

(Penultimate draft. For favour of comments.)

Position Paper on Systemic Reforms



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**State Council of Education, Research and Training (SCERT)
Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh**

Vision of the State

The vision of AP is that ALL children should receive high quality education and become responsible citizens with an acute sense of the other. They should be aware of their environment and think about it critically. They should listen carefully and speak fearlessly. They should be able to understand what they hear and read; but they should also be able to question it. Teachers should promote these skills, provide meaningful teaching learning processes in natural and friendly environment that enable children to express themselves freely and ask questions. Teachers are collaborative learners and reflective practitioners. Parents and community should have a sense of ownership and participate in the life of the school. In a world which is becoming increasingly instrumental, materialistic and competitive, school should become a space for reflection, cooperation and promotion of human and ethical values.

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Bibliography

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Executive Summary

This paper reviews the current state of the educational system in Andhra Pradesh, including the demographic data, the institutions and initiatives already in place for the spread of education, and what needs to be done if these are to function more effectively in order to ultimately realise the goal of providing quality education to all. Some anomalies in the current system which pose impediments in desirable progress are identified and suitable measures are suggested.

In order to adequately assess the need for reforms, it is necessary to take into account the demographic characteristics of the State. Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest state in India with respect to both area and population. The number of children falling in the 6 to 14 years age group is also correspondingly large. While a large number of these now have access to schools on account of the efforts taken by the State and the Centre, a sizeable proportion (58866 boys and 56944 girls) are still out of school. The dropout rate is 13.22% for the 6 – 11 years age group and 11.29% for the 11 – 14 years age group. Other indicators also show that the needs of the population are not being met adequately. These include a moderate number of unfilled teaching posts, the lack of drinking water and toilet facilities in schools and other infrastructural inadequacies. Other concerns include the inability of the current system to encourage students and teachers to participate in knowledge construction, to provide education to each child as per his/ her need and to bring about the overall development of the children. The Constitutional aims of providing each child quality education with equity and justice are not being met. Knowledge which the children gain in school is seldom connected to their own lives and is based on a method of memorising from the textbook. Also missing is the dialogue with teachers and others around them which can help them in making sense of their learning in the context of the world they observe around them.

In order to improve the educational standards, some initiatives have already been introduced. These initiatives have been functioning over two decades in the State with the help and support of agencies such as the Government of India and international organisations such as the UNICEF, with multiple aims of improving the quality of infrastructure, providing support structures and enhancing the availability of good teachers. These initiatives include APPEP (Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project), the DPEP (District Primary Education Programme), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the State Resource Groups. Certain specific aims are also being pursued by

different Government initiatives. These aims include, among others, the promotion of pre-primary education, encouraging creativity and liberty in children, making educational provisions for children in remote areas who have problems related to access, and promoting availability of resources such as libraries.

In spite of all these attempts, due to structural rigidity in the system, certain problems are encountered at all levels. These are the concerns which need to be addressed through reforms. These problems include the declining rate of enrolment in Government schools, indicating a loss of trust on the part of major stakeholders such as parents and the community. Also, the use of same curricula and textbooks for all children results in some children being favoured over others. Children from marginalised backgrounds have different needs, which are not addressed through the curriculum. There is a wide gap between the contents of the curriculum and the local context of the lives of the pupils. These issues related to equity need to be addressed. Added to these are issues of health and malnutrition, which pose impediments in the educational process. Teachers' ideas of teaching, which are often restricted to the transferring of knowledge from the textbooks to the children, also need to be changed. Teachers' and children's absenteeism is another issue. Teachers' perspectives are related to inadequacies in the teacher training institutions. Lack of community participation in the education process leads to low accountability of schools towards the community and other major stakeholders. Lack of trust in Government schools prompt parent to send their children to private schools, which are associated with better results in terms of academic performance measured in marks. Since these schools face pressure from the parents regarding the performance of the students, only some subjects in demand get highlighted and the overall development of the children is neglected. Lack of regulation of this trend is also another major concern, since it tends to make education stressful and less meaningful and enjoyable for the children. In view of these limitations and challenges, the following broad reforms have been suggested:

1. Decentralisation, implying greater involvement of local authorities at district and mandal levels in the educational process
2. Focus on differential guidance and support for children from different social backgrounds
3. Reforms in teacher education. These would involve developing a professional commitment and professional attitude towards children among teachers;

changing their perspectives towards students as well as towards learning; developing clarity of goals; improving and diversifying career advancement opportunities for teachers; adequately fulfilling the teacher training requirements; strengthening teacher support structures by addressing the needs of the institutions; developing a meaningful and sophisticated system of teacher assessment to increase accountability; and addressing their conceptualisation of the role they are supposed to play.

4. Recommendations and initiatives to be implemented at the school level, as they best make sense in the immediate context of the school. The school Heads and other teachers to have more decision making power.
5. The infrastructural needs of each school to be addressed along with the general ambience, so that the school is a comfortable and inspiring place for children
6. Careful assessment of the needs of various positions in the educational sectors. Personnel to be selected on the basis of how they can best suit those needs.
7. Building a system of evaluation of reforms which would guide further actions to be taken.
8. Building networks in all institutions established by different agencies so that they work together and not in parallel, thus increasing the efficiency.
9. Officers involved in education management to be oriented to the real concerns of the schools
10. Changes to be made in the content of the curriculum so that it is more closely related to the life of the children
11. Making schools accountable to the community and to the stakeholders
12. Reforming the system of assessment so that it indicates the extent to which the child has understood the key concepts rather than his/ her memorisation ability. An attitude of regarding assessments as guides for further development should be inculcated.

1. The Status of School Education in Andhra Pradesh

1.1 Introduction – State profile

Andhra Pradesh is the 5th largest state in India both in area and population. The area of the state is 2,75,045 sq. km with a population of 7,62,10,007 as per the Census 2001 and the decennial growth rate is 13.86%. The density of population is 275 per sq. km. The urban population is 27.08 % and the rural population is 72.92%. The literacy rate of the State as per the 2001 census is 60.47% with the male literacy rate being 70.32% and the female literacy rate being 50.43. The major languages spoken in the state are Telugu and Urdu. The profile of the State is given hereunder.

1.2 Population

As per the 2001 census, Andhra Pradesh ranks fifth in the country both in size (275045 sq. km) and population (762.10 lakh). The total SC population is 123.39 lakh and the ST population is 50.24 lakh. Consequent on the introduction of Mandal Praja Parishad System in place of Tahsils, all the 23 districts are divided into 1128 mandals with 32,940 villages, 22307 Gram Panchayats and 74954 habitations for the sake of administrative convenience.

AP - Population – 2001 Census

(Figures in lakhs)

Category	Male	Female	Total
All	385.27	376.83	762.10
SC	62.28	61.11	123.39
ST	25.48	24.76	50.24

Source: Census of India 2001

Growth of Population in Andhra Pradesh

Year	Category	Rural	Urban	Total
1951	Male	1,30,05,673	27,37,239	1,57,42,912
	Female	1,28,16,006	27,01,215	1,55,17,221
	Total	2,58,21,679	54,38,454	3,12,60,133
2001	Male	2,79,37,204	1,05,90,209	3,85,27,413
	Female	2,74,63,863	1,02,18,731	3,76,82,594
	Total	5,54,01,067	2,08,08,940	7,62,10,007

Source: Census of India 2001 and previous years.

The growth of population in Andhra Pradesh during the period 1951-61 was 16%. The decadal growth rate of Andhra Pradesh during 1991-2001 was 13.86%, which is lower compared to the corresponding all India decadal growth rate of 21.34%. Andhra Pradesh stands second in growth rate among the four Southern States, following Karnataka which showed a growth rate of 17.25%. Tamil Nadu & Kerala have registered growth rates of 11.19% and 9.42% respectively.

The sex ratio in Andhra Pradesh state (978/1000) is better than that of our country (933/1000) for the last forty years.

Sex Ratio in India and Andhra Pradesh 1961 – 2001

Year	Females per 1000 males in India	Females per 1000 males in A.P.
1961	941	981
2001	933	978

Source: Census of India 2001 and previous years

1.3 Literacy

The definition of 'literate' for Census of India 2001 is the same as was adopted in 1991 Census. A person is considered literate if she/he is able to read and write with understanding in any language. One who can merely read but cannot write is not considered to be a literate. However, to become literate, it is not necessary that a person should have received any formal education. As in 1991 census, all the children below 7 years of age have been treated as illiterates during Census of India 2001.

Keeping in view the definition of 'literate', the literacy rate has been calculated for population in the age group of 7 years and above. The percentage of literates as per provisional population aged 7 and above, works out to be 61.11% in 2001 Census as against 44.08% in 1991 Census. The corresponding all India figures are 65.38% for 2001 and 52.21% in 1991. The literacy rate of Andhra Pradesh is lower than the all-India average. The State continues to show the lowest literacy among the southern states and is still one of the less literate states in the country.

