

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION  
(Pre-primary-12) IN NEPAL**

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# Preface

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARNEC	All Round National Education Committee
CAS	Continuous Assessment System
CTCC	Curriculum Textbook Coordination Committee
CTEVT	Council for technical Education and Vocational Training
CTSC	Curriculum Textbook Subject Committee
DEC	District Education Committee
DEO	District Education Office
DLCDC	District Level Curriculum Development Committee
DOE	Department of Education
ED	Executive Director
EFA	Education for All
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HIV	Human immunodeficiency Virus
HLNEC	High Level National Education Commission
HMGN	His Majesty's Government of Nepal
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
LCDF	Local Curriculum Development Forum
LNBCDC	Local Need Based Curriculum Development Committee
LNBS	Local Need Base Study
LPP	Liberal Promotion Policy
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	Management Information System
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDAC	National Curriculum Development and Assessment Council
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NEC	National Education Commission
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NESP	National Education System Plan
NNEPC	Nepal National Education Planning Commission
NPA	National Plan of Action
OCE	Office of Controller of Examination
P-12	Pre-primary to Grade 12
PCL	Proficiency Certificate Level
RC	Resource Centre
RCLEC	Resource Centre Level Examination Committee.
REC	Regional Examination Committee
RED	Regional Education Directorate
SAARC	South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation
SEDP	Secondary Education Development Plan
SEPP	Secondary Education Perspective Plan

SESP	Secondary Education Support Program
SLC	School Leaving Certificate Examination
SMC	School Management Committee
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## Chapter 1

### Need for a National Curriculum Framework

#### 1.1 Background

The twenty-first century is characterized as the age of globalization, protection of human rights and child rights, demand for peace, emphasis on gender and social equity, protection of the environment, and global flow of information and communication. These characteristics of the twenty-first century have called for a broadening of the vision of education. Under this broad vision, education is regarded as the fundamental right of all people, an investment for economic, social and political advancement, a tool for empowerment of disadvantaged groups, a route to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and mental development of the individual, a foundation for culture of peace, and an avenue for developing a lifelong learning society. Hence, improving access, equity, relevance and quality of education have become the focus of the twenty-first century education.

In the above context, the UNESCO document *Learning: the Treasure Within*, known as Delors Report (1996), has taken a critical look at the total educational scenario and has given a vision for the twenty-first century education based upon the following four principles of learning: 'learning to know', 'learning to do', 'learning to be', and 'learning to live together.' This new vision calls for rethinking and reorganizing the education system. It is commonly recognized that those who do not possess those principles will be deemed to lead a life of extreme poverty. Imparting such knowledge and skills, however, requires more years and higher standards of basic education than in the past (Braslavsky 2001). Hence, it has become increasingly important to ensure that learners are adequately prepared to deal with these new demands of education.

Furthermore, there have been several commitments, plans and programmes at the international and national levels in recent years that deal with providing education at both primary and secondary levels. The UN has set the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for education with a focus on achieving the universal primary education and eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education by the year 2015. Similarly, Education for All Dakar Framework of Action agreed in 2000 has set the following six goals of education by the year 2015: (1) expanding and improving early childhood care and education; (2) ensuring access to education for all children; (3) meeting the learning needs of all young people and adults; (4) achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy; (5) eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education; and (6) improving all aspects of the quality of education.

In Nepal, efforts towards making education available for the masses started only after the restoration of democracy in 1951. Since then, there have been sustained efforts to develop a national system of education that best fits the national and individual requirements.<sup>1</sup> In addition

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<sup>1</sup> The formation of Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) in 1954 and its report (NNEPC, 1956), the formation of All Round National Education Committee and its report (ARNEC, 1961), the formulation of National Education System Plan (NESP, 1971) and its implementation, the formation of National Education Commission (NEC) in 1990 and its report (NEC, 1992), and the formation of the High Level National Education Commission and its report (HLNEC, 1998) are examples of various national level commissions to analyze the situation of education in the country and make appropriate recommendations.

to various high level commissions to identify reform agendas on education, several national plans and projects have been implemented since the 1970s. Such plans and projects were: the National Education System Plan (NESP, 1971), Education for Rural Development, the Seti Project (1981-1992), Primary Education Project (1984-1992), Science Education development Project 1983, Basic and Primary Education Project Phase I (1993-1998), Secondary Education Perspective Plan (1997), Basic and Primary Education Project Phase II (1999-2004), Secondary Education Development Project (1993-2000), and the Secondary Education Development Plan (2001). In 1989, the Higher Secondary Education Board was established with the purpose of implementing 10+2 program under the Higher Education Act. These efforts were further enhanced with the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990 and the introduction of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 that regarded education as one of the fundamental rights. This constitutional provision encouraged the introduction of special policies for educating girls, other disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities, and *Dalits* who have been historically marginalized in Nepal.

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) has the overarching national goal of poverty reduction and has regarded education as one of the major means to achieve this goal. The Plan has emphasized the need for knowledge building, human resource development and sustained human productivity, gender and social equity, inclusion and empowerment, and economic growth for poverty reduction. Similarly, the government has approved the Education for All National Plan of Action (2001-2015), which has adapted the six goals of Dakar Framework of Action agreed in 2000 to suit the national context. Drawing from these two plans, a five-year strategic plan called Education for All (EFA) 2004-2009 was developed and has been implemented since July 2004. Similarly, for the improvement of secondary education, Nepal is implementing a five-year Secondary Education Support Program (2003-2008) with the objective of improving equity, access, quality, relevance and institutional capacity of secondary education.

Due to all these efforts Nepal has made significant progress in education at all levels during the past half a century. However, there are many challenges and problems that Nepal's needs to overcome before it can achieve the EFA and MDG goals. The literacy rate of 6 years and above population, for example, is only 54.1% percent, the Net Enrolment rate for the primary level is 84%, for the lower secondary is 39.4%, and for the secondary level is only 25.5 % (MOES, 2004). Moreover, only about 20% of those enrolled in grade one complete grade five in five years. These indicators suggest that significant percentage of children of school going age continue to remain outside the education system, and that there is low internal efficiency and low quality of education that does not serve the labor market. Therefore there is growing concern not only about the problems of education in general but also to the quality of curriculum contents, its delivery and the assessment system.

The above discussion clearly indicates that fundamental reorganization and reform of curriculum has become essential so that all students can learn and what they learn is relevant to them as individuals and citizens, in their present and future context, as well as for community, societal, and national development. Towards this direction the initial step is the development of a National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for school education that covers grades P-12 and embodies the principles, structures and approaches upon which specific curriculum elements are to be developed. This has been duly recognized in the SESP core document. It was in this

context that the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) initiated the process of developing a National Curriculum Framework including an assessment policy for school education. The NCF consists of the principles and guidelines for developing, implementing and revising the national school curriculum and assessment based on a comprehensive review of the context and concerns of educational development with reference to national needs and international perspectives.

## **1.2 Process Followed in Developing the NCF**

Based on this concept of NCF given above, the task of developing the NCF started with a workshop which suggested some guidelines for the process of NCF development. A tentative outline of NCF was developed and finalized after an interaction program with educationists and subject experts. This was followed by a number of activities such as the analysis of existing curriculum of six core subjects by six task forces in CDC, the technical analysis of curriculum, textbooks, and teachers' guides by five different stakeholder groups from their perspectives,<sup>2</sup> collection of views and suggestions from teachers, students and other stakeholders on the existing curriculum through five regional workshops, and review of national and international documents on curriculum framework and assessment policies and practices. Inputs from all these activities formed the basis for the first draft of the NCF.

In the process of reviewing the first draft of the NCF within CDC, thematic discussions on inclusive education, student assessment, technical and vocational education and life skills, local curriculum, and information and communication technology (ICT) education were carried out with concerned experts and officials. After incorporating feedbacks and suggestions from these thematic discussions, the second draft was prepared and discussed with high level officials at MOES consisting of the Secretary, all Joint Secretaries, directors of the Department of Education, and all institution heads. The suggestions thus received were incorporated and the revised version of the NCF was shared with education experts for their professional input and feedback. Following their feedback and comments this final version of the NCF was prepared.

## **1.3 Organization of this Framework**

The rest of this document is organized as follows: This introductory chapter is followed by a discussion on contexts and concerns in which effort is made to highlight the overall context within which this framework is developed and the major issues and challenges that Nepal is facing in the area of curriculum. This is followed by the third chapter on vision, goals, and guiding principles for curriculum based on which objectives of school education, curriculum structure, and assessment policy are developed and presented in chapter four. The last chapter elaborates on the guidelines to implement the National Curriculum Framework.

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<sup>2</sup> The reports produced under this study are the following: 1) Analysis of the Curriculum from Dalit Perspective (Dalit Commission 2061); Analysis of Textbooks and Teachers' Guides from Dalit Perspective (Dalit Commission 2061)—both in Nepali; Analysis of the Curriculum, Textbooks, and Teachers' Guides from the Perspective of People with Disability (National Federation of Disabled-Nepal, 2005)—in Nepali; Analysis of the School Level Curriculum from the Perspective of Janajatis and Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN 2005); Analysis of the Textbooks and Teachers' guides from the Perspectives of Janajatis and Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN 2005)—in Nepali; A Report on the Content Analysis of Curriculum and Textbooks (Grades 1-12) from Rights-based and Child-Centered Perspectives (CWIN, 2004); Content Analysis of the Curriculum (Grades 1-12) from Gender Perspective (Onta-Bhatta and Ghimire-Niraula, 2005).

## Chapter 2

### Overall Context and Curricular Concerns

This chapter presents the overall context within which this NCF has been developed and highlights the major issues and challenges that prevail both at the policy and implementation levels of curriculum. This chapter is organized under the following issues of concern:

- Socio-cultural and educational context
- Curriculum development and improvement process
- Curricular coherence and continuity
- Need for value education
- Life skills approach to education
- Education for work
- Need for information communication technology education
- Language issues
- Inclusive approach to curriculum
- Instructional approaches
- Sanskrit education
- Local Need Based Education
- Subjects to teach
- Alternative education
- Impact of globalization in education
- Student assessment

The above points are elaborated below.

#### 2.1 Socio-cultural and Educational Context

Nepal is topographically, culturally, linguistically, and ethnically very diverse despite its relatively small geographical size. It has three eco-zones (i.e. Mountain, Hills and Terai) that feature high mountains with harsh environmental conditions in the North to flat lands with tropical weather in the South. Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country with relatively high population growth rate (2.24% per annum), slow economic growth rate and insufficient infrastructure. Culturally, Nepal is a mosaic of many different cultures, languages and religions. The most recently conducted census (2001) has recorded more than 101 ethnic groups in Nepal with ten major ethnic groups occupying 69% of the population.<sup>3</sup> In addition, there are 92 different languages and a number of dialects having status as mother tongue. Nepali language is prominent both as the lingua franca of the country and the state language. In terms of population by mother tongue, about 48.61% speak Nepali, 12.30% speak Maithili, 7.53% Bhojpuri, 5.86% Tharu, 5.19% Tamang, 3.63% Newari, 3.39% Magar, 2.47% Awadhi, 1.49% Gurung and 1.47% Limbu.<sup>4</sup> Given this kind of cultural and linguistic diversity, it is a major problem that

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<sup>3</sup> These ten ethnic groups are: Chhetri, Hill Brahmin, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Newar, Kami, Yadav, Muslim and Rai Kirati.

<sup>4</sup> There are other various mother tongues like Rajbansi, Hindi, Urdu, Bhote, Sherpa, etc. with less than 1%

there is a centralized national curriculum with little provision for flexibility and localization and that the language of instruction is Nepali.

Another context that is of relevance here is the regional and rural-urban disparity in the nation. There are variations in the economic, educational, health, and other facilities such as electricity, communication and transport between regions, and these services are mostly confined to urban areas. For example, the literacy rate varies notably by gender, location and ethnicity. As evidenced by 2001 census, 65.5% males and 42.8% females are literate. Similarly the rural and urban literacy rates are 51.0 and 71.9 % respectively, while by development regions the literacy rate in the Western Development Region is the highest (i.e. 59.3%) and that of the Far-Western Development Region is the lowest (i.e. 48.7 %). The literacy rate also varies according to ethnic groups as evidenced by the fact that while Kyastha, Thaklali, Hill Brahmin, Bangali, Newar, Maithali Brahmin have the rate of 82.05%, 75.66%, 74.90%, 72.51%, 71.22% and 71.21% respectively, deprived groups such as the Dom and Mushahar have literacy rates of only 9.39% and 7.28% respectively (Dahal, 2003).

When the above figures are viewed from a historical perspective, it must be concluded that Nepal has made substantial progress in the field of education in the past half a century. In 1951, Nepal had a literacy rate of only 2%, and there were only 321 primary schools and 11 high schools. By 2002, the literacy rate had mounted to 54%, the number of primary schools to 25,927, lower secondary schools to 7,289 and secondary schools to 4,350 (MOES, 2004). Despite these quantitative achievements, people from different cross sections of the society generally agree that the increase in school enrolments has been accompanied by a decline in educational performance illustrated by low success rates in examination. If we look into the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination results, the overall pass percentage has remained around 35% over the years while that of the community schools has remained less than 25%. Also, there is gender disparity in educational attainment. A review of the level of educational attainment of literate persons of 6 years and above by sex showed that the educational attainment of boys was higher than that of girls in 2001. Similarly, rural and urban differences in educational attainment were revealed whereby higher proportions of urban students were found to be completing different levels of education compared to rural students in 2001 (Manandhar and Shrestha, 2003).

Given all these disparities and the diversity of cultures and languages in the country, the centralized management of education and uniform curriculum are major problems. Hence, there is a need for strong political commitment and effective strategies in education to bridge the gaps elaborated above, and to create a curriculum framework that embraces cultural diversity of the nation as a strength and as an opportunity for enriching the educational experience of Nepali children.

## **2.2 Curriculum Development and Improvement Process**

The concept of curriculum and the process of curriculum and textbook development have changed in recent years. Curriculum is now viewed as a process and it includes intended, taught and learned curriculum. In this context, we need to capture the interactive, dynamic nature of the curriculum process where national education goals are established and the curriculum is

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population who speak these languages.

organized around key learning areas rather than divided into many discrete and seemingly unrelated subjects. Also, the curriculum development process needs to be changed so that many actors such as female and male teachers, other educators with recent teaching experience, curriculum experts, and members of the wider community become actively involved in developing the curriculum.

