

Inclusive Education and Environment for Students with Special Needs in Nepal

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《 Abstract 》

The purpose of this article is to study the status of Nepal's existing inclusive education policy and implementation process. As Nepal's research and current report show that inclusive educational practice is not being satisfactorily implemented. It is so because of the absence of support services, relevant materials, adequately qualified special education teachers, funding as well as structures and systems. Until both concepts and policies are expressed clearly and accurately, meaningful implementation of inclusive education will remain challenging. Based on the initial findings, it is suggested that the government of Nepal should revise teacher training programs, train all teachers in inclusive education methods, and improve the monitoring of education for all children.

Key Words : inclusive education, policy, students with special needs

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I . Introduction

As a society, we live in the era of globalization and we coexist in collaborative configuration with other countries. Inclusive education has been implemented for thirty years. Now it is time for us to enhance our understanding of inclusive education in the world. Kim (2011) highlights the importance of world community in Korea, Japan and China. Further, it is also important to study other neighboring countries in Asia and look at how inclusive education has been implemented. This is an effort towards global awareness to advance inclusive education. Nepal is a developing country and has many students with disabilities (Kang and Lee, 2001).

Special education in Nepal is still an emerging trend, despite the fact that general education system has undergone several changes since 1971. Specifically, in recent years the issue of inclusion has brought about increasing demands for schools to provide equal opportunity for all learners. Inclusive education refers to a broad philosophical position related to the educational rights of all children. Nepal's Interim constitution (2006) protects all children from discrimination and presents a commitment to creating access to, and provision of, education that accommodates the needs of children. Inclusive education can thus be defined as "a system of education that is responsive to the diverse needs of learners." (Ainscow, 2005)

Limited data is available on people with disability, including how many children are living with disabilities, their education, healthcare needs, and what factors promote or hinder their equal participation in their community. The available statistics of disability suggest disparate numbers, ranging from 1.94 percent (National Census, 2011) to approximately 10 percent, as reported by the different NGOs working in the field of disabilities. The latest statistics published by central bureau of statistics (2012) states that about 2% (tentatively, 1.94%) people are disabled, and categorically physical disability constitutes 36.3% of the population with disability followed by blindness/low Vision (18.5%), deaf/hard of hearing (15.4%), speech problem (11.5%), multiple disability (7.5%), mental disability (6%), intellectual disability (2.9%) and deaf-blind (1.8%). Similarly, the composition of students' population that exist in total number of students up to the tenth grade is 6,964,553 and

by gender, it is as follows: boys 51% & girls 49%. The percentage of students with disability is 1.1% at primary (1–5 grades), 0.5% at lower secondary (6–8 grades), and 0.6% at secondary level (9–10 grades) (Kafle, 2012). A survey concludes that 68.2% of the people with disability are deprived of education (CERID, 2004).

International policy documents, primarily represented in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UNESCO's Salamanca Statement, have influenced educational reforms globally. The need to accommodate all learners was highlighted in the Salamanca statement on principles, policy and practice in special needs education, which laid down the framework of inclusion at a world conference on special needs education in Spain in July 1994. The concept of inclusion was born through mainstreaming and integration, as the mainstreaming of special education originated from de-institutionalization; and integration with the idea of normalization. Integration, based on the major premise of normalization, developed into the paradigm of inclusion since the early 90s, passing a series of procedure such as regular education initiative (REI) and least restrictive environment (LRE).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004), as amended in 2004, does not require inclusion. Rather, the law requires that children with disabilities be educated in the "least restrictive environment appropriate" to meet their "unique needs." Yet, the proponents of inclusive schooling call for a restructuring of the school to accommodate all learners with diverse needs. This data reveal that a vast majority of students with special needs have no access to education; in reality, large numbers of the –above–mentioned persons with disability are excluded despite the government's provision of inclusive education policy.

In Nepal, a large number of children with disabilities have no access to mainstream classes, hence the main objective of this paper is to highlight the existing situation of inclusive education in Nepal by focusing on potential equal access and quality education without discrimination for children with disabilities irrespective of their differences. Also, this paper strives to explore the government's current inclusion strategies and the gaps, if any, that exist between the policy and implementation of inclusive education. This will in turn help highlight Nepal's special education policies and practices, to make it available for discussion in international forum for those researchers

interested to carry out further research regarding inclusive of developing countries including Nepal. To do so, this review paper intends to consider a number of aspects of inclusion such as current situation of disabled children, general attitudes toward disability, inclusion policy and challenges to inclusive education in Nepal. The research will be organized along these two questions:

1. What are the challenges of the present policy and practice of inclusive education for children with disabilities in Nepal?
2. What kinds of impact do the concepts and policy of inclusive education have on effective implementation of inclusion for children with disabilities?

II. Methods

This research is designed to be a representation of real-life, with loosely expository style, purely based on descriptive statistics— descriptive research, also known as quantitative research method, describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2008). The techniques for gathering evidence becomes the means and procedure through which to address the core issue which is the environment of inclusive education for the children with special in Nepal. Descriptive statistics provides simple summaries about the sample and about the observations that have been made. For this purpose, secondary data was gathered, analyzed and presented in the conclusion.