Among the districts, Hyderabad is at the top with 79.04% followed by West Godavari, Krishna and Chittoor districts. The least literate district is Mahabubnagar with 45.53% literacy.

The male literacy rate is in Andhra Pradesh 70.85% and the female literacy rate is 51.17%. Among the 23 districts, 8 districts namely Hyderabad, Rangareddy, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Nellore and Chittoor have recorded a higher female literacy rate when compared to State's average female literacy rate. On the whole, 9 districts have shown a higher literacy rate than the State's average. They are Hyderabad, Rangareddy, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Nellore, Kadapa and Chittoor.

Comparison of Literacy Rates
National Vs Andhra Pradesh since 1961-2001

Year	India	Andhra Pradesh
1961	28.31	21.19
1971	34.45	24.57
1981	43.56	35.66
1991	52.11	44.08
2001	65.38	61.11

Source: Census of India 1961-2001

The growth in literacy rate in the state has been increasing since 1961. In these years it has changed from 21.19% (1961) to 61.11% (2001). In the year 1961, the national literacy rate was 28.31% whereas it was only 21.19% in case of Andhra Pradesh. In 2001 the national literacy rate was judged to be 65.38% while it was 61.11% in case of Andhra Pradesh.

Gender-wise Literacy Rates in Andhra Pradesh 1961-2001

Year	Male	Female	Total
1961	30.19	12.03	21.19
1971	33.18	15.75	24.57
1981	39.26	20.39	35.66
1991	55.13	32.72	44.08
2001	70.85	51.17	61.11

Source: Census of India from 1961 to 2001

The table on literacy rates in the State of Andhra Pradesh indicates that the rates have been on the increase since 1961. However, the increase in this respect has been especially high since 1981. The increase is by 15%. In spite of the increase in literacy in general, the gap between male literacy and female literacy has been consistent and continues to exist.

Literacy Rate in Focus Groups – 2001

SC	ST	Rural				
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		Female Literacy Rate				
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
63.51	43.35	53.52	47.66	26.11	37.04	23.97

Source: Census 2001

With respect to the focus groups the literacy rates are 53.52 for SC all and 37.04 for ST all. The SC literacy rate is higher than the ST literacy rate. The gap is of about 16%. But the SC male literacy rate is higher than the SC female literacy rate. The gap is of about 19%. Similarly the ST male literacy rate is higher than the ST female literacy rate. In this case the gap is about 21%. However, the female literacy rates of both SC and ST are higher than the rural female literacy rate at the State Level.

1.4 Pattern of education in Andhra Pradesh

The following is the pattern of education in Andhra Pradesh. The first five years of schooling called Primary School covers up to class V, the next level is Upper Primary School which covers classes VI and VII and then, the Secondary School for classes VIII to X. At the end of the Secondary School, a public examination will be held.

Access to schooling

Out of a total of 74996 habitations in the State, 71860 habitations have access to primary level schooling within a radius of 1 km. In the 2758 habitations which do not have adequate strength of children in the school going age, EGS (P) centers have been in operation to provide access to primary level of schooling. 378 habitations do not have either formal primary schools or EGS (P) centers. However, 4 habitations have been found to be qualified to have primary schools as these habitations have children 245 in the school going age. There are 374 habitations in the State qualified to have EGS (P) centers with 4477 children in the school going age.

1.5 Child population and enrolment

Child Population, enrolment, and out of school children – 2010-11

	Ages 6-11 years			Ages 11-14 Years			Ages 15-17 Years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
All									
Population	3456159	3299522	6755681	2006981	1924796	3931777	5463140	5224318	10687458
Enrolment	3435318	3276180	6711498	1968956	1891194	3860150	5404274	5167374	10571648
Out of school	20841	22342	44183	38025	33602	71627	58866	56944	115810

Source: DICE 2010-11 & Micro Planning: 2011-12

The total population of the children in the age group of years 6-14 in the State is 10687458 in which there are 5463140 boys and 5224318 girls. The total population of children in 6-11 years is 6755681 in which there are 3456159 boys and 3299522 girls. The population of children in school in the age group of years 6-11 is 6711498 and the number of children out of schools is 44183 at the State level. The number of children in schools in the age group of years 11-14 is 3860150 and the number of children out of schools in this age group at the state level is 71627. The total number of out of school children in the State in the age group of years 6-14 is 115810. The total number of children in schools in the age group 6-14 at the State level is 10571648.

1.6 Repetitions and dropouts

Repetition, Dropout, GER & NER: 2010 – 11

Age Group	Repetition	Dropout	GER	NER
6 - 11	1.22	13.22	111.51	99.35
11 – 14	0.61	11.29	94.85	79.51

Source: DISE 2010-11

The Gross Enrolment Ratio at the State level in the age group of children 6-11 is 111.51 and the Net Enrolment Ratio in the same age group at the state level is 99.35%. It is clear from the given table that children are admitted in schools and classes irrespective of their age groups. However, the table also indicates that the achievement in respect of NER is also remarkable as it is close to 100%. In due course of time, the State is likely to achieve 100% NER by making the people enrol their children in age specific classes in days to come to ensure quality learning by pupils.

Repetition rates in the age groups 6-11 and 11-14 are 1.22% and 0.61% respectively. The trend is found to be more at the Primary level in the 6-11 age group than in the 1-14 age group where repetition rates are lower. So, more attention has to be paid in case of children belonging to 6-11 age groups.

In case of dropout rates a difference of 1.93% is seen between the age groups 6-11 and 11-14. The situation demands level specific measures to bring down the dropout rate to 1% or even lower to ensure near 100% continuation till the completion of schooling.

The transition rate at the state level is 94.47, and thus is close to 100%. However, efforts need to be taken to check the trend and ensure 100% transition rate.

Transition Rates - Data on Schools: 2010 – 11

Type of School	Govt.	Aided	Private	Total
Primary	57184	2109	7547	66840
UPS	8937	423	6137	15497
HS	10649	828	7398	18875

Source: DISE 2010 -11

The data on schools captured through DISE 2010-11 in the State indicates that there are 66840 schools at the Primary level. The break-up of these figures indicates that there are 57184 under Government control and 2109 schools in the Government Aided sector and 7547 primary schools functioning under Private managements. At the Upper Primary Level, the total number of schools under all managements is 15497, with 8937 being under Government control, 423 being in the Government Aided Sector and 6137 being under private managements. Likewise, the total number of High Schools in the State is 18875. The break up discloses that there are 10649 schools under Government control, 828 under the Government Aided Sector and 7398 functioning under the Private Sector.

1.7 Data on teachers

Data on Teachers: 2010 – 11

Teachers	Sanctioned	Positioned	* Gap
Primary	168924	161083	7841
Upper Primary	Regular:82964	75421	7543
	Part time:13583	10802	2781

Source: DISE 2010 – 11

The data on teachers captured through DISE 2010-11 reveals that there are 168924 posts of teachers sanctioned at the Primary Level of education and the number of filled posts is 161083 leaving a gap of 7841. At the Upper Primary level, the number of regular teacher posts sanctioned is 82964 and the number of filled posts is 75421 leaving a gap of 7543 posts to be filled. Similarly part time teacher posts sanctioned at upper primary level are 13583 and 10802 are in position. 2781 part time teacher posts are to be filled. However, the shortage is overcome by recruiting teachers or by engaging Vidya Volunteers during 2010-11.

Sanction of Schools: Up to 2010-11 under SSA

Up to 2011	Primary	Upper Primary				
	Sanctioned	Opened	Gap	Sanctioned	Opened	Gap
Total:	20	20	0	5	5	0

Under SSA 20 Primary Schools were sanctioned in the State and all the Primary Schools started functioning. There is no gap in respect of the target and the achievement at this level. At the Upper Primary level the number of schools sanctioned in the state under SSA is 5 and the number of schools started functioning is 5.

Regular Teacher Posts: 2001 – 02 to 2010 –11 (under SSA)

Up to 2011	Primary	Upper Primary				
	Sanctioned	Filled	Gap	Sanctioned	Filled	Gap
Total	5635	5635	0	13871	13007	864

Source: District Profiles, APSSA, Hyderabad, 2010-11.

The data captured through the district profiles discloses that under SSA 5635 posts of teachers were sanctioned at the Primary level and all the 5635 posts were filled. The gap in this context is nil and the achievement is 100%. At the Upper Primary level, 13871 posts were sanctioned and the achievement is 13007. The gap is 864.

Additional Teacher Posts 2001 – 02 to 2010 – 11 under SSA

<i>Up to 2010</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Upper Primary</i>				
	<i>Sanctioned</i>	<i>Filled</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sanctioned</i>	<i>Filled</i>	<i>Gap</i>
<i>Total</i>	5882	5882	0	12041	12041	0

Source: District Profiles, APSSA, Hyderabad, 2010 - 11.

Regarding additional teachers at both Primary and Upper Primary levels, the number of posts of teachers sanctioned is 5882 and 12041 respectively. The achievement in this regard is 100% at both the levels and the gap is zero.