In Nepal, CDC is the only national institution responsible for the development, implementation and revision of curriculum. CDC has no other branches or divisions at regional or district level. It functions as a governing body under His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Education and Sports(MOES), and has the authority to prescribe school level curricula (grade 1-10), and to develop curricula, teachers' guides and textbooks. Currently, the Executive Director (ED) heads the CDC. There is a high level National Curriculum Development and Assessment Council (NCDAC) chaired by the Minister for Education and Sports to approve all curricula and to guide detailed developmental work of the CDC by setting operational and administrative policy. The CDC develops school level curriculum and assessment system according to the operational policy developed by NCDAC.

As indicated in the 'Curriculum and Textbook Development Guidelines' (CDC, 2002), CDC draws from the following sources for the development of new curriculum:

- Recommendations given by education commissions formed at the national level.
- Suggestions provided by curriculum users.
- Suggestions and reactions obtained through workshops and interaction programmes attended by teachers, guardians, social workers, and intellectuals.
- Suggestions received from various sectors established to develop human resources.
- Objectives, policies and programmes determined for the purpose of updating curriculum on timely manner.
- Innovations, research and development outcomes and philosophy of education.
- Suggestions and advice received from different channels of communication.

CDC has developed a mechanism for collecting information and feedback on curriculum from its users (students and teachers) and other stakeholders such as parliamentarians, guardians, school management committees, members of district education committees, special needs groups and civil society. Curriculum updating, revision and improvement are done according to the feedback received from different types of stakeholders and through piloting of the curriculum. In practice, CDC has followed the practice of curriculum updating as per need, minor revision on a 5-year basis and major revision in a 10-year period.

With regard to the curriculum development process in any subject area, a write-up subcommittee consisting of the Curriculum Officer of the CDC and other subject experts first draft the curriculum. The subcommittee then submits the draft curriculum to the Curriculum Textbook Subject Committee (CTSC) consisting of subject teachers, teacher educators, and university professors for comprehensive review. The CTSC reviews the draft curriculum on the basis of objectives, content, weightage, instructional materials, and assessment methods. If deemed necessary, the CTSC makes necessary additions or deletions and if major revision is needed the CTSC sends it back to the subcommittee for redrafting or revising the draft curriculum. After the

CTSC finds the draft curriculum of appropriate standard, it forwards the draft curriculum to the Curriculum Textbook Coordination Committee (CTCC), which is chaired by the Executive Director of CDC, for final review. The CTCC may invite specialists as observers for the review, revision or finalization of the curriculum as per the need. Finally, the NCDAC approves the curriculum. If needed, the NCDAC may also form a technical committee to review the curriculum before its approval.

Although it is mentioned that views of different stakeholders such as teachers, students, guardians, school management committees, civil societies, parliamentarians, educationists, social workers, researchers, consultants and other various organizations would be sought in the process of curriculum development (CDC, 2002), no mandatory provision is made for such wide consultation and participation in the process of developing the curriculum. There is little flexibility in curriculum to meet the local needs which is limited only at the primary level. This has led to having a school curriculum that is of little relevance to the local community. Both the Regional CTCC and District Level Curriculum Coordination Committee (DLCC) have not been functional in monitoring the implementation of the curriculum and in providing feedback to CDC. These realities have intensified the criticisms often made from different sections of the society in the process of curriculum development, implementation and revision. The teachers, students and other stakeholders (women's groups, child right groups, ethnic groups, *Dalits* and disabled) raised this issue during the regional workshops and through the stakeholder analyses of the existing curriculum recently completed mentioned earlier under footnote 4. After reviewing the existing curriculum, different stakeholder groups have pinpointed the lack of inclusiveness in the curriculum, textbooks, teaching strategies and evaluation procedures to address the diverse needs of different castes and ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and children with other special learning needs.

Given that there is little flexibility in the existing curriculum for accommodating local and regional variation and that there is no mandatory provision for involving different groups of stakeholders in curriculum development, revision and improvement process, there is an urgent need for revisiting the existing national curriculum structure and the curriculum development and revision mechanism. The extensive involvement of stakeholders representing various groups such as women, minority ethnic groups, *Dalits*, human and child rights advocates, and people with disability, in the curriculum and textbook development, and revision process is a must. The curriculum should provide room for meeting the needs of diverse learners and local contexts in the geographically, economically and culturally diverse situation of Nepal.

### **2.3 Curricular Coherence and Continuity**

Though curriculum development for different levels of education in Nepal has followed certain structural process for the last three decades, there is fragmentation in design, development, and monitoring of curriculum for different levels and subjects. There is clearly a lack of holistic approach that looks at the school level curricula of grades 1-12 as one unit. Until very recently, subject committees to design the curriculum were formed separately for different levels up to grade 10, and there was no mechanism that ensured communication and coordination between these sub-committees. Recently, provision has been made to have only one subject committee for all levels from grades 1 to 10, but no provision has been made to include grade 11 and 12 within the school curriculum structure. No notable efforts have been made for confirming the

horizontal and vertical relationship between the contents of various levels. Hence, the gap between grade wise and level wise curricula has created difficulties for students in learning and in making smooth transition between grades and levels.

Reviews of the curriculum from grade 1 to 12 by SEDP 2001 and the CDC Task Forces 2004 have revealed gaps in the curriculum of different subjects at different levels. The problems of smooth transition from one level to the other were reported for core subjects like Science, Mathematics, Social Studies and Health Population Environment. These studies have shown inconsistencies in level wise objectives, and have pointed out that the curriculum in most subjects were content oriented with inadequate elaboration. They have also elucidated that the sequencing of content between grade 9 and 10 in some subjects like science and social studies was not in proper order. While Social Studies was reported to be lengthy and overloaded, Mathematics was found to be difficult especially at the secondary level. Overall, the analyses have found the revised primary level curriculum (2003) to be more systematic.

#### **2.4 Need for Value Education**

One of the main aims of education is to inculcate value among children. The traditional norms and values that are useful and helpful for the betterment of humanity should be preserved. In this connection various forms of value education such as social, cultural, religious and individual since long has been the main objectives of Nepali school education system. Value education was also incorporated in school curriculum in different forms like civic education, moral education, and Sanskrit education in different periods. However, behavioural changes in students were not found as expected. This has been the area of concern expressed by various education commissions' reports and reviews as well. In recent years, deterioration of values in Nepali society has been a major concern. The participants of regional workshops stressed the need of inculcating values such as cooperativeness, honesty, respect for elders, civic duty, love and help for children, women and helpless people.

Value development is influenced directly or indirectly by the curriculum, the school environment, the teaching learning process, the training of teachers, and the behaviour demonstrated by teachers and staff in the school. There is, therefore, need to define value education to inculcate certain quality traits as mentioned earlier to address the emerging needs and to avoid discrimination arising from the distortion of traditional beliefs and customs. The values of humanity, social justice, democracy, child and human rights, equity and equality, peace and coexistence must be promoted through education.

#### **2.5 Life Skills Approach to Education**

Providing life skills education to the school children and youths is an emerging concept in national and international context. However, there is no single view about what constitutes life skills. It has been interpreted loosely by different people. In this regard UNICEF (2000) notes:

Several country reports pointed to topics in hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention in the descriptions of Life Skills. Others listed lessons in etiquette and good manners, and preserving the environment. Income generating skills such as animal breeding, organizing small businesses, and basket weaving were also mentioned. UNICEF defines this last set of important incoming generating skills as 'Livelihood' Skills, and distinct from 'Life

Skills'. In contrast, Life Skills are psycho-social and interpersonal skills used in every day interactions and are not specific to getting a job or earning income.

Hence, “the term ‘life skills’ tends to be assimilated with ‘competencies for life’ understood in a broader sense as ‘capabilities’ (i.e. knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, behaviours) to face challenges of daily (private, professional and social) life and exceptional situations successfully and also to envisage a better future” (International Forum for Education, 2004). The categories of Life Skills indicate that they are not confined to any particular subject area. They are and should be common requirements across the curriculum areas. Integrating Life Skills approach into curricula involves interpersonal skills, coping and management skills, and skills for building self-awareness, for critical and creative thinking, and for making decisions. Life skills approach is designed to support and build on existing knowledge, to promote positive attitudes and values, to develop specific skills and behaviours, as well as to prevent or reduce risk behaviours (UNICEF, 2000).

In Nepal, CDC (2060 BS) has defined Life Skills in Health Education curriculum of primary education as the capability that helps to solve daily life needs, demands and challenges effectively. Life Skills make children able to deal with what to do and how to do. CDC has identified Life Skills as a concrete attitudinal concept built in an individual that gives positive skills in the behaviour of individual. The concept of livelihood skill as Life Skill is no more recognized. CDC has tried to incorporate Life Skills in the primary level health education subject through skill-based health education. The curriculum has also identified effective communication, interpersonal relationship, empathy, self awareness, ability to control emotion, ability to cope with stress, creative thinking, critical thinking, decision making ability, and problem solving as the generic life skills that are necessary to develop in students.

These generic life skills are related to all aspects of life and therefore all learning areas of school education must stress to attain these skills optimally through cross-curricular provision. They must be utilized across a range of content areas. Guidelines for addressing life skills in different subjects have not been identified. More importantly teaching and learning methods must be relevant and effective in order to achieve the objective of life skills. Therefore, interactive or participatory teaching and learning methods are an essential part of life skill education. Students learn skills best when they have the opportunity to observe and actively practise them. Now the challenge and concern is how to integrate life skills at different levels from primary through higher secondary in terms of defining life skills for different levels and grades and integrating them in relevant subjects without substantially increasing the overall curriculum load.

## **2.6 Education for Work**

In the national and regional workshops organized by CDC, stakeholders, teachers and students expressed their concerns on the need to give work orientation and experience in general school setting to make existing curriculum relevant, useful and acceptable. Parents were of the view that their children should possess some work/vocational/technical knowledge and skills when they complete different levels of school education. Reviews have found the existing curriculum to be too theoretical and it does not provide life related useful practical knowledge and skills.

The reality with respect to our education is that not all students who complete different levels of

school education will pursue higher-level education. There are several terminating points during the school period. Less than half of all children complete the primary cycle and only 10% of those entering grade one reach grade 10, even after repeating several times; less than half of the secondary level students pass the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination; pass rates in higher secondary and at the University are comparable (UNDP, 2004: 32-33). Most of the students who leave school after completing or failing certain grade or level are either exposed to the world of work because of economic and social reason or join Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) centers that are run by or are affiliated with the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT).

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) has raised concern on providing technical and vocational education to support the Plan's objective of economic development and poverty reduction. The Plan has set target to impart full time training to 7100 persons and short term training to 23555 persons by establishing two additional technical institutions and two poly-technical colleges; and to conduct Annex Programmes with additional classes to provide secondary level skill-oriented education in 75 community schools i.e. one in each district. Despite the views that the secondary education should provide a general education to provide broad-based education, there is a need to explore the modality to provide technical and vocational education and training that can take place in general secondary schools.

There is no single modality for providing TEVT in school setting. In developed countries there are three modalities for introducing school based TEVT: i) selecting a variety of vocational courses within the general secondary school; ii) providing vocational lines in addition to general education lines, and a technician line; iii) providing separate vocational and technical schools running alongside the general secondary school. In the developing world, the tradition of the separate vocational schools has prevailed as found in much of Latin America, parts of South East Asia, and the Middle East (King, 1995:6245). The World Bank supported "diversified" secondary education through agricultural, technical, commercial and home economics options in regular secondary schools during the 1960s and 1970s. However, by the mid-1980s, it had decided that this style of school based vocationalization was not effective. Consequently, secondary education was de-vocationalized, and the vocational subject was converted from being a required subject to an optional subject in Nepal by 1991. Contrary to this trend, vocational and technical streams have been expanding faster than the general streams in Western Europe at the upper/higher secondary level (Ibid: 6246). In these varying contexts, Nepal has to decide appropriate modality of introducing TEVT program in school education.

## **2.7 Need for Information and Communication Technology Education**

With the explosion of information and communication technologies the twenty first century human civilization has gone towards a knowledge based society. ICT covers a wide range of scope such as dialects, gestures, books and magazines, radio, television, telephone and the Internet. However, in practice, it refers to those technologies that are operated through the electronics, computers and telecommunication. Hence, ICT can be summarized as the process, method and means of receiving and retrieving, storing and collecting, manufacturing, and communicating and disseminating knowledge and information. This includes hardware and software of computer and other instruments including telecommunication and micro electronic technologies including the multimedia.

Throughout the world, ICT is proven as a tool for educational transformation. It can be brought into the schools in three different ways: (i) as a tool for delivering information and or services, including school administration; (ii) as a tool to teach other subjects; and (iii) as an academic curriculum subject to equip the students with skills required to succeed in the knowledge economy. From the curricular perspective we are concerned with the second and the third aspect of ICT at the school level.

At present, opportunities for ICT education are very limited both at school and university levels in Nepal. Some private institutions are providing ICT education as computer education. In the case of public schools, colleges and universities even the availability of computer education is very limited. Under the national curriculum, computer education is offered as an optional subject at the secondary level. However, because of resource constraints only a few public schools have been able to offer this course. The demand from the public for ICT education in school is high despite their recognition that present school curriculum is overloaded with subjects and contents.

The Tenth Plan has clearly emphasized the need to develop industries and services based on information communication technology. For this, the Plan has policy and strategy for introducing computer education from school level curriculum and providing Internet facilities in public schools and universities. Recently, HMG/N has also given a high priority to provide computer education with the slogan “Computer Education for all by 2015”. This warrants for a comprehensive attempt to introduce ICT education in schools. The challenge is to seek appropriate ways on how ICT can be introduced in the schools of Nepal without substantially increasing the curriculum load. In this connection, CDC needs clarity on the ICT education in Nepali context, the minimum as well as desirable learning outcomes, the modality for introducing alternative measures, and the minimum infrastructure requirements (i.e. teachers, hardware, software, and internet access).

## **2.8 Language Issues**

Given the multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual society, a number of issues and concerns related to language prevail in Nepal. These issues range from the official language Nepali being the language of instruction, to the right of ethnic minorities to have primary education in their own mother tongue, to language as a subject of study versus a medium of instruction, to having a clear language policy in education.

