

SCERT & DIETs In Tripura: Gaps and Way Forward

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সত্যমেব জয়তে
ত্রিপুরা সরকার

This report is presented to Department of Education, Government of Tripura



SCERT & DIETs In Tripura: Gaps and Way Forward



About - Leadership for Equity

Leadership For Skilled Education Foundation (branded as Leadership For Equity, LFE), is a non-profit (NGO). In our two-fold approach to change, we build the capacity of government system leaders and we influence system processes. In partnership with the local and state education bodies, we co-create programs that shift teaching-learning practices and improve student learning and well-being. This work coupled with our research and advisory support to influence policies, we aspire to be a catalyst in forming effective government education systems. We focus on building system leaders by strengthening capacity of field officers (i.e. middle management cadres). This includes enabling Academic & Administrative Officers (Extension Officers, BEOs, DIETs, SCERTs) to effectively lead quality improvement programs and run their departments. As well as, equipping Teachers Mentors (URCs, CRG, BRG, CRCs) to improve teacher training, support, coaching & mentoring, ultimately affecting classroom practices in improving the foundational learning and well-being of children. In the last 5 years, we built the capacity and impacted 2100+ system leaders, and through the programs we influenced 40,200+ teachers, collectively, reaching out to 8.2 million students. We have co-created and implemented 8 different programs and have multi-year MoUs with 9 govt. bodies including Zilla Parishads (self-governing district & city bodies), DIETs, SCERTs, Department of School Education across 4 states in India.

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Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------|--|
| AISHE | All India Survey on Higher Education |
| BO | Block Officer |
| BRCs | Block Resource Centers |
| BRP | Block Resource Person |
| CBSE | Central Board of Secondary Education |
| CISCE | Council For The Indian School Certificate Examinations |
| CRCs | Cluster Resource Centers |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| CSSTE | Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education |
| CTE | College of Teacher Education |
| D. EL. ED | Diploma In Elementary Education |
| DDO | Drawing & Disbursing Officer |
| DEO | District Education Office |
| DIET | District Institute of Education and Training |
| ECCE | Early Childhood Care Education |
| EDUSAT | Educational Satellite |
| ETE | Elementary Teacher Education |
| IASE | Institute of Advance Studies in Education |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology |
| IS | Inspector of School |
| JRM | Joint Review Mission Report |
| KRI | Key Performance Indicator |
| LDC | Lower Division Clerk |
| MHRD | Ministry of Human Resource and Development |
| NAS | National Achievement Survey |
| NCERT | National Council of Education Research and Training |
| NEP | National Education Policy |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| OSD | Officer on Special Duty |
| PGI | Performance Grading Index |
| PTR | Pupil Teacher Ratio |
| RTE | Right to Education Act |
| SCERT | State Council of Education, Research and Training |
| SDM | Sub Divisional Magistrate |
| SMS | School Management System |
| SSA | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan |
| TBSE | Tripura Board of Secondary Education |
| TE | Teacher Education |
| TEI | Teacher Education Institute |
| TET | Teacher Eligibility Test |
| TISS | Tata Institute of Social Sciences |
| TTAADC | Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council |
| UDC | Upper Division Clerk |
| UDISE | Unified District Information System for Education |

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Executive Summary

The challenges to school education in Tripura are unique. On one hand the state has made remarkable progress towards universalization of school education, and has consistently shown a strong commitment to improvement of education through high budgetary allocations over the years. But on the other hand it has suffered from lack of personnel and capacities within schools as well as its important institutions.


SCERT, DIET and other teacher support structures have emerged organically, and in response to the unique needs of Tripura, it remains in misalignment to the national vision for these institutions. As part of this report we examine the gaps in Tripura's SCERT and DIETs, against MHRD's recent national guidelines. A summary analysis can be seen on the following page. From the primary data collected following challenges have emerged:

Key Challenges in SCERT

- Lack of infrastructure and resource availability for effective departmental functioning
- Lack of academic staff and high vacancy rate resulting in disproportionate workloads
- Administrative background of staff leading to administrative functioning
- Lack of alignment between job charts with SCERT's mandate
- Lack of formal communication systems
- Lower emphasis on long term strategic decision making
- Connections between SCERT and DIET are reduced to necessary coordination for top down training programs.

Key Challenges in DIET

- Lack of dedicated DIETs per district
- Lack of infrastructural facilities at DIETs to support pre-service and in-service teacher development
- Ad hoc nature of roles and responsibilities at DIET
- High vacancy rates in DIET and need to improve personnel management at DIETs
- Challenges to in-service teacher training
- Lack of effective action research projects




















 Adherence to guidelines
 Low compliance


 Partial compliance
 Compliance absent








Current structure of SCERT as against CSSTE guidelines

| | |
|--|---|
| Director, SCERT |  |
| Joint Director SCERT |  |
| Division of Curriculum Studies |  |
| Division of Teacher Education & Foundation |  |
| Division of Technological Services (ICT) |  |
| Division of Educational Surveys, Research & Policy Perspective |  |
| Division of Special Needs & Social Justice |  |
| Division of Library & Documentation |  |
| Technical Staff for different departments |  |
| Project Staff for different departments for 2 years |  |
| Administrative Section |  |

Current roles and responsibilities of SCERT as against CSSTE guidelines

| | |
|--|---|
| Academic Authority under RTE |  |
| Conducting policy research & advising state govt on policy |  |
| Nodal agency for govt & private ECCE and D.El.Ed. TEIs |  |
| Preparing State Curricular Framework for School Education |  |
| Preparing textbooks in all curricular areas for all levels of school education |  |
| Preparing other teaching-learning materials including ICT for school education |  |
| Translations for curricular materials in local languages |  |
| Coordinating with DIETs, CTE and IASE |  |
| Organizing in-service teacher education annually |  |
| In-charge of admissions, curriculum, examination & certification of ECCE, ETE TE |  |
| Developing models & demonstrating school improvement practices |  |
| Overseeing quality of school education |  |
| Providing academic support to state science, art fairs |  |
| Developing database of teachers & teacher educators |  |
| Participating in national level science talent, achievement surveys, school report cards |  |
| Preparing and implementing state perspective plan for TE |  |
| Collating and disseminating available research |  |
| To conduct the public examinations |  |

Existing scenario at DIET Kamalpur as case study

| | |
|---|---|
| Pre-service teacher education |  |
| In-service teacher education |  |
| Maintain TMS & Professional Development Record for teachers |  |
| Direct field interventions & school improvement |  |
| Studies on education |  |
| Annual academic planning and review |  |
| Resource Center/ Teacher Learning Center and Material Development |  |

These institutions matter in ensuring teaching and learning quality in the state, and their linkages must reinforce programs and inputs provided at each level. As SCERT and DIET roles expand, its internal organisational structure, organisational goals, academic and non-academic sanctioned positions, and personnel policies need to be re-oriented. Restructuring of administration and its key institutions has the potential to improve its responsiveness to the needs of students and communities. While there can be a plethora of solutions proposed for a given problem, we recommend the following.



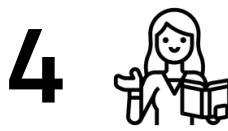
Make SCERT an autonomous body with administrative, academic & financial independence.



Revamp officer recruitment process and institutionalize performance management structures



Capacity building of the middle management officers



Strengthen the teacher mentor cadre (BRPs, Inspector of Schools)



Rename the designation, "Inspector of Schools"



Revise job descriptions

Introduction

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Introduction

Successes and Challenges to Education in Tripura

The education sector in Tripura has made enormous progress since attaining its statehood in 1972. Many indicators show promising results compared to national averages. Tripura ranked 4th in literacy rate in census 2011. ASER data has shown a decline in out of school of children from 3.7% in 2007 to 0.7% by 2014.¹ According to 2017 NAS data, Tripura is not far behind national averages for grade 8.² Even for education quality indicators in Performance Grading Index (PGI), Tripura state has ranked number one³ when compared to other small states in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Similarly, Tripura has seen incremental growth in its PGI rankings between 2017-18 and 2019-20.⁴ Though literacy rate and access to education has improved, there are many prevailing challenges in the education sector, such as need for quality education in hilly and interior areas, lack of trained teachers, coping with Covid -19 challenges, integrating technology for education, among many others. Furthermore, Tripura state presents a complex set of developmental issues due to its unique historical, geographic and economic trajectory.

Need for improved Governance and Reform

While Tripura has seen significant progress in universalization of education, the potential of current public schools in improving education access and quality is still to be realized. Globally as well as nationally, the focus of education interventions is moving from access to education quality. This has also been recognised in NEP 2020, where it states that 'access to quality education must be considered a basic right of every child'. To facilitate this, policy interventions and people supporting these interventions will be required to improve access and quality, as well address relevant obstacles which include social inequalities based on gender, caste and class, economic inequalities and migration, as well as inequalities stemming from geographic and political challenges unique to Tripura.

This is the essence of the work of all institutions and officials in the public education system. They must be equipped to ensure smooth policy implementation that leads to improved quality of education for all children from pre-school to higher secondary, and that the system is working to address those relevant obstacles in the way of quality education.

At present, the discourse on education is shifting in Tripura, in part due to the renewed vigor infused through the 'Nutan Disha' program but also due to the leadership and vision of its public servants. This report is also part of these efforts that aim to critically examine its current institutions and their effectiveness to chart a trajectory towards improved public education systems. Interestingly being a border state, there are few academic studies or research reports that have been conducted so far on administration and governance of education of Tripura. Through this report we aim to understand the education governance of Tripura, with special reference to SCERT and DIETs and their role in changing the current education scenario.

Background

Leadership for Equity (LFE) has entered into an MoU with the Samagra Shiksha, Tripura wherein we will support the restructuring of SCERT and DIETs in accordance with the national guidelines. For all educational innovations to succeed and thrive, there is the backbone of middle management that needs to be strengthened through clear expectations and support structures. To enable timely awareness of successes and gaps, the senior leadership must have access to key static and dynamic data points, which will enable clear goal setting, monitoring and course correction. These background and supportive factors are invaluable for long term efficient and effective functioning of the department to enable quality education. This is the value addition that LFE wishes to co-create with, and contribute to the Tripura School Education Department. This report is a precursor to those efforts, wherein we hope to inform future actions with a systems analysis report.

1 Source: Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), Trends over Time: 2007-2014, Tripura (Rural). Find [here](#)

2 Find state-wise comparisons here (<https://nas.gov.in/report-card/nas-2021>). For detailed Tripura state report find 2021 NAS report here (<https://nas.gov.in/download-state-report/MTY=>)

3 Source: NITI AATOG, Performance Grading Index (PGI), Change in Rankings (2016-17 vs 2015-16) Find [here](#)

4 For detailed For detailed overview of key education statistics, see next section

Approach

This report aims to understand systemic gaps in management and governance of education with a specific focus on SCERT and DIETS in Tripura state. With every new policy mandate, the role of SCERT and DIETs has seen a continuous expansion since the beginning. However, its position as the apex academic authority in the state has been undisputed. In such a capacity, SCERT and DIET have potential for high impact on school education. Hence, the people - leadership and middle management, processes - rules and systems, and policies that govern it have an important bearing for education quality. Aware of the importance of key institutions responsible for academic quality, this report sheds light on some of its



30

Officers
interacted with



05

MHRD guidelines



03

Months of Data
Collection

areas of developments that inhibit effectiveness, and highlight opportunities and recommends key initiatives that can propel Tripura's efforts in overall quality improvement in government schools. This report is largely exploratory in nature and builds an understanding of key gaps and challenges, their impact, as well as focus areas and probable solutions as we move ahead.

The findings of this report are based on qualitative primary data collected between August 2021 to December 2021, as well as secondary data and existing reports and policies. The data collection included both in-person interviews as well as interviews taken on call. Given the nature of sensitive information collected, the interview tool was unstructured and semi-structured in nature. An initial draft of the report was presented to SCERT in May 2022, after a thorough review, suggestions from SCERT were incorporated, and the final report has been prepared.

