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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-110 115

Dated the 09th July, 2013

D.O. No. 43-27/2012-EE.9

Dear *Shri. Sinha,*

I am enclosing herewith the report of the Joint Review Mission, led by Dr. Sadhna Saxena, which visited Tripura from 6th to 13th June, 2013. The team had discussed the report with you and your other team members.

2. I would request you to prepare a comprehensive position with regard to the status of teacher education in your State, along with steps taken by the State Government in the last one year for making qualitative and quantitative improvements in the Teacher Education scenario. Further, the action, which the State Government proposes to take, along with time lines, with regard to the recommendations of the Joint Review Mission, may also be indicated.

3. In this regard, I also refer to the SLP (C) No. 4247-4248/2009 before the Hon'ble Supreme Court in which the Hon'ble Court is hearing the matter relating to implementation of the various recommendations contained in the Report of Justice J.S. Verma, former Chief Justice of India on Teacher Education. The Supreme Court has also taken note of the JRMs and has desired that Action Taken Report should be obtained from the concerned States and placed before the Court by the Central Government. In the light of the above Court order, I am to request you to indicate the action taken/proposed to be taken on the recommendations of the JRM by 31st July, 2013.

4. A copy of the report is also placed on our website www.teindia.nic.in. Please do let us know if we can facilitate this in any manner.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Amarjit Singh
(Amarjit Singh)

Shri Banmali Sinha,
Principal Secretary (Education),
Department of Education,
Capital Complex,
Govt. of Tripura,
Civil Secretariat,
AGARTALA - 799 006



मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय
All India Council for Technical Education

JOINT REVIEW MISSION REPORT ON TEACHER EDUCATION
TRIPURA

MISSION DATES: JUNE 6 TO 13, 2013

Table of contents

1.0 Executive Summary

2.0 Joint Review Mission

2.1 JRM Context

2.1.1 Objectives

2.1.2 Areas of Interest

2.2 Team Members

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Preplanning

2.3.2 Visit Schedule

3.0 Teacher Education in Tripura

3.1 Brief History of Tripura and Teacher Education

3.2 Untrained teachers – An early legacy

3.3 Present status of teacher education

3.4 Concerns regarding ODL mode

3.5 Recommendations

3.6 State Profile: About the state

3.7 State Profile: Enrolment and Teachers

4.0 Teacher Education Institutions and their role

4.1 State Profile: Teacher education institutions

4.2 Governance and management of training institutions

4.3 Teacher education institutions--observations

4.3.1 Intake capacities

4.4 SCERT

4.4.1 Recommendations

4.5 IASE

4.5.1 Recommendations

4.6 DIETs

4.6.1 Recommendations

5.0 Curriculum and Pedagogy process related to various trainings

5.1 Various Training programmes

5.2 Overall Reflections

5.3 Recommendations

6.0 Conclusions and overall recommendations

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Key achievements of the states

There is a lot of concern and commitment in the government to improve the quality of school education and build linkages with higher education. To strengthen the teacher education in Tripura the state Government has prepared an Annual Work Plan and a Five Year perspective plan for SCERT, IASE, CTE and DIETs considering the feasibility and absorption capacity of the state and to enable the DoE (school) , Government of Tripura, to avail appropriate support from MHRD, GoI. However, the AWP has still not been approved as it was not in the required format.

Given the geographical complexities leading to political and geographical isolation from the mainland, complex history of merger with India, high levels of poverty, lack of industry and dependence on agriculture, and cultural and linguistic diversity, makes education a very challenging and onerous task in the state of Tripura. Government proposes to take following steps to enhance the capacity of institutions and improve the quality of teacher education in the state:

- Proposal submitted to NCTE for enhancing intake capacity of students in the pre-service programmes from 50 to 100 in all DIETs.
- Proposal for increasing number of DIETS from 4 to 8 as the number of districts has increased to 8. District Magistrates and Collectors of these newly created districts have been instructed to take necessary action for identification and allotment of land for new DIETs.
- Addressing the training needs of untrained teachers (as per the NCTE norms) through Open Distance Learning (ODL mode) is one of the top priority of the state . For this the department of education (school) is in the process of signing an MoU with IGNOU for starting 34 centers from July 2013.
- Curriculum revision and text books renewal has been done in the line of NCF-2005 and NCFTE-2009.
- Teacher education programme for tribal communities in one of the widely used local language is being encouraged. In schools of tribal

area Kokborok language is being taught as a language at the elementary level though the medium of instruction is Bengali.

- There is proposal for setting up BITES in tribal dominated areas.
- A well planned building providing space for library and reading room, laboratories, faculty rooms, hostels etc. for IASE has been constructed and the student intake will be increased from 150 to 250 in the next academic session after the approval from NCTE.
- Ministry of DoNER in NLCPR programmes has been playing a crucial role in creating infrastructure for IASE and colleges of education. One college of education has been constructed at Kumarghat and will start its session from 2014-15 with student intake capacity of 500. Similarly, decision to set up two more colleges of teacher education in Santibazar, South Tripura and Teliamura in Khuwai district has been taken. The proposal for sanctioning Rs.25 crores for each college are on the priority list of the 14th Finance Commission.
- University of Tripura is running MA education programme and soon it will be starting M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes as well.

- 1.2 Key Issues Identified during JRM

- The most urgent requirement is finalization of the AWP according to the MHRD guidelines so that the state could avail the funds for strengthening and creating teacher training institutions.
- In the new plan SCERT is envisioned as a key institute that would provide academic leadership to all the other institutions in the state. However, in Tripura, SCERT is the weakest link in the teacher education institutions with poor infrastructure and limited staff. Also, for the past many years SCERT has not had a director from the field of education. It has no autonomy and most of the staff is on deputation
- All the teacher training institutions have vacant positions and are inadequately staffed. All these institutions also need to constitute programme advisory committees as per MHRD guidelines.
- Infrastructure is poor without proper libraries, laboratories and with little or no ICT access.

- There are no mechanisms of upgrading and updating faculty's knowledge and understanding.
- There is little work in the area of research and innovation as there is no guidance and also faculty is over worked with their regular teaching responsibilities and conducting in-service short trainings for BRCs.
- Backlog of untrained teachers is the most important issue. Also, there seems to be shortage of elementary level teachers and oversupply of graduate teachers. The new recruitment of elementary level teachers is not taking place as about 5000 duly selected candidates are still awaiting appointments. A large number of these candidates do not fulfill the NCTE criteria for appointments though they appeared for interviews much before the NCTE criteria came into existence. As a consequence of this graduate teachers are being given D.El.Ed. trainings. The teachers are confused and resentful.
- The curricular and pedagogic issues need more attention as even amongst the faculty members there seems to be little or very mechanical understanding about the conceptual issues related to CCE, child centred education, play way method, activity based learning and so on and so forth. The big challenge how to create an environment of critical engagement with the crucial curricular and pedagogic issues.
- As in other states, language of instruction is a complex and challenging issue. For teachers' and teacher educators own learning also language is a big challenge as most of the important books are available only in English a language they are not very comfortable with.
- The faculty members seem enthusiastic and willing to learn however they urgently need proper environment, academic guidance and support for their own learning and for creating critical thinkers.

1.3 Overall recommendations

Finances and AWP

- The state did not submit AWP for 2012-13. For 2013-14 the proposal was made but it was not in the prescribed format. The AWP is a vision document which requires a participatory process for its preparation. It

requires discussions and planning with the faculty of other institutions like IASE and DIETs. The process is now underway and the state would submit the revised AWP. However, due to the absence of AWP for the last year there were no allocations from the CSS. The JRM recommends that some guidance/support from the ministry may speed up the process.

- One of the primary reason for this seems to be the absence of academic leadership at SCERT. The IASE faculty has very experienced people who need to be involved in the visioning exercise. JRM recommends that the state should identify people and seek support in this exercise, if not for AWP 2013-14 but for the next year.
- For proper functioning of SCERT, IASE and DIETs it is necessary that the vacant positions be filled and each of these institutions constitute their PACs (programme Advisory committees) at the earliest as per MHRD guidelines.
- The JRM recommends that the state should identify suitable and appropriate centers and resource persons for improving the capacity of faculty members of SCERT, IASE and DIETs and prepare the Perspective Plan and Annual Work Plan Budget for 2013-14 by including all the eligible components as per the revised Centrally Sponsored Teacher Education Scheme June 2012, with the help of experts who are effectively involved in the preparation of AWPB for Teacher Education.

