

Context study – Bihar

Objective of Context Study aims to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural and education context of the district. This will provide the basis for identifying the nature of curriculum, content and pedagogy to be followed for the programme. It will help to make the inputs as per need and requirements rather deliver 'standard' stuff.

Looking to data from the system, examine the overall context of the state along various parameters, observe the processes and relationships in school and the system, as well as understand the students and teachers as well as possible.

Process to be followed

- i. **Desk analysis** - desk analysis of whatever documents or net-based information that can be procured.
- ii. **Field visits** – field visits to a few selected sites of the state to gather impressions, interact with people, observe classrooms and schools, examine records, discuss with key stakeholders what is sought to be done for the programme and gather their suggestions.
- iii. **Consultation** - organize consultations with teachers, HMs, DIET, training institutions etc. in the state. An important aspect in this consultation would be to understand curriculum, textbooks, pedagogy followed etc.
- iv. **Analysis** – analyze all information available, and draw **implications** for the various inputs and processes to be planned under the programme

The study will seek to answer the kind of questions given below, through the means given above. Not all the questions may be answered. During the situation analysis visits we need to find out as much as we possibly can. A lot of the data may be difficult to get from actual documents – in interaction we may get teachers' or others' impressions and use those as a basis to the extent it seems corroborated at different places. Where there are serious contradictions, we will need to explore in greater depth.

Possible Questions

General

1. About district / state in general

- 1.1. Info from district – socio-cultural-economic and educational scenario
- 1.2. Attendance patterns over the years. What is the overall teaching learning time available? Typical times when school is closed.
- 1.3. Any research done in State in general on secondary education? E.g. on learning

1.4. Achievement study, NCERT curriculum study, etc. What do they show about state and district?

1.5. Recent developments in the State – any economic / market change? Infrastructure growth, etc.

2. Social/cultural/economic situation in the district

2.1. Disaggregated data social group wise, for students? Muslims, Tribals, etc.

2.2. Economic situation. Main occupations, industry, etc.

2.3. Cultural aspects. Major festivals, fairs, seasonal events, arts, music, etc.

2.4. Overall health status of the state, of adolescents in particular. Major health issues, any health related programmes, etc.

2.5. What kind of marginalization may be seen? CWSN? Girls? Tribal? Working children?

3. Overall education scenario

3.1. A note on the overall secondary education situation of the state, including who develops curriculum and textbook. Also about the secondary board.

3.2. Any distinguishing features of the state when compared to others?

3.3. Situation of tuition/coaching/guide market

3.4. Vocational education, career counseling?

3.5. Opportunities for further study available

3.6. IT – availability, usage, etc. - for students and teachers.

3.7. Status of libraries at the school level? Any institution running library for students?

3.8. What are the further educational opportunities?

3.9. What are the employment opportunities for adolescents?

4. From U-DISE data, on educational situation in the district

4.1. What is the age group that is in school? Get GER, NER, and if possible identify percentages of underage and overage students.

4.2. Dropout rates, retention rates, completion rates, pass percentage, overall marks, etc.

4.3. What is PTR like, in the State /dist / blocks?

4.4. What is the percentage of 'large classes'?

4.5. Teacher vacancies?

4.6. Do we have a subject-wise distribution of teachers in the district?

4.7. Position of Core subject teachers?

4.8. How are attendance patterns? Irregular?

4.9. Infrastructure situation?

5. Admin + institutions

5.1. Admin structure of the state /district, staffing (vacancies), admin + supervisory activities.

5.2. Teacher Training institutions available, their role, strengths, limitations etc.

Schools, Students and other Stakeholders

General information about the school

- 1.1. Name of the school, when established (and any special circumstances behind it being established, such as demand from community). Rural or Urban.
- 1.2. Number of teachers, classes and sections, PTR (pupil-teacher ratio) in general, highest and lowest PTRs (including in which class these are found). Total number of children and their typical backgrounds.
- 1.3. General background of teachers, how many trained / untrained. Do teachers support each other academically in any way; if so, in what way?
- 1.4. Name, background and experience of the school head. Nature of his/her functioning as a school leader (your general impressions about the relationship of the head with teachers, decision making process, community involvement, general running of the school etc.)
- 1.5. Community involvement and support towards the school.
- 1.6. Infrastructure and materials -- status
- 1.7. Overall atmosphere in the school. Is it conducive to learning and reasons for your opinion? What might be some of the changes that children and teachers could bring about together in the atmosphere (e.g. make it more colourful, etc.)
- 1.8. Any other significant information or special feature of the school
- 1.8. What do people appear to think of the school?
- 1.9. What are the strengths, limitations and opportunities that this school might have as an institution?

About the classroom and teaching learning process

A. Describe the general aspects of the class

- 1.1. General physical condition of the class, atmosphere, space, storage, facilities, etc.
- 1.2. Name of teacher, background and experience, subject being taught.
- 1.3. Number of children in the class, boys and girls. Would it be called a large class? Is it a multi-grade class? A small class?

B. Describe the lesson as it took place, broadly

- 1.1. Lesson or topic being taught

1.2. Main points covered by the teacher, in the sequence in which it was done. Main phases (e.g. introduction, explanation, conclusion)

1.3. Describe the general method used, materials employed and evaluation undertaken, if any.

C. Describe what the teacher did (you might find that many of the questions do not apply at all)

1.1. What was the kind of preparation that the teacher had made? Was there a lesson plan?

Did the lesson go according to the plan? If there was a variation, why was this so? Was the variation justified? In light of the lesson as it took place, was the lesson plan OK?