Research has shown that teaching in mother tongue has several advantages. It promotes access, equity, self-esteem, faster acquisition of basic literacy and contributes to higher academic achievement. The present official Primary Education Curriculum 2060 BS has recognized mother language as one of the local curricula that school can offer as per the demand of the community. It has also stated that mother tongue can be the medium of instruction where majority of the students belong to one language group.<sup>5</sup> But CDC is facing a number of problems in implementing these provisions because of the status of literate traditions of different languages (i.e. only a few have literate traditions and some are being developed), non-availability of

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<sup>5</sup> What is meant by “majority” is not defined in this document without which it would not be possible to implement this provision because

teachers who can teach in minority languages, un-availability of teaching-learning materials in minority languages, and the status of curricular materials being developed so far. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 clearly states that Nepal is a multiethnic and multilingual state, and has accordingly included the right to preserve ethnic cultures and operate schools up to the primary level in the mother tongue. The National Language Policy Recommendation Commission 1993 had categorically recommended the necessity of mother tongue and bilingual education for non-Nepali speaking children. The Commission had suggested measures to design curriculum, prepare textbooks and introduce mother tongue as the medium of instruction in monolingual communities and in transitional primary education and literacy programs. The High Level National Education Commission report (HLNEC, 1998), the Ninth Development Plan and the Education Act Seventh Amendment (2002) also stated the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary level. The Tenth Plan has also stated that programs providing education in mother tongue will be encouraged in order to increase access of children from diverse linguistic groups. More recently, realizing the importance of the mother language, the Education for All National Plan of Action Nepal (EFA/NPA) 2001-2015 has added one more goal to the six major goals set by Dakar Forum. The goal is to ensure the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to quality basic and primary education through their mother tongue (EFA/NPA, 2003:5). Accordingly, the EFA/NPA has suggested to implement three language policy, i.e. local, national, and English. Although this suggestion is yet to become a policy officially, the challenge is to translate this policy into reality at the classroom level.

Similarly, one of the problems faced by multilingual country like Nepal is the question of medium of instruction: Should it be the mother tongue of the majority of students whereby it would not be fair to some of the students whose mother tongue is different; or should it be Nepali the lingua franca and the national language which is spoken as the mother tongue only by about 49% of the population; or should it be English? In the spirit of providing education for all, there is increasing emphasis on using the local language as the medium of instruction. However, this is practical only in homogenous communities. Bilingual or multilingual teaching will have to be adopted in ethnically heterogeneous communities. Regarding teaching in mother tongue and learning the mother language as a subject of study, no teacher recruitment and training modalities have been developed yet. Hence, the questions of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction and language transfer are the issues demanding specific policies and programs in relation to school education.

## **2.9 Inclusive Approach to Curriculum**

The fundamental principle of inclusive education is that every child has a right to education and that the education system needs to be flexible to accommodate the learning needs of all children. It is a philosophy that places children at the center and demands that it is not children who need to change to fit into the existing education system, but rather that the education system needs to become child-centered to meet the learning needs of all children. Hence, the emphasis is on making schools child-friendly, mainstreaming children with disability into general schools, and creating a non-discriminatory education system where all children have equal opportunity in learning.

Under its five-year program for the primary sub-sector EFA 2004-09, Nepal has adopted

inclusive education as one of its key strategies for implementation. As an effort towards reaching a common understanding of inclusive education, the Department of Education (DOE) of the Ministry of Education and Sports has developed the following definition:

“Inclusive education is a process of developing educational system that ensures the opportunity for receiving education in a non-discriminatory environment in their own community by respecting the multicultural differences. Inclusive education believes on the principle that all children can learn if they are given appropriate environment and support to address their needs and recognizes the importance of the ownership of the community in schools.

Inclusive education is a strategy to identify those children at national and local level who are in danger of being deprived of education or are in danger of dropping out from the school due to lack of essential appropriate environment and lack of support and encourages to follow a child centered teaching and learning to fulfil social cultural and educational needs of all children.”

DOE has also identified the following target groups for inclusive education: girl child and women, children with disability, *Dalit* children, minority ethnic groups, street children, children affected by conflict, children affected by trafficking and sexual abuse, children severely affected by poverty, children of bonded laborers, children in jail, children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, child lepers, and child laborers.

The challenges of putting this concept into practice are numerous as inclusive education is a relatively new concept in Nepal. While policy and decision makers are yet to internalize this concept, there is an urgent need to ensure that educational planning and management, teacher training, and curriculum and teaching learning materials all embrace the principles of inclusion.

In the review and analysis of existing curriculum, textbooks, and teachers’ guides from the perspective of various stakeholders mentioned earlier (see footnote 4), it is revealed that the existing curriculum and teaching learning materials are not inclusive in their content and approach to teaching. They have pointed out that issues of ethnic minority, Dalits, people with disability and those of gender and human rights are covered only in very small proportions in the existing curricula. Consequently, textbooks do not adequately reflect the above issues and concerns and they continue to sideline issues of groups that have been historically excluded, i.e. women, Dalits, Janajatis, and people with disability.

Hence, in order to create an inclusive curriculum, it is necessary to not only orient the curriculum developers on the fundamentals of inclusive education, but need to change the curriculum development process itself to ensure wider participation and consultation of various stakeholders. Also, it is necessary to clearly state inclusive teaching and assessment strategies in the curriculum as well as in teachers’ guides. Curriculum content must be changed to make it more balanced and non-discriminatory, and it must clearly state that textbooks produced based on that curriculum must embrace the principles of social inclusion and equity. Guidelines for book writers must be developed stating the basic principles of inclusion including non-discrimination, equity and equality, and cultural representation. Although the policy push for inclusive education

is already there as reflected in EFA and SESP, the challenge today is to accomplish these tasks given the limited technical capacity within the system in this area.

### **2.10 Instructional Approaches**

One of the major criticisms in present curriculum is its weak implementation at the classroom level. There are numerous reasons behind it. One root cause behind it is the absence of yearly instructional planning for curriculum implementation. Very few teachers go through the curriculum and plan for annual instructional programme. Most of the teachers basically use textbooks alone as curriculum<sup>6</sup> and deliver instruction as a routine task. In most of the cases the instructional approaches used in the classroom are not interactive, participatory and meaningful to the learners. Despite various training programs conducted for the teachers, they have not been successful in transferring their knowledge and skills in day-to-day classroom instruction. The use of instructional materials for making learning meaningful is not found in most of the classroom even at the primary level. There is more emphasis on rote learning and lecture-oriented teaching. Interaction between students during the class room teaching, use of extra curricular activities and project works are almost non-existent. Thus, teaching and learning approaches have not been successful to foster the development of intelligence, creativity, lateral thinking and independent learning. Teachers have no skills and practice of receiving feedback from their peers, school supervisors and students for their improvement in teaching.

Teachers are generally found to be using similar teaching methods for all students without considering their linguistic, ethnic, socio-economic, and geographical differences. There is a strong need for looking into specific cultural context in which a learner is placed to making teaching-learning effective. Therefore, instead of using one uniform mechanistic way of teaching-learning, cultural practices such as story telling, drama, puppetry, folklore, and everyday life in the community should become a strong basis for teaching and learning at the primary level.

Another problem in today's teaching practice is that students' pace of learning and style of learning is generally not an issue for teachers. Consequently, classroom instruction by and large has not been successful in addressing the different needs of learners. Teachers provide similar treatment to slow or weak learners and the gifted or fast learners. Teaching continues to be teacher-centered rather than child-centered. Teachers have a prime role in transacting the curriculum effectively by adapting nationally developed curriculum to accommodating the learning needs of children and to make it locally relevant. However they are not found to be making efforts in this line. Teachers also have a role in using classroom based assessment for instructional improvement. But they use assessments generally for only grading purposes.

Teaching approaches need to place greater emphasis on the tools for seeking and processing knowledge, rather than the actual knowledge itself. This requires active involvement of students in the learning process. While teaching, the students not teachers should be regarded as a constructor of knowledge. Hence, how to implement curriculum in a child friendly manner is a major concern today.

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<sup>6</sup> One of the reasons why teachers use textbooks as curricula is because they do not get the curricula. The dissemination of the curricula and other teaching learning materials prepared at the center needs to be improved.

### **2.11 Sanskrit Education**

Since 1993 there have been three types of community lower secondary and secondary schools in Nepal: i) general education schools, ii) general Sanskrit schools, and iii) specific Sanskrit schools known as Vedabidyashram.

Sanskrit was a compulsory subject in all general education schools at the lower secondary level until recently. In 2003, Sanskrit was made into an optional subject with the choice of selecting civic education instead. Hence, Sanskrit education as a compulsory subject in general education has come to an end. The curriculum structure in the two Sanskrit schools is slightly different. The Vedabidyashram type lower secondary and secondary schools focus more on subjects like Veda or Ethics and Karmakanda or Rituals. They do not study English and Science, but only Nepali, Mathematics and Social Studies in addition to Veda and Karmakanda. However, in the general type of Sanskrit lower secondary schools, students take all the subjects of general lower secondary school except for 50 marks of art or prevocational education and 50 marks of social studies. Instead, they study 100 marks Sanskrit Grammar and Translation. At the secondary level students of general Sanskrit schools study Nepali, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Sanskrit language as compulsory subjects and 200 marks of Sanskrit as optional subjects.

The fact that there is a separate stream of Sanskrit education in Nepal clearly indicates that Sanskrit education has been regarded as a separate branch of study, and that Sanskrit has become one of the optional subjects in the general education. In the context of diverse socio-cultural, multilingual, multiethnic reality of Nepal, Sanskrit education can neither be imposed as a compulsory subject for learning nor can it be omitted from the curriculum framework as Sanskrit is considered as the foundation for Eastern knowledge and philosophy. Hence, the issue is how to incorporate the knowledge of Sanskrit education into our school curriculum in a simple and practical way so that future generations will be able to benefit from its inherent qualities.

### **2.12 Local Need Based Education**

The idea that education should be based on local needs of the people is not new to Nepal. Various commissions' reports on education have highlighted the importance of local need based learning and have highly recommended it for educational reform (NNEPC, 1956; ARNEC, 1961 NEC 1992 and HLNEC, 1998). However, the existing national school curriculum continues to be criticized for not fully catering to the needs of local people as courses outlined in the national curriculum at all levels of school education do not adequately address local issues nor carry adequate local content.

The new primary school curriculum of 2003 (2060 BS), however, has given continuity of the provision made in 1992 (2049 BS) curriculum by providing 20% weightage for the study of local contents in Social Studies, Creative and Expressive Arts, and Physical Education. It has also made provision for an additional subject for local need based study that may include mother language or local subject. This level of flexibility of studying local need based subjects is not available at lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary levels of school education today. However, the SESP Core Document has spelt out that the new curriculum at the secondary level will give 10 to 15 percent weightage to local content to increase local relevance.

Despite the provision at the primary level for local curriculum, teachers are neither trained for

using the curriculum in local context nor are they provided with adequate instructional materials to enrich their abilities in developing and implementing the local curriculum. Hence, there is a clear need to develop a clear understanding of the concept of local curriculum and for ways and means of incorporating local knowledge, skills, histories and cultures into the school curriculum.

### **2.13 Subjects to Teach**

What learning areas to select and offer for different levels of school education has been a matter of great debate around the globe. We see diversity in the types of curriculum--content driven or objectives driven, national or regional. In a decentralized system, curricula might be of different types by schools, districts, and regions within a country. The curriculum also depends on the vision and national objectives of education, which in general is guided by the political system, economic status and socio-cultural beliefs and structures of the country. In addition, curriculum is influenced by the structure of education and the expected changes among the students by the level of school or age of the children.

However, a review of the curricular categories used in primary education of seventy countries by Mayer et al. discovered an extraordinary homogeneity across the extraordinarily variable countries of the world (Ross, 2000). The main subject areas of primary education include language, math, science and social studies. Nation states, however, tend to have a high degree of consistency in curricular emphasis over time, but differ sharply from each other, reflecting unique historical patterns (Benavot and Krmens, 1989, quoted in UNICEF, 2000). Local level interests may also have an impact on and contribute to the quality of educational content (UNICEF, 2000a). All countries however should include several pivotal areas such as literacy, numeracy, life skills, and peace education- as well as science and social studies for quality education (Ibid). In this context a look into the essential learning areas identified in the NCF of different countries( India, Thailand, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand) include languages( national language and foreign language), mathematics, science, social science/study, arts, health and physical education and technology education.

In the above context, Nepal is no exception. However, in Nepal, due to lack of well formulated national curriculum framework in Nepal, many decisions related to school education have been taken on an ad hoc basis without understanding the far reaching implications of addition or deletion of a core subject. No considerations were made in the past on how an addition of one subject could have adverse effects on curriculum load and subsequently on the test results. Some of the examples that reflect the ad hoc decision related to curriculum are given below:

- The introduction of English language as one of the core subjects from grade 1 since 2003;
- Sanskrit as a compulsory subject at lower secondary level in 1981;
- Health, Population and Environment Education as one of the core subjects at secondary level in the existing curriculum; and.
- Recognition of 100 marks of vocational subject (that was compulsory in 1981) as an elective subject at the secondary level since 1990s.

Commenting on the existing curriculum, teachers as well as other stakeholders have emphasized the need for practical and life related learning. The SEDP document( 2001) has indicated that content in school curricula has suffered from being narrow in focus and single discipline

oriented, without the benefits of establishing and building links with other disciplines. The school curriculum especially at the secondary and higher secondary levels are criticized for giving more emphasis on cramming of information and facts rather than imparting the skills of learning. These situations have called for introducing new learning areas that address the differing needs of the learners as well as society in the school curriculum and for bringing improvements in the curriculum development, implementation and revision process.

#### **2.14 Alternative Education**

In Nepal, participation of school-going age children at formal school has not been universal and the dropout rate is significant. In order to cater to the needs of children who are not yet in school, the Non-formal Education Center is providing educational opportunities to the out of school children of the age group 8 to 14 years and adults of the age group 15 to 45 years. The graduates of the age group 8 to 14 years from non-formal education programs are encouraged to enter into regular primary schools.

However, due to lack of open school system, rigidity of national curriculum, shortage of text books in mother language, access to learning in mother language, and many other socio-cultural and economic reasons large sections of school age children and adults remain deprived of educational opportunities today. The rigidity of national curriculum has restricted the entry of children and adults in formal schools who pursue their study in traditional religious institutions like Gumba and Madrasa. Besides, there are many children and adults who study at home through their family members and also through electronic media. For these children and adults, there is no mechanism to shift to formal schools. Hence, there is an urgent need to ensure that there are multiple entries to formal schools and/or formal certification for students who have learned through different modes. Also, it is necessary to make provisions for open learning and distance mode education system. This would also require recognition by the government.