Convenience sampling was used to select respondents. The data captured was focused on individual roles and responsibilities as well as overview of institutional structures. We interacted with 24 different officers and lecturers to gather data for this report. This included SCERT Deputy Director, DDO/HO, OSDs, OS, Deputed Teachers, Clerks, DIET Principal, lecturers as well as DEOs, IS officials, BRPs, CRPs and Teachers. Attempts were made to document institutional background, cadres and personnel management practices, learning governance at SCERT, policy implementation, coordination between DIET and SCERT, capacity building of officers, teacher/ teacher mentor support and others.

The analysis as well as recommendations presented are based on national MHRD guidelines. Particularly the guidelines presented in the following documents:

1. Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education (CSSTE) (2012)⁵
2. Concept paper on strengthening of SCERT (2017)⁶
3. Concept paper on Strengthening of DIETs (2017)
4. NCERT's evaluation of CSSTE (2009)⁷
5. TISS's evaluation of CSSTE (2017)⁸
6. Joint review mission (JRM) report on Teacher education in Tripura (2013)⁹

The approach here has been to identify gaps in comparison to recommendations made in these national guidelines, and suggest a way forward keeping in mind feasibility, willingness, urgency and learnings from past practice. The report is divided into 3 major sections.

- First section provides an overview of education statistics in Tripura and the context of the state.
- The second part critically examines the governance and administration of education in Tripura.
- The last section provides a detailed overview of the SCERT and DIETs in Tripura in comparison to national guidelines.
- The report ends with a set of detailed recommendations.

5 Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education (CSSTE) (2012). Find report [here](#)

6 Concept paper on strengthening of SCERT (2017). Find report [here](#)

7 NCERT's evaluation of CSSTE (2009). Find report [here](#)

8 TISS's evaluation of CSSTE (2017). Find report [here](#)

9 Joint review mission (JRM) report on Teacher education in Tripura (2013). Find report [here](#)

Tripura Education at a Glance

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Tripura

Education at a Glance

Tripura is one of the smallest, unrevealed and border states of India. Tripura is located in the North East region of India which is also known as one of the seven sisters. It shares an international boundary with Bangladesh along its Northern, Western and Southern border. On its Eastern border lies Mizoram and Assam. In 1949, Tripura as a princely state became part of India by signing the "Tripura Merger Agreement" and became a full-fledged state by 1972. Tripura has a small population with 36.7 lakh residents, making it the 14th least populous¹⁰ state in the country¹¹ and 3rd smallest in terms of size. The tribal population makes up 31.8% of the total population. There are around 19 Schedule Tribes, each with their own unique culture, belief, dialect, and tradition. Tripura is currently divided into 8 districts, with the formation of 4 of these as late as 2011.

The current education system in Tripura has been shaped by a unique set of challenges. Multiple reports¹² have noted the challenges caused due to hilly terrain, isolation from the mainland, high levels of poverty, political volatility, cultural and linguistic diversity, lack of infrastructure, migration, and low economic development. The north eastern region in general and Tripura specifically, face huge disadvantages due to lack of connectivity with the mainland and low levels of infrastructure and economic development. Tripura has also had to see a sizable influx of migrants and refugees from neighboring regions, since the partition. All of these factors have had an enduring effect on the process of political, social and economic development in the state.



Figure: Map of Tripura State

(Source: Wikimedia Commons)

State Education Statistics

The education system in Tripura has been divided into four stages, namely - the primary stage (grade 1-5), the middle stage (grade 6-8), the secondary stage (grade 9-10) and higher secondary stage. There are 88 schools in which the pre primary grades have been included in the year of 2019-20. The state has a good mix of private and government-aided schools either affiliated to the Tripura Board of Secondary Education (TBSE) or Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) or the Council for The Indian School Certificate Examinations (ICSE). The medium of instruction in most schools is either English or Bengali, though tribal and regional languages are also used in the primary grades in some areas. There are approximately 7.6 lakh students enrolled in less than five thousand schools in the state. Data from UDISE 2020-21, shows that almost 77% of all children are enrolled in government schools or government aided schools.

¹⁰ Source: Census, 2011. Find here

¹¹ Tripura has an area of 10,491.69 sq.km with a population of 36, 73,917 (Census, 2011).

¹² Joint Review Mission (JRM) Report on Teacher Education in Tripura (2013); Dr. Deepak Sharma; Udayan Chakraborty. "School Education in Tripura: Issues and Development". European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine, 7, 7, 2021, 6317-6322.; Mishra, S. K., & Nayak, P. (2008). Facets and factors of human development in Tripura. Growth and human development in North-East India, 281-296.

The education sector in Tripura has experienced the establishment of schools and colleges in large numbers since achieving statehood. While some analysis has shown that educational development in Tripura has a long way to go, a closer look at the data from the past two decades has shown an impressive progress overall. Tripura shows a quantum jump in its literacy rate from 13th position in 2001 to the 4th position in 2011 when ranked against other states.¹³ In the report on Achievements made during 2001-2002 to 2010-11 under SSA in Tripura, key indicators show positive signs. See charts ahead. Both gross enrolment ratio and net enrolment ratio are high and have remained stable or have shown an improvement. This underlines the progress made in universalisation of education. While the recent pandemic related disruptions may have resulted in a decline in some cases, Tripura has been able to show a high degree of access to schools in the recent past. On the other hand, PTR norms have improved and can be seen as well within the RTE norms.¹⁴ While other important statistics show an improvement in transition rate from grades 5 to 6 and drop out rates for this duration. These numbers are also validated in the ASER data, that shows a steady decline of out of school children from 3.7% in 2007 to 0.7% in 2014 with a continued decline to 0.4% in 2018.¹⁵ See charts ahead.

The charts on the next page show trends in key education indicators from 2001-02 to 2010-11.

Tripura's Education Landscape




| |  SCHOOLS |  TEACHERS |  STUDENTS |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| GOVERNMENT | 8,550 | 76,784 | 14,85,226 |
| GOVERNMENT AIDED | 99 | 2,428 | 70,008 |
| PRIVATE | 704 | 11,812 | 3,43,413 |
| OTHERS | 536 | 2,432 | 48,744 |

Figure: Key Education Statistics, Tripura State

(Source: Directorate of Secondary Education, Education(School) Dept. Government of Tripura)

13 Chowdhury, S., & Chakraborty, G. (2013). Tripura's Tryst with Literacy. Economic & Political Weekly.

14 The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in its Schedule lays down Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) for both primary and upper primary schools. At primary level the PTR should be 30:1 and at the upper primary level it should be 35:1. The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) framework stipulates that the PTR at secondary level should be 30:1.

15 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), Trends over Time: 2007-2014, Tripura (Rural).

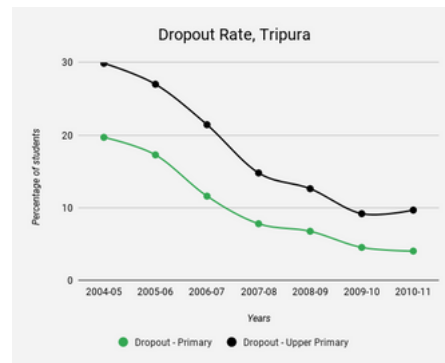
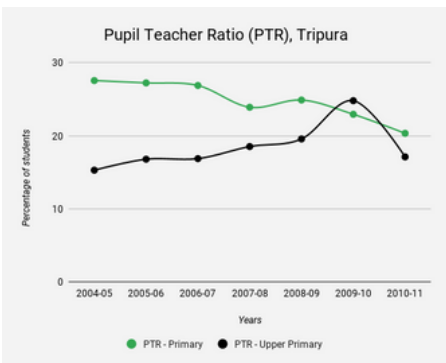
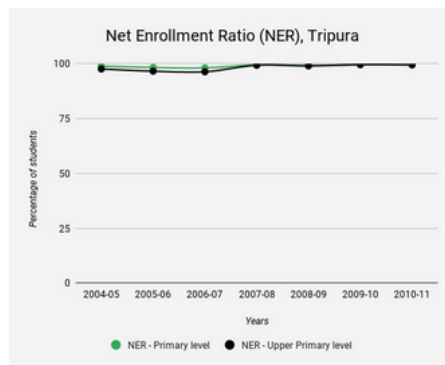
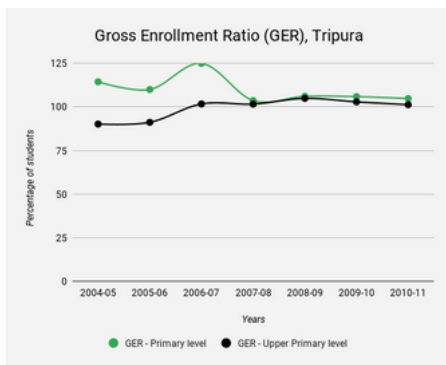


Figure: Trends in key education indicators 2004-05 to 2010-11, Tripura (Source: Education (school) Department, Govt of Tripura, Achievements made during 2001 - 02 to 2010 - 2011 under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Program in Tripura. Find [here](#))

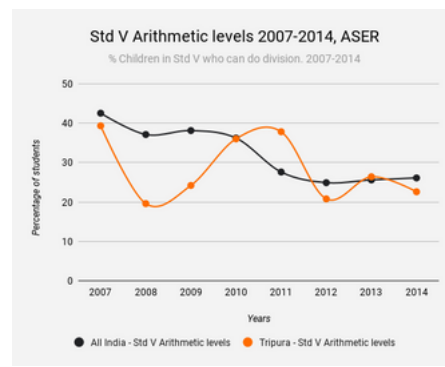
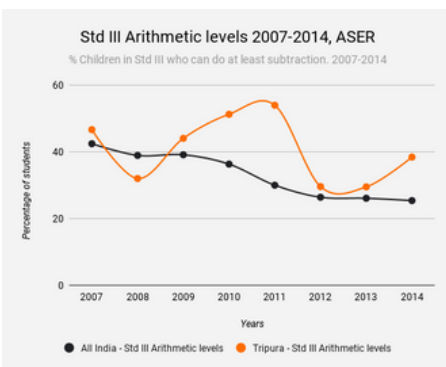
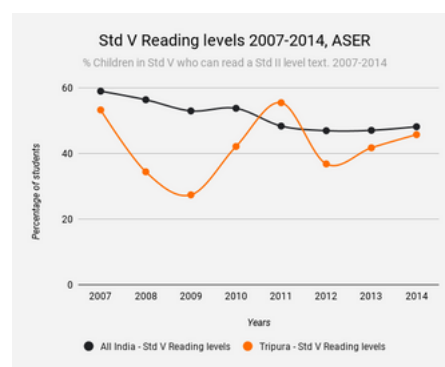
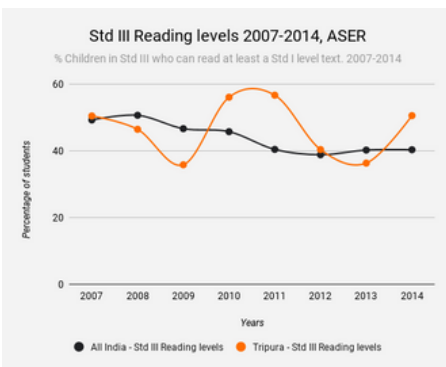


Figure: ASER Trends Over Time: 2007-2014, Tripura vs All India (Source: Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), Trends over Time: 2007-2014, Tripura (Rural). Note: data from subsequent rounds of ASER have not been included here as sample used was not representative of the State

However, as per the data seen in 2021 NAS for the state, Tripura has scored below the National average in terms of overall education quality. Comparing ASER data for the state with the rest of the country, we find that students in Tripura are at par or even above national averages. In conclusion, while the progress Tripura state made under SSA has been remarkable,¹⁶ in terms of education quality Tripura has been close or below national averages as well.

However, the indicators for foundational literacy and numeracy are bleak and much improvement would be required for progress. This poor academic performance has been attributed to many causes like “lack of quality and trained teacher, lack of motivation of teachers, lack of proper inspection and supervision of schools and no detention policy”¹⁷, relating very closely to challenges of governance and administration.

