respective situational analysis, understanding the EEQ framework, and building commonality of purpose.

#### ***Introduction:***

The workshop commenced with an introduction to the State teams in an unconventional manner. It was proposed that the State teams introduce themselves through three key phrases which would describe the quality of their States' efforts in education. This was done with a view to orient the teams towards the kind of ethos that would be the context of the workshop. This activity was intended to provide the States some time to reflect on their own quality. The reflection would be used as a baseline, established in the beginning of the workshop. It would give the participants the opportunity to make a comparison at the end of the workshop, after they were exposed to knowledge, techniques and tools to take their quality to a new level. The descriptors that emerged in this process are presented in box I.

#### **Box I**

##### **Three words/phrases that best describe States' efforts in the direction of EEQ**

##### ***I. Dadra and Nagar Haveli:***

- ABL
- Learning with experience
- ADEPTS

##### ***II. Gujarat:***

- ABL
- Performance standards for teachers and support mechanism in place
- Annual assessment of system itself by assessing students, teachers and schools against target set by themselves

##### ***III. Mizoram:***

- ADEPTS

- Quality monitored regularly through QMC of NCERT
- Regular meetings of VEC, SMC and parents on quality issues

*IV. Goa:*

- Performance based teacher training based on RTE
- Quality based curriculum reforms
- Grass-root awareness creation in the community

*V. Punjab:*

We have adopted at upper and lower primary level -

- ABL,
- ADEPTS, and
- CCE

*VI. Chandigarh:*

- Passion of understanding
- Innovations in teaching learning, barrier free learning
- Reading in English to acquire competency ó speaking in English to acquire work proficiency

As a plenary, certain guiding posts for participating were suggested. It was recommended that every representative from the State participates, the approach of the teams be based on clearly articulated reasoning. Participants were encouraged to take comprehensive and analytic notes for further reference. Teams were invited to make a concerted effort for visualizing the path ahead rather than focusing on describing and reporting existing status. Teams were prepared with the notice that they should be in a position to deliver the plans they create in the workshop.

*Context:*

The backdrop of the work to be done, as contextualized by the vision of RTE, was outlined through a presentation on how implementation of RTE is influencing the vision of SSA (see Appendix C (A.) (C.): EEQ II Workshops). EEQ II was seen drawing connection with EEQ I in which key implementers from some States took part (see Appendix C (D.): EEQ II Workshops). At the time, there was a focus on how implementers can arrive at a common understanding on how children learn, engaged in envisioning teaching-learning, developed a framework for quality, and identified outcomes that they would want to achieve. There was a focus on "what should be". At that time, the RTE had not been notified.

However, after the RTE has been notified, the focus has need is to have an emphasis on "how to do what has been envisioned". Therefore, the EEQ II workshops aim

that each State should have a very clear implementation plan with clearly designed strategies, sharp focus, a time-line, and a rigorous follow-up plan. The objectives of EEQ II were presented as given in Box II.

**Box II**  
**Objectives of EEQ II**

Evolve clear, doable action plan to attain agreed upon outcomes; this will include:

- Deeper conceptual understanding of EEQ
- Its manifestation in implementation terms
- Completing a rapid situational analysis of the State (started in Gandhinagar workshop)
- Planning and coordination (there is a need to establish a common purpose where concerns of each body gets represented)
- Agreeing on follow up actions

The purpose is not to rework on Annual Work Plans, but to sharpen them and develop specific implementable plans.

*Framework for planning:*

Given the objectives, a guide for the creation of State plans was presented. Using the RtE-SSA framework, each State should develop the outcomes, processes, and relationships it would want to achieve. These three would form the base of the plan, whereby the plans would comprise specific steps/strategies to achieve these. The RtE-SSA framework of outcomes, processes, and relationship was presented with an emphasis on the shifts that RtE and NCF vision have brought about in traditional vision of education (see Appendix C (E.): EEQ II Workshops - Outcomes, processes, and relationships).

The guide map is constituted by the RtE-SSA vision framework that has a bearing on the nature of *outcomes* that are expected of, and the *processes* and *relationships* that exist in classrooms, schools, and education in general. These three are the core of any programme or plan.

Through discussions on the nature of shifts, it emerged that (with regards to outcomes) we are now expecting that we will be able to equip children to learn by themselves. Earlier it was expected that all children will learn the same things, at the same pace, and in the same way. However, given the RtE-NCF mandate, diversity and difference has to be respected, which means providing an environment where every

child's differential ability is nurtured, thereby providing the opportunity for optimal learning for every child.

