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| **TISS Evaluation of the CSSTE, August-September 2017** | | **Tool 3** | **SCERT-faculty FGD** |
| Instructions: This FGD will include 3 to 4 faculties / sr functionaries (Assistant professor and above), organization / members associated with SCERT such as NGOs/ INGOs/ Institutions etc.  The FGD  will take about an hour.  Kindly record the conversation with all the nuances. If material is available in soft copy then copy it  in pen drive as well as laptop , you can also collect soft copy | | | |
| State | Assam | District/Place | Guwahati |
| Name of institution | SCERT |  |  |
| Researcher name | Dr. Amina, Shinjini | Date of visit | 28.08.17 and 31.08.17 |
| Respondent name | Dr. Jayanta Kr. Sarmah, Project Officer  Dr. LN Sonowal, Asst. Director  Abani Deka, Research officer  Dr. Ajanta Bahua, Reader  Narendra Nath, Controller of exams  Borkha Saikia, Lecturer  Suwala Dutta Saikia, Lecturer  Dr. Jutiful Baruah, Lecturer  Biren Chandra Borah, Reader  Ravindra kumar Mishra, SC (TE) Unicef, Assam | Designation |  |

This FGD took place in 2 phases. On the first day of our visit, Dr Dutta had arranged for a meeting in the seminar room with all the Sr. faculty (mentioned above). However, due to our tight schedule (we had a meeting with the Education Commissioner) we could spare only 20-30 min for the faculty FGD. During the first instalment, all of the above were present, but only 3-4 persons really interacted with us.

On the second day, there were only two faculty members present (Narendra Nath and Dr. Jayanta Kr. Sarmah), who continued the interaction with us.

1. **About Major activities under CSSTE**–

 What are the major activities conducted under CSSTE programmes during 2012-2017 in particular and since inception of scheme in general. (please collect relevant materials such as information sheet, training module, CDs , manuals, annual work plan, evaluation report  etc , of different programe  implemented under CSSTE, )

Major activities under CSSTE can broadly be categorized under 3 heads – infrastructural, capacity building and managerial. We have been involved in research projects, developing modules and training programmes for DIETs and CTEs

Materials received from SCERT on 28.08.17: Annual Report, list of research conducted, SCERT published journal on education research, A PPT on CSSTE by Nodal officer Dr Dutta, note on UNICEF technical support to SCERT.

1. **About Teachers Education –**

What kind of change we are approaching for Teachers education in the state/ UTs ?  Upto what extent you are able meet expectation and requirement  for teachers education ? what are major challenges? Efforts/ steps taken to ensure that trainings/courses translate into classroom practices based upon the vision of NCF2005? (Collect vision document and Teachers training modules)

Changes: There have been many changes post RtE Act, since there are a lot of untrained teachers in the state that must be trained before the deadline of March 2019. The no. of training programmes have gone up, capacity building of teacher educators is happening more often, we are collaborating with other agencies like UNICEF which provides technical support, there has been review of curriculum post NCFTE (three times), etc. Now focus is more on the teaching learning process. B Ed has also become from 1 year to a 2 yr course, so it is more meaningful with a proper duration (4 months) school internship which was impossible before. Thus our teachers have become more competent for the classroom post 2012.

Challenges:

* the high no. of untrained teachers in the state vs. the low intake capacity of our govt. teacher training institutes. The total no. according to govt. data is 98,750 untrained teachers.
* We need more DIETs because new districts have been formed. We have 23 sanctioned DIETs but 33 districts now. Each district has its own challenges of multilingualism, access issues, etc. so the local institutions need to be empowered enough to deal with them. The DIETs are not empowered at the moment; they do not have much administrative or even infrastructural support. Often the DIET faculty does not get the incentive or financial support (e.g. TA/DA) to make school visits.
* There are motivated teachers, and there are not-so-motivated ones. Especially older teachers who are close to retirement are not very proactive in the classroom or in inservice training programmes.
* The trainings do not often translate into better classroom process. There is no proper mechanism to ensure that transference takes place. Monitoring/onsite support/follow up visits are missing. There are learning gaps which teachers are not equipped to handle due to MGML situation (There are schools which have only 1 sanctioned teacher due to total strength of 50 students, but they are of different classes and learning levels).