1. Data Collection

To gather information for this review article, data was collected through different resources, primarily Nepal government's census reports (2011), annual reports, published articles regarding Nepal's special education, and studies from internet journals including: Academic Search Premier, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Psych INFO, Professional Development Collection, and TOPIC search. The key terms used for the search included: disabilities, inclusion, special education, policy, and Nepal.

2. Data Analysis:

Quantitative data was reviewed and tabulated in the given format developed by the study team so as to analyze the data meaningfully. Basic statistical devices such as percentage and average were used to analyze the quantitative data. It was then synthesized based on the context of the information and the objectives of the study. A preliminary draft report was prepared with the organized information based on the compilation and analysis of the data collected from the literature review. Analysis and interpretation of data were basically categorized into the following main themes: inclusive education policy and implementation, problems faced by teachers in teaching the children with disabilities in Nepal.

III. Inclusive Education

This section provides the background needed to contextualize this study, and surveys changes in educational systems, both globally and locally. This part also reviews the literature that frames principles of inclusive education, by examining both international research and research studies conducted within Nepal.

1. Emergence of inclusion in Nepal

In 1993, the National Special Education Program was launched in Nepal as an integral part of the first phase of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP I, 1993) with sponsorship from international agencies. Special education unit under BPEP I was established to plan and implement the program. BPEP I marked a shift to an integrated education system under the special education program. The concept of resource class and resource teacher was introduced to prepare children with disabilities to participate in regular classrooms with their non-disabled peers (Unicef, 2006). Under BPEP I special education program, a resource class was established within

the ordinary primary school system. Resource classes were preparatory, training classes for children who were blind, deaf or had mental disability.

Although BPEP I was a promising step towards providing mainstreaming education to children with disabilities, it did not go beyond integrated education (Kafle, 2007). Furthermore, children with different disabilities had unequal opportunity to inclusion, with the hearing/speech impaired and mentally challenged children being kept in the resource classes as a result of not being adequately prepared to study with their non-disabled peers. Due to these limitations in practice of the resource room model in BPEP I, the Department of Education took up the challenge of initiating inclusive education in Nepal in the year 2000. Basic primary education program (BPEP II, 1995-99) sought to promote inclusive education of children with mild to moderate disabilities in primary education. To achieve this aim, the program supported primary schools in identifying and assessing children with disabilities, training special education teachers and providing appropriate teaching-learning materials designed to ensure effective mainstreaming of these children. Foundational documents including Nepal's commitment to UNESCO's principle of education for all (EFA, 1994)), core document (2004-2009), the Secondary Education Support Program (SESP, 2004-2009), the poverty reduction strategy (10th plan) and the EFA National Action Plan (2001-15), School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP2009-2015) reflect the lessons of inclusion (kafle, 2012). This has led to a movement towards inclusive education in Nepal, especially at the primary level.

2. Overview of the Schooling System

The school education system in Nepal consists of primary, lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary education. Starting from grade one, elementary schools offer five years of education (grade 1-5), and lower secondary (lower middle) schools provide further three years of education (grade 6-8). Secondary schools offer two more years of education(grade 9-10) which concludes with the School Leaving Certificate (Examination, while higher secondary schools offer two more years of education(grade 11-12) after SLC. In addition, Early Childhood Development (ECD) pre-

primary classes (PPCs) are offered as preparation for grade one. The prescribed age groups for these levels are 3–4 years for ECD/PPC, 5–9 years for elementary, 10–12 years for lower secondary (middle), 13–14 years for secondary and 15–16 years for higher secondary education program. Since 2009, government of Nepal has implemented the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP), which aims to integrate school education into basic education (consisting of grades 1–8) and secondary education (consisting of Grades 9–12).

Broadly, schools are categorized into two types: community schools (supported by government) and institutional schools (supported by parents and trustees). Community schools have three sub-categories: community-aided (fully supported by the government for teachers salary and other expenses), community-managed (fully supported by the government for teachers' salary and other funds but their management responsibility lies with the community) and community-unaided i. e. getting either partial or no support from the government.

3. Myth toward disability

Disability, a new area of disclosure in many developing countries (Venter et al., 2002) including Nepal, has often been used in the cultural belief system to explain and understand it. Nepal is a multi-cultural country with several ethnic communities, each having its own unique culture (Adhikari, 2000), cultural beliefs about the causes of disability and treatment are to a large extent very challenging one. In Nepalese socio-cultural context of explanations to the causes of disability include: (a) witchcraft; (b) a curse from gods or ancestors; (c) a manifestation of supernatural powers; and (d) a punishment of the sins committed by the, parents or relatives. Some of these beliefs, occur by ignorance, superstition, fear, stigma, hostility, discrimination and negative attitudes toward persons with disabilities and their families, are social factors that have historically acted against inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and their progress in schools and the society (Lakhan et al., 2010).

