

A Brief Report of Workshop on “Suggestion Collection for the Amendment of the Scholarship Implementation Guidelines, 2068”

National Campaign for Education Nepal in collaboration with Department of Education (DoE) and support of Voluntary Service Organizations (VSO) and Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) accomplished the workshop 'Suggestion Collection for the Amendment of the Scholarship Guidelines, 2068' in Chitwan and Nepalgunj on 30th January and 1st February respectively with the active participation of more than 150 participants from the NCE Nepal's members at the district level, parents, teachers, members of SMC, students, representatives from disable groups, Muslim communities, core marginalized groups of those regions as well as government representatives from around 47 different districts.

Entitlement for and protection of children's rights to free and compulsory basic education through affirmative actions is a major challenge in case of the Nepal. Although the government data supports 96.4% school enrollment, there is caste based and regional disparities in the access of education. Access in the quality education of marginalized and deprived communities, students from poor family background like children with caste/ethnicity, gender, disability, poverty or geographic barriers is lower than the national average. One of the causes of being deprived of those children in school education is poverty and socio-cultural factors. Therefore, if the support measures is adopted to those children, their access in education can be improved. One of the support measurers can be the scholarship and other financial support. However, the current scholarship distribution system is not scientific and effective which could not address the concerns of poor, marginalized, deprived and vulnerable children to have access in education in Nepal. Therefore, the reform and amendment was sought in the existing Government's scholarship distribution guidelines which has also been mentioned as a mandatory reform and amendment in the recently approved School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) and current's minister Mr, Dhani Ram Paudel's 19 points action plan.



Mr. Rajendra Pahadi, Board Member, NCE Nepal welcoming all the participants and also highlighting the mission of NCE Nepal to ensure equitable and qualitative education in Nepal

As accordingly, the objective of the workshop was to collect the suggestions and inputs from marginalized communities, parents, teachers, members of SMC and those from targeted communities regarding the ongoing issues of the equity and inclusion in the education and submit those issues to the government so as to ensure the voices of target groups in the Amended Scholarship guidelines. Moreover, the workshop was aimed to collect the voices from the poor, vulnerable and the deprived communities so that it could be addressed in the current scholarship guidelines of the government and ultimately would contribute to equitable, quality and inclusive education as proposed by the SDG and SSDP.

Mr. Rajendra Pahadi, Board Member of NCE Nepal started the session with the welcome to all the participants and highlighted the need for the revision of the current scholarship so as to ensure



Mr. Ana Prasad Neupane, Director, DOE urging the participants to provide their views and suggestions for the scholarship guidelines.

the distribution of the scholarship on the equitable basis. Mr. Ana Prasad Neupane, Director of DoE highlighted the several silent provisions of the current scholarship provisions and the need to clarify them currently which could be more effective with the suggestions obtained from the participants in the workshop. Furthermore, Mr. Neupane also clarified the strong attempt the DoE would make in incorporating all the genuine suggestions received from the participants in the discussion.



Mr. Basanta Prasad Koirala, Deputy- Director, DoE, highlighting the gaps in the current scholarship guidelines and the silent provisions of the guidelines to be unpacked by the discussions.

Moreover, Mr. Basanta Koirala, Deputy Director, DoE explained that with the change in the structure of education, the inclusion of higher secondary into the school level has added more challenge in the issue of scholarship which arose the need to amend the guidelines. Furthermore, he also explained that the current scholarships that are being provided to the students have not been the effective one and there exists strong need to revise them. Furthermore, Ms. Manuja Baral, Section Officer from DoE added that the voices from the real stakeholders of the scholarship could induce pressure to the government so as to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of the scholarships to the real targeted students.



Participants in the group work

The overall program in both the districts was based in the group discussions of the participants. 5-6 homogeneous groups were prepared and the participants were made to discuss in the existing scholarship guidelines preliminary draft. Based on the discussion in the group, participants presented the provisions to be addressed by the amended scholarship guidelines. Several critical issues that had remained unpacked in the Guideline were critically observed and the suggestions were collected from the participants in the workshop. The suggestions included the provision to be made for the distribution of the scholarship on the need basis rather than cash to the students. Educational materials such as stationery kit, uniform, text books, monthly fees etc. could also be provided as the scholarship rather than confining the scholarship only on the cash. Furthermore, the participants suggested for the unanimous period or month for the distribution of the scholarship which could ensure that students in each and every regions could timely obtain the scholarship and could be utilized efficiently. The group also suggested for



Students critically observing the Scholarship Guidelines and discussing on its relevancy

the variation in the rate of the scholarship as per the geographic locations. Currently there are numerous types of scholarships in Nepal which are from the range of 400 to 40 thousand. Grouping and revision of these categories of scholarship has accounted most for the effective implementation.

Concluding the overall session, Mr. Ram Gaire, Program Manager of NCE Nepal highlighted that none of the students should be deprived from the light of education because of the economic and financial problems for which the government has brought up the scholarship programs. Moreover, Mr. Gaire expressed the need for the refinement of the existing guidelines and also its effective implementation after the amendment so as to ensure that each and every children are under the common umbrella of qualitative education. He shared the plan that suggestions collected for the amendment of the scholarship guidelines would be compiled up by NCE Nepal and submitted for the Department of Education (DoE) very soon so that DoE would move further in its action plans.

Some other glimpse of the program at Chitwan and Nepalgunj

