

HEI ICI ToT Nepal Project

With the end of a decade long civil war, abolition of monarchy and growing awareness of the importance of education, expectations and demand for quality public education have significantly increased in Nepal. Being aware of the expectations, the Government of Nepal declared to achieve the goal of Education for All (EFA) by 2015. In order to meet the challenges in the path of EFA, the Ministry of Education (MoE) took initiative to improve the existing educational services by introducing School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP) 2009-2015. One important component of SSRP is teachers' professional development without which no education reform can be effective.



First day of the first phase ToT May 2013

According to the Teacher Development Policy Guideline MoE –National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), the practicing teachers at the secondary level (9-10) must have Master's degree in their relevant subjects. It is estimated that some 13,000 teachers, who teach at the

secondary level have only Bachelor's degree. Hence they need to upgrade their academic qualification but for various reasons, they cannot enroll them as students of Master's degree for face to face mode education.

As these practicing teachers cannot leave their classes for long, Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode was thought to be the best. However, Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education (TU-FoE) had not enough experience and expertise to launch the ODL programme. TU-FoE needed technical support to prepare its teacher trainers to use ODL methodology in order to help these 13,000 teachers upgrade their qualification. Therefore, TU-FoE sought help from the Teacher Education Colleges, JAMK and HAMK University of Applied, Finland. Consequently, Training of Trainers for Teacher Qualification Upgrading Programme in Nepal (TOT-Nepal) started. According to the MoU signed between these three partners, following areas were identified and agreed to be worked on.

- 62 teacher educators and 8 ICT experts will be trained on the ODL methodology in four phases by the Finnish teacher educators assisted by three Nepali Local Master trainers
- Finnish partners will also help in the production of Self Learning Materials (SLM)
- An ICT hub will be established

- A study visit of 15 people (6 Campus Chiefs, 6 ICT experts and 1 ICT expert from the central ICT hub, 2 faculty members from TU-Foe) to be made to JAMK and HAMK universities of Applied Sciences, Finland.

So far, the first and the second phase training on ODL methodology has already been completed successfully in May and in November 2013, and the study visit was completed in October 2013. The establishment of ICT hub and preparation of the SLMs are in progress.



The Finnish tutor talking with the participants

Both training centres, Sanothimi and Surkhet Campus, have enough physical facilities not only to run ToT but also the ODL courses in future. The two campuses have good ICT labs located in a separate building with two large rooms. They have more than 40 computers with 24 hours internet access. In order to tackle the power shortage problem, they have diesel motors to generate power. In addition to these, they also have both common library

and e-library, and efficient staff to run the labs.

The training was based on participatory approach. Trainees worked on their own in groups and pairs with the constant help and support from the trainers. They discussed the issue and reached the conclusion facilitated by the trainers. At the end of most sessions, different groups made their presentations for other groups in order to get feedback.



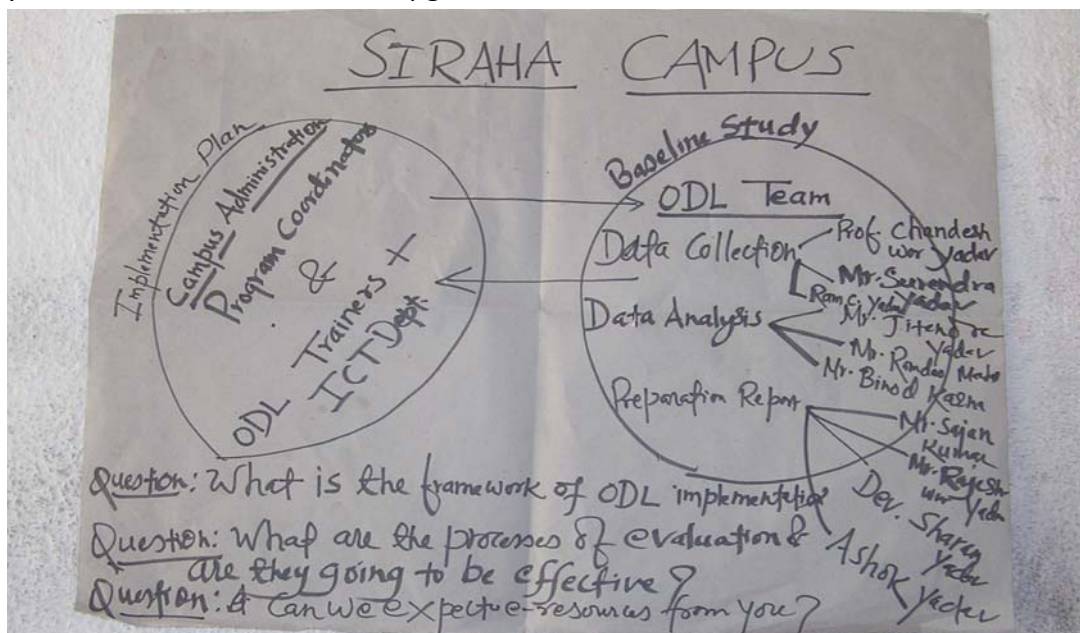
Finnish tutors and Nepali participants

At the end of the day, the tutors hold meetings to talk about the day's session. There was a very good understanding and coordination between the Finn and the Nepali tutors. They were eager to learn and they liked the way the tutors conducted their session. Most of them had not any experience of participatory approach which they experienced in this training. As there were sometimes problem of communication between the Finnish tutors and the participants, the communication was facilitated by the local tutors by translation. The most important thing was that majority of teachers were convinced

that ODL can be successfully operated in Nepal.

This qualification upgrading programme has been introduced for the 13,000 practicing teachers but it will be extended as a regular programme later. ODL mode of education is the cry of the day. People of the remote areas of Nepal can have access to education only through ODL mode. Similarly, the employees in different sectors can upgrade

their qualification more comfortably through ODL mode. Tribhuvan University has realised this fact and plans to start this ODL mode of education in all other faculties. Faculty of Education being the pioneer in Tribhuvan University appreciates the cooperation and support from the Finnish Universities and the Finnish Government.



A work of the training participants

Writer:

Project Coordinator Vishnu Singh Rai,
Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education,
Kathmandu, Nepal