About untrained teachers and other recommendations

- About 5000 candidates were shortlisted in three phases for elementary teachers positions through due process. However, they have not been appointed as many don't fulfil the new NCTE criteria of minimum marks and are only class 10 pass. There is a lot of discontent amongst these selected candidates which is holding back the process of new recruitment. Also, in a state like Tripura, the JRM team was told, it is not easy, especially amongst tribals, to fulfil this criteria. The tribal students in Tripura generally drop out after class X, JRM was told. JRM recommends that this situation be reviewed and appropriate decisions should be taken keeping the unique situation of Tripura in mind.
- In fact disaggregated data of teacher educators, teachers and students and their dropout rates at various levels are need to be examined to

understand the problems of ST and SC population. JRM recommends that this analysis be done at the state level to understand the inequality in participation and for finding ways to deal with it.

- There is very little scope for the professional development of teacher educators and their engagement in research and innovation in the existing scenario. There are no mechanisms in place for formal academic interaction amongst the faculty members of various institutions even within the state. Also, the libraries are almost non-existent. For any quality improvement in school education there is an urgent need to create opportunities of professional development of the teacher educators and the teachers. JRM recommends since this is a problem in most of the states an active group may be set up to engage with this issue. The group may be asked to take cognisance of the specificities of various states as well.
- Building linkages with higher education needs to be dealt with at the conceptual levels first as the university faculty in Tripura does not even see any role for themselves in school education. The faculty of the department of education and colleges of education require more exposure to understand this relationship.
- Unlike in many other states, Tripura has the advantage of getting adequate funding from DoNER for developing good infrastructure for educational institutions. However, there are not many qualified people to occupy faculty positions in institutions like IASE, CTEs and DIETs. The JRM recommends that a brainstorming be organised to understand and resolve such situations in backward states.
- The state has not done any projections regarding the requirement of teachers at different levels of schooling. From the data it seems that there is a backlog of trained teachers at the elementary level. Would there be an oversupply of secondary and higher secondary teachers in the coming five years? Or would many of them be engaged in SSA and RMSA short term in-service trainings? Also, what would this large number of BA (Education) graduates do? The question is crucial as there is already a situation where graduate teachers are undergoing two year D.El.Ed training instead of B.Ed. training. The JRM recommends that the state SCERT and IASE jointly take up this exercise and estimate

how many teachers and teacher educators would be required in the state in next five years?

- A similar exercise should also be done about the required in take capacities of different teacher education institutes including the colleges. There are very few M.Ed seats in the existing institutions however a large number of teacher educators are required for training teachers. The state should have a plan to deal with this gap.
- In view of the failure rate in IGNOU ODL mode course the enrolment and rate of success need to be carefully monitored. For this each institution should compile data on enrolment and successful completion of degree/diploma.
- Due to historical reasons, unlike in other states, Tripura does not have huge shortage of teachers but like in other states, it has a backlog of untrained teachers. Many of them are employed under SSA and are getting consolidated salaries, are contractual and were hired to teach higher classes but are undergoing D. El.Ed. training. They actually teach higher classes and were not sure how the D.El.Ed. training would help them. Understandably, they are unhappy and confused. JRM recommends that this anomaly be resolved urgently.
- For Tripura, currently pre-service training is not as crucial an issue as two year in-service training of the untrained teachers is who have been teaching, sometimes, since 2001. In such a scenario there is an urgency to critically focus attention on the curriculum, content and pedagogy of ODL mode. It is not sufficient to say that curriculum is recognised by NCTE as contextualisation is important. JRM team's experience is that teacher educators themselves neither understand NCTE curriculum nor do they have the means to seek help.
- The IGNOU, one of the agency that has been running the D.El. Ed. classes in the ODL mode has reported absenteeism and lack of interest and the data of the directorate of distance education that runs B.Ed. level course shows a large dropout and failure. The JRM recommends that there is need to understand and address the issues that are building such a situation.

Institution specific Recommendations

SCERT, IASE and DIETs

- Need to restructure SCERT as per the CSSTE guidelines with sufficient autonomy, leadership, authority and capable faculty to undertake state level visioning, academic and educational planning and leadership roles and own professional growth through refresher courses at JNU, crediting MA(El Ed) courses at TISS, attending and organizing seminars and conferences, research work, enriching library, visits to functional SCERTs, university departments of education and leading NGOs with long history of work in the area of education in other states.
- SCERT may lead development of specific courses on teaching of Kokborok in the teacher education programmes whether D.El. Ed. Or B.Ed. and could encourage research in the area of language education and transition of tribal students from Kokborok to Bengali medium.
- Also there is this crucial but complex issue of separate cadre of teacher educators for the SCERT. Unwillingness of the state government to bear financial burden once financial grants under CSSTE are stopped is in a way a stumbling block that would have far reaching consequences in fulfilling the academic leadership role that SCERT is expected to play.
- The IASE faculty needs orientation about the what centrally sponsored schemes are. This should be done at the earliest so that the faculty could participate in the making of AWP and become aware of the provisions, role and responsibilities.
- The faculty also need exposure to debates and researches in education. For this the library needs to be urgently updated and the faculty need to organize academic orientation programmes by inviting resource persons from institutions outside the state also. Develop a systematic plan of individual and collective professional development of faculty members with their participation with adequate provisions for promotion, study leave, attend conferences and seminars within and outside Tripura and undergo refresher and orientation courses at academic staff colleges including those conducted at JNU, University of Delhi etc.
- Exposure visits, trainings in research methodology, and opportunities for sharing and dissemination of research should be instituted in teacher education institutions.
- New mechanisms to enrich libraries as a resource center for faculty research should be explored. This would include procuring recent

academic work in various areas and subscription of research journals and magazines.

- Special provisions to enable access of SCERTs, IASE and DIETs to e-resources (INFLIBNET) through UGC may be made. Several Indian and foreign universities and institutions preserve dissertations of their students through D-Space. These may be accessed through internet.
- Networking between institutions and formation of teaching and research interest groups may be other avenues to forge peer-support systems to initiate, sustain and disseminate researches.
- To promote research journals in regional languages, initial seed money, grants and subsidy such as one received by *Contemporary Education Dialogue* in its initial years from ICICI foundation and SRTT may be explored.
- Universities may also need to revise and/or relax rules for working school teachers and teacher educators to join research programmes without compromising on the rigour.
- Different teacher education institutions (SCERT, IASEs and DIETs) should establish academic committees at institutional and programme levels and draw on expertise available outside these institutions
- Develop linkages of SCERTs, IASEs and DIETs with universities within and outside Tripura as the site of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary inquiry and research for revitalization of these institutions and to develop their capacities. MHRD, state governments and institutions like UGC may consider a set of schemes and incentives to promote such collaboration through extra recruitments, deputations, resources to develop readers and other resource materials for teacher educators and teacher pupils, to undertake collaborative research and develop training programmes.
- Need to activate DIETs when so much activity happening in the state
- Reconceptualise School Educational experience, move beyond behavioristic understanding and lesson planning, use it to discuss process of learning and develop understanding and observations about school life, students and learning processes , discuss academic and non-academic issues in a non-threatening and friendly manner instead of an evaluative, judgmental and corrective mode

2.0 Joint Review Mission

2.1 JRM Context

- The current school education reforms in India including the implementation of RTE Act 2009, also re-visualises the academic role of all teacher education institutions for preparing qualified teachers and also continuous professional development of teachers and teacher educators.
- Teacher education witnessed substantial conceptual and structural transformation in policy, planning and management after National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) through the centrally sponsored schemes of restructuring and reorganization of teacher education.
- Massive expansion of elementary education due to RTE Act necessitates further strengthening and reconceptualizing of teacher education institutions. The XII Plan period approved outlay of Rs 6,308 cr. for teacher education, in a Centre-State sharing ratio of 75:25 (90:10 for NER) is providing opportunities to the states to upgrade and set up new teacher education institutes.
- This is an opportune period for the states to address the critical need of quality improvement in teacher education and research through systemic overhauling and expansion of their teacher education institutions.

2.1.1 Objectives

The overarching purpose of JRM is to understand about the teacher education institutions in the state. The specific objectives are:

- To review the historical progress, and to consider issues related to programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, of each component of the Teacher Education Scheme.
- To develop an understanding of the history of teacher education institutions, progress and processes and help in building future vision.
- To share observations that highlight strengths and weaknesses - with a view to enhancing implementation capacities and quality.

