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| **TISS Evaluation of the CSSTE, August-September 2017** | **Tool 1** | **State Secretary & SCERT Director** |
| Instructions Interview *Schedule for State Education Secretaries (ES) will mainly focus on capturing perceptions, views and vision for Teacher Education in the state and specific developments under CSSTE at the state level.* |
| State | Assam | District/Place | Guwahati |
| Name of institution | SCERT |  |  |
| Researcher name | Dr. Amina, Shinjini | Date of visit | 28.08.17 |
| Respondent name | Ms. Nirada Devi | Designation | Director, SCERT |

*Please Note: The Director has just joined the institution. The day of our visit was her first day at work as SCERT Director. Earlier, she has worked as a principal in govt. college, so she is from the higher education field. She agreed to give us an overarching view of the concerns regarding teacher education as she was still new to the processes and mechanisms of SCERT.*

**A: Overall Teacher Education Sector in the state**

1. What is the teacher education scenario in the state?

I feel the end purpose for all teacher education reforms is that it should reach the children. For this inter-linkage between the different levels – primary, elementary and secondary is essential. This is still missing now and isolated efforts take place. Unless the bridging is done actively, we will not be able to achieve our final goal. Trainings are happening for each level at the state/district level through our instutions, and restructuring of SCERT (since 2017, sanctioned in 2013) has also given positive outcome. This will benefit the teachers, and we will see a positive outcome in 2-3 years. The curriculum review is also a positive step in this direction.

Restructuring (Mr. Dutta, nodal officer, added): different departments created under SCERT. Each dept. (e.g. planning, curriculum, R&D, ICT, etc.) is proposed to be headed by professor and associate prof. New pay scale will come into effect. Earlier we had director, assistant director, joint director, additional director etc. (administrative positions) rather than academic ones. 57 sanctioned academic posts – we have 9 professors, 17 associate professors, 29 assistant professors. Now in 12th FYP we have to link this with higher education along with school education.

Earlier only psychology, etc. was a part of teacher training, now we have more pedagogy and techniques (pedagogy) and practical aspects with the new curricular reforms. We are going to a new system where everything is merged.

a). How is teacher education organized in the state?

Teacher education dept. headed by LN Sonowal. We have academic staff in SCERT, separate staff and departments for INSET, examinations, etc.

1. What is the state’s vision for teacher education?

Every teacher should be trained before being appointment as teachers, we have people who are TET qualified but untrained teachers. They should have a B Ed before appearing for TET exams.

a) How has the state’s vision evolved in light of the NCFTE 2009 and RTE 2009?

Yes. RtE asked for trained teachers, so it is aligned with that. Also, both pre and in service curricula have been revised. We are even planning courses in ODL mode to make this a reality.

1. What are the key achievements of the state in the field of teacher education?

All our 23 DIETs are now recognized by NCTE through the 39th ERC meeting last year. Earlier only 18 DIETs were recognized. We don’t need to expand to more institutes; it only creates liability for finance department. Our existing mechanisms such as manpower, structure should be empowered to handle D El Ed and B Ed courses. We now have a composite structure now, gazetted posts have been created and recruitments are going on to fulfill all these vacant posts. 149 posts have been advertised by APSC, viva voce is going on.

Another major achievement is that NCTE has allowed SCERT to conduct D Ed through ODL mode. 27,000 untrained teachers will enroll for D El Ed through ODL or face to face mode.

As per RTE Article 23 we have to train at least one teacher in each school. ODL is a strategy to tackle this by the 2019 deadline. Same portal for both govt. and pvt. Teachers. We have CTEs and DIET faculty who will conduct this ODL. They have already run this module before, so they are equipped to handle it.

1. What major changes have you made recently in the structure and functioning of TE?

Changes post 2012 – teachers are now motivated to come forward for training (INSET). Initially teachers were reluctant inspite of mandate. Now accountability has gone up due to RTE. No detention policy is another reason that teachers have more responsibility to reach out to all children. Now they have more exposure in terms of training programmes. Now they feel that they are also an important part of the system. Earlier they were more neglected. Now we have more monitoring, external visits, etc. so they have become more alert.

1. What according to you are the challenges of teacher education sector in the state?

Adapting the RTE to the local (Assam) context.

Compared to no. of schools and teachers, our intake capacity is very less, so we cannot supply enough trained teachers. Per year we get around 7000 teachers for D El Ed, but our capacity is 3150 – so more than half. Vacancies arise because teachers retire and then they are not filled up.