#### **2.15 Impact of Globalization in Education**

One of the implications of globalisation for the field of education has been the emergence of 'knowledge societies' (Hallak, 2000). More directly, globalization has affected areas such as educational policies and curriculum (ibid). The internet has made it possible to have exchange of experiences for co-ordinating educational policies. Similarly, the concept of 'appropriate forms and contents' are widely shared by increasing number of countries, largely as a result of the work of international organisations and networks. The emergence of what might be called 'common curricula' at the international level, however, is still only a hypothesis (Ibid: 283). But, there is increasing convergence in giving priority to questions of access, quality and relevance, as well as of gender equality, effectiveness of resource allocation, and empowerment, participation, collaboration and mobilization of all stakeholders in the education sector.

Given the context of globalisation, most of the problems of universal nature do not stop at any country's boundary, but call for world-wide solutions instead. Globalization compels schools of any country to develop capacity among students to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can compete in the world market and remain up to date with the changes in the world. Globalization also demands that students learn to live and work together. In this respect, education should be a catalyst for developing the ability in students to work and live with others in their own society on the one hand, and in the global village on the other through

the teaching of universal values such as tolerance and human rights, diversity of cultures, respect for all kinds of difference, and respect for the environment.

Education in the globalized context, however, should not be only about concerns at the global level. Education of any nation should be within the context of the national and local realities, needs, and priorities. There is also the need to consider issues of localization of curriculum, learning in the mother language and maintaining a balance on the quality of education provided by the private and public schools. Hence, in order to meet the local, national and global requirements, there is a need to maintain a balance in curriculum.

### **2.16 Student Assessment**

Assessment in education is the process of gathering, interpreting, recording and using information about students' responses to an educational task. Educationists and evaluation experts have made significant contributions on educational assessment in terms of using measurement and evaluation in teaching (Gronlund, 1976), developing comprehensive and fair tests (Gipps and Murphy, 1996), using examination as an instrument for controlling curriculum and instruction (Keeves, 1994), use of class room assessment in improving instruction and learning (Huitt, 2001) and using national assessment for guiding policy personnel in decision making (Murphy et al., 1996).

In Nepal various education commission's reports (e.g. NEC, 1992; HLNEC, 1998) have mentioned that the existing assessment system has not been recognized as an integral part of teaching learning process. Besides, the formative use of assessment results is not found in most schools. Assessment is primarily conducted through examination, which has led to intensive cramming at the time of examination and malpractices during examinations. Other forms of assessment such as classroom activities, home work, project work, co-curricular activities have been given no weightage for promoting students. The promotion of students is completely based on the final examination, and despite demonstrating good performance in day to day work, they will not be promoted in case they can not do well in final examination due to some personal problems like health or other unavoidable and accidental reasons. There is, therefore, a need to develop a comprehensive assessment system evaluating students' overall performance and utilizing assessment results to improve both students' learning and teachers' teaching techniques. Also, there is a need to make assessment curriculum-based and inclusive so that children's learning is evaluated against the stated learning outcomes and that children are given several opportunities to demonstrate their level of achievement. In this regard, s

To address the concerns outlined in this chapter, a National Curriculum Framework for school education covering pre-primary to grade twelve (i.e. Grade P-12) has been developed and presented in the following chapters of this document. The NCF states the vision, goals, and principles which give directions to CDC for curriculum and curricular materials development, improvement and implementation by placing students at the center of teaching and learning.

## Chapter 3

### Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for Curriculum

#### 3.1 Vision

The vision of school education is to develop citizens who are knowledgeable, skilful, competent, responsible, reliable, healthy, cooperative, good mannered, ethical, optimistic, nationalistic, and humanitarian, who believe in democracy, human rights, and diversity, and who have the ability for critical thinking to face the emerging challenges of the twenty-first century in a productive manner. Such citizens will be capable to live independently, contribute to national development, and work for national and international peace and security.

#### 3.2 National Goals of Education

The national goals of education are the following:

- i. To inculcate respect for democracy, human rights and the will to safeguard our multicultural nation.
- ii. To produce citizens capable of creative and critical thinking.
- iii. To produce citizens who participate in and promote the democratic process.
- iv. To inculcate in each individual qualities like self-esteem, self-discipline, religious tolerance, humanity, and civic consciousness.
- v. To develop human capability that contributes for the development of the nation.
- vi. To develop a strong belief in social justice, social equity, and gender parity such that everyone is treated equally and fairly despite her/his caste, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, region of origin, and age.
- vii. To respect and celebrate the socio-cultural and ethnic diversity, multilingual realities, and multicultural setting of our nation.
- viii. To enhance social unity by inculcating a deep respect for socio-cultural differences and worldviews present in our country.
- ix. To help each individual develop her/his identity in both national and international contexts and lead a socially harmonious life in the modern world.
- x. To develop social and civic responsibility to safeguard and promote the common good.
- xi. To nurture and develop personalities and innate abilities of each individual for successful living.
- xii. To teach the thoughtful protection and wise use of Nepal's natural and cultural resources.
- xiii. To help disadvantaged citizens like minority ethnic groups, Dalits and people with disabilities enter the mainstream of national life.

#### 3.3 Guiding Principles for Curriculum

The NCF for school education covering from Grade P-12 presents the elements which are fundamental to the development of relevant curriculum for school education in Nepal. This framework has set out the foundation policy for teaching, learning and assessment in schools of Nepal. It has identified learning areas and key skills for the development of knowledge, understanding and skills in all students. The framework also emphasizes the development of values and attitudes among students through school curriculum. More importantly it emphasizes on inclusive curriculum for all students irrespective of gender, ethnicity, cultures, religion,

castes, ethnicity, abilities and disabilities, socio-economic conditions and geographical conditions. The key guiding principles for national curriculum are the following:

- Curriculum will be construed broadly
- Curriculum will be for a broad and balanced education
- Curriculum will be organized around key learning areas
- Curriculum will address diverse curricular concerns through integration
- Curriculum will be outcome focused
- Curriculum will follow child-centered developmental approach
- Curriculum will recognize mother language in teaching and learning
- Curriculum will be inclusive
- Curriculum will provide opportunity for local need-based learning
- Curriculum will recognize Sanskrit education as the foundation for Eastern knowledge and philosophy
- Curriculum will provide opportunity for ICT education
- Curriculum will focus on life skills
- Curriculum will orient students towards work
- Curriculum will establish direction for student assessment
- Curriculum development will follow collaborative approach
- Curriculum will recognize alternative learning

Each of these principles is briefly discussed below.

### **3.3.1 Curriculum will be construed broadly**

Recently curriculum has been defined as “what is learned and what is taught (content); how it is delivered (teaching learning methods); how it is assessed (exams, for example); and the resources used (e.g. books used to deliver and support teaching and learning)” (UNESCO 2004). Hence, curriculum is not only the “formal curriculum” with a prescribed set of intended outcomes and goals, but also what is actually taught by the teachers and learned by the students. It is therefore, a combination of intended, implemented and hidden curriculum. The NCF recognizes that as curriculum is a factor that influences learning, a broad concept of curriculum needs to be adopted. The concept of curriculum that is adopted in this NCF, therefore, encompasses the content, the learning environment, teaching methods, resources provided for learning, practices of student assessment, and the ways in which students, teachers and communities interact with each other.

### **3.3.2 Curriculum will be for a broad and balanced education**

The curriculum should aim to promote children’s physical, intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. Hence, school curriculum must not only focus on knowledge and content, but also on providing the students with the opportunity of developing essential life skills, civic sense, social and interpersonal know how, and democratic values to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century—i.e. to be competitive in the global market, to be adept in communication technologies, to engage in society as capable citizens with analytical and critical thinking skills, to be able to work in teams, to appreciate all sorts of difference. The curriculum contents should contain

values, concepts and processes for learning, doing, being, and living together. The national goals of education must reflect these principles and it should be the primary guiding principle for curriculum development. The learning areas, the contents, assessment system and teacher training curricula need to be linked with national goals of education.

### **3.3.3 Curriculum will be organized around key learning areas**

The term 'learning areas' used here refers to broad ideas that focus on learning, learners, and content rather than on subjects as ends in themselves. The learning areas which set out what students should be taught are the following: Languages (official, national and international), Mathematics, Social Studies, Creative Arts and Expressions, Science, Health and Physical Education, Environmental Education, Information and Communication Technology, Local Need Based Study, and Work, Occupation and Trade. In addition, curriculum will also define or make flexible provision for extra curricular activities that compliment the attainment of the overall curricular objectives. While each level of school education may have a different combination of the above learning areas in terms of weightage, the rationale is to provide students with a well-rounded education that equips them with essential learning and life skills such as communication skills, problem-solving skills, social and interpersonal skills, and self management skills. Curriculum development process draws from these learning areas to construct a comprehensive, broad and balanced curriculum, and not use them to divide up the curriculum.

### **3.3.4 Curriculum will address diverse curricular concerns through integration**

Deciding what to teach to children is a very sensitive and a challenging task. This task is generally influenced by changing socio-cultural, economic and political situations in the international, national and local contexts. The changes at global and national contexts often lead to addition or exclusion of certain subjects. More often curriculum tends to be overloaded due to addition of new subjects/learning areas that emerge as a result of concerns raised by spiritual leaders, gender activists, human rights activists, environmentalists, legal experts, and peace activists, who demand for the inclusion of various subjects like moral education, global education, civic education, human rights education, peace education, family education, legal education, environmental education, population and migration education, different local and international languages, HIV/AIDS, conflict management, and life skills. Therefore, the best approach would be to integrate such issues and concerns to various subjects/learning areas and adjust the instructional approaches accordingly. In other words, curriculum needs to be responsive to emerging issues as they arise so that education stays relevant and applicable to the current context. However, following the principle of child-centered pedagogy, it is necessary ensure that students are not overloaded with content but are provided with a broad-based education.

### **3.3.5 Curriculum will recognize mother language in teaching and learning**

The curriculum development process is most effective when learning outcomes and performance standards are first established and then linked to what teachers must do to ensure that learning takes place. In operational terms, this means that the curriculum must shift away from an emphasis on what is to be taught, how and when, to an emphasis on what is actually to be learned by each student. The school curriculum should set attainment targets and level wise descriptions (which set out the expected standards of students' performance) on each learning area. An attainment target sets out the knowledge, skills and understanding which students of

different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key developmental stage.

### **3.3.6 Curriculum will follow child-centered developmental approach**

Children develop and learn at different rates in different ways. While their style and pace of learning might be intrinsic to them, other external factors such as home and school environment, teaching techniques applied in the classroom, language of instruction, and socio-cultural and economic background of the child also affect their academic performance. Hence, in order to facilitate a child-centered school education, one of the principles of curriculum development is to make it child-focused. This implies that curricular contents, teaching techniques and assessment methods for each grade or level of school education will be selected in accordance with children's developmental stages. Moreover, options will be given in the curriculum in order to give flexibility and to accommodate children with special learning needs.

Curriculum addresses time spent on learning and how long children at a particular age and/or skill level should spend in school studying a particular subject. These decisions will be based on what is known about children's developmental levels and about the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to be learned in particular areas as per current research.

### **3.3.7 Curriculum will give opportunity to learn in mother language in early grades**

In line with the child-development approach to learning, the language of instruction will be the mother tongue in early grades i.e. Pre-primary to grade 5. There will be provision for language transition from the mother tongue to Nepali and/or English from grade 4.

The curriculum of English will include elements of teaching English as a second language. The curriculum of Nepali will also have these elements so that children whose mother language is not Nepali will be taught utilizing techniques of teaching a second language.

### **3.3.8 Curriculum will be inclusive**

Inclusion means recognizing, respecting, and responding to the educational needs, experiences, interests, and values of all children: both female and male children, children of all ethnic groups, children with different abilities and disabilities, children of different social and religious backgrounds, and children who speak minority languages. It means valuing and including the understandings and knowledge of all children and ensuring that learning opportunities are not restricted for any reason like gender, ethnicity, caste, religion, socio-economic status and regional origin. The curriculum must be inclusive through the development of broad common goals defined for all, including the knowledge, skills and values to be acquired, the selection of content and learning experiences, preparation of textbooks, development of teaching and learning materials and student assessment. For example, it could be achieved through the development and availability of learning materials (textbooks and reference materials) according to the learners needs such as learning materials in brail for the blind, in sign language for the hearing impaired, and in mother language. And inclusion could be fostered through acknowledging cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity of the learners in school premises and in the classroom.

One of the fundamental elements of inclusive curriculum is flexibility. Flexibility can be ensured

through curriculum adaptation or through the development of local need based curriculum and/or through both approaches. It can also be ensured by providing flexibility in the school calendar and in instructional planning to cater to the needs of school children with different socio-cultural backgrounds and different geographical and ecological conditions without compromising the total school days and instructional hours. Different instructional and learning modules should be developed whereby students would have the opportunity to perform project work or case studies or other life related skills during certain time of the year when they cannot report to school either due to local and/or national festivals, and/or harvesting and farming seasons. Flexibility in curriculum may operate at the school level, community level, Resource Center level or district level depending on ecological, socio-cultural beliefs, and economic necessities to address the differing needs of students, schools and communities.

Another element of inclusive curriculum is curriculum adaptation. There will be adequate room for localization of the curriculum whether through adaptation of nationally prescribed themes to local context or through the introduction of Local Need Based Study (LNBS).<sup>7</sup>

### **3.3.9 Curriculum will provide opportunity for local need-based learning**

As a way to incorporate local knowledge, skills, histories and cultures into the school curriculum, LNBS will be introduced as one of the learning areas.

In order to meet diverse needs of students and to bring local relevance to the curriculum, the provision of LNBS will be made by means of curriculum modification as modified contents, instructions, and/or learning outcomes. The curriculum modification will be done with the purpose of modifying curriculum to enable an individual to compensate for intellectual, physical, or behavioural challenges and to create learning environments which allow the individual to use existing skill repertoires while promoting the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. In this connection, curriculum modification can take place in four ways: accommodation, adaptation, parallel curriculum outcomes, and overlapping. However, the best approach for our context of LNBS should be accommodation, adaptation and overlapping. The first approach means a modification to the delivery of instruction or method of student performance and does not change the content or conceptual difficulty of the curriculum i.e. through contextualization. The second will be through curriculum adaptation i.e. appropriate transfer of a curriculum (course of study, approaches and resources) from one community into another, which is different from the first. Third, approach will be a modification to curriculum such that the modification creates overlapping *or* common goals for learning outcomes of diverse students. It may suggest to develop separate curriculum on local knowledge and skills that are not covered by national curriculum even though it is contextualized and adapted and is deemed necessary and important by the local community.

Both the processes should go through the formation and operation of a Local Need Based Curriculum Development Committee (LNBCDC) comprising of school teachers (both males and females), guardians, representatives from caste and ethnic groups in the community, people with disability, persons knowledgeable in local histories, and educationists.