2.1.2 Areas of Interest

- Annual work plan and budget approvals and fund released to the State for FY 2012-13;
- Progress on process and performance indicators included in the Guidelines;
- Progress made on utilization of funds at the institutional level;
- Quality of the curriculum of the pre-service and the in-service programme ;
- Processes and pedagogical practices involved in the delivery of the programmes,
- Quality of resource material used by teacher trainees and teacher educators;
- Qualifications and experience of teacher educators;
- Contribution of the institutions in content development, undertaking research and action research, etc.;
- Issues of governance, linkages across institutions, cadre management, filling up of vacant posts;
- Quality and adequacy of infrastructural and instructional facilities in the institutions.

2.2 Team Members

- i) Prof. Sadhana Saxena, Delhi University, (Team Leader)
- ii) Prof. Bhupender Yadav, APU, Bangalore
- iii) Dr. Shubhra Chatterjee, Director , Vikramshila, Kolkatta
- iv) Dr. Disha Nawani, TISS, Bomaby
- v) Dr. Manish Jain, Ambedkar University, Delhi
- vi) Dr. Vincent De Paul, SCERT, Chennai

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Preplanning

For preplanning the team leader had telephoned the Director School education from Delhi a couple of times. The team leader also tried to talk with the principal secretary (education). However, she was asked to contact the director school education and the SCERT director. With the director education the team leader discussed the plan including scheduling meetings with the state officials and faculty of teacher training institutions. The director was informed that the

team would visit various teacher training institutions and interact with the faculty to understand the faculty's interests, competence and research inclinations and institute's infrastructure and other resources. It was also conveyed to the director that the team would also see observe the classes and interact with the pupil teachers. He was requested to make arrangements for field visits and assign a knowledgeable person to help the team. Request was also made to instruct the institutions to prepare presentations and invite all the faculty members for interaction. The state was also requested to send their AWP and any other relevant documents/reports. However, the team got the documents including the draft plan only after reaching the Agartala.

2.3.2 Visit Schedule

June 6, 2013	Meeting of the team members with Director and Additional Director School Education, Tripura; and Director SCERT	State Guest House
June 7, 2013	Meeting with the Principal Secretary, School Education, Director Higher Education, Director School Education, Director SCERT, Principal IASE and the team members. Meeting with the vice chancellor and the faculty of the department of education of Tripura University	State Secretariat Tripura University
June 8, 2013	Formal presentation about the work and role of SCERT and other teacher training institutions by SCERT director followed by interaction with the IASE and DIET Agartala faculty members in the presence of director school education. Visit to the new building of IASE Meeting with the DIET, Agartala faculty and observation of classroom	SCERT DIET, Agartala
June 9, 2013	Visit to DIET Kakraban, Udaipur, and BRC Matabari Rural Development Block	DIET, Kakraban
June 10, 2013	Group-1: Meeting with IASE faculty and meeting with IGNOU course co-ordinator Group-2: Visit to DIET Kamalpur and BRC, Dhalai district	IASE, Agartala

June 11,2013	Report writing	--
June,12,2013	Meeting with the faculty of education, Director distance education, distance education programme teacher educators and faculty of education teachers at Tripura University Sharing of draft findings and recommendations with Principal Secretary , Education; Directors of School Education and Higher education; Director and faculty of SCERT and DIET pricipals	Tripura University Conference Room, State Guest House

3. Teacher Education in Tripura

3.1 Brief history of state and Teacher Education Institutions

Tripura, with a total land area of 10,492 sqKms and a population of 36.74 lakhs (as per census of India, 2011), is the third smallest state in India in terms of size. It lost a considerable part of its fertile agricultural land during partition. The distance by road from Agartala to Kolkata via the present Bangladesh was less than 350 kms before partition. After partition , the route to Kolkata via Siliguri land corridor became 1,700kms long. Its geographical location – a land locked north eastern state, surrounded on three sides by Bangladesh and poor connectivity to the mainland through a circuitous land route via Assam, adds to its sense of isolation and deprivation.

Tripura was a princely state ruled by the kings of Manikya dynasty, that decided to join the Indian Union in October 1949 and was part of the Union Territory for 23 years. It attained full fledged statehood in 1972 after the liberation of Bangladesh. A steady influx of a large number of Bengali speaking refugees from East Pakistan brought about far reaching economic, political, social and cultural changes, all of which had a definite impact on the development of education in the state. Though migration from East Pakistan changed the population profile of this region yet tribals still constitute 31 % of the population. Dhalai is a tribal majority district with tribal population being more than 60%. From amongst the non tribals the population of SCs is 17% and that of OBCs is 27%. There are 19 sub tribes amongst the tribal population with their own cultural and linguistic uniqueness and identities. With Bengali being the language of the majority population and cultural and linguistic diversity

amongst the tribals the task of education is hugely challenging and complex. Majority of the students from tribal communities are first generation learners. The state's high percentage of tribal population has remained educationally backward - so much so, that it is difficult to find qualified teachers in remote tribal areas even today. Of all the teachers 37.10% are ST teachers, 16.82% are OBC and 14.60% are SC teachers (DISE Flash Statistics 2010-11,P 16).However their visibility in the teacher education institutions as teacher educators, even at the level of DIETs, is negligible. The literacy rate of the state is 87.75% which is higher than the national average.

Over 60% of the area of the state is classified as forest area leaving less than about 27% for cultivation though the economy of Tripura is agrarian and more than 50% of the population depends on agriculture. The economy of Tripura is characterised by high rate of poverty (fifty percent population is below the official poverty line), low per capita income, inadequate infrastructure, geographical isolation, communication bottlenecks, low progress in industrial growth leading to high rate of un-employment.

3.2 Untrained teachers – an early legacy

The spread of education in Tripura in the pre independence era does not quite follow the same trajectory as some of the other princely states in India such as Baroda or Mysore, although some efforts were made by the kings to establish schools and start a teacher training institution for training *Pathshala* teachers as early as 1892. The tradition of sending teachers for training to other states was evident even from those days. Schools were few in number and spread of education was limited to a small section of people. However, a large number of schools were set up after independence mostly due to the private efforts of the displaced persons from East Pakistan, a considerable number of whom were teachers. By then the population of the state had also swelled due to the steady influx of refugees.

The story of teacher training in Tripura begins after Independence in the 1950s. The first Basic Teacher Training College of Tripura, a primary teachers training institute – now the Agartala DIET, was established in Agartala in 1954, followed then, by the establishment of a Hindi Teachers' Training College in 1956. The Hindi Teachers' Training College worked well for several years but later it was declared outdated. In 1957-58, the Craft Teachers' Training

Institute (CTTI) was established. But like the Hindi Teachers' Training College, it too became defunct after a few years.

After this two Basic Training Colleges were established at Kakraban (South Tripura) and Panisagar (North Tripura) in 1958 and 1961 respectively. Then, in 1964, B.T. (Secondary Teachers' Training) College was formed at Agartala to train teachers of the secondary schools of Tripura. It too changed its name later to Government College of Education, then to College of Teacher Education (CTE). From 1998 this CTE started offering M.Ed. courses and in 2003 the same college was upgraded as the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE). In 1964 the above BT college was established in a make shift building. However in 1968 it was relocated on the campus of by then defunct Hindi Teachers' Training College. So by 1968 there were 4 institutes of teacher education—3 for the training of primary level teachers and one for secondary teachers.

The Basic Training College in Panisagar stopped functioning as a teacher training institute and has since been converted to the Regional Physical Training Institute. All these training colleges were affiliated to Calcutta University till the establishment of Tripura University in 1987. Hostel facilities were offered to the trainee teachers as the state had a policy of recruiting untrained teachers and then sending them for training to these institutions on deputation. It is evident from the records that the backlog of untrained teachers started building up from the 60's itself. The intake capacities of these institutions proved to be insufficient once the number of schools began to increase especially from 1990s due to the added focus on universalisation of elementary education. During this period, and even earlier, the state had a practice of sending their teachers to other states, mostly to West Bengal, for training. But the number of teachers who thus got trained was negligible compared to the actual need. The focus of the government was more on expansion of basic education, and teacher education largely remained a neglected area. This is evident from the fact that after the initial spurt in the 50s and 60s when these four colleges were set up within a period of 10 years (1954-1964), no new teacher training colleges were established for nearly next 25 years. It was only when the state decided to implement the centrally sponsored scheme in 1989, the Ministry of HRD approved central assistance to upgrade the two existing Basic Training Colleges of Agartala and Kakraban to DIETs (District Institute of Education and

Training). Also, under the same scheme two new DIETs were set up--one at Kamalpur and the other one at Kailasahar. At present, Tripura has four DIETs that are supervised by the SCERT, Agartala.