Mostly, non-disabled people in Nepalese context are considered as weak,

feeble and a burden to society. Disabled children, especially girls with disabilities from low-caste communities, are further discriminated against and marginalized (Watch, 2011). A significant percentage of parents who have children with disabilities feel that it is their bad fate. Most people are not aware of the disease and lack of nutrition that causes the disabilities or impairment.

4. Inclusive Education in Principle

Originally, the inclusive education movement was focused primarily on people with disabilities and learning difficulties. This assumption can be seen across the literature and a number of legislative documents (Ainscow et al., 2006). More recently the concept of inclusion expanded to embrace those who are at risk of marginalization or exclusion for whatever reason. It can be thought of as an approach that seeks to address 'barriers to learning and participation', and provide 'resources to support learning and participation'. This support is seen as all activities, including those considered to be extra or co-curricular which increase the capacity of schools to respond to diversity (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). Some of these reasons are associated with ability, gender, race, ethnicity, language, care status, socioeconomic status, disability, sexuality, or religion (Gerschel, 2003). One major reason for this broader approach is that many of these factors interact or act in combination and can result ultimately in marginalization or exclusion. Focusing on a single factor, such as disability in isolation, has the potential to lead to faulty assumptions (Topping and Maloney, 2005). In this context, policies on inclusion should not be restricted only to the education of children identified as having special educational needs (Booth and Ainscow, 1998). This view is reflected in Nepal's national policy on inclusion (1996), in which attention is focused on a wide range of vulnerable or at-risk groups. This guidance states that educational inclusion is more than a concern with one group of children such as those who have been or are likely to be excluded from school. It is about equal opportunities for all children and young people whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment or background' (Interim constitution of Nepal, 2006)).

5. Inclusive education policy in Nepal

The Government of Nepal has shown commitment to ‘education for all children’, including those with disabilities and other special educational needs. The government is a signatory of the international declaration on Education for All and the Salamanca Declaration, which call for providing public education to all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic, or other conditions. The government has promulgated legislation and policies for rendering certain facilities and benefits to people with disabilities. Besides recognition of their human rights, some important policies such as the Disabled Persons Protection and Welfare Act 1982; the Child Act 1992, the Disabled Persons Protection and Welfare Rules 1994, Special Education Policy 1996 and the Local Self-Governance Act 1999 and create provision for rehabilitation in the areas of health, education, child development and social welfare. Currently Interim Constitution (2006) of Democratic Republic of Nepal has guaranteed education as a fundamental right for all citizens.

Several initiatives have been undertaken to provide integrated and inclusive education for children with disabilities by the department of inclusive education, charity organizations, religious institutions, local NGOs and international organizations. However, there is little documentation of such initiatives. There is a debate over the issue of special, integrated and inclusive education in the country. Some professionals advocate special schooling, whereas others favor integrated education in mainstream schools. Some argue that the implementation of inclusive education is unrealistic in the absence of awareness and infrastructure, and a lack of professional training. In Nepal, the division between special and general education policy clouds the development of an inclusion policy. The government’s education policy categorizes three types of education, namely, education for children in general, education for children with disabilities (mainly in the form of special education and integrated education), and education for other vulnerable children, such as ethnic groups, out-of-school children, women, poor and low-caste children. Most special education programs are donor-funded. Donors have a great influence over program design. There are few examples of good practice models for inclusive education. They are relatively new, and need to be

strengthened to make programs more disability-friendly.

6. Education for Persons with Disabilities

One of the least discussed aspects of the human rights situation in Nepal is the condition of children with disabilities and their right to education despite the laws guaranteeing it. Although the government provides free education to persons with disabilities from the pre-primary to undergraduate level, persons with disabilities who attend schools are limited and the drop-out rate is high. Although governments under the Muluki Ain (civil acts) provides social services, most people are unaware of these provisions and are unable to benefit from them (Country Profile of Nepal, 1999).

Children with disabilities in Nepal face diverse and imposing barriers to receiving a basic education – schools are physically inaccessible, teachers are inadequately trained, and some children with disabilities are unjustly denied admission to neighborhood schools (Human Rights Watch, 2011). Overall literacy rate (for population aged 5 years and above) has increased from 54.1% in 2001 to 65.9% in 2011. The male literacy rate is 75.1% as compared to the female literacy rate of 57.4%. The highest literacy rate is reported in Kathmandu district (86.3%), and the lowest in Rautahat (41.7%) (CBS, 2012).

However, children with disabilities in general, and especially those with intellectual disability and girls with disability, are among those most excluded from access to school and education. They have lower enrollment and higher drop-out rate (Human Right Watch, 2011; UNICEF, 2007). It is supposed that approximately 68% of persons with disabilities have no education, including 59.6% of males and 77.7% of females (UNICEF, 2007). The Flash I Report (2011) by the Ministry of Education reveals that out of 60,348 children officially registered with disabilities, only 1.2% is enrolled in the primary and basic education and 1% in lower secondary education.

