

Strengthening Inclusive Education at Secondary Stage in States/UTs: Regional Consultations

Report of three days (27th -29th November 2013)

Regional Consultations Dedicated to Hindi Speaking States

Organized at CIET, NCERT New Delhi

Coordinated

By

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Introduction

Secondary and senior secondary stages of schooling are crucial stages of education as it initiates thinking about world of work and makes the child ponder about after school life and career choice. Under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan (RMSA) the vision for secondary and senior secondary education is to make good quality education available, accessible and affordable to all young persons in the age group of 14-18 years. As far as access to secondary and senior secondary level is concerned, the focus is on children from economically and socially weaker sections of the society and the educationally backward sections, the girls and the children with special needs particularly residing in rural areas.

The guiding principles towards universalization of secondary and senior secondary education are universal access, equality and social justice, relevance and development, curricular and structural aspects, equity and common school system.

RMSA realizes that Inclusion of children and youth with disability is not only a human right, but also it is an effort to provide good education to all at secondary and senior secondary stage. India is signatory to international declarations like the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) and the Biwako Millenium Framework for Action (2002) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Each one of these indicate our Governments good intention to work for the education of children with disabilities and also to make necessary amendments in the foundational policies at the central level enabling children with special needs to study in the general neighboring school along with children without special needs.

The central Government has taken a number of dedicated steps in this direction which include Persons with Disabilities Act (1995), emphasis on inclusive education in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), recognition of the need for flexibility in the curriculum to accommodate diverse needs including those with disabilities in both cognitive and non-cognitive areas, in the National curriculum Framework on school education (2005), accepting the need to provide accessible, affordable and appropriate learning environment, in the National Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) 2005 and centrally sponsored scheme for “Inclusive Education of Disabled at the Secondary Stage (IEDSS) launched in 2009. This Scheme replaces the earlier scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and would provide assistance for the inclusive education of the disabled children in classes IX-XII.

Rationale of the programme

IEDSS -- centrally sponsored scheme of Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage is a government's initiative towards providing secondary education to children with special needs, which enable all students with disabilities completing eight years of elementary schooling

an opportunity to complete four years of secondary schooling in an Inclusive and enabling environment.

In the year 2012-13 the Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs (DEGSN) has conducted an evaluation study titled “Evaluation of implementation of the scheme IEDSS in India” as well as one regional consultation to strengthen the implementation of IEDSS in the north eastern states. The evaluation study revealed that though the scheme launched in 2009 needs to gain momentum as the states are facing problems with respect to planning and lack of awareness among the educational administrators involved in the implementation. The regional consultation held at Guwahati, dedicated to strengthening of IEDSS implementation in the North Eastern states, also indicated the need to build the capacity of the educational administrators in planning as well as comprehending the issues and concerns related to the Children With Special Needs (CWSN). The IEDSS planners need to realize the differences in the provisions for CWSN from elementary to secondary stage, despite of identical nature of provisions in the schemes at elementary level, which comes under the purview of SSA and secondary level i.e. IEDSS. For example, while planning for AIDs and Equipments, the planners need to take into account the maintenance of the AIDs and Equipments received at the elementary stage which in turn may mean replacing the battery of the hearing aid or upgrading resource room in terms of learning support material.

In order to build the capacity, of the educational administrators, teacher trainers, textbook developers, boards of secondary examinations and state RMSA teams involved in the implementation of IEDSS as well to develop sensitivity, awareness and ability to perceive differences in the needs of CWSN from elementary to secondary and senior secondary stages of education, the DEGSN, NCERT planned and organized regional consultations for 12 Hindi speaking states.

Specific Objectives of the programme are –

1. To strengthen implementation of Inclusive Education at the Secondary Stage
2. To guide and facilitate implementation of Inclusive education at the state level
3. To create synergies by building partnerships between state education bodies and Health, Social welfare, legislative structures and National Institutes, RMSA for implementation of Inclusive education
4. To facilitate the preparation of state plans for implementation of IEDSS.

Methodology

The focus of the programme was on building the capacity of IEDSS functionaries in the Hindi speaking states of India, hence the participants for the consultations was invited from the 12 Hindi speaking states Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujraat, Chandigarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Uttaranchal. Each state was requested to depute a team of five members comprising of senior functionaries representing various agencies involved in implementation of IEDSS in the state like RMSA, IEDSS, state examination boards, SCERT's, state textbook bureau and state department of secondary education. The states were also encouraged to depute administrative persons involved in the preparation of annual work plan and budget.

Report of the Three Days Regional Consultations

The regional consultation began with coordinator welcoming the participants and requesting participants to introduce themselves to the group. The representative from 12 Hindi speaking states participated along with nodal officers of RMSA from NIE, NCERT constituted the group of participants.