The state's recruitment policy also contributed in undermining the teacher education system, as the practice of appointing untrained teachers continued even as the training colleges were unable to provide seats to train them up after their recruitment. The old institutions were in a state of gradual decline due to prolonged vacancies and lack of investment in professional development of newly recruited faculty. Towards the late 1990s the problem of untrained teachers had snowballed to such a level that the state was forced to take cognisance of the situation and act on it. Soon after the Secondary Teacher Training Institute at Agartala was upgraded to CTE it started offering a one year M. Ed Course from 1999 (under the affiliation of Tripura University) to prepare teacher educators, as the unavailability of qualified teacher educators was reinforcing the vicious cycle that had been created. From 1996, the Secondary teachers training college had also started offering B.Ed Courses to a large number of students in the ODL (Open Distance Learning) mode to cope with the crisis. This course was affiliated to the Tripura University and was also given to fresh University graduates aspiring to be teachers. This step helped to mitigate the crisis of untrained teachers at the Secondary level to some extent, but the problem at the elementary level, where fast expansion was taking place, continued.

Although the launch of SSA in 2002 helped the state in fulfilling its agenda of universalising mass education at an accelerated pace, it also resulted in heightening the crisis of untrained teachers. The crisis was greater at the elementary level as the DIETs were unable to offer regular courses as they failed to get recognition from NCTE due to non fulfilment of criteria pertaining to staff strength, staff qualification and infrastructural facilities. This rendered them somewhat dysfunctional and dispirited for a few years. The state started offering short term Induction training of 60 day/ 30/ 10 days duration to untrained teachers with the help of SSA funds as a stop gap measure. Though these courses helped to infuse some fresh energy into the schools and improved their functioning, the real problem pertaining to untrained teachers remained unresolved as the content and pedagogy of these short term courses were not adequate for teacher preparation (discussed in later section).

In 2005 special permission was granted by NCTE to the state to clear its backlog of nearly 22,000 untrained teachers by getting them trained by IGNOU in the ODL mode. Two parallel courses were conducted for the graduate and undergraduate teachers respectively. The undergraduate teachers underwent the CPE Training (Certificate of Primary Education) and the graduate teachers took the CETE training (Certificate Course in Elementary Education). Both these courses were of 6 months duration. Simultaneously the state started to take steps in getting the DIETs recognised by NCTE to enable them to offer regular 2 year D Ed programmes in the face to face mode. However the courses that was started in 2008 had to be discontinued from 2010 as the institutes failed to enrol students when it became apparent that these trainings did not make them eligible for jobs even when there was an acute shortage of trained teachers in the system.

The 'inherited legacy' is thus a combined outcome of a general shortage of teacher training institutions and the state's teacher recruitment policy. Paucity of funds coupled with the state's own emphasis on mass education and its policy of recruiting untrained teachers have all contributed to aggravating the problem of untrained teachers to such an extent that today the state finds itself constantly in a fire fighting mode, unable to take a long term view of establishing a strong teacher education system in the state.

3.3 Present status of teacher education: confusion about number of trained and untrained teachers

Large numbers of untrained teachers teaching in schools pose a key challenge for teacher education in Tripura. But different figures cited in different data sources pose enormous difficulty in figuring out the exact number of untrained teachers, the nature (D.Ed. or B.Ed.) and duration (1.5 years or 2 years) of training required to comply them with the NCTE norms and the number of teachers who have completed the training. According to state officials the total number of untrained teachers post RTE Act is 16,502. These teachers constitute 44.43% of a total of 37,136 teachers across all stages of school education in Tripura. These teachers are sub-divided in two groups. The first group consists of 11,884 untrained teachers who have not received any teacher training and will have to do the full 2 year Course. These teachers (11884) constitute about 32 % (or one-third) of all school teachers in Tripura. This figure of 11884 is

consistently maintained in different data sources and official presentations. Of these, 2901 are contractual teachers appointed by SSA and 271 are *Madrassa* teachers.

The second group consists of 4618 untrained graduate teachers, who were trained by IGNOU for a 6 month long Certificate in Elementary Teacher Education (CETE) programme. As this training did not meet RTEs two year training norm, these teachers will have to undergo an additional 18 months training to bridge the gap.

Confusion about this second group and the number of teachers who have received training from IGNOU arises as IGNOU's own data records that State Govt. sponsored 7088 candidates from July 2007 to July 2010. Of these sponsored candidates, 7074 candidates passed the CETE (Certificate of Elementary Teacher Education) programme. Besides this IGNOU records another 5198 candidates who were sponsored by the Tripura State Govt. for the Certificate in Primary Education (CPE) programme from July 2003-July 2010. Out of these 5198 candidates, 3756 completed the CPE programme (72.25 passed, 27.75 failed). Thus, together 12286 candidates were sponsored by state government and trained by IGNOU and 10830 (i.e. 8.14 %) passed the examination.

Due to these different figures, two set of discrepancies arise. Firstly, the number of teachers who have received even 6 months training needs to be freshly ascertained and secondly, it should not be assumed that all those who enrolled completed the CPE program. Clarity and revision of these figures would have consequences for the number of teachers who need training and the duration for which they need to be trained.

3.4 Concerns about the ODL mode

A small section of these untrained teachers have been and would be part of regular D.Ed. programmes at DIETs whereas a far larger proportion are being/would be trained through ODL mode. JRM has analysed these in-service trainings from different angles. The first of these is the number of teachers trained and the claims made regarding their successful completion. The second angle is the content, curriculum and pedagogy of those trainings. The third angle for examining the data on teacher trainings relates to the qualifications and experience of the faculty conducting those trainings.

The ODL mode of clearing the backlog of untrained teachers raises a set of concerns that should be borne in mind while adopting this mode.

Firstly, the ODL mode cannot substitute for a rigorous professional training amidst institutional ethos that nurture an academic culture of engaging with educational theory and practice, self and collective reflection, exchange of ideas, confidence and readiness to learn.

Secondly, the ODL mode cannot achieve the huge task at hand without a sufficient number of study centers. Even if IGNOU agrees to activate its study centers for D.Ed., it would require far greater number than those operated earlier. Finding suitable faculty for personal contact programme (PCP) and quality feedback on student's assignments is in itself an onerous task because the number of teacher educators in the state is small.

This brings us to the third concern. The number of qualified teachers (with M.Ed. or higher qualifications) for conducting Personal Contact Program (PCP) with trainees/ students in Tripura is severely limited. The teachers used in the executing ODL programmes for PCP are largely drawn from the faculty of DIETs and IASE. These faculty members are likely to be over-worked if, in addition to their regular duties, the PCP in ODL also becomes their responsibility.

Fourthly, stretching the work of the existing teacher educators in Tripura will harm the quality of their performance. If the indifferent quality of the feedback by the overworked for assignments by 'students' is not up to the mark, the purpose of training teachers through ODL mode (which is even otherwise a dilution) gets further compromised and will be defeated. The likelihood of this is quite high especially when the schedule of the ODL mode clashes with the regular job of the teacher educators in their own institutions.

The 'students' who are receiving this teacher training in ODL mode are untrained teachers with years of teaching experience in schools. Given their experience, continuity of teaching coupled with contact classes and assignment submission and long gap from formal study since employment, the nature and success of D.Ed. programme premised on a pre-service model for young students without any school teaching experience, needs careful reconsideration.

3.5 Recommendations about training of untrained teachers and teacher education programmes

1. A disaggregated record of the number of a) untrained teachers at various stages of school education, b) courses and trainings enrolled, attended and completed by them and c) teachers requiring further training should be collated at district and state level immediately.
2. As D.Ed. training would not meet the necessary norms for untrained secondary teachers, a distinct plan for their training needs to be put in place.
3. Instead of random allocation of teachers for in-service training programmes, the batches should be carefully formed to encourage and institute ethos of peer-learning and formation of community of teachers based on disciplinary backgrounds, needs and experiences.
4. State or any agency/institution entrusted with the task of training untrained teachers may decide to employ more teacher educators with requisite qualification and experience for this specific task. They may also be brought in from other states.
5. Dilution in the rigour and existing norms of teacher training (regular or ODL) must be discouraged. It should be borne in mind that the purpose of training these untrained teachers is not simply a literal compliance with RTE norms but enhancing the capacities of teachers and any dilution in it is going to have long-lasting negative effects for school education and learning of children in Tripura.
6. A system to obtain and use feedback about quality of faculty, process of training, command over subject content and feedback may be instituted.
7. The existing practice of using a pre-service model of two year training for the in-service teachers needs careful reconsideration at the level of several institutions (e.g. MHRD, NCTE, University education departments and teacher training institutions including IGNOU, state education departments and UGC) to redesign a programme that takes note of working teacher's experiences, needs and training requirements to emerge as professionals. In this regard JRM has following suggestions:

- a) There is a need to study how are teachers responding to the existing training.
 - b) Credit-based summer and winter schools for these teachers to augment their training in the areas of both disciplines and pedagogy, dual mode courses, work based in school may be considered. These programmes should not be seen as ways to water down or substitute existing models of teacher training but to develop other means to develop teachers as professionals and not simply transmitters of information to the young learners.
 - c) A credit system for in-service teachers may be evolved in which assessment systems have to be evaluated creatively. Learning by the student has to be evaluated under all systems. Instead of being evaluated all at once in one end-semester or annual exam for the in-service teacher, this learning could be assessed through module-making and assignment writing exercises. This one hopes may be more acceptable even to teachers who have taught for many years.
 - d) Among looking for novel ways to meet the challenge of a massive backlog of untrained teachers Tripura state has a history of sending its untrained teachers outside for training. In 1964, according to a NCERT publication *Teacher Education in Tripura*, 63 teachers were receiving full or part-time training in institutions outside the state. Three of these institutions were in Kolkata (viz. Calcutta University, David Hare Training College and Calcutta Institute of English), then, there was VishwaBharti in Shantiniketan, Kalyani University in Nadia, the Regional College of Education in Bhubaneshwar and Centre for English and Foreign Languages in Hyderabad. The same effort may be made now considering the fact that there is a precedent.
8. With increasing social heterogeneity and diversity in the profile of students of teacher education programmes and school teachers and large tribal population in Tripura, questions of inclusion need to be given adequate significant space in both the theoretical and practical components of teacher education programmes. In this context, reconceptualisation of teacher education programmes from the perspective of gender or other marginalized social groups needs careful

consideration to conceive question of quality in conjunction with equality.

3.6 State Profile

Table 3.6: About the State

Name of STATE	TRIPURA	No. of IASEs sanctioned/functional	1
No. of Revenue Districts	8*	No. of State Universities (i) Having Department of Education (ii) Not having Department of Education	None***
No. of Education Districts	8		-
No. of Blocks/Mandals	45		-
No. of DIETs sanctioned/functional	4	Number of lower primary schools	2343 (DISE)
No. of DRCs sanctioned/functional	Zero	Number of upper primary schools (including composite schools)	1240
No. of CTEs sanctioned/functional	Zero** (one is being proposed)	Number of secondary schools (including composite schools)	572
		Number of senior secondary schools (including composite schools)	362

* Four new districts were created 2011.

** Building for one CTE has already been constructed in Kumarghat.

*** Tripura State University has been designated as a Central University. It has a department of education and Directorate of Distance Education. There are 19 colleges affiliated to Tripura University which run BA (Education) programme. The state has decided to set up three more colleges of teacher education for running teacher training programme. Building for one college is being constructed in Kumarghat. This college would start functioning from academic

session 2014-15 and would accommodate 500 students. The government is contemplating sanctioning of Rs. 50 crores for setting up two more colleges in South Tripura and Khowai districts.

3.7 State Profile

Table 3.7: Enrolment and Teachers

Education Level	Enrolment	Sanctioned Strength of Teachers	Total No. of Teachers appointed	PTR	Total No. of Teachers with NCTE qualification	Total No. of Teachers without NCTE qualification	Teachers Vacancy	Annual Av. Retiral Vacancy
Primary (I-V)	354892*	NA	NA	19##	NA	11884 (all untrained graduate teachers)	4600#	NA
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	206546**	NA	NA	21##	NA		NA	NA
Secondary (IX-X)	113951***	NA	5625***	20.26***	NA		NA	NA
Sr. Secondary (XI-XII)	44444^	NA	6647^	6.9^	NA	NA	NA	NA

Note: The above table has been constructed from data given in the SCERT Tripura's document *Present Status & Proposal for Strengthening of Teacher Education in Tripura*. This data includes total number of students enrolled in all government, aided, unaided and central schools.

* Census 2011-12

** DISE 2011-12

*** U-DISE 2010-11

DISE Flash statistics 2010-11

^ DISE 2010-11

These posts have been advertised thrice (2002, 2006 and 2009) and teachers have been selected but not recruited as they do not meet post-RTE NCTE norms. The total number of vacant posts is much higher but this number is not available.

4.0 Teacher training institutions and their role

4.1 State Profile

Table 4.1: Teacher Education Institutions in Tripura

Type of Teacher Education Institutions	Government		Aided		Private		Total	
	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity
2 Yr. D.Ed*.	4 DIETs	480	None	-	None	-	4	480
1 Yr. B.Ed. (Regular)	1 (IASE/TU)	150	None	-	1 (VidyaBhawan)	100	2	250
2 Yr. B.Ed. (ODL)	1 (Directorate of Distance Education, TU)	400**	None	-	None	-	1	400
4 Yr. B.El.Ed.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Yr. D.Ed. (Special Education)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 Yr. B.Ed. (Special Education)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 Yr. M.Ed. (Regular)	1(IASE/TU)	20	-	-	-	-	1	20

Type of Teacher Education Institutions	Government		Aided		Private		Total	
	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity	No. of Institutions	Intake Capacity
1 Yr. M.Ed. (ODL)	1 (IGNOU)	25	-	-	-	-	1	25
MA Education (Regular)	1 (TU)	15	-	-	-	-	1	15
MA Education (ODL)	1 (Directorate of Distance Education, TU)	600	-	-	-	-	1	600
BA Education (Regular)	19 (colleges of TU)	500	-	-	-	-	-	500

* According to SCERT proposal document, an MOU is expected to be signed shortly between the Tripura Government and IGNOU for running 2 Yr. D.Ed. programme from July 2013 at 34 study centres at SCERT, DIET, BRCs.

** Tripura University has been conducting a B.Ed. course in ODL mode for in-service teachers since 1996. It has a capacity of 400 students. Over the 17 years, there have been 6,800 seats available under this mode. But only 2,302 students (or 34%) have successfully availed this facility of B.Ed. from this University.

4.2 The governance and management of teacher training institutions

- The governance and management of teacher education is done by School and Higher Education departments. However, organic linkage with the university system still needs to be worked out.
- Current teacher education is primarily through in service trainings of teachers who are already employed and were recruited on or after September 2001. Due to limited intake capacity of the training institutes only a small fraction of these teachers get into regular D.El. Ed and B.Ed courses run by DIETs and IASE every year.
- The short term distance mode trainings were conducted by IGNOU at IGNOU and other study centers . These have been stopped and government is hoping to start the 2-yr D.El.Ed. by July 2013 but no MOU has been signed so far.
- Tripura University has a department of education that runs MA (Education) course. It is going to start M.Ed. And M.Phil courses as well.
- BA(H) in education is run by 19 colleges that are affiliated to TU. Only 15 of these about 300 graduates get absorbed in MA education course at TU.
- There is one private university, VidyaBhawan, that runs B.Ed. course for 100 students and also serves as study center for IGNOU.

4.3 Teacher education institutions --Observations

The number of institutions engaged in teacher education in Tripura is small (4 DIETs, 1 IASE, 2 departments of Tripura University, IGNOU and VidyaBhawan). Four teacher education institutions (3 for Primary and 1 for Secondary level training) had been established during 1954-1964 and no new teacher training colleges were established for nearly 20 years. It was only when the state decided to implement the centrally sponsored scheme in 1989 that two new DIETs were set up –one at Kamalpur and the other at Kailasahar, and the two existing BT Colleges at Agartala and Kakrabon were upgraded to DIETs. This small number of teacher education institutions, their gradual decline due to prolonged vacancies and lack of investment in professional development of newly recruited faculty combined with the continuing practice of appointing untrained teachers contributed to undermining the teacher education system in Tripura. The training colleges were unable to provide seats to train untrained

teachers after their recruitment. The number of untrained teachers increased substantially with increasing efforts for universalization of elementary education towards the late 1990s and this century and deepened the crisis of teacher education in Tripura. The crisis was greater at the elementary level as DIETs were unable to offer regular courses for few years as they failed to get recognition from NCTE due to non fulfilment of criteria pertaining to staff strength, staff qualification and infrastructural facilities.