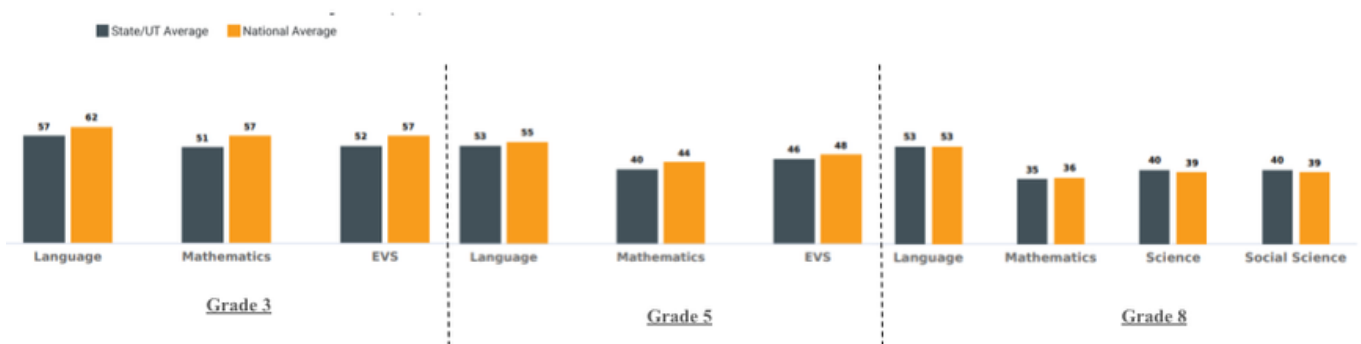


Figure: NAS 2021, Average Achievement by Classes and Subjects, Tripura
(Source: NCERT, National Achievement Survey, 2021, Tripura State Learning Report)

16 Yadav, S. K., Sharma, R. S., & Birua, M. (2018). Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: Achievements, Problems and Future Prospects: A Comparative Analysis of Some Indian States. In Reflecting on India's Development (pp. 175-201). Springer, Singapore.
17 ibid.

Education Governance in Tripura at a Glance

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Institutional Background

Structure of education governance and administration in Tripura

In Tripura, School education comes under the jurisdiction of the Education (School) Dept. Government of Tripura, headed by the Minister, Department of School Education. The Education Department of Tripura is headed by Hon. Education Minister, subsequently followed by Secretary. Further, the education department has three sub departments - namely - Directorate of Higher Education, Directorate of Secondary Education and Directorate of Elementary Education.

The Directorate of Higher Education is headed by a Director and followed by two Joint Directors and two Deputy Directors (one on deputation), two Officers on Special Duty (general and technical), Archivist and statistical officer. There are 62 Higher learning institutions in Tripura registered under All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE). The Directorate of Higher Education has 34 government institutions including 1 state university, 22 general degree colleges (one women college), 6 polytechnic institutes (one women polytechnic college), and 5 professional colleges.

The Directorate of secondary education is headed by Director, followed by Additional Director, Joint Director, Deputy Director and Engineering Cell that comes under Joint Director. Under Deputy Director, there are Higher Secondary and High Schools. SCERT is declared as the academic authority of the school education department as well as apex body for training of in-service teachers in Tripura and comes under Samagra Shiksha.



Education Department
Govt of Tripura

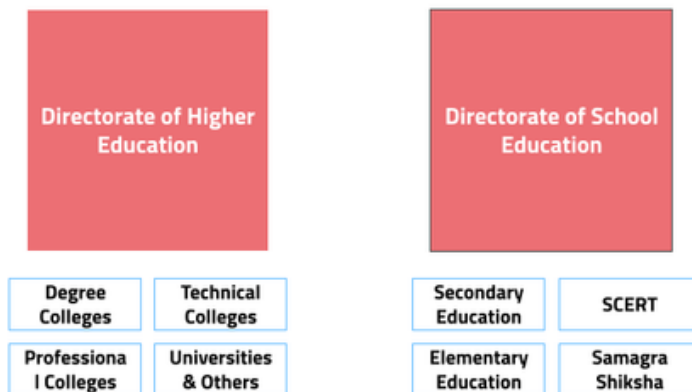


Figure: Details of Education Department, Tripura

Apart from the above mentioned institutions, Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) also runs schools in predominantly tribal areas placed under its jurisdiction.¹⁸

The directorate of Elementary education is also headed by Director and followed by Additional Director and Joint Director. Under Joint Director, comes Deputy director and engineering cell. Recently, a Pre-primary education cell was established in this department. District education cell comes under this department. District Education office headed by District Education officer followed by Inspector of School (IS) and deputy inspector of school (Block). Under inspector of schools (block) comes pre-primary, junior basic, senior basic and high schools.

State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT) is the state apex body for pre-service and in-service training of teachers and for academic support to elementary and secondary schools. SCERT in Tripura was formed in 1996 as per MHRD guidelines.¹⁹ Given teacher education remains an important policy mandate and, multiple policies over the years have underlined the importance of SCERT and DIETs as apex and nodal agencies in teacher education and authority for academic guidance.

¹⁸ TTAADC has approximately 1622 Primary Schools and one English Medium Residential High School. Given that these schools are under separate department, they have been excluded in this report.

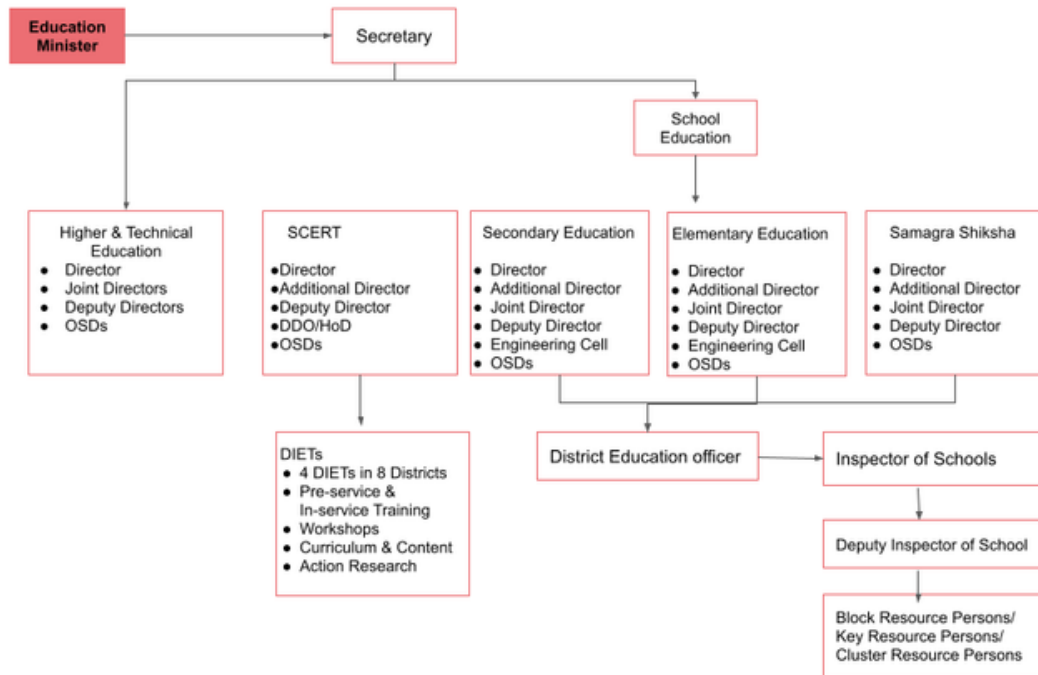


Figure: Details of Organizational Setup, Education Department, Tripura

District Institute for Education and Training (DIET)

were envisioned as the district level decentralized unit of education to strengthen elementary education and be more responsive to the needs of the field. With a core focus on supporting in-service and pre-service teacher development, Tripura has 4 DIETs supervised by SCERT. DIET Agartala was Tripura's first primary teacher's training college established in 1954. Other 3 DIETs are in Dhalai, Unakoti and South Tripura.

In Tripura, the education system, schools are directly connected with the Inspector of School (IS) and Block Resource Person (BRP). Usually in every block, the IS office is set up in a school of a block as well as the BRP office. Any program, scheme, competition related to school and training or workshops for teachers etc are directly informed or notice circulated from either IS office or BRP office. The Information flows down from the education department to district education office to IS block office and BRP office.

Inspector of School

Every district has one Inspector of School and 5 - 8 Deputy Inspector of Schools (DIS) and Every AIS is assigned 1-2 circle areas under them to monitor and provide necessary support. IS officials work as administrative officers to schools for monitoring, evaluation, providing information regarding schemes, fund allocations and other miscellaneous works. IS officials have to report the progress of school and different schemes to the higher authority. IS officials also ensure the proper implementation of different schemes such as Midday Meals. As example, to ensure the stocks of food grains for next one month, availability of utensils, timely reporting of allocated funds, expenditure, requisitions etc. are checked regularly. The concerned Inspector of Schools will help the school authority in all emergency situations.

Since the early months of the pandemic, BRPs and KRPs have been directly reporting to IS officers, while they previously reported to Block Development Officer (BDO). As a result, KRPs and BRPs have been assigned many administrative works previously done by the IS Officials. For instance IS offices have been conducting State level Science and Mathematics Talent Exams, Covid - 19 vaccination programs in school, .

Governance Performance of Tripura State

In assessing how well the various administrative and academic institutions have been performing in Tripura we examine trends for the PGI reports and assess Tripura state on LFE’s governance rubric.

Tripura’s growth in PGI indicators

Tripura has been scoring well when compared to national averages in the the Performance Grading Index (PGI) as well. For both 2015-16, and 2016-17, Tripura state has ranked number 1 when compared to other small states. Similarly Tripura has seen incremental growth in its PGI rankings between 2017-18 and 2019-20.

The table below shows the progression in PGI scores for Tripura

Tripura’s score for Access and Equity indicators has been high since the base year (2017-18). Within the same time period its indicators for Learning Outcomes and Quality have been moderate and have seen some increase.

Of all the domains, Tripura has shown the most improvement in its Governance Processes when compared over three years. Detailed analysis needs to be conducted to trace the shift in indicators. But on the whole based on the current available data improvements can be seen against indicators of staffing of head teachers, subject teachers in upper primary and secondary schools, percentage of teachers evaluated, school visits by CRC members and BEOs, and registration of schools under public financial management system (PFMS).²⁰ In large part this shift also coincides with changes from Nutan Disha Policy (2019) and introduction of the Shiksha Darpan Mobile application. The extent to which these changes have impacted the PGI indicators remains to be seen.

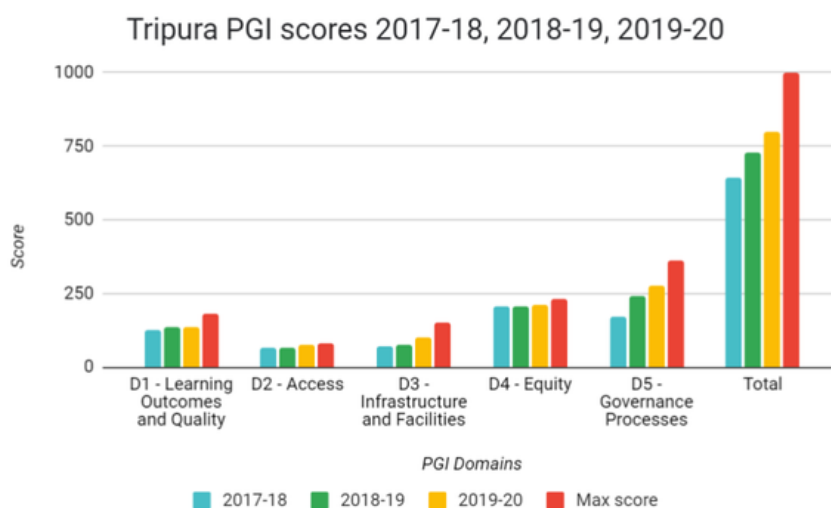


Figure: Tripura PGI scores compared domain-wise

20 This inference has been drawn on the basis of state wise indicator scores provided on the PGI website. Details on how each of these indicators were measured have not been provided.

| YEAR | GRADE (SCORE) |
|---------|----------------|
| 2017-18 | Grade IV (643) |
| 2018-19 | Grade II (727) |
| 2019-20 | Grade I+ (801) |

TABLE: Tripura PGI grade compared by year

Tripura's emergent status on Governance rubric

In order to better understand the status of Tripura's governance structures, we added the data gathered in this exercise to LFE's governance rubric. This rubric particularly focuses on administrative governance and learning governance.²¹ An important aspect of administrative governance remains its policies for staff management and staff accountability. At present Tripura has adequate and well defined staff transfer, recruitment and selection policies.