Similarly, there are shifts in how educational processes are visualized. For instance, there is a shift from favouring the advantaged to addressing the disadvantaged. Traditionally, there has been an assumption that education is meant for the advantaged; that is why a poor person's child holding the first position in CBSE exams makes news in national dailies. With NCF-RtE, there is a realization that there are no first generation learners – there are only first generation school-goers. The understanding is that people learn outside school too, all the time and at all ages. Thus, every community member can potentially be a resource person that the school should not neglect to consider as a source of learning for the child.

The issue that presents itself in this regard is, what knowledge and whose knowledge should be considered worthwhile; and further, whose knowledge is currently excluded. Participants shared instances where they could identify knowledge of children who do not come to school and who are rejected as 'not knowing' what they are 'meant to know' or what the school expects them to know.

Also, given the RtE-NCF framework the nature of relationships in the entire educational system are expected to change. Earlier children were accountable to teachers, teachers to administrators, and administration to ministers. RtE inverts this pyramid and makes everybody responsible to children. The need now is to increase responsiveness to those in 'subordinate' positions so as to subvert subordination, and also towards the socially patterned hidden biases that intervene in relationships. Discussion on the issue has been summarized below in Box III.

### **Box III**

Q. If there is a focus on differential learning then what will be the place of textbooks in teaching-learning? There will be a role of curriculum, textbook, evaluation etc. but not the same as it had earlier. Textbooks will have to be altered in keeping with the nature and scope of education changing in the framework and curriculum which the state develops as per RtE and NCF guidelines. Some states have already started this process.

Q: Will differential learning influence the time table? 35 minutes will not be enough. It will influence. There is no research to support the pedagogic basis for having 35 minutes period, it is a system that has been generated to serve the needs of school managers. It is not a matter of re-fixing the pre-fitted the jigsaw, it is also about thinking afresh about the programme design. The principles of the design of the program have changed, thus the structure and system for its implementation are bound to change.

Q. If a child is sitting for three hours in an examination is he learning or wasting time?

It is because of the 3 hour exam that there is so much focus on memorizing. That is why CCE is now being visualized.

Q. But we can't throw out things from window immediately even if we feel that a change has to be brought about. Just making laws and taking decision is not a guarantee to action it is a challenge to convince people who have to implement. How to deal with this?

A harmonization of efforts could be brought if there is a common vision and a shared understanding at all levels. For example, a teacher, the CRC/BRC and the state level managers must have an experiential understanding of the constructivist approach to be able to implement it. Also, there is a need to write about how change occurs in people.

### *Formulating the outcomes - Task I:*

In the above context, the State teams initiated the first phase of the planning exercise, where they had to articulate and formulate five specific outcomes, they would want to achieve with children at lower and upper primary level. The six programmatic RtE-SSA outcomes were the guiding posts for the specific outcomes the States had to plan, these are presented in Box IV. These outcomes stand on *four pillars of action* that will be the agents for bringing about the envisioned change; these are presented with the six outcomes in Box IV.

#### **Box IV**

*Six focal outcomes for quality related intervention for elementary education under SSA to realize wider objective of RTE for 2010-11:*

- I. Improve teacher availability and time on task.
- II. A warm and encouraging atmosphere in the school.
- III. Learning through activity, discovery and exploration, and dialogue.
- IV. More inclusive classroom participation (visible and continuous reduction in discriminatory classroom practices)
- V. Focus on higher order learning with objective to building of child knowledge, potential and talent.
- VI. Higher deliberation on quality aspect in SMCs and an organic linkage with community and school

*Pillars of action:*

- I. Curriculum and syllabus
- II. Textbooks
- III. In-service teacher training
- IV. Academic support

With respect to the pillars of action, it was emphasized that there is a need that all States draft a curriculum framework which is specific for their States. Adopting the NCF is not equivalent to having a curriculum framework that is tailor made to the States' context. Also, there is a need to understand that a curriculum framework is not a syllabus,

and that after having prepared a curriculum framework there is a need to draft syllabus for schools. Further, it was emphasized that in-service teacher training needs to be made to make it enjoyable for the teachers such that they feel motivated to attend the sessions. This was suggested given the understanding that today, it only requires teachers to engage as an obligation, during which they feel burdened and penalized.

