



E-9 Meeting on Teacher Training for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education

31 May 2012

New Delhi, India

Session 1 : Opening and Setting the stage

The meeting on Teacher Training for Inclusive Relevant Quality Education was opened by Ms Magdalene Maidoh, Nigeria, current chair of the E-9 consortium.

Dr. Amarjit Singh, Joint-Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, welcomed the delegates. He emphasized the importance of the role of the E-9 countries in taking the question of inclusive relevant quality education forward. The E-9 countries are home to 60% of the world's population and account for two thirds of out-of-school children.

It is essential to link the outcomes of the various E-9 meetings and other conferences that have focused on education-related issues. Cases in point are the 2008 E-9 meeting that focused on teacher management and the 2012 Policy Dialogue Forum on Teachers for EFA in India. Dr. Singh highlighted the linkages between these two very important events by emphasizing the common areas of discussion and further action:

- recognition of teachers as the cornerstone for the improvement of quality of education as well as expanded access and equity;
- use of information and communication technologies and open and distance learning in teacher training and education;
- development of professional training and promotion of career prospects of teachers;
- within the framework of South-South cooperation, the E-9 as a platform for exchange of experiences, best practices and lessons learned;
- development of teacher professional standards for quality standards;
- development of evidence-based teacher policies;
- promotion of partnerships, both governmental and non-governmental, to promote research, to develop innovate practices to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Though much has been done since 2008 ministerial review meeting around the aforementioned areas, there is a lot left to be achieved given the scale and enormity of the tasks at hand.

There is a strong commitment on the part of governments of the E-9 countries with regard to education. India has allocated 2 billion dollars for the biennium 2012-2014 for teacher education alone; the deliberations from this meeting and those stemming from the policy dialogue forum will inform the future planning.

Thanks to the E-9 focus on literacy during the biennium 2010-2012 biennium, there is a marked emphasis on monitoring literacy programmes. The GEQAF will be pilot tested in Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya. Nigeria will also pilot test the GEQAF. The findings resulting from these pilot testing initiatives could provide an excellent opportunity to

conduct a comparative study. An expert from India will be invited to Nigeria for pilot testing the GEQAF as well as share experiences.

With regard to the Dakar framework, it is imperative to take not just the 6 goals but the 12 strategies into account when devising programmes. One of the 12 strategies focuses on teachers and teacher management. A holistic approach is needed to attain optimal results and accelerate progress to reach the Dakar goals. A well defined strategy for the run-up to 2015 and thereafter is necessary to inform all stakeholders of where we are at and prepare for the future.

To this end, champions like dynamic government officials, educators and teachers are needed. The UN Secretary-General Ban ki Moon has announced his priority to focus on education. He has made his intention to support education actively in his second term as Secretary-General. This announcement sends out a positive message as education is often given a second place with regard to like health.

Session 2: Qualifications framework and competency standards

The session on qualifications framework and competency standards was chaired by Prof. Poonam Batra. The following are the main points from the presentation and the discussions that ensued:

- Discourse around qualifications for teachers is very academic in nature. There is a pressing need to connect academic discourse with reality if progress on the ground is to be achieved. For example, it is a challenge to ensure that equity and social justice are not disassociated from the discourse of diversity.
- There is inadequate communication between local stakeholders and governments. There needs to be a dialogue between them to ensure that local teacher colleges and training institutions reflect the needs on the ground.
- Teacher remuneration should be linked with qualifications and not the grade.
- Primary school teachers should be encouraged to undertake research. To this end, teachers could contribute to the development of the education field a whole.
- Qualifications alone are not suffice to ensure good teaching. Critical thinking should be encouraged so that teachers are able to incorporate this skill in their teaching and motivate students to do the same.
- Qualitative research is very important and should be encouraged.
- Scaling-up of good ideas remains a challenge although good examples of replicable models are available.
- ICTs is a good way to support teachers however, it is not possible to get across the ideas of diversity and relevance through distance mode. ICTs have a great potential for the dissemination of support materials.
- Critical thinking needs to be anchored in sound reading material written in the language of teachers and students. To this end, ICTs could be very helpful.
- Structural provisions need to be put in place to bring young talent to the field.
- Career progression and mobility requires more emphasis and importance in teacher management issues.
- Offering teachers the opportunity of professional development that is linked to higher education could be a way to retain teachers that wish to leave the profession for higher salaries that contract jobs offer. Occupational mobility is the need of the hour. For example, teachers could remain in elementary education and undertake research that in turn could contribute to the field of education. This could help teachers to become 'contributors' rather than just 'implementers'.
- There should be balance between what a teacher needs to teach at a certain level and what he/she wishes to do to progress intellectually.

- There should be a dialogue between teacher training institutes and stakeholders to ensure that there is a balance between demand and supply. This will curtail surplus of teachers in certain fields and the shortage in certain others.
- In certain countries like China, there is a shift from a closed model to a more open model of teacher management.
- Qualifications are not a guarantee that teachers will teach well. There is a need to strike a balance between reality and what the qualifications framework implementation entails.