In Assam TET is valid for 5 yrs but MHRD is pressurizing us to conduct it annually like CTET. Every year new ones qualify but the previous ones are not recruited, so it creates large gap. The govt appointment processes take time and the vacancies keep piling up. We have now contractual teachers also. Regular vacancies are being filled up by the new govt. by appointing fresh teachers.

Infrastructure – no ICT lab, psychology lab, language and math lab, etc. We have upgraded DIETs (from BTC) and they are very old. Buildings are very old. DIETs should be fully equipped to handle pre service properly.

Faculty shortage – 52% posts for faculty lie vacant still. We are overburdened. PTR is an issue.

NGOs and private actors – it is purely a govt matter, so they cannot help much. But we are aware of the PPP mode. Govt. should take the initiative here. Innovations are happening, e.g. UNICEF is running support programmes for leadership and professional development of teachers, etc.

82% of central funds go in salaries, only the rest is left for innovations and programmes.

1. How has the state been able to identify and deal with the challenges?

We have to do things in project/mission mode, handling one issue at a time with fixed targets.

We have to get external resource persons for workshops, and these require funding. Infrastructure development is also required. Just like challenges and lacuna, we also have opportunities. We are trying to submit project proposals to get things done. E.g. a resource person could be brought in to take care of 2-3 DIETs. E.g. UNICEF is also helping us by supporting us at the district level.

1. What are the roles and contributions of the central government, state government, private actors, NGOs in teacher education? How do these stakeholders interact with each other?
2. What mechanisms have you put into place to enable them to contribute to Teacher Education?
3. What are the other measures for enhancing quality of teacher education in the state?
4. Have any of the teacher educators attended Arizona State University fellowship programme? Have they been able to translate the training received in their current work practice?

Total of 5 people from SCERT, DIET and CTE have participated in this programme. Dr Dutta ( CSSTE nodal officer) also attended. He came back and supported in some Guwahati schools (he adopted 20 schools through intervention. He trained 10 teacher educators from DIET Mirza who prepared resources and TLMs and supported these schools. There was pre test and post test and supported teachers, even I went to the schools from time to time. He published an article/research paper on this) But the issue is that transference does not take place. Things go back to normal after training.

**B: Teacher Education Institutions of the State**

1. How do these institutions coordinate with eachother?

Discussions with principals from the different district level institutions happen from time to time to discuss issues. Video conferences from time to time (e.g. the next day after visit this was scheduled). We develop and train KRPs at the districts and block level.

In case of SSA RMSA also we are involved sometimes. But not all the time, because often they appoint their own resource persons. The structure of SSA should be changed so that all teacher training fund should come to SCERT. We support them in development of training modules, textbooks, etc. Now ministry has finally realized that SCERT can cover all the teacher training activities that SSA and RMSA do. Only then sustainability will be achieved. We have meetings individually and unofficially almost daily with district institutions, but there is no such structure for meetings.

1. How do these institutions coordinate with eachother?
2. What are the major gaps of teacher education institutions (SCERTs, DIETs, CTEs, BITEs) in terms of human resources, facilities and functionalities?

Intake, infrastructure, faculty shortage.

1. How can the present institutional capacity be enhanced to ensure adequate supply of trained teachers for elementary school education? And / or continuous professional development of teachers?
2. According to you, what are the ways for optimum utilization of existing structures for pre-service as well as in-service training of the existing cadre of teachers at all levels?
3. Do the SCERT faculty have academic designations or are they academic officers?

We have academic designations. Original SCERT (1985) – Lecturers, readers and deputy directors. Now with restructuring we have designations like professor and associate professor. We are basically academicians but sometimes we have to take up academic responsibilities as well.

1. What is the role of the private teachers training institutions in meeting the adequacy of teachers?

I doubt that their intake is substantial enough to fulfill the demand for teachers in the state. Also, after 2017 I think we should not issue NOC to more private colleges. Privatization will once again lead to parallel cadres of trained teachers in the state, adding to the problem.

1. What is the quality of the private teachers training institutions?

As per NCTE norm, some private TEIs have applied for recognition to SCERT as we are the local academic body. We have to give NOC to them for D El Ed course. In case of fee structures, rules, regulations we have to give them NOC. We have 8 private B Ed colleges under SCERT.