4.3.1 Intake capacity and number of graduates

In comparison to 630 seats in regular mode for pre-service teacher education programmes, there have been 400 seats in the Open Distance Learning (ODL) mode. This may indicate that ODL mode has been a significant form of teacher education programmes but the number of students who have graduated from ODL programmes on offer presents a different picture. Of the 6800 seats on offer (400/year since 1996) by Tripura University for B.Ed course in ODL mode for in-service teachers, only 2,302 students (or 34%) have successfully availed this facility of B.Ed. from this University. This situation raises three concerns a) not once before 2012 have all seats been filled, b) not all those that are admitted appear for the exam and c) pass percentage of those who take the exam has never been 100%. This indicates that ODL mode may not be necessarily a preferred mode of receiving pre-service training. Further, the limited number of seats for M.Ed. (20 regular and 25 in ODL mode) means that the possible pool of teacher educators in the state is also going to be smaller. This small number corresponds to limited employment opportunities in the light of very few teacher training institutions. This in turn means that state does not have enough teacher educators to teach untrained teachers. Absence of any PhD programme in education at any institution or university in Tripura also adds to the poverty of capacities to develop teacher educators at state level and engage in systematic researches pertaining to educational challenges and questions in Tripura.

For a glance at the intake capacity of these institutions please refer to Table No.4.1.

4.4 SCERT

Currently central assistance to SCERT is provided on a 50:50 sharing basis subject to a maximum of Rs. 1.0 Crore for the duration of the entire plan period for the following faculty strength:

	Designation	Number
1.	Director (Retd.IAS)	1
2.	Dy.Director	01
3.	HM (HS School on Deputation	01
4.	HM (Senior Basic School) Deputation	01
5.	Lecturer DIET	01
6.	AT (Post Graduate) Deputation	01

Staff position is minimal and has more than 50% vacancies. Infrastructure and physical facilities such as hostel, laboratories, library, rooms for the faculty, ICT lab, toilets etc. are either not there or are inadequate. Also, administrative support is weak and posts of administrative staff have not been filled. The past three directors have been from on deputation and from the administrative cadres who have not been in a position to provide academic leadership and vision. It does not have a separate cadre and the faculty is drawn from other institutions on deputation including from DIETs and schools.

At present, SCERT is carrying out a huge responsibility of preparing text books in 6 languages, including tribal languages, which is a significant achievement. It is also overseeing the ICT programme in 400 schools and preparing training modules for all the in service courses offered by DIETs. All these tasks are being performed with a skeletal faculty. One of its faculty members has also developed a dictionary of Kokborok which deserves commendation and dissemination. But absence of any designated faculty positions for SCERT means that it lacks conceptualization and capacities to undertake leadership role in the area of teacher education as envisaged in the revised CSSTE. This absence also means that faculty members with years of experience including one who developed Kokborok dictionary cannot be given appropriate designations.

4.4.1 Recommendations

1. Need to restructure SCERT as per the CSSTE guidelines with sufficient autonomy, leadership, authority and capable faculty to undertake state

level visioning, academic and educational planning and leadership roles and own professional growth through refresher courses at JNU, crediting MA(El Ed) courses at TISS, attending and organizing seminars and conferences, research work, enriching library, visits to functional SCERTs, university departments of education and leading NGOs with long history of work in the area of education in other states.

2. It may include people, institutions and agencies from outside state in the process of envisioning itself and developing its capacities.
3. SCERT may lead development of specific courses on teaching of Kokborok in the teacher education programmes whether D.El. Ed. Or B.Ed. and could encourage research in the area of language education and transition of tribal students from Kokborok to Bengali medium.
4. Also there is this crucial but complex issue of separate cadre of teacher educators for the SCERT. Unwillingness of state government to bear financial burden once financial grants under CSSTE are stopped is in a way a stumbling block that would have far reaching consequences in fulfilling the academic leadership role SCERT expected to play.

4.5 IASE, Agartala

The antecedents of Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), Agartala, go back to 1964 when B.T. (Secondary Teachers' Training) College was formed at Agartala to train teachers of the secondary schools of Tripura. It was later renamed as Government College of Education and was subsequently rechristened as College of Teacher Education before being upgraded to IASE in 2003. At present, a well-planned new building for IASE is under-construction. He funding for this hs been provided by DoNER.

To examine its present role as a premier institution of teacher education in the state and being the only IASE in Tripura, JRM has attempted to assess the availability of human and physical resources, academic capacity and its processes of institution-building.

Positions at IASE	Principal	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	PGT
Sanctioned Positions	1	1	13	9

Filled Positions	1	-	11	9
Vacant Posts	-	1	2	-
Mode of recruitment	TPSC	-	TPSC	Interview by Higher Education Department

All the existing faculty members of IASE have post-graduate degrees in different disciplines and education and meet the necessary educational qualifications for appointment. Principal has PhD in education and four other faculty members are pursuing PhD. But the faculty members who are otherwise quite committed and enthusiastic about their work and welcomed interaction with JRM, need to deepen their understanding of the theoretical perspectives and debates that inform NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009.

IASE faculty is engaged in teaching in B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes in both regular and ODL mode as it serves as a study centre for Tripura University and IGNOU. This means that during vacations too they continue to teach which has consequences for both short-term and long-term personal and professional well-being of these faculty members. Students of B.Ed. programme are exposed to and trained in the archaic models of demonstration lessons, lesson planning and micro teaching and teacher's own understanding of the teaching-learning process is drawn from behaviourism with focus on information recall.

The list of M.Ed. dissertations at IASE in recent years shows diversity in the kind of research questions pursued. Some of these pertain to specific challenges of education in Tripura (examination of board results, educational progress of specific communities, inter-relationship between provisions for nutrition and learning) whereas a larger number attempt comparisons of Tripura Board and CBSE syllabuses, differences between regular and ODL mode students and even maintenance of hygiene in schools that do not add much to either educational theory or knowledge about local contexts and experiences.

The faculty members themselves have little experience of research. These researches have been confined to meeting the norms to obtain their M.Ed. degrees or some sort of action research and only few faculty members have undertaken research projects. The academic isolation of the IASE faculty is also evident in the small number of research papers presented by them in the

seminars and absence of any publication. This isolation has also restricted their vision of professional development and academic role and does not move beyond expressed needs of refresher and orientation courses, development of task based content, developing communication skills and designing material.

Library at IASE with its rich collection of older books is manually maintained by a sincere and committed librarian. Along with absence of a consistent annual grant for the library, most of its recent acquisitions have been of guides, help books and text books procured from book fairs organized in Agartala by a limited number of book vendors towards the end of the financial year. It did not have any periodicals and journals, any internet connection and access to online journals. In the recent past, the faculty had not made much use of the existing collection but the student's space in the library was being actively used.

A significant issue that concerned the existing faculty members and has ramifications for future of IASE relates to the status and identity of PGT faculty. These faculty members had been earlier recruited on the position of Assistant Professors on a contractual basis but have been regularized as PGT. This has caused anxieties about their professional identity and designation and has ramifications for job satisfaction due to lower salary for similar work with equal educational qualifications.

4.5.1 Recommendations

- The IASE faculty needs orientation about the what centrally sponsored schemes are. This should be done at the earliest so that the faculty could participate in the making of AWP and become aware of the provisions, role and responsibilities.
- The faculty also need exposure of recent debates and researches in education. For this the library needs to be urgently updated and the faculty need to organize academic orientation programmes by inviting resource persons from institutions outside the state also.

4.6 DIETs

At present Tripura has 4 DIETs. Four more DIETs have been proposed in the new plan. The present faculty position in these DIETs is as follows:

Only one DIET has full time principal. Other three DIETs have in-charge principals and need full time qualified principals urgently. As against 25 academic positions per DIET under the new scheme the four DIETs in Tripura have one principal, 3 senior lecturers, 16 lecturers and 17 deputed teachers. Teachers in the two DIETs that the JRM visited pleaded for the appointment of full time principals and also filling up the faculty positions. Otherwise they say that the workload does not allow them to focus on research.

DIET Agartala

DIET Agartala has 8 faculty members that include Principal In-charge and 4 Asst. Profs. At present all the existing students at this DIET are untrained teachers who have been deputed to attend D.Ed. training. These 'students' were divided in two sections of 100 and 55 students due to shortage of teachers and rooms, and involvement of teachers in SCERT work and trainings.

The DIET faculty had limited understanding of the conceptual premises of NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2010 and constructivism was equated with 'project method'. The exposure of faculty members on constructivism was only through a small unit in M.Ed. course module of IGNOU. There was a complete absence of any reading resources and opportunities for the faculty to know and engage with contemporary academic discourse. Even in the context of these restrictive opportunities, certain faculty members had undertaken action research and sought feedback on their work. Two of these researches deserve special mention for the problems addressed and their significance. These related to problems of absenteeism of rural SC girls in a block in Tripura and performance of teacher trainees. These educators attempted to contextualize these problems with reference to economic and health challenges and language question. Though these studies need far greater theoretical and methodological rigour the effort to engage with context specific problems exemplifies the desire and motivation of the DIET faculty.