The regional consultation was organized in the room no 202, CIET, NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg New Delhi, from 27th to 29th November 2013. The paragraphs below present the day wise report of the proceedings as well as brief description of the discussions during regional consultations—



Day 1
27th November 2013
Wednesday

The day formally began with the programme coordinator briefing the participants about the programme and telling the objective of the programme. The programme coordinator described the scheme IEDSS and its components in nut shell and also mentioned the funding pattern of the scheme.

After this the Prof. Anita Julka, Head of the Department of education of groups with special needs further elaborated upon the issues and challenges of inclusive education at secondary stage. This was followed by brief presentation of the major findings of the nationwide IEDSS evaluation study conducted by the department. During her presentation Prof. Julka emphasized on the major challenges regarding implementation of IEDSS in the states. These challenges, surfaced from the data analysis, includes lack of administrative structures, trained resources, retention of children with special needs in regular schools, building partnership with SSA, creating enabling physical environment, establishing and utilizing resource rooms etc.

Prof. Julka ended her presentation with the observation that the major challenge of IEDSS implementation lies in maintaining the enrollment numbers from SSA to RMSA along with identification and enrollment of out of school children with special needs. The newly enrolled children should be given bridge course so that they may feel confident about the regular school and it's routine.

The theme for the post tea session was “building synergies” and facilitator for the same was Prof. Janak Verma, retired from DEGSN, NCERT. The session began with sharing of IEDSS implementation experiences in states by participants. The discussion was strengthened by inputs from expert in the form of presentation. The focal point of this presentation was the vision, national goals, ensuring physical and other facilities, making school accessible and improving the quality of education for children with special needs.

Thereafter the participants were divided into four groups for brainstorming the barriers to building synergy as well strategies for by passing the same. Each group comprises of members from different agencies involved in the secondary schooling not necessary from the same state. The groups shared their thoughts with the house which resulted in discussion and debate on each issue raised. Some of the significant recommendations were—

- The teacher training programmes at all levels should have compulsory course on inclusive education
- The teacher training should have provision for hands on experience of teaching in regular, inclusive as well as special schools
- Exhaustive training in curriculum adaptations as per the child's need and context
- Parents of children with special needs should be preferred as SMC members
- UDICE data should be cleaned
- National vocational educational qualifications framework should also be discussed and made part of the RMSA
- Innovations and modification in evaluation procedures should be encouraged

The participants also took this as an opportunity to share their problems in implementing the IEDSS in their respective states. Presented below are their observations in their own language—

IEDSS Issues in Uttarakhand

- Funds since 2011-12 to 2013-14 have not released from GOI
- Funds should come directly into the accounts of RMSA

Issues wrt implementation of IEDSS in Chandigarh

- No release of funds under the scheme inspite of approval
- Chandigarh has peculiar setup being single district UT. Although there are 2 urban resource centers but one of it is not functional as such resource centers at BRC level is not feasible in UT Chandigarh. Chandigarh has 20 functional cluster resource centers as such resource centers under IEDSS are required at cluster level.
- Guidance with respect to recruitment of resource teachers in view of the fact that there is no regular cadre of resource teachers
- Very few concessions available for children with disabilities by CBSE.
- No evaluation guidelines provided for the children with disabilities and Chandigarh does not have their own board (SCERT).

IEDSS Issues in Rajasthan

- Ten years pending money towards MHRD regarding IEDC/IEDSS to state is not provided
- IEDSS funding though approved to some extent but not given till this date
- Money for IEDSS i.e. cell's salary is not approved though it is organized as per MHRD norms
- Funding is not given in due time. So the training of in-service teachers under IEDSS are not conducted

- AWP&B in PAB is not properly attained/considered
- Unconcerned objections are invoked regarding funding

Group 1: submitted the following report

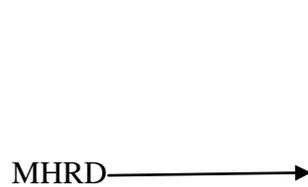
Identification: resource teachers, anganwadi workers, asha karyakrte, guardians. Teachers, Ngo's, SMS, SMDC

Assessment: by experts including doctors and psychologists

- Distribution of disability certificates aid and appliance through convergence with IEDSS, ADIP, Social welfare Dept. NGO's.
- School readiness programme through experts/ resource teacher
- Training
 - 2 days sensitization of community
 - 2 days sensitization of guardians
 - 2 days training of administrators
 - 5 days training to teacher, disability wise, multi-category training of resource teachers
- Resource support for training was drawn from SCERT < DIET and National Institutes
- Barrier free environment
 - Modified toilets
 - Ramps and hand rails
 - Removal of architectural barriers
 - Height of water taps
- Transport and escort facilities
- Curricular issues
 - Modification in textbook according to disability
 - Use of ICT (JAWA & SAFA software)
- Evaluation
 - Extra time in examinations
 - Scribe facility
 - Relaxation in passing percentage/marks
- Enrollment drive
- Increase in retention rate
- Decrease in dropout rate
- Convergence with other departments
 - Health department
 - Social welfare
 - ICDS
 - Police/ Traffic department
 - Labour department
 - TBC
 - Panchayati Raj Institutions

