

Phase II Regional Workshop on Education of Equitable Quality
Pedagogy Unit, TSG, SSA
First workshop
Puducherry, 10-13 November, 2010
Hotel Green Park

This report documents the proceedings of a four day regional workshop on Education of Equitable Quality conducted by the Pedagogy unit, TSG SSA, during 10-13 November 2010 at Puducherry. The States participating in this workshop were Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Puducherry. State representatives included quality/pedagogy team at SPO, representatives from DIET, and SPDs of some States also participated in the final phase (see Appendix A).

The core agenda of the workshop was to enable the State teams to identify key changes to be brought about in education, keeping in mind the guiding framework provided by the RtE with a specific focus on education of equitable quality. The outcome expected was a commitment plan for each State to achieve this.

Day I:

The workshop began with a welcome note by State Project Officer, Puducherry and an introduction of the teams. The key thrust of the workshop was not only to mobilize these outcomes, but also to build an atmosphere where the teams are motivated to dialogue, engage in relationship building, and appreciate analytical dimension of what they do. That is, moving beyond presenting what is, and engaging in visualizing and drawing interfaces between what should be/could be (possibilities), along with planning to achieve the vision thus drawn. This was initiated within a process where it was proposed that the State teams introduce themselves through three key phrases describing what they think about their work. The descriptors that evolved in this process are presented in box I.

Introduce the group by giving 3 words/phrases that describe the group

- I. Tamil Nadu:
- Education of equitable quality without compromise
 - EEQ to all children
 - Constructive learning

II. Karnataka:

- Slogan: We are a 'silicon hub' promoting 'Nali Kali' with 'enthusiasm'

III. Kerala:

- Confident in addressing challenges in the field of education
- Concerned in ensuring quality of education
- Optimistic

IV. Himachal Pradesh:

- Interested in quality of education
- Dedication of teachers towards noble teaching
- Focus on yoga and culture of HP

V. Puducherry I:

- Pioneer in Many areas of ICTs
- Epoch maker in making ABL in English
- Small but unique

VI. Puducherry II:

- Cooperative
- Innovative, and
- Qualitative

VII. Puducherry III:

- Known for Hospitality
- Rich educational History
- Philosophy of *Atithi Devo Bhava*

VIII. TSG:

- Constantly engaged in management of time, space and task
- We like to talk and hope that we are facilitative
- Want to extend our family across the country

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 must be based on reasons; comprehensive and analytic notes be maintained by each team for further reference, teams make a concrete effort to visualize the path ahead rather than reporting existing status, and that the teams should commit to deliver what they plan for in the workshop.

In this session, the context of the workshop was introduced as being different but similar to EEQ I. The first phase of four regional workshops was focused on arriving at a shared understanding on education of equitable quality and developing a common vision of a school (more particularly classroom processes, beliefs about teaching-learning, expected outcomes of work) that would manifest this quality across different implementation agencies related to school education. While the effects of Phase I workshops have begun to be visible in terms of greater focus on outcomes and the perspective informing the AWP's developed, there is a need to further these advancements in vision into plans that can lead to action through second round of workshops (Phase-II). It is also relevant to note that with the RtE being implemented this becomes the next logical step.

Building on the work that has been done till now, the objectives of the second stage of the workshop, as specifically chalked out for the State teams, were: What do we have to deliver? How to make a minimum change happen to bring about a change towards EEQ? What are the options available? Make selections: what will we do, how: our plans? How to coordinate our plans? How to visualize future? How to ensure a rigorous follow up? For this, there is needed a situational analysis that can address the above questions. The structure of the workshop was built around a planning support document designed to facilitate these objectives (see Appendix C). The workshop was structured in a phased manner.

Given this context, the State teams worked in groups to identify key outcomes, processes and relationships (based on SSA RTE vision as outlined in Appendix B, Appendix B: II SSA slides on outcomes, processes and relationships) that they see as forming the basis for their planned actions towards RtE. As a prelude to this, how the RtE has changed, the context in which we work was shared. Before the RtE we were the benefactors; now we are the beneficiaries since it is because of children that we are occupied. It has made the system and the State responsible. In this sense, the outcomes being visualized relate not only to the learning levels but also to an entire process of development, having implications at all levels. Processes do not only relate to what happens in the classroom but also to what happens in teacher training, curriculum development, resource

development. It needs debates, discussions, arguments at all levels in the system as a whole rather than just the classroom. Similarly, the corresponding relationships include aspects like quality of mutual dependence, partnership, collegiality and calls for a shift in the nature of relationships rather than just building relationships.

