



Ministry of Human Resource Development

# Workshop on Strengthening of IASEs

New Delhi, India  
30-31 July, 2013

## A Report



Tata Institute of  
Social Sciences

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## Executive Summary

The workshop on ‘Strengthening of IASEs’ was envisioned by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and Vidya Bhavan Society (VBS), Udaipur, at the behest of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), to bring together all the IASEs in the country. The key aim was to develop greater clarity and concreteness in the understanding of the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP) guidelines for IASEs. Through such an understanding it was aimed that the IASEs could develop a better grasp of larger systemic issues which support or inhibit their growth. It also aimed at enhancing the capacity of each IASE to strengthen its annual and perspective plans along-with monitoring mechanisms and bring them in alignment with the MHRD 12th FYP. More importantly it attempted to develop among the IASEs a sense of being a strong network of important teacher education institutions spread across the country.

The key issues and recommendations which were highlighted during the discussions in the workshop were:

- Bringing a *paradigm shift* in discourse and transforming Teacher Education (TE) in the country as it is currently suffering from shortcomings with respect to quality, access and equality.
- Establishing *stronger linkages* with schools and institutes of higher education is crucial necessary to engage with the issue of TE collectively as a community of teacher educators extended across school, college and university levels. Further, establishing linkages between IASEs and TE institutions such as DIETs, CTEs and other TE colleges is equally important.
- *Strengthening Pre-service teacher education* by moving beyond simply imparting skills on pedagogy and use of Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) to a more cognitive one would help teachers to reflect on their practices and beliefs.
- *Addressing the diversity question* proactively while preparing teacher educators is essential to recognize the inherent differences in classrooms and home conditions.
- Improving *In-service teacher education* along with *strengthening the linkages between pre-service and in-service training* would prove to be a more systemic approach.
- Ensuring *capacity building of faculty* through refresher courses, certificate programmes, workshops and through collaboration with other institutions of teacher education.
- *Empowering IASEs* by reclaiming their importance as comprehensive institutes of teacher education.

Since preparation of teacher educators is a key role performed by IASEs, one of the sessions conducted focused particularly on re-imagining the M.Ed programme in TE colleges. The discussion largely revolved around concerns like levels at which M.Ed is being offered, sites where it can take place, educational profile of students entering the course, revision of current curriculum and tools used for teaching. The key ideas put forth were:

- M.Ed must have diversity in the courses being offered.
- A compulsory course on research which provides an exposure to the various realms of educational research including descriptive research.
- Exploring the possibility of a 2 year M.Ed programme for graduates without a B.Ed degree.
- Revision of the current curriculum with greater emphasis on research components as well as community projects.

With the primary objective of bringing in a deeper understanding of the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP guidelines for IASEs, one of the sessions encouraged IASE participants to revisit their annual and perspective plans by IASEs. The session allowed IASEs to come up with certain key action points to align their individual vision to the 12<sup>th</sup> plan guidelines. It was voiced that IASEs need to function as “centres of excellence” in teacher education through strengthening their pre-service and in-service training, research and curriculum development activities. It was agreed that strengthening linkages with DIETs, CTEs, SCERT and other TE colleges in their respective region and state is important so that they can work together as an educator community. Revising the M.Ed and B.Ed curriculum and undertaking more research activities through collaboration with other institutions was also considered critical. Similarly, greater capacity building through development of infrastructure facilities, rejuvenation of libraries, holding of faculty refresher courses etc. were discussed.

However effective implementation of these action points requires strong support from the MHRD. Suggestions were made by IASEs to the MHRD in ensuring this support through various means like fund flows, formation of region wise working groups, conducting annual workshops for IASEs, providing them greater autonomy, streamlining bureaucratic procedures and so on. IASEs need to reclaim their voice and space as comprehensive and leading centres of Teacher Education.

The workshop ended on a hopeful note with the understanding that the vision of IASEs can be achieved through a joint effort on the part of the IASEs along with effective support from MHRD.