1.2. Did the teacher refer to what has been taught earlier, or undertake any revision? How?

1.3. What was the main focus of the teacher: to explain? To involve and make interesting? To test children by asking questions? To create relevant tasks? Anything else?

1.4. What was the nature of the material used by the teacher – naturally available material from the environment, or textbooks, or special kits, or library or something made by the teacher and/or children? In what way did the teacher make use of the materials? Did all children have materials? Any difficulties faced by the teacher?

1.5. In what way did the teacher make use of the blackboard? Was it effective? What made it so?

1.6. What did the teacher do when children were busy with tasks?

1.7. What was the nature of the language used by the teacher, especially while giving explanations or instructions for task? Did children understand it easily? Did the teacher have to repeat what s/he had said?

1.8. Did the teacher try to make sure that *all* the children were given an opportunity? How? Were some children neglected? Where were they sitting? Why were they neglected?

1.9. How well did the teacher make use of the available space? What was classroom management and organization like? If the teacher formed groups, how were the groups formed? On what basis were they formed? Were they groups of children at the same level or mixed levels? Does the teacher change groups frequently? How long do children remain in the same groups?

1.10. Did the teacher have class 'control'? Did s/he have to try hard to maintain 'discipline'? What kind of reward or punishment was the teacher using?

1.11. Did the teacher plan according to time? Did the teacher face a difficulty in managing time; if so, why? Was the time calculation OK? Or did the teacher have too much or too little time to do what had been planned?

1.13. Did the teacher sum up the session at the end of the period? In what way?

- 1.14. Did the teacher go on assessing if children were understanding or not? Did the teacher bring about any change in what s/he was doing on basis of this ongoing assessment while teaching? Did the teacher do any evaluation towards the end (informally, orally, or written or in any other way)?

D. Describe what the children did

- 1.1 What was the nature of the oral work, the written work, the material related work? Was it appropriate to the task at hand, and why?
- 1.2 Did children work individually on their own? Did they do group work? Did they function like a large class most of the time?
- 1.4. Were children (mentally) active for much of the time? Were they involved? Were they bored? Did they spend time sitting and waiting for the teacher to come to them? Did they start doing other things because they were bored? Was any child feeling left out?
- 1.5. Were children involved in running the class in any way – e.g. distributing material, or supervising tasks, etc.?

E. Apart from the questions above, analyse this lesson further.

- 1.1. Was there a 'flow' in the lesson – was the sequence appropriate, did it move smoothly from one part to the next?
- 1.2. For how much of the period do you think actual learning took place?
- 1.3. Did the teacher teach all time of the period? Is this likely to be the case usually? (e.g. was the teacher beginning to tire out at the end?)
- 1.4. What was the nature of the relationship between children and teachers?
- 1.5. Any other significant point?

F. Some points for comparison across the lessons of different subjects

- 1.1. What were some of the common points you saw across the lessons?
- 1.2. What were some of the unique things that some teachers did, which others did not?
- 1.3. Did the methods vary according to the subject, or the nature of the topic being taught (e.g. teaching about plants might require taking children outside the classroom for observation while working on mathematics might require playing with materials inside the classroom)?
- 1.4. What are the kind of improvements that might generally be needed by most teachers?

1. Students / adolescents in the district

- 1.1. What are the typical experiences of adolescents here?
- 1.2. What are the interests of students here? What kind of experiences do they bring to school?
- 1.3. What are the known adolescent issues here?

- 1.4. Overall health status of the district, of adolescents in particular. Major health issues, any health related programmes, etc.
- 1.5. In science and maths, what are the experiences that will apply here, and what unique ones would be needed?
- 1.6. Entry level learning status – for SSRP (should we do a diagnostic test during one of the visits?)
- 1.7. Access to mobiles and familiarity with them?
- 1.8. How many working students? What kind of work do they do? In urban and rural areas, etc.

2. About teachers

- 2.1. What activities (other than those in school) are teachers involved in typically?
- 2.2. What are the key academic, pedagogical and other difficulties that teachers report? What do they feel are the strengths of their students as well as of teachers?
- 2.3. Access to mobiles and familiarity with them?

3. Curriculum, materials, processes

- 3.1. Nature of curriculum, esp. in 3 subjects
- 3.2. Nature of textbooks, esp. in 3 subjects
- 3.3. Analysis of curriculum of the three subjects in particular – what are the overlaps and what are the differences?

4. Other Stakeholders

- 4.1. Parents views
- 4.2. SMCs
- 4.3. What kind of changes or improvements (in secondary education) would teachers / HMs / parents / officials want to see in secondary education here?
- 4.4. Other NGOs operating in the district – in general, and in education in particular

Tentative structure for the report

A. District Profile

- i. Demography
- ii. Socio-cultural background
- iii. Economy
- iv. Educational status

B. School Scenario

- i. School Infrastructure
- ii. Learning Environment – content, pedagogy,
- iii. Relationship between

- student and teacher
- Teacher and teacher
- Teacher and head teacher
- School and community
- School and SMC

C. Teachers' status

- i. Background
- ii. Strength
 - Training imparted
- iii. Support required
- iv. Limitations

D. Student

- Socio-economic background
- Cultural capital
- Educational background
- Experiences
- Strength
- Limitations

Academic Support System

- Structure
- Process
- Follow-up
- Limitations

Government System / Department

- Structure
- Process