The introduction of local curriculum depends on local initiative i.e. the schools, stakeholders, School Management Committee and Resource Centre (RC) and human and instructional

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<sup>7</sup> Details of Local Need Based Study and its processes appear in 3.3.9.

resources available in the school.

### **3.3.10 Curriculum will recognize Sanskrit education as the foundation for Eastern knowledge and philosophy**

Sanskrit has been recognized not only as a language of study but also as the foundation for Eastern knowledge and philosophy. Hence, it is useful for incorporating the knowledge of Sanskrit education<sup>8</sup> into our school curriculum in simple and practical ways so that future generations will be able to benefit from its inherent qualities. This can be made possible in a number of ways such as continuing Sanskrit education as a separate stream, integrating the knowledge of Sanskrit education into different subjects, and recognizing Sanskrit education as one of the optional subjects and/or LNBS.

### **3.3.11 Curriculum will provide opportunity for ICT education**

The incorporation of scientific and technological advances into education is wishful thinking for most of the schools in Nepal. However, without its incorporation, education will rapidly lose its relevance in today's context of globalization and generate disillusion among the young people—the product of the present education system. Therefore, ICT which is a proven tool for educational transformation will be introduced in schools by: (1) integrating it into related subjects; (2) offering it as an optional subject; and (3) preparing teachers to use IT in the classroom.

### **3.3.12 Curriculum will focus on life skills**

School children need life skills that consist of various kinds of competencies that bring about personal and behavioural changes. Life skills, in a broader sense, are 'capabilities' (knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, behaviours) to face challenges of daily (private, professional and social) life as well as of exceptional situations successfully. Hence, life skills included in school curriculum must not be confined to any particular subject or learning area, but must be perceived as common requirements across the curriculum. They must include interpersonal skills, coping and management skills, skills for building self-awareness, critical and creative thinking, and making decisions.

### **3.3.13 Curriculum will orient students towards work**

Knowledge, skills and values based on occupation, trade, vocation and technical education will be provided up to grade 10 for at least for two reasons. First, there are demands from different cross sections of the society for job or skill oriented education. Second, not all students who complete different levels of school education pursue higher education for various reasons. Hence, the objective of work education is to inculcate respect for all kinds of work and to promote self-reliance, cooperativeness, perseverance, helpfulness, tolerance, and work ethics. At the initial years of primary education, knowledge and skills related to the needs of the individual such as health, hygiene, clothing, cleanliness at home and in school will be stressed through pedagogical measures.

Activity-based learning will be introduced as an important part of primary education. Children

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<sup>8</sup> The term Sanskrit education here stands for the knowledge that has a strong base in Sanskrit. It is not meant to stand for the Sanskrit language per se, but for the rich source of information (e.g. in Mathematics, in Ayurved, in Eastern philosophy and religions) that is Sanskrit based.

will be encouraged to do things and learn by practical experience in all subjects. Students from grade 6 to 8 will be oriented towards Occupation, Trade or Vocation through LNBS. Through project work, observing and experiencing work in work places, and performing simple community activities, students could be oriented towards work.

At grade 9 and 10, the complexity of the activities on occupation, trade and vocation related subject will be increased so that it will adequately prepare the students to choose vocational stream at grades 11 and 12 if they decide to do so. It will also prepare them to acquire basic knowledge and skills required for entry into the world of work. The government will continue to make provisions for skill training in the CTEVT run annex program and similar other programs for secondary students as extra credits. Schools will be allowed to select appropriate work education/vocational training from among the centrally developed curriculum or to develop a new curriculum under the Local Need Based Study learning area that best meets the needs and demands of the local community. In addition, private agencies/individuals/companies will be encouraged to initiate skill training centers at convenient places especially for school dropouts and other interested youth.

#### **3.3.14 Curriculum will provide direction for student assessment**

Assessment will be based on the learning outcomes and performance standards set in the curriculum with the objective of improving teaching and learning. This means that assessment will be curriculum-based, student-centered, as well as designed to provide feedback to the teachers, parents, and students. In addition, district, regional and national level examinations will be conducted for monitoring standards and for grading purposes. Hence, a combination of formative and summative types of assessment will form a comprehensive assessment system. Under this comprehensive system, the principles and practices of assessment will be guided by the philosophy of inclusion.

#### **3.3.15 Curriculum development will follow collaborative approach**

Curriculum development process is required to be highly participatory such that curriculum experts are teamed up with parents, teachers, gender experts, experts on child-centered teaching and learning, and representatives from ethnic minorities, Dalits, and people with disabilities. The rationale behind this collaborative approach is to ensure that curriculum becomes non-discriminatory and based upon principles of social inclusion and equity. The process of preparing textbooks and other teaching learning materials will also follow the same collaborative procedure where stakeholders from all walks of life are actively involved in the actual drafting, writing, and reviewing process. Revisions of all curricular materials will also be based upon the same principle of participation of stakeholders. Teachers, the implementers of the curriculum, will be involved in the above processes at all levels, i.e. national, regional/district/cluster/community, and school.

#### **3.3.16 Curriculum will recognize alternative learning**

In order to ensure that the education system is accessible to all, alternative learning avenues are given due recognition within a system of open school. An open school system from grade P to 12 will be initiated for a wider access of educational opportunities. In this connection, ICT facilities and self-learning materials will be developed. Similarly religious educational institutions like Gumba and Madrasa will be brought into mainstream education. A system of accreditation and

certification of the graduates who come from alternative schooling system will be developed. Also, children (or adults) who prefer to enter into the mainstream formal schooling at any grade or level will be allowed to do so through an assessment procedure.

## Chapter 4

### School Education Objectives, Curriculum Structure and Student Assessment Policy

Based on the vision, national goals of education, and the guiding principles of the NCF presented in the previous chapter, level wise educational objectives, curriculum structure, and student assessment policy and guidelines are presented here.

#### 4.1 Structure of School Education

In view of the national policy, international practice, and present educational context and concerns, Nepali formal school education will be of 12 years with two tiers—primary and secondary. The primary level will be from grade 1 to grade 8, and the secondary level will be from grade 9 to grade 12. As a preparatory stage for primary education, there will be two years of pre-primary education (i.e. P-level).

#### 4.2 Level wise Objectives of School Education

The level wise objectives of school education are presented below:

##### 4.2.1 Objectives of Pre-Primary Education

The ultimate goal of pre-primary education is to bring about holistic development of children and to facilitate children to have smooth transition to primary education. More specifically, pre-primary education will have the following objectives:

- i. To provide an opportunity to develop physical, emotional, social, mental, moral and creative aspects.
- ii. To develop habit for personal sanitation.
- iii. To develop respect for others.
- iv. To develop positive behaviour and attitude towards school.
- v. To prepare for primary schooling.

##### 4.2.2 Objectives of Primary Education (Grades 1-8)

The main aim of primary education is to develop the innate ability of each child through child centered education. Its ultimate aim is to produce citizens who believe in the nation and in democracy and are aware of their responsibility towards the social and natural environment. Students are expected to be competent in communicating ideas, are independent and hard working, health conscious and ethical. More specifically, the objectives of primary education are the following:

- i. To develop basic knowledge of democratic values and norms and a positive spirit for Nepali nationality.
- ii. To develop basic knowledge of Nepali history, society, and multiculturalism.
- iii. To develop basic knowledge and skills on at least two languages (Mother tongue, Nepali, English) necessary for self expression and communication with others.
- iv. To develop basic knowledge in science, mathematics, environment, health, information technology, and life skills.

- v. To develop personal and social qualities like cooperation, discipline, morality, social etiquette, helpfulness, honesty.
- vi. To develop creative and expressive skills.
- vii. To make children aware of child rights and the importance of respecting everyone's human rights.
- viii. To contribute to children's overall development—i.e. physical, mental, emotional, and social.
- ix. To develop life skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, inductive thinking, decision-making, safe health practices, and teamwork.
- x. To develop civic consciousness.
- xi. To develop respect for cultural differences and an eagerness to learn about different cultural beliefs, practices and customs.
- xii. To develop a strong sense of non-discrimination towards others despite their caste, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, class, and disability.
- xiii. To develop a positive outlook towards work and respect for labor.

#### **4.2.3 Objectives of Secondary Education (Grades 9-12)**

The aim of this level of education is to produce competent and healthy citizens who can contribute to economic development and are familiar with national traditions, cultural and social heritage, and democratic values. Its ultimate aim is to produce middle level human resource to make solid contributions to the all-round development of the country and to impart them the basic knowledge required for receiving university education. More specifically the objectives of secondary education are the following:

- i. To develop positive attitude towards and pride in our multicultural nation and democratic values.
- i. To prepare productive citizens who are confident, self-reliant, semi-skilled, and trained human resource needed for national development.
- ii. To develop qualities such as honesty, self-reliance, creativeness, industriousness, cooperativeness, being a team player, being responsible, self confident and pro-active.
- iii. To develop language abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and comprehending needed for social living and effective participation in the day-to-day activities.
- iv. To develop knowledge on mathematical operations and science and ability to think inductively to solve daily life problems.
- v. To familiarize with national history, culture, geography, economics and environment to recognize the importance of multicultural and multiethnic diversity to maintain and build national unity, harmony, and peace for national development.
- vi. To develop basic knowledge of technical and vocational education and a healthy respect for labor.
- vii. To develop basic occupational skills and the capacity to earn a livelihood to be self-dependent.
- viii. To understand and practice human rights, social justice and democracy.
- ix. To develop knowledge, behaviour and attitudes to respect individual differences in terms of gender, disabilities, social, economic, geographical, ethnic and cultural variations.
- x. To develop knowledge, skills, and life skills such as creativity, inductive thinking, co-

operation, independence, critical thinking, and analytical skills to meet the growing national and international challenges.

- xi. To be able to pursue higher education and compete at national and international level.

### **4.3 Curriculum Structure of School Education**

#### **4.3.1 Primary Level**

At the primary level, the curriculum structure is visualized in three stages: i) first stage comprising of grades 1, 2, and 3; ii) second stage comprising of grades 4 and 5; and iii) third stage comprising of grades 6 to 8. Based on these stages, the learning areas mentioned below will be offered to develop specific knowledge, skills, and values in children according to their developmental stages:

- Languages: Mother language, Nepali and English
- Mathematics
- Arts: Creative and Expressive Art
- Science: General Science, Environmental Education, Health and Physical Education
- Social Studies
- Local Need Based Study

The purpose of the first stage (grades 1-3) will be to introduce children to formal teaching and provide an opportunity to develop basic literacy, numeracy and life skills including personal health habits and sanitation. They will also be acquainted with the environment they are living in and will not be loaded with many subjects. At this stage children will learn two languages (any two from mother language, Nepali and English). Regarding other learning areas children will be introduced to basic science, health, environment, and social studies through integration. In addition, Creative and Expressive Arts will be an important part of the primary level curriculum.

The purpose of the second stage (grades 4-5) will be to provide an opportunity for developing knowledge, skills, attitude and values through the experiences of different learning areas and life skills. The learning areas at this stage will be Mathematics, Creative and Expressive Arts, Science, Health and Physical Education, Language and Social Studies. The teaching of Science, Health and Social Studies will focus on providing experiential learning through adapted curriculum or localization. Similarly, the knowledge on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be integrated with other subjects. Life skills will be emphasized through the integration of content and method in all subjects as appropriate. Under the Language learning area, children at this stage will continue to learn the same two languages they have learned in grades 1 to 3. For those who need to make language transition to Nepali or to English<sup>9</sup> in grade 6, the transition process will begin in grade 4 through special arrangements for those students. Regarding the Local Need Based Study learning area up to grade 5, it will not appear as a separate subject but will be integrated into subjects in the other learning areas through curriculum adaptation.

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<sup>9</sup> Children who take mother language and English in the primary grades will need to make the transition from mother language to Nepali, and those who take mother language and Nepali will have to make the transition from mother language to English starting from grade 4.

At the third level (grade 6-8), students will be offered the same set of learning areas as mentioned above. However, the Local Need Based Study will appear as a separate subject of learning. For example, under the LNBS students will have the opportunity to select among various subjects like the mother language or ICT or other practical life related areas such as livestock, horticulture, agronomy, and computer education.<sup>10</sup> The generic life skills such as interpersonal skills, self awareness skills, critical and creative thinking skills, decision making skills and coping and stress management skills will be developed through cross curricular provision.

#### **4.3.2 Secondary Level**

At the secondary level, the curriculum structure is visualized at two stages: the first stage comprising of grade 9 and 10 and the second stage comprising of grade 11 and 12. The following learning areas will be offered at the first stage of the secondary level covering various subjects:<sup>11</sup>

- Languages
- Science
- Mathematics
- Social Science
- Occupation, Trade and Vocation

During the first stage, students will be given the opportunity to learn subjects like English, Nepali, General Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics as core subjects. They will also be required to select one subject from the Occupation, Trade and Vocation learning area. In addition, students will have to choose one subject from one of the following learning areas: Language, Science, and Social Science. Schools will provide as many choices as possible.

At the second stage of secondary level, the students will have the opportunity to study two fields of study: i) academic, and ii) technical and vocational education. In the academic field, there will be separate streams of Social Sciences, Management, and Science. The technical and vocational field of study will have streams like Agriculture, Forestry, Engineering and Medicine. There will be three groups of subjects offered: compulsory, specialization and elective in both fields of study. The distribution of weightage for three groups of subject will be as mentioned below:

- Forty percent weightage will be given to compulsory and elective subjects and sixty percent to the specialization area.
- Nepali, English and Social Studies will be compulsory subjects for both streams. The Social Studies subject will cover Nepali studies and global knowledge.
- Students will be given the opportunity to select any one subject as elective different from her/his specialization.

#### **4.4 Student Assessment Policy**

A comprehensive assessment policy has been developed with the purpose of addressing

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<sup>10</sup> Other subjects that could be introduced under the Local Need Based Study are listed in Annex 2 under the Occupation, Trade and Vocation learning area. This list is, however, only indicative, and any other subject that is more locally relevant can be developed and offered.

<sup>11</sup> An indicative list of subjects that fall under these learning areas are provided in Annex 2.

assessment related concerns that have emerged in recent years.

#### **4.4.1 Guiding principles for student assessment**

The following principles will guide the development of a comprehensive assessment policy.