A recent study carried out by Human Rights Watch (2011) states: despite Nepal's political commitment to persons with disabilities, particularly children, in practice, the government is failing in the implementation where it is most needed. Lack of disability-friendly environment, adequate learning and teaching

materials and negative attitudes of teachers and parents are major challenges. Even if school buildings might be accessible, the roads to schools are not. Education for children with disabilities is mostly organized as separate classes in the general school or as segregated initiatives in special schools and daycare centers. It is reported that government scholarships are often collected by parents without sending their children with disability to schools.”

1) Framework of Inclusion

Inclusion is such a broad approach that is more likely to be successful in contexts where there is a culture of collaboration that encourages and supports problem-solving (Carrington, 1999; Kugelmass, 2001; Skrtic, 1991). It involves those within a particular context in working together, using evidence to address barriers to education experienced by some learners. What, then, does this mean for policy? What needs to be done so that education systems that can encourage practices that ‘reach out’ effectively to all children and young people, whatever their circumstances and personal characteristics? In order to offer some direction as to how this agenda might be addressed, we have been developing a framework¹ based on what international research suggests are features of education systems that are successful in moving in an inclusive direction (Ainscow, 2005; Ainscow et al, 2006; Dyson, Howes & Roberts, 2002). The items in the framework should be seen as ideals, i.e. aspirations against which existing arrangements can be compared in order to pinpoint areas for development. The framework consists of four overlapping themes (Mel, 2008), as follows: Concepts, Policy, Structures and systems, Practice

For each of the four themes in the framework suggest four *performance indicators*, as follows:

(1) Concepts

- Inclusion is seen as an overall principle that guides all educational policies and practices.
- The curriculum and its associated assessment systems are designed to take account of all learners.

- All agencies that work with children, including the health and social services, understand and support the policy aspirations for promoting inclusive education.
- Systems are in place to monitor the presence, participation and achievement of all learners.

(2) Policy

- The promotion of inclusive education is strongly featured in important policy documents.
- Senior staff provides clear leadership on inclusive education.
- Leaders at all levels articulate consistent policy aspirations for the development of inclusive practices in schools.
- Leaders at all levels challenge non-inclusive practices in schools

(3) Structures and systems

- There is high quality support for vulnerable groups of learners.
- All services and institutions involved with children work together in coordinating inclusive policies and practices.
- Resources, both human and financial, are distributed in ways that benefit vulnerable groups of learners.
- There is a clear role for specialist provision, such as special schools and units, in promoting inclusive education

(4) Practice

- Schools should provide support for those learners who are at risk and still have no access to main streaming practices.
- Trainee teachers need to be prepared for dealing with learner's needs, interests and preferences.
- Teachers must have opportunities to take part in continuing professional development regarding inclusive practices.

The framework can be used to review the stage of development within a national or district education system. This requires an engagement with statistical data, not least the views of students and their families. In this

way, evidence can be used to formulate plans for moving.

The table below is a latest disability statistics of Nepal carried out by CBS(2012), it also could not figure out school enrollment of the students with disabilities.

<Table 1> Prevalence of Disabilities

| | Total population | People without disability | People with disability | % with disability |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 26,494,504 | 25,981,183 | 513,321 | 1.94 |
| Male | 12,849,041 | 12,568,955 | 280,086 | 2.18 |
| Female | 13,645,463 | 13,412,228 | 233,235 | 1.71 |
| Categorical Prevalence of Disability | | | | |
| SN | Disabilities | Total No. | % of <> within disability | % in total population |
| 1 | Physical disability | 186,457 | 36.3 % | 0.704 |
| 2 | Blindness/Low vision | 94,765 | 18.5% | 0.358 |
| 3 | Deaf/Hard of hearing | 79,307 | 15.4% | 0.301 |
| 4 | Deaf-Blind | 9,436 | 2.9% | 0.036 |
| 5 | Speech impairment | 58,855 | 11.5% | 0.222 |
| 6 | Mental disability | 30,997 | 6% | 0.117 |
| 7 | Intellectual disability | 14,888 | 2.9% | 0.056 |
| 8 | Multiple disabilities | 38,616 | 7.5% | 0.146 |
| | | | | 1.93 |

** Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal (Final Report, 2012)*

However, data published by different NGOs shows that about 68% children with disabilities have no access to education. The review of literature developing framework of inclusion suggest that if there is no clarity in concepts, policy, systems and practices of inclusive education setting, the implementation of inclusion will not meet the needs of all diverse learners specifically children with special needs.

The table below presents Nepal's regional based disability data.