1. **Collaboration & Networking -**

To what extent has the SCERT been able to collaborate with other institutions (DIETs, IASE, BITE, CTEs, and Private institutions) of education in the state?

The linkages need to be strengthened for better networking and collaboration. At the moment there is a parallel structure. The BRCs and CRCs are not linked to the SCERT so the feedback loop is missing.

1. **Curriculum development –**

What is SCERT role in curriculum, syllabus and textbook development, if it has been declared as an academic authority?

To review the state curriculum in the light of NCF 2005, state specific D El Ed curriculum as per NCFTE, conducting workshops, developing textbooks, periodic reviews, etc.

(on the day of the visit, a textbook review workshop was going on – final review of English class 2 textbook)

1. **Research –**

What is the major research that SCERT has completed during 2012-17 in particular and since inception of scheme in general. What guides you to formulate a particular research. How is this research disseminated and used? (please collect copy of research if possible in soft copy )   We keep conducting research from time to time, we plan seminars. As per guideline/mandate all faculty members of TEIs must conduct at least 2 action researches individually and 2 applied research institutionally. But due to lack of funding this is often affected. However, there are initiatives that are taken despite the fund issue. E.g. Himangshu Roy, a faculty of Goalpara DIET conducted a research on popularizing ICT techniques even without funding.

We have brought out a survey of education research in 2012 which captures all the education surveys that have taken place in Assam in the last few years. Perhaps no SCERT has done such research.

What guides you – mainly the policy mandates (2+2 research)

Dissemination – seminars, we distribute copies of our published research to all the TEIs, NCERT, NUEPA, SSA, RMSA, etc.

(Annual Report, list of Research activities and some published books by SCERT have been collected)

1. **Implementation of specialized programe for school education** :

What is the role of SCERT in planning & execution of education program , experience with planning (as envisioned in the NCFTE)?

CSSTE perspective plan was developed by the SCERT

1. **Monitoring and support mechanism:**

What are mechanism to support district and subdistrict level TE organisation includes DIETs , BIETs , BRC, CRC . What are are monitoring  mechanism for  execution and implementation of education program for school structure  (please write link if it is online)

This happens very sporadically due to lack of funds. We have extreme shortage of faculty, we cannot make too many visits at the district level as we are not always compensated for it. We are overburdened with too many activities and programmes so no time for school visits. There is fund for MME (monitoring, management and evaluation) by MHRD. We have not received this in the past few years. I think this year it has finally been released, so now maybe we will be able to do a few visits. After restructuring of institutions 57 new posts for faculty have now finally been sanctioned. So this year after the recruitment process is completed we will be able to fulfill our role of monitoring and support. With funding we can visit schools, provide support to institutions at the district level, and look at the implementation of the D El Ed programme.

For the last few years, in absence of funding, regular visits were not possible. So the mode was each faculty at the SCERT is responsible for 1 DIET. They are in touch with them for support, but this is more events based than regular.

1. **Policy**:

Has the SCERT been able to engage with policy matters?

Yes, of course. We have been instrumental in framing the state rules of the RtE, influencing the TE policy that introduces the ODL mode for D El Ed. The SCERT director is a part of that committee (consisting of her, Directorate of El. Education, MD SSA and Secy Edu) which is responsible for RtE implementation in the state.

1. Which are the key NGOs in the state? What are your interactions with them? Which sectors are they currently contributing to?

UNICEF, Intel India, WWF, etc. work with SCERT from time to time; there is a society called Aranyak for environment conservation. There are also literary organizations like Assam Sahitya Sabha, Bodo Sahitya Sabha, etc.