Group 2: submitted the following report

Administrative cell



Administrative cell should be established at directorate of secondary education of the state

- Responsibilities
 - Coordination
 - Planning (AWP&B)
 - To sustain inclusion or to add to it
 - Monitoring
 - Evaluation & administration
 - To look after all the student oriented, teacher oriented and other activities and to evaluate them.
- Training in-service may be designed as per requirement of the target group with reference to the state
- Training programmes should be conducted by the RMSA in the state
- Funding should be distributed by the RMSA
- Curriculum should be formed by the IEDSS cell of administration
- All the provisions regarding IEDSS should be processed to MHRD by RMSA office of the state
- Inclusive educational curriculum must embedded in the teacher educator programmes or B.Ed.
- The knowledge of the disabilities of the students regarding special education certificates/diploma/their syllabus/teaching activities must be included
- In-service training for general subject teachers must be conducted regarding special educator/disabilities at the following centers
 - RIE
 - SIERT
 - IASE
- Special educator at secondary level to teach 6th to 12th class CWSN in every school/cluster schools should be recruited disability wise in any disability area. He/she should be given multi-category training after appointment.
- Special educator should not to be appointed subject wise because his duty is to facilitate/support the general subject teacher but not to teach.

Group 3: submitted the following report

First Step

Establishment of IEO cell at HQ level with the convergence of SSA IE may be under RMSA/Director of secondary education

District IE coordinator for classes (1st to 12th) with the convergence of SSA IE with the pooling of resources under both component

BRC (IE)

Principal/Head

Special teacher → general teacher → parents involvement → peer involvement

- SMDC should also be involved and one or two parents of CWSN should be involved in SMDC

Second step

Implementation of scheme

- Student oriented component
- Other component
- MMER 5% of total budget which is to be allotted to the state
- Student oriented component @3000/child /year
- Identification/medical assessment of CWSN child under this head. The provision is only 200/child. The amount of Rs 200/child need to be increase and should be on the basis of geographical location. Medical assessment camps should be organized with the convergence of NRHM, Red Cross, NGO's, ALIMCO, Rotary club etc.
- Distribution of aids and appliances
 - ALIMCO, Red cross, National Institutes
- Allowances –stipend for girl's stationary uniform. Escort/Transport allowance. The clear cut guidelines in respect of escort/transport allowance should be provided under the scheme for better implementation.
- Provision for Ayah/helper—provision for Ayah/Helper should be allowed to select by parents. References need to be given to the parents of CWSN. Requirement should be attended as per the need of the CWSN.

- Provision for PT/OT/ST (therapeutic services)—these services should be provided as per the need of the CWSN child on block level/cluster level. Guidelines need to be framed under the scheme.
- Other component
 - Appointment of special teacher—as per the guidelines of scheme 1:5 have been provided in the case of appointment. Special teacher should be appointed as per the block/cluster according to disability. At least 3 resource teachers one for VI, One for HI and one for MR/LD should be appointed at the block/cluster level due to non-availability of special teachers. Clear guidelines are also required about the role of special teachers. Special teachers should be appointed on regular basis as scheme also supported this but the states no implementing in the right spirit.
 - Training –of special teachers, head/principals/general teachers/parents. Training aspect should be encouraged under the scheme and provision of Rs. 200/- per day need to be increased for better implementation of training. The key resource person for training may not come under this little provision. It should be increased and training should also encourage in residential practical manner using group work.
- Construction of resource room—for the construction of resource room the provision of Rs. @ lakhs is too little. Existing rooms under the school should be utilized and this amount needs to be utilized for development of resource room instead of construction of new room.
- Provision of TLM and equipment @70,000/--this amount should be utilized as per the need of CWSN and those who are studying under resource room. TLM should be based on actual requirement and also related to curriculum.
- Barrier free—for barrier free access the universal guidelines should be developed by MHRD for uniform parameters. Specific arrangements for funds need to be provided for ramps, handrails toilets etc
- Awareness programme for the parents peers and community—awareness should be encouraged among the parents, siblings, peers and the community. The amount of Rs. 10000/-per block cannot fulfill this requirement. The provision for executing these programme need to be increased.
- MMER—5% of total budget
 - research
 - administrative cell
 - development of model school
 - maintaining and evaluation
- board level
 - inclusive education should be involved as a subject in B.Ed/D.Ed
 - class teaching should be compulsory for at least 15 days for every new B.Ed/D.Ed teacher in class with CWSN

- modification is required in textbooks according to the disability of the child and inclusive setup
- extra time, objective type questions, relaxation in passing marks should also be encouraged
- NIOS system may also be adopted
- SRG
- Admission process need relook
- Provision of sports, cultural activities may also be made
- Music therapy center may also be provided under the scheme

