

ANTRIEP Regional Workshop on Education of Marginalised Groups: Policies, Programmes and Challenges

(25-27 March, 2015, New Delhi, INDIA)

Equity in education is one of the major concerns of policy and planning in most of the countries of the world. This concern is a result of continuing problem of educational disparities among the groups and communities despite the fact that most of the countries the world have committed themselves to promote equality and non-discrimination in education. Equality of educational opportunity, as a consequential principle of equality, is either constitutionally guaranteed or ensured as a state principle reflected through public policy text. In majority of cases, both are twined together, for constitutional and juridical commitment does not operate in vacuum. It is necessary to have policy text for articulating the concerns. Indeed, mere constitutional commitment towards equality or equality of opportunity cannot translate equality in various operational contexts. There may be apparent gap between the idea of equality of opportunity and its operational context, especially in a situation of intergroup inequalities and disparities. Substantive conditions of realising and enjoying equality of opportunity necessitates state support and a strong component of policies and programmes directed towards promoting equal opportunity. Education is one of the key areas of concern as it is considered as one of the basic components of human development.

Unequal access to education and intergroup disparities in educational attainment are continuing reality in most of the countries of the world. There could be various factors amounting to unequal access of groups to education and intergroup disparities. Some of them may be related to specific societal context such as caste in India, others may relate to geographical context of location of groups, economic context or many other contexts. Asia-Pacific region has its own context wherein equity and equal access to education at all levels is a problem. Most of the countries are interfaced with the challenge of intergroup disparities in education based on income, occupation, gender, social and class position of individuals and groups. There are groups and communities who lag behind the others in many countries. Similarly groups and communities located in remote areas and difficult situation, poor and many other groups are not at par with other groups. Their social, cultural and physical location impedes equal educational access and attainment. They are not able to access education at all level. Similarly language is also an issue in multilingual situation of

countries. It has been seen that language of the children spoken and used at home is different from the language of educational transactions in schools. The gap between language of the school and language of home creates gap in equal access and achievement. In many cases linguistic minorities face problems in coming at par with the linguistic majority groups in schools.

Undoubtedly the countries of the Asia- Pacific region have attempted to address the problems of educational disparities and inequality in educational attainment through variety of policies and programmes, still equal access to quality education and comparable educational attainment remain recurring concerns for many of the countries. It is also not to deny that some of the countries have done well in bridging the gap between groups through effective policy and programme intervention. There could be a number of good practices along with robust public policies contributing to equality in educational opportunities and attainment.

Keeping in view the recurring relevance of the theme and imperatives of post 2015 Agenda of Education For All, and the goal of sustainable development, which unequivocally pleads for equity in education, *ANTRIEP Regional Workshop on Education of Marginalised Groups: Policies, Programmes and Challenges* proposed to be held in New Delhi, India, 25-27 March, 2015 proposes to deliberate on the issue. The focus of the workshop is on policies and programmes relating to education of marginalised groups. There could be variety of marginalised groups depending upon the context of each of the countries of the region. It would be endeavour of the workshop to deliberate upon the states' response to such problems through policies and programmes. It would be equally important to reflect on outcome of the policies and programmes as to what extent the policy interventions have helped in fulfilling the objectives of providing education of equal quality to the marginalized groups. It would be also important to deliberate on the challenges which impede education of the marginalized groups. Around the main theme of the workshop, the participants/contributors of the papers are expected to bring together experiences of their respective countries with regard to education of the marginalised groups. The country papers should include the following indicative aspects relating to the main theme:

1. What are policies in education to ensure equity in education, and to deal with the issue of intergroup disparities, if there is any?
2. What are programmes to deal with issues of education of the marginalised groups?

3. Is there any institutional mechanism established for redressing the issues of educational deprivation of marginalized groups?
4. What have been the outcomes of the policies and programmes relating to education of the marginalized groups?
5. What are the best practices which have been evolved to cater the requirement and educational needs of these groups?

The length of the country paper should normally be between 6000 to 7000 words. The paper should reach to us latest by 10 March 2015.

The audience for the workshop will be invited participants from ANTRIEP member institutions in Australia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, South Korea, Indonesia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Maldives, Nepal and India.

The methodology of workshop will include plenary sessions with keynote speeches, presentations and discussion.