The task I of the day I was to visualize and identify changes/shifts that the States have to make in relation to the above. A snapshot of the task is presented in Box II.

Task I

In general, based on the outcomes, processes and relationships discussed:

- Visualize and identify changes/shifts that you have to make
- Implications of the shift thus visualized
- Instead of an elaborate attempt, the idea should be to list fewer but critical issues, as in the next 5 years State groups will have to commit to what has been visualized

In particular, for classes five and eight each State team identifies and lists:

- 5 different things that children should be able to do ó outcomes of learning
- 5 most important shifts/changes with respect to relationships
- 5 changes you want to see in processes

Initial Presentations by the States on Task I:

Puducherry I:

Outcomes:

- Shift from acquiring basic operations to mastering basic operations
- Shift from acquisition and utterance to proficient usage of language in communication

Process:

- Integrate mathematical process to everyday life
- Create opportunities for child for simple and free expression

Kerala:

Outcomes:

- In English language children are able to produce manuscript magazines
- Able to present stage performance in English
- In Mathematics, build capacity to solve day to day problems

Processes:

- CCE in class
- Develop indicators to be implemented with children

Karnataka

Class V:

Outcomes:

- Develop time consciousness and complete agreed upon work with full

interest

- Can fix their goals of learning and get involved in activities accordingly

Implementations/processes:

Inputs that teacher need at every level:

- Tailor made training programmes
- Integrate technology, *Kalikayatna* and different programmes being run in the States

Relationships:

- Bring changes in attitude
- Motivate team work, coordination, contribution

Himachal Pradesh:

Outcomes:

- Opportunities to all children
- Inclusive learning outcomes
- Language: Knowledge of local and first language, Skills- LSRW
- Mathematics: Knowledge of number systems real numbers, basic functions, geometrical shapes, Profit and Loss

Puducherry II-

Outcomes:

- Focus on all round development
- Coordinate with the health department
- Social: Friendly relationship with all
- Intellectual: Develop on communication skills by the end of 5th grade
- Children engage in activities without fear

Following this the second session on day II, aimed at orienting the State teams to child-centered activity based learning approaches through a series of activities and tasks designed. The State teams were diluted to form groups including members from other States. Each activity was different involving different thinking and approach. The nature of these activities was such that these were usable in regular classrooms and had a potential to explicate meaning of, and introduce teams 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).

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. An important role that the TSG team played in these sessions was that of a facilitative participant rather than that of an observer or monitoring authority. It worked on the tasks with groups and shared work with other participating groups.

Day 2:

Session I:

The proceedings of the day two began with a follow-up on understanding the activity approach by discussing and sharing other activities with the group (activities 7 to 9 in Appendix D). Subsequently, the groups deliberated on certain issues related to this approach, like for instance: When is an activity an activity? (Other points for discussion listed in Appendix D). This helped in elaborating and consolidating certain features of an activity and activity approach to teaching-learning including following:

- An activity presents a problem/challenge (appropriate level of challenge) or a situation where one has to think, that can trigger thinking and application
- Whether it is an activity or not will also depend on the nature of meaning making it is facilitating i.e. whether it is scaffolding ideas enabling to think and engaging with the problem and having scope to think afresh freedom to express
- It creates an atmosphere where people are inspired to work and not burdened with it i.e. learning environment conditions of learning
- Contains opportunities for hands-on experience
- An activity has to be supplemented with explanation
- It is to be built in the lesson, and not forced in i.e. an activity is not an isolated task, its an approach to teaching-learning
- 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 that her content area in specific and other related areas in general are premised upon ó activities are simple tools for teaching-learning, they can be designed by teacher
- Simple activities can entail complex concepts which are otherwise difficult to understand

The challenges faced by teachers when they attempt to implement this methodology was also discussed. It turned out the problem was that of an incorrect understanding of the process involved ó which showed up in the environment of the classroom and did not come up in the much more controlled environment of the training workshops. It is important that she discusses the problems she comes across in-depth, observes classes of colleagues who are doing fairly well and also interact with those colleagues. She could use aides such as the model class videos in developing lesson plans over a period of time. Further, it emerged that listening to teachers is important, as a CRCC there is a need to provide a space where teachers are heard, instead of simply going on with a training approach.. The purpose is to understand that it is the process that is important and that there is a need to transfer the skill of planning and not the plans or activity.