# **Workshop on ‘Strengthening of IASEs’**

**30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> July, 2013, New Delhi**

**A brief report by Policy and Programme Evaluation Desk**

**Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai**

*“Just imagine the potential of re-invigorating our pre-service teacher education. If we had the opportunity to let in-service teachers interact with our pre-service students, how much of professional knowledge transfer would take place between experienced teachers and the new teachers coming in? We should be redefining the meaning of our professional practice in our institutional spaces and reclaiming the pre-service teacher education space and the in-service teacher education space not merely as a requirement of a university or a government programme but as sites where we as professionals really consolidate our practice.”* - A teacher education expert on the renewal of teacher education in India.

## **1. Background**

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The establishment of Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) was first articulated in a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of Strengthening and Reorganization of Teacher Education, 1987. At present, 31 IASEs which were exceptionally functioning Secondary Teacher Education Institutes (STEIs) have been selected and sanctioned. Keeping in view the important role played by IASEs in teacher education, it has been proposed that 50 Departments of Education in Central and State Universities be upgraded to IASEs during the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP). However, the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP document points out several challenges being faced by IASEs across the country. These include the problem of non-functioning IASEs, lack of infrastructure, vacant academic positions, inter-state variations in recruitment methods, neglect of research and curriculum development activities, lack of availability of optimal central assistance, and a limited number of IASEs conducting M.Ed, M.Phil and in-service programmes

In consonance with the current state of events, the 12<sup>th</sup> plan emphasizes certain objectives to be fulfilled by all the IASEs. These objectives include preparation of quality teacher educators for all levels of school education, ensuring their capacity building, promoting research activities to improve the quality of education, providing academic guidance to DIETs and resource support to CTEs, establishing linkages between higher education institutes and SCERTs/DIETs and ensuring that the spirit of the ideas mentioned in National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE 2009) and National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) is reflected in their pre-service and in-service programmes. According to the 12<sup>th</sup> plan, the real challenge of the IASEs is to effectively fulfill these objectives along with rising to the new demands and emerge as Academic Lead Institutions and Centres of Excellence.

The workshop on ‘Strengthening of IASEs’ was envisioned by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and Vidya Bhavan Society (VBS), Udaipur, at the behest of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to bring together all the IASEs in the country. The key aim was to develop greater

clarity and concreteness in the understanding of the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP guidelines for IASEs. Subsequent consultations led to the design of a two day residential programme which was finally conducted at the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), NCERT campus, New Delhi on July 30-31<sup>st</sup> 2013. Principals and faculty members from 17 out of 31 IASEs attended the workshop.

The main objectives of the workshop revolved around developing the following within the IASEs:

- A richer sense of being a network of important institutions spread across the country and accountable towards strengthening teacher education and preparing excellent teacher educators.
- A deeper knowledge and understanding of the MHRD 12<sup>th</sup> FYP for IASEs and how it could be adapted as per the needs and priorities of their region.
- A better grasp of larger systemic issues which support or inhibit the growth of each IASE.
- An enhanced capacity of each IASE to strengthen its annual and perspective plans along-with monitoring mechanisms and bring them in alignment with the MHRD 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.

## **2. Key Issues discussed**

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The workshop provided for a rich interaction between the participants. Some of the key issues which were highlighted were:

### **2.1 Needed, a paradigm shift**

The school education system in the country suffers from poor quality education, skewed sex-ratios in class-rooms, poor sensitivity to diversity among students, practice of rote learning, less integration of child's mother tongue and so on. There is a need to bring a paradigm shift in discourse and transform the school education in the country. Teachers undoubtedly have a key role to play in bringing about this transformation. Hence, teacher educators need to be proficient to support student teachers in becoming caring and knowledgeable professionals. As institutes which prepare 'teacher educators' for all levels of school education, IASEs have a very critical role to play in improving school education.

