

**MOTHER TONGUE BASED MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION:
FRAMEWORK, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION**
International Consultative Meet & Strategy Dialogue
(September 19-21, 2011, conference Hall, CIIL, Mysore)

Background

MLE forms a major innovative initiative of MHRD and, apart from the state level efforts to provide mother tongue based MLE for tribal language communities under the SSA programme, there have been several national and international programmes organized by the Ministry in collaboration with other national and international bodies like UNESCO, UNICEF, NCERT, CIIL, JNU. Developments in respect of planning and implementation of mother tongue based MLE in India are promising. MLE is distinctly seen as offering an effective and innovative alternative to the current submersion forms of early education that involves neglect of the home language and cultural experiences of children, subtractive language learning, large scale school failure and high 'push out' rate. The urgent need for revitalization of endangered languages also compels a rethinking of our current educational practices in imposed dominant languages. Existing models of MLE need to be re-assessed in light of our experiences and insights from the ongoing programmes. In brief, the proposed Workshop and Strategy Dialogue on MLE will address the following issues:

1. Taking stock of MLE programs in India:
 - a. Program/outcome evaluation of MLE in India (including NMRC Longitudinal Study Report & report on MLE+ program)
 - b. Reflections on the nature of MLE programs (Timing & duration of MT/L1, L2, L3 etc); early-exit vs. late-exit & other issues (keeping in view the international findings (such as in Ethiopia; Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2010)
 - c. Policy & implementation issues; MLE and India's Right to Education Act 2010 (with its objective of free and compulsory education for ALL, minimum quality assurance and its provision for education in mother tongue "*as far as practicable*")
2. Issues in extension of current model of MLE:
 - a. MLE for linguistically diverse & multiple MT classrooms (majority of the classrooms have multiple MTs; some states like Jharkhand would like to try MLE only for such multilingual classrooms which are the modal patterns)
 - b. Capacity building issues (meeting the requirement for a large number of trained MLE teachers; in some cases since required number of teachers are unavailable from within a language community alternative approaches have to be thought of), Training Strategies and Details
3. Pedagogic Issues:
 - a. Issues in Language Teaching in multilingual contexts
 - b. Teaching of MT and L2 (regional dominant language)
 - c. Teaching of English: multilingual strategies
 - d. Pedagogic strategies for teaching of Mathematics and Science

Objectives

1. To take stock of the developments in the field of MLE in India and facilitate integration of MLE theory, Practice, Research and International experience with the National initiatives in India.
2. To discuss and evolve strategies for capacity building and training for MLE in India.
3. Developing a model of MLE for linguistically diverse and multiple mother tongue classrooms.
4. To recommend strategies for MLE pedagogy including Multilingual transition plan, exit from Mother tongue and introduction of English and other languages in light of the International experiences and major research findings.
5. To bring into focus state of the art pedagogic practices in MLE in respect of diverse cultural and community practices, linguistic variations and orthographic issues etc based on international practices and research evidence and to link MLE pedagogy to all the subject areas in school curriculum and to the NCF 2005.
6. To recommend initiative for development MLE policy and practice framework and advocacy strategies for promotion of MLE in India
7. To develop a network of National and International resources, organizations, Professionals and Practitioners of MLE for Promotion of MLE objectives.

Expected Outcomes

1. Outline of a plan for capacity building, training and development of training resources for MLE.
2. Recommendations regarding scheduling of MT, L1, L2 etc. in MLE framework in India, strategies for linking languages in MLE programme and points of introduction of languages like English and continuation of MT as a medium of teaching and as a language subject.
3. Recommendations regarding specific action plans and strategies for extension and suitable applications of MLE practices for the common classroom scenario in India with simultaneous presence of multiple languages (Mother tongues) within the classroom.
4. Recommendations of specific Pedagogic strategies for MLE classroom transitions, teaching learning practices, and TLM for a. Focused cultural practice based pedagogy, b. Linking linguistic (and orthographic) community practices to classroom practices, c. Extending good MLE practices to teaching of Mathematics and science and other school subjects
5. Recommendations for evolution of a long term framework for MLE policy practice and advocacy