Session II:

The next session continued with the task of working on setting outcomes for the plans to be developed by the State based on the six programatic outcomes that have been framed

by SSA as a whole (Appendix B). The State teams were split into 6 groups, each group working on one outcome and then reassembling into State teams in order to contextualize the outcomes to State specific issues. The group work was based on a document provided by the TSG, to facilitate discussion on the six outcomes (see Appendix E: I). The document contained elaborated pointers that could help in establishing and achieving the six outcomes. The State teams could modify and adapt the outcomes according to their specific context and concerns to develop a framework for the concerned state. 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 each. The groups thus formed worked on the following six outcomes:

- I. Teacher is more available and present in the class and actually teaching; increased instruction time
- II. A warm and welcoming atmosphere
- III. Reduced discrimination in the classroom and school
- IV. A focus on higher order learning becomes visible
- V. Greater use of active learning in the classroom
- VI. Greater involvement of community in quality aspects

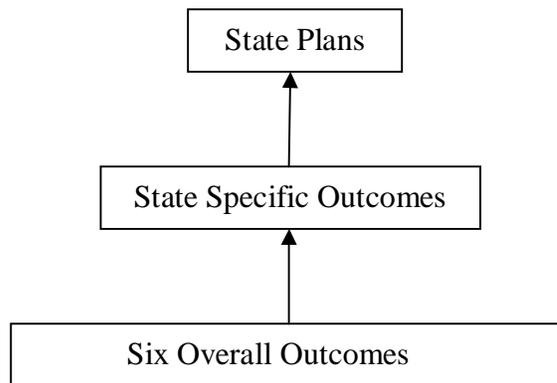
The groups presented their thoughts and further refined the suggestions that they had made on the document with the help of interventions and inputs from external resource persons and the TSG team. A refined document along with the interventions made at various points is appended with the report (see Appendix E: II). The presentation made

by the group working on reduced discrimination in class and school is appended separately (see Appendix E: III). The last session for the day comprised of a presentation on school libraries by Room to Read (see Appendix F).

Day 3:

The session on the third day RtE started with a follow-up of proceedings of the previous day with the two remaining groups making their presentations. (Appendix E: II). Following this the State teams reassembled to work on planning strategies for implementing the intended specific outcomes that were developed on the second day and the two were intertwined so as to ensure that the plans are not only State specific but also viable. A planning support document was provided to the teams in order to assist in the process of developing the plans (see Appendix C). The teams worked on stage I as outlined in the planning support document.

The pattern for planning involved three layers. The six programmatic SSA outcomes that were developed from EEQ-I shaped the foundations for developing the state specific outcomes, processes and implications.



The State teams had intensive discussions, over the day, facilitated by the TSG team and external resource persons.

Day 4:

Session I:

In the first session of the closing day the teams proceeded with developing the State plans based on the stages II, III, IV, V and VI of the planning support document (Appendix C). This entailed analyzing the existing situation in the States using State situational analysis, selecting specific actions/steps to attain the outcomes using the support document for attaining six critical outcomes provided by the TSG team, organizing and sequencing actions, setting up time frames and milestones as well as specifying the support that the teams will need in order to implement the plans.

Session II:

The second session of the day involved participation of the Chief Minister of the State, the Director School Education, Advisor, SSA (Tamil Nadu) and the Additional Secretary (EdCIL); whereby they shared their views on the progress of and issues related to the agenda of education for all.

The proceedings began with the Puducherry team welcoming the Chief Minister. This was followed by the Director School Education, Puducherry, sharing achievements of the State government's initiatives in the area of education specifically with respect to the progress made in making provisions for social and physical infrastructure for educational development.

The Education Quality Advisor, TSG, gave an overview of the workshop highlighting the changes that the RtE has brought about in the roles and responsibilities of those working in the area of education. He visualized the workers in the field of education transiting from being benefactors of education to being beneficiaries of education. With regards to the poor learning outcomes being experienced at schools, he shared that it is not only the infrastructure and teachers that are responsible, it is a systemic tendency to blame teachers for everything. However, the problem is more to do with the lack of understanding of the process of learning. He shared that it is worthwhile to engage with the question of how learning happens in a child-centered approach.