With this framework the teams worked on the task of formulating the five specific outcomes for upper and lower primary each for their respective States. These outcomes were further refined during the course of the workshop and were presented in a finessed form in the State plans that were presented on the last day of the workshop. However, the draft outcomes that were shared on the first day and the interventions made by the TSG for enabling refinement are presented in Box VI.

**Box VI**  
**Draft outcomes and interventions by TSG team**

*I. Himachal Pradesh:*

At the end of five class students would have mastered Mathematical operations

[TSG: The manner in which the outcome has been formulated is not in consonance with child-centered pedagogy as mandated in RTE-NCF.

Modified: Child uses knowledge of basic operations to solve real life situations and problems ]

*II. Gujarat:*

Child should have comprehension skills ó child should not only read, but understand, be able to comprehend oral and written material, interpret and analyze, draw her own understanding, connect with her own view, and present it.

[TSG: Comprehension, in real sense, would also mean that the child becomes able to read materials, understand them, and use them to change their life situations].

*III. Punjab:*

Child will be able to relate and translate comprehension to real life.

{TSG: Connecting with life doesn't mean doing things like interpreting moral of the story; it means being able to challenge it, accept it, or change it}.

*IV. Chandigarh:*

At the end of class five the child will be able to estimate and represent data with the available measures and things ó like dimensions, body parts, and height.

[TSG: It is unclear what is it that is intended beyond what a child is usually able to do.

Modified: Derive data, record it, process it - categorize it, change it from one system to another, derive inference and present it.

TSG intervention: There is a need to think whether or not mathematics is only about data and estimations. Mathematics enables one to reason and logic, by focusing on estimation and basic solving in mathematics. We are delimiting its potential].

*V. Dadra and Nagar Haveli:*

Child will engage in environmental observation and analysis and relate it to content learnt at school

[TSG: There is a difference between looking and observing - observation is purposive, details, and involves

analysis. It is important as it enables child to explore the world, better understand it, live better.

TSG: The manner in which this outcome has been formulated seems to indicate that the child is trying to use the knowledge gained in the school to the real world. There is a need to think about the purpose of education - is it to ensure that the child adjust to school, or the school to adjust school to the child?].

*VI. Assam:*

After class five, child will develop an attitude for/interest in further/higher learning; development of curiosity for all subjects and natural environment.

*VII. Goa:*

Will have developed clarity of situations around and an ability to respond to situational changes appropriately - what is happening around , why it is happening, based on learning derived from school, while also responding to these appropriately.

[TSG: There is a need to think how this will be different in a school going and non school going child.

Modified to add explanation: Will be aware of the different phenomena, sometimes cause and effects of it and the resources that are available, and the ability to respond, the child is able to articulate the situation, will not accept without question].

*VIII. Sikkim:*

Be creative and aware of what is happening around, be able to describe/express what has been observed, communicate and express oneself, observe, interpret is happening in class - going beyond the text.

## ***Session II***

### *Orientation to the meaning and ethos of activity based approach to teaching-learning:*

The following session aimed at orienting the teams to child-centered activity based learning approaches through a series of activities and tasks. The State teams were diluted to form groups including members from other States. Each of the activity presented involved different thinking skills. The nature of these activities was such that these were usable in regular classrooms and had a potential to explicate meaning of, and introduce participants to ethos of and joy and challenges in activity approach to teaching learning, along with encouraging an exploration of what construction of knowledge could potentially mean. Specific details of the activities conducted are appended with the report (see Appendix D: Activities). This session was aimed at encouraging interaction, deliberation and brainstorming over the tasks, coming out of the mode of reporting and appreciating analysis as a significant part of the work that regional teams do, and building an atmosphere for the following sessions of the workshop.

Following this the groups deliberated on certain issues relating to this approach, like for instance: When is an activity an activity? This deliberation along with that of day one helped in elaborating and consolidating certain features of activity and activity approach to teaching learning including following:

- An activity presents a problem/challenge (appropriate level of challenge) in an attractive way ó it is not a mechanistic exercise to keep learners busy
- Activities are based on clear learning objectives and are goal directed
- It should have stages and phases each involving higher-order thinking
- It should be subject and age appropriate, child friendly
- Activities make learning enjoyable and the understanding thus drawn stays with the learners
- They help in drawing interfaces among various subjects
- They assist in developing a spirit of learning together
- There is no one way of thinking and solving problems: divergent, convergent, critical, dependent-independent thinking
- Engaging with the problem and along with a meta-cognitive analysis are significant components of activity
- Teaching-learning through activities may not demand burdensome labour from the teacher but demand imaginative and creative thinking, improvisation, and a sharp understanding of basic concepts.
- Simple activities can entail complex concepts which are otherwise difficult to understand. For consolidation of concepts there is a need to sum-up at the end