10. As faculty what are the key areas of reform that you seek?

The two key areas for reform are in infrastructure and quality of manpower. We feel the status of SCERT should be enhanced to an autonomous body which is akin to the rank of a teacher education university. Otherwise there is no motivation – the roadblocks and deficiencies of the system de-motivate us.

11. What faculty development opportunities have been provided to you?

We had an exposure visit to Bihar to understand how classes are conducted through ODL in the state. UNICEF took a team of 15-20 people (select faculty from SCERT and DIETs)

There was a famous psychologist/neurologist, Thomas Baidya, who conducted workshops for us (faculty of DIET, SCERT and CTE) a year back on self development. There were sessions on anger management, self realization, yoga, etc. which we really enjoyed.

There is scope for faculty development, but the issue is that it is not continuous, and not every faculty gets the chance. Only selective faculty gets the opportunity, and there are times when a faculty has not got even one such opportunity.

12.To what extent do you use technology and for what purpose? Have you all been provided with computers? Have you had training in the use of computers?

Letters, emails, whatsapp groups to monitor what is happening on the field (pictures and updates)

We all have smart phones these days. We even check emails from our phone. We use computers for data storage, for conducting trainings (AVs, PPTs, etc.) Last year there was a seminar for which all coordination (abstract submission, managing deadlines, etc.) was done online.

We had organized a training programme last year to familiarize ourselves with the use of technology. It was self initiated.

We also have a website for SCERT, but it will be permanently discontinued. There is talk of a common website for the education department, of which SCERT is one part.

13. What are the various schemes under which your activities are currently taking place? What is the synergy between these schemes?

CSSTE, State Leadership Academy (linkage with NUEPA)

14. To what extent do you think the CSSTE scheme for DIET, CTE and IASE has been reorganized to meet the needs of the state? What are the areas for improvement?

Now there are more faculty positions, before they were very less. However, inefficiency is still there. The resource allocation under CSSTE needs to improve, capacity building of faculty should be regular, and timely fund availability is a must for programme activities to run smoothly)

15. **Fund provision and Fund Flow:**  Any observations and suggestions on use of fund under CSSTE

Funds should come on time for activities to take place. Since funds are not released, activities also remain incomplete. Funds from the CSSTE should come directly to SCERT rather than be channeled through the Finance dept. of the state govt. it leads to unnecessary delays and roadblocks. Like MHRD funds NCERT directly, we should also get funds directly. Otherwise it causes problems. E.g. we wanted to take up a research and publish it, the deadline given to us was Feb, and we finally received the fund in Jan, which gave us 1 month to conduct and entire research and write it. The quality of work is compromised.

For in-service trainings, MHRD gives funds directly to SSA and RMSA rather than SCERT, which is supposed to be the main academic body in the state. SSA and RMSA then conduct their own trainings by hiring consultants without consulting us. Sometimes they even invite us as resource persons, but institutionally SCERT is not consulted for such academic matters. This is what leads to this parallel structure, and it becomes a sustainability issue because SSA and RMSA are programmes that may end. If SCERT is the academic body, the SCERT and its institutions should be responsible for teacher education. The SCERT Director should be empowered with administrative powers to make this a possibility. This will not happen as long as central funds are channeled through the commissioner – he/she will decide who to give the funds to.

1. **Governance :**

Any observations and suggestions on recruitment posting, managing program under CSSTE and technical support that SCERT required

The key requirement is autonomy of SCERT. We need to have the administrative power to recruit faculty members from different organizations. Now it happens through APSC which is time taking as well. To make SCERT a centre for academic excellence, some administrative power to make our own decisions is needed.

17. Any other highlights/achievements/to-dos?

The D El Ed course in ODL mode is a key achievement – there are over 40,000 applicants and only 3150 seats! We conducted a formal pre entry test with OMR sheet, even had negative marking, 4 sets of question papers – it was a big deal. We published an advertisement for it.

Main to do for us is to increase our intake capacity to bridge the demand supply gap for trained teachers. For this institutional capacity, infrastructure and manpower must be enhanced.

18. What are the improvements and changes needed in the CSSTE scheme?