We have little idea because we have never monitored them before. Lately, the minister has given instructions to install CCTV in all govt/pvt. to monitor the examinations.

1. Do you think that Private teacher education institutions alone can meet the needs of the state for quality Pre-Service Teacher Education and have DIETs, CTEs and IASEs may focus only on INSET?

As the pvt. B Ed colleges are NCTE recognized, they provide around 3000-4000 trained teachers per year for govt. schools. They are producing more teachers than we are, because private colleges have funding from NCTE. Only 50 govt. colleges are recognized by NCTE. This is a major issue. We are pressuring NCTE that if your are giving 100 pvt TEI, why only 50 govt. institutes? (maybe they don’t have money to pay faculty?)

They are helping us to bridge the gap of untrained teachers in the state.

(Informal discussion: there are some DIETs in remote areas that have never been visited by the administration, because they are very far and inaccessible. Our faculty has been urged so many times but all of them refuse. Finally on order of the minister, two of my colleagues went there and submitted a visit report. Had this been a private institution they would have willingly gone, because they would be compensated. For govt. institutes that is not the case.)

1. Do you think DIETs should be upgraded to provide academic support to secondary teachers and schools?

We have some DIETs like Lakhimpur and Kamrup, and others who have recently started courses for secondary teachers. We feel that this is essential, as we have to survive in a composite structure, where the ultimate target is to reach the children.

1. Please suggest ways for enhancing the quality of;

           a.       Pre-service:

           b.      Curricular reform at school level:

           c.       In-service:

           d.      Monitoring & Support for enhancing quality of School Education

Internal efficiency, administration, monitoring, etc. require more coordination at all levels. We have a lot of communication gaps due to lack of smooth communication (e.g. we are so dependent on technology these days, but there are areas where even today we have no electricity, we have poor network in Assam, etc.)

**C: CSSTE in the State**

*The director requested that we discuss this section with the faculty members since she was not yet familiar with the scheme.*

1. How has the state’s approach towards teacher education changed post 2012?
2. Did the state prepare a perspective plan for teacher education under the CSSTE? Could you mention some of the salient features of this plan? What is it trying to achieve?
3. To what extent does this plan address the aims and objectives for quality teacher education of NCFTE 2009 and RTE 2009 to provide qualified teachers in all schools?
4. In what ways has the CSSTE has been able to strengthen the institutions of teacher education in the state?
5. How is the scheme monitored?
6. Has the state been able to create a forum for convergence of all the institutions and structures (including SSA and RMSA) of teacher education within the state? Can you highlight major achievements of this forum?
7. Under the CSSTE how has the flow of funds to the states been? Were the funds received adequate? What were the timelines of receipt of the same? If there were bottlenecks how were these resolved?
8. Has there been a assessment of the needs of training for teachers?
9. What were the major findings of this evaluation? How have these findings impacted training content and processes?
10. What could be the changes to the scheme to ensure goals of teacher education within the state are met?
11. Has a Teacher Educator cadre been created in the state? If yes, When? If not, why and what are the key issues facing the creation of this cadre?
12. Under the 12th Plan, did you enhance IASEs or CTEs or make changes to IASEs and CTEs?
13. Do you have districts or blocks where you have created BITEs?
14. Which are the key institutions with whom you have MOUs and schemes for faculty development of IASEs, CTEs and DIETs?
15. What capacity building have you had from NCERT, NUEPA, etc.?

**C: Technology Use**

*We covered mainly the broader questions that talk about a vision for ICT. Since the Director has just joined, she would not be able to help us with the details of what is happening at the moment with ICT in the institutions. We covered the minor details during the faculty FGD.*

1. Is technology being used for administration and coordination?

Videoconferencing is a good way to get everyone together and talk. It helps in coordination. We use emails, etc. for official communications as well. But I personally believe that physical proximity and face to face communication is more important for administration and coordination.

E.g. video conference is important for presentations and discussions. But actual physical verification is also very important for monitoring purposes, there is a psychological factor involved there as well. Even teacher training is better when it is face to face.

For teaching also, I personally believe that physical classroom transaction can never be replaced by ICT, especially for primary and elementary level. For higher age group learners it may be still doable. In teacher training centers it is okay.