1.8 School Infrastructure

School Infrastructure – Primary & Upper Primary: 2010 – 11

Sl. No.	Name of the Item	Primary	Upper Primary	Total
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1	Total No. of schools	57167	19490	76657
2	Total No. of classrooms	125655	99771	225426
3	No. of schools without drinking water facility	7755	1525	9280
4	No. of schools without common toilet facility	20800	6905	27705
5	No. of schools without girls toilet	30551	6132	36683
6	No. of schools without access ramps	49372	14762	64134
7	Gap in classrooms	62264	20359	82623

Source: DISE 2010-11.

The table on school infrastructure brings out the facts that the total number of schools functioning up to elementary level of education in the State is 76657. There are 57167 primary schools and 19490 upper primary schools. The total number of classrooms available in the state is 225426 in which 125655 classrooms are there at the primary level and the remaining 99771 are at the Upper primary level. 9280 schools do not have drinking water facility. 27705 schools do not have common toilet facility. 36683 schools do not have toilets for girls. 64134 schools do not have ramps for the CWSN. Moreover, there is a gap of 82623 class rooms in the state.

Secondary, Sr. Secondary and Teacher Training Institutions

1. Secondary/ Sr. Secondary Schools Functioning under Central Government

No. of Central Schools (CBSE)	No. of Central Schools (ICSE)	Navodaya Schools
228	90	22

There are 228 Central Schools with CBSE Syllabus and 90 Central School with ICSE Syllabus functioning to meet the needs of the Urban Children. Similarly 22 Navodaya Schools are functioning to cater the needs of Meritorious Rural Children in the State.

2. Teacher Education

Teacher Training Institutes

Sl. No.	Type of Institution	No. of Institutions	Total in take Capacity
1.	Government DIETs	23	2850
2.	Teacher Training Institutes (UN-Aided)	210	10500

The table above on Teacher Training Institutions in the State indicates that there are 23 DIETs in the Government Sector and 210 Teacher Training Institutions in the private sector with the total capacity of intake of 2850 candidates in the former and 10500 in the latter. The Teacher Training Institutions operating in the Private Sector are recognized by the Government of Andhra Pradesh but they are un-aided institutions and in 11 Government DIETs Urdu medium sections are opened with a intake capacity of 50 each.

Colleges of Teacher Education (CTE)

Sl. No.	Type of Institution	No. of Institutions	Total in take Capacity
1.	Government CTE / IASE	7	1014
2.	Aided Colleges (B.Ed.)	7	960
3.	Un-Aided Colleges (B.Ed.)	596	63422
	Total	610	65396

The table on Teacher Training Institutions at the elementary level indicates that there are 610 institutions in the State and Colleges of Teacher Education, out of which 07 CTEs/ IASE are functioning in the Government Sector with a total intake capacity of 1014 candidates. 7 B.Ed. Colleges are functioning in the Government Aided Sector with a total intake capacity of 960 candidates. Likewise there are 596 B.Ed. Colleges functioning in the un-aided sector with a total intake capacity of 63422 candidates. On the whole, the 610 institutions at the Secondary level cater to the needs of 65396 candidates receiving pre-service teacher education in the State.

1.9 Summary

Andhra Pradesh is the 5th largest state in India in terms of both area (275045 sq km) and population (76210007; as per Census 2001). The total number of males is 385.27

lakh while that of females is 376.83 lakh, with 978 females per 1000 males (as per Census 2001). The literacy rate has risen considerably from 1961, when it was 21.19%, till 2001, when it was 61.11%. This, however, is lower than the national average of 65.38%. Since 1961, there has been a consistent and significant gap between the literacy rates of males and females, with the male literacy rate standing at 70.85% in 2001 and the female literacy rate standing at 51.17%. This trend is reflected in focus groups such as the STs, SCs and the rural population.

Of the 74,996 habitations in the state, 2758 do not have access to primary level schooling, and 378 do not have either primary schools or EGS (P) centres. In the 6-11 year age group, 44183 children (208421 boys and 23342 girls) are out of school; and in the 11-24 years age group, 71627 children (38025 boys and 33602 girls) are out of school. In total, 115810 children (58866 boys and 56944 girls) are found to be out of school. Repetition rates stand at 1.22% in 6-11 years age group and at 0.61% in 11-14 years age group. The dropout rate for the 6-11 years age groups is 13.22% while for the 11-14 years age group it is 11.29%. Transition rate stands at 94.47%. At the Primary School level, there are 7841 unfilled teaching posts; while at the Upper Primary level, there are 7543 unfilled regular teaching posts and 2781 unfilled part time teaching posts. In upper Primary SSA schools, 864 posts are unfilled. With respect to infrastructural inadequacies, 27705 schools are without common toilet facility; 36683 without toilets for girls; and 64135 without ramps for CWSNs.

2. Constitutional Expectations

The Indian constitution envisaged 60 years ago that the State shall endeavour to provide each child, education with equity and justice. The State would be committed to ensure that each citizen has access to education. Subsequent to the commitment in the constitution, the policies formulated have promised free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. All governments are, however, struggling to meet this basic commitment. The several efforts made by both Central Government and State Government include policy modifications, increase in resources invested, mission mode attention to this area and publicity to inform the communities about the importance of this goal. There has been considerable progress in all educational indicators i.e., access, enrolment, retention and materials. But we are yet to bring all citizens into the fold and to ensure proper access without barriers and with sufficient infrastructure to all children. The issue of quality is even more inadequately addresses and quality with equity, an even more distant concept, is yet to be seriously addressed. There is recognition of the need for this and a variety of efforts have been made to improve quality of education for the poor children. The recently formulated RTE 2009 has also attempted to enable at least some poor children to gain access to what is said to be 'good quality' education in private schools. The notion of good education is however, a wider issue with fundamental ramifications for many components of the system.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) were reviewed through the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in 1992 which made provisions for the setting up of local bodies at village mandal and district and municipal levels through a process of elections. The responsibility of managing school education was entrusted to the PRIs as listed in the elementary schedule of the constitution. This amendment provided an enabling framework for decentralization of educational governance and management. The way the decentralization works at the moment needs to be reviewed and reorganised.

The national policy on education 1986 and revised policy formulations 1992 refined educational priorities and also tried address other aspects related to quality and access with equity of educational processes. The government of India ratified the UN convention on the rights of the children (CRC) in 1992 and committed itself to creating

appropriate environment for survival, protection and development of children.

The NCERT reviewed the school curriculum ensuring highest standards of rigor and developed National Curriculum Framework – 2005 with 21 Position Papers with following guiding principles for curriculum development. The key elements of the NCF 2005 included among others, the importance of the following ideas:

- Connecting knowledge to life of the child and to the world outside school
- Ensuring that learning shifts away from rote methods
- Engagement of children in their learning processes
- Enriching curriculum so that it goes beyond textbooks
- Making assessment purposeful and flexible
- Having mechanisms in the system that make this possible

The commitment made in the principles enshrined in the constitution of the country need to be fulfilled and quality education with equity, opening doors of options and choices, needs to be provided to each child. It should be in the spirit of democracy and respect for the person and dignity of everyone involved, particularly the teachers, the children and their parents.

3. Existing Major Educational Initiatives and Reforms to Improve School Education in the State

Several education institutes have been established in Andhra Pradesh to improve school education especially elementary education. The basic education programmes to achieve the goal of education for all with equity and quality have been taken up with the assistance of Government of India and international organizations such as DFID, UNICEF etc. The programmes aimed at improving access in terms of establishing new schools, improving school infrastructure, providing additional teachers, building capacity of new and of existing teachers and teacher educators. The efforts for this included recurrent training, establishing support structure at district and sub district levels, special initiatives for the education of out of school children including those trapped in child labour, improved participation of community in school improvement etc. These initiatives have been spread over more than two decades.

3.1 Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP)

The AP Primary Education Project (APPEP) was an initiative for improving primary education through professional development of teachers, educational supervisors and other functionaries. It also involved consolidating support structures for teachers i.e., SCERT, DIETs and Teacher Centres. The focus of this was on activity based, child centred approach and all Primary teachers were oriented towards it. The following six pedagogical principles constituted the basis for the classroom transaction in APEP for the schools:

- Providing teacher generated learning activities
- Promoting learning by doing, discovering and experimenting
- Developing individual, group and whole class work.
- Providing for individual differences
- Using local environment
- Creating an interesting classroom by displaying children's work and organizing it effectively

As a result of intensive training, there were temporary improvements in the quality of transaction in the classroom. The teachers started using some kind of activity based methods in transacting curriculum but it did not last and their understanding of

knowledge, of the capability of the child and hence of the essential features of an activity remained inadequate.

