

# PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND LINKAGES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

## Pathways to Change

*Nothing stops an organization faster than people who believe that the way they worked yesterday is the best way to work tomorrow. To succeed, not only do your people have to change the way they act, they are got to change the way they think about the past.*

- John Madonna (2004)

### 1.0 Context

Education systems have remained, almost without exception, remarkably stable despite sweeping changes all-around them. To put it simple, they are, by and large, closed systems, and the pace and the scale of their change in response to challenges they encounter are abysmally unimpressive. In the Indian context, the second-half of the 1980s and the 1990s i.e., the period immediately following the National Policy on Education (1986 / 1992) was the most propitious period for accelerated educational development. No other policy framework, not even the laudable the Kothari Commission Report (1964-1966), evoked similar response from policy-makers and planners. Fortunately, the momentum continued uninterrupted till date. The priority has, of course, rightly shifted to school education, pre-eminently to elementary education. Within this sub-system, quality coupled with equity, has come to acquire overriding priority in terms of planning, strategies, interventions and investment.

Quality, broadly conceptualized in terms of inputs, processes and outcomes, has been acknowledged as a non-negotiable mandate. Teachers are the frontline providers of quality education. Sufficient supply of well-qualified and well-trained teachers is the most, if not the only, contributing factor of school effectiveness and quality of learning. With this paradigm shift from simplistic linear quantitative expansion to qualitative transformation in school education, the teacher education system in the country has increasingly emerged, during the last two decades or more, as an area of overriding concern. This is due primarily to the conviction that teacher performance, and hence the quality of children's learning, is dependent, to a considerable extent, on the quality of teacher training institutions and their processes.

Our teacher education institutions are now on the throes of a transformative change. It would not be wrong to say that the recent thrust on teacher education is a direct consequence of the Central Government's increased and proactive role (in matters of policy formulation, launching of new programmes, increased financial support, technical backstopping, capacity building etc.) in school and teacher education. The Teacher Education sector has been under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) since the Eighth Plan period. Significantly, Government of India has accorded unprecedented priority to teacher education under "Restructuring and Reorganization of Teacher Education" in states with increased share of funding (75 : 25). The states have become willing and active actors in this partnership.

It is, however, an established fact that many of Government of India – sponsored social sector programmes, notwithstanding their lofty objectives, cherished intentions, enabling policies

and huge resources, have not been able to transform these into expected outcomes. A search for reasons drive us to the “last mile” metaphor i.e., the most difficult step in turning a good policy idea, often invested with resources, into an effective social outcome. To put it in programmatic parlance, the “last mile” refers to effective planning, implementation and monitoring of schemes with collaborative linkage and convergence. The education sector in general and the teacher education in particular, is affected by limited effectiveness of this most difficult step (Khilnani, 2012).

## **2.0 Planning, Implementation and Monitoring in Education: Perspectives and Processes**

Education as a sector of investment at the centre as well in states has always had a low priority in terms of the proportion of GDP invested in it (Government’s ability) and the Government’s willingness to invest in it in preference to other sectors. For a fairly extended period, educational planning was inexorably resource-driven, limiting the system to its barest sustenance i.e. non-plan requirements. It was, a simple arithmetical exercise, where ‘means’ used to dictate the ‘ends’. This resource strapped, rigid and stereotyped ‘planning’ by so-called ‘well-trained’ specialists, primarily engaged in ‘exercises of quantification’ has since 1990s been replaced by a new regime of educational planning in India. To be in the zone of lesser contestation, it could be said that systematic educational planning in its new nuances is restricted to centrally sponsored programmes, which come under Plan development only. Started with Government of India-sponsored externally funded District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in 1990s, the context and process of educational planning, whether at the state, district, sub-district or institution level, have experienced paradigm changes. The planning process, though exclusively restricted to the plan schemes of Government of India, has the following distinctive markers:

- Educational planning is **no longer centralized and top-down**, everything being decided at top echelons of decision-making. It is, on the other hand, **decentralized and bottom-up**, thus, contextual and aligned to the real needs and aspirations of the stakeholders.
- Educational **planning is holistic and integrated**: it covers all aspects of a programme as opposed to **disjointed, piecemeal set of individual schemes**, addressing only an isolated aspect. An integrated approach is more likely to achieve synergies among different programme components (POA, 1992).
- Educational planning is no longer a domain meant **exclusively for well-trained specialists**; **it is inclusive** in the sense that **all stakeholders** (with conventional and local wisdom) are genuinely involved in the planning process, as it affects them and the education of their children.
- Educational planning ensures **linkages and convergence** between education and related services. Working together and collaborative efforts help achieving intended outcomes, obviating overlapping of initiatives and eliminating wastage of scarce resources.

- **Evaluation, monitoring and research are interactive and supportive** of educational planning. They inform effective policy formulation, planning and implementation.
- Decentralized planning provides the field level TEIs the much needed autonomy, flexibility and trust in planning for their domain area. Thus, the chain of accountability for planning and implementation moves closer to the sites and their actors.
- Though, the Centre sets the policy goals, framework for implementation and funds for systemic reform, **planning is done at the decentralized levels through an intense process of consultation.**
- A realistic and implementable educational planning **rests on a robust, relevant and reliable data and information base**, created through plurality of sources.

### **3.0 Planning, Implementation and Monitoring of Teacher Education in Odisha : A Situational Analysis**

This section attempts to make an objective and dispassionate portrayal of the existing state of educational planning, policy formulation, implementation of programmes, monitoring and linkages in respect of Teacher Education in the State. The situational analysis attempted in this section is based on:

- The related records and documents available from various sources viz., (Government of India (MHRD, NCERT, NCTE and NUEPA) in respect of Teacher Education;
- The report of the recent Joint Review Mission on Teacher Education – Odisha (MHRD, 2013);
- The observations of respondents, both public and professionals, to two sets of opinionnaire and the professionals designed to capture the voices of the public; and
- Our own “lived experiences” as Teacher Educators, intimately associated with the education system of the state.

#### **3.1 Planning and Implementation**

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Restructuring and Reorganization of Teacher Education in the State, in fact, provided the broad policy goals and framework for planning. The State has been implementing the scheme since the Eighth Five Year Plan. However, the scheme has been progressively revised, the latest being the revision for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (MHRD, GOI, 2012).

- The Directorate of TE and SCERT is the apex academic institution with an overarching mandate for improving the quality of school education and teacher education. In conformity with MHRD's Guidelines for implementation, the Directorate of TE and SCERT directs the field level institutions (DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs) to develop their Perspective Plan as well as Annual Work Plan.

- The field level teacher education institutions develop their plans by a select set of faculty in exclusion of others.
- At the state level, the Directorate of TE and SCERT develops its own component plan, and collates the institutional plans. Put together, the SCERT plan and institutional plans constitute State's Teacher Education Plan.
- Effective, realistic and implementable planning is ideally based on a solid database. That relevant, reliable, consistent and up-dated database is not in place either in the TE and SCERT or in the field level TEIs.
- Developing educational plan requires some kind of professional competence, wisdom and understanding. State's as well as TEI's plans are, not un-often, ambitious and non-implementable.
- The Government of India Guidelines (1987 and 1989) provided for a Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) in TE and SCERT as well as in field level TEIs. The plans are required to be critically reviewed and approved by the PACs. However, PACs are not in place in many of the TEIs. Wherever, PACs have been constituted, they are dysfunctional
- The Directorate of TE and SCERT and the TEIs, DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs develop their plans for inservice training of school teachers independent of SSA and RMSA. This dualistic planning is neither desirable nor cost-effective.
- A system or mechanism for review of programme implementation, targets achieved and problems encountered is weak, if non-existent. Rarely does the Directorate of TE and SCERT review the programmes of TEIs under its control. Even at the institution level, such exercises are rarely taken.
- Plan implementation is found to be affected mostly by three factors : first, inordinate delay in fund release; second, ineffective vertical communication channel; and third, absence of genuine involvement of faculty.