DIET Kakraban

Due to construction of a new building, no pre-service or in-service programmes at present run at DIET Kakraban. It was a heartening and encouraging experience for the JRM team to interact with the existing 12 faculty members of

this DIET that include Principal, 3 Asst. Profs. and 8 PGTs with significant experience and commitment. But in the absence of their involvement in any teaching or training programme, their professional training, experiences and capacities are getting wasted at a time when there is paucity of trained teacher educators in the state. DIET Kakraban did not have any academic calendar and the plan for in-service trainings is sent by SCERT to be followed by all the DIETs. The faculty members apprised the JRM team of the language differences and difficulties of communication between the teacher educators and student-teachers as this DIET is located in a tribal majority district. They also shared about their need to know and develop different kinds of evaluation processes and maintain objectivity in teacher training. Some members of DIET had attended training courses in action research organized by NUEPA, English language training by British Council and others were willing to attend such programmes and receive research related guidance. Given the ongoing construction, the library was temporarily placed in a room with little space to access and use books, most of which looked dated. Quite a few of these books had been studied by teacher educators as students and were now being used also and a significant number of these did not pertain to elementary level.

The JRM team also visited the Kamlapur DIET that is located in tribal dominated Dhalai district. Construction of a new four story building is awaiting electric connections. There is an incharge principal in this DIET also with four lecturers and four teachers on deputation. Some of the faculty members have done some action research however it clearly lacked understanding of what action research is all about. There was no library and the D.El.Ed. students complained of lack of reading materials as listed in the NCTE curriculum that their teacher was using.

4.6.1 Recommendations

- Develop a systematic plan of individual and collective professional development of faculty members with their participation with adequate provisions for promotion, study leave, attend conferences and seminars within and outside Tripura and undergo refresher and orientation courses at academic staff colleges including those conducted at JNU, University of Delhi etc.

- Exposure visits, trainings in research methodology, and opportunities for sharing and dissemination of research should be instituted in teacher education institutions.
- New mechanisms to enrich libraries as a resource center for faculty research should be explored. This would include procuring recent academic work in various areas and subscription of research journals and magazines.
- Special provisions to enable access of SCERTs, IASE and DIETs to e-resources (INFLIBNET) through UGC may be made. Several Indian and foreign universities and institutions preserve dissertations of their students through D-Space. These may be accessed through internet.
- Networking between institutions and formation of teaching and research interest groups may be other avenues to forge peer-support systems to initiate, sustain and disseminate researches.
- To promote research journals in regional languages, initial seed money, grants and subsidy such as one received by *Contemporary Education Dialogue* in its initial years from ICICI foundation and SRTT may be explored.
- Universities may also need to revise and/or relax rules for working school teachers and teacher educators to join research programmes without compromising on the rigour.
- Different teacher education institutions (SCET, IASEs and DIETs) should establish academic committees at institutional and programme levels and draw on expertise available outside these institutions
- Develop linkages of SCERTs, IASEs and DIETs with universities within and outside Tripura as the site of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary inquiry and research for revitalization of these institutions and to develop their capacities. MHRD, state governments and institutions like UGC may consider a set of schemes and incentives to promote such collaboration through extra recruitments, deputations, resources to develop readers and other resource materials for teacher educators and

teacher pupils, to undertake collaborative research and develop training programmes.

- Need to activate DIETs when so much activity happening in the state
- Reconceptualise School Educational experience, move beyond behavioristic understanding and lesson planning, use it to discuss process of learning and develop understanding and observations about school life, students and learning processes , discuss academic and non-academic issues in a non-threatening and friendly manner instead of an evaluative, judgmental and corrective mode

5.0 Curricular and pedagogic processes related to various teacher trainings

Like all other states, the teacher educational set up in Tripura offers a variety of short and long term courses to in-service teachers. Some of the short training modules are conducted by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and the diploma and degree programmes are offered by DIETS, IASE and Tripura University in collaboration with the Directorate of Distance Education and IGNOU.

What is striking about the state is its emphasis on in-service teacher education and by virtue of that its reliance on distance education due to a huge backlog of untrained teachers. The pre-service at the D. El.Ed level is actually not a priority for the state as both in regular as well ODL mode training of untrained teachers is the top priority.

5.1 The various training programmes offered

In-service Training

1. SSA- 10 day in-service teacher training at Block Resource Clusters (BRCs) by BRC resource persons and the master trainers who are the selected secondary school teachers.
2. SSA- 30 (induction) and 60 day orientation training- for new and in-service untrained teachers at DIETs.
3. SSA- 5 day module for improving reading, writing and arithmetic skills of learners at the elementary school level.
4. RMSA - 5 day in-service refresher training for secondary school teachers

(graduates) at BRCs.

5. Under special approval of MHRD, a six month teacher training programme in Open Distance Learning (ODL) mode through IGNOU was organised w.e.f 2004-05. These courses were called Certificate of Primary education (CPE) and Certificate of Elementary Education (CETE) and under them all the graduate and under graduate in-service teachers were trained. However, this was revised in 2010 and expanded into a 24 month course.

D.El.Ed.

6. IGNOU undertook training of untrained in-service teachers for elementary education appointed after 2001. A two year Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) in ODL mode (MOU has to be signed between the state government and IGNOU and the training programmes are expected to start from July 2013 in 34 study Centers at SCERT, DIETs and BRCs.
7. DIET- in-service teacher training- two year D.El.Ed in a face to face mode from 2012 (*280 teachers have studied the first year of the programme in DIET Agartala, Kamalpur, and Kailashahar- none in Kakraban because of the building being under construction*).

Pre-Service Teacher Education (PSTE)

8. The history of PSTE in Tripura has been rather fragile. The DIETs offered a two year PSTE programme from 2005 onwards but was discontinued in 2011. The number of teachers trained were not sufficient to fulfill the large need for trained teachers required in the expanding school system. After the enactment of the RTE Act- the increased emphasis on universalisation of elementary education and RTE Act requirement to have trained teachers in schools, the focus of the teacher education shifted on ensuring that first all untrained teachers teaching in schools were trained. Therefore, the PSTE became a second priority.
9. Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) offers B.Ed (both regular and ODL) and M.Edprogrammes and serves as a study center of Tripura University.

5.2 Overall reflections

- The state of Tripura is characterized by social diversity. SCs and STs constitute about 17.4% and 31% of the population respectively. There are 19 subtribes among the ST population with their unique languages and cultures. The teacher education/training curriculum/activities are by and large uniform in nature and neither take cognisance of the special challenges that these teachers face by virtue of the children/place (first generation/inaccessible) they teach nor of their own limitations and inadequacies.
- The short term training modules seem quite ad hoc in nature and contain an assortment of topics, some of which seem quite inane. Serious thought needs to be given to the objective that these trainings are supposed to serve and the way in which they are transacted.
- The teacher education curriculum and syllabi (B.Ed. and M.Ed.) is the responsibility of IASE and Tripura University. In many senses it is a reflection of the way school teaching is conceived of and mirrors the inadequacies of traditional curricular approaches followed across the country. Since school education centers around transmission of information contained in textbooks, the teacher education programmes also focus essentially on enabling the teacher to transact that information in class. A brief but systematic review of the curricula, syllabus, readings and available reading material shows that they are quite narrow and restricted in approach.
- The readings prescribed if at all are old. Original readings of classics and subscription to educational journals from which one could gather new researches being done in relevant areas is totally missing. Conversations with some IASE faculty also revealed that in the name of journals, the libraries even stocked brochures of institutions rather than academic journals.
- Even though the faculty showed familiarity with NCF- 05 and idea of constructivism, on being probed further, one realised that they had a very superficial understanding of these and needed both guidance and exposure to some good readings on the same.

- Textbooks from Classes I –V were prepared by SCERT whereas textbooks from VI-VIII were simply translated from NCERT textbooks. Some faculty members revealed that even the primary class textbooks were essentially translations of the NCERT textbooks with a few insertions of local examples.