However, it still remains emergent on the rubric, as there is scope to improve its staff management practices such as introduction of KPI and goals for individuals, review systems, updated and transparent technology to manage recruitment, transfer and vacancy. As for learning governance, Tripura already has a strong foundation with its existing use of apps for tracking progress of students like attendance and learning outcomes. However, to strengthen its learning governance Tripura can introduce learning goals for state, districts and schools and periodically use student learning data in its teacher support practices.

State Budget on Education

Over the years, Tripura state has assigned a high share of resources to education keeping education high on its priority list. As per the economic review of Tripura 2016-17.²² Tripura has a history of spending 12-14% of its annual budget on education, since its statehood. Specifically, between 2001 and 2012, Tripura spent an average of 17.2% of its total expenditure on education.²³ This has been higher or as much as aggregate spending on education in all other states between 2004-05 and 2021-22.²⁴ This trend of high budgetary allocations has continued to the more recent 2022-23 budget as well, where 18.6% of the budget has been allocated to education.²⁵

Expenditure on Education (ratio to aggregate expenditure)

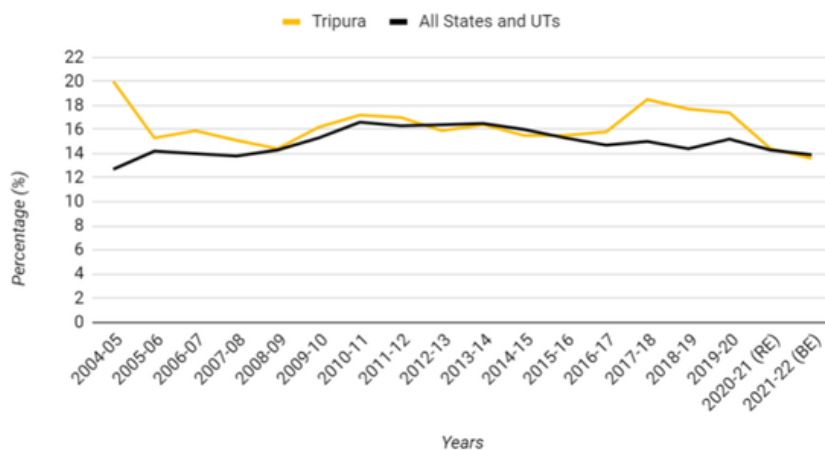


Figure: Expenditure on Education Tripura vs National average

(Source: RBI, Expenditure on Education - As Ratio to Aggregate Expenditure)

21 Key domains in Administrative governance includes- staff management, staff accountability, financial management & accountability; and learning governance includes - MIS system (Students), learning accountability. The full rubric and analysis for Tripura can be found [here](#).

22 Directorate of Economics & Statistics Planning (Statistics) Department Government of Tripura, (2018), Economic review of Tripura 2016-17 . Find [here](#)

23 Chowdhury, S., & Chakraborty, G. (2013). Tripura's Tryst with Literacy. Economic & Political Weekly.

24 Source: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) (2021), Statement 26: Expenditure on Education - As Ratio to Aggregate Expenditure. Find [here](#).

25 For highlights on the budget see Indian Express (March 17, 2022) article [here](#).

Current Scenario and Challenges: **SCERT & DIET**

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Existing Structure of SCERT

State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT) is the state apex body for pre-service and in-service training of teachers and for academic support to elementary and secondary schools. SCERT in Tripura was formed in 1996 as per MHRD guidelines.²⁶ Unlike few other states, SCERT in Tripura is not registered as an autonomous body and is part of the Department of School Education in Tripura. It works as the apex body for training of teachers and academic resource institutions but it functions independently.

The structure of SCERT varies from state to state, similarly the structure of SCERT in Tripura, has emerged organically based on the prevailing conditions in the state. Currently, SCERT in Tripura is organized under 6 different officers, who are designated as officers on special duty (OSD) or branch officers (BO). Each officer has been assigned multiple functional areas. In some cases each of these functional areas is either termed as “branch”, or cells.

From the qualitative data we gathered, following are the key functional areas in SCERT:

- **General Branch:** handles (1) specific press releases or notices, and (2) any miscellaneous work that does not belong to any particular department. For instance collaboration with NGOs is currently handled by the general section.
- **Curriculum Branch:** is responsible for developing, updating curriculum used in the state board
- **Publication Section:** is responsible for publishing books, textbook, and printing of resource materials
- **DIET branch:** is responsible for all communication with DIETs. All notices for DIET are released from here. Eg, Inservice teacher D.EL.ED program notices are released from here.
- **NEP state cell:** Handles any duties related to NEP implementation. For instance, most recently, they translated the policy document to Bengali, and was the first state to do so. It is looking after the State curriculum Framework (SCF) and conducted district level workshops on SCF. This cell also conducted a state level mobile app survey uploaded on the digital platform of NCF, where the target was 3000 and Tripura covered more than 3500 teachers. NEP state cell is also involved in the preparation of answers for the mandate questions of MOE, prepared 25 position papers on different subjects sent to MHRD, prepared contextualized modules for the state, and translated the NSCL/ NIEPA module into Bengali language. NEP cell is also working as SPOC for LFE and Labhya foundation.
- **NAS section:** Coordinates in implementing NAS statewide and collecting data for national achievement surveys.
- **Action Research cell:** is currently not very active, but coordinates all action research projects across all DIETs. They recently created an advisory committee of representatives from SCERT, IASE, Degree College, DIETs, and NERI Shillong to conduct action research projects.
- **In-service training:** Responsible for in-service teacher training and support
- **Vande Tripura TV channel:** They broadcast recorded classes from 9am to 7pm for the students of 1 to 12th. Two hours each day for the classes 9th to 12th and 1 hour for the rest of the classes. From 3 pm to 5.20 pm they broadcast live sessions. On Tuesday and Friday they broadcast news on educational topics and any initiatives taken by the Education Department. On special occasions they broadcast live sessions and conduct talk shows on different topics by resource persons and invited guests.

26 SCERT, (2015) Teacher Education in Tripura. Find [here](#)

- **Establishment Section:** is responsible for managing the financial processes at SCERT.
- **Examination Cell:** The examination cell looks after different scholarships and talent search examinations.
- **Population Education:** an initiative for Adolescence education. It prepares newsletters and conducts annual research on adolescence education in the state. Organizes different awareness and advocacy programs and competitions of folk dance, poster making, role play, yoga Olympiad in District, State levels and selects participants for National level competition. This year the Tripura junior girls team won 1st prize and junior boys team won 2nd prize in the national level Yoga Olympiad competition.

Administrative sections/cells:

- **General Branch:** handles (1) specific press releases or notices, and (2) any miscellaneous work that does not belong to any particular department. For instance collaboration with NGOs is currently handled by the general section.
- **Establishment Section:** is responsible for managing the financial processes at SCERT, Staff leaves/ attendance, service book, pension, working report of deputed staff & LTC.

- **Human Resource management cell:** looks after the management and distribution of works among the officers and officials.
- **Cash section/ Audit section & Accounts & Bill section:** responsible for auditing compliance and the financial transactions of SCERT and managing and tracking regular updates of incoming payments, receivable database, outstandings, deadlines preparation of salary bills, GPF, non-salary bills, etc.
- **Receipt & Dispatch:** managing all kinds of files receiving and dispatching.
- **IT cell including DIKSHA:** Looks after the contents and data in Diksha app.
- **RTI cell:** Have a committee to provide the requested information
- **Legal affairs cell:** look after the law and order mandates.
- Other programs run at SCERT includes:
 - School leadership program for HM
 - NGO - CSR collaboration project
 - School Health Program
 - Inspire Manak program (centralized)



Policy and Innovation at SCERT

At present in Tripura, educational programs are run by the education department or SCERT or even sometimes by DEO office Dhalai. Following are some commendable innovations run in Tripura SCERT:

- **Vande Tripura (Educational TV channel)**

Idea for an Educational TV channel was in discussion for the last few years. But the Lockdown period sped up the process. With the guidance of SPD, Samagra Shiksha, Director and Joint Director, SCERT Vande Tripura TV Channel started. At present, there are 10 members in Vande Tripura team including 6 members of EDUSAT (production team). Programs run from morning 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. at night. Program schedule is made by the Director. Classes are taken by the expertise from reputed schools around the state on a rotation basis. This Initiative is able to reach out to students during lockdown. They also have a YouTube channel.

- **School Leadership Academy**

Due to the school leadership academy program, SCERT was able to create a positive impact on headmasters in Tripura through leadership training. It's a platform for the HMs to share best practices funded by NIEPA. It provides 10 days regular workshops on basics of School Leadership and a 1 month certificate course on school leadership and management for HMs, till date 60 HMs have successfully completed the course, also 240 pages of case studies have been prepared on School leadership and management.

- **Translation of NEP into Bengali and tracker for programs**

After forming NEP, one of the sections translated NEP in Bengali. Tripura state is the only state translated the NEP in Bengali. On policy level SCERT officers are working as ASNO of NEP Tracker for monitoring of 297 schools and taking decisions on policy level. NEP tracker is all the work of NEP is being tracked- how its getting implemented and progress.

- Tripura govt. decided to create awareness about cultures of different communities among the students. Curriculum section has developed a book "Unique Culture of Tripura " for the school students.

- **Nutan Disha**

Nutan Disha scheme started from 1st March, 2019. Main objective of the scheme is that every child from class III to VII should be able to achieve the basic academic skills of fluently, reading his / her textbooks with understanding and performing basic mathematical operations. Natun disha program started from the SCERT, and later on the project was handed over to the Elementary Education Dept. Due to the intervention, of the 1.70 lakh students 1.50 lakh students were made ready for the school. Due to the handing over of the project to the Elementary education, SCERT officer stated that no data was available at present, if students were still at a class appropriate level or not. Currently this program has now been replaced by the NIPUN BHARAT Mission and comes under SSA.

Other achievements include

- Tripura govt. decided to create awareness about cultures of different communities among the students. Curriculum section has developed a book "Unique Culture of Tripura " for the school students.
- Implementing various initiatives of the School Education Department in line with other states such as Assam.
- Beyond their mandated responsibilities upto class 8th, SCERT, Tripura also translates and provides textbooks for class 9th to 12th.
- Prepares weekly & monthly modules with learning objectives and students learning outcomes for teachers. Questions for examinations are prepared based on these modules for the state.
- Conducts Exam for the Super 30 scheme
- Created contextualized workbooks, teachers handbooks and lesson plans for Pre-Primary to Higher Secondary.
- Developed textbooks, workbooks, teachers handbooks, TLMs and lesson plans for "Vidya Prabesh".
- SCERT is planning for Tri-language textbooks for the students.
- Population Education is preparing for conducting a research on child marriage in Tripura.
- An Advisory committee for Action Research has been created with SCERT, IASE, assistant professors of Degree college and a resource person from NERIE, Shillong.

Gaps as per Policy Guidelines



The CSSTE (2012) guidelines provides clear directives for the structure as well as the key role and responsibilities of SCERT. These directives have also been reinforced under MHRD's 2017 concept paper on restructuring of SCERT. The tables ahead provides the current status of SCERT Tripura against these guidelines and has been rated for level of compliance with each guideline. Each of these aspects have been color coded for compliance with the guidelines. Green represents adherence to guidelines, yellow indicates partial compliance, orange indicates low compliance and red indicates absence of the structure or role.

The existing structure of SCERT is different from the given guidelines. While many of its functions have been placed with different officers or departments, the full extent of the structure has not been realized as of yet. In many ways the gap between the guidelines and SCERT's existing functions is wide. While many of the responsibilities are with SCERT, they are fulfilled in a limited manner, and do not completely align with the vision created for SCERT as the apex academic authority. Much of its functioning is determined by directives from State departments.






For instance SCERT's role in curriculum development is limited to the Publication and curriculum department. This department is the busiest section of SCERT and has the highest number of employees, with a majority of SCERT's resources and activities focused here. Throughout the year, translation of NCERT textbooks into Bengali and other languages and publishing other related books such as 'Unique culture of Tripura' works are going on in this section. The push towards translation of NCERT textbooks and development of secondary material, promoting the national curriculum has been influenced by the recent policy shift in the state.