- Student assessment on the whole will comprise both internal and external assessment using formal as well as informal testing devices at all levels and grades.<sup>12</sup>
- The assessment based on the learning outcomes defined by the curriculum will be administered by the government at the end of each level for promotion purpose. It will be a basis to maintain standard.
- Formative assessment of the students will be done through homework, unit tests, trimester test, observation, class work, attendance and participation in the classroom.
- Summative assessment will be used for grading or certification of students' achievement, and information based on it will be used for judging the appropriateness of the course at each level.
- The techniques used for summative will be determined by instructional objectives, but they will typically be teacher made tests like trimester test, final test, and practical test – oral and laboratory work.
- Appropriate policy measures will be taken by the MOES to introduce Continuous Assessment System (CAS) and Liberal Promotion Policy (LPP) from grade 1 through 5 and extended gradually to all primary grades.
- The subject teachers will use classroom assessment techniques for course improvement, rather than for assigning grades. The purpose will be to help teachers perform individual diagnosis and take feedback for instructional improvement to promote learning and increase students' achievement.
- The teacher and school will be the focal point for students' internal assessment and will be responsible for student's test results in both primary and secondary level. All components of internal assessment will be given weightage.
- The school, the Resource Center (RC), the DEO, and the RED will be made responsible to carry out summative assessment at school, RC, district or regional level respectively.
- The assessment policy will be inclusive so as to address the problems of students with disabilities and others with special learning needs.
- Collaborative and partnership approach on student assessment and promotion will be

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<sup>12</sup> See Annex 3 Table 1 for Assessment Types, Purpose, Use, and Tools.

emphasized by involving stakeholders in policy formulation and execution of assessment system.

- The pre-primary level children will be assessed through non-testing devices to assess the physical, emotional, social and mental aspects, personal sanitation and other quality traits, attitude and behavior. The information about various aspects of children's developments will be shared with parents/guardians.
- MOES will make provision for developing standardized tests gradually in different subjects for different levels to ensure the minimum standard of achievement in specific subjects or in certain levels of schooling. Such tests will be used for level wise examination gradually.
- MOES will make provision for subject specific national assessment at any grade and level periodically considering test results and their analysis at district, regional or national level.
- MOES will expedite the possibilities for conducting international studies in South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) level to generate comparative data on students' achievement. The comparative studies will be conducted in selected subjects like English, Mathematics, and Science in certain grades as deemed necessary.
- The NCDAC in consultation with Department of Education, CDC, OCE, NFEC and RED will develop a policy for providing opportunity for formal schooling for those who are literate through informal and/or non-formal modes of education e.g. open schools, Gumba and Madrasa.
- A provision for qualifying test on regular basis will be made by the CDC through school, DEO or RED for those who have not attended formal education but want equivalence certificate of their education and training (knowledge, and skills or occupational skills) obtained through open learning, non-formal and informal modes.
- MOES will introduce the principle of positive discrimination in assessment for students with disability.
- Letter grading system will be introduced gradually at the secondary level.
- The school grants system will be tied-up with the success rate of school at the end of primary and secondary level.

#### **4.4.2 Comprehensive student assessment system**

Drawing from the principles stated above, a comprehensive student assessment system has been developed and presented in this section.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See Annex 3 for an overview of this system in a matrix form.

### *Grade and Level Wise Promotion System*

The MOES will ensure that related institutions at national, regional, district and community levels adopt following appropriate decisions for students' assessment and promotion:

- The promotion will be decided on the basis of fixed weightage for the internal assessment and final examination at grade and level both. For internal assessment the weightage of marks will be 60%,<sup>14</sup> 40%, 25% and 20% at grades 1- 5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12, respectively.
- The pass marks in all grades and levels will be 40%.
- In all external examinations i.e. in grade 5, 8, 10 and 12, the weightage of marks will be 40%, 60%, 75% and 80% respectively.<sup>15</sup>
- The CAS and LPP will be used from grade 1 through 5. There will be no provision for labelling pass or fail in these grades. The CAS will include class work, homework, peer assessment, self-assessment, group interaction, portfolio assessment and performance assessment.
- There will be no formal paper and pencil test from grades 1 through 4 under CAS to count towards their aggregate score for each grade. However, children will be given simple mock tests for practice and familiarity toward preparing for an external test at the end of grade 5.
- At the end of grade 5, the students will be required to pass an external examination administered at the RC level. The purpose of external examination will not only be to assess students for promotion but also to compare test results and share between schools of the RC.
- Once the CAS and LPP are fully utilized, the purpose of RC level examination will only be for comparing test results and share between schools for planning and improving educational program. The RC school will work as the secretariat of RC level examination.
- The CAS and LPP will be used in a phase wise manner. Until the CAS and LPP are fully implemented, students will be required to obtain 40% marks on average in both internal assessment and final examination for grade promotion at the primary level.
- At the end of primary level, i.e. grade 8, students will be required to go through external examination administered at the district level by the District Examination Committee (DEC) formed by the DEO. The purpose of the external examination will not only to

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<sup>14</sup> For grades 1-4, 40% of the aggregate score will be obtained from summative assessment in school until CAS is fully implemented. In grade 5, this 40% will be obtained from the RC level external examination.

<sup>15</sup> See Annex 3 Table 2 for Types of Assessments, Weightage and Responsible Agencies.

assess students for promotion but also to compare test results and share among schools of the district for planning and improving educational program.

- For promotion from grade 9 to 10, students will be required to pass all core subjects securing at least 40% in both internal assessment and final examination separately.
- At the end of grade 10, students will have to pass a qualifying test conducted by the concerned school, group of schools or the RC to sit for regional examination of grade 10.
- Students of grade 10 will have to secure 40% aggregate marks and pass any six subjects including Nepali and English in the regional examination.
- For promotion from grade 11 to 12, students will have to pass all subjects securing 40% marks in both internal assessment and final or external examination separately. The responsibility to design, implement and conduct test examination of grade 11 will be that of the concerned school, group of schools or the RC.
- The final examination at the end of secondary level i.e. grade 12 will be conducted at national level. To get the School Leaving Certificate, student will have to pass all subjects of the national examination.
- The MOES/CDC will define the minimum learning standards for each level. This will provide a basis to develop and use criterion as well as norm-referenced assessment system.

#### *Assessment policy for students with disabilities*

To make the assessment policy inclusive for students with disabilities, HMG/N will take the following measures:

- For students with visual disability, there will be separate provision for students with low vision and for those who are blind
- For low vision students, provision of large size print of the question, examination hall with extra light and reasonably extra time will be provided.
- Since the blind students can read and write in Braille script, there will be provision of question papers in Braille script and answer books to write in Braille script. Students who write in Braille script will be given 50% more time in the examination.
- As an alternative to question papers in Braille script and answer books to write in Braille script, there could be arrangement of recording question papers and answer in tape. In such case, the examinees will be given slightly more time so that they can correct answer in the recorder.
- In the case of the present provision of sighted writer for blind, alternative provisions will be made in practical subject and substitutions made in items for pictorials descriptions and drawing in subjects such as geometry, geography and physics.
- For hearing impaired students, they will be exempted from the assessment of listening and speaking components by other forms of communication skills that are viable for them.

- There will be comfortable seating arrangements in the examination hall for physically disabled students who do not have limitations in arms and hand.
- Those who have disability in their arms and hands and thereby have problems in writing will be provided with extra time and other special provisions.

In order to implement the proposed National Curriculum Framework outlined in this chapter, some guidelines are presented in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5

### Implementing the National Curriculum Framework

In order to effectively implement this NCF, there is a need for strong political commitment to take administrative and technical decisions. The CDC as the lead agency in curriculum development, implementation and revision, has to ensure that the principles of the NCF and proposed curriculum structure are translated into action without any delay. Major interventions required for the proposed NCF are given below.

#### 5.1 Restructuring school education

In view of the national as well as international practice and context, the structure of formal school education in Nepal will be 12 years with two tiers--primary and secondary levels. Hence, the education structure of P-12 will be implemented throughout the country and 2 years of pre-primary education. The primary schools will be from grade 1 to 8 (with flexibility of pre-primary school) and the secondary level will be from grade 9 to 12. However, given that the process of upgrading the existing primary schools (i.e. those only up to grade 5) will take some time, it is necessary to continue to have schools with only up to grade 5 in order to ensure access to children of very young age especially in remote and geographically difficult circumstances. Similarly, to adopt the policy of grade 9 to 12 as secondary education, there is a need to gradually phase out the PCL from the university system and the existing ten plus two system.

#### 5.2 Reforming the curriculum development, approval and revision process

The existing NCDAC that is responsible to formulate curriculum and assessment policies, and guidelines for curriculum and curricular material development and approval will be reconstituted for wider representation of different stakeholder groups such as women, ethnic groups, *Dalits*, people with disability, students, parents, teachers, and human rights and child rights experts.

With regard to curriculum development, approval and revision of school education (P-12), the CDC will begin a collaborative approach with a wider representation of different subject experts, educationists and stakeholders such as women, ethnic groups, *Dalits*, and people with disability, students, parents, teachers and their professional organizations, and different right based groups like human rights, women's rights, and child rights. The committees and subcommittees thus formed will work in a holistic approach that guarantees the coherence of curriculum from pre-primary to grade 12 in all learning areas. Similarly, at the district level, the DLCCC and at Resource Center (RC) or Village Development Committee or school level a Local Need Based Curriculum Development Committee (LNBCDC) will be formed by including representatives from different stakeholder groups mentioned above.

The DLCCC will be responsible to monitor curriculum implementation and to evaluate and approve locally developed, accommodated and adapted curricula. The LNBCDC will be responsible to develop and revise the local curriculum and to accommodate and adapt the national curriculum to the suit the local context. The LNBCDC may obtain technical support and feedback from the Resource Center, local educationists, subject specialists, concerned District Education Office (DEO) and Resource Person (RP).

### **5.3 Developing guidelines for preparation and implementation of curricular materials**

The curriculum of each subject will consist of objectives, learning outcomes, contents, teaching and learning strategies, instructional materials and student assessment strategies.

Learning outcomes will describe what students should know, understand value and be able to do as a result of their curriculum experiences. The learning outcomes will become increasingly more complex as students progress through their schooling. In addition, the curriculum will indicate the core content areas and activities to be uniformly used as well as content areas and activities that may be accommodated, adapted and varied to suit local needs.

Curriculum of each subject will consist of the following elements:

- Objectives that conform to the accepted national goals and level wise objectives and life skills.
- Core content common to all schools.
- A segment on the learning area of Local Need Based Study.
- A segment aimed at developing competencies that are required to meet personal needs and goals.
- Appropriate teaching learning strategies based on the principle of child-centered, activity-based, and issue oriented teaching learning. Practical work, project work, field study and types of assignments will be clearly stated.
- Clear description of assessment tools and procedures for using school and curriculum based assessment.

The schools, teachers and their stakeholders have expressed their concern that centrally developed curricula are inadequate to meet variations in students' prior knowledge and learning needs. Similarly, the national curricula may not account for variations in teachers' knowledge, interest, and ability to implement them. Therefore, for bringing local relevance in the national curriculum, the government will give more priority to curriculum accommodation and adaptation strategy in the local context rather than developing a new local curriculum to make it less expensive, less time consuming, and to maintain standard with the national level objectives.

A support mechanism to orient and train the teachers and the LNBCDC for local accommodation and adaptation of national curricula to address the local needs will be made by mobilizing the DLCCC.

The textbooks for all subjects will be based on the objectives and learning outcomes and a policy on the introduction of multi-textbooks will be introduced. The textbooks from grade 1 to 5 will be translated into different national languages to address the local needs of the students. Supplementary instructional materials for learners with special needs will be developed.

Orientation program for curriculum developers and textbook writers will be a must on the intent and focus of curriculum such as inclusiveness, life skills, ICT, local need based study, language transition, and child-centred instructional approaches.

CDC will develop guidelines, handbook, orientation packages or other kinds of materials for curriculum experts, textbook writers, teachers, and the members of different Subject Committees and Subcommittees and stakeholders so that discrimination and biases of any forms related to gender, castes, ethnicity, languages, religion, disabilities or regional differences will not prevail in the curriculum, textbooks, and other curricular materials. The CDC through its curriculum and textbook approval mechanism will ensure that the curriculum, textbooks and other learning and teaching materials are free from biases or discrimination related to gender, castes, ethnicity, languages, religion, disabilities or regional differences.

The CDC will develop feedback mechanism for updating and revising the curriculum in following ways:

- Regular reporting and updates from DLCCC and Regional Education Directorate by collecting feedback from teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders as part of their annual program.
- Using interactive website, list serve based discussion, and mass media at central level.
- Interaction programs at regional and national level organized by CDC.
- Making provision for mini grants project to support researchers and students of Masters and Ph. D. level for their thesis work in the components of curriculum, textbook, and teaching-learning.

The curriculum and textbooks will be disseminated and made available to all schools and teachers in a timely manner. Dissemination of curriculum will be inclusive of content on the need for assimilating life skills approach in the learning areas and instructional strategy to support and build on existing knowledge and skills, positive attitudes, and behavioural changes.

#### **5.4 Promoting curriculum evaluation and research**

The CDC will build a mechanism for curriculum evaluation and research as a requirement for curriculum development, implementation and revision. Research on curricular issues will be an integral part of CDC's responsibilities. It will set up a separate wing to carry out curriculum evaluation and research activities under the leadership of curriculum evaluation and research experts.

The focus of curriculum evaluation can be on curricular content, on pupils, on classroom transaction, and on the gaps between intended, taught and learned curriculum through content analysis, assessment, observation or case study. Continuous research on curricular issues will focus on the various domains of curriculum and teaching learning materials. National assessments, school-based action research, and content analysis of teaching learning materials from various perspectives will provide inputs for minor and major revisions of the curricular materials.

#### **5.5 Implementing comprehensive assessment system**

In order to implement the comprehensive assessment policy outlined in the previous chapter for student assessment, the following measures will be taken.

### **5.5.1 Formation of examination committees at different levels**

For smooth functioning of the external examinations at different points the following provisions will be made:

There will be a Resource Centre Level Examination Committee (RCLEC) comprising of members representing the head teachers, Resource Person, guardians and School Management Committee(SMC) of the related RC for the final examination of grade 5. The role of RCLEC will be to:

- Plan, develop, and implement the tests
- Publish the test results and analyze them for use by respective schools
- Suggest for instructional improvement plan as needed
- Share the findings of the test results with other RCs of the district.

There will be a Qualifying Test Examination Committee at the concerned level (school, group of schools or the RC) to design, plan and conduct qualifying test for grade 10. The committee will comprise of head teachers, teachers, Resource Person, and School Management Committee of the related school, group of schools or RC.