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The post lunch session was devoted to “constructivism and CCE at the secondary stage”. This was jointly conducted by Prof. Ranjana Arora In-charge RMSA cell and Dr. Siddhi Vyas, independent educational consultant and ex faculty Azim Prem ji University Bangalore. Prof Rnajana Arora initiated the session with an individual activity wherein every participant was expected to write “any two initiative they will take to improve the quality of education in schools?” Initially the participants understood that they need to make suggestions for the organization they were working for so they appeared hesitant to write the same as it was clearly not in their hands to move the entire system. The facilitator clarified that they need to mention only those activities that they can initiate on their own as part of their professional profile. This resulted in participants mentioning and sharing lot of activities which might be initiated by them at their work place like sharing the learning of this workshop, identifying and being sensitive to the needs of CWSN, encouraging comfort schooling for all, peer tutoring, student motivation, barrier free environment, conducting the training programmes, monitoring the execution of training programmes, regular parent counseling, barrier free environment, etc. This individual sharing was related with the theory of constructivism, basic concepts and constructivism based teaching and its advantages. This was constructivism in action.

Space for collage

Now was the turn of Dr. Siddhi Vyas to share her thoughts on Constructivism and Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE). She started the discussion by drawing attention on difference between evaluation and assessment, and then moved on to the need and benefits of CCE. At this juncture Prof. Pravin Sinclaire, Director NCERT intervened and shared her observations regarding constructivism and stressed on its significance with respect to CWSN. She encouraged participants to share their experiences and challenges and how NCERT may extend support. Prof. Sinclair appreciated active participation of all present.

The post tea session witnessed animated debate among the participants as well as participants and experts as the theme was “gender issues”. The experts were Dr. Anita Nuna from Department of Women studies and Dr. Anita Ghai from Delhi University. The session initiated with the screening of film titled “Badte Kadam” made by CIET. This was an attempt to capture the success stories of women with disabilities. The brief screening, due to paucity of time, of the film led to the realization of difficulties faced by girls with challenges in seemingly supportive school environment. After screening of “Badte Kadam”, Dr. Ghai initiated the discussion on perceived difference between “Sex” and “Gender”. Elaborate discussion and exchange of opinion among participants and experts led to the understanding that sex is biological connotation whereas gender is more socially oriented. The education is concerned with the gender issues with reference to girls and how gender stereotyped roles are encouraged by the society which expects girls to be emotional and confined to the role of house manager and boys are expected to be more outgoing and physically stronger than the girls. She being a girl with challenge, wheel chair supported mobility; she shared her experiences of growing up and as well as her interaction with students. Dr. Nuna shared her views on various issues associated with adolescent girls in schools like lack of washrooms, playgrounds, play material, self- perception and safety. She expressed her dissent with the use of term differently able for children with disability and ended the session with the question “Is there anybody who is not disabled and who can do all work without any support from others?”

The programme coordinator Dr. Bharti, requested all the participants to prepare their brief resume mentioning their area of interests. The introduction session in the onslaught of the consultations revealed diversity among the participants with respect to their exposure and experience with inclusive education. Some participants like state IEDSS coordinators, teacher educators and resource teachers had relatively better experience of the area whereas representatives from state RMSA teams, examination boards and text book bureau expressed their lack of exposure in the area of inclusive education prior to this consultations. Each participants was provided with the photocopy of the presentations made by experts as well as scheme IEDSS. This marked the end of first days programme.

Day 2
28th November 2013
Thursday

The second day of the consultations began with the screening of remaining part of the film “Badte Kadam”. After this the first session on the theme “mathematics and science teaching began. The experts, Dr. A.K. Wazalwar and Dr. Anjani Koul, for the session was invited from Department of Science and Mathematics (DESM) NCERT.

Dr. Wazalwahaar started the discussion with mathematics teaching and nature of mathematics. Mathematics is an essential part of life, the one which is associated with the logic and reasoning. Mathematics teacher’s main duties involves bringing the children close to the discipline of mathematics by developing clear understanding of basic concepts and developing taste for the subject through teaching methods like activity based teaching, visualization, simulation, projects etc. The activity based teaching and visualization might be more beneficial for children till elementary level yet the same is equally beneficial for secondary school students provided they are planned and executed well. He also stressed that success in mathematics is equally important for children with special needs and this is possible by slight variation in teaching learning strategies and not by diluting the curriculum.

Next, Dr. Anjani Koul, shared her views on science teaching. She said that inclusive education should not be restricted to only children with disabilities but it should also be extended to children belonging to disadvantaged sections of the society. She repeatedly emphasized the thought that there shouldn’t be any difference in the curriculum for children with special needs and children without special needs. The curriculum should be kept similar but the teaching learning methods should be made more and more student centered. To support her point of view she shared her experience of field visit, i.e. teaching science in school for three months, and how she managed to teach science to a low vision and shy girl in her class. She narrated the efforts made by her to involve this girl in all the activities, experiments, demonstrations and written work. All this work lead to lot of improvement in the self confidence and perception of this girl as well as her social esteem also got enhanced. She ended her talk by saying “the trick lies in letting the child explore themselves”!