Current structure of SCERT as against CSSTE guidelines


 Adherence to guidelines
 Low compliance

 Partial compliance
 Compliance absent

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1 | Director, SCERT | Present SCERT Director also heads the Directorate of Higher Education. |  |
| 2 | Joint Director SCERT, (In charge of DIETs in addition to other normal work of SCERT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Director SCERT, (In charge of DIETs in addition to other normal work of SCERT) • In Tripura, DIET Section is a separate branch headed by Officer on Special Duty (OSD) along with National Achievement Survey. • The Deputy Director at SCERT is responsible for in-service teacher training. • Tripura SCERT also has an Additional Director |  |
| 3 | I. Division of Curriculum Studies i) Deptt. of Science & Mathematics ii) Deptt. of Social Sciences iii) Deptt. of Languages iv) Deptt. of Art Education v) Department of Health Education & Physical Education vi) Department of Work Education vii) Deptt. of Educational | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Tripura, SCERT has a separate Division for Curriculum Studies but without separate subject wise departments. • Curriculum section is divided between two BO officers. One looks after curriculum development, translation of NCERT textbooks to Bengali/ other languages and Publication section is headed by another BO Officer. | |
| 4 | II. Division of Teacher Education & Foundation (PreService Education-Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology; In-Service Education) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service education is largely under the per-view of DIET and at present there is no separate department in SCERT for this. DIET is the main body for pre-service teachers. D. EL.ED course for pre-service students is the main activity of the DIET and the certificate is given from SCERT. • DIET recently started a 2years D.EL.ED course for In-service teachers under the guidance of SCERT especially for untrained teachers. • SCERT organized short term workshops/ training for teachers and headmasters throughout the year on different topics. Deputy Director headed the training section along with other SCERT duties. School leadership program for headmasters is one of the main training programs which is organized every year for headmasters. |  |






| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|--|---|---|
| 5 | III. Division of Technological Services (ICT) i) Department of Computer Education ii) Department of Technological Aids | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT doesn't have any division for Technological Services or Computer aids and Technological department. • Many prominent schools in Agartala and other district headquarters have installed the smart classes set up. The ICT infrastructure in a majority of schools in Tripura is weak due to challenges of underdeveloped infrastructure in the state and geographic conditions. |  |
| 6 | IV. Division of Educational Surveys, Research & Policy Perspective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT has a NAS cell along with DIET section, Science and Maths talent search clubbed with Vande Tripura section, action research project clubbed with School Health program section. Educational research, surveys etc. are happening but not organized as a division or department. • SCERT doesn't have a separate division for educational surveys, research and policy perspective as mentioned in CSSTE guideline. |  |
| 7 | V. Division of Special Needs & Social Justice i) Inclusive Education ii) Women Empowerment Cell iii) Education for SC/ST and Minority cell iv) ECCE Cell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no division for special needs and social justice in SCERT. This comes under the Directorate of Social Welfare and Social Education. • From mid 2022, SCERT Organized an Workshop for Inclusive Education in collaboration with NCERT. • At present there is a resource group working on inclusive education. |  |
| 8 | VI. Division of Library & Documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT doesn't have a division of Library and Documentation. |  |
| 9 | Technical Staff for different departments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No proper designated technical staff for each section or with each OSD. But the existing set of LDC/UDC and Computer operators work across SCERT, and operate with each department on a needs basis. |  |
| 10 | Project Staff for different departments for 2 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no separate project staff. |  |
| 11 | Administrative Section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a separate section called Head of Office/ Drawing and Disbursing Office - all financial matters are handled by this section along with the establishment section |  |

Current roles and responsibilities of SCERT as against CSSTE guidelines

 Adherence to guidelines
 Low compliance

 Partial compliance
 Compliance absent

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1 | Academic Authority under RTE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Tripura, SCERT is an apex institution of training of teachers education under the Department of School Education. SCERT is declared as Academic Authority School Education Department. Primary objectives of SCERT are to research, training and extension through suitable programmes. |  |
| 2 | Conducting policy research and advising state governments on policy formulations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCERT broadly works on education policies that aligns with the national directives, for instance NEP, translation of NCERT textbooks for the state as well as work on Nishtha training modules. SCERT works closely with the Directorate of Secondary and Elementary Education as and when required on research and policy formulations. However, it does not conduct any continuous policy research functions independently at present. |  |
| 3 | Nodal agency for government and private ECCE and D.El.Ed. TEIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCERT, Tripura is acting as a prime institute for Elementary Teacher education in the state through its D.El.Ed course for pre-service and in-service teachers. Apart from this, SCERT does not have a separate section for pre-service training, and this makes up for a majority of activities done by DIETs. As for ECCE in Tripura, a separate Pre-Primary cell created in 2019 under the Directorate of Elementary Education and organized pre-primary education in selected government schools started in 2019 itself. Private pre-primary education has been prevalent in the state for a long time but not in an organized manner. |  |
| 4 | Preparing State Curricular Framework for School Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of early 2022, SCERT has ongoing workshops on creating a draft of State Curriculum Framework aligned to NEP2020 |  |
| 5 | Preparing textbooks in all curricular areas for all levels of school education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the introduction of NCERT Textbooks from 2019-20 in the state, SCERT has been translating NCERT textbooks in Bengali and other languages. |  |
| 6 | Preparing other teaching-learning materials including ICT for school education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present SCERT is engaged in programs to provide additional teaching learning materials. To ease the learning for students, workbooks have been introduced to the schools. Workbooks for class 1 to 8th, Teachers handbooks have been prepared and published by SCERT. Also workbooks and translation of textbooks |  |

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|--|--|---|
| | | for class 9th to 12th have been prepared and published by SCERT, an expert committee has been formulated to do the work. A new scheme 'Prayas' to distribute the workbook has been initiated by SCERT as well. | |
| 7 | Translations for curricular materials in local languages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCERT Curriculum textbooks have been translated into Bengali and Kokborok to help the students compete with national level schools. |  |
| 8 | Coordinating DIETs Coordinating CTE Coordinating IASE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT has a DIET cell to coordinate with DIETs • SCERT coordinates with CTE and IASE while conducting workshops and training for teachers in the state and lecturers of different teachers training institutions. However, SCERT's role is limited to resource persons in a majority of cases.²⁷ |  |
| 9 | Organizing in-service teacher education annually for all teacher educators, SDM, administrators, secondary level teachers and ECCE practitioners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT conducts training for teachers educators, administrators, teachers throughout the years on different topics in collaboration with other institutions and departments but it may not cover directly to all the teachers educators, SDM, administrators, teachers and ECCE practitioners. These training programs are conducted on a needs basis, and does not follow a pre-specified training schedule. |  |
| 10 | In-charge of admissions, curriculum, examination and certification of ECCE and ETE TE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT offers a 2 years diploma course on elementary education to pre-service and in-service teachers. Apart from that, DIET and other TE institutions run the programs, but teachers are finally certified by SCERT. |  |
| 11 | Developing models and demonstrating school improvement practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCERT doesn't engage in developing models and demonstrating school improvement practices directly at present. |  |

27 CTE, Kumarghat is affiliated with Tripura University and established in 2015. SCERT and CTE coordinated while conducting workshops and training for teachers in the state and lecturers of different teachers training institutions. IASE, Agartala is established in 1964 and antecedents of B.T. (Secondary teachers Training College) and Government College of Education and College of Teacher Education. Later on it was upgraded to IASE.

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|--|--|----------------|
| 12 | Overseeing quality of school education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School Education Department directly oversees the quality of school education overall. But areas of teacher support, training and education quality programs are also run by other departments as well as SCERT. Hence this function is not limited only to SCERT | |
| 13 | Providing academic support to state science, art fairs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every year, SCERT organizes Tripura Science and Maths Talent Search Examination, Inspire Mainak, National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Examination, Merit Scholarship Examination and Sanskrit Scholarship Examination and others as per instruction from NCERT and the State. | |
| 14 | Developing database of teachers and teacher educators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and Teachers Educator database is not directly available in the SCERT. The Directorate of School Education develops and maintains the teachers database. | |
| 15 | Participating in national level science talent, achievement surveys, school report cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every year, SCERT participates in National Science and Math talent search examination and conducts National Achievement Survey (NAS) and others. In the NAS survey, mainly DIETs, IASE and CTE participate to collect the data. | |
| 16 | Preparing and implementing state perspective plan for TE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCERT doesn't currently have a prospective plan for Teacher Education. But Tripura does have a cadre of BRP, CRP, Academic Leaders and Teachers mentors but the role of these above-mentioned designation keep rotating between officials of the different education departments and DEOs. | |
| 17 | Conducting research Collating and disseminating available research from universities, research agencies, NGOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every year Action Research projects are conducted by DIET faculties in different districts. Because of less DIETs in the state, DIETs aren't able to cover all the districts. However due to the Pandemic, action research projects are on hold for the past two years. Other than that, SCERT and DIET are not collaborating with research agencies and universities in a structured manner at present. Recently, SCERT is working with multiple NGOs for capacity building and restructuring and on other programs. | |
| 18 | To conduct the public examinations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCERT usually does not conduct any public examination in Tripura. | |

Key Constraints at SCERT, Tripura

Infrastructure and Human Resource Availability as a major constraint for Effective Departmental Functioning

The 2013 JRM report noted poor infrastructure at SCERT. However, currently SCERT operates out of multiple buildings, where at present, major sections like the publication section and Vande Tripura TV channel, have been provided with ample space in separate buildings. The rest of the SCERT and DIET, Agartala operate out of the same building, currently infrastructure of building is under progress. Further, Internet facilities are available now, earlier officers were using phone hotspots.

Shortfall of Academic Staff and High Vacancy

As was discussed in the section above, all the roles and responsibilities at SCERT are distributed under 7 OSDs or branch officers - and are not specifically organized as per departments. This structure remains in stark contrast to the structure proposed in MHRD's 2017 concept paper on strengthening SCERTs. Apart from the Director and Joint Director, it is recommended to have 28 officials in academic positions for small states like Tripura where the population is 1 cr or below. Currently, apart from the director and joint director at SCERT there are:

- 1 Deputy director
- 6 officers on special duty (OSD)

Under OSDs there is no specific academic staff assigned, they are instead assisted by UDC/LDC. In some cases where required a task will be assigned to multiple OSDs.

However, LDCs, UDCs and computer operators are not assigned to a specific department, but are resources associated with a specific task or officer as per need. Officers also pointed out that there is a lack of non-academic - clerical staff. Often, officers have a perception, that work is pending or remains stagnant due to lack of proper technical support. At present, all technical work is routed to a very limited number of computer operators and there are not enough computers for all departments. As a result, their duties are constantly jumbling. In the limited interaction with SCERT officers it was not clear how many LDC/UDCs permanently report to each branch officer.

Given much of the work in SCERT is organized under branch officers and not department wise - we are unable to comment on the vacancy at SCERT at present. However, the 2013 JRM on teacher education in Tripura noted a 50% vacancy at SCERT. MHRD's 2017 report on restructuring of SCERTs also notes a vacancy rate of 48.30% across the country as a massive challenge to SCERTs. Apart from this, some staff at SCERT are on deputation, for short term projects like revision of textbooks. These are HMs or DDOs who are pulled to complete specific tasks within a short span of time particularly for their academic expertise.

Disproportionate Workloads

Many officers we spoke with suggested increasing the number of branches at SCERT, to reduce the workload, because a lot of the present work is directed to only two or three branches. At present BOs find that there is a lot of work directed at them. SCERT officers are dedicated and motivated officials but most of the time they have to work extra. There is a need for more qualified officers since every official has to play multiple roles. With extra work load, officers state that it's very difficult to manage the time or complete the work on time. In many instances, before completing one activity, others activities are assigned, BOs have to prioritize which activity should be done first. As each officer has multiple projects to take care of, they highlighted the need for more people under them.

We feel that at present the officers' approach to work due to increased workloads can negatively impact their motivation, where they focus on the task itself over an impact based approach.

Administrative Function Dominating Roles and Responsibilities

SCERT is headed by Civil servants (TCS) such as Director and Joint Director. At present the Director of SCERT also heads the Directorate of Higher education, and hence does not have a dedicated official in this leadership role. This challenge was also noted in 2013, where the past three directors at that time were also from administrative cadre on deputation. This recurring challenge at SCERT means that there is a huge scope for strengthening the academic leadership and vision.