<Table 2> Disability Population by Development Region

| Area/ Sex | Total | Population without disability | Population with disability | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| | | Physical | Blindness/ Low Vision | Deaf/Hard of hearing | Deaf/ blind | Speech problem | Mental disability | Intellect ual disability | Multiple disabilit ies | |
| Eastern Dev. Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 5,811,555 | 5,700,206 | 39,637 | 17,571 | 16,606 | 1,857 | 14,447 | 7,532 | 3,444 | 10,255 |
| Male | 2,790,483 | 2,29,048 | 23,368 | 9,007 | 8,897 | 1,018 | 7,939 | 3,946 | 1,851 | 5,409 |
| Female | 3,021,072 | | 16,269 | 8,564 | 7,709 | 839 | 6,508 | 3,586 | 1,593 | 4,846 |
| Central Dev. Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 9,656,985 | 9,512,314 | 50465 | 30,985 | 19,080 | 2,822 | 17,576 | 99,214 | 4,479 | 10,050 |
| Male | 4,841,624 | 4,761,566 | 29,868 | 15,658 | 9,871 | 1,443 | 10,140 | 5,152 | 2,534 | 5,392 |
| Female | 4,815,361 | 4,750,748 | 20,597 | 15,327 | 9,209 | 1,379 | 7,436 | 4,062 | 1,945 | 4,658 |
| Western Dev. Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 4,926,765 | 4,830,571 | 33,560 | 15,110 | 15,478 | 1,553 | 12,372 | 6,921 | 3,508 | 7,692 |
| Male | 2,292,597 | 2,240,155 | 19,808 | 7,538 | 7,798 | 777 | 6,757 | 3,682 | 1,945 | 4,137 |
| Female | 2,634,168 | 2,590,416 | 13,752 | 7,572 | 7,680 | 776 | 5,615 | 3,239 | 1,563 | 3,555 |
| Mid-Western Dev. Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 3,546,682 | 3,453,407 | 36,186 | 16,772 | 17,167 | 1,953 | 8,700 | 4,146 | 2,128 | 6,228 |
| Male | 1,706,450 | 1,655,962 | 20,743 | 8,256 | 8,865 | 979 | 4,951 | 2,217 | 1,206 | 3,271 |
| Female | 1,840,232 | 1,779,445 | 15,438 | 8,516 | 8,302 | 974 | 3,749 | 1,929 | 922 | 2,957 |
| Far-Western Dev. Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 2,552,517 | 2,484,685 | 26,614 | 14,327 | 10,976 | 1,251 | 5,760 | 3,184 | 1,329 | 4,391 |
| Male | 1,217,887 | 1,182,224 | 14,492 | 6,582 | 5,773 | 586 | 3,403 | 1,790 | 744 | 2,293 |
| Female | 1,334,630 | 1,302,461 | 12,122 | 7,745 | 5,203 | 665 | 2,357 | 1,394 | 585 | 2,098 |

* Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal (Final Report, 2012)

In fact people with disability have no easy access to education in Nepal. Despite government's commitment to education for all, many students with disabilities are still in exclusion. Why? It is not easy to give quick answer. However the literature shows that there is deficiency in both conceptual and operational framework of our inclusive education process. Therefore it

is a need for a rethinking to the concepts, policy, systems and practice of Nepal's inclusive education. Revised literature suggested that progress would be much more likely be effective if structures, practices, assumptions, models, theories and attitudinal changes are preceded by philosophical shifts. Thus certain changes need to take place to implement the philosophy and practice of inclusion.

The data below indicates that the enrollment status of the children with disability is getting worse at higher grades as compared to primary and secondary level

<Table 3> Special and Integrated Schools in Nepal

| Disability | Special Schools | Integrated Resource Classes |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Blind and visually impaired | 1 | 88 |
| Deaf and hearing-impaired | 8 | 171 |
| Intellectual disability | 14 | 118 |
| Physical disability | 1 | – |
| Total | 24 | 377 |

** Source: Department of Inclusive Education, Sanathimi, Bhaktapur, 2012*

7. General Education Reform Strategic Plans

1) School Sector Reform Program (SSRP)

Universal primary education is one of the major millennium development goals (MDGs) to which all member countries of the United Nations are committed. In April 2000, the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal embraced a holistic concept of educational development and subsequently declared the Education for All (EFA) agenda to be achieved by 2015. Nepal, as a signatory member country of the forum, has shown its commitment to achieving the EFA goals within the stipulated timeframe. In this regard, the government of Nepal has given high priority to the education sub-sector, and has allocated a significant share of its total national budget to this sector.

264 특수교육 저널: 이론과 실천(제14권 2호)

The government expected to meet the target of education for all through EFA 2004–2009 and SSRP 2010–2015; the latter part has been implemented as School Sector Reform Plan (2009–2015), a long-term strategic plan to achieve the goals and objectives of basic and secondary education through expanding access and equity, improving quality and relevance, and strengthening the institutional capacity of the entire school education system to improve system performance, which the Government of Nepal and Ministry of Education (GoN/MoE) has envisioned for the years 2009–10 to 2013–14. The plan comprises the key strategic interventions and the estimated financial resources required to implement these key strategies. Subsequently, it has been implemented with a sectoral approach across the country (MoE, 2012).