The subsequent question and answer session saw many suggestions like adding notes for teachers to manage special needs of children in the text book, which may include tips for making teaching learning material, modifying worksheets, individual work etc. These suggestions and other issues raised by the participants were appreciated and accepted by the experts and participants were assured and informed that some of these suggestions are already part and parcel

of few text books developed by NCERT , yet the need is to make it wide spread and not restricted to one or two textbooks.

The post tea session was dedicated to “Adolescent issues and challenges concerning with CWSN”. The experts for the session were Dr. Vijay Lakshmi from the National Institute of Multiple Disabilities, Chennai and Prof. Saroj Yadav, Head DESSH, NCERT.

Dr. Vijay Lakshmi initiated the session by sharing the story of her son, who is a challenged child, and how at different stages of growing up the issues and concerns changes. How the same affects the families and needs to be dealt with sensitively and carefully. These issues during adolescent phase are more oriented to exploring changes in self both at physical and psychological level. Managing relationships, desire for sex, sticking to socially acceptable norms of behavior, channelizing energy etc. were few of the issues raised by her along with detailed discussion on the strategies to deal with the same.

Maintaining the same line of thinking Prof. Saroj Yadav, extended the discussion and added many more examples from the life of adolescent in metro and other places, the variations in the experience, impact of media, role of parents, proper education and not restrictions is the key to deal with adolescent issues both at home and school. She beautifully added that the challenges of adolescent remains the same both for the children with special needs and their other counter parts though the former faces the difficulties many times depending on the nature of disabilities and impairment. One fifth of the population of the world is between 10-19years of age with varying ratio of sex. In India the disparity among sex ratio during this period of age group is very high in favor of boys. This raises the need for quality adolescent education and age appropriate authentic and complete information. She shared an example to elaborate on passing the age appropriate authentic information to children. A child studying in class 2 asked father “what is sex?” the father though felt surprised listening to the word from such a small child, yet he didn’t scold the child or reacted to shut the communication or avoided the issue as he had attended a session, like the current one, during in-service training programme attended by him which made him realize the importance of discussion and information sharing with children. So, he geared himself for passing on the information to the child studying in class 2, but before he could elaborate upon the topic a thought crossed his mind and he asked the child, from where he/she heard the word and why the information was sought? The child innocently replied that the teacher at school asked the children to fill a form which requires filling the column “sex”.

She further moved on to detail discussion on the theme by relating it with the news items in the media and how some unfortunate incidents could have been avoided by quality adolescent education. She ended the discussion by sharing a beautiful presentation on relation between father-son – father. The experts for this session dealt with questions and observations of the participants within their talk, hence no extra time was required for the same.

The post lunch session on “teaching of languages and social science” was jointly taken by Dr. Kirti Kapoor and Dr. Gowramma. In the onslaught Dr. Kirti shared that every human being is born with innate language ability which may or may not have any relation with the disability, and only an input rich communication environment needs to be provided for language teaching.

To elaborate upon the same she asked the participants to tell the places from their daily lives where they find English. The participants came out with several responses like mobile, advertisements, T.V., Radio, menu cards, shops, railway stations, grocery packets etc. she explained that English is all around us and we need to make the children learn by establishing connections with day to day life and the challenge lies in linking the same with the curricular content. She ended her talk by mentioning that language cuts across the curriculum and thus it is important for a child to develop language skills so that the comprehension in other disciplines and subject areas also gets enhanced.

Dr. Gowamma, furthered the discussion by focusing on the teaching of social sciences in inclusive classrooms. The main challenge of teaching social science in inclusive classroom lie in modifying the teaching learning activities as per the nature and degree of disability, individual level of motivation and likeness for particular subject and support provided in the school and at home. Referring to National Curriculum Framework for school education developed by NCERT in 2005 she emphasized upon significance of transacting the curriculum through activities, drawing on local resources, methods that promote creativity, aesthetic and critical perspective. For this, strategies like problem solving, dramatization, role play etc based on ICT, audio visual resources might prove beneficial. She gave details of various activities that may be used in inclusive classroom to teach history, geography and civics at secondary stage. She ended her talk with a quote by Mother Teresa “Few of us can do great things but all of us can do small things with great love”. The experts talk facilitated sharing of inspiring and success stories by participants. These included Helen Keller, Stephen Hawking, Elvin Glenn etc. At this point of time, the programme coordinator, Dr. Bharti requested the participants to share success stories form their own states both from the perspective of teachers and students with disabilities. The participants promised to collect and send the same after the workshop, by mail or speed post.

The expert for the post tea session was Dr. Aruna Broota, and the theme was “Guidance and counseling for inclusive education”. Dr. Broota initiated the discussion by stating that we as humans do not want to accept the variability in life which the source of all problems and issue in relationships both at home as well as at workplace. The variability of any sort or any digression form the accepted norms are considered “not normal” or “abnormal” by us. The conventional thoughts, beliefs and attitudes of the society were highlighted by her using experiential anecdotes. She added that the problems of children with disabilities and their parents get extra shade due to attitude of society, school and administration. She emphasized that every child of God is a child with special needs and thus it is the “S” facto in the child that needs to be recognized, appreciated and highlighted more than the “g” factor, for general abilities. She suggested measures like parents and grandparents counseling once a month in school and building positive environment. The session ended with expert listening to the participants queries and providing suggestions and tips for managing issues related with children with special needs and other day to day life concerns.