Session 3: Management of teacher education and the issue of quality inclusive education

The session on management of teacher education and the issue of quality inclusive education was chaired by Prof. Janki Rajan . The following are the main points from the presentation and the discussions that ensued:

- Reorientation of teacher education to address the issue of relevant inclusive quality education could be based on experiences that a variety of partners and stakeholders like youth groups, women’s associations and others have to offer. In the context of India, partners from across districts could be invited to participate in the process of reorienting teacher education. District Institutes for Education and Training (DIETs) could be used a good resource for information.
- Community participation, especially in rural areas of India, should be encouraged. Community watch groups could be included in negotiations with schools and the education system.
- Women’s groups could be linked to teacher training institutes to organize workshops around themes like gender sensitization.
- Child-rights groups could be a source for sensitizing teachers to various issues around rights of children. The involvement of such groups could provide valuable insights into rights-based teaching and learning.
- Linking disability-rights groups is also an essential and vital element in the framework of inclusive relevant quality education. Parent-teacher meetings could provide a platform for dialogue and problem-solving.
- Creation of textbooks and learning materials with NGOs and academics in conjunction with members of DIETs and SCERTs should be encouraged.
- To ensure the induction of teachers for quality inclusive education, it is imperative to link teacher training education and training institutions to research agencies. This measure will help teachers to generate innovative teaching methodologies and in turn improve the possibility for their career growth.
- Rewards and recognition should be encouraged to bring young talent to the teaching profession.
- Mentoring of young or new teachers could improve productivity. Guidance could increase motivation and help inexperienced teachers to stay in the profession.
- Continuing professional development should be an integral part of teacher management issues. Against the backdrop of global challenges and developments, this aspect becomes a very important and vital one in the career growth of teachers.
- The use of ICTs cannot necessarily be equated to quality education.
- Civil society organizations should be included in the development process of the action plan for teacher training for inclusive quality education. CSOs have a better

understanding of realities on the ground and have worked with marginalized communities.

- The same logic could be extended to women and youth groups. A variety of actors that are active on the ground are necessary to make the design and implementation of strategies a success. Their outreach and understanding of ground realities are an advantage and should be harnessed in devising a strategy to reach the unreached.
- Partnerships, across levels- local, regional, international, should be forged to bring the strengths of a variety of stakeholders to provide inclusive relevant quality education to all.

Session 4: Teacher education and training and the question of inclusive relevant quality education

The session on teacher education and training and the question of inclusive relevant quality education was chaired by Prof. Padma Sarangapani. The following are the main points from the presentation and the discussions that ensued:

- The role of pre-service and continuous professional development (CPD) programmes has been limited in ensuring the delivery of inclusive relevant quality education. Large scale successful examples/cases do not exist and whatever exists is at the pilot stage.
- In most cases, teacher training institutions have offered special education courses to prepare teachers who work with children with disabilities. This approach does not promote inclusion as it deals with only disability while ignoring other forms/dimensions of exclusion.
- Teacher education itself should be inclusive by integrating inclusion and diversity in enrollment, contents, pedagogical approaches, etc. In some parts (of India), minority students are concentrated in particular institutions. This can lead to 'ghettoization' or segmentation of minorities in low quality institutions. Therefore, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity should be promoted in all type of teacher training institutions.
- The challenges and opportunities for integrating excluded groups in the teaching force can be summarized as following
 - Cost of training (where teacher training is in the private sector), language requirement (some institutions offer courses in languages which are not similar to that of minorities and excluded groups), location of training institutions (heavy concentration in some areas and absence of teacher training institutions in some areas, especially in remote and undeveloped regions where excluded groups reside), lack of boarding/hostel facilities pose challenges in terms of integrating excluded in teacher training institutions.
 - To insist that teachers should come from the same community and more women teachers should be hired in teaching can be counterproductive to the inclusive goal. Inclusion is about values, beliefs and attitudes so teacher training programmes should emphasize core values, principles and practices of inclusion.
- The pedagogical aspects that should be considered to ensure the delivery of inclusive quality education are as follows:
 - Teacher education institutions operate with the mindset of old paradigm of teacher preparation which is based on the notion of application-based notion

of teacher development and promotes standardization rather than diversity. A major step should be to undertake curriculum renewal that responds to diversity includes arts, crafts, theater and vocational skills training in addition to subject matter proficiency and pedagogical skills. A robust curriculum can challenge the prospective teachers and motivate them to excel regardless of their academic background.

- Diversity and inclusion should remain at the heart of curriculum and pedagogical renewal. Curriculum should enable teachers to understand diversity of childhood and its impact on learning and develop competencies that are needed to educate heterogeneous group of learners.
- Opportunities and mechanisms should be created for progressive dialogue amongst different stakeholders to address diversity.
- Curriculum should allow sufficient flexibility so that teachers can differentiate learning contents, teaching methods, classroom management, assessment practices, support strategies according to the capacity, interest and needs of learners. This also requires adjustments in examinations systems.