The Advisor, SSA, Tamil Nadu, also expressed the need for transformation of the classroom in all respects. He said that there is a need to trust teachers. The problem is not with the capacity of the teacher but with the methodology that the system has promoted. A change brought about in the methodology has brought about a change with the same learners. A working model was developed in a pilot and then it was expanded and strengthened. He appreciated the Puducherry government for being the first state in taking critical steps for implementing the activity based-learning (ABL) approach.

The Additional Secretary, MHRD, noted the special status of Puducherry as being a State with the Chief Minister holding the portfolio of education. She appreciated the work that Puducherry has done in all aspects of school education. She shared that in the last one year there have been huge developments in education especially with the RtE being passed and implemented along with the section 21 A. The act mandates that education be free from fear, stress and anxiety ó detention, punishment and expulsion are visible forms of anxiety and stress producing factors at school. She emphasized on the States efforts in making people aware of this along with a great deal of work in developing infrastructure for education. However, the issues are much deeper and involve an equal understanding of curriculum, pedagogy and the social context of education. Having said that, she shared that this workshop is aimed at contributing to ensuring such environment at school where children experience the joy of learning, and expressed her gratitude to the State for organizing the workshop.

The Chief Minister expressed Puducherry's concern regards developing and enhancing quality of education in the State. While discussing the achievements that the State has made in the area of education, he shared that despite the achievements made, there were gaps experienced in the quality of education. **For instance, the gap seen between quality of government and private school education exists mainly because of issues related to income and situation (??).** He recognized this as a responsibility of the government which entails making quality education accessible to those who are deprived. Equality is an integral part of the ABL approach, however, the system seems to be lacking in delivering the results. He further expressed the State's willingness to implement new strategies and

plans and to consider Puducherry as a small model or a laboratory for experimenting in improving teaching-learning and education. He shared that the State is working hard to develop a public faith in the system of education. Since the State is investing in education, it is important for it to understand how to channelize it and how to use it to improve the quality and equity in the education system as a whole.

This was followed by the inauguration of ABL cards developed by Puducherry SSA team for classes I and II in English. This session was concluded with a thank you note by the SPD, Puducherry.

Session III:

In this session the State teams presented the plans that they had made during the course of the workshop. During the presentations the Additional Secretary, TSG team and external resource persons made observations and gave inputs. The State plans along with the interventions made are appended with the report (see Appendix G).

Following this the issues common to all presentations were discussed. One of the main issues was a seeming confusion between a description of quality, where what was required, was a description of an action that needed to be taken. For instance, if a State planned for, 'BRC to be made aware', an accompanying description of specific steps that it would need to take in order to make BRC more aware, would be helpful. States agreed to revise the plans such that the actions were more specific and detailed (including with time lines).

Similarly, plans stated what the States intended to be, instead of stating what the States will do to get there. For instance, 'training has to be participatory' is a vision and does not specify the action which will lead to it. Possible actions could be 'sensitizing teachers by showing model classrooms, films, face to face dialogue and the like.

Another issue was of need to appreciate what has been going on already in the State rather than establishing new interventions and initiatives. The difficulty with continuing ongoing good practice or even a plan that has been put into process is sometimes exacerbated with the entry of new officers in the system. States were encouraged to

create a system of documentation and a process of retaining institutional memory of which this plan document could be a part such that implementation could be less fragmented. A proper documentation of the efforts going on in the state, with rationales and explanations and follow-ups of the changes that these efforts are bringing about, will help in strengthening this process.

The States agreed to revise the plans in this light and set deadlines for doing it. Dates fixed were as follows: Karnataka on 25 November 2010, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Uttarakhand and Kerala on 30 November 2010 and Tamil Nadu 3 December 2010.

Apart from completing the plans some actions that the States needed to take up were also chalked out. These included:

- Preparation of detailed explanatory notes on the outcomes (to be used for dissemination in different forms)
- Have a baseline report to support the planned actions
- Identification of the implications of 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 is to occur in a phased manner that have ramifications across the boards or functions in education
- Etch out the distribution of 45 hour instructional time
- Orientation of the staff [teachers, CRC-BRC, HMs] + others [example: Community]
- Dissemination of the outcomes

The States also agreed upon the minimum three actions that will be completed over next three months and the one (partial) outcome that will be visible by 15 February 2011. These are as follows:

Kerala:

- Commission on the RtE report by end of the month, after consultation
- Orientation about the RtE to concerned people across stakeholders through 15-16 workshops
- Conducting 20-30 State level workshops