Day 3
29th November 2013
Friday

The third day of the consultation began with an informal sharing/discussion on the required changes to be made in the teacher recruitment process. All participants actively participated in the discussion and shared various difficulties faced by administration in the recruitment process including late sanction of budget from the center which led to irregular payment of salary to the teachers. Shortage of trained personals is also one of the major hurdles faced by the IEDSS.

The first formal session of the day was dedicated to “ICT –making lives easier for children with special needs” and the resource person was Mr. Deependra Manocha , President Daisy Forum. In the onslaught, he initiated brainstorming by asking “Is ICT relevant in schools in the present scenario?”The questions sought response from the participants that there exists lack of availability of suitable devices with teachers and students as well as lack of proper training in the use of devices. The expert added that a device should be made available to both the user as well as service provider so that the instructional material becomes easily accessible. ICT should be perceived as an eco-system and not as a standalone device. It includes distribution system of instructional material so that the students can study independently. ICT is network of digital devices where users have access to these devices and are trained in their use and this is built keeping in mind accessibility for all. Some of the ICT devices easily used for educational purposes are computers, tablets, smart phones etc. these devices can be easily utilized for reading and writing purposes.

Dr. Manocha further suggested that in case of non-availability of such devices, the intermediaries such as school resource room/centers or organizations can convert the material available on these devices in usable form such as Braille books etc. Websites like bookshare.org and obindia.org might prove helpful. This led to a number of queries raised by the participants regarding the material available for students with hearing impairment and other challenges, skill and training required by teachers as well as students for using such devices etc.

The theme for the next session was “arts and aesthetics” and the resource persons were Dr. Radhika Alkaji and Dr. Sharbari Bannerjee. The discussion focused on use of arts and aesthetics for teaching in inclusive classrooms. Dr. Alkaji emphasized on the use of group work for developing a feeling of oneness and improving communication skills through medium of arts like dance, theatre, drawing, sculpting etc. These activities encourage self-expression. Dr. Alkaji mentioned various examples of children learning happily via arts and also shared a slideshow depicting various children with disabilities expressing themselves via arts.

Next Dr. Bannerjee stressed on the role of arts and aesthetics as therapy for children with disabilities. She showed clippings from two video films. The first was on inclusive classroom

and second showed art as brain developer. The first one began with a thought provoking quotation “we all are different but needs are same, everyone needs a friend to share their experiences”. The film showcased children with different forms and nature of disabilities singing, dancing and enjoying together along with non-challenged peers in inclusive setting. The second film was video interview of Mr. Benegal from NIMHANS wherein he was speaking on the therapeutic role of arts. Arts stimulate multiple areas in the brain and this fact has been proven scientifically. He mentioned that arts can lead to spiritual connection and it caters to the needs of every child. He shared that arts help in fighting depression and concluded that arts should not be an extra period but an integral part of schooling.

Now was the time for participants to share their experiences and the initiatives taken by their states with respect to arts and aesthetics.

The post lunch session, was the last formal session of the three days regional consultations and was conducted by Dr. Bharti, the programme coordinator. The session focused on linking consultations learning with the day to day professional life. For this the participants were encouraged to think of their professional day to day work responsibilities as an outsider. Sufficient time was given for the same and after this each participant was provided with a plain paper and was encouraged to write their plan for bringing changes in their day to day work life and responsibilities as a result of three days learning and sharing experience. Each participant was also asked to write their name and contact number on the same paper so that they may be contacted or follow up may be made with them. Participants from examination board offices mentioned that they will try to make provisions in their state board examinations for children with special needs. One participant from Raipur stated she will include gender issues and children with special needs in the in-service training programme she is likely to conduct soon at her workplace. Another participant mentioned that as part of his profession he had to interact with school principals daily on various issues related with education and schooling and now after attending this workshop he will make it a point to discuss provisions and educational issues concerning children with special needs during this interactions. Further, he will also try to include it in his talks and lectures. One participant from Uttarakhand working as research officer with the board of school realized that he may work towards spreading awareness about children with special needs and initiate preparation of adapted textbooks with the help of special teachers. another participant from DIET suggested that she will try to make the concept of inclusion clear to her teacher trainees during D.Ed. course.

All the suggested and identified linkages with the day to day professional life are presented below in the handwriting of the participants.