3.2 District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

The District Primary Education Programme was a centrally sponsored scheme of Government of India for the improvement of Primary Education in the country. The programme was implemented in the State initially in five districts from 1996 onwards with the assistance of DFID of UK government and later extended to 14 more districts with the assistance of World Bank. The program is focused on achieving the universalisation of elementary education with focus on equity, decentralization, participatory planning, quality improvement through professional development of teachers and managing staff. The program opened the possibility of the State involving resource persons from outside the State and taking their help to build understanding and capability within its structures. The programme apart from improving access and sensitising the people in the system to children with special circumstances made a major effort to train all teachers at the elementary level and to make changes in the text books. The focus of these efforts was to recognise the strength of the human mind and understand how it gathers knowledge, And to build an understanding of the learning ability of the child, of his/her way of learning and hence of an engaging classroom and a meaningful text-book. The principles in addition to the APEP being:

- Child has immense potential to learn and demonstrates evidence of that before he/she comes to the school.
- Teachers and educators need to see themselves as learners and recognise the sources that can be accessed for building on their knowledge.
- They need to recognise the knowledge that child has and use it in the classroom.
- They need to respect the child, her language and culture and build space for that in the classrooms. Consider diversity including multi-lingualism as a resource rather than a limitation
- Learning through activity means using tasks that also engage children mentally and make them think and reflect. It is not merely physical engage.

These principles were shared with teachers over many workshops and a large resource group at the state level constituted. The process of aligning the text-books to these goals was started and books for some classes prepared after a rigorous conceptualization of the nature of the subject, the purpose and goals of teaching the subject, the appropriate

learning process and the space for the child to engage and contribute to knowledge. The continuity of the process and the scope however, got limited by the people available and lack of continuity in thinking.

3.3 Sarva Siksha Abhiyan

The DPEP merged into the SSA program, which had the same purposes with more detailed possibilities. The additional components that were to be emphasised under SSA included the attempt to improve quality of elementary education through community participation. The program being implemented in all the districts of the State since 2004-05, attempts to address access, enrolment, child labour, establishing and strengthening professional support structures, teacher capacity building, improvement of school infrastructure etc. The effort has however, partially succeeded because of many reasons.

3.4 Formation of State Resource Groups

State Resource Groups have been formed under DPEP and continued under SSA with effective teachers, teacher educators, supervisors, NGOs to guide the quality initiatives in elementary education. The SRG act as resource persons for the trainings, participate in the workshops for material development etc. The SRG also take up academic monitoring of schools and support the teachers and supervisors. The structure of the SRG needs to be strengthened and consolidated with formal recognition of purpose, role and functioning principles.

3.5 Other initiatives for specific aims

Other initiatives include promotion of pre-school education through establishment of Anganwadi Centres in all habitations in the State; attempts at eliciting greater community participation in education through the enactment of Community participation Act 1998; free distribution of textbooks to all children in Government and Private Aided schools; implementation of the Midday Meal Scheme; making provision for flexible, non-formal education at the upper primary level through setting up of the Andhra Pradesh Open School Society; taking steps to maintain and develop a comprehensive and efficient library system under the management of the Public Libraries department; establishment of the Residential Institution Society for the benefit of talented children from rural areas; the establishment of Jawahar Bal Bhavans for promoting creativity, liberty and excellence in children; and the promotion of education in tribal areas through the establishment of the Tribal Welfare Educational Institutions.

4. Key Concerns and Challenges

As mentioned, concerted efforts are being made to improve Elementary Education on all major indicators, viz. access, enrolment, retention, quality, equity, school infrastructural facilities etc. A lot of progress has been made on all above indicators except on quality.

Several other quality initiatives have also been taken-up under SSA to improve quality such as implementation of CLIP (Children Language Improvement Programme) and CLAP (Children Learning Acceleration Programme). School processes were sought to be focused through Twenty Six Performance Indicators including those such as Wall magazines, Class Room Libraries, Children Diaries etc., and grading of schools into ABCD categories based on children performance. Further programs including Vignana Mela, Language Mela, TLM Mela, children talent search examination, children conventions at mandal and district level were organised.

The quality initiatives as mentioned above have made some impact on quality improvement both in terms of classroom processes and children learning achievement. For example children performance in school subjects improved from the baseline of 38% to 61% during the last decade.

Though all these efforts were made and some of them are continuing, the existing situation of school education including of elementary school is far from what is expected and government schools are losing the confidence of people day by day. Following indicators give some idea of this:

4.1 School size, enrolment and the decreasing share of government schools

The enrolment in government schools during 1994-95 was 86.53%, it dropped to 73.55% during 2004-05 and to 62.85% during 2008-09.

On the other hand enrolment in private schools has increased from 13.47% in 1994-95 to 21.12% during 2001-02, 26.45% during 2004-05 and to 37.15% during 2008-09.

Of the total 57,002 elementary schools under government and Panchayat Raj, 2758 schools have enrolment less than 10. In all about 9000 schools have less than 20 children, 19,854 schools have enrolment between 21 and 40, 11754 schools with

enrolment between 41 and 60, and 6,594 schools have enrolment between 61 and 100. Only about 10,000 schools have enrolment above 100.

With over 50% of primary schools in the state with enrolment less than 40, the need to transform the system of education is obvious.

The State had a reasonable teacher - pupil ratio of 1:33 at the primary level in 2004-05 but was 1:22 during 2008-09. In upper primary level however, the TPR was around 31 during 2004-05 and 32 during 2008-09. The data shows a gradual decrease of children enrolment in government primary schools and this is a matter of concern.

4.2 Equity concerns

The children in government and government aided elementary schools are from different socio economic backgrounds. They include children from marginalized communities and poorer sections of the society. A cursory look at educational indicators of these communities shows that they are lagging behind in enrolment, retention and success ratio. It is important to ask how schools can become more welcoming for them and provide high quality education for all. The variation in educational achievement among children from different backgrounds needs to be bridged. The learning analysis program study shows that over 40% of children from the marginalized sections are not able to read and write or do arithmetic at primary level. Once these children fail to achieve basic competencies in reading, writing and arithmetic at the end of primary stage, they lose confidence and interest in continuing. One limitation that makes a change in this difficult is the utilization of the same curriculum, textbooks, language and methods for all children. This ignores the variations among children. The experience and culture of these children is not valued and respected. Critical policy to reform the school system needs to be put in place to address the challenges of diversity. The transformation model of school reform to address the concerns of diverse section of the children is very much needed in the present context.

For example, the system needs to address the requirements of the first generation learners. Andhra Pradesh still has many children coming to school who are first generation learners. The National Position Paper on Systemic Reforms prepared by the NCERT states categorically that 'Since many poor students are first generation learners their parents are unable to help them with their schoolwork. Children find it difficult to cope and are humiliated for being slow learners, dull students. They are classified as non-

achievers. Repeatedly discouraged, they often end up failing in the examination. They are also punished for their inability to purchase textbooks, stationery, and uniforms and pay official and unofficial 'school charges'. In addition, they are subjected to corporal punishment. Eventually, as is only to be expected, they get pushed out of the school system'.

Therefore the system and teachers need to be sensitized towards the issues of equity including of language, culture, economic and social background including the issue of first generation learners.

4.3 Health and malnutrition

Many children coming to school do not have access to regular health care or even sufficient nourishment. These are great impediments affecting the regularity of the child and his/her ability to pay attention to what is happening. Many of them are expected to support the family through some kind of work or home responsibilities. This implies lower availability of energy and time for learning. This problem needs to be addressed; and as the NCF 2005 position paper clearly states, it is an issue of national concern. We quote from the position paper: 'Recent evidence has shown that most poor children are malnourished and have no access to safe water, sanitation and health care, leading to frequent bouts of illness like infections, stubborn coughs and cold and other chronic illnesses. An overwhelming proportion of children in government schools are from poor situations; poor nutrition and frequent bouts of illnesses (due to poor sanitary conditions and lack of access to healthcare) affect the ability of children to attend school regularly. While the mid-day meal is indeed a welcome addition to the school routine, a lot more needs to be done if we are to address the impact of poor nutrition and health on education'.

Therefore, there is a requirement for appropriate policy for addressing this issue thorough school health education in collaboration with Department of Health. Regular health checkups for school children with doctors and health workers from nearby health centres and support for referral services. Further, the health deficiencies among the children in terms of iron, iodine etc. may be addressed by providing tablets. The mid-day meals given to children can be examined for their nutritional value. Support for the family through economic development and through places for care for their very young children needs to be provided.

4.4 Teacher preparation and professionalization

Teacher preparation and professional expertise is crucial for planning and organizing learning experiences in classrooms. Even though the capability of teachers to plan and organize teaching-learning process based on the curriculum and the syllabus is varied among teachers, the delivery of curriculum in most cases is still not meaningful. It does not relate to the context of the child and her level. No space is created for her participation and for individual or group tasks and presentations. The present situation indicates that most teachers rely on textual matter and transaction of the same without any value addition like adding of examples, illustrations etc. or referring to resource books /material. There is no evidence of planning and strategising to help children learn. Teachers do not seem to bring TLM to make children engage in learning.

Most of the teachers and supervisors rarely refer to library books, modules, internet, professional magazines etc. Professional growth including promotions is not linked to addition of capability or to performance but only to the number of years spent in service. The system of transfers is also arbitrary and leads to a feeling of alienation from the system. Besides this, the support from School Complexes, MRCs for professional clarity, guidance is also not as per expected levels.