### **2.2 Stronger linkages with Schools and Higher Education Institutes**

TE in India for a variety of reasons has got isolated from the higher education system and also from school education system. As teacher educators working in our respective colleges, most of the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) are not confident enough to feel as an active part of the university. At the same time they are also not properly connected to the schools with which their practices are directly connected. The Government does not usually allow a University Professor to take a year-long sabbatical to teach in a school. Although the Government thinks that as professionals working in the field of teacher education, we need active engagement with schools, there are very few concrete mechanisms to ensure the same. It is important to understand that school teachers are an extended community of teacher educators. Senior experienced faculties at schools are as much teacher educators as the professional

teacher educators. For doctors, hospitals should be their site, similarly for teacher educators, schools should be their site. Hence it is necessary to engage with the issue of teacher education collectively as a community of teacher educators extended across school, college and university level.

Moreover, establishing linkages between IASEs and institutions such as DIETs, CTEs and other TE colleges is crucial.

One of the IASEs at the workshop described how they assist their local DIETs in conducting research activities through helping in developing research proposal, research design, research tools etc. This is one of the ways in which such linkages could be explored.



### **2.3 Strengthening Pre-Service Teacher Education at IASEs**

*The existing knowledge base of Teacher Education (TE) is changing.* The current curriculum needs urgent changes. There is an increasing need to focus on attitude and practices of Teachers Educators rather than just their skills and competencies. The idea of teachers as a community of practitioners who frequently discuss their issues and responses must take concrete shape. Earlier, there was a conception that TE was mostly concerned with development of skills and competencies. Today it is known that the belief framework that the teachers have, are an equally aspect of their teaching. Attitudes and practices needs to be changed. Developments in the ‘cognitive approach’ to TE, which have made considerable progress in the last few decades, are important to incorporate in the TE curriculum.



TE has to move beyond simply imparting skills on pedagogy and use of TLMs to a more cognitive one that would help teachers to reflect on their practices and beliefs. Research based TE, with elements from cognitive science, would be critical to include. It is important to understand *that teachers (both practicing and prospective) are adults* and hence TE must be about what it means to be teaching them.

One of the IASEs has a compulsory resident pre-service teacher education programme thereby ensuring full time commitment of the students to the programme. Such exemplars would be useful to consider making the TE programmes more intensive.

The *diversity question needs to be pro-actively answered while preparing teachers*. It is important to understand that classrooms and home conditions are very diverse. It is not that the children are deficient, they are simply different. Hence it is important to figure out how teacher education curriculum can accommodate this diversity. The teacher education programmes should not view diversity as a problem, but rather enable teachers to adapt their practices to different situations that they might encounter. There is an urgent need to enable our teachers to adapt to those challenges, rather than push for a routinization of the process.

In an interesting programme followed by one of the TEI, the student teachers are sent to a remote location where they are given training on community living and community work. During the course of this programme, students need to collect data from the community through interaction with them; this data is later processed and presented to the community itself. The basic idea behind this exercise is to gain an understanding about the local environment and the diversity involved in it.

Given these changes, there is a need to revisit and rework our B.Ed and M.Ed curriculum and course content. In this context, the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP also becomes particularly important because development of TE institutions is the core of this plan and it talks about the renewal of M.Ed and other courses based on National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE, 2009) and National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005). One of the sessions at the workshop was about re-imagining the M.Ed course and has been detailed later.

#### **2.4 Improving In-Service Teacher Education at IASEs**

In case of in-service training, teachers are frustrated by these trainings, mainly because they are exposed to *too many things at the same time*. As a community of teacher educators, IASEs could take it as a professional duty to critique this kind of practice and propose how this could be changed.

One of the IASEs at the workshop explained how they follow a system of *adopting a particular school for in-service training*. Once the school is selected, the faculty members of this IASE regularly visit the school, engage in teaching a few classes and slowly build a rapport with the teachers. It is only after the faculty gets an insider understanding of the school that they begin with the in-service training.



In-service cascade mode might not be the best method to improve professionalism and voice of the teacher educators. *It is not necessary that teachers are given instruction and ideas all the time.* There is also a need to create spaces where professionals can reflect on their experiences which could be further crystallized into new knowledge.

The scope as well as challenges of IASEs is immense. It is important to collectively think about what needs to be changed. Imagining and celebrating the diversity in the classroom is crucial. Although the system is large, collective effort can bring about positive changes. However, taking an initiative at the individual level is very important.