When examining the background of officers at the academic posts in SCERT, we find there is a mismatch between the cadre of officers assigned to specific roles in SCERT. The table below shows the existing scenario in SCERT.

Group A officers are largely assigned to leadership roles, senior management or roles higher up in administration. While Group B officers are middle managers with executive responsibility, Group C staff perform operative and clerical tasks, while group D staff are responsible for maintenance and laborers duties. As SCERT is largely staffed with group B and C officers, the majority of the workforce is bent towards implementation and administration. As we were informed, typically a week for SCERT officers is mainly administrative work, planning of different activities of different sections, making notice and memos. Given the ad hoc nature of work at SCERT, we found that BOs describe their work as more administrative in nature, where they focus on dispensing tasks.

Most of the OSDs have a background of teaching in school as HM/ AHM/Teacher, and many are TET qualified, however there are no specific qualifications or specializations among them as SCERT officials.

At present Tripura state does not have a separate cadre of officers for academic roles at SCERT or DIET beyond the specific focus on pre-service teacher training. Further, OSDs are directly assisted by LDC/UDC to perform clerical work. There are no other academic staff under OSDs to assist in any academic related initiatives at SCERT.

Misalignment Between Existing Job Charts and SCERT's Mandates

When asked if specific documents like roles and responsibilities are updated or present, we were told that no specific documentation exists for any section. BOs may be given memos on positions or tasks assigned to them but specific duties as per sections are not outlined. Overall, broad roles and responsibilities are divided among BO offices but specific/particular textbook rules are not in place. BOs have to look after everything from making small notices/memos to attending meetings and conferences with Director/SPD/Ministers.

On a day to day basis, specific tasks are carried out on the basis of orders that come down from the seniors like the Director or SPD office. Work is assigned on an ad hoc basis and prioritized on the urgency of a specific task. In many instances, these are tasks that have to be coordinated with other departments, in which case this comes through the SPD office. BOs are usually consulted by the Director if they are ready to take particular responsibilities or not. These project/ task assignments are not determined by any specific job charts or departmental/ branch goals.

As with any large organization, it is necessary to frame individual personnel roles and responsibilities in connection to the larger organizational vision and goals. Given that SCERT is the apex academic authority in the state and is responsible for ensuring quality education, the alignment and clarity in each officer's contribution is lacking.

For instance, each BO has to visit school from time to time. But no such role is assigned as per their job charts. When asked, BO's did agree that school visits are required but due to work pressure and lockdown, school visits have been stopped at present. However, school visits were not seen as an integral part of one's role linked to academic quality improvement. However, we find that SCERT officers are very dedicated to their role.

| GROUP A | GROUP B | GROUP C | OTHER |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director (1) • Additional Director (1) • Deputy Director (1) • OSD (1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDO/ HoD (1) • OSD (5) • OS (1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PA to Director (1) • Head Clerks (3) • LDC (10) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputed teachers (12) |

Figure: Composition of Officers, SCERT Tripura

Note: no of deputed teachers keeps changing, this is data recorded as of June 2022

Decision Making and Decentralization

Decision making at SCERT at present is need-based with a top-down approach. A clear decision making process needs to be in place for efficient functioning of the organization. Decisions usually flow from SPD to Director to the BOs and so on based on the hierarchical nature of positions. For instance, communication from other departments comes from SPD on the basis of the need of a project or a task concerning SCERT. Hence indicating a lower emphasis on long term strategic decision making.

Weak Linkage between DIET and SCERT

DIET runs as an independent institute and SCERT functions mainly as a funding body. SCERT has minimum interference at present. Even with regards to the utilization of funds and creation of annual budgets, earlier DIETs were included but are no longer part of the process, as the SCERT's funding structure has changed. Currently, the final decisions are made by SCERT. If funds are required at the DIET level, they have to make demands to SCERT, where multiple factors decide if funds are disbursed. Even with regards to teacher training, often these are organized by the DEO office, and DIET faculty are brought in as resource persons. Most of the time DIET is in touch with the DEO office, more than SCERT. Hence connections between SCERT and DIET are reduced to necessary coordination for top down training programs.

High Dependence on Informal Communication Systems

SCERT coordinates with Dept of Secondary Education, Department of Elementary Education, Samagra Shiksha, DIET, BRCs and CRCs, DEO offices from time to time on a need basis. However, no formal cadences of communication exists. Inter-departmental communication is mostly done through whatsapp group messages, calls and emails etc. The Whatsapp groups are very active, but apart from that, usually calls, emails and messages are the main mode of communication. SCERT and other education departments don't have any proper tracking system where each department can track the file and other documents without any hassle and confusion.

In conclusion, the current strength of the academic staff at Tripura has a bearing on how well SCERT is able to dispense its duties adequately to meet its mandate. While the number of staff positions are not satisfactory as per the recommendations, their operations also do not align with the vision for SCERTs due to its current structure. In the current structure with BOs leading each function, as opposed to adequately staffed departments, decision making, implementation and clerical responsibilities fall on few officers effecting performance.

Current Scenario and Challenges: DIET, Tripura

Currently, Tripura has 4 DIETs, across 8 districts, with each DIET covering teachers in multiple districts. Across the three DIETs visited in making this report, we found the same overall organizational structure. DIET works under the supervision of the Principal. While there are subject specific Lectures and Sr. Lecturers in DIET, there are no subject specific departments found.

Role of DIETs in Quality Education

Key responsibilities of DIETS have been detailed in CSSTE 2012 guidelines. However due to the unique set of conditions present in the state, its most pressing challenge remains the lack of trained teachers. This was noted both in the JRM 2013 report as well as SCERT's own report in 2015.

At present DIETs are running pre-service courses along with teacher preparation courses for teachers who have already been recruited but lack qualifications. These include training programs that can last up to 2 years.

The focus of DIET remains on bridging the gap in pre-service teacher education. This also aligns with recommendations of MHRD (2017), where states like Tripura that have few private D.El.Ed institutions, DIETs should continue to focus on pre-service teacher education along with In-service training. DIETs in Tripura also provide in-service teacher training as per the demands of the district. For instance, SCERT and DIET provide 3-5 days training for in-service teachers on different topics and in a majority of the cases the DEO offices conduct training with the help of DIETs. Most of the DIET faculty members were engaged with the other programs as well. Accordingly, faculty members are assigned to develop D.El.Ed – Textbook content – English, Contemporary Indian Education and society etc. Main role of the faculty is Teaching – pre-service (DL. EL. ED) and in-service teachers (DL.LE.ED).

Quality of personnel in DIET are imperative for these bodies to effectively function and guarantee academic support to schools and teachers. TES 2012 guidelines, highlight the need to attract a cadre of high 'aptitude, merit, enthusiasm and dedication to be inducted and are provided opportunities of professional growth, creative work and career advancement in the academic stream.' This area remains unaddressed in many states, and is in urgent need of action and reform.

Academic expertise of DIET faculty is seen to be of utmost importance, in all policy documents. In Tripura, all the faculty members - Principals, Senior Lecturers have Masters degree in concerned subjects along with B.Ed./M.Ed and some faculty also have Ph.D and NET qualified. The Tripura Public Service Commission (TPSC) is responsible for selection of the faculty. Most of the lecturers and senior lecturers have gone through many trainings in a year and some of the teachers receive three month training in the domain of Leadership and Education.

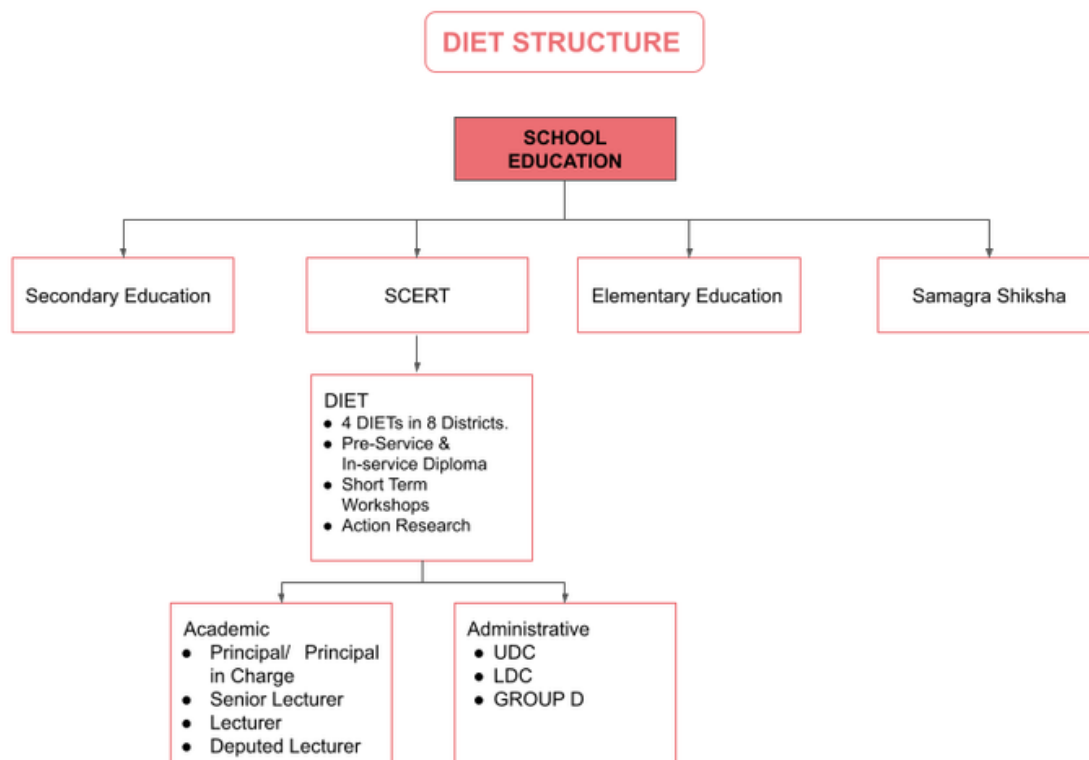


Figure: Structure of DIET

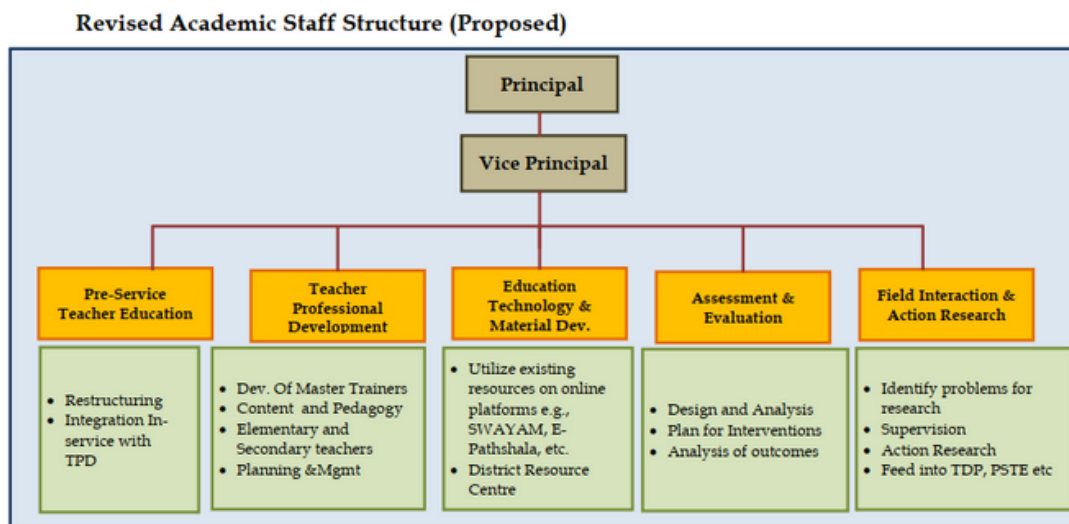


Figure: Proposed academic staff structure at DIET³²
 (Source: MHRD, (2017) Strengthening of DIETs, pg 28)

32 The structure of DIETS with 7 academic branches has now become defunct or does not exist in a majority of states as per MHRD (2017). These include the following branches (1) In-service programme, Field Interactions, Innovation and Coordination (IFIC); (2) District Resource Unit (DRU); (3) Work Experience/ Education (WE); (4) Education Technology (ET); (5) Planning & Management (P&M); (6) Curriculum Material Development and Evaluation (CMDE); and (7) Pre-service Teacher Education (PSTE).