There will be District Examination Committee (DEC) comprised of head teachers, subject teachers, guardians, and people's representatives of the district to conduct final examination at the end of primary level i.e. grade eight. The purpose of this final examination will be to certify students for secondary level. The role of DEC will be to:

- Plan, develop and implement the tests
- Publish the test results
- Certify the students for secondary level
- Analyze the test results and disseminate it within the district
- Design and implement instructional improvement plan in the district

The final examination of grade 10 based on the curriculum of grade 10 will be at the regional level. The Regional Examination Committee (REC) formed under the Regional Education Director will design, plan, develop question papers, conduct examination and publish examination results. The REC will be comprised of District Education Officers, head-teachers, subject teachers, subject experts and peoples representatives. The REC will function under the policy guidelines and directions provided by CDC and OCE.

The final examination of grade 12 will be at the national level and will be administered by OCE.

### **5.5.2 Involving stakeholders in student assessment**

Stakeholders' involvement in student assessment will be encouraged through the following mechanisms:

- The curriculum for each grade will be shared with the parents and guardians at the beginning of the school year.
- The stakeholders will be involved by the respective school in developing and

implementing local policy on CAS and liberal promotion at the primary level.

- The stakeholders will be involved while developing annual school assessment program, sharing students' progress and obtaining feedback from the stakeholders in improving the school assessment policy.
- The parents will be contacted on a regular basis to share the progress of the students and to adjust instructional program for remedial teaching as needed.
- The stakeholders will be involved while conducting action research related to students' performance and using test results for instructional improvement.
- Schools will develop regular interaction program/ discussion with parents/guardians as part of academic program for sharing on the performance of their children, teachers' predication on students' progress and finding ways on improving students' performance.
- The DEO will have regular monitoring and supervision of schools to ensure the involvement of stakeholders in student assessment.

### **5.5.3 Institutional arrangement for implementing the assessment policy**

The capacity of the CDC and other related institutions will be strengthened for curriculum development, revision and implementation.

- The existing NCDAC will coordinate with the Office of Controller of Examination (OCE) and examination Division of Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) to have uniform national schools assessment policy from grade P to 12 including the provision on special needs students.
- The NCDAC will develop policies to guide CDC plan, design and conduct programs for capacity building of related agencies like Regional Education Directorate (RED) and DEO and the RCs to manage schools assessment, action research and national assessments and surveys.
- The CDC will coordinate with the OCE and the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) in upgrading the infrastructure to conduct examination at regional, district and RC level.
- The MOES will establish an effective management information system (MIS) of both primary and secondary levels final examinations and assessment for better planning and implementation of school education program.
- The MOES will ensure implementation of various programs and activities through CDC with support of related agencies like NCED, DOE, and OCE for the following:
  - Development of curriculum grids, sample tests based on the curriculum grids and distribution through the DOE, RED and DEO in the whole country.
  - Development of variety of culture-fair tests i.e. tests which are not biased against gender, caste, religion, ethnic groups, *Dalits*, students with disabilities and disadvantaged groups to address their differing needs.

- Development of orientation manuals and training package on student assessment techniques and tools to orient the staff concerned at the RED, DEO, RC and school level.
- Development of detailed guidelines and tools for all types of tests and recording student information from grade P to 12 at national, regional, district, RC and school level, and dissemination through out the country.
- Design, develop and implement various capacity building programs for concerned staff members to effectively implement the comprehensive assessment system
- Analyse test results and share them with concerned schools, parents and teachers from RC to national levels will be made.

### **5.6 Preparing teachers for effective curriculum development and implementation**

Teachers are at the forefront of the process of educational reform. The quality and effectiveness of any education system ultimately depends on the quality and nature of interaction that occurs between learners and their teachers. In this context, teachers' involvement in the process of curriculum development is important. Their involvement in curriculum development facilitates effective implementation of curriculum. One of the major problems in existing school education is the lack of effective implementation of school curriculum. This is primarily due to the lack of understanding of the intent of the curriculum among the teachers resulting from a lack of access of teachers to the curricula and adequate orientation.

Hence, the NCF emphasizes the importance of professional development of teachers with a focus on curriculum development and implementation in order to ensure that teachers understand the curriculum content and the processes involved in supporting learning. Teachers draw on their knowledge of subject matter and curriculum to make sound decisions about what is important for students to learn. Therefore, in view of the proposition of new structure of school education and its curriculum framework, there is a need to upgrade the educational qualification of school teachers particularly at the primary level.<sup>16</sup> As per the demands of this National Curriculum Framework, teacher preparation programs must focus on the following elements:

- Inclusive approaches in teaching and learning process.
- Child centered and life skills-based approach in teaching.
- Knowledge of and skills in language transition for primary level students in
- Bilingual and multilingual classroom situation.
- Contextualizing the learning experiences based on curriculum.
- Basic knowledge and skills in ICT.
- Knowledge and skills for curriculum accommodation, adaptation, and need-based curriculum development and implementation.
- Preparing instructional materials to address the differing needs of children.

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<sup>16</sup> The Tenth Plan has also stated that necessary measures will be taken to upgrade the minimum academic qualification of primary school teachers from grade 10 to grade 12 (NPC 2059, p385).

- Developing assessment tools, analysing test results and reporting to parents.
- Understanding and conducting action research.

In order to develop and implement a plan for effective teacher preparation, CDC, OCE, NCED, DOE, and teacher education programs of different universities within the country need to work together in a coordinated fashion. The institutions that train teachers (both pre-service and in-service) must be continuously updated with the changes in the school curriculum and global trends in curricular reform.

### **5.7 Revision and Improvement of NCF**

It is obvious from the introductory chapter that this NCF has been prepared through a wide consultation with various stakeholders, review of international literature, and a thorough commenting process involving educationists and policy makers. This NCF is comprehensive and has the following major characteristics:

- Strategies to address the differing curricular needs of various groups such as women, *Dalit*, Ethnic Groups, Special Needs Groups
- Policies for curriculum development, implementation and revision to ensure inclusiveness of curriculum and students' assessment
- Strategies for representation of different stakeholders in different Curriculum Development Committees and Forums and their participation
- Strategy for the flexibility of adaptation or localization of curriculum and introduction of Local Need Based Study (LNBS) for work orientation
- Focus on the school based and curriculum based assessment for instructional improvement and students' achievement
- Inclusion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an emerging field of new learning
- Provision of mother tongues as a medium of instruction and learning from grade 1 to 5 and language transition at grade 6
- Fixation of school opening days and instructional hours
- Emphasis on child centered and life skills based approach of learning
- Suggestion for creating new avenues of learning such as open learning and recognition for learning through religious institution like Gumba and Madrasa
- More focus on skills, attitude and value development rather than knowledge acquisition alone

Hence, it must not be changed on an ad hoc basis. Any major changes must be incorporated only after a wide consultation with stakeholders.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accountability:** Accountability in assessment refers to ensuring that money invested in education has led to measurable learning. It attempts to assess what students have learned, or how well teachers have taught, and/or the effectiveness of a school's performance or that of teachers as an instructional leader. This is an attempt that can affect policy and public perception of the effectiveness of taxpayer-supported schools and be the basis for comparison among schools.

**Achievement Test:** A test designed to measure the amount of knowledge and/or skill that a student has acquired, usually as a result of classroom instruction. The achievement test results can be interpreted in terms of criterion referenced measurement or norm referenced measurement

**Action Research:** School and classroom-based studies initiated and conducted by teachers and other school staff. Action research involves teachers, aides, principals, and other school staff as researchers who systematically reflect on their teaching or other work and collect data that will answer their questions.

**Assessment:** The term "assessment" refers to gathering and interpreting information about students' achievement whereby the term "achievement" means the level of attainment of learning goals of school or college courses. At its most useful, assessment is an episode in the learning process; part of reflection and autobiographical understanding of progress. Traditionally, student assessments are used to determine placement, promotion, graduation, or retention. Strictly speaking, "assessment" refers to assignments and tasks that provide information, and "evaluation" refers to judgments based on that information.

**Classroom assessment:** Classroom assessment refers to teacher regular task in the normal classroom work of gathering information on students' learning for effective teaching learning process. It differs from tests and other forms of students' assessment in that it is aimed at course improvement, rather than at assigning grades. Classroom assessment helps teachers perform individual diagnosis and take feedback for instructional improvement to promote learning and increase their ability, mastery of content, motivating students for learning and monitor student progress for promotion and grading. It also includes providing feedback to parents

**Continuous Assessment System:** Continuous Assessment System (CAS) is a modern assessment system that is adopted as a means to improve the innate potential of the students and improve their learning. It is also used for liberal promotion.

**Criterion Referenced Tests:** A test designed to compare a student's test performance to clearly define curricular objectives, skill levels, or areas of knowledge rather than with scores or a sample of other students (like norm-referenced tests). Performance is compared to an expected level of mastery in a content area rather than to other students' scores.

**Curriculum Accommodation:** The modification to the delivery of instruction or method of student performance and **not** the change in content or conceptual difficulty of the curriculum.

**Curriculum Adaptation:** The modification to the delivery of instructional methods and intended goals of student performance that does not change the content but does *slightly change* the conceptual difficulty of the curriculum.

**Curriculum Development:** The process of planning learning opportunities intended to bring about certain desired changes in pupils, and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken places.

**Curriculum Dissemination:** The process of ensuring that a curriculum reaches the target population, that is, the deliberate intention to inform clients of an innovation. The process includes such aspects as training those who will present the materials, sensitizing those who will monitor it, and other goal oriented activities to facilitate the adoption of the innovation.

**Curriculum Evaluation:** The process of delineating, obtaining and providing information useful in making curriculum decisions and judgements

**Curriculum Modification:** The changes to a range of educational components in a curriculum, such as content knowledge, the method of instruction, and student's learning outcomes, through the alteration of materials and programs

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information on the student performance in knowledge, skills, attitude and values, or cognitive as well as non-cognitive areas of learning for educational decision making. It includes both qualitative and quantitative descriptions of pupil behavior plus value judgments concerning the desirability of that behavior.

**Examination:** Examination is generally considered as part of teaching, a tool to measure the outcomes in knowledge, skills and attitude. Examination has long been part of education system in the world. A national examination which assesses the educational achievement of pupils for grading, promotion or for placement in higher education has been in most of the countries in the world a means of evaluation.

**Formative Assessment:** Observations which allow one to determine the degree to which students know or are able to do a given learning task, and which identifies the part of the task that the student does not know or is unable to do. The main purpose of the formative assessment will be to monitor the learning progress during instruction, make instructional improvement and effective learning of the students by means of identification and subsequent remediation of problematic aspects during learning.

**Informal Assessment:** The process of informal assessment is a means by the teachers, either through ability or training, are able to collect, evaluate, and use information about the students they instruct. The information received by the teacher on average student through ordinary method like review of cumulative record, previous test scores are usually insufficient for teachers to address the problems of exceptional students, especially those with learning disabilities. The

information obtained by the teachers through informal means is subjective and private and is neither shared nor verified with the students.

**National Assessments:** National assessments are some times called as system assessment, learning assessment and, and assessment of learning outcomes. National assessments are conducted with purpose of providing information on the quality of education and assessment to policy makers, planners, and managers. The policy makers need basis of knowledge in education sector for firm decision regarding the goals of education, quality enhancing and effective allocation of resources or bringing policy changes in education sector. The purposes for national assessments may differ depending on what we intend to achieve. Sometime national assessments are carried with intention of raising standards or maintaining standard.

**Non-testing Devices:** Non-testing devices is means such as anecdotal record, rating scale and checklist. The result of observations supplements paper-and –pencil test which can be used to measure the learning outcomes such as skills, work habits, social attitudes, scientific attitudes, interests and appreciations and adjustments.

**Norm-referenced test:** The norm- referenced test refers to teacher made and standardized tests designed to rank students with respect to a sample of other students in achievement and are useful for selection, grouping and grading.

**Overlapping Curriculum:** It refers to the incorporation of specific individual goals and expectations for students with diverse needs in the curriculum but do not have a direct modification of general curriculum.

**Outcome:** An operationally defined educational goal, usually a culminating activity, product, or performance that can be measured.

**Performance Assessments:** Performance assessments are tests that directly assess pupil performance. Students are assessed on the result as well as the process engaged in a complex task or creation of a product.

**Portfolio assessment:** An assessment process that is based on the collection of student work (such as written assignments, drafts, artwork, and presentations) that represents competencies, exemplary work, or the student's developmental progress.

**Self-Assessment:** A process in which a student engages in a systematic review of a performance, usually for the purpose of improving future performance.

**Standardized Tests:** It means the test is always given and scored the same way. Assessments that are administered and scored in exactly the same way for all students. Performance assessments also can be standardized if they are administered and scored in the same way for all students.

**Summative assessment:** Assessment at the conclusion of a unit or units of instruction or an activity or plan to determine or judge student skills and knowledge or effectiveness of a plan or

activity. Outcomes are the culmination of a teaching/learning process for a unit, subject, or year's study. The purpose of summative assessment is to determine the extent to which the instructional objective have been achieved and will basically be used to assign course grade or score or for certifying pupil mastery of the intended learning outcomes

**Test:** A test is a measure that provides information about a students' knowledge, skill, competence, or behavior. Tests or "assessments" are often used to monitor education systems for public accountability, help improve instructional practices, evaluate program effectiveness, measure student achievement, and assess students' mastery of skills.