There is a need to prepare teachers professionally and set up systems of motivation and learning so that they are able to take the effort to do justice to children from marginalized communities and recognize their strengths. Teachers need to be professionally oriented with appropriate accountability procedures and options for their carrier advancements and somehow linking their performance to their future prospects.

4.5 Teacher and children absenteeism from school

Another cause of concern is the fact that both children and teachers are absent from schools for many hours and for many days. The attendance and the functioning of the schools is irregular and erratic. A careful look at the functional aspects of schools shows that they do not function seriously. Research studies show that about 25 % of teachers are absent i.e., not-available to the children for various reasons. Studies and monitoring reports shows 27% of children are absent on any day of visit. Different children are absent on different days. 40% of them are irregular. This is a major concern and even the reason for the parents to opt for private schools.

4.6 Filling up of the vacancies and making system to run in the expected lines

The present statistics show that there are many vacancies against sanctioned posts, slowing down the system. 90% of the Mandal Educational Officers, 70% of Teacher Educators in the institutes of SCERT, DIETs, IASEs etc., 60% of District Educational Officers are not in place due to court issues and other reasons. All this leads to lack of proper academic monitoring of schools, inadequate support to the teachers and inadequate capacity building of teachers including during pre-service training. The vision and belief that education at foundation level is crucial for human development and for ensuring that children emerge as better citizens is of high priority. It is necessary to correct these gaps, have capacity building programmes for these functionaries and retain them in their places for longer duration.

4.7 Pre-service teacher education

Pre-service education for elementary and secondary teachers is being offered by government and private institutions. A large number of private institutions have come up recently for both elementary and secondary education. The ratio of the number of student-teachers enrolled in the government institutions to that of those enrolled in private institutions is over 1:4 for the Diploma in Education programme and over 1:30 for the B Ed programme (here even the aided colleges for B Ed have been considered as a part of the government system). The number of Diploma giving private institutions is 10 times that of the govt DIETs. For the B Ed program, there are 7 Govt colleges, 7 aided colleges and 596 private colleges. This has resulted in deterioration of standards of pre-service education due to lack of monitoring and regulatory mechanisms. It is required to assess the functional aspects of these institutions and focus on the professional preparation of teachers to ensure quality education for all.

4.8 Teacher performance and attitudes

Teacher performance depends upon his professional perspective, his preparation and commitment to children. It is reflected in his plans to transact curriculum, nature of activities and learning tasks used. The studies and monitoring reports shows that present situation is not appropriate. Teachers merely speak or read or have children read from the text book and do not even use the blackboard appropriately. The question of interactive classroom, posing open ended questions, organising discussions, freedom to question and think, is inconceivable. There is very little clearly visible teaching and learning time.

Teachers and the school believe that their job is to finish or 'cover' the text-book. This is irrespective of whether all children understand and follow. Only a few teachers address the basic concepts required to develop the foundational abilities in children. There is no mechanism to visualise, assess and scrutinize seriously the performance of the teacher with supportive feedback. There is also lack of clarity and consensus among different sections of the academic hierarchy as to what is the appropriate role for the teacher and how should the classroom appear during the interaction with children.

4.9 Leadership, monitoring and support

Quality of leadership, monitoring process and on-site support is important for quality in school education. The Headmaster is the primary person at the school level responsible for effective functioning and for harnessing appropriate support from community and parents. The headmasters need to be chosen appropriately and prepared and empowered to ensure that the institution runs well. The absenteeism declines, class-room processes become child involving and the school is more sensitive to the needs of children particularly the marginalized children.

The DIETs are understaffed even though the salary of the staff is to be received entirely from the MHRD as a grant. An alternative way of staffing of DIETs i.e., part time Lecturer /Direct Recruitment etc., has not been developed leading to a stalemate and no appointments in the DIET's. It is necessary to select from amongst interested young persons, who are from Universities, department of Education. They could be Post Graduates with M.Phil or Ph.D in some disciplines. Their coming to the DIET with a strong disciplinary background would strengthen the institutions. The current exercises of institution building being conducted in the DIETs have had no significant impact due to under staff & the fact that existing staff are mostly at the verge of retirement.

In Andhra Pradesh the situation of the teachers is complicated by the fact that there are many teacher unions. While the total number of such unions is close to 25, only 6 are officially recognised. Officer bearers of about 25 of all these unions at state, district, mandal level are busy in union activities. The RJDSE, DEO, Dy. E.O, MEO avoid visits to the schools of union leaders and do not take action against their unauthorized absenteeism.

4.10 School working days and timings

The working days of the school in a year and the structure of timings of the day is one of the deciding factors for continuation of children in schools and their consequent learning. There are no studies to indicate how many days it requires to fully implement the given curriculum in its spirit and what part of the curriculum can be transacted properly in the schools and what part needs to be done outside the school with active engagement of children and parents.

As per the academic calendar schools are to function for 220 days in an Academic year, but the current number of days for the school can be even lower than 160. The timing for Government schools is up to 3.30 p.m., while in many private schools it is up to 4.30 p.m. Most teachers in government schools do not stay in the village and reside at divisional, district or mandal headquarters and depend on transport. They are not able to turn up on time for the school assembly and for other school processes.

4.11 Community monitoring and involvement

The school is a part of community. The effective functional aspects of the school can be achieved through appropriate community support and involvement. At present the schools do not feel answerable to the parents and the community and do not respect them. They hide information from them including of their own attendance, regularity and school performance. They also do not invite community involvement. The VECs, S.Cs, SMC are nominal, non functional and exist only on paper as there is a feeling of mutual distrust.

4.12 Accountability of schools towards community and parents on children learning outcomes

Parents send their children to schools with the expectation that they would grow in academic, social and personal behaviour. The child invests a lot of formative years in school, the parents invest their time and money in making it possible for the child to be in school and the government also invests in schools. There needs to be a justification for this expense and effort. If the schools do not run seriously, children do not enjoy or learn in the school, all this expenditure is not justified and the stakeholders are justified in looking towards alternatives. Therefore, the system must ensure outcomes and make the individuals and institutions accountable towards the stakeholders particularly children

and ensure their learning, performance and development.

4.13 Relevance of school curriculum to the needs of society /parents – life of pupil in their local context

The present textbooks at school level are information loaded and unrelated to the life of children and do not require them to engage actively. The textbooks prepared under DPEP were replaced and the present books need to be re-examined in the light of the principles of education. Attempt must be made that the studies enable the children to contribute to the needs of the family and society. Text books should include the productive systems in the community to empower the experience of the students and the community.

4.14 Tension/ stress

Most children are not happy attending schools. They are engaged in mechanical rote learning and are confined to classroom without challenge. They are most of the time listening to the teacher, memorising the textbooks or notes, from sources including the teacher or the guides etc. They are constantly competing with each other, hiding their knowledge from each other and taught to shun working with each other. This makes the children sad and unhappy leading to tension and stress.

A transformation in the approach to curriculum and its implementation is needed. What constitutes learning has to be redefined and the children need to be provided with challenging learning experiences to construct knowledge collaboratively with teachers, peers etc. Space for thinking and expression both oral and written make children stress free. The school should transform and become place for children to experience and express in an encouraging climate. The teachers and other staff shall have empathy towards children from divergent background and support to them to learn on their own pace and let them experience joy of learning and accomplishment.

4.15 Regulatory mechanism of private schools

The decade 2001-2010 witnessed huge growth of private schools. These schools were earlier limited to cities and towns but now they exist even in many remote villages. Many private schools charge heavy fees and follow oppressive strategies to force children to

display performance. The school day is extended with no time for play or other exposure and recreation. Tuitions and homework restrict even the time for relaxation and sleep. There is a need to save childhood and educate parents and ensure right kind of school practices and home practices. Policy decisions are required to regulate school timings, pedagogy used, assessment of learning, tuitions, stress etc., and take appropriate measures to stop school education from commercialization.

Part of the reason for this is the narrow view of the parents and their aspiration to make each child a doctor, an engineer or something similar. They encourage children to compete and put stress on them. This also forces school processes to focus on individualized and book based learning. This drives the private school and extra tuition programmes. The school time table only has place for English language, science and mathematics with no space for play, art, games and sports, drama, craft etc. Even social studies and vernacular languages are neglected.

5. Systemic Reforms

As mentioned, in spite of the initiatives already taken, the current system is facing many problems which seriously undermine its capability to deliver quality education to children from all sections of the society. In order to improve the picture, the following reforms are suggested.

5.1 Centralisation versus decentralisation and local decision making

As per the 73rd and 74th amendments of the constitution, the management of Elementary and Secondary Education was entrusted to the Panchayati Raj Institutions viz. Gram Panchayats, Municipalities, Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Parishads. The school management and support and terms of attendance of teachers and children, school infrastructure, progress in children's learning achievement, organizing co-curricular activities is to be monitored by them continuously. The idea has not worked as all powers are still vested with government functionaries viz. District Educational Officer, Deputy Educational Officer and Mandal Educational Officers. The PRIs only have powers delegated in principle.