### **3.2 Monitoring**

Strong monitoring system depends on the routine collection and analysis of basic education statistics and indicators. Such data can provide descriptive “snapshots” information on a system, trace anticipated changes from implemented reforms and enable diagnostic investigation of their relationship. The maxim “to improve something, first measure it” encapsulates the importance of monitoring progress the goals to be achieved (UNESCO, 2009). Successful monitoring is not just about generating information. It is also about creating institutional mechanism through which monitoring can inform development and implementation of policy. Planning for an effective system of monitoring must address the following : (i) what is to be monitored ?; what are the parameters against which monitoring to be done ?; (iii) at what level/s monitoring to be done ?; (iv) frequency of monitoring ? (v) who is to monitor ?; and (vi) follow up of monitoring. The Directorate of TE and SCERT has a network of TEIs, ranging from state-financed Secondary Training Schools (33) to DRCs (06), DIETs (24), CTEs (10), IASEs (02) and Training Colleges (02). As the apex state level institution, the TE and SCERT is mandated to closely monitor, on a continuous basis, the day-to-day management of the

institutions as well as an extended range of programmes planned to improve the quality of schools and TEIs. The mandated role of TE and SCERT as well as that of the field level TEIs is to monitor four aspects of the system: the inputs, the process, the outputs and the outcomes.

However, a close scanning of the monitoring roles of these institutions reveals:

- The absence of a systemic and institutional mechanism to measure the effectiveness of TEIs affects their functional efficiency.
- Monitoring mechanism does not exist at any level, be it the TE and SCERT or a set of nondescript secondary training schools.
- Rarely are monitoring and review exercises conducted, and when conducted, they are mostly unplanned, characterized by adhocism and absence of follow-up.
- While the TE and SCERT and its field institutions (mostly DIETs) monitor SSA programmes, they are yet to put a strong, systematic and well-designed monitoring system in place for their own programmes and performance.
- Of late, the Ministry of Human Resource Development has identified a set of performance indicators – state level and institutional – for TEIs to be submitted to Government of India.
- A weak monitoring system that is in place, however, is a liability. This heavily affects the system.

### **3.3 Linkages**

Vertical and horizontal linkages are essential for internal efficiency and effectiveness of the teacher education system. The observation of the Kothari Commission (1964-1966) that our teacher education institutions continue as insular organizations, and to be “.....brought into the mainstream of the academic life of the universities on the one hand and of school life and educational developments on the other”. To put it differently, our TEIs lack forward and backward linkages.

- The DTE and SCERT has forged linkages with its own set of institutions like DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs primarily for two purposes: (i) administrative / management and (ii) academic. However, the link is rather weak and feeble.
- The Directorate of TE and SCERT does have some kind of linkage with national level specialized institutions such as NCERT, NUEPA, NCTE, NIOS, RIE, UGC and such other institutions. The established link is externally – propelled, not internally – driven.
- The DTE & SCERT does not have any functional lineage with its counterparts in other states.
- The DTE and SCERT and the TEIs such as CTEs and IASEs are almost entirely de-linked from institutions of higher education like Universities, Colleges and Research Institutions.

- While field level TEIs has linkages, however feeble, with the Directorate of TE and SCERT, they do not have linkages with their peer institutions.
- Obsession with territorial possessiveness prevents the Directorate of TE and SCERT to have organic linkage with SSA and RMSA at the state level. The linkages envisaged in SSA (SCERT-DIET/DRC-BRC-CRC) and RMSA (SCERT-IASE-CTE) are yet to be fully functional.
- The direct academic linkage of DTE&SCERT and other TEIs with the Schools (both elementary and secondary) is yet to evolve.
- The entire teacher education system of the state is bereft of linkage with many stakeholders such as teachers' professional associations, NGO coalitions, corporate houses and civil society groups.