It was shared with the group that the plan or the structure of an activity follows a sequence The learner goes through Experience, Reflection, Application, and Consolidation. It was in the light of this understanding of Activity that the Activity-Based Learning popularized by Tamil Nadu was critiqued. From the discussion that followed, it emerged, that one of the key indicators of effective activities need to be that children are engaged in learning and not only that they are busy.

In the last session, the participants sat in State teams to contextualize the list outcomes that they had prepared in the light of their understanding of the activity-based approach to teaching-learning. Further, they were also asked to visualize the changes that will be needed in the existing processes in order that these planned outcomes are achieved.

## ***Day II***

### ***Session I***

#### ***Follow-up:***

The second day began with a follow up on how far the States have reached after the Gandhinagar workshop, specifically on whether or not the concerned teams have shared and discussed the workshop and its outcomes with other concerned people in the state. The State teams apprised of the developments. Gujarat, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Goa have conducted relevant meetings and have made some initiations in the post workshop phase. All participating teams also shared the difficulties that are faced in implementation of what is learnt at workshops, specifically that of some teams not attending all the workshops and team changing every time that hampers continuity of learning.

This was followed by revisiting what was discussed in context of activity based teaching learning with the help of some activities (see Appendix D: Activities). It was discussed that it is necessary that teachers understands the principle of activity. As a teacher if one has to use this approach, it becomes necessary to know ones learners ó who are they, their context, what they know, what they like and what they dislike. This is because the purpose is to increase engagement time of each child as against the waiting time. ABL cards cannot lead to activity based learning; teacher is always needed for explanation. The State teams shared their vision on how they would ensure that teaching-learning is activity based. The presentations made by the States are presented in Box VII below.

#### **Box VII**

##### **How to make classes activity based?**

###### ***I. Goa:***

- Through material teachers will be made aware that activity is a part of their daily work
- Consultation with key resource persons and teacher educators for designing workshops
- Development of teacher manuals through experts who are experienced and practicing in the field
- Intensive teacher training with demonstrations and activities
- Orientation and capacity building of BRC and CRC and implementing in field
- Orientation of administrators, headmasters, etc.
- Parent consultation
- Reforms in assessment

*II. Chandigarh:*

- Instituting some mechanism or forum where teachers can sit together and share good classroom practices
- Flexible time-table
- Teacher should have a freedom in using activities and planning

*III. Punjab:*

- Can there be systems for evaluating children on reasoning, reflection, application, thinking skills and incorporate them in CCE?

*IV. Assam:*

- Teachers need to know the level of learners in order to leveling the activity

*V. Sikkim:*

- Training has to be time and again
- Review the role of libraries and laboratories ó a many places these systems are not used, along with reviewing the role of all TLM.

## ***Session II***

### *Refining steps towards attaining six programmatic RtE-SSA outcomes:*

The State teams were split to form 6 groups, each group working on one programmatic outcome of SSA and then reassembling into State teams so as to have a framework for each of the six outcomes that can be contextualized to the specific needs of the State. The groups worked to refine the document that had emerged from Gandhinagar workshop. The document contained specific steps that could lead to each of the six outcomes that could help in establishing and achieving the six outcomes. The groups were expected to discuss and adapt the document based on the following guiding questions:

- Are the proposed steps likely to contribute towards attaining the outcomes? If not, either refine or drop.
- Is something missing? Suggest additional steps
- Does the group have any advice on any of the steps (how to implement it or who to involve or any indicator that you are doing it correctly etc.)?
- By looking at the steps suggested by the group, will a state team become clear about what they can do? Think of the context of your own state and see if it will apply?

The members of TSG team functioned as facilitators for the groups, each member working with one outcome team. The refinements that had emerged from the Pondicherry workshop were shared as examples, and as a resource for beginning to think and to draw from. The refined document that emerged from this session is appended with the report (Appendix E: Attaining six outcomes - Refined).