## **2.5 Strengthening the Inter-linkages between In-service and Pre-Service Training**

The inter-linkages between in-service and pre-service components have to be strengthened. The B.El.Ed programme offered in Delhi University, for instance, makes it mandatory for students to visit and stay with an alternative school or Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) for one week. Such an exposure to practical teaching gives the student-teachers the motivation required to view teaching as an intellectual exercise and as an important means to empowerment.

## **2.6 Empowering IASEs**

Reclaiming the importance of IASEs as comprehensive institutes of teacher education is not just important but necessary today. Besides, what can the IASEs give back to the profession of TE is a question they need to answer and be accountable for? How can IASEs improve their research and resource centre functions? How can they take charge and prepare caring and professional teacher educators?

Re-focusing on Pre-service and In-service Teacher Trainings and critically analyzing the current B.Ed/M.Ed courses so as to change the curriculum and course content could be one of the steps towards bringing about this kind of empowerment. Similarly continuous capacity building programmes for faculty is also necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of IASEs. Another area of focus is with regard to generation of own resources by each IASEs. This could range from generation of funds, important academic literature etc. Regional translation of important documents and literature is also crucial. To achieve these goals, it is necessary that IASEs have some sort of administrative as well as academic autonomy. At the same time, constant self evaluation by IASEs is also necessary in understanding their areas of strength and also areas which need improvement.

The second day of the workshop was used to build on the sharing of ideas and exemplars shared by the IASEs. Since, a key role of IASEs is to prepare teacher educators; it was decided to conduct a discussion around re-imagining the M.Ed programme to bring out concrete ideas and perspectives on TE into an authentic context. The next point highlights the discussions on how the M.Ed programme could be re-imagined.



### 3. Re-imagining the M.Ed Programme

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IASEs brought forth interesting ideas and perspectives linked to M.Ed curriculum renewal and address the issues and challenges with respect to undertaking such a process. It was strongly felt that there is a need to re-look at

- The levels at which M.Ed is being offered (primary/elementary/secondary);
- The sites where M.Ed can take place;
- Student profile allowed to enter the M.Ed course (B.Ed or any undergraduate);
- Revising the present curriculum ;
- The tools which are currently being used to teach (ICTs/models, etc.).

The IASEs came up with a few ideas with regard to revisiting the M.Ed Programme. These were:

- *M.Ed must have diversity in the courses being offered.* The courses may range from pedagogy of specific subjects to Educational Administration, Educational Finance, Educational Research, etc. The purpose of M.Ed should not be just limited to preparing teachers or teacher educators but also researchers, education planners, policy advisors and so on. Given that the IASEs are envisioned as regional centers of excellence, this larger view of their role must become embedded within the M.Ed programme.
- M.Ed curriculum must have *a compulsory course on research* which provides an exposure to the

various realms of educational research including descriptive research. Conducting good research and setting exemplars for other institutions is one of the most critical roles for an IASE. Also, research has sometimes been confined only to Action Research and IASEs can work to break that myth.

- Several IASEs suggested that as per its current curriculum and structure it should remain open only for those with B.Eds, and if M.Ed is conceptualized to be open for graduates from all disciplines, then *it should be made a 2 year programme* so as to lay a strong foundation for the students' in core areas such as philosophy, sociology and psychology.
- There is an urgent need to revise the current M.Ed curriculum, as it still has major components from the 80s/90s. Students need to be provided with experiences related to community projects, different evaluation procedures, research proposal writing, and exposure to various methods of research.
- IASEs which currently do not offer an M.Phil degree, must establish infrastructure and facilities so as to offer M.Phil courses.

The discussions allowed the participants to revisit some of the key assumptions behind the programmes they are currently running and learn from each others' experience on how the programme could become more lively and effective.

Although the session brought out thought-provoking issues linked to the M.Ed, how would this programme fit within the context of the IASE also needed to be considered. Further, one of the key objectives of the workshop was to have a healthy discussion on the suggestions of the 12th FYP and how can IASEs align their vision and long term plans to it. The next section describes the key action points that IASEs could set for themselves.