## **4.0 Gap Analysis and Action Points**

Gap analysis simply refers to identifying discrepancies between the vision and the system's present state of things. Identifying the gaps establishes the need for change. And the change or reform is always a product of dissatisfaction. The gap analysis of the existing teacher education system in the State is based on (i) the Report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development's Joint Review Mission on Teacher Education (2012), (ii) the spin-offs of the Sharing Workshop held on July 13, 2013; (iii) the dividends of the two-day workshop (July 11-12, 2013) on Developing the Roadmap for Teacher Education, and (iv) the Ministry of Human Resource Development's Restructuring and Reorganization of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education : Guidelines for Implementation (2012). Besides these context specific information, the gap analysis relied on research studies and relevant literature. The NCF (2005), the NCFTE (2009) and the RTE Act (2009) also provided a range of challenges to be addressed. In no less extent, the gap analysis, as attempted below, was informed by our own 'locally lived' circumstances. The analysis, therefore, brings into sharper focus, two sets of discrepancies / deficiencies: generic and specific. The deficits of the teacher education system in the State are in need of reform in short-term, medium-term and long-term timeframe. The gaps have been flagged below:

### **4.1 Planning and Implementation**

The dominant deficits of the teacher education system of the state in respect of planning and its implementation include the following:

- Despite several paradigm shifts in school education and teacher education, the perception and understanding of teacher educators, barring a few, are still dominant in their outlived mould. The TEIs now face new challenges and have new opportunities with quality and equity concerns at the centre-stage, which have substantially changed the roles and responsibilities of those who manage the system. This has inevitably led to development of institutional plans, void of foresight, vision and progressivism.

- A visible absence of planning culture across teacher education institutions for their development and transformation. A change in attitude and reflective thinking will make a difference.
- Once the institutional plans are developed, they are collated at the TE and SCERT level with little review and reflection. Most plans, thus prepared, rarely go beyond the programmatic interventions under the Teacher Education Scheme. With PACs not in place at all teacher education institutions, plans lack important inputs from them.
- The Directorate of TE and SCERT, notwithstanding its expanded roles, responsibilities and authority, lacks the capability and competence in developing its own systemic and institutional plan, let alone honing competence of other teacher education institutions.
- What makes matter worst is the gross absence of a consistent, relevant, reliable and robust database for preparation of both perspective and annual work plans. In the absence of a range of data, drawn from multiple sources, including evidence-based research, it is difficult to develop realistic, implementable and monitorable plans.
- Education, including teacher education, is a cross-sectoral area for planning and development. However, development of teacher education plans hardly takes cognizance of other sectors. Thus, the planning approach is non-integrative. Teacher Education plan has, by and large, remained non-holistic and non-integrated. Non-convergent planning proves to be less cost-effective.
- The process of planning is characterized by non-collaboration, non-inclusion and non-engagement of critical stakeholders, resulting in non-engagement and absence of ownership. Non-engagement of critical stakeholders breeds ‘suspicion’ and resistance in them to involve themselves in plan implementation.
- Good and effective educational plans reflect the professional wisdom and competence of people who play a lead role in their development. For this, capabilities and competence of teacher educators need to be developed. One of the major constraints is non-existence of specialized institutions in the State to build such skills and competencies. Neither the DTE and SCERT nor the SIEMAT under OPEPA is capable of managing the task.
- Apart from the content of institutional plans, an area of concern is the process of their preparation. In almost all TEIs, including the DTE and SCERT, the Perspective as well as Annual Plans is developed by a select group or a single individual. Non-involvement of other faculties in plan development makes the process non-collaborative, leading to loss of eclectic vision and viewpoints. Institutional leaders have not been able to create a sense of shared ownership, autonomy and energy in their staff (JRM, 2013: 60).
- Institutional plans are essentially fund-driven. Resources are necessary. However, many changes could be effected without financial resources. This urge for change is dependent on the vision and ingenuity of the institution head and his / her colleagues. There always exists scope for such initiative. Notwithstanding this, the mindsets and urge to make the initiative something different are absent.

