

Saarc human  
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SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) Islamabad, Pakistan  
Workshop on " Improving the Quality of Education: Role of Teachers in  
Achieving Quality in Education in South Asia" (December 26-28, 2011)

Concept Paper Introduction Quality of education is a relative and dynamic term varying from contexts to contexts and time to time. In a changing world driven by technological advancements, quality defined yesterday may not be valid today or tomorrow. Therefore, it is essential to discuss the concept and define and redefine quality of education with the passage of time. Quality of education is desirable even in countries where all the children are enrolled in schools for basic education because education has to allow all students to enhance their potentials in cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains.

Most of the policy makers overlook qualitative aspects of education instead they focus on quantitative aspects of it. Links between qualitative aspects of education and society are strong and so is important teacher's role in bridging the two in a way that students can play effective role in society. 2.

Quality education includes but not limited to: healthy learners; healthy environment; healthy content; healthy process; and healthy outcome. Since access to education has been a major problem in SAARC Region, quality of education provided is also emerging as a major challenge. High dropout rates in most of the member states also neutralise the effect of growing enrolment in primary education. Several policy initiatives have been taken in this regard but in the absence of well developed school-based process there is a considerable distance to go before achieving quality education for all. Additionally, different segments of societies undergo different educational experiences causing social stratification which is an unhealthy sign for the

communities in the region. 3. Improving quality of education has always been emphasized alongside education for all at national, regional and international forums such as the World Education Forum in Dakar held in 2000. Similarly various articles of the Convention of the Right of the Child highlight the right of everyone not only to get education but education of high quality. All the declarations by the international communities and goals set by United Nations regarding education also emphasize quality of education provided to the masses which can only be achieved through effective teaching and learning process, regularity and punctuality of students and their long stay in schools. 2 4. Teachers play crucial role in imparting quality of education. They are the role models and have greater impacts on the personality development of students. Education is a unique activity and the relationship between teachers and students can not be undermined for achieving quality of education. All that needed is to bring about educational reforms to allow well educated teachers to improve and develop their work in the classroom. 5. Teacher quality mostly determines quality of education in an educational setting. Some of the teacher quality dimensions include: 1) Command on the subject matter; 2) Pedagogical skills; 3) Reflective attitude and critical thinking ability; 4) Professional commitment and dedication; 5) Administrative skills; 6) Effective communication skills; 7) Greater flexibility; and 8) Respect for pluralism and diversity. The purpose is not to confuse teachers with so many roles and responsibilities but to make them aware of the prerequisites which they need to effectively accomplish this moral activity. 6. Knowledge of what has been in the field of quality education worldwide and regionally will provide a useful

background for policy makers, midlevel functionaries and ultimately the teachers to improve the educational standards in the region. Providing only access to educational facility without quality will not suffice the need to get productive citizens and capable human capital. Quality has to be an integral part of the whole educational process. The workshop titled "Improving the Quality of Education: Role of Teachers in Achieving Quality in Education in South Asia", being organized in Bangladesh by the SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) Islamabad, will give an opportunity to the participants to share their experiences and knowledge with the experts of the field to improve their understanding of teacher's role in achieving quality of education. The workshop will assess the best practices in the achievement of quality education within the region and globally that will have implications for future educational initiatives in South Asia. Objectives of the Workshop 7. The main objective of the workshop is to explore the current situation of quality of education with respect to teacher's role and develop strategies to improve quality of education in future. More specifically participants will: i. ii. iii. Discuss country specific information and statistics during country report presentations; Discuss the best practices on providing quality of education regionally and worldwide; identify the areas where teachers can play effective roles in promoting quality education in the region; SAARC Human Resource Development Centre, Islamabad - Pakistan 3 iv. v. vi. Analyze the effectiveness of teacher education programmes in the region; Evaluate the progress made by member states in achieving quality of education; and Suggest modalities for teachers, policymakers and other stakeholders to achieve quality of education in SAARC Member States. In this regard the

workshop specifically seeks to answer the following questions in a SAARC countries' educational scenario: - - - - What are the policies in place to improve quality of education and what type of policies would be required to respond to the combined challenge of expanded access and quality improvement of education? What new skills are demanded of teachers to better perform their duties towards improving quality of education? What roles school administrators can play in preparing teachers to cope with the challenge of quality of education? How can the training of teachers be improved? Why is the teaching profession not attracting the best candidates and what could be done in this regard? Approach 8. The workshop will be interactive and participatory in discussing concepts and sharing of ideas. Experts from SAARC Member States will make presentations on various aspects while discussion will take the agenda forward. The environment thus created will be participant friendly in all respects. There will be a number of facilitators explaining themes, highlighting the connections, theories and practices related to quality of education and role of teachers in it. Groups may prepare their reports and present their findings before the participants. The SHRDC will prepare the workshop report later on. Methodology 9. To achieve the workshop objectives, a number of methodologies will be used including lectures and demonstrations, peer work and group work. Resource Persons will arrange activities according to the nature and requirement of their respective themes to make the topics comprehensive and interesting for the participants. After each presentation, there will be a question-and-answer session in which participants will ask questions and/or give their inputs in relation to the topic under discussion. Emphasis will also be given

to the group work in which participants are expected to come up with SAARC specific suggestions and recommendations about teacher's role in achieving quality of education in the region. SAARC Human Resource Development Centre, Islamabad - Pakistan 4 Expected Outcome of the workshop 10. It is expected that participants will develop replicable template models of teacher training and suggest modalities for achieving quality of education in the SAARC member states. Suggesting such models of teacher preparation for achieving quality of education would be the most desirable outcome. As a group of professionals they are expected to come up with particular suggestions and recommendations on the theme. Participants 11. About 28 participants (3 participants each from Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and 7 from Bangladesh) are expected to attend the workshop. Participants' profiles include the following: a) Mid-level policymakers/functionaries, trainers/professionals, teachers from government, semi-government organizations and NGOs working in the field of Education specially those who are working at the grass root levels; b) Researchers and scholars; and c) Civil society, NGOs, Donor and Private Sector Representatives. Logistic Support: 12. Free boarding and lodging will be provided to the participants/Resource Persons. Moreover, pick & drop service will also be provided. Date and Duration 13. The workshop is of three days duration w. e. f. December 26-28, 2011. Venue of the Workshop 14. Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University, RD. 2, House 113/A, Niketon, Gulshan 1, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Contact Persons Mr. Rehmat Wali Khan (Focal Person), Education Officer SHRDC, Islamabad Ph: +92-51-9255387, Cell: +92-344-2312524 E-mail: rehmatwalikhan@yahoo. com

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