Karnataka:

- 3 activities of curriculum and syllabus distribution and discussion with teachers would have taken place by 15 February 2011
- Core group will have discussed the outcomes with around 1000 teachers of with a focus on teachers to go beyond the general methodology
- Going beyond module being finalized, will incorporate elements from outcomes
- Testing achievement outputs on a sample of children from 3, 5 and 7

Puducherry:

- Preparation of checklist for knowing reading ability of children

Uttarakhand:

- BRCC/CRCC orientation on how to build rapport with the community;
- Enhance understanding of RTE;
- Coordination of systems SCERT, Board of School Education, SSA project and directorate of education with respect to RTE

Himachal Pradesh:

Shift in training process,

Impact of the material already supplied (Adhar and Samriddhi) will be assessed,

Initiating curriculum development for classes I and II

Tamil Nadu:

Orientation of all teachers on RTE,

Making available supplementary reading materials in science, social science and languages

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). It was consensually felt that the representatives from the State need to continue to work together in the future if a change has to be brought about.

Intervention during the presentations:

- On recruitment and placement when you talk about recruiting teachers there is a need to make explicit certain specific points ó like taking Karnataka's recruitment system as a case in point. Teacher not coming in time and leaving earlier than time is a much graver issue than recruitment. There is a need to address this and monitor this. It is not only a matter of academic monitoring. Non-inspectorial monitoring óthere is a range where CRC personnel is perceived as an authority but there are places where CRC personnel is not even considered important. Stake-based monitoring has to be in place.
- Regarding accountability on the part of teachers logically everything comes under accountability. There is a need to interface monitoring with other 5 outcomes as all other outcomes are related to the issue of accountability. When a teacher is posted in a village, going to a village is not a hardship (especially when we are talking of hardship allowance). There is a need for clear job description of teachers. What is it that they are supposed to deliver needs to be clarified along with clarifying teacher entitlement, especially with respect to para-teachers. Accountability should be fixed for teachers at all levels ó principal, CRCC/BRCC, districts, state departments and national levels also. If teachers' students score poorly on an external assessment, then not only the teacher but the CRCC/BRCC, districts and state level personnel lose increment ó An instance of

stake based monitoring. No-retention policy till class 8 doesn't allow fixing external assessment as a monitoring tool.

- More than anything, there is a need to make teaching an interesting job that there is no issue of fixing accountability. Making teaching enjoyable and providing fresh frames of references is necessary. If teachers' students score poorly on an external assessment, then not only the teacher but the CRCC/BRCC, districts and state level personnel loose increment ó An instance of stake based monitoring.
- While we use jargon such as teacher change; there is a corresponding need to analyse how we see a change coming about. How can you make an individual change internally is an issue worth pondering and its answer will depend on what is the theory of change that you believe in.
- Why are things not changing (why is it that activity based teaching-learning has not been implemented despite several years). This is because the stagnation at one point may not be the only source of inertia. States should stop focusing on hard spots and develop specific strategies for the system in general. There is a need for spiraling strategies. One should also know what one is doing is aimed at countering a tradition of oral testimony. Therefore, we cannot expect too many changes at one time. Incremental approach and right input/intervention at right time rather than flooding with all strategies at one go, appears to be the better approach. It will also demand not engaging in frequent policy changes and developing perspective plans that continue over a period of time. Contradictions between what CRC, BRC, DIETS and schools do also need to be curtailed, which also calls for orienting administrative officials, state level visioning exercise followed by district level visioning exercise so on and coordinate them.
- Very often teachers get different messages in training. There is a need to understand why is it that system conveys different messages to teachers? Having a uniform message is difficult. There is a need to understand who conveys what,

who intends what; then choose what to do. This could happen because of lack of codification. To counter this there is a need to enable teachers to identify correct message using a framework- that provided by RTE. There also have been serious mis-receivings of various messages. There is a need to ensure that documentation be an integral part of the system. This will help in making the system accountable. Also, this will help in distinguishing between an opinion and a message.

- Another issue concerns over usage of the term innovation so much so that gives a sense as if basics are not important and innovation is the ultimate goal. Is it not to strengthen the basics that constitute the majority of what teachers? If the innovation adds to basics then it is much more worthwhile. In EEQ 1, it was discussed that instead of making anything new but to strengthen what is already is there and not to innovate at the cost of basics.