<Table 4> School Sector Reform Program Budget for Fiscal Year 2010–11

| Components | SSR Program Budget for FY 2010–11 (NRs,000) | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------|------------|-------|------------|
| | Total budget in ASIP | | | | |
| | Central | Share | District | Share | Total |
| | 65–3/4–428 | | 65–3/4–815 | | |
| Early Childhood Edu. and Dev. | 40 | 0.01 | 680,365 | 4.0 | 680,405 |
| Ensuring Access to All | 51,216 | 8.97 | 5,104,840 | 29.8 | 5,156,056 |
| Literacy and Continuous Education | 8,260 | 1.45 | 173,003 | 1.0 | 181,263 |
| Improvement of Edu. Quality | 85,871 | 15.04 | 3,543,638 | 20.7 | 3,629,509 |
| Teacher & Education Dev. | 21,881 | 3.83 | 347,489 | 2.0 | 369,370 |
| Capacity Development | 326,283 | 57.15 | 11,625 | 0.1 | 337,908 |
| School Management and Follow-up | 73,839 | 12.93 | 1,034,160 | 6.0 | 1,107,999 |
| Incentive and Support | 2,700 | 0.47 | 1,897,678 | 11.1 | 1,900,378 |
| Per-child Funding Unit (Non-salary) | – | – | 13,656,485 | 79.6 | 13,656,485 |
| Others | – | – | 709,252 | 4.1 | 709,252 |
| Recurrent | 432,915 | 75.82 | 11,898,158 | 69.3 | 12,331,073 |
| Capital | 138,025 | 24 | 5,260,377 | 31 | 5,398,402 |
| Total | 570,940 | 100 | 17,158,535 | 100 | 17,729,475 |

* Source: Ministry of Education: Annual Work Plan & Budget, 2010–11

The table value shows that about 97% of the total budget was allocated for the districts and only 3% was allocated for the center. In the central budget head, the highest share 75.82% was for recurrent. And in the district, the highest share 79.6% was for Per-child Funding (PCF).

<Table 5> School Sector Reform Program Indicators and Achievements

| Indicators | Unit | Base Year | | Target Year | | |
|--|------|-----------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| | | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2010-11 |
| 1. Share of Education Budget | | | | | | |
| Gross National Product | % | 2 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.2 | NA |
| Gross Domestic Products | % | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 5.39 |
| 2. Share in Education Budget | | | | | | |
| Basic Education | % | 70 | 71 | 71 | 72 | 63.99 |
| Secondary Education | % | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 16.94 |
| 3. Enrolment at Grade 1 | | | | | | |
| New Entrants with ECED Experience | % | 33 | 36 | 41 | 45 | 52.1 |
| Gross Intake Rate | % | 141 | 148 | 144 | 140 | 142.4 |
| Net Intake Rate | % | 78 | 81 | 83 | 86 | 89.0 |
| 4. Gross Enrolment Rate | | | | | | |
| ECED/Pre Primary | % | 60 | 63 | 67 | 72 | 70.0 |
| Basic Education (1-8) | % | 116 | 123 | 125 | 128 | 124.4 |
| Secondary Education | % | 36 | 40 | 43 | 47 | 46.2 |
| 5. Net Enrolment Rate | | | | | | |
| Primary Education | % | 89 | 92 | 94 | 96 | 94.5 |
| Basic Education | % | 71 | 73 | 75 | 77 | 86 |
| Secondary Education | % | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 27.1 |
| 6. Teachers with Required Qualifications and Training | | | | | | |
| Basic Education | % | 62 | 66 | 70 | 74 | 79.3 |
| Secondary Education | % | 74 | 77 | 80 | 83 | 75.3 |

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〈Table 5〉 School Sector Reform Program Indicators and Achievements (continue)

| Indicators | Unit | Base Year | | Target Year | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| | | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2010-11 |
| 7. Teachers with Required Certification | | | | | | |
| Basic Education | % | 90 | 91 | 92 | 94 | 95 |
| Secondary Education | % | 90 | 91 | 92 | 94 | 95 |
| 8. Pupil Teachers Ratio | | | | | | |
| Basic Education | Ratio | 44 | 43 | 41 | 40 | 30 |
| Secondary Education | Ratio | 42 | 39 | 37 | 34 | 44.4 |
| 9. Repetition Rate | | | | | | |
| Grade 1 | % | 28 | 18 | 12 | 8 | 22.6 |
| Grade 8 | % | 13 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 6.6 |
| 10. Survival Rate by cohort Method | | | | | | |
| Grade 5 | % | 54 | 58 | 61 | 65 | 80.6 |
| Grade 8 (Basic 1-8) | % | 37 | 41 | 45 | 49 | 66 |
| 11. Coefficient of Efficiency | | | | | | |
| Basic Education | Ratio | 0.46 | 0.49 | 0.52 | 0.55 | 0.65 |
| Secondary Education | Ratio | 0.3 | 0.33 | 0.36 | 0.39 | NA |
| 12. Learning Achievement | | | | | | |
| Grade 5 | % | 50 | 53 | 56 | 60 | 49.6 |
| Grade 8 | % | 44 | 46 | 58 | 49 | 43.5 |
| 13. Pass Rate | | | | | | |
| SLC | % | 60 | 62 | 64 | 65 | 55.5 |
| Higher Secondary (Grades 11-12) | % | 23 | 25 | 28 | 31 | 41 |
| 14. Literacy Rate | | | | | | |
| Age group 15-24 yrs. | % | 73 | 75 | 78 | 80 | NA |
| Age group 6+ yrs. | % | 63 | 69 | 76 | 78 | NA |
| Age group 15+ yrs | % | 52 | 56 | 60 | 62 | NA |
| 15. Literacy GPI (15+) | Ratio | 0.61 | 0.74 | 0.92 | 0.92 | NA |

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* Source: Ministry of Education: Annual report, 2011

The above achievement indicator of enrollment at grade one is enthusiastic and has surpassed the target set by the plan. GER in ECED/Pre-primary and secondary education (9–12) is higher than the target set, but the GER in basic education (1–8) is still lower than the set target in FY 2010–11.