### ***Session III***

#### *Presentation on school libraries:*

The concluding session of day three comprised of a presentation on school libraries by Room to Read (Appendix F: School Library). It was discussed that the idea of library needs to be introduced and distinguished from a physical structure with books. It needs to be connected to teaching-learning in a daily classroom by using activities that involve the connection between library books and textbooks, proposing library as a substitute of textbook and moving ahead to the limitations of textbook with its discriminatory aspects. Further, monitoring of schools and teaching should also take into account the extent to which children use and enjoy library. Teacher should also be promoted to use library during the training programmes and performance assessment indicators should have mechanisms to include teacher's use of library.

### ***Day III***

#### ***Session I***

The day three began with some activities in which the participants engaged (see Appendix D: Activities). It was discussed that if classroom has to be made child-centered then there is a need to understand that there are issues which are systemic and cannot be worked upon unless the people in the system communicate seamlessly between levels. Further, some issues concerning the steps towards attaining the six outcomes were also discussed.

#### *Some issues concerning the steps towards attaining the six outcomes:*

The nature of the team needed at State level needs review, as does the lack of coordination between various agencies. It was suggested that the States develop a core

team with representatives from all education agencies involved in the SSA implementation at the state level and plan a common vision.

On the issue of training of trainers it was discussed that there is a difference in the nature and outcomes between training of trainers and that of teachers. Most trainers cannot do what they ask the teachers to do. One suggestion to remedy this, was that trainers in training are required to undertake responsibility for change in a growing sphere of influence ó from one classroom to a school to a cluster to a block etc.

*Pillars of action:*

This was followed by the teams being apprised of their task of developing specific do-able action plans for their respective States, which was the main agenda of the workshop. In order to facilitate this planning of actions, the pillars of action discussed on day one were revisited in greater detail through a presentation that has been appended with the report (see Appendix G: EEQ Framework ó Pillars of action). The teams expressed the need for guidelines on textbook and curriculum to facilitate the process of their development. Regarding academic support system, the teams were assured that suggestive outlines on the roles of CRC/ BRC, and suggestive plans on what is to be done in schools in first two, four, and six months will be shared with them by TSG.

***Session II***

*Work on State plans:*

Following this the State teams worked on State specific plans, based on the proceedings of the workshops. This process was specifically guided by a planning support document (see Appendix H: Planning support document) provided by TSG, the steps towards attaining six outcomes ó refined during the workshop (Appendix E: Attaining six outcomes - Refined), and by States' situational analysis (in case of States that had completed it prior to the workshop).

**Day IV**

During the first session the teams continued to deliberate upon the State plans that were presented during the second session. State presentations along with the comments on those presentations are appended with the report (Appendix I: State Plans with

specific comments). There were some observations common to all plans, which are outlined as follows.

It was observed that the plans that have been formulated show definite shifts from focussing on inputs to outputs, from events to processes, from issuing instructions to establishing partnerships that build ownership. The plans that are made need to be sharpened with respect to concrete steps to achieve outcomes and be submitted by the agreed upon dates. It was felt that all States need to set time frames. Other suggestions that were made as possible additions to plans for a few states were as follows:

- Conducting meetings with concerned officials and sharing the workshop experiences with all stakeholders
- Completing the situational analysis
- Preparing detailed explanatory notes on the outcomes
- Having a baseline to support the planned actions
- Identifying the implications of selected outcomes for components such as curriculum, pedagogy, materials, classroom organization, planning, evaluation, school management, SDMC/SDP, CRC-BRC, institutional developments, monitoring/research and evaluation, policy, administration. This is important if implementation has to occur in a phased manner that have ramifications across the boards or functions in education

All States will have to deal with some common challenges like distribution of 45 hours of a teachers' work, teacher rationalization, systemic issues, like: accountability development in a system where there is no link between performance and progress, and work culture related issues. The teams are responsible for quality at the State level need to continue to develop professionally. States need to develop a culture of sharing knowledge among States.

This year in the AWP there is a need to plan to implement activities for which there is evidence of success. The research component will need to work to action research on experiments if they are undertaken, such that there is robust M&E.

Areas common to all plans where TSG will be willing to extend support are: curriculum, textbook, CCE, classroom organisation with respect to ó diversity, community involvement, leadership, ADEPTS, and training.

The workshop was concluded with the TSG team also giving a commitment to support the State teams by providing feedback on plans and developing at least one concept note on a major area (e.g. curriculum, CRC-BRC development, or higher order learning objectives).