- Action Point 1.** Directorate of TE and SCERT needs to develop itself into a specialized institution for policy formulation, planning, and monitoring with support from the international, national and state level resource institutions
- Action Point 2.** A Monitoring-cum-Planning Unit, consisting of planners, educationists and statistical experts may be put in place, which will be responsible for collection and collation of institution level Annual Plans and preparation of State-level Perspective and Annual Plans.
- Action Point 3.** The capacity of Teacher Education Institutions, including DTE and SCERT may be developed in the preparation of realistic and context-specific, and ambitious but implementable Perspective and Annual Plans through specialized national level institutions such as NUEPA, NCERT, LBSNAA and similar institutions like IIMs, APF etc.
- Action Point 4.** A select group of potential Resource Persons (called SRG in Planning and Management) may be constituted and trained by the specialized institutions, which would, in turn, build the capacity of the functionaries of the DTE and SCERT, and the TEIs. The SRG can ensure quality and sustainability of planning and management processes.
- Action Point 5.** A robust, reliable, consistent and comprehensive database system may be institutionalized in each TEI as well as in the DTE and SCERT, for facilitating development of need-based institutional plans.
- Action Point 6.** To put in place a mechanism at all levels (from DTE and SCERT to DIETs / DRCs, down the line) to critically review and approve the Annual Plans of TEIs before they are collated at the State level and sent to TEAB, Ministry of Human Resource Development to finally approve the State Plan .

## 4.2 Monitoring

- The teacher education system is beset with the continuing problem of weak monitoring of its inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. The absence of systemic and institutional mechanism for monitoring is, indeed, disturbing. Absence or weak monitoring is a system-wide concern for the state.
- Even where a semblance of monitoring exists, the mechanism and process are unplanned, incidental and ineffective. What is required is to put in place a permanent institutional mechanism for monitoring, clearly specifying what needs to be monitored, indicators and measurable parameters.
- A weak monitoring system is always non-focused and unplanned leading to no improvement or change. A mechanism in the form of instituting PACs and Monitoring Committee needs to be in place. Besides, these structures need to be made sufficiently pro-active. In the absence of an effective monitoring, the quality dimension of education is seriously affected.

- The “territorial disputes” between authorities of SSA and RMSA on one hand and the TE and SCERT along with its institutional arrangements is a stumbling block for school monitoring.
- The purpose and importance of monitoring is rarely understood by the functionaries of TEIs. Very often, it is found that monitoring is viewed as means for surveillance and fault lines. Its potential for improving the system and informing the policy formulation process and decision-making is not properly captured. What is of utmost importance is its structure, plan, periodicity, objectivity and intensity.

**Action Point 7.** *In order to strengthen the existing monitoring system, the DTE and SCERT may constitute a Planning and Monitoring Cell. Similar cells may also be constituted in DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs. To make the process of monitoring focused and functional, a set of parameters and indicators may be identified by professionals.*

**Action Point 8.** *Monitoring of Teacher Education programmes may be done more frequently and at all levels i.e. (i) internal monitoring at the institution level, (ii) monitoring the performance of TEIs by the DTE and SCERT, and (iii) overall monitoring of the DTE and SCERT and all TEIs of the state by the Department of School and Mass Education.*

**Action Point 9.** *Monitoring of BRCs, CRCs and Schools by DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs may be streamlined jointly by SSA and RMSA authorities, and the DTE and SCERT at the state as well as the district level.*

**Action Point 10.** *A strong monitoring system for the state-managed Secondary Training Schools and Training Colleges, with multiple deprivations seriously affecting their internal efficiency and effectiveness, be put in place with immediate effect.*

#### 4.3 Linkages :

- One of the glaring deficits of the existing TEIs of the state is their isolation and insularity from schools. This missing backward linkage with schools, for which they ensure supply of sufficient number of well-qualified and well-trained teachers is really disturbing. De-linking TEIs from schools severely affects both.
- Equally, if not more, TEIs are isolated from the institutions of higher learning and research. This insularity has hindered their identity and credibility as professional institutions as well as the credibility of Education as a social science discipline.
- The Directorate of TE and SCERT, Odisha, like other SCERTs across the country, have a very weak linkage with national level academic institutions such as UGC, NCERT, NCTE and NUEPA. Whatever linkage exists, it is programme related and almost MHRD – driven. Their potential for capacity building and performance standards of teacher educators is hardly exploited and taken advantage of. This weak link deprives the TEIs, including the TE and SCERT, of the opportunities for institutional capacity building.