1. Have you installed satellite/ video conferencing between SCERT and DIETs?
2. What are the examples of this?( email, whatsapp, Edusat video conference, website)
3. What are the types and kind of technology being used for Teacher Education in the SCERT/DIETs/ IASE/ CTEs ?
4. What are the ways in which currently ICT is being used in the process of training and material development? Which areas do you think can improve substantially when ICT is used?
5. What kind of capacity building in human resources with regards to ICT do you envision? What are your plans for improving ICT infrastructure in classrooms and trainings?
6. How do you see ICT impacting teaching-learning process in the classroom? What are your views about MOOCs? Do you think this model can be used in your training programmes?
7. What are major roadblocks according to you for implementing large-scale use of ICT during trainings?
8. Which areas do you think will remain largely unaffected by use of ICT?

**E: SCERT**

1. Does the SCERT have an organizational structure as mandated by the guidelines? Draw an Organogram of the SCERT which covers staffing, nonacademic, etc. aspects
2. What are the ongoing activities for the SCERT as a leading academic institution at the state level providing support to DIETs, CTEs ( college of teachers education) , IASEs ( Institute of Advanced Study in Education) and at the same time engaging in educational research and training; providing advice to state governments on policy issues; quality improvement in school education; and teacher education?
3. What are the ongoing activities for revision/development of curriculum and syllabus of the teacher education courses viz-a-viz National Curriculum Framework (NCF–2005) and the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE)?What are the ongoing activities  of  the SCERT under the preparation of prototype teaching learning material other than  textbooks for elementary  school education;
4. What are the strategies with respect to Pre-service and In-service training of teachers/ Education (particularly for the elementary school level)?

·         Long term strategy

·         On Going program

·         Collaboration with SSA/ RMSA etc

1. What are the steps for the professional development of education administrators and head teachers?
2. What kind of training is required for Professional Development of Teacher Educators for DIETs & SCERTs?

Professional training for teacher educators is needed. Leadership development is needed. Even now I have seen many teacher educators, despite training, use mainly traditional methods, in spite of the curriculum demanding otherwise. They stick to their old curriculum and self innovation is very less. We need to have more programmes where we encourage teacher educators to produce their own innovations on which they will be graded. The trainings they receive must equip them to make innovations in the standard curriculum. Each teacher must be equipped to handle the individual needs of children. They must be innovative to deal with the children’s unique needs. It is similar for teacher education, where our trainers too must be innovative to address the individual needs of the teachers in our training programmes.

Important qualities required for a teacher: accountability, patience, entrepreneurship, exposure to talent of each individual. These things should be nurtured through our training programmes.

1. Nature of Duties performed by SCERT: (Yes/No, If yes, in details)

*This was discussed in detail in the FGD and annual reports, list of researches ops conducted, etc. was collected.*

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| Role  | Yes/No | If Yes, specify  details of the activities   |
| 1.Has the SCERT been notified as an academic authority as mandated under the state rules under RTE?  |  |  |
| 2. Does the SCERT play a role in policy matters?  |  | Has it developed textbooks?Has it conducted evaluations? |
| 3.Is the SCERT involved in curriculum development? |  | Which level(s)? Examples post-2012?For which grades?  |
| 4. Is the SCERT involved in material development?  |  | What kind of material is developed?Is ICT used in material development? |
| 5. Does the SCERT conduct in-service training activities?  |  | * For whom?
* How frequently?
* Which subjects?
* Where do experts come from?
* Any pool of identified experts?
* Help from NGOs?
 |
| 6. Does the SCERT have in place a system to ensure community and children’s outreach?  |  |  |
| 7. Has the SCERT initiated interdepartmental coordination?  |  | Faculty CoordinationCurriculum development |
| 9. Is there a Program Advisory Committee?  |  |  |
| 10. Does the PAC meet regularly as mandated by the guidelines? |  |  |
| 11. Does the SCERT have Annual plan and perspective plan documents?  |  | Annual plans since when?Collect copies of plansWho makes the plans? |
| 12. Has the SCERT introduced any innovations in its roles/ Is the SCERT performing activities which are not directly specified in the Guidelines?  |  |  |
| 13. Has any research been carried out by SCERT?  |  | * Needs assessment of faculty, insfrastructure, departments, staffing, adequacy of faculty positions, adequacy of technical and supporting staff
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1. Have the duties of the SCERT changed after RTE? If yes, how?
2. Planning process of CSSTE
* How are the plans made?
* Who makes the plans?
* What is the database used for planning?
1. Issues in planning process

**E: Networks and Collaborations**

1. Are there NGOs with whom the SCERT is working closely?
2. What functions are being performed through this partnership?