(Space for linkages individual pages)

Next, was the time for collecting feedback and suggestions from the participants for further improvement in the workshop/consultations. The participants were further requested to provide their feedback in written form and it resulted in mixed opinion of very useful to average. Few sessions like the one on constructivism, and guidance & counseling and adolescent issues and challenges were really appreciated and liked by all whereas the participants clearly expressed their concerns for the sessions on ICT and gender issues as a lot need to be done at the level of attitude of people. Participants feedback and suggestions are presented below as it is without any changes and modifications.

Self Evaluation

The three days regional consultations organized for the Hindi speaking states was second in turn. The first was organized in Gawahati dedicated to the north eastern states and their issues in implementing the scheme IEDSS. The flavor of the first workshop was on building the capacity of the state IEDSS teams to first understand and then plan prepare and execute the IEDSS in harmony with various state agencies involved in the secondary education. The IEDSS wasn't very well received in the north eastern states of India as revealed by the nationwide evaluation study conducted by the department earlier in the year.

The second workshop focused on the Hindi speaking states and on the basis of findings of the evaluation study it was visualized at the planning stage that the functionaries may be aware of the scheme so there may not be any need to devote a session on making the participants understand the scheme or to empower them in making AWP&B for implementation. This proved to be a wrong beginning right in the beginning of the consultations as many participants who came from textbook bureau, board of examination and even from SCERT and state RMSA team expressed their lack of understanding of various provisions of the scheme. The flavor of this consultation was building the capacity of participants in inclusive pedagogy, constructivism and CCE. Though the participants enjoyed and were actively involved in the discussion and appreciated the programme design yet they also mentioned that it would have been much better if

- Interaction between participants and ministry people would have been there
- Field visit to special/inclusive school
- Interaction with special children
- Hands on experience with respect to inclusive pedagogy

As a programme coordinator, I will give only 6 marks out of ten to this consultation, as few topics of importance like model inclusive schools, maintenance of aid and appliances, balancing between administrative and academic responsibilities also require attention. Further, the venue though was chosen for its apparent barrier free location yet when a resource person on wheel chair came, the barrier she faced while entering the hall due to thick lining of carpet and slight edge at the entry highlighted the entire venue in new perspective and made me identify the barriers which need to be removed from NCERT office building.

In the next programmes participation from Open University like IGNOU, RCI, and open schooling etc may also be involved both as resource support as well as participant.

Appendices

Appendix A
Reading Material Distributed

List of Material Distributed

1. IEDSS Scheme
2. Framework for preparing integrated annual work plan RMSA
3. Status of projects sanctioned and funds released to the state of
 - i. Bihar
 - ii. Chhattisgarh
 - iii. Gujarat
 - iv. Haryana
 - v. Maharashtra
 - vi. Madhya Pradesh
 - vii. Jharkhand
 - viii. Uttarakhand
 - ix. Delhi
 - x. Rajasthan
 - xi. Punjab
 - xii. Uttar Pradesh

Appendix B

Power Point Presentations

&

Expert Opinion

- [Create Synergies among Various Agencies Involved in the](#)
- [How a son or a daughter thinks of his/her Father at different ages](#)
- [Diability and Understanding Adolescence learner, SCERT Gurgaon](#)
- [Evaluation study DEGSN](#)
- [Guidance & Counseling For Inclusive Education](#)
- [ICT MAKES EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL](#)
- [RMSA DEGSN Social Science](#)
- [Using the Arts for Children with Disabilities](#)

Appendix c

Schedule of the regional consultations

Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs

National Council of Educational Research and Training

Three Days Regional Consultation

27th –29th November 2013

Room No 202; CIET

Day 1, 27th November 2013, Wednesday	
9:30a.m. -10:00a.m. 10:00a.m.—11.00a.m.	<i>Registration</i> <i>Welcome</i> <i>Introduction of participants & programme</i> Inclusive Education: Issues and Challenges Head of the Department, Programme Coordinator, Faculty DEGSN
11:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.	Tea
11:30 a.m. –1:00p.m.	<i>Building Synergies-- Planning and Management of IEDSS</i> Prof. Janak Verma
1:00p.m.—2:00p.m.	Lunch
2:00p.m. –3:15 p.m.	<i>Constructivism and CCE at secondary school stage</i> Prof. Ranjana Arora Dr. Siddhi Vyas
3:15—3:45p.m.	Tea
3:45—5:00p.m.	<i>Gender Issues</i> Dr. Anita Nuna Dr. Anita Ghai

Day 2: 28th November 2013 Thursday	
10:00a.m. –11:15 a.m.	Mathematics and Science Teaching Head DESM
11:15a.m. – 11:45a.m	Tea
11:45 a.m. –1:00p.m.	Adolescent issues and challenges concerning CWSN Prof. Saroj Yadav Dr. Vijay Lakshmi
1:00p.m.—2:00p.m.	Lunch
2:00p.m. –3:15 p.m.	Language and Social Science teaching Dr. Gowramma Dr. Kirti Kapoor
3:15—3:45p.m.	Tea
3:45—5:00p.m.	Guidance and Counseling, Vocational Education Dr. Aruna Broota
Day 3, 29th November 2013, Friday	
10:00a.m. –11:15 a.m	ICT Prof. Amrendra Bahera Dr. Dependra Manocha
11:15a.m. – 11:45a.m.	Tea
11:45 a.m. –1:00p.m.	Arts and Aesthetics Prof. Pawan Sudhir Dr. Radhika Alkajee
1:00p.m.—2:00p.m.	Lunch
2:00p.m. –3:15 p.m.	Group work: Linking consultation learning with day to day work Dr. Bharti
3:15—3:45p.m.	Tea
3:45—5:00p.m.	Wrapping up