#### **4. Revisiting the Annual and Perspective Plans of IASEs**

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With respect to the session on IASEs revisiting their Annual & Perspective Work Plans, as per the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP, each IASE came up with key action points. The common points have been collated as under:

- IASEs would exercise their role *as a centre of excellence* in Teacher Education and take initiative to collaborate and generate funds. Most IASEs were energized to function as leading centres for Pre-service Education by becoming centre for curriculum, research, policy and educational development, within their regions.
- IASEs would strengthen *linkages with DIETs, CTEs, SCERT and other TE colleges* in their respective region and state, so as to work together as an educator community. The IASEs also felt an urgent need to work together and *network with each other* so as to share their ideas, practices and challenges.
- IASEs would consult and collaborate on research with other institutions.
- IASEs would urgently work to revise and modify the B.Ed/M.Ed curriculum and course content being currently offered. The critical analysis of the current curriculum and the modification that is brought about must reflect the suggestions and guidelines as per NCF 2005 and NCFTE 2009.

- IASEs would arrange for capacity building of faculty through refresher courses, certificate programmes and workshops, and by collaborating with other institutions in the field of Teacher Education. Exchange programmes with other universities and colleges could also be explored.
- IASEs to urgently carry out civil works pertaining to establishment of new infrastructure or any maintenance work.
- IASEs would include a plan to rejuvenate their libraries and online catalog the books. New books must be sourced, and library should subscribe to journals in education.

However, accomplishing these action points, would also involve support from the MHRD. Certain important suggestions were made by IASEs to the MHRD in order to ensure their effective functioning. These are listed as follows.

- Better coordination between centre and the state so as to ensure timely and efficient flow of funds for infrastructural and pedagogical development. If possible, IASEs should get the funds directly from the central government and not be sourced through the state.
- Government should consider forming working groups, region wise or state wise. These groups can have members from universities, NCERTs and other higher institutions.
- Conducting annual workshops for IASEs, wherein IASEs from all over the country can gather and participate and engage in discussions of contemporary relevance in TE. This would in turn also help in the professional development of faculty.
- IASEs to be provided administrative and academic autonomy so that they do not feel subservient to the SCERT, SSA, RMSA or Directorate of Public Instruction.
- Availability of NCFTE and 12<sup>th</sup> FYP in regional languages should be looked into.
- Streamlining the bureaucratic procedures to improve the overall efficiency of IASEs and reduce the administrative work on the part of faculty and principal.
- For IASEs to act as a platform for academic discussions, workshops and seminars, it should also include private colleges within its purview, as more than 90 percent colleges offering B.Ed are private and are currently beyond the work periphery of IASEs.
- MHRD to create an online portal wherein IASEs all over the country could share their work, experiences, research, ideas, queries and challenges.

## **5. Concluding Remarks**

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The final session led to a rich discussion of issues and action points discussed during the workshop. The following points were re-iterated:

- IASEs need to reclaim their voice and space and act as comprehensive and leading centres of Teacher Education. More than relying on the University/State/Centre, the IASEs must raise their voices and take action to play a key role in revising the curriculum.
- IASEs must re-look at their governance structure so as to ensure efficient functioning and autonomy, which would in turn allow them to revise their curriculum, source funds, develop Teaching-Learning Material (TLM), etc.

- IASEs must revise their B.Ed/M.Ed curriculum on the lines of NCFTE 2009 and NCF 2005. Moreover, there is an urgent need to develop TLM to support the curriculum, so as to ensure smooth and effective integration.
- IASEs to act as state-level resource centres in the region and support practicing teachers and schools. Research by IASE faculty has to supplement the resource centre by carrying out field researches in the schools and classrooms, so as to enable teachers to develop their teaching and pedagogy.
- IASEs must act as repository of best practices from all over the country and actively disseminate the materials to DIETs, CTEs, schools and teachers in their regions. Such an effort will lead to professional development of school teachers and BRCs/CRCs, and help in capacity development of IASE faculty.
- IASEs must be truly 'inclusive' and sensitive towards the children that are coming to our schools, be it the girl child, SC/ST child or a child with special needs. The student-teachers need to be made sensitive towards diversity and the curriculum should support such an initiative.
- IASEs must reflect on their annual and perspective plans and revise them so as to reflect the discussions that were carried out over the two days.