Gaps as per Policy Guidelines

CSSTE (2012) also requires DIETs to run programs for multiple objectives like “untrained teachers, school improvement projects, preparation of training modules and evaluation tools, assessment of teachers and teacher training, material development, research-oriented projects, distance education, orientation of resource persons working in BRCs and CRCs, and other activities to improve the quality of elementary education.”²⁸ However, at present no independent programs are run by DIETs apart from the pre-service and in service teacher training. The following table highlights the current role of DIET against the given SSA guidelines.

The table ahead examines DIET functions as per CSSTE guidelines 2012 .Here we take the case study of Kamalpur DIET. Each of these aspects have been color coded for compliance with the guidelines. Green represents adherence to guidelines, yellow indicates partial compliance, orange indicates low compliance and red indicates absence of compliance.

²⁸ Teacher Education Resource Group, National Council for Teacher Education, (2008), Review of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Teacher Education: Synthesis Report. Find [here](#)

Existing scenario at DIET Kamalpur as case study



Adherence to guidelines





Partial compliance

Low compliance

Compliance absent

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|--|---|----------------|
| 1 | Pre-service teacher education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIET mainly runs a two years Diploma course on Elementary Education for pre-service teachers. At present, there are 67 students in total | |
| 2 | In-service teacher education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIET also conducts training and workshops for teachers on various topics such as TLM, Pedagogy etc. most of the training for teachers is conducted as per the requirement of the DEO or teachers. In 2019, DIET, Kamalpur organized 8 training sessions as per request from the DEO, Dhalai. From 2021 onwards, a two years in-service Diploma course on Elementary Education started. First batch of in-service D.EL.ED courses started with 28 teachers. | |
| 3 | Maintain Training Management System (TMS) and Professional Development Record for teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIET doesn't have any kind of integrated Training management system (TMS) and Professional development record for teachers at present. DIET students have a separate MIS that is maintained at the DIET level only. However an overall dashboard is missing even for student-teachers, data will have to be gathered manually from each and every DIET if any data has to be aggregated at the state level. | |
| 4 | Direct field interventions and school improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the shortage of staff, DIET is directly not involved in field interventions. | |
| 5 | Studies on education (research and documentation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIET doesn't do any kind of studies, research and documentation on education and any other related subjects. Action Research Project, that DIET conducts every year. Every lecturer conducted an action research project at least once in the last two years. For example, action research projects have in the past focused on study on the problems found by elementary students in reading difficulties (5 schools, 50 students and 5 teachers) and activity based teaching in social sciences. | |

| sn | DEPARTMENT/ HEADS PROPOSED UNDER CSSTE (2012) | CURRENT STATUS OF SCERT, TRIPURA | CURRENT STATUS |
|----|---|---|---|
| 6 | Annual academic planning and review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each DIET prepares an Action Plan for a particular Financial year To execute different programs and budgets throughout the year. In this year Action Plan, DIET Kamalpur included given below programs- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training program ○ Action research for all faculties ○ Adopt A School Program ○ Exposure Visit to RIE, Bhopal ○ Faculty Development Program • DIET lecturers don't do annual academic planning. SCERT develops the academic planning which includes teaching learning materials, yearly academic calendar, lesson plans etc. A common practice until 2008 was that senior DIET lectures were invited for academic planning. But this has been discontinued since then. • As mentioned by the previous Principal of DIET, Kamalpur annual academic program review is conducted once in a few years and the last academic planning review he was part of was conducted in 2018. • On the basis of Academic planning of SCERT, each DIET does quarterly planning to execute different programs - examinations, training, DL.EL. ED activities etc. |  |
| 7 | Resource Center/ Teacher Learning Center and Material Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present, DIET doesn't have any resource center/ Teaching learning center for DIETs, BRPs/CRPs or any other education officers. |  |

Other miscellaneous works include working with National Achievement Survey Field investigators, organizing programs for D.EL.ED students etc., development and content writing of textbooks (subject specific) and curriculum for D.EL.ED students, translation of NISTHA training module etc.

Current efforts of DIETs

With all the challenges and constraints DIETs in Tripura are doing some exemplary work. Such as:

- Adopt A school Program - At present, all DIET facilities are conducting school visits under this program. DIET, Kamalpur adopted 9 schools where they provide academic and pedagogical support to teachers and teach useful teaching-learning techniques to the teachers.
- Preparation of contextualized state level textbooks for 2 years D.EL.ED course in collaboration with SCERT, IASE for effective teaching & learning. This will help in evaluating the quality of learning outcomes of the teachers pursuing the diploma from different institutions.
- DIETs in Tripura also provide in-service teacher training as per the demands of the district. For instance, SCERT and DIET provide 3-5 days training for in-service teachers on different topics and in a majority of the cases the DEO offices conduct training with the help of DIETs.

Key Constraints at DIET

Creation of dedicated DIETs per district in progress

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme on restructuring and reorganization of teacher education (CSSTE), pushed reform of multiple teacher education institutions.²⁹ This scheme required the formation of one DIET per district, except in a few cases.³⁰ As we find in Tripura, there are only 4 DIETs for 8 districts. This was due to the formation of 4 new districts in 2011, after the cutoff date provided in the policy. As per the last Tripura JRM report (2013), as well as a report by SCERT (2015), a proposal for creation of 4 DIETs in newly formed districts has been submitted to MHRD, and currently construction of proposed 4 DIETs in new districts is under process.

Scarcity of Infrastructural facilities at DIETs

As key teacher education institutions, infrastructural facilities are considered necessary for effective functioning of these bodies, particularly with regards to the quality and adequacy of instructional facilities. While there has been some central funding for repair of buildings and procurement of other resources, MHRD (2017) reports a huge gap in additional buildings, hostel facilities, equipment, library and laboratories. While at DIETs visited as part of this study, computer facilities exist, but were not used for classes as there are no ICT teachers. We found that there were adequate rooms for classes, but many of them were still vacant. In some cases toilet and water facilities are also missing for both teachers and students.

Further there are no separate quarters for faculty or hostel facilities. For instance, at DIET Kamlapur while the building exists, but it has never been inaugurated, some of the rooms stay empty.

Hence while basic infrastructure marks the presence of the institution, its resources are insufficient to provide a complete environment for pre-service and in-service teacher training. Given that there are no facilities for teachers to stay, often in service teacher training has to be for a short duration only where teachers can come in the morning and leave by noon. Moreover, two of the four DIETs are very remote in their location and can be difficult to access.

Given the status of infrastructure and the role of the DEO office in organizing training, DIETs are not the default venue for training in many instances, instead training is often organized in DEO offices. Furthermore, SCERT has the power to directly conduct teacher training but it is very logistically challenging to do so - and officers are often weary of the challenges it presents. Hence SCERTs involvement in teacher training remains minimal.

Ad Hoc nature of roles and responsibilities at DIET

DIET mainly functions as a learning institute for pre-service and in-service teachers education. Lecturers' main activities thus revolve around teaching. However, as is the case with SCERT, the job roles are not defined for DIET lecturers nor are their responsibilities documented in any form. They often act as per the work that is there, based on urgency and their roles are not limited in scope. For instance, in one DIET we found that the English Lecturer was not just engaged in English related teaching activities, but had to participate as resource persons in other trainings as well. Work is allocated on an ad hoc basis, as notices come from SCERT, or from the district coordinator who decides who has to do what.

29 Find additional details of the policy document [here](#)

30 DIETs were sanctioned under the IX plan, for those districts that have existed before 1.4.2002, and have a minimum of 2,500 teachers. Source: MHRD (2004), Role and functions as per MHRD guideline, pg 22. Find [here](#)

High vacancy rates in DIET

As per the CSSTE 2012, MHRD guidelines, the staff of DIET must include 25 academic and 24 non-academic positions in a given DIET. However vacancy in positions has been a major challenge in many states. MHRD (2017)³¹ notes that nationally vacancy in DIETS can be as high as 45%. When asked about the vacancy in DIETs in the state, the shortage was described as acute. Need was felt to increase the number of both teaching and non-teaching staff. For instance, DIETs at present lack Liberians, teachers who specialize in the use of ICT, and admin staff.

Deficient staff management policies at DIETs

There are no specific subject wise departments in the DIETs but all the lecturers are recruited as a specific subject teacher. Last teachers recruitment for DIET was conducted 7 years ago and most of the lecturers recruited are still on deputation. In one instance we were told that being a lecturer in DIET as a career is bad as there have been no promotions for the last few years nor additional lectures been recruited for the last seven years. DIET lecturers have also pointed out a difference in salary in DIETs Tripura versus those in DIETs Assam, and DIETs Mizoram. Further, in a few cases DIET lectures were on deputation right after their TET qualification. In such cases DIET faculty may not necessarily have classroom experience. Given that there has been no new recruitment, DIET faculty on deputation have been in their current position since the last 6-7 yrs and are not permanent staff. This adds to a sense of demotivation as they do not receive any financial incentives, do not see opportunities for career advancement or promotion.

Challenges to in-service teacher training

While pre-service teacher training remains a major focus at DIET, in-service training receives little attention due to a plethora of challenges. Firstly, training is conducted when required either by SCERT or DEO office, DIETs at present do not independently conduct training, nor follow an independent academic calendar for in-service training. Hence training is more ad-hoc in nature. In such cases DIET lecturers are brought in as resource persons. Further, due to the shortage of lecturers and officials, after giving training also, they don't have enough resources and manpower to intervene and record the progress of trained teachers or document feedback from the training.

Lack of Effective action research projects

SCERT does encourage action research projects every year for which DIET invites teachers for action research projects. Teachers submit their proposals. Selected Action Research project proposals have been forwarded by DIET and once approved funds have been allocated to DIET. Finally, on completion of the project teachers can suggest recommendations to the SCERT. However, according to them, no recommendation has been approved so far and no review has been conducted.

In conclusion, the 2012 CSSTE guidelines do not recommend a specific organizational structure for DIETs. It recommends that each state have the flexibility to reorganize its DIETs as per its core functions, which does not dictate any future changes in structure or staffing.

However, in Tripura, DIET's current focus is predominantly on pre-service teacher education whereas other functions are left behind. In the current structure and limited role, DIETs is unable to function in a manner that allows for innovation and prioritizes its activities relating to in-service teacher training or school support.

Opportunities for SCERT and DIET

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Learning governance at SCERT

At present student level data is captured under the School Management System (SMS) as well as through Empower U - Shiksha Darpan mobile application. SMS as initial the student MIS³³ Tripura is maintained by the IT Department with the school education department. It captures student details along with student background and learning information. HMs in each school are responsible for updating that information on the platform. Following are the key features of the platform.

- At present, Students don't have access to SMS, only Headmaster, Inspector of school, DEOs and education department have the access.
- It captures information for each student, however does not assign students with individual unique student IDs
- Attendance is tracked, but not student wise. However, learning outcomes data is captured by each student. Where monthly reporting is required on progress, each teacher is assigned 20-30 students who they have to monitor closely.
- This platform, has to link student's aadhar in the systems, but the DBT schemes are linked to the empower U app
- If a student is transferred to another school, their data is deleted from the current system, and then re-uploaded from the new school.

On the other hand Empower U - Shiksha darpan mobile app is very similar to SMS but is operated at the teacher and student level. Following are the key features:

- In this app every school has to upload student bio data from class 1 to Class 12.
- Every class teacher has their own id and every student has their own id.
- Teacher diary , Teachers management - leaves , posting and transfer etc are updated in this app.
- There are supposed to be several other functions of the EmpowerU App for student usage as well as teachers such as attendance and uploading marks but at present, the App only has student bio data and teachers data mainly. Pre-primary is not included. The app is currently limited to the bio-data. The app is not currently in active usage.

The teacher we spoke to stated that they feel that there is no difference between the two platforms - Empower U is used more by teachers, where every student and teacher have their own individual ID. However, as teachers have to update the data on their mobile app it has seen more frequent and widely used.

