5.10 Inaugural Speech by Prof Ram Takwale, Chairman, NAAC
At
The National Training Program
Organized by APEID, UNESCO and NAAC
Banglore, 29 August 2005

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to inaugurate the Training Program for Teacher Educators on ICT-Pedagogy Integration organized by Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovations for Development (APEID), UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) under the auspicious of Japanese Funds-in-Trust ICT in Education Program.

These are the days of partnerships, of working together. The first principle promoted by ICT is networking; and we have started well with this joint program by bringing four major internationally known agencies together.

Since the adoption of UNESCO's two programs; the *Millennium Development Goals and Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*; the global vision of education has broadened and extended; it is covering Education For All to be achieved soon, and changing focus of education towards Development and its Sustainability. This brings us to the objectives of the Training Program to build capacity and capabilities of teachers, who are the change agent in the transformation towards the Knowledge Society of 21st Century. The driving force of the Information Society, the ICT, is to be integrated with pedagogy and teaching-learning programs; and it is hoped that a new paradigms of education would be evolved. I really appreciate that you have set very well the Training Program goals and outcomes for developing **Technology Mediated Pedagogy.** I will also be interested in the outcomes of this National Training Program. I am sure; this would help greatly to improve in-service and pre-service teacher education in this region of the world.

The goals and objects of this training program are many.   They include, among others, empowering teachers and learners, expanding learning alternatives, ensuring high quality and relevance of education, and making generally educating as a quest for quality and excellence. In NAAC, we are also interested in adopting the so called Five Core Values in Indian Education; *Linking Education with National Development, Fostering Global Competencies, Inculcating Value System, Promoting Use and Culture of Information Technology and Quest for Excellence*. We are developing a NAAC version of Baldrige Model for *Capabilities Building and Maturation* for excellence in educational institution and their teaching-learning processes. Effective development and deployment of the model needs extensive use of ICT, and we are at the initial stages of evolving it.

Since I am also involved in Teacher and School Transformation Program in Maharashtra, one of the states in India, I would like to make some comments and suggestions that are based on our work done so far. I hope they would be useful to the participants and organisers.

Firstly about ICT. Extensive use of IT enables us to create not only networks for and linking people for their communication but also for linking work-flow processes of individuals, groups and institutions. This is creating a new phenomenon not seen earlier; the mass-customization or mass-personalization and just-in-time education.

Information Communication Technology generates three major processes;

- **Virtualization** enabling virtual co-location of all teaching and learning processes taking place anywhere anytime; leading to the development of **Distributed Education System.**
- **Digitization** of all information in multiple media, giving possibility of communicating, changing, reforming and manipulating information, which enables us to create **knowledge grid** and to **just-in-time education** with creativity and entrepreneurship. This helps the development of localization along with globalisation; and
- **Customization** enabling possibility of personalized and group customized learning and developing programs in knowledge as well as in development space. This enables creation of *models of developmental education* appropriate to the socio-cultural and economic environment of a locality or region and helps in evolving *learning and developing path* for every learner.

I am certain, that the goals and vision of UNESCO will be realized soon with *Technology Mediated Open and Distance Education* (Tech-MODE), which would integrates all the modes of education- formal, non-formal and informal. You have rightly chosen the location of Banglore, the Silicon Valley of India, where softwares of all types are being developed. IT experts are now creating **level playing field for all** so that educated and well-trained can compete globally and creatively. One of the major problems faced by all educationists is to create new paradigms of education that would fulfill UNESCO vision of education, health and livelihood for all.

Coming to the Indian Education System, we will have to address some major issues, some of which are as follows.

1. **Division of Intellectual and Physical Work**: Indian system of education has always given great importance to intellectual development at the cost of manual skills and services. All efforts to give balanced emphasis on knowledge and skills development have failed, probably due to well-rooted Indian hierarchical cast system. The change of focus from the so called scholastic – non-scholastic divide, to integrated development of human personality is essential. This possibly can be achieved through development centric education, measured in terms of practical developmental achievements.

2. **Solving Iron Triangle of Quality-Quantity-Equity:** India is facing major problems of large population, ignorance and poverty. The new paradigm has to develop system that enables **access to high quality education for all**. The issue is to solve the quantity-quality-equity triangle by using Open and Distance Learning through Technology Mediated Education. Like *free-ware movement*, it is essential to promote creation of free content, free ICT tools and techniques, and people's technologies; and offer access to knowledge for all. Immediate use of Indian Satellite, the EduSat, Internet connectivity, and in future use of broadband and mobile Internet should enable us to achieve the dream of Best Quality Education For All.

3. **Linking Experts & Learners Directly**: Cascade Training Process is often used for training, and everyone is aware of its transmission losses in terms of information, accuracy

and motivation. It is often one-shot program. It is essential to move towards Fall Training Process in which master trainer and experts could be connected directly continuously to the trainee through network and video conferencing facility. A low cost audio-graphic conferencing facility is already available; it hardly costs Rs. 14/- per hour and works on dial-up Internet. Such a distributed classroom can be created and interactivity between experts and learners could be established and made meaningful.

        4.   **Bottom-up Model**: One of the real challenges in education is to develop Life-Long-Learning (L3) and Continuously Developing Teachers along with their Learning Groups and Learning Community. I think we will have to develop a work-place based system of Learning for Development, which should be deployed in Classrooms, in Schools and in Community. Our Training and Development model should promote integration of learning-teaching-developing paradigm with training being continuously translated into teacher and school transformation. This needs, besides the current top-down model, a bottom-up model in which trainee groups interact horizontally, translate knowledge into practice, search for better, efficient and effective learning processes and become partners in creation and extension of knowledge. Creating global / national / regional leadership and local leadership for owning and developing learning and transforming is essential to make successful transition to a new paradigm. Our future schools and colleges and teachers should be prosumers- producers and consumers of knowledge.

In partnership with some institutions and organisation we are developing a partnership model; a model of **public-private-community partnership**, to pool the best of resources and expertise to create a system of education appropriate to the Knowledge Age. It is essential to integrate all the efforts, create **knowledge intensive** and **technology mediated** learning and developing resources; and add values of sustainability to activities and programs.

This is a great common task and a big challenge. Let this National Training Program set its first step and right direction in the common endeavor of developing education system for Knowledge Age Society.

With this, I inaugurate the National Training Program and wish it all the success.