Appendix D

Experts and Participants

Experts

1. Dr. Anita Ghai
Delhi University
New Delhi
2. Prof. Aruna Broota
Rtd. Delhi University
New Delhi
3. Dr. Dipendra Manocha
President & Founder
Managing Trustee Saksham Trust
Daisy Forum of India
4. Prof. Janak Verma
Retd. DEGSN
NCERT
5. Dr. Siddhi Vyas
Ex Faculty
Azim Prem ji University
Bangalore
6. Dr. Vijay Lakshmi
NIEPMD

Dept.of Disability Affairs,
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment,
Govt. of India

Experts from NCERT

1. Prof. Anita Julka
Head
DEGSN
2. Dr. A. K. Wazalwar
Head DESM
3. Dr. Amerendra Bahera,
Prof.
CIET
4. Dr. Anita Nuna,
Associate Professor
DWS
5. Dr. Anjani Kaoul
Assistant Prof.
DESM
6. Dr. Gowramma,
Associate Professor
RIE, Bhubaneswar
7. Dr. Kirti Kapoor,
Associate Professor

DEL

8. Prof. Pawan Sudhir
Head
DEAA
9. Prof. Ranjana Arora,
Head
RMSA Cell
10. Prof. Saroj Yadav,
Head
DESSH

Participants

1. Ms. Amrit Kaur
Coordinator IE
SSA
Haryana
2. Mr. Anil Kumar Vyas
Bikaner
Rajasthan
3. Mrs. Anupama Nalgundwar
Assistant Professor
SCERT
Raipur
Chhattisgarh
4. Ms. Anusuya Gupta
Assitant Director
IEDSS
Jaipur
5. Shri. Avanindra Buthural
Deputy Director,
IEDSS, RMSA,
Uttarakhand
6. Dr. Atima Shrouti
Bhopal

7. Mr. Brijesh
Coordinator IE
Delhi
8. Shri Bharat Kishore Choubisa
SIERT
Udaipur
9. Shri H. G. Patel
Director IEDSS
Gandhi Nagar
Gujaraat
10. Shri Manoj Kumar
Allahabad
UP
11. Shri Manoj Kumar Pathak
Research officer
Uttarakhand
12. Dr. Nandan S. Bisht
Research officer
Uttarakhand
13. Dr. Narender Singh Dabas
SCERT
Gurgaon
Haryana
14. Ms. Nidhi
APC IE
Chandigarh
15. Shri. Pradeep Kumar Sharma
Assistant Manager
TBC
Raipur
16. Shri. P.K. Singh
IEDSS New Delhi
17. Shri. P. N. Pamdey
Chattisgarh

18. Smt Pushpa Purushottam
APC SSA/RMSA
Chattisgarh
19. Mr. Ram Shankar
JD
CBSE
20. Mr. R.D. Parmar
Special Educator
RMSA
Gandhinagar
Gujraat
21. Shri Rajneesh Sharma
Coordinator IEDSS
Haryana
22. Shri. Rao Kuldeep Singh Yadav
Deputy Director Public Instruction,
Directorate of Public Instruction
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh
23. Mrs. Seema Chawla
Punjab School Education Board
Mohali
24. Dr. Santosh Kumar Khanna
Allahabad
UP
25. Shri Satinder Jeet Kaur
State Institute of Science Eductaion
Punjab
26. Shri Sher Singh Varun
Ghaziabad
UP
27. Shri Shree Kant

RP SE
Chandigarh
Punjab

28. Shri. S. K. Singh
Bikaner
Rajasthan

29. Md. Sohrab Ansari
APC
Patna
Bihar

30. Smt. Sujata Gupta
Assistant Director
RMSA
Raipur

31. Sh sunil Mishra
RP, SCERT
Raipur
Chhattisgarh

32. Mrs. Tajender Kaur
Chandigarh

33. Smt Usha Mudliyar
APC SSA/RMSA
Raipur

34. Dr. Vimlesh Kumari
IEDSS
New Delhi

35. Dr. Yatinder Singh
Ajmer
Rajasthan

36. Dr. Yogesh Vashishth
Assistant Director,
Board of School Education,
Bhiwani
Haryana

Logistics Support

1. Ms. Geetanjali
JPF
DEGSN
2. Sushma Gupta
APC
DEGSN
3. Mr. Vikram Singh
DEGSN
4. Mr. Yatinder
DEGSN
5. Technical support staff
CIET