33 Find manual on SMS [here](#). Find additional details [here](#)

Capacity Building of Officers

Working group report on Teacher education for the 12th five year plan (2011)³⁷ also notes a need for capacity building of leadership and middle management in teacher education institutions. Particularly the need to develop leadership and managerial capabilities. Some officer capacity building initiatives have been conducted over the past few years. For instance, In December 2019, selected faculty members of 4 DIETs went to Kerala for an exposure visit to learn and share about the education system. NCERT, NERIE and NIPA have also conducted 3-5 days training for the SCERT officials once or twice in a year and selected officials usually attend the training.

However, in both SCERT and DIETs, officials mentioned the necessity of training on technical/ computer literacy. It was felt that SCERT doesn't have technically sound and computer literate officers. Hence, SCERT needs to have a special section who will work separately and need to form a technical section and as for now Internet connection setup is completed. Before Officers had to use their own network for office related activities. Officers are dedicated and experienced, but due to the lack of computer knowledge they end up waiting for an LDC/ UDC. This has been identified as a key skill gap. Data handling and data analysis was seen as an extension of this.

Teacher and Mentor support

In Tripura, Block resource centers (BRC) and cluster resource centers (CRC) have been established. Along with this structure, parallelly there exists a deputy inspector of school (IS) at the block level. Both of these structures have been created to provide in school support to teachers. At present BRP/CRP report directly to IS in any given block. At present, in-service teacher support is limited to teacher training that may not cover all teachers of a district or block. No other forms of professional development (eg. exposure visit) were noted for teachers.

BRP and CRCs were envisioned as the lowest decentralized units for in-service teacher education. Hence, BRP is crucial to any training done in Tripura. BRPs are recruited directly under the SSA Mission, however they have a temporary position. BRPs are well educated, most of them have Masters, B.Ed and some of them have teaching experience as well. From our observations we found that BRPs participated in different training throughout the year conducted by SCERT, other education departments and NGOs. Apart from BRPs, there are no specific master trainers, but currently there is a push from civil society to institute such a cadre.

Main role of the BRPs and CRPs at present includes :

- Provide training for the inservice teachers of a particular block of the district.
- To provide academic support to the teachers and schools on a regular basis.
- To help in community mobilization activities.
- After becoming the part of the Inspector of school office, BPRs are engaged in different activities such as general works - collecting questionnaires and distribution to the school, vaccination of students (between 15 - 18) and other

BRPs also work in SCERT whenever needed especially as resource persons - in curriculum and workbook development.

Key Challenges

In Tripura, Block Resource Person (BRPs) and Cluster Resource Persons (CRPs) are under Inspector of School in Block level in District level and under SSA in State level. Along with their regular works and new additional roles have been given to the BRPs and CRPs. This along with COVID-19 lockdown, they face the following challenges:

- **Regular school visits hampered due to lockdown**

Due to the lockdown of schools, BRPs were not able to perform their regular work such as training of teachers, academic support to the school.

- **Shortage of BRPs and CRPs**

There are huge shortages of BRP and CRP in almost every district. For example - In Khowai district, there are only 5 BRPs looking after 3 blocks out of 6 blocks in Khowai. 2 BRPs each in 2 blocks and 1 BRP in 1 block and there are no single BRPs assigned in 3 blocks of the district.

- **Burden of administrative responsibilities due to inclusion under IS office**

Since the government ordered BRPs/ CRPs under the Inspector of School office (IS), BRPs/CRPs have been helpful to reduce the workloads of the IS. However, BRPs are doing the work of the IS Office which is mostly admin work and not much related to academic work. At present, BRPs have to work out of both the offices - IS office and BRP center. Being the part of the IS office now, they have to give priorities to activities of the IS office mainly. At present, CRPs are working out of the BRP Office and doing the work of BRPs and other clerical work. After being part of the IS office, BRP offices are left vacant as BRPs have to work out of the IS office.

- **Lack of support from DIET**

BRPs and CRPs are block level and cluster level coordinators under the School Education Department in Tripura and DIET and SCERT are supposed to provide necessary support and training to the BRPs and CRPs. But due to lack of resources and officials, DIETs are unable to provide support and training on a regular basis and most of the academic support and training of BRPs/ CRPs are conducted by SCERT and other educational departments.

While above mentioned challenges are particular to BRPs and CRPs in Tripura, many of these resonate with the constraints being faced in other states. As per the findings mentioned in the 2010 report³⁴ across 14 different states, common challenges include the overburden of administrative work, inability to visit schools due to work loads, lack of transportation, lack of recognition for their work, and inadequate professional development among others.

In-service teacher training programs

A joint review mission (JRM) on teacher education (2013), notes that the task of education is hugely complex in a state like Tripura. This is because of its challenging geographic terrain, lack of connectivity and isolation with the mainland, a large tribal population, challenges of poverty and higher dependence on agriculture, inadequate infrastructure and communication bottlenecks - all together create a unique set of factors that compound the challenge of education.

At present pre-service education remains the focus of DIETs. On the other hand as noted above, the in-service teacher training is conducted based on needs of a particular program and is not linked to any given progression of in-service teacher professional development.



From MHRD reports it can be noted that some progress had been made with regards to SSA training. Report mentions in-service teacher training at the BRC level under SSA reached 82% of its targeted teachers in 2015-16 and 27% of its targeted teachers in 2016-17. While the same progress noted at the CRC level has been 87% in 2015-16 and 31% in 2016-17.³⁵ However, MHRD concept note on restructuring of SCERT (2018) notes that, "in-service training programmes are being conducted in isolation under the various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as the SSA, RMSA and CSSTE. There is a felt need for redefining the role of the SCERT as the nodal agency for not only in-service training with a focus on quality (in terms of resource personnel, teacher training materials, promote use of ICT, etc) but also other capacity building programmes for Teacher Educators." This, we find remains true for Tripura as well.

Tripura's challenge of lack of teachers and lack of trained teachers

A major challenge for Tripura has been the lack of trained teachers in the state. The JRM 2013 report notes that this challenge has been historic in nature starting as early as the 1960's. As per the report the underlying cause of this challenge has been institutions for teacher training have had insufficient intake capacity against the demand from increasing numbers of schools during the 1990's.

Further the state's teacher recruitment policy encouraged untrained teachers to be recruited, such that by 2005 a backlog of 22,000 untrained teachers had to be granted special permission by NCTE to complete their training in open distance learning mode. As a result of this the 2013 JRM report, notes that one third of all school teachers (11884) did not receive any training.

Additionally another 10830 teachers had been sponsored by the state govt to undergo 6 month long Certificate in Elementary Teacher Education (CETE) program from IGNOU. However these teachers do not meet RTE's two year mandatory training norms. All of these challenges came to a head when the recruitment of 10,323 teachers were challenged in Tripura High Court as well as the Supreme Court (SC) for violating the RTE norms. In 2017 the SC allowed the government to continue with 10,323 teachers on ad hoc basis up till 31st March 2020. Apart from a portion of teachers who were selected though the new recruitment policy, about 8882 teachers were expelled from the system in March 2020 accordingly. An independent study³⁶ also found that the demand for second school teachers, as well as teachers to teach B.Ed and M.Ed courses has been high between 2007-08 and 2016-17. Hence Tripura is currently facing an acute shortage of teachers as well as shortage of trained teachers. In these conditions the role of BRPs, IS and professional development structures becomes paramount to ensure quality education for students in Public schools.

34 Research, Evaluation and Studies Unit, Technical Support Group (2010), Role of Block and Cluster Resource Centres In Providing Academic Support to Elementary Schools: abridged report of study conducted in 14 States. Find [here](#)

35 MHRD (2017), Concept paper on strengthening of SCERT

36 Pritam, B. P. (2019). Education in North-Eastern India: A Study of Supply and Demand in Secondary Teacher Education. *Educational Quest*, 10(1), 45-51.

Recommendations

Status of Educational Governance in Tripura

Conclusion

The challenges to school education in Tripura are unique. On one hand the state has made remarkable progress towards universalization of school education, and has consistently shown a strong commitment to improvement of education through high budgetary allocations over the years. But on the other hand it has suffered from lack of personnel and capacities within schools as well as its important institutions.

SCERT, DIET and other teacher support structures have emerged organically in Tripura. While the present structure has emerged in response to the unique needs of Tripura, it remains in misalignment to the national vision for these institutions. For instance, at present SCERT focuses on textbook development, some flagship programmes and provides broad academic inputs to DIETs. DIETs are more focused on pre-service training, and while BRC and CRC members are focused on providing training for SSA and other departments and tasks assigned by IS. SCERT, DIET and BRC-CRC as well as IS, are a continuum of institutions meant to support academic interventions. But currently in Tripura they function as complementary to each other and are not linked. These institutions matter in ensuring teaching and learning quality in the state, and their linkage must reinforce programs and inputs provided at each level, but also create opportunities for feedback loops in the system.

According to various reports on SCERT and teacher education over the years,³⁸ in many states, while the roles have been clearly written out and institutions formed, structural reforms are still incomplete against national directives. The vision has been to ensure that state SCERTs have been equipped with adequate leadership, administrative and financial control over the network of teacher education, academic institutions, and personnel to fulfill their mandates to improve education quality.

While SCERT's role expands, its internal organizational structure, organizational goals, academic and non-academic sanctioned positions, and personnel policies need to be re-oriented. Restructuring of administration and its key institutions has the potential to improve its responsiveness to the needs of students and communities

With this report we intend to shed light on Tripura's current success, gaps and opportunities. While there can be a plethora of solutions proposed for a given problem, we recommend the following:

- Make SCERT an autonomous body with administrative, academic & financial independence.
- Revamp officer recruitment process and institutionalize performance management structures at state, district, block level by setting up a merit based process of recruiting officers on deputation. Setting up a 6 monthly/annual performance appraisal structure for renewal of deputation.
- Focus on capacity building of the middle management officers to gain required knowledge, skills and mindsets for effective planning and implementation of academic/administrative programs.
- Strengthen the Teacher Mentor cadre (IS, BRP, CRP, KRPs) across the state by selecting subject experts as teacher mentors and upskilling them w.r.t coaching-mentoring, conducting effective classroom observation etc.
- Rename the designation, "Inspector of schools" to remove the fear of inspection lens associated with it for teachers. Suggested titles are: "Block Education Officer" , "School Support Officer"
- Revise job descriptions of SCERT, DIET, Block level academic/admin staff for better clarity of responsibilities and setting clear expectations to deliver.

38 See particularly JRM ON THE CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME OF TEACHER EDUCATION [CSSTE] 2015. Find [here](#)

| SN | Recommendations for reform | Type of reform | Responsible institution/stakeholder | Time required for reform |
|----|---|----------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Make SCERT an autonomous body with administrative, academic & financial independence. | Administrative | SCERT, Education Department, Principal Secretary Office | 3 years |
| 2 | Revamp officer recruitment process and institutionalize performance management structures at state, district, block level by setting up a merit based process of recruiting officers on deputation. Setting up a 6 monthly/annual performance appraisal structure for renewal of deputation | Administrative | Education department, Principal secretary's office | 2 years |
| 3 | Focus on capacity building of the middle management officers to gain required knowledge, skills and mindsets for effective planning and implementation of academic/administrative programs | Administrative | SCERT, DIET, SSA | 1 years |
| 4 | Strengthen the teacher mentor cadre (BRPs, Inspector of Schools) across the state by selecting subject experts as teacher mentors and upskilling them w.r.t coaching-mentoring, conducting effective classroom observations | Academic | SCERT, DIET | 2 years |
| 5 | Rename the designation, "Inspector of Schools" to remove the fear, "inspection" lens associated with it for teachers. Suggested titles are "School mentor", "School Support Officer" | Administrative | SSA | 6 months - 1 year |
| 6 | Revise job descriptions of SCERT, DIET, Block level academic/admin staff for better clarity of responsibilities and setting clear expectations to deliver | Administrative | Education department, Principal secretary's office | 1 year |



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Leadership For Skilled Education Foundation (branded as Leadership For Equity, LFE), is a non-profit (NGO) headquartered in Pune, Maharashtra. LFE is working with the Government of Tripura to restructure the state's education bodies in order to improve learning and well being of all government school students of Tripura.