- In order to re-plan and revise their Annual plans, it is important that the IASEs keep in mind the following points:
  - Do our Annual Plans reflect the needs of the region we work in?
  - Do our Annual Plans allow vibrant, meaningful interactions with the schools and teachers?
  - Are we able to break out of our isolation and network and collaborate with similar research institutions, government or non-government?
  - Are we making a concerted attempt at collaborated research?
  - How are we going to network and work with local D.Ed /B.Ed colleges in our region?
  - Are there provisions which allow for capacity building of faculty?

- Do we give importance to innovative and new ways about work and research activities?
- Are we able to act as resource centre for the region- curating TLM?
- Are we able to improve the quality of learning experiences for our student-teachers through the curriculum envisioned in the Annual Plan?
- IASEs would gain a much better insight into their own work by reflecting on the question- What do we mean by good teachers and teacher educators?
- IASEs must have the hunger to continuously learn from each other and the happenings in TE. The faculty needs to conduct as well attend various workshops, seminars and conferences on TE.



**Annexure-1**  
**Schedule of the Workshop**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Session Name</b>	<b>Objectives and Description</b>
<b>DAY 1 – 30<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Breakfast and tea+ Registration	An opportunity to speak with each other and build rapport
<b>12.00-1.30 pm</b>	Develop a deeper understanding of MHRD 12th FYP for IASEs. <i>By Dr Singh, Dr Padma and Dr Dewan</i>	The participants are led through the thought behind the 12th FYP, proposed action steps, objectives of other TE institutions like DIETs, CTEs and how do they relate to IASEs and have been envisioned. This would help them get a larger picture of the 12th FYP
<b>1.30- 2.30 pm</b>	Lunch	
<b>2.30-4.00 pm</b>	Issues and Challenges for IASEs	IASEs think through their issues with respect to the 12th FYP – Group session facilitated by Dr Dewan and Dr Padma and team
<b>4.00-4.30 pm</b>	Tea	
<b>4.30-5.30 pm</b>	Presentation of Group work	IASEs present their work as a group. The focus is not just on issues but also how could those issues be managed
<b>DAY 2 – 31<sup>st</sup> July</b>		
<b>10.00-11.00 am</b>	Reflections of Day 1	6 point summary shared by participants
<b>11.00-12.00 am</b>	Relooking at the M.Ed- a brainstorming	Brainstorming session on what changes could be made in the M.Ed programme.



<p><b>12.00-1.30 pm</b></p>	<p>Developing the vision, revisiting the Annual Work Plans and perspective plans; implementation details for each IASE in light of current performance, level of preparedness and 12th FYP;</p>	<p>In the light of their current performance and capacity, each IASE would come up with a (revised) vision and objectives in alignment with the 12th FYP guidelines in terms of both long term and immediate goals. Each IASE in pair could prepare 5 concrete action points What will they do to revise and revive B.Ed./ M.Ed; what will they do to develop linkages, an academic culture. what do they need to do all this</p>
<p><b>1.30- 2.15 pm</b></p>	<p>Lunch</p>	
<p><b>2.30-4.00 pm</b></p>	<p>Sharing of action points</p>	<p>3-4 IASEs share the plans they have made and their thoughts on the questions that were raised in the earlier session. They would also share their next one year action plan.</p>
<p><b>4.00-5.30 pm</b></p>	<p>Plenary and closure- <i>Dr Singh, Dr Dewan and Dr Padma</i></p>	<p>IASEs and key facilitators could bring out the key points arising out of the 2 day workshop and way forward. Some kind of action plan could be agreed upon</p>

**Annexure-2**  
**List of Participants**

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