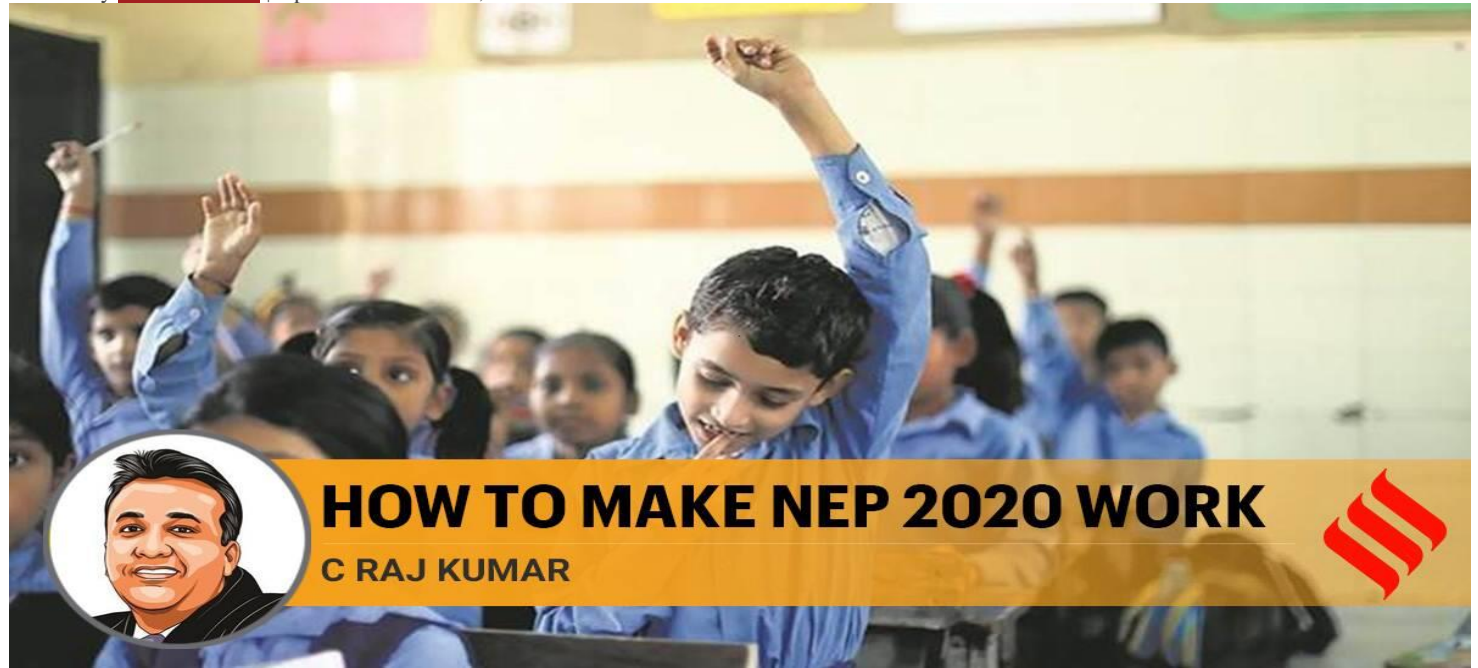


A five-point implementation plan to help make the NEP 2020 work

Policy, regulatory and institutional mechanisms, participation of stakeholders, will be needed to make the National Education Policy 2020 work.

Written by [C Raj Kumar](#) | Updated: October 14, 2020



Research related to policy implementation gaps has repeatedly demonstrated that avoiding policy failures is about having robust means, methods and implementation mechanisms. (File Photo)

The National Education Policy 2020 has a vision to transform the Indian education landscape. It relies on a significant commitment for policy implementation from all stakeholders, including the Prime Minister and the education minister. Research related to policy implementation gaps has repeatedly demonstrated that avoiding policy failures is about having robust means, methods and implementation mechanisms.