The funds for school improvement are being released directly to the schools and MEOs and no discussions are held in PRI meetings on how to utilize available budget resources. There is a big gap between PRI, schools and educational functionaries. The spirit of decentralization with local participation is far from being in practice.

Similarly, decentralization of quality requires positioning of appropriate persons at these institutions and empowering them to develop plans and provide support and guidance for its implementation in the field. Currently, everything from planning to implementation including conceptualization takes place at the State level. The district, mandal and school authorities totally depend on instructions and there is no motivation, real possibility or effort to develop and implement ideas from their context.

To include the community also, school based planning and management is needed. There is no possibility of doing that unless the responsibilities are clearly defined and powers appropriately delegated. The delegation of power is necessary to build ownership, clarify responsibility and fix answerability. It is only after this social audit of inputs, process and output of any institution would be possible.

In addition to this the staffing at the DIET, mandal and other levels needs to be adequate. With inadequate staff there is no reasonable way of meeting the expectations. Besides the power and authority to take decisions and make choices, they also need allocations to use flexibly. They also need to have a vision of their institution and their role, along with a sense of responsibility for the national goals that we have set up.

5.2 Equity versus excellence

Schools compete to produce results that show a good performance and for this they pay special attention to a few identified students. They get special coaching, materials and also extra work. This is not only puts stress on these children but also on the rest. The rest are not paid adequate attention, given the notion that they are not bright enough and cannot learn or do well. Given the diverse backgrounds of students, this ends in many of them dropping out or not making the effort to learn. In spite of the talk about under playing exams and the marks obtained, these factors drive the schools and thereby do injustice to the poor children who are in majority. The school program, its nature and the pace is not set according to their requirements.

Teachers expect equal performance from all children with standardized curriculum and textbooks, and standardized uniform way of teaching. This perspective needs to be changed. Differential support and guidance is required for children to progress. Teachers need to engage in academic planning, and need help in doing this. The existing uniform methods, learning materials and assessment procedures need to be replaced by collaborative group learning and participation.

5.3 Teacher empowerment and professionalization - teacher education reforms

The quality of school education directly depends upon the quality of the teachers and supervisors and other managers at system level. The quality is in terms of their professionalism, professional attitude and professional commitment towards children's learning achievement and their professional improvement.

The NCF – 2005 points out that the teacher must be prepared and enabled to function in a manner that has the certain key elements. NCF 2005 expects that he must Understand the way learning occurs and create plausible situations conducive to learning.

View knowledge as personal experiences constructed in the shared context of teaching and learning, rather than embedded in the external reality of textbooks.

Consciously attempt to formulate one's own professional orientation as a teacher in situation – specific contexts. View appraisal as a continuous educative process. Develop an artistic and aesthetic sense in children through art education. Address the learning needs of all children, including those who are marginalized and disabled.

Care for children, and should love to be with them. Understand children within the social, cultural and political context. Be respectful and constantly learning. View learning as a search for meaning out of personal experience, and knowledge generation as a consciously evolving process of reflective learning.

Own responsibility towards society, and work to build a better world. Appreciate the potential of productive work and hands-on experience as a pedagogic medium both inside and outside the classroom. Analyse the curricular framework, policy implications and texts. Learn how to make productive work a pedagogic medium for acquiring knowledge in various subjects, developing values and learning multiple skills.

Understand that the learner needs to be given priority. The learner is seen as an active participant rather than a passive recipient in the process of learning, and his/her capabilities and potential are seen not as fixed but dynamic and capable of development through direct self-experience. The curriculum will be designed so as to provide opportunities to directly observe learners at play and work; assignments to help teachers understand learners' questions and observations about natural and social phenomena; insights into children's thinking and learning; and opportunities to listen to children with attention, humour and empathy.

The major shift in the role of the teacher is towards making her the facilitator of the teaching learning processes, of helping children develop concepts, become wiser, act as a supporter in enhancing learning through multiple exposures, encouraging the learner to continuously achieve his/her educational goal. She has to move away from transmitting information and forcing children to copy and, what is worse, to merely satisfy the data requirements of the cluster, block, district and state statistics. In terms of the role in the class-room the shift needed can be expressed in the following way:

Major Shifts Needed

From	To
• Teacher centric, stable designs	• Learner centric, flexible process

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Teacher direction and decisions | • Learner autonomy |
| • Teacher guidance and monitoring
encourager of | • Teacher as facilitator, supporter and
learning |
| • Passive reception in learning | • Active participation in learning |
| • Learning within the four walls of
the class room | • Learning in the wider social context |
| • Knowledge as "given" and fixed | • Knowledge as it evolves and is
created |
| • Disciplinary focus | • Multidisciplinary, educational focus |
| • Linear exposure | • Multiple and divergent exposure |
| • Appraisal, short, few | • Multifarious, continuous |

(a) Professionalism in teachers and other functionaries:

Professionalism is necessarily a systemic process and cannot develop in isolated individuals. It is necessary to build mechanisms of developing and sustaining this in the system. There is a need to build an understanding of the direction we want the educational processes to take and the way the classrooms have to be constructed and the role of the teacher in it. This understanding has to develop across the system and must be continuously refurbished. The system must ensure that there is a periodic re-energising of the people and they have clarity on their role, expected professionalism and perspectives. There must be regular appraisals and opportunities for growth for those having the ability to lead the system. No system can function well without clarity of roles, appreciation and review of work.

(b) Setting goals and educational standards

Education is a process of knowing and the entire curriculum was designed keeping in view certain goals to be reached. That curriculum and syllabus represent certain goals to be achieved at various levels. The goals are for both practice and as well as for achievement as outcomes. Clarity on goals is required for teachers, parents and educational leaders, managers, supervisors so as to reflect on the same in the process of educational practices. Therefore, the goals need to be set for every stage/ grade and be simple enough to be understood by all. They must be shared with all stakeholders and a mechanism must be developed to assess how far the goals have been achieved.

(c) Teacher appraisals – improving teaching standards and career ladders for teachers

At present certain qualifications are prescribed for the teachers to enter into teaching profession. Once teachers enter service they are expected to teach the prescribed syllabus through textbooks and there is no encouragement and incentives to improve their professional academic qualifications. Nowhere is their performance or qualification linked to their future advancement on professional ladder. In a welfare model, it is the responsibility of the government to provide free education with qualified and challenging persons with high expertise. Therefore talent, acquisition of higher qualifications, improved performance levels need to be recognized, supported and linked to incentives such as promotions, monetary benefits, study leave, exposure to successful practice within and outside the country etc.

There are restrictions to move across in the department based on performance, expertise and qualifications which need to be broken down out and visualized in a much broader spectrum with the sole aim of improving performance and providing social justice. At present the teachers cannot compete for other posts in the department though they possess qualifications and expertise.

There are no review and assessment processes for the teachers and no promotional avenues. Most teachers start in the same role and continue in the same role. They have annual increments and after a certain number of years, teach the next grade and then the next. There is no requirement of change in the performance standard or having shown evidence of work of quality to go to the next grade. There is no expectation of even learning anything new or doing some course for the eligibility for the higher grade. So while on the one hand there is no expectation of good performance for grade change, there is nothing extra in terms of role, respect or grade that a teacher would get for good work. This limits the motivation and sense of purpose in doing well. The lack of opportunity for facing new challenges and gaining wider exposure makes them academically isolated and rusted. This issue needs to be addressed and requires a re-investigation of the rules and regulations, and the provision of opportunities and encouragement for teachers to grow professionally.

(d) Teacher unions and their role in providing quality education

At present the role of the teacher unions is confined to protect their service rights and

conditions, pay structures, transfers and promotions. Not much effort is taken for professionalization of teacher cadres and for professional development of teachers, and ultimately for improving children's learning achievement. The way the system responds to the unions and their leaders also promotes this stance. The departments of education and government feel that it is their sole responsibility to providing programs for professional development of teachers through trainings, workshops, reading material, teaching learning material etc., but never expect that teacher unions to participate in these matters. The teachers do not look at them as a source for furthering their knowledge and experience but as a structure that would confront the education department on their behalf.

It is therefore, important to support and fund teacher unions for capacity building of teachers. They should also be supported for organizing seminars, workshops on various curriculum subjects to understand the nature of the subject and ways of teaching learning processes. They could also manage and set up subject forums in different areas and support new teachers on-site.

(e) Teacher preparation and support structures - networking among the SCERT, DIETs, MRC, the CRCs

The SCERT, DIETs, CTEs, IASEs, BRCs, CRCs are meant to provide in-service training programs to the teachers and other supervisory staff at the local level. In addition to conducting in-service training programs these institutions are also expected to take up academic monitoring of schools and providing on job support to the teachers and Head teachers. Some of these have other crucial roles as well. For example the SCERT has the role of capacity building of the DIET faculty, developing State textbooks, supporting the development of policy documents, conducting studies to understand the status of education as well as developing modules and resource persons for the training of teachers. The DIETs run pre-service programs and also act as centres for analysis and collation of the status of education at the district level.