Session 5: Public-Private Partnerships for Education for Inclusive Quality Education

The session on public-private partnerships for education for inclusive quality education was chaired by Mr. Dilip Ranjekar. The following are the main points from the presentation and the discussions that ensued:

- Governments should not depend on funding through public-private partnerships, instead they should higher budgets to facilitate effective leverage of PPPs. The important and possibly the most vital element of financial sustainability for projects and programmes should be given serious thought at the planning stages. Very often, good programmes come to a halt due to lack of financing.
- An innovative blueprint should be drawn up to indicate the best use of allocated budgets. Innovations on how best to use the last dollar or rupee is he need of the hour. A lot can be achieved by devising smart ways of using funds.
- For PPPs in education or any other sector to succeed, there has to be a very strong political will and commitment. The tendency to go with ‘the flavor of the year’ can prove to be the undoing of many well conceived partnerships.
- There is an urgent need for governments to come draw up well structured governance systems that will favor PPPs in education. Enabling frameworks, definite guidelines and policies could attract interested stakeholders to partner with governments.
- Governments should also bear in mind that one size does not fit all stakeholders it wishes to partner with. To this end, governments should exercise a certain amount of flexibility to optimize impact and results on the ground.
- Governments should invest in research and research institutions with regard to quality education.
- Governments should also plan to invest in devising frameworks to assess the quality of teacher education institutions, teacher educators and teachers.
- PPPs in education and more importantly quality education could attract partners to improve:
 - Teacher education: investing in teacher educationists
 - Teacher support: support capacity building of teachers; development of teacher training materials
 - Teacher development : top- class teacher training institutions; other infrastructure development
 - Teacher motivation: teacher excellence awards; recognition
- Possible private sector engagement in PPPs as- funders, catalysts for change, talent creators and doers.

Session 6: Outline of an action plan for teacher training for inclusive relevant quality education

The final session of the E-9 meeting focused on devising an outline for the development of an action plan for Teacher Training for Inclusive Quality Education that will be elaborated at a later stage by the E-9 countries.

The way E-9 countries deal with issues that come under the EFA realm has evolved with time. Increasingly, countries look at the six goals in a holistic way. To this end, the wide range of teacher-related issues should also be dealt with by keeping this perspective in mind. The issues of equity and inclusion must also be prioritized if real gains are to be achieved and the importance of creating inclusive institutions must be emphasized. Therefore, it is imperative that the role of the teacher needs to change in order that she/he feels empowered enough to usher in the required change.

The questions of what needs to be done till 2015 and what needs to be addressed thereafter should be the cornerstones of the process of developing the outline for an action plan for teacher training for inclusive quality education.

The three broad issues have been identified for the action plan for teacher training for inclusive quality education:

A: Good governance and management system for teachers and educators

- An efficient system is required to optimize the potential of the teaching force. The following points should be included in any governance system that countries may choose to develop and adopt.
- Standard setting for teacher performance; this should be rooted in the local context while maintaining linkages with global trends.
- State-of-the art database with regard to various teacher-related issues. This should include quantitative and qualitative information to reveal the existing ground reality.
- Use of financial and human resources. This aspect should elaborate how financial and human resources are used to identify what works and what does not. This could also help remedy areas that are low on efficiency.

B. Use of ICTS in teacher education and training

The use of ICTs in teacher education and training has great potential to reach the unreached. The following points could be considered under this sub-section:

- Efficient way of integrating ICTs in teacher education and training.
- Training teachers for use of ICTs and the financial implications for this endeavor.

C. Partnerships and innovations in financing for education

The allocation of additional resources for teacher training and education is important and critical. Apart from the traditional sources of financing, innovative and new forms of funding should also be explored. To this end, the following points have been identified:

- Private sector engagement with governments should be encouraged.
- New forms of partnering that will facilitate resource mobilization, both human and financial.
- Need for empirical research on public-private partnerships for education.

Conclusion

The E-9 countries have changed dramatically since the inception of this mechanism. The “new” E-9 needs to take the agenda of education forward. To this end, education should be an integral part of the new MDG agenda. The E-9 consortium could be a force to reckon with in getting education an important place in the post 2015 global development scenario.

To shape the post 2015 global development scenario the E-9 countries would need to work closely together. This would call for a restructuring in the working relationship of the E-9 countries.

The theme of the next inter-ministerial meeting on Relevant Inclusive Quality Education is very appropriate with the changing global development landscape. There is an urgent need to address not only the formal education sector but also the non-formal and informal education sectors. It is equally important to address the issue of diversity in education wherein the learning needs of diverse population groups are met adequately. To this end, research institutions have an important role to play in generating important and useful data that could inform policy decisions and where needed new policy formulation.