

FLN Implementation in Assamese-Medium Primary Schools in the Context of NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat: A Critical Study

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Abstract

Under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) has been identified as the first priority of school education. The policy recognises that children who fail to acquire fundamental literacy, numeracy and comprehension skills during their formative years are at risk of facing ongoing learning challenges. With this, the Government of India launched the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy, commonly referred to as NIPUN Bharat, to ensure every child attains foundational competencies by the end of Grade III. NIPUN Axom is the Assam version of this national mission with learning materials and teacher support mechanisms developed in Assamese and other regional languages.

This research journal critically analyses the implementation of FLN in Assamese medium primary schools within the framework of NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat. It explores the significance of mother tongue, availability of resources for Assamese learning, teacher preparedness, teaching methods, evaluation processes, community engagement and institutional backing. The study has a qualitative, descriptive and analytical nature, supported by policy documents, official guidelines, state materials and pertinent academic discussions. Analysis reveals significant advantages for Assamese-medium schools, such as cultural familiarity, a strong oral language tradition, and availability of teaching-learning materials adapted to the local context. However, implementation is hampered by uneven teacher training, the realities of multilingual classrooms, lack of infrastructure, lack of parental engagement, excessive administrative responsibilities, and the gap between policy expectations and classroom practice. The paper contends that for FLN to be implemented with success, it requires more than just distribution of materials or numerical targets. It requires sustained academic mentoring, context-sensitive pedagogy, continuous assessment, strengthened teacher autonomy and meaningful participation by families and communities.

Keywords:

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, NEP 2020, NIPUN Bharat, NIPUN Axom, Assamese-Medium Schools, Primary Education, Multilingualism, Teacher Education.

Introduction

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy is described as the basic skills that allow children to read with understanding, write meaningfully, think mathematically and apply basic numeracy concepts in everyday life. All subsequent learning builds on these skills. A child who cannot read a simple text or understand basic numbers at the early primary stage will have difficulty in every school subject. Thus, NEP 2020 places universal FLN at the core of education reform and proclaims it an urgent national mission.

This policy commitment is translated into an implementation framework by NIPUN Bharat. The mission includes children of the age group of three to nine years covering the pre-school and Grades I to III. The

vision is that by the end of Grade III all children will have acquired the desired competencies of reading, writing and numeracy. The guidelines emphasis on play-based, activity-based, multilingual, competency-oriented and inclusive learning rather than mechanical memorisation (Zoya Ansari).

Assam has embraced the national mission thru NIPUN Axom. The state launched the initiative on 16th November 2021 and the administrative and academic structures at the state, district, block and school levels were constituted. It has developed FLN material in Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Hindi, English, Hmar, Manipuri and Garo. These include teacher guides, worksheets, big books, picture stories, letter cards, word cards, conversation charts and numeracy work cards (GOI).

In this reform, the Assamese medium primary school has a special place. Assamese is not merely a medium of instruction but also a significant conduit for local culture, community knowledge, oral traditions, and children's everyday experiences. Meanwhile, many classrooms in Assam are multi-lingual classrooms. Children may speak Assamese, tribal languages, Bengali, Hindi or other varieties at home and meet Assamese as the formal language of school. Thus, the implementation of FLN in Assamese medium schools has to take into account both the pedagogical potential of the mother tongue and the difficulties associated with the linguistic diversity (Govt of Assam).

This paper critically reviews the implementation of FLN in Assamese medium primary schools. It does not conflate policy adoption with policy implementation. It instead explores the implementation of policy principles in classroom processes, teacher practices, assessment and child learning.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the strong policy emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy under NEP 2020 and the operational framework provided by NIPUN Bharat and NIPUN Axom, the effectiveness of implementation ultimately depends on classroom realities. Assamese-medium primary schools operate within diverse linguistic, cultural and institutional contexts where teacher preparedness, multilingual classrooms, availability and pedagogical use of learning materials, assessment practices, parental participation and infrastructure may vary considerably. The central problem, therefore, is the possible gap between policy expectations and actual classroom implementation. This study critically examines that gap and explores the conditions required for meaningful and context-sensitive implementation of FLN in Assamese-medium primary schools.

2. Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

- To study the implementation of NIPUN Axom in Assamese medium primary schools.
- To study the role of Assamese as a medium of instruction in foundational learning.
- To investigate the readiness of teachers and the utilisation of FLN teaching-learning aids.
- To investigate the feasibility of play-way and activity-way methods of teaching in Assamese medium classrooms.
- To study the role of assessment, parental involvement and institutional support.
- To determine critical challenges for successful implementation of FLN.
- To recommend measures to enhance the quality, inclusiveness and sustainability of FLN practices.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study:

- How does NEP 2020 define FLN as a national educational goal?
- Up to what extent does NIPUN Axom fulfil the needs of Assamese medium schools?
- What does Assamese provide to the children for the development of the basic language?
- What are the difficulties teachers experience in implementing FLN?
- Are existing assessment and monitoring practices child-focused enough?
- What institutional reforms are required for effective implementation?

4. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study is confined to the implementation of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in Assamese-medium primary schools within the policy framework of NEP 2020, NIPUN Bharat and NIPUN Axom. It focuses on language, pedagogy, teaching-learning resources, teacher preparedness, multilingualism, assessment, community engagement and institutional support. The study is conceptual and documentary in nature and

does not attempt a statistical measurement of learning outcomes or a comparative empirical survey of all schools in Assam.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Approach and Design

The design of the research is of qualitative and descriptive-analytical type. The study is based on documentary analysis of national and state policy documents, official guidelines, implementation materials and scholarly literature on FLN, NEP 2020, multilingual education and primary schooling.

5.2 Sources of Data

The main sources are NIPUN Bharat Guidelines for Implementation published by the Ministry of Education, Government of India; official information on NIPUN Axom released by Samagra Shiksha, Assam; SCERT Assam materials; and some academic discussions on FLN. The NIPUN Bharat guidelines cover academic and administrative aