

**e-Discussion on UN Solution Exchange ICT for Development and Education
Communities**

Consolidated Reply of the 3rd Query:

**Query: Framework for ICTs in School Education: Programme Delivery Issues –
Public Private Partnership
(7.5.08 – 21.5.08)**

.....

Moderators Note: The e-discussion on the Framework for ICTs in School Education has been grouped into three broad areas: Topic 1 covered investment issues, read summary at this link: http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/ictd/e-discuss/ediscuss02/summarytopic1_01040801.pdf (Size: 25.5 KB), topic 2 covered content and quality issues, read summary at this link: http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/ictd/e-discuss/ediscuss02/summarytopic2_15040801.pdf (Size: 37 KB) and the third discussion will cover programme delivery issues, and address the topics of Public-Private Partnerships, and Monitoring and Evaluation.

We present you the next topic, TOPIC 3: Programme Delivery Issues and look forward to your active participation. We encourage you to broaden the discussion to your contacts in NGOs, schools, government, local authorities, private sector, and other non-members who you feel would have something to contribute.

Once again members may please refer to <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/ictd/cr/res28030801.doc> to understand the process of this series of consultations.

Issue	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
Public Private Partnership	How should the public-private partnerships be effectively built for enhancing proper usage of ICT tools in school education?	List out the different models of PPP that have been tried addressing the specific aspects of efficient implementation of ICT in school education delivery systems. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such associations? How do these partnerships differ from vendor-client relations?	Can learning outcomes of children be enhanced using the PPP model in delivering ICT tools for school education? How does corporate experience on delivering quality education address this aspect?	Are there any examples of PPP in Vocational Education, and the key challenges faced?

Response List: 3 responses were received on the thematic area Public Private Partnership from 7.5.08 to 21.4.08.

1. Anindya Kumar Banerjee, Panchayats and RD Department, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata
2. Gurumurthy Kasinathan, IT for Change
3. M V Ananthakrishnan, Developmental Infomatics Lab, KReSIT, IIT Bombay, Mumbai

Response 1

Anindya Kumar Banerjee, Panchayats and RD Department, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata

1. How should the public-private partnerships be effectively built for enhancing proper usage of ICT tools in school education?

It was discussed earlier as well that choosing the variable stakeholder will mean a great "CAUTION" since they will be responsible for the "most difficult" portion of the entire process of "educating" the students without vested interests. The PPP partner should have certain skill sets like:

1. The partner should be in education for at least 5 years
2. The partner should have an employee strength to match the project size and a "reserve bench" to fill vacancy at short notice
3. The partner should have BOD or head of the project from the education/academia only so it would be easy to "communicate processes"
4. The partner should deposit a written assurance that they would re-invest at least 10% of the earnings from the school in preparing the School Databases for teachers, students and it means not only infrastructure but software, multimedia presentations, etc.

2. List out the different models of PPP that have been tried addressing the specific aspects of efficient implementation of ICT in school education delivery systems. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such associations? How do these partnerships differ from vendor-client relations?

From my personal experience, the current scenario has changed only a bit since early 1990s when PPP began in Madhya Pradesh, a state I used to live in, by AISECT-Bhopal, then other states in South India and also East did tie up with educational organizations like NIIT, Aptech, etc but they could not make ICT compulsory till now at most places and hence the earnings have deteriorated as a PC cost has come down drastically a local unemployed youth invests in a Cyber Cafe which he/she uses to train the school students at half the cost hence the school loses students as they know more by paying less as in most cases the software outside is pirated the training is cheap.

Advantages:

- Employment opportunities for many unemployed IT trained youth,
- Computer Education at young age lays a good foundation for the students for higher education
- Computer has been used by teachers to make their job easy by avoiding the writing hassles (result preparation, notifications etc)
- Used for school management system software
- Internet has enabled more GK and basic knowledge
- Education due to e-content has given good impetus to students ability to retain things for longer duration

Disadvantages:

- Good faculty members do not get paid in accordance to the industry as it is not a compulsory subject
- School teachers often disapprove and advice students not to join computer course fearing loss of students in tuition classes in summer
- School teachers on government payroll are getting less amount of salary than these private trainers
- Exposure to too much of radiation as the specifications are not followed in absence of a policy or improper updation of technology

3. Can learning outcomes of children be enhanced using the PPP model in delivering ICT tools for school education? How does corporate experience on delivering quality education address this aspect?

PPP will definitely enhance the students as private trainer always suffer from a fear of job loss and hence outperform it is not that government teachers do not perform but largely the fear of non performance is the reason why PPP works most of the times.

The quality standards have to be set by the policy makers and reviewed every 3 months initially or 6 months at the maximum or else rapid change in technology will never be utilised by the stakeholders to get the best delivery made.

4. Are there any examples of PPP in Vocational Education and the key challenges faced?

There are many such PPP cases in Vocational education in university level but none so far in school level as the education system in India is not as similar to US/UK where more stress is on hands on rather than textual.

But if we can do this, then we will definitely find that the maximum drop out 92% from schools is by the age of 14 years ie Class 8-9-10. Also, there is a need which Jayalakshmi has correctly pointed for establishing vocational senior secondary schools not in primary level of course. However, here is the catch. Almost all of the dropouts get funneled into vocational education that guarantees skills development and ensures employability. This is a non-existing sector in India.

http://www.bwpat.de/skope/ppps/11_planas.pdf can be viewed for a presentation pdf. It is a foregone conclusion that the government machinery is incapable of meeting the demand for newer schools. In fact, even the old and established schools need a fresh bout of professional management. I wish that the Finance Ministry announces a few schemes to

attract PPP to collaborate with the governments for creating and running primary schools – in rural, as well as urban areas.

I or maybe other members in this forum are perhaps unwilling to buy the argument that the private players are interested only in the urban areas. I have been a consultant to such an organisation which works 85% in rural area of West Bengal.

Imagine, we need at least 3000 – 4000 new schools every year for the next decade and a half, at least. This is after counting all the schools that the Governments across the country plan to set up. Needless to say, the task is humungous and needs to be actioned, now! In China, for example, there are 50,000 vocational senior secondary schools. We have not even one in India!! Correcting this anomaly is long overdue. My sincere wish was the Finance Minister makes it mandatory for each school in the country to offer vocational training courses in the free time (5 pm to 7pm).

As a pilot, about a 1000 odd government schools could be selected per state, and supported by the local ITI/Polytechnic college to offer these courses to the youngsters in the local community. Financial support, technical expertise, certification from DGVVT, scholarships, industry tie-ups and placements for certified students could form an integral part of the scheme if required corporate or even technological institutions could chip in their best.

There should also be some PPP venture into program and funding to create centers of excellence in the area of teacher training. The few centers of excellence such as the CET, RTI, etc., need to be upgraded and funded to become the fountainheads of educational leadership. We need principals, district education officers, curriculum leaders etc, in thousands. Our focus on building institutions which will lead to this capacity building that is directly linked to the nation's growth must be understood by the people up there making policy for our future generation one of which is absence of good quality teachers in technical institutions like engg. colleges (private one's).

PPP, in creating the vocational training capacities, needs continued acceleration. The employability figures in the country look gloomy. Young India is devoid of appropriate livelihood and this poses a potential social danger. My work with both IL&FS ETS Ltd as the project manager for the Tata Motors project in Singur West Bengal Hooghly District and with P&RD Dept in West Bengal has exposed me to the basic issue of livelihood and vocational courses would definitely help.

The scheme to bring more of it into play through PPP needs a greater thrust. The PPP for the entire set of 1600 ITI could be completed in the coming fiscal year itself instead of dragging it over the next 2 – 3 years. Also, the program to create a new breed of modern 'ITI' (Industrial Training Institutes) through PPP needs closer monitoring and financial incentives for better execution. It is a tough task.... but, we are in desperate times as far as employability is concerned right?

We can also think of opening up the FDI for education:

FDI in education is a sensitive subject to a diverse group for varied reasons – politically sensitive to some, sheltered for too long and hence scary to others, sheer inertia to a few more, and so on. However, my view is entirely different and might sound contra-intuitive, too. I see opening up education sector as a strategic intervention to gain competitive advantage in today's knowledge world. If you look into the NeGP then the recent Capacity Building project is going to create wonders by promoting building and replicating CHAMPIONS across the length and breadth of the country in a few years of time. Hats off to the Team at MIT, DIT under Sri.Chandrasekhar.

KPO: India, from being a knowledge consuming nation must now dream of becoming a knowledge creating one. For that, each one of us needs to have the best people working in schools, colleges, universities, research labs across the four corners of the country. The best of global institutions and their finest brains need to be attracted. We are uniquely positioned to be doing that today. We must not miss this opportunity while formulating policy for MOHRD, GoI. Can I ask you all to imagine Harvard, Wharton, Stanford, UCB, LSE, Yale, INSEAD having campuses in places like Kanpur, Pune, Visag, Bhopal etc..... please go ahead and imagine bringing back Nobel laureates to India for their work imagine Jagdeesh Sheths, Mohanbir Sawhney, CK Prahalad returning to their native cities.

Response 2

Gurumurthy Kasinathan, IT for Change

To my mind, a separate theme of 'public private partnership' is not very relevant to an ICT in education policy. This issue may come at the implementation level where efficiency considerations may demand outsourcing some activities,

for instance, technical support. But this is not a central issue in the policy, and in any case private contracting of services and/or equipment is already done by all public institutions.

What on the other hand is problematic is that under the guise of PPP's, business actors are at times given an important role in policy making even when they have direct business interest in the concerned areas. It is obvious that a drug pricing policy should not be directly influenced by a pharmaceutical company. To have software and hardware vendors' working within ICT in education policy structures is quite dangerous, and can distort the very structural basis of the policy as it can impact its specific aspects towards their own business interests. (It is disturbing to see that the initial small group working on this policy has at least 5 vendors, most of who have near monopolies in their area of business, as members). It is noteworthy that most of these representatives designations indicate they are from the marketing /sales and corporate relations than any 'technical expertise' area. Also we need to ask what part of the initial policy design actually requires such 'technical complexities' as to require any vendor expertise.

Vendor driven policy seems to be an issue not only in the education sector, but in ICTD related policies in other domains as well, under the belief of 'needing technical expertise', which we need to analyse. *In light of above, I will suggest we add 'the policy making process' itself to the themes we need to discuss. It ought to be a separate vertical of discussion here.*

Response 3

M V Ananthkrishnan, Developmental Infomatics Lab, KReSIT, IIT Bombay, Mumbai

1. How should the public-private partnerships be effectively built for enhancing proper usage of ICT tools in school education?

The essential prerequisites for a purposeful PPP, based on my experiences, are:

a) A public system

- that is fair in achieving its objectives
- that has planned out its modus operandi in letter and spirit
- that has the plan ready for implementation once the finances/resources are made available
- that has the system in position to get going
- that has tested out the modus operandi on a small scale and is sure of its successful duplication
- that has a back up mechanism to continue in case of depleted resources from the private partner
- that has the belief and motivation in whatever they plan and do

b) A private party

- that has the honest desire to further the cause of the objectives set by the Public system
- that has the know-how to execute the project
- that has the essential person-power to assess the viability prior to participation
- that has the person-power to add value to the project
- that has person-power to actively participate in the implementation phase
- that has the necessary mechanism to periodically evaluate the progress
- that has the necessary corrective measures in case of any deviations
- that ensures that there is a periodic evaluation every six months even after the completion of the project
- that sees the benefits to society much beyond its CSR

2. List out the different models of PPP that have been tried addressing the specific aspects of efficient implementation of ICT in school education delivery systems. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such associations? How do these partnerships differ from vendor-client relations?

The parties involved were Ministry of Information Technology, Govt of India., IIT Bombay and Vigyan Ashram (NGO).

a) Advantages:

- The NGO becomes the point-of-contact on a regular basis
- The NGO is familiar with the local language, the school administration and the relevant issues
- The NGO is able to effectively test out and transfer the models/prototypes developed by the IIT Bombay
- The NGO facilitates the effective dialogue between the IITBombay and the school(s)

- The NGO helps the IITBombay in identifying the particular person(s) from each school for regular liaison
- b) Disadvantages
- Issues on identifying the appropriate technology
 - Pressure to apply existing technologies (not concerned about the end users sometimes!)
 - Pressure to market its own products (which often are “misfits”)
 - Desire to employ its own people on the project
 - Tendency form the employees to show allegiance to the NGO and not the Project Manager
 - NGO-selected employees behaving more as reporters rather than “change agents”
 - Discords between the NGO and the IITB on implementation issues...very often resolved.
- c) Difference with Vendor-Client Relationships
- It is not a product but a service
 - It has no expiry date
 - It calls for a perfect relationship
 - The student is the ultimate customer
 - It calls for an emotional relationship
 - It means ownership on the part of both the parties involved
 - It calls for a sustained follow-up...ideally life-long!
 - The relationship has to be more of a nurturing and remedial nature
 - There is no modular approach in Education...it is continuous!

3. Can learning outcomes of children be enhanced using the PPP model in delivering ICT tools for school education? How does corporate experience on delivering quality education address this aspect?

a) PPP in delivering

ICT tools for enhanced learning of children

- Enhancement is possible by using ICT to disseminate the best of teaching and instructional resources
- This approach is best suited for our remote rural schools
- IITBombay has successfully implemented such an experimental study in six rural schools in rural Maharashtra (with an NGO, Vigyan Ashram in Pabal)
- The students have been very positive to this methodology (as seen in the rural school in Pabal area) as observed over a period of nearly a year
- The website address is <http://www.eshikshak.it.iitb.ac.in>

b) Corporate experience in delivering quality education

- Corporates have experience in conducting need-based training for their new employees
- Corporate have experience in conducting continuing education programmes for their existing employees
- Corporates have their training and education programmes...following quality standards as per ISO and SEI-CMM
- The programmes have definite objectives which ensure the desired results post-training.
- Corporates suitably add the practical and down-to-earth components...sadly missing in the college degree courses
- Corporates can work back from the degree courses to the high school courses/subjects to determine what should be initiated in the school curriculum. This would ensure that the students are project-ready on completing their respective degree courses
- Corporate can accordingly advise the high school boards and university boards of studies
- Corporate can depute their staff (with a flair of teaching) to handle classes in the third and fourth years of the Degree courses, where electives are taught and essentially need practical applications in industry
- Corporate could take the entire responsibility of the final year project work, right from defining the problem to testing and implementation...to ensure that the project outcome adds value to the company's line of business and ensures ROI on the investment in terms of stipends/scholarships.

4. Are there any examples of PPP in Vocational Education, and the key challenges faced?

None to my knowledge