Also, it needs to be emphasised that these institutions are also expected to act as resource centres and construct net-works and attract teachers and educators for academic development and discourse. The resources in terms of resource persons, teaching learning material, equipment, library books, internet etc., at these institutions need to be available to the nearby schools. This implies a need for expansion of the facility as well as openness to allow access and opportunities to make it possible.

The different professional support structures involved in teacher education at various levels viz. SCERT, DIETs, IASEs, CTEs, BRCs, CRCs and NGOs are unlinked and therefore lose the opportunity to share resources and learning from each other. It is necessary to establish a functional network of sharing and mutual learning. These institutions can jointly plan strategies for professional development of teachers i.e., trainings, workshops, individual interaction and support, and develop reading materials for them in Telugu, Hindi and Urdu.

The capabilities required for building fresh understanding and materials that would add to the capabilities of the teachers as well as those in the DIETs /CTEs and SCERT itself cannot be created at all centres. It is necessary to identify specific institutions and make them responsible for work in specified fields and gain capability and authority of knowledge that can then be shared across institutions. An understanding about classroom and field based researches must be developed so that all those in the system including teachers can be supported to create knowledge in local context on pedagogical practices and children learning.

There is thus a need to develop role clarity and a vision of what they can do in these professional support structures. There must be mechanisms set up to overcome the constraints and structural energy. They need to have some additional resources and space for using them flexibly. There is a need to evolve some aspiration and achievement criteria for them.

(f) In-service teacher education, resources and financial constraints

Presently the in-service teacher education programmes are being planned and conducted by national, state and district level institutions i.e., NCERT, SCERTs, DIETs, CTEs, IASEs, BRCs and CRCs. Most of these programs are implemented a cascade models. They mostly focus on giving information in a didactic manner.

The major challenges to the quality of these programs in terms of resources and finances are:

- There is a lack of good resource persons to conduct trainings at various levels in a cascade mode. Not sufficient time is spent on preparing resource persons for the responsibility that they have to undertake.
- No effort has been made so far to build subject specific resource cadre or subject

forms to address the issue of acting as a resource person for training programmes, material development workshops and for monitoring the academic work in schools. Such individuals would need to think deeper about the nature and the pedagogy of the discipline and study the learning patterns of children.

- The teacher training institutions viz. SCERT, DIETs, CTEs and IASEs etc. are understaffed. The few persons these institutions have at present do not have the energy or the temperament to learn more.
- The rules of travel expenses, for honorarium to resource persons, expense on facilities in the government structure have led to the establishment of parallel structures for the implementation of education projects such as DPEP and SSA. These have not been able to link meaningfully with institutions that have been set up for quality initiatives.
- The teachers, after undergoing training in teacher training institutions, generally do not have the opportunity to go back to their disciplines. Hence, opportunities to recreate their knowledge need to be built for them. Universities and higher learning institutions are mostly uninvolved in providing support to educational structures and working collaboratively with them in the field. These agencies can help in evolving appropriate pedagogy by taking up studies.
- There is a lack of definite funding patterns and financial allocations from the state budget to the institutions such as SCERTs, DIETs, IASEs and CTEs.

Therefore, it is required to develop a resource school of resource persons in all subjects at State and district levels. Capacity building needs to take place on a continuous basis, duly involving State and national level expert institutions. Support to the resource groups in terms of training, reading materials, exposure visits, undertaking studies etc. needs to be provided.

(g) Reconceptualization of roles and authority of teachers and educational managers and professionalization of educational services

What roles and authority should the teachers exercise? Do the roles only involve transaction of textbooks and conducting assessments? Do teachers have a broader role in getting children to schools regularly, making schools interesting and encouraging places for children, facilitating learning, maintaining dialogue with parents and maintaining good home-school links? How should they address equity matters regarding children coming

from diversified sections and marginalized groups? How far are teachers and head teachers responsible for quality learning achievement of children? If their role is wider, how are they empowered to fulfil it? Are the system of monitoring and the mission mode projects sensitive to their needs and responsibilities?

The roles and responsibilities of the teachers must be reconceptualised. Teachers should be regarded as facilitators and supporters rather than an authority or domination. The perspective of teachers towards learners, learning, teaching support etc., must be developed appropriately.

The present scenario is such that the educational managers spend most of their time in offices attending to administrative work and participating in meetings and deliberations. Their attitude towards teachers is not adequately engaging and respectful. This makes it difficult for teachers to act as facilitators for their children. Besides this, the managers do not have a sense of the school as they do not visit schools sufficiently often or long enough and do not stay there as supporters of the teacher. They carry their own notions about schools, classrooms and what must happen in them and do not listen to the essence of what they hear from the teachers and other grass root functionaries. Though efforts have been made for their professional development and the need for more field visits and support has been stressed, not much has changed. There is a need to professionalise educational cadres. The role and responsibilities of the educational functionaries is increasingly being perceived as administrative and not academic. Part of the reason for this is that people from other departments and projects/ missions are administrators and do not have educational background.

It is important to ask who can be good educational leaders and good education managers. What is their background? What should their professional training and continuous learning involve? How much experience should they have and what should their attitude be towards teachers? The re-conceptualization of roles and of authority of teachers and educational managers is a must. The practice of positioning other managers than those from the education department to head the basic education projects like SSA shall be re-examined. Such managers will preferably be replaced with educational professionals.

Much orientation, training and on the job support is required for the professionals in the educational services. Strong induction training programmes and orientations to develop proper perspective on the profession are required at the beginning of their service. For this suitable resource institutions or universities may be identified and entrusted with the

responsibility. For all these functionaries, frequent appraisals and re-validation of their certification are required. They must also have the opportunity to take up research studies and programme evaluations ensuring their effective participation and learning. It may be made mandatory to spend some time periodically in a school or some other institution.

5.4 School level reforms

Reforms should start from the school level and school based management. Making schools accountable to the parents and public in achieving the expected outcomes is a part of this. The headmaster and the teachers need to be able to plan and decide their strategies.

They should be allowed to work towards making schooling and learning more interesting and challenging, and also towards providing a warm person-centered relationship i.e., one of acceptance, encouragement and empathy, towards the children. They should view the children without any stereotyped preconceptions. The emotional climate in schools and classrooms should be positive, since this is required for good learning and schooling. The schooling must have the flexibility to liberate children from the domination of the textbook and the teachers. Teachers and headmasters must be able to involve the community and make use of its resources. They must be a part of conceptualization of the reform process. They should not be a recipient of what is planned for them from the state level institutions and other reforms at government levels. Even if it is necessary for certain decisions to be central, teachers and field functionaries must know about these beforehand and they must be discussed at the grass root level before being implemented. The reason for reforms and their purpose must be felt by the teachers and supervisors at the grass root level. Reforms should be planned by them based on their own context. They must lead in this effort. This would require capacity building of the heads of institutions and a system that would enable them to actually lead. Only the reforms which are based on the felt needs of the persons at grass root level and which evolve at their level can result in expected results. Receiving instructions from the top and implementing them does not reflect the spirit of reform. Thinking about one's own context and implementing according to one's own decisions is essential. The leaders of the institutions have to develop their own strategy to move ahead towards the accepted principles.

5.5 School climate and ambience

A warm, welcoming and hygienic school climate is very much required to attract children to the schools. The school climate refers to good quality positive relationships between teachers and learners, teachers and parents. The mutual exchange, self esteem and dignity of the children must be maintained. The school rules, discipline, ways of engagement and working together etc. also influence school climate. The attitude and practice of oppression and domination make children dull and passive in their engagement in learning and participation.

Cleanliness and greenery, environmental hygiene, shading trees, flowering plants, good buildings, compound wall, clean toilets, drinking water facility etc. are basic necessities for a school. This improves the school ambience, which is the primary characteristic of a good school that attracts children and parents.

Therefore, efforts must be taken to improve the school ambience and the physical, academic and emotional school climate. The academic climate of the school is reflected in the nature of classroom activities, discussion, communication, learning material, library etc. Stress will be laid in teacher training on the maintenance of effective school climate and on improving school ambience. It must be made mandatory that a school possess adequate space, compound wall, shady trees, water facility, toilets, electricity connection and classrooms.

5.6 Re-conceptualisation of the selection and capacity building of SCERT and DIET faculty:

The present educational practices represent a rigid conceptualization of roles at all levels. The impression is that of a relationship of giver and taker i.e., learning goes from more knowledgeable person to less knowledgeable person. There is also confusion between information and knowledge. There is inadequate clarity on the very purpose and meaning of schooling and education. There is a lack of shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.

The educational functionaries in all institutions are inadequate in number. There are over 50% vacancies in the SCERT and over 70% in the DIETs. The people who are in these institutions have been in the education system for a long period and therefore, while they have experience, they do not have freshness, new knowledge and energy. New appointments to these institutions have been stopped for many years. There is no possibility of recruiting young bright people to these institutions. There is a need to

reformulate the rules for placing people in these institutions and also the criteria for selection and qualifications.