Bob Hudson, David Hunter and Stephen Peckham had identified four contributors to policy failure — overly optimistic expectations, implementation in dispersed governance, inadequate collaborative policymaking and vagaries of the political cycle. This could be the story of most policy failures. The authors suggest there is a need to develop a robust policy support programme, if we are to be serious about implementing any policy. They write: “...The four threats to successful policy implementation... are so widespread, that simply hoping that normal procedures and channels will be sufficient to resolve them is no longer realistic. At a minimum, a better understanding is needed of the processes through which policy moves and how, at each of these points, policy can best be supported. Four sequential points can be identified: Preparation; tracking; support; and review...”

I would like to propose a five-point implementation plan to help implement NEP.

One, the Prime Minister has highlighted a vision to build intellectual and social capital for developing collective consciousness for implementing the NEP. The next step will be to match it with the establishment of an institutional mechanism for implementation. The successful implementation of NEP requires different types of

interventions. It includes coordination and cooperation between the Centre and states; legislative interventions, including passing new laws and/or amendments to existing laws; an increase in the budgetary framework and augmentation of financial resources with involvement of inter-ministerial discussions; and regulatory reforms. The PM's Task Force on Higher Education Reforms can be an advisory body comprising experts from public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to help the PM understand and appreciate the bottlenecks, and ensure time-bound implementation with fixed accountability.

Two, there is a need to establish a National NEP Implementation Standing Committee with select vice-chancellors/directors of universities/institutes. This Committee will be tasked with creating and monitoring the NEP Implementation Plan in a time-bound manner. It will have specific powers and functions, including thematic sub-committees and regional committees. The Committee, located within the Ministry of Education, will be chaired by the education minister and the member-secretary will be the education secretary. It should have ex-officio members of all major regulatory bodies to remove the hurdles faced by HEIs in the implementation of NEP.

Three, the National Education Ministers' Council with Education Ministers of all states and UTs, chaired by the Union Minister for Education, needs to be constituted. The Council will be an important institutional mechanism to monitor the implementation of NEP in states and UTs, and will also serve as a forum to discuss and address implementation issues, and navigate through the diverse perspectives of state governments.

Four, the idea of Institutions of Eminence (IoE) articulated by the Prime Minister contains the vision to develop world-class universities in India. In the [budget](#) speech of 2016, the then Finance Minister, [Arun Jaitley](#) promised to provide “an enabling regulatory architecture” so that “10 public and 10 private institutions” would emerge “as world-class teaching and research institutions”. This led to the establishment of IoEs. Today, the vision of IoE needs to be integrated with the NEP implementation plan, and IoEs need to be empowered with more freedom, flexibility, autonomy and resources. This will, in due course, help universities to have a robust presence in the global university rankings.

Five, the National Higher Education Philanthropy Council, chaired by the Education Minister with private sector participation, needs to be constituted. Nearly 70 per cent of Indian HEIs are private, and more than 70 per cent of Indian students study in private HEIs. We must build on this reality to raise financial resources that are critical for the establishment of more private HEIs. However, this will require new and innovative institutional mechanisms, tax incentives, endowment frameworks and other initiatives to incentivise the Indian corporate sector to contribute in the form of individual and corporate philanthropy. The Philanthropy Council could help promote a fundamental re-imagining of the tax structure to incentivise potential donors for establishing three new endowment funds — Higher Education Infrastructure Development Endowment Fund; Higher Education Student Scholarship Endowment Fund; and Higher Education Research Grants Endowment Fund.

In *Why Government Fails So Often — and How It Can Do Better*, Peter Schuck, identifies six elements for successful policy implementation — incentives, instruments, information, adaptability, credibility and management. For successful implementation of the NEP, we will need to create stakeholder incentives; formulate instruments in the form of legal, policy, regulatory and institutional mechanisms; build reliable information

repositories; develop adaptability across HEIs, regulatory bodies and government agencies; develop credibility through transparent actions and participation of all stakeholders; and develop sound principles of management.

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