- The TEIs are also dissociated with a vast network of NGOs, civil society coalitions, teachers associations and corporate sectors. In this process, they miss opportunities to learn lessons from others and harness their expertise and support.
- More particularly, horizontal linkages with peer institutions (STS, DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs) are conspicuously missing. Their exists, at present, no forum for dialogue and sharing of experiences providing leadership, supplying social and technical support, generating ideas, disseminating positive practices, providing different perspective and creating larger professional communities.
- A system of Practicing Schools, attached to TEIs, both elementary and secondary, a colonial legacy, has been withdrawn from the TEIs during 2003-2004. The practicing schools were considered the lab schools for TEIs to try-out experiments, in a number of areas. It was intended that being mentored by TEIs, these schools would have sufficient demonstration effects on other schools.
- The TEIs are, even the DIETs and CTEs, literally de-linked from the decentralized sub-district level structures such as BRCs and CRCs. The resultant absence of interface between these two sets of institutions seriously affects the delivery of quality education.

**Action Point 11.** *Efforts may be mounted to establish the missing links or to strengthen the weak / feeble links between :*

- *DTE and SCERT with national level institutions*
- *DTE and SCERT and OPEPA, RMSA authorities*
- *DTE and SCERT with its own institutions and schools*
- *DTE and SCERT with other SCERTs of the country*
- *DIETs / DRCs, CTEs and IASEs and BRCs, CRCs and Schools*
- *Peer TEIs*
- *DTE and TEIs with Universities, Research Institutions and other Centers of Excellence*

**Action Point 11.** *The teacher education system can no longer afford to work in isolation and insularity. The DTE and SCERT may, therefore, develop a mechanism or forum to rope in NGOs, Teachers' Associations, Civil Society Groups, Corporate Houses etc. for broadening and deepening its linkage with an extended group of stakeholders.*

**Action Point 12.** *The School and Mass Education Department's decision de-linking Practicing Schools from the TEIs of all levels may be reconsidered in the light of the Justice Verma Commission on Teacher Education Report. Every pre-service TEI may have a dedicated school attached to it as a laboratory where student-teachers get opportunities to experiment with new ideas and hone their capacities and skills to become reflective practitioners.*

## 5.0 Postscript

No reform, however well-intentional and well-designed, takes roots and leads to transformative change unless it is backed by strong political will and administrative commitment. Once this will and commitment is assured, the reform agenda would be translated into action by a wide-range of stakeholders from teachers, community members to top officials of the system. What matters and matters most is the mind-set and attitude of the stakeholders, most importantly, that of teachers, teacher educators and others associated with the Teacher Education system. What is of crucial significance is a positive mind-set and an uncompromising determination of those who are the partners in this movement for improving the system. Hope springs eternal in the human breast. Working together reflectively makes a difference. This requires a resolve : we can do better, we shall do better, and we must do better.

### *References :*

- MHRD (2009). *Teacher Development and Management*, New Delhi.
- MHRD (2012). *Restructuring and Reorganization of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education*, New Delhi, Department of School Education and Literacy.
- MHRD (2013). *JRM on TE – Odisha Report*. New Delhi : Department of School Education and Literacy.
- World Bank (1997). *Primary Education in India*. Washington.
- Clarke, P. (2006). *Improving schools in difficulty*, London : Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Menon, M., Rama,K., Lakshmi, T.K.S., Bhat, V.D. (Eds) (2007). *Quality indicators for teacher education*. Bangalore: National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and Vancouver BC: Commonwealth of Learning (COL).
- MHRD (2011a). *Report of the Working Group on Teacher Education for the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan*. New Delhi: Department of School Education and Literacy
- MHRD (2012). *Vision of teacher education in India: Quality and regulatory perspective: Report of the High Powered Commission on Teacher Education constituted by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India (Vol.I)*. New Delhi: Department of School Education and Literacy and National Council of Teacher Education.
- NCERT (2005). *National curriculum framework 2005*. New Delhi: National Council for Educational Research and Training.
- NCTE (2009). *National curriculum framework for teacher education: Towards preparing professional and humane teachers*. New Delhi: National Council for Teacher Education.