The other issue is of these functionaries not being sufficiently professional, not being keen to learn and develop their capabilities, or not being clear about their role. They also lack drive and initiative and are reconciled to preserving the status-quo at a low level of operability.

There are no systems and processes available to build capacity in them and to re-invigorate them. No opportunities are available for them to academically grow and they are not linked to the universities and the department that was their main discipline. Since, there are no linkages among them and none with the outside world they do not get the opportunity to have their opinions challenged and get exposed to new ideas or discuss ideas. The fact that the institutions lack good library facilities and lack easy access to internet, implies that they are unaware of many things happening outside and the changes in view about education taking place in the wider context.

The systems and structures to support teachers are SCERT at state level and DIET, CTEs and IASEs at district level and MRCs, CRCs at sub district level. These institutions play crucial role in the field for teacher development. The roles and responsibilities of these structures and of each individual involved have to be evolved and reviewed periodically locally to be a part of the context. However, due to lack of adequate funding, support and monitoring, these structures have almost become ineffective in providing appropriate academic support to schools and teachers.

Therefore, institution building of DIETs, MRCs, CRCs etc. must be undertaken with appropriate role clarity, positioning the staff and funding mechanisms with appropriate networking across institutions both horizontally and vertically. The academic audit of all these institutions must be done on annual basis with peer institutions or higher level institutions. Good institutions and work must be acknowledged and supported. These institutions must document successful practices and disseminate the same for wider practice. Institutions are currently mostly receiving and transferring the knowledge rather than creating or validating the knowledge.

5.7 Programme evaluation

Education is a subject of concern of both Central and State Governments. Several centrally sponsored schemes and programmes with large funding are operating in to improve the quality of education with equity. There must be periodic assessment of

these efforts with a view to improve and direct them. Often, the assessment is mechanical and does not incorporate many contextual elements. There is little participation of the local functionaries and the process is not transparent.

Sound participative methodologies may be developed for undertaking programme evaluation in a manner that encourages the functionaries to make a greater effort. The evaluation can be internal or external to the department but should be in consultation and partnership with the persons whose work is being assessed. It should be a supportive process rather than a fault finding one. Every programme must have a certain budget towards its own assessment as a part of its implementation. Discussions involving all stake holders may be organized on the findings of the assessment and program implementation made more transparent.

5.8 Educational management and governance

The organization of educational system and its governance has a major impact on the functional aspects of the system. Appropriate governance structures and procedures are required for the system to run with efficacy. At present the schools in Andhra Pradesh are being operated under various managements viz. government, local bodies, municipalities, tribal welfare department, minority welfare department, private management, Christian missionaries, residential institutions societies etc.

Several departments which run the schools do not have the required zeal, understanding and professional expertise to run effectively. Though the department of school education is responsible for quality education across institutions functional under various managements, it does not have control over the employees, teachers since service matters are the concern of the respective departments. Therefore there is no effective control on quality management over these institutions under various managements. Therefore certain policy formulations are required to get schools under one management i.e. under Panchayati Raj duly reflecting the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment.

Panchayats operate at local level and take up ownership and management of the schools at the local level in a decentralized way. They attend to the local level problems and issues as well as to enrolment, retention, attendance of teachers and people, school infrastructure etc. appropriate budgetary allocations may also be made to Panchayats to manage the schools and improve the schools with local participations and support. Appropriate orientation and training may be given to the PRI members on school management, support and financial transactions and procurements.

5.9 Parallel structures and working in isolation

Improving quality in education is one of the important objectives to be achieved in the present context. However, the present data on quality of classroom transactions, teacher preparation and children's learning achievement shows that we are far from reaching the agreed goals towards quality.

The central government is supporting the states for improved quality by assisting through centrally sponsored schemes and programmes like DPEP, SSA etc. The present scenario shows that professional support structures like SCERT, DIETS, CTEs IASEs, BRCs, CRCs etc. provide professional support to the teachers. Further DPEP and SSA have developed specific structures to address quality at state project office and district project offices by taking certain personnel into these offices.

The mandatory institutes responsible for supporting quality like SCERT and DIETs have been sidelined and are suffering from scarcity of funds and persons. Therefore the programmes are operationally parallel at state and district level.

The establishment of parallel project offices separately under DPEP and SSA has also delinked elementary education from the regular administrative bodies like district educational office. Slowly, the official and regular structure is moving away from its mandatory duties of maintaining and supporting quality.

Therefore, any impending project shall invariably run through regular department. The implementation of the programs and projects through regular department mode will result in capacity building for the system and individuals and will also lead to sustainability of quality and programmes. The centre-sponsored schemes and programmes should strengthen the existing structures rather than operate in parallel and weaken the existing system/ structures.

5.10 Improving curriculum and content

The very purpose of education will be reflected in the curriculum and its content. The curricular areas, syllabi, learning material and transaction should reflect the aims and goals of education.

The curriculum is at present limited to the pursuing of disciplinary knowledge through certain academic subjects like languages, science maths, social sciences etc. It does not appear to be aimed at the overall development of the child. The textbooks are loaded with information without much focus on building children knowledge based on their

context and prior experiences. The assessment of children's learning involves assessing the retrieval of textual information as it is through the process of memorization. Therefore exams become anxiety ridden and stressful. Therefore focus will be on the following curricular reforms:

- What to teach will be defined and related to the aims and goals of education.
- The curriculum shall reflect the purpose of education.
- Learning will be through construction of knowledge based on children experiences and context.
- Practice of critical pedagogy as a method of curriculum transaction will be emphasised to empower the learners and to maintain the dialectic relationship between teacher and the taught, rather than a dictatorial relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed.
- Importance will be given to children's participation and learning through social construction and scope will be provided for group and collaborative work, including undertaking project work, investigations, discovery and exploration.
- Teacher's role will be that of a facilitator supporting the children and addressing equity and social justice issues.
- The curriculum should be related to children's contexts and issues relevant to them. It should be designed to enable them to pursue challenges.
- Focus will be on the processes of learning reflecting the nature of the subjects, rather than on outcomes of the learning.

5.11 Measures of accountability and ensuring that schools meet the expected academic standards

There must be clarity on the expected academic standard among all the stakeholders viz. educational managers, supervisors, head teachers, teachers, parents and children.

The description of the academic standard in terms of the quality of curriculum and textbooks, teacher preparation, classroom practices, learning outcomes etc. must be detailed and awareness must be raised about it. Frequent appraisals of the maintenance of academic standard must be taken up, and further steps should be guided by this appraisal.

Schools must be evaluated in terms of their performance over identified indicators. The mechanism of self appraisals by the head teachers and teachers shall be implemented in addition to external appraisals. A school score card resembling the children's score cards may be developed and implemented.

The quality of teachers and supervisors and managerial staff at professional level shall be monitored and appraised at regular intervals to ensure good quality practices across the system. Frequent orientations and discussions on the contemporary theories, research literature and practices shall be conducted. Effective institutions and individuals shall be identified and supported further and linked to incentives such as monetary or service benefits incentives.

5.12 Examination reforms

Assessment of learning shall not be treated as terminal and external to the teaching learning processes. The assessment is primarily a diagnostic activity to identify the learning gap and other indicators of learning. Children come from diversified backgrounds with different kinds of prior knowledge and ideas. Thus, they need differential kind of support. The assessment may not be a separate test, but it should be an evaluation of children's work, such as assignment, homework, projects, collaborating with peers etc.

The assessment shall be holistic and shall serve as a marker to guide teachers regarding whether they are on the right track. The assessment should cover entire profile of the child i.e. knowledge, skills, attitudes and analytical abilities, values and ethics. Therefore assessment must be continuous, comprehensive in nature and a guide for understanding the child's progress in all areas. There must be linkages between curriculum, syllabus, textbooks, teacher training and assessment. The assessment ultimately shall reflect the extent to which we have achieved expected curricular aims and objectives.

The assessment procedure shall not be confined to a paper-pencil test but it must be oral, performance-based, project-based etc as well. The child must express his own ideas and thoughts and the construct answers without memorization. The textbook based, memorized answers and practices shall be discouraged and shall not be given any importance.

The nature of test items shall be open ended and critical, requiring thinking on the part of the child as far as possible. The analytical and higher order thinking skills must be fostered and assessed. These include critical thinking, reasoning, analysis, synthesis,

evaluation etc.

The tasks for learning and assessment must be challenging and create interest among children. They should help to develop an attitude of self learning for pursuing knowledge through various other means.

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CONSTITUTION OF INDIA PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, *having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a*

SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC, REPUBLIC *and to secure to all its citizens*

JUSTICE, *social economic and political*

LIBERTY *of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship*

EQUALITY *of status and opportunity and to promote among them all*

FRATERNITY *assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation.*

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty –**sixth day of November, 1949,** do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**