PEDAGOGIC TRANSACTIONS

- The curriculum is essentially transacted in Bengali and it may be expected that a large number of teachers face problems in comprehending the ideas or medium of instruction. This problem becomes more acute especially given the fact that there are no/very few books available for teachers to read and refer to. Books if at all are available mostly in English.
- Most DIETS had large classrooms either with very few (minimum as low as two out of which one drops out) or large number of students. Seating arrangement in vertical rows with a huge podium on one end where the Lecturer stands and lectures from makes the experience didactic and unilateral.
- Some of the Teaching Learning Material examined seemed totally out of context- in English for instance a passage on King Lear, rationale of a particular exercise- Dictation for example (borrowed from British Council of India, wrong usage of English- did you see the laptop stolen yesterday, where had you been by 9pm to 6pm yesterday, could you say who may have stole it?
- The composition of the faculty at DIET sometimes posed severe challenges when teachers were asked to teach papers in which they were neither competent nor trained.
- Sometimes even teachers from schools were brought in teach or conduct workshops for teacher trainees. While it is possible that they were senior and experienced but one is not sure if they were familiar with the theories or some new ideas etc being talked about in the curriculum.

- Lack of proper libraries (outdated books, mostly textbooks prepared by SCERT) and availability of proper reference books both to the TE and student teachers made the newly revised curriculum even more terse and lectures became either too generic or sub-standard (if notes had been made from poor quality books).
- The focus on preparing teaching learning materials- not as means to an end but as end in themselves, was quite evident in TEI in the state. The curriculum essentially focused on the technique of teaching various subjects and managing children in class.

However, it must be pointed out, that most of the challenges and limitations pointed out above are not specific to TEI in Tripura alone but are the bane of most teacher education programmes across the country.

5.3 Recommendations

- Constitute a team of qualified, experienced and competent people to design the training modules and its content.
- Identify experts in different subject areas in the country and avail of their expertise rather than always capitalising on the internal resource available.
- Invest in resources like libraries- seek support from Delhi University, TISS, Mumbai, Ambedkar University etc in identifying suitable resources for the library.
- Contextualise the recently approved curriculum in the context of Tripura and not necessarily make it prescriptive. Procure the relevant reading resources outlined in the curriculum document. Ensure faculty development workshops for the faculty so that they are trained and acquire expertise in transacting the new curriculum.
- Transition from lecturing to meaningfully involving the student group to make sense of various ideas discussed in the readings and also incorporate the teaching experiences of teachers.

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The state government has shown exemplary commitment to teacher education and is making land and financial resources available for setting up institutions. It has taken following initiatives in last two three years:

- Proposal submitted to NCTE for enhancing intake capacity of students in the pre-service programmes from 50 to 100 in all DIETs.
- Proposal for increasing number of DIETS from 4 to 8 as the number of districts has increased to 8. DM and Collectors of these newly created districts have been instructed to take necessary action for identification and allotment of land.
- Addressing the training needs of untrained teachers (as per the NCTE norms) through Distance Education Programme.
- Curriculum revision and text books renewal has been done in the line of NCF-2005 and NCFTE-2010.
- Teacher education programme for tribal communities / local languages is being encouraged. In schools of tribal area Kokboro language is being taught as a language at the elementary level though the medium of instruction is Bengli only.
- There is proposal for setting up BITES in tribal dominated areas.
- New building and other infrastructure for IASE has been constructed and the student intake will be increased from 150 to 250 in the next academic session after the approval from NCTE.
- Ministry of DoNER in NLCPR programmes has been playing crucial role in creating infrastructure for IASE and colleges of education. One college of education has been constructed at Kumarghat and will start from 2014-15 with student intake capacity of 500. Similarly decision to set up two more colleges of teacher education in Santibazar, South Tripura and Teliamura in Khuwai district has been taken. The proposal for sanctioning Rs.25 crores for each college is on the priority list of the 14th Finance Commission.

However the state faces a few crucial issues that are unique to some of the North Eastern states. Following are some such issues and recommendations:

- About 5000 candidates were shortlisted in three phases for elementary teachers positions through due process. However, they have not been

appointed as many don't fulfil the new NCTE criteria of minimum marks and are only class 10 pass. There is a lot of discontent amongst these selected candidates which is holding back the process of new recruitment. Also, in a state like Tripura, the JRM team was told, it is not easy, especially amongst tribals, to fulfil this criteria. The tribal students in Tripura generally drop out after class X, JRM was told. JRM recommends that this situation be reviewed and appropriate decisions should be taken keeping the unique situation of Tripura in mind.

- In fact disaggregated data of teacher educators, teachers and students and their dropout rates at various levels are need to be examined to understand the problems of ST and SC population. JRM recommends that this analysis be done at the state level to understand the inequality in participation and for finding ways to deal with it.
- There is very little scope for the professional development of teacher educators and their engagement in research and innovation in the existing scenario. There are no mechanisms in place for formal academic interaction amongst the faculty members of various institutions even within the state. Also, the libraries are almost non-existent. For any quality improvement in school education there is urgent need to create opportunities of professional development of the teacher educators and the teachers. JRM recommends since this is a problem in most of the states an active group may be set up to engage with this issue. The group may be asked to take cognizance of the specificities of various states as well.
- Building linkages with higher education needs to be dealt with at the conceptual levels first as the university faculty in Tripura does not even see any role for themselves in school education. The faculty of the department of education and colleges of education requires more exposure to understand this relationship.
- Unlike in many other states, Tripura has the advantage of getting adequate funding from DoNER for developing good infrastructure for educational institutions. However, there are not many qualified people to occupy faculty positions in institutions like IASE, CTEs and DIETs. The JRM recommends that a brainstorming be organised to understand and resolve such situations in backward states.

- The state has not done any projections regarding the requirement of teachers at different levels of schooling. From the data it seems that there is a backlog of trained teachers at the elementary level. Would there be an oversupply of secondary and higher secondary teachers in the coming five years? Or would many of them be engaged in SSA and RMSA short term in-service trainings? Also, what would this large number of BA (Education) graduates do? The question is crucial as there is already a situation where graduate teachers are undergoing two year D.El.Ed training instead of B.Ed. training. The JRM recommends that the state SCERT and IASE jointly takes up this exercise and estimate how many teachers and teacher educators would be required in the state in next five years?
- A similar exercise should also be done about the required in take capacities of different teacher education institutes including the colleges. There are very few M.Ed seats in the existing institutions however a large number of teacher educators are required for training teachers. The state should have a plan to deal with this gap.
- In view of the failure rate in IGNOU ODL mode course the enrolment and rate of success need to be carefully monitored. For this each institution should compile data on enrolment and successful completion of degree/diploma.
- Due to historical reasons, unlike in other states, Tripura does not have huge shortage of teachers but like in other states, it has a backlog of untrained teachers. Many of them are employed under SSA and are getting consolidated salaries, are contractual and were hired to teach higher classes but are undergoing D. El.Ed. training. They actually teach higher classes and were not sure how the D.El.Ed. training would help them. Understandably, they are unhappy and confused. JRM recommends that this anomaly be resolved urgently.
- For Tripura, currently pre-service training is not as crucial an issue as two year in-service training of the untrained teachers is who have been teaching, sometimes, since 2001. In such a scenario there is an urgency to critically focus attention on the curriculum, content and pedagogy of ODL mode. It is not sufficient to say that curriculum is recognised by NCTE as contextualisation is important. JRM team's experience is that

teacher educators themselves neither understand NCTE curriculum nor do they have the means to seek help.

- The IGNOU, one of the agency that has been running the D.El. Ed. classes in the ODL mode has reported absenteeism and lack of interest and the data of the directorate of distance education that runs B.Ed. level course shows a large dropout and failure. The JRM recommends that there is need to understand and address the issues that are building such a situation.

Finances and AWP

- The state did not submit AWP for 2012-13. For 2013-14 the proposal was made but it was not in the prescribed format. The AWP is a vision document which requires a participatory process for its preparation. It requires discussions and planning with the faculty of other institutions like IASE and DIETs. The process is now underway and the state would submit the revised AWP. However, due to the absence of AWP for the last year there were no allocations from the CSS. The JRM recommends that some guidance/support from the ministry may speed up the process.
- One of the primary reason for this seems to be the absence of academic leadership at SCERT. The IASE faculty has very experienced people who need to be involved in the visioning exercise. JRM recommends that the state should identify people and seek support in this exercise, if not for AWP 2013-14 but for the next year.
- For proper functioning and of SCERT, IASE and DIETs it is necessary that the vacant positions be filled and each of these institutions constitute their PACs (programme Advisory committees) at the earliest as per MHRD guidelines.
- Identify suitable and appropriate centers and resource persons for improving the capacity of faculty members of SCERT, IASE and DIETs and prepare the Perspective Plan and Annual Work Plan Budget for 2013-14 by including all the eligible components as per the revised Centrally Sponsored Teacher Education Scheme June 2012, with the help of experts who are effectively involved in the preparation of AWPB for Teacher Education.