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# **ANNEXES**

## **Annex 1: The NCF Development Process**

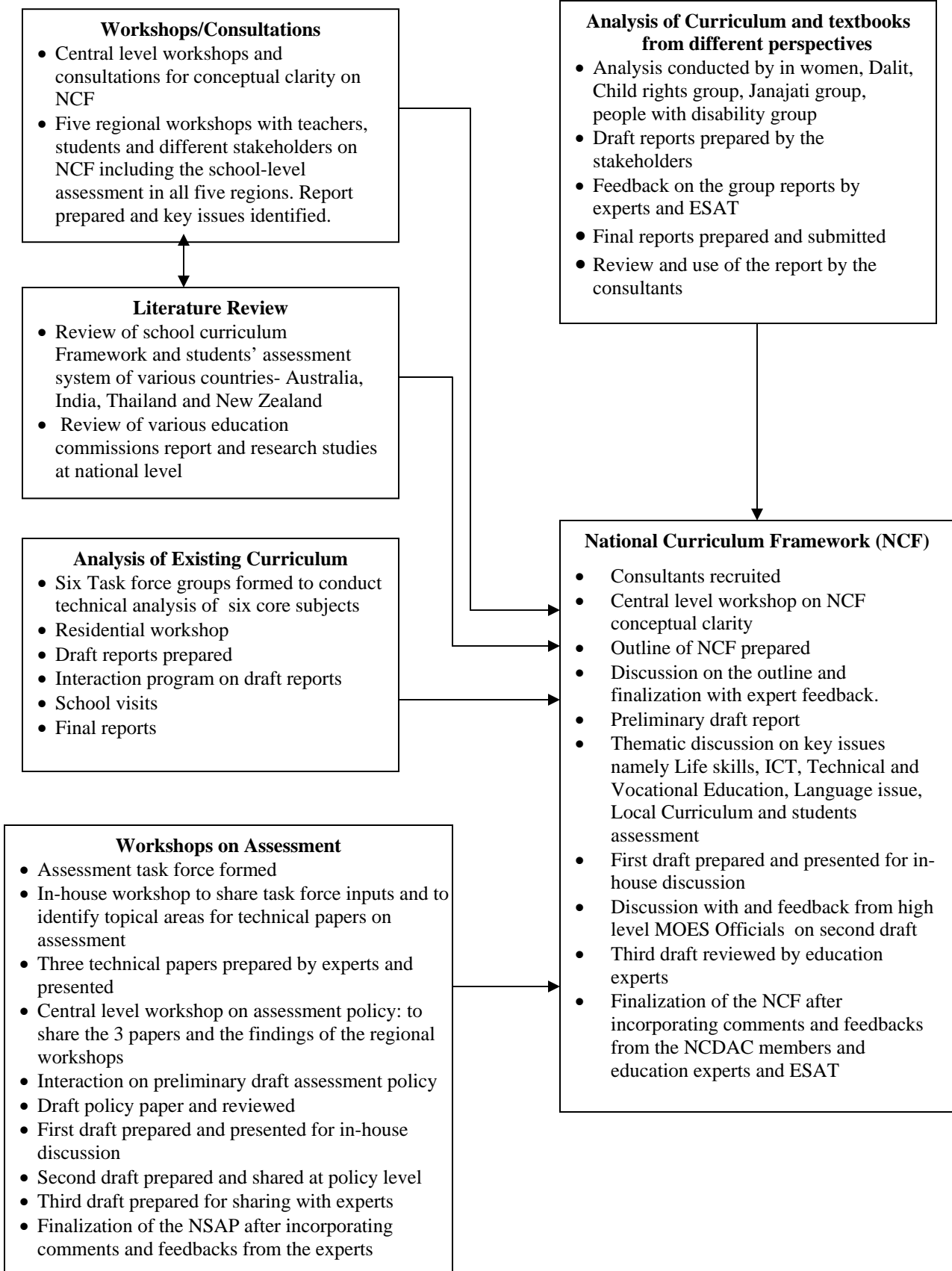
In the process of developing the NCF, a number of activities were carried out by involving the related persons and authorities from grassroots to central level. The process was very participatory and interactive. Chart 1 below summarizes on the NCF and NSAP development process.

In April 5, 2004 a national workshop to conceptualise NCF was conducted bringing 50 participants from wide range of government and nongovernmental organization, campuses, schools and other stakeholder groups. The workshop was instrumental in defining the NCF as:

*The NCF consists of the principles and guidelines for developing, implementing and revising the national school curriculum and assessment based on a comprehensive review of the context and concerns of educational development with reference to national needs and international perspectives*

Based on the above concept of NCF, the CDC organized an *Interaction Program* with educationists and the subject experts to discuss on the outline of NCF on May 7, 2004 in Kathmandu. The workshop suggested guidelines for developing the NCF. Based on the guidelines, five regional workshops were conducted to explore views and suggestions from the educational administrators, educational experts, principals, head teachers, teachers, stakeholders and students. Among those 5 workshops one was conducted in Pokhara from May 14 to 17, 2004 and, one each in Chitwan and Biratnagar and two in Nepalgunj from May 24 to 27, 2004. More than 200 teachers representing all levels of school education from 50 districts participated in these workshops. During the same time separate workshops with women, ethnic groups, and special needs group and child right group and local leaders from the host districts where also conducted. Altogether, about 130 stakeholders participated in these regional workshops. As part of the regional workshops students and teachers representing all levels ( i. e. primary through higher secondary) were involved in discussion, separately. More than 300 teachers and 300 students participated in these discussions. The workshop revealed a number of issues that are summarized in Box 1.

**Chart 1: Process of Developing the National Curriculum Framework**



### **Box 1: Problems in existing school education system: Views of participants**

- The quality of education is deteriorating
- Equality, access and efficiency in education are far from reality
- School graduates are not able to meet the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Students lack values, humanity, morality and civic responsibility and discipline
- Students lack practical knowledge and life skills
- Students are not able to get jobs in the labor market
- Opportunity are limited to few well- to-do class children
- Curriculum is not practical, not suited to the needs, abilities of the students
- Curriculum is rigid, not flexible
- Existing curriculum does not address the needs of special needs groups like women, *Dalit*, ethnic groups, and students with disabilities
- The linkage between curriculum from one level to other is weak
- Secondary school curriculum is overloaded
- SLC curriculum seems to be tough
- Teaching method is not interactive and participatory
- Students have no opportunity to learn in mother language
- Limited or no room for remedial instruction
- Student assessment is examination oriented
- Student assessment is not flexible to disabled and disadvantages group, minority. Women and *Dalit*.
- Assessment does not provide flexibility for promotion of brilliant students

To address those problems the participants also made some recommendations, which are presented in Boxes 2 and 3 below.

### **Box 2: General recommendations**

#### **On Curriculum**

- School Curriculum must be from grade P to 12 and not fragmented
- Stakeholders must be involved in the curriculum development and revision process
- Curriculum and evaluation must be flexible to address differing needs of students
- Mathematics and science curriculum at secondary level must be simplified
- Nepali, English, Science and Mathematics must be the compulsory subjects at all levels
- New learning areas like life skills, ICT, and vocational and technical education in school education must be introduced
- Evaluation should be liberal,
- Non-testing devise at primary level
- Classroom based evaluation must be practiced for instructional improvement
- Evaluation to address the needs of special needs groups like women, **Dalit**, ethnic groups, blind and disabled, mentally retarded
- Internal and external examination in all grades and levels

#### **On Assessment**

- Focus on classroom-based assessment
- Informal testing devices from primary to higher secondary level.
- Emphasis on practical test and non-testing devices
- Final examination at grade 5 should be at RC
- Grade 8 final examination at district level
- Test examination of grade 10 at district level
- SLC final examination at Regional level
- Focus SLC examination on grade 10 curriculum only.
- The final examination at higher secondary level should only in grade 12
- Need for one board to run examination
- Exam preparation days

### **Box 3: Specific recommendations**

#### **Pre-primary level**

- Focus on communication and socialization skills
- Emphasis on pupils' growth and development.

#### **Primary level**

- Offer subjects such as English, Nepali and mother language
- Introduce local language as the medium of instruction

#### **Lower secondary level**

- Introduce civic education and moral education
- Introduce prevocational subject
- Introduce Information communication technology (ICT)

#### **Secondary level**

- Introduce ICT and vocational subject
- Life skills to be integrated in related subjects

#### **Higher secondary education**

- Introduce practical subjects like ICT, photography and journalism as optional subjects.
- Introduce life skills and vocational and technical education

In addition, CDC also formed six taskforce groups for reviewing the curriculum of six core subjects (one taskforce for each core subjects i.e. English, Nepali, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Health, Population and Environmental Education) of primary to higher secondary levels.

Each task –force, headed by the Deputy Director or Curriculum expert of CDC consisted of one subject teacher representing secondary school and one-subject committee member of higher secondary education board. In the process of analyzing the existing curricula from grade 1 to 12, the task force met individually and collectively for several times and also a three-day residential workshop was held in Dhulikhel. This workshop identified the gaps between the curricula from one level to the other and separate reports were prepared. These reports will be more important at the stage of developing details of subject curriculum Other steps involved in developing the National Curriculum Framework included the process of collecting information through-reviewing various national and international documents and research studies. In addition, analysis of the existing curriculum of the core subjects from the perspectives of different stakeholders groups i.e. gender, Dalit, Child right group, ethnic groups, physically disabled was also carried out. Besides a number of in-house discussions on NCF were held.

Regarding the formulation of the assessment policy, one national workshop was organized by CDC from June 18 to 22, 2004 in Sanothimi, Bhaktapur with the purpose of exploring views and suggestions from the planners, administrators, subject experts, principals, head teachers and teachers on the existing practices of evaluation and the reforms needed for national school assessment. Suggestions from the workshop have been taken into consideration while developing policy on assessment.

By acknowledging the changed context and concern related to school education and students assessment, a draft NCF and the student assessment policy was developed by mid July 2004 which consisted of various components or elements such as national goals of education, structure of education, level wise objectives of school education, curriculum structure, instructional time, language policy, medium of instruction, assessment policies and curriculum development, revision and implementation guidelines and policies. Besides, the draft NCF had special mention about emerging issues like work/technical and vocational education, life skills education, inclusive education and ICT education. However, the deliberations on the draft indicated for further discussion on five key issues i.e. on inclusive education, student assessment, technical and vocational education and life skills, local curriculum and information communication technology. Accordingly, the CDC organized one-day thematic discussions on each five issues involving both the concerned experts and officials. After incorporating feedbacks and suggestions, the second draft of the NCF was developed and presented to the high policy makers--Secretary, Joint-secretaries and institutional heads in the Ministry of Education and Sports on November 7, 2004 for constructive feedback and suggestions. After incorporating the feedback and suggestions from Joint Secretaries and Secretary, the revised version of the NCF and NSAP was shared with the experts for their professional input and feedback. Following the feedback and comments from the experts the NCF was finalized.

## **Annex 2: An indicative list of subjects under various learning areas for the secondary level**

### **Language**

1. Nepali
2. English
3. Hindi
4. Sanskrit
5. Tibetan
6. Mother Language other than Nepali (which has literary tradition)
7. International language like-French, Germany, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Japanese and Arabic

### **Social Science**

1. Political Science
2. History
3. Geography
4. Community study
5. Rural economics
6. Cultural study
7. Population education
8. Development study
9. Other

### **Science**

1. General Science
2. Environmental Science
3. Optional Mathematics
4. Optional Science
5. Physics
6. Chemistry
7. Biology
8. Other

### **Management**

1. Accountancy
2. Business organization and office management
3. Office management and secretarial practice
4. Travel and tourism
5. Hotel management
6. Business mathematics
7. Marketing
8. Finance

**Occupation, trade and vocation related subjects**

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**Subjects**

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- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Music  | 2. Electronic Application      |
| 3. Electric Fitting                             | 4. Plumbing                    |
| 5. Badyabadan                                   | 6. Home Science                |
| 7. Dance  | 8. Arts                        |
| 9. Fine arts                                    | 10. ICT                        |
| 11. Bastukala                                   | 12. Computer Education         |
| 13. Handicrafts                                 | 14. Karmakanda                 |
| 15. Accounting                                  | 16. Agronomy                   |
| 17. Auditing                                    | 18. Horticulture               |
| 19. Driving                                     | 20. Livestock                  |
| 21. Photography                                 | 22. Hotel Management           |
| 23. Yoga  | 24. Mountaineering and Tourism |
| 25. Journalism                                  | 26. Travel and Tours           |
| 27. Driving                                     | 28. Nursing                    |
| 29. Community Health                            | 30. Physical Education         |
| 31. Health Care                                 | 32. Cooking                    |
| 33. Social service                              | 34. Mass communication         |
| 35. Others as decided by CDC or Local Community |                                |
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### Annex 3

**Table 1: Assessment Types, Purpose, Use, Tools and Users**

<b>Types of school assessment</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Tools</b>	<b>Users</b>
Formative assessment	Assessing pupils learning progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to monitor learning</li> <li>- to provide feedback to students and teachers</li> <li>- to identify learning difficulties</li> </ul>	Classroom Assessment Techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unit test</li> <li>- achievement test</li> <li>- diagnostic test</li> <li>- observation</li> <li>- non testing devices</li> <li>- class assignment</li> <li>- tutorial</li> <li>- interviews</li> <li>- peer reviews</li> <li>- class participation</li> <li>- project work</li> <li>- observation of life skills</li> <li>- portfolio assessment</li> </ul>	Teachers Stakeholders
Summative Assessment	Assessing pupils achievement at the end of course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to determine to what extent instructional achievement are achieved</li> <li>- assigning course grade</li> <li>- certifying pupil for mastery of learning outcomes</li> </ul>	Teacher made achievement test	Teachers Administrator Curriculum Experts

**Table 2: Types of Assessments, Weightage and Responsible Agency  
(Grade 1-12)**

Level/ Grade	Purpose of assessment	Assessment techniques	Responsible Agency	Weightage	
				Internal Assessment	Final test/ External Assessment
Grade 1-4	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, life skills project work	School, subject teachers, stakeholders	60%	-
	2. Promotion	<i>Summative assessment</i>	School	-	40%
Grade 5	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work		60%	
	2. Qualifying test/ promotion	Summative test /External exam	RC or group of schools		40%
Grade 6-7	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work	School, subject teachers, stakeholders	40%	-
	2. Promotion	<i>Summative assessment</i>	School	-	60%
Grade 8	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work	School, subject teachers, stakeholders	40%	
	2. Level wise Qualifying test/ promotion	External exam	DEO		60%
Grade 9	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work	School	25%	
	2. Promotion	<i>Summative assessment</i>	School	-	75%

Level/ Grade	Purpose of assessment	Assessment techniques	Responsible Agency	Weightage	
				Internal Assessment	Final test/ External Assessment
Grade 10	1. Instructional improvement	<i>Formative assessment</i> Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work	School, subject teachers, stakeholders	25%	75%
	2. Qualifying Exam /Sent-up examination	<i>Summative assessment</i>	RC or group of schools		75%
	3. .Level wise Promotion /Final Examination (SLC)	<i>Summative assessment at regional level</i>	OCE	25%	75%
Grade 11	1. Instructional improvement	Unit test, classroom test participation, attendance, home assignment, project work	School or colleges	20%	
	2. Promotion	<i>Summative assessment</i>	School or college concerned		80%
Grade 12	1. Instructional improvement	classroom test participation, assignment, project works	School or college concerned	20%	
	2. Qualifying Exam /Sent-up examination	<i>Summative assessment</i>	School or college or group of schools/colleges		80%
	3. Promotion		HSEB	20%	80%

Note: Liberal promotion based on Continuous Assessment to be implemented from grade 1 through 8 in a phase wise basis.