IV. Discussions

1. Challenges of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities

The national policy and plan of action on disability, adopted in 2006, recognized the need to improve the access of persons with disabilities to education, health, training, employment, rehabilitation, and communication. According to this policy, the government will focus on inclusive education “to increase educational opportunities for children with disabilities and for quality education.” The plan aimed to provide free primary education to 50% of school-aged children with disabilities by 2012. The plan also included teacher training and the development of early identification and intervention programs. While the plan contains concrete steps to improve access to education for children with disabilities, it appears to ignore the commitment to inclusive education expressed in the 2006 National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability.

The Ministry of Education initiated orientations on inclusive education for district education officers, who are in turn required to organize trainings for school administrators and teachers in each district. It is clear, however, that such brief orientation programs do not provide local government officials with the necessary skills to train teachers and other school staff on how to adapt teaching methods, the curriculum and the environment to include children with diverse learning needs. As a result, the government is failing to meet its obligation to ensure inclusive schools for students with disabilities, as dictated by its own inclusive education policy as well as international law (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

Despite national policies on inclusive and child-friendly schools, the government is failing to make the school environment accessible for children with disabilities, which in many cases effectively denies these children their right to education. In addition to physical abuse, children with all types of disabilities also experience stigmatization and verbal abuse in their schools and the communities. In Nepal and many other countries, disability and poverty are inextricably linked. Poverty can lead to disability through malnourishment, the inaccessibility of health services, poor sanitation, or unsafe living and working conditions.

Governments' inclusive education policy does not appear to be serious since there is no clear plan for the integration of children with disabilities, particularly intellectual or developmental disabilities, into mainstream schools. Of the primary-school-aged population in Nepal, 93.7% are enrolled in school, totaling nearly five million children. Of all those enrolled in school at the primary level, 1.1% are students with disabilities, totaling 53,681 children (Human Rights Watch, 2011)

2. Why is Inclusive Education Not Successful?

Research literature suggests that the lack of relevant facilities and materials comprise the major obstacle to the implementation of effective inclusion in developing countries (Anumonye, 1991 & Kholi, 1993). Anumonye (1991), for instance, investigated the problems of inclusion in the West African country of Nigeria. The data indicates that the required educational materials were not provided or are inadequate. Further, there were no personnel in most institutions to provide important advisory services that would assist the regular teachers with teaching and managing students with special needs who were being educated in public schools.

It was observed that those children at the primary levels were socially isolated since they just sat in the classrooms and never participated in any activity outside their corner of the classroom. Clearly, evidence indicates that inadequate facilities, the absence of support services, the large class sizes and the poor infrastructure are some of the obstacles to achieving meaningful inclusion. In addition, inadequate personnel training programs

constitute another problem of achieving inclusion. Apart from regular and special needs teachers of different kinds, the successful education of learners with disabilities in inclusive schools requires the involvement of parents and professionals who assist in the identification, referral, diagnosis, treatment and provision of appropriate educational and related services. Thus, adequately trained professionals are required for the provision of meaningful educational services to students with special needs in regular schools.

Evidence suggests that several institutions of higher education in many developing countries have training programs for regular and special needs teachers (Marfo, 1994, & Eleweke, 1999a). However, training programs for support personnel, such as educational audiologists, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, and communication support workers like interpreters remain unavailable in many developing countries (Eleweke 1999a). Research in China, for example, indicates that support personnel such as vocational counselors, evaluators and work placement specialists lack most of the educational institutions that serve learners with special needs (Xu, 1995).

Furthermore, concerns remain about the inadequacies of the teacher training programs in view of the absence of relevant materials and facilities in the institutions. Indeed, concerns about the inadequacies in personnel preparation programs are well documented (e.g., Thorburn & Roeher, 1986; Ainscow et al., 1995; Kisanji, 1993; Marfo, 1994; Thorburn & Roeher, 1986). Many of the training programs, according to these authors, are strongly influenced by Western models of training that may be inappropriate for the situation in Nepal. Kisanji (1993), for instance, observed that many of the training institutions had continued with the categorical teacher training model. This model emphasizes specialist teachers and special school placement, and clearly does not favor inclusive practices.

3. What Needs to be Done to Make Inclusion Successful?

Although, in theory, the government promotes an inclusive education policy, in practice, it supports a system of segregated resource classes designated for children with disabilities in mainstream schools and separate

schools for deaf, blind and children with physical and intellectual disabilities.

While it will take time to transition from resource classes and special schools to a fully inclusive education system, the government has not done enough to ensure that children with disabilities attend school and that the education system is accessible, appropriate, and of good quality for children with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities.

Furthermore, the governments' inclusive education policy does not appear to be reliable since there is no clear plan for the integration of children with disabilities, particularly intellectual or developmental disabilities, into general education classrooms.

Fox and Yssedyke (1997) identified several issues that must be addressed in order to make inclusion work. These included providing sufficient resources, encouraging the active leadership of individuals with positive attitudes, and convincing all educational personnel that inclusion is not solely the responsibility of special education; however, it is also important that special education teachers play an important role as consultants in the overall process (Simon, 1998).

To make inclusion truly successful, a range of changes is needed in education; many positive examples of inclusion are the result of individual committed teachers or effective parent advocates. Although this may work for individual children, a more systematic approach is needed to make inclusion succeed on a broad scale. First of all, general education law must address a long-term program for preparing of all general education teachers to relate to students with disabilities. The traditional separation of special and regular education in teacher training programs can be a barrier to achieving inclusion. Second, there needs to be administrative support for inclusion. This includes leadership in demonstrating support for inclusion and establishing clear nationwide policies. Third, resources ranging from teacher aides to consultant teachers have to be made available. Without a commitment of resources, inclusion can result in the "dumping" of students into classes that are unprepared to accept them.

Finally, inclusion will be facilitated by team teaching and collaborative approaches. And acceptance of inclusion will continue to grow and an increasing number of students with different sorts of disabilities will be included in regular classes and programs. Hopefully, in the near future the socio-political and educational climate will be such that these students are

more likely to be included.

V. Conclusion

The existing gap in policy and practice of Nepal's inclusive education is one of the most challenging issue at present. As the theoretical part(policy) that guides the operational part of inclusion(practice. Unless the concepts and policies of inclusion are interconnected well, the implementation process of inclusion cannot benefit to all learners of diverse needs. To address the equal access to all children regardless of their differences, Nepal government's many initiatives such as commitment to UNESCO's principle of education for all(EFA, 1994), core document (2004–09), the secondary education support program(SESP, 2004–2015), the poverty reduction strategy(10th plan), education for all national action plan(2001–2015), school sector reform plan(SSRP, 2009–2015), inclusive education policy (2006), and interim constitution (2006) reflects the lesson of inclusion. This has led to a movement towards inclusive education in Nepal. However, the true concepts of inclusive education have not been translated in classroom practices yet. As the research study conducted by CERID in 2004, which had also concluded that Nepal's school environment is not favorable for inclusion to the students with disabilities. This situation still prevails it is so because of the gap in between the conceptual clarity and effective implementation of inclusion. In this way, inclusion practice without clarity in concepts, and policies, the practice can simply turn out to a form of rhetoric: much talks without real application.

Over all problem of Nepal's present policy and practice of inclusive education can be wrapped up in the following gists: First, it is the conceptual problems related to the beliefs, motivations and attitudes that different teachers and parents have about educating children with disabilities in general education classrooms. Second, it is the implementation process that is related to the differences in the way Nepal's present schools and classrooms are structured and managed as well as the instructions are designed. Many inclusion initiatives fail because there is lack of strong commitment from

administrators to provide resources to the teachers as they need. Similarly, the tightening budgets threaten the continuation of the inclusion process, which Nepalese administrators are facing now. Third, it is the knowledge about inclusion. Problems concerning the differences in the knowledge and skills of various teachers about instructing special needs students, providing support services, adapting to the curriculum and instruction, and structuring the classroom for optimal inclusion. Most of general education teachers in Nepal lack the knowledge about whether and how inclusion programs work. The teachers often have little access to information about the benefits, successful strategies, and results of inclusion. It is this gap that this paper with its concept and framework of inclusion wishes to improve.

This research recommends for governments to adopt a “twin track” approach, where children are integrated from special schools into mainstream schools over a set period of time; This approach requires the government, together with international partners or experts, to clarify the concept of inclusive education and discuss the relationship between separate schools, resource classes, assessment centers and mainstream schools as well as the ways in which they can work together toward the common goal of achieving inclusive quality education for all children. Rather than existing as parallel processes, collaboration between special schools and inclusive schools through information sharing and the development of future strategies is essential.

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네팔의 특수교육대상자를 위한 통합교육과 환경

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<요 약>

본 논문의 목적은 현재 네팔의 통합교육 정책과 실행과정을 살펴보는 것이다. 네팔의 연구서와 보고서들은 통합교육이 만족스럽게 이루어지지 않고 있음을 보여준다. 그 원인은 지원 서비스, 관련자료, 능력을 갖춘 특수교사 뿐만 아니라 학교 구조와 시스템도 부족하다는 데 있다. 그러므로 통합교육이 잘 실행되려면 관련된 개념과 정책이 분명하게 명시되어야 할 것이다. 본 연구 결과에 따르면, 네팔 정부는 모든 학생들을 위해서 교사 훈련 프로그램을 개선하고, 모든 교사들에게 통합교육 방법을 가르쳐야 하며, 교육에 대한 대비를 증진시켜야 한다.

주제어 : 통합교육, 정책, 특수교육대상자

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