Implementation Support Agency for SCERT, Bihar

Monthly Progress Report

January 2018

Sl. No.	Areas	Description
1	**Progress and key tasks accomplished**	• 1 new consultant joined the ISA team, Saswat Basu (e-Content and Communications) on 30 January. • Work has continued on substantially improving the existing SCERT website, making it more user-friendly and dynamic and looking at how this work can be extended to include development of websites for all the DIETS. In close collaboration with SCERT pages have now been developed on: News and Events, Gallery, Magazines, E-books and SCERT Departments. • Discussions were held with SCERT regarding materials development for Pre-service D.El.Ed. programme. Aligned with the findings emerging from recent ISA visits to Teacher Education Institutions, the decision was taken to hold a series of workshops during February and March to review the current materials being used for the regular course, develop draft modules for all papers currently being used for the first year, pilot test the materials, fine-tune by incorporating recommendations and finally send the materials for printing and dissemination. This activity would replace the previously planned Consultative Workshop. A detailed budget was prepared and submitted to SCERT for approval. • Work has continued on cataloguing all existing ODL print materials held by SCERT. All units of ODL have been examined against the Bihar Teacher Education curricular guidelines (D.El.Ed). Unit based assignments prepared by SCERT have been looked into and suggestions for enhancement shared with Emteyaz. One unit on Class Management is being used as an example of how to make all units reader friendly and text light by using suitable illustrations. • The revised TNA report to assess current levels of ICT competence of elementary schools teachers and teacher educators in Bihar was submitted on 4 January by AMC. ISA studied the revised document and recommended that it be accepted as it had demonstrated sound analysis of the data collected to formulate clear recommendations for appropriate CPD. ISA has requested SCERT to form a committee to grant formal approval of the report.

		• Further to the CPD plan developed in consultation with SCERT, ISA participated in three SCERT-organised CPD workshops on School Readiness, Art Integrated Learning, and Sports and Learning on 16-20 January. 81 master trainers from 16 districts took part. ISA team members dialogued with them on their views on effective CPD and the use of ICT solutions and began the process of building relations with them, creating three WhatsApp groups for future sharing of ideas with ISA/SCERT and across the districts. • The programme has been prepared for a 1-day Visioning workshop for ISA and SCERT staff to develop greater shared understanding of the programme and produce a Theory of Change model. It will be combined with a Consultative Workshop with British Council to familiarize participants with on line resources produced by the British Council which can be drawn on in our programmes. • The SMC module was formally reviewed from 16-18 January by a committee of experts belonging to SCERT, BEPC and the DIET. • Books of Accounts for FY 2014-15, FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17 were approved by new SCERT Director and submitted to DRT. • Once approval was received from Director SCERT, work began on managing Books of Accounts for FY 2017-18. • E-filing and Record Management System began to be implemented for all documents from April 2017 onwards. • Inputs were provided to BSEIDC for their Financial Management Manual.
2	**Challenges**	• Getting proactive engagement of SCERT senior management and timely approval of proposed activity as agreed in ISA Action Plan • There is a severe shortage of staff within SCERT and DIETs. Need for urgent recruitment to enable SCERT to fulfil their core mandate. ISA will assume a proactive role in taking each area forward to mitigate these staff shortages but in the interests of sustainability we recommend that SCERT work with DRT to seek measures to recruit further staff at the earliest opportunity. • Office space and facilities allocated to the ISA team remain inadequate. As of 29 January the offices allocated to ISA staff had no power as the supply was cut off due to non-payment of electricity bills. Although approval was given in November and the contract has now been awarded, finalisation of planned refurbishment work can still not be expected before the end of the first quarter of 2018.
3	**Support required**	• Proactive engagement of SCERT senior management with ISA work including approval of key files in a timely fashion. • SCERT staff allocated by Director SCERT to work with ISA in carrying out actions defined in each Result Area • Expeditious refurbishment of office space for ISA within SCERT.

4	**Plan for next month**	• Continued development of SCERT website to make it fully functional ready for official launch. • Working with SCERT, it is planned that workshops related to the review of existing pre-service materials and development of modules will be completed by end March 2018. There will be 3 in-house workshops (during February and March 2018) for materials development, 1 pilot testing exercise at a number of TEIs, 1 workshop for incorporating recommendations to finalise the modules, and finally printing of materials • Development of two new ODL units on Yoga and Physical Education and Development of the Self before March 31st. • Development of two additional CPD modules on Integrated Education and School Readiness - Language and Maths, in close collaboration with SCERT. By end March. • A dissemination workshop on the new SMC module attended by Principals and DIET faculty members will be held during February and the SMC module with any recommended revisions will be printed. Planning will be conducted for the training of district level SMC trainers in all 10 pilot districts in March 18. • Visioning workshop for ISA and SCERT staff to develop greater shared understanding of the programme and produce a Theory of Change model. 1 February in Vaishali. • British Council workshop to familiarize ISA and SCERT personnel with on-line resources available for programme use in Bihar. 2-3 February in Vaishali. • Plan Launch of ISA programme on a date to be agreed with WB and SCERT in March. • ISA to assist with hiring of accounts staff for SCERT. By end March. • Further implementation of and familiarization with on-line ANAR finance and administration Programme Management system. • Advice and guidelines given to BSEIDC on development of ERP system for finance, administration, HR and procurement. By end February.
5	**Risks**	• Recruitment of new staff to SCERT and other TEIs may take a long time, weakening the effectiveness of the core capacity building remit of ISA and the overall outcome of the programme. • Weaknesses in current SCERT financial and general management capacity may lead to delays in programme implementation. • Inadequacies in procurement systems including limited bidder participation and lack of understanding of best ICT fit-for- purpose solutions may lead to poor procurement practice.