
**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND MECHANISMS IN CURRICULUM REFORM**

The curriculum planned at the central level is modified by all the processes leading to its adoption. In the classroom at the secondary level most institutionalized activity is centrally controlled.

**Ministry of education**

The task of initiating educational activities throughout Nepal lies with the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Ministry is responsible for educational planning and management, as well as in improving service delivery systems across the country. MOE is composed of three divisions: Planning; General Administration; and Educational Administration. Educational programmes and services are prepared by: the Curriculum Development Centre; the Secondary Education Development Centre; the Distance Education Centre; the Office of the Controller of Examinations; the National Centre for Educational Development; the regional education directorates and district education offices. From July 1999 a new structure will be implemented with the formation of a Department of Secondary, Education, containing a Primary and Basic Education Division and a Secondary and Higher Secondary Division. This will separate policy making from executive actions.

**The National Curriculum Council**

A high-level National Curriculum Council (NCC), chaired by the Minister of Education, approves all curricula and guides the detailed developmental work of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) by setting operational and administrative policy.

**Technical Committees**

The NCC forms ad-hoc technical committees when additional advice is required. Matters concerning the relevance of curricula drafted by CDC may be referred to such
a technical committee if the NCC feels additional advice is necessary.

Curriculum Development Centre

The CDC is responsible for the maintenance, transmission and renewal of the school-level curriculum and is also concerned with pre-primary education. (See below for further discussion of CDC).

The Secondary Leaving Certificate Board

The Secondary Leaving Certificate Board sets policies and makes decisions relating to the School-Leaving Certificate (SLC), which are then implemented by the Office of the Controller of Examinations (OCE). A reformed SLC, with single subject certification is planned for July 2001. The courses leading to this examination are to be implemented from grade 9, beginning in July 1999.

The Secondary Education Development Centre

The Secondary Education Development Centre (SEDEC) is responsible for a range of in-service training activities at the secondary level. SEDEC operates through twenty-five secondary education development units at locations, which allow for national coverage. The training activities also support the work of the Curriculum Development Centre and the OCE.

Janak Educational Materials Centre

The Janak Educational Materials Centre (JEMC), operating as a public limited company, produces and distributes school textbooks throughout Nepal. JEMC’s Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from concerned ministries and organizations.

THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Responsibilities and activities

The CDC (see Figure 1) is responsible for the maintenance, transmission and renewal of the school education curriculum. The wide-ranging activities of the centre include developing, revising and disseminating textbooks and teacher’s support materials. A programme of seminars and workshops supports these activities. CDC’s development and monitoring work is carried out by specialized curriculum subject units, advised by curriculum subject specialist committees. Subject units cover languages, science and maths, social studies, health and physical education. To support CDC’s activities, various studies and surveys are conducted on curriculum-related issues and problems. The activities of CDC give rise to a wide range of relationships with other institutions. The most important of these is with the teachers and student in schools, who are the immediate end-users of the centre’s products. CDC also incorporates a publishing unit.

The Publishing Unit (PU)

The PU (in collaboration with subject specialist units, their advisory subject specialist committees, subject advisers and consultants) sets textbook specifications. According to prescribed procedures, the PU also selects textbook writers on the basis of: subject knowledge, classroom experience and sample materials reviewed by teachers/subject experts. A PU staff member serves as the managing editor, and is responsible for briefing contracted writers and liaising closely with them to ensure quality and schedule controls, until the camera-ready copy goes to the printers. The PU manager also arranges distribution of the draft materials to be tested in schools and validated by teacher groups. The managing editor, unit specialist, subject committee members, advisers and specialists all visit schools to collect comments which are subsequently relayed to the writers.

Subject Advisory Committees

The role of these committees is to advise on the preparation and revision of the curriculum, and the preparation, revision and evaluation of textbooks and teachers guides. The Curriculum Officers, as members of the committees, also participate in these activities and provide the secretariat that promotes the committee’s work. Sub-committees are established to carry out specialist developmental inputs. The subject committees cover Nepali, English, science, mathematics, social studies, and health, population and environment (HPE).

Task Committees

Like the publishing unit, the task committees cut across the boundaries of the various specialist units. Examples are the formative assessment committee and the dissemination committee. Task committees are formed to advise the cross-boundary projects managing officer on policy and operational matters.
FIGURE 2. Curriculum Development Centre

Director-General

Primary and Secondary Curriculum Division Director
- Administration Section
  Staff: 30
- Fiscal Section
  Staff: 2

Non-Formal Education Division Director
- Editing & Publishing Section
  Staff: 10
- Library & Documentation Centre
  Staff: 2
- Curriculum Materials Section
  Staff: 3
- Training Supervision Section
  Staff: 3
- Production & Distribution Section
  Staff: 3

Language Unit
Staff: 3

Science & Math Unit
Staff: 3

Social Studies Unit
Staff: 3

Health & PE Unit GO II
Staff: 2

Primary Curriculum Unit II
Staff: 7

Vocational Education Unit GO
Staff: 1

Pre-Primary Curriculum Unit
Staff: 1

Note:
GO = Gazetted Officer;
NO = Non-gazetted Officer
FIGURE 2. National goals of education

The National Goals of Education frame all the detailed technical work of curriculum development and should be reflected in all documents and materials developed by the Curriculum Development Centre. The national education goals are to:

- nurture and develop the personalities and inherent talents in each person;
- instill respect for human values and the will to safeguard national and social beliefs so as to help develop a healthy social unity;
- help the individual to socialize, enhancing social unity;
- help the individual keep his or her identity in the national and international context and to help him/her lead a socially harmonious life in the modern world;
- assist the modernization of the country by creating able manpower for its development;
- teach the thoughtful protection and wise use of Nepal’s natural resources;
- bring those who are underprivileged into the mainstream of the nation.

### TABLE 1. Secondary school curriculum structure—general secondary school level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Classes 9 and 10</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
<th>Full Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Nepali</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Mathematics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Science</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Social studies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Health, Population and</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Optional Paper I</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Optional Paper II</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>800</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### A. Option 1 paper subjects (any one)

**Languages:** Nepali, Arabic, Avadhi, Bhojpuri, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Maithili, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Persian, Hebrew, Urdu, English, French, German, Greek, Latin, Russian, Spanish. (Other national languages of Nepal will be included in the curriculum, provided that grammar books, teaching materials, etc., are available.)

**Humanities, Social Science:** history, geography, civics, economics, sociology.

**Optional mathematics**

#### B. Option 2 paper subjects (any one)

**Interdisciplinary:** agricultural education, food science, architectural education, industrial education, office management and accounting, auditing, typing and shorthand, computer science, home science, handicrafts painting, sewing and knitting, bamboo-work, dance, music, Ayurveda naturopathy, health and physical education, Yoga education, photography, journalism, instrumentation.

**Secondary Education Development Project**

The Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP) began in 1993. SEDP originally aimed at improving and reinforcing three subjects (English, science, mathematics). In 1997, support to Nepali and social studies was added. SEDP also has the goal of reforming the examination system and providing materials and equipment to selected secondary schools. The project has been providing support services through the Secondary Education Development Centre and the twenty-five training centres.

**Accomplishments**

As of July 1998, CDC had produced ten curriculum booklets outlining the lower secondary curriculum (grades 6–8) and the secondary curriculum (grades 9 and 10) and covering all core subjects therein. The curriculum and textbooks for grades 6 (1996), 7 (1997) and 8 have been printed and distributed (1998). The lower secondary curriculum is being prepared for publication. However, English is the only subject in which teacher’s guides have so far been produced.

In July 1998, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) decided to restructure the curriculum of grades 9 and 10, to allow for the inclusion of a new sixth core subject, health, population and environment (HPE). This reduced English, Nepali, mathematics and science from six to five periods each week. The curriculum was adjusted in line with the reduction of periods. The grade 9 production schedule for textbooks and teacher’s guides has now been separated from that of grade 10. The grade 9 textbooks for the six core subjects were scheduled for printing by the end of March 1999, while completion of grade 9 teacher’s guides was foreseen for the end of April 1999.

CDC has formulated a seven-stage dissemination strategy for the grades 9 and 10 curriculum. The first stage (approval) was completed in November 1998. Included in the strategy are: detailed planning, package development, training of master facilitators and facilitators, training of head-teachers, cluster-based and school-based workshops. The full programme will be completed by the end of July 1999.

The Publishing Unit’s first textbooks are clearly of a better quality than previous CDC/SEDP outputs. The unit has also produced a four-page CDC bulletin of a high standard (February 1998) to publicize its activities, as well as a leaflet in English and Nepali. Textbooks have been monitored for gender, socio-economic and regional equity.
DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF CURRICULUM REFORM

While the capacity of CDC to handle complex tasks is clearly improving, the capacity to plan and to develop human resources has certain constraints due to the rate of staff changeovers. This makes the institutionalization of curriculum development design processes very difficult. These staff changes are at all professional and administrative levels of the organization.

The same changes create problems of continuity and liaison with other organizations connected with the implementation process. These institutions—District Education Offices, Regional Education Offices, OCE and SEDEC—also have high staff instability.

There are very few formalized follow-up activities, except by the SEDP BME Unit. These are mainly concerned with project evaluation.

REFORMING THE CURRICULUM WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL STUDIES

As described earlier all core curricula and many optional subjects have been changed in recent years. In the development of all core curricula there has been tension between traditionalists and modernists, as well as between nationalists and those in favour of globalization or wider horizons—those who speak for ‘our values’ and those who speak of ‘global values’. Balancing these diverse views is a problem for all curriculum developers. No curriculum subject can avoid these controversies. While in science and mathematics the debate is narrower, in English and Nepali there are different dimensions due to the source of each individual language. Both of the two newer subjects—social studies and HPE—have proved to be controversial in different ways (see Figure 2).

Translating the goals, general objectives and specific objectives of the social studies curriculum into a useful textbook proved difficult. Although there are many dimensions to the discussion, the fundamental debate concerns whether education is about passing knowledge or learning skills—or what is the balance between the two. Members of the subject committee did not always agree with those who set the framework for developing the new textbook, creating what is hopefully a creative tension.

Those setting the framework for developing the new textbook felt that the following factors are all important in the writing of a new style textbook:

- Each chapter should have clearly thought-out learning outcomes. These will include not only factual information for knowledge and understanding, but specific skills such as interpreting a bar chart, locating places of historical importance, presenting an argument in favour of a certain course of action and collecting local data.

- The earlier textbooks mostly contained only factual information, followed by recall questions. The new textbook must present information in different forms (text, statistics, pictures, photographs, diagrams, graphs and charts, maps, newspaper items, source documents) and provide challenging questions to help students understand, interpret, analyze and evaluate the information.

- The textbook must include many project-related activities, starting with simple tasks, and moving towards longer projects. This will mean that most of the work studied has a local component and thus is of genuine relevance to the students. It will also mean that students can experience research activities, gaining practical investigation and analytical skills, and learning to present their findings. It will also help them to work together co-operatively.

- The students should be able to see what skills they are learning in each chapter and gain a sense of achievement and progress towards the school-leaving certificate (SLC). This may be done with a summary of chapters or topics. The exercises given in the textbook will not only test knowledge and understanding, but will expect analysis and evaluation of the information, and well-thought-out answers. They will also need to encourage the practice of practical skills and abilities. This will provide practice for new SLC-type questions.
OBJECTIVES. There are twenty-eight general objectives listed in the grades 9 and 10 social studies curricula. Highly specific objectives are listed for grade 9 (twenty-seven objectives) and grade 10 (twenty-nine objectives).

Abilities. On achieving the course objectives, students will be able to demonstrate a wide range of abilities. Some examples of the abilities associated with knowledge and understanding and practical abilities are as follows:

Ability 1: Knowledge and understanding.
1. Describing projects in different zones and development regions;
2. Describing the achievements of Nepal in the fields of education, health, transportation, telecommunications, electricity and water supply;
3. Discussing the role of skilled manpower in the development of the infrastructure of Nepal;
4. Stating the role of international organizations in solving social problems;
5. Explaining different climates and the elements that affect them;
6. Giving a short introduction to the geo-economic activities of continents;
7. Identifying the problems created by population growth and migration and finding out ways to participate in solving them;
8. Describing the physical features of the Earth;
9. Examining the impact of landslides on the physical features of Nepal and participating in the task of avoiding them;
10. Listing the agricultural products grown in the various geographical areas.

Ability 2: Practical abilities.
1. Maintaining national dignity;
2. Drawing a map of Nepal and filling in the main industrial centres and roads;
3. Demonstrating models in class;
4. Analyzing the data presented in charts;
5. Locating historical sites on a map;
6. Investigating the problems of population growth;
7. Appreciating the contributions of our national heroes;
8. Applying the knowledge of social studies for the good of society;
9. Drawing a picture of the Himalayan region;
10. Recording the maximum rainfall of the month;
11. Designing a research proposal to find out about social evils.

Criteria. The new-style social studies textbook must be developed so that students can be thoroughly prepared to take the new SLC examination. The textbook must help them not only to understand the content of the course, but also to develop the necessary skills and ability to think critically about the different topics. Thus, each chapter should have clearly thought-out learning outcomes. These will include not only factual information for knowledge and understanding, but will also include specific skills such as those outlined in the previous section. After studying this lesson the student will be able to:

- interpret a bar chart;
- locate places of historical importance;
- present an argument in favour of a certain course of action;
- collect local data.

The earlier textbooks contained only factual information, followed by recall questions. To prepare for the new SLC examination, the new textbooks must present information in different forms (text, statistics, pictures, photographs, diagrams, graphs and charts, maps, newspaper items, source documents) and provide challenging questions to help students understand, interpret, analyze and evaluate the information.

As 30% of the new SLC marks will be given for project-style work to be carried out during the year, the textbook must include many such activities; starting with simple tasks, and evolving to longer projects. This will mean that most of the material studied has a local component and thus is of relevance to the students. It will also mean that students can undertake genuine research, and gain practical skills in investigating, analyzing and presenting their findings. It will also help them to work together cooperatively in groups. Such tasks are illustrated below.

EXAMPLES
- draw up a plan of your VDC, mark the water;
- prepare a poster or a talk to stop young people from experimenting with drugs;
- survey the type and number of animals kept in the local community;
- write and perform a short historical drama;
- keep a record of local weather over a long period and prepare a suitable display, such as a bar chart or graph.

The students should be able to see what skills they are learning in each chapter and gain a sense of achievement and progress towards the SLC. This may be done with a summary of chapters or topics. The exercises given in the textbook will not only test knowledge and understanding, but will require analysis and evaluation of the information and well thought-out answers. They will also need to encourage the practice of practical skills and abilities. This will provide practice for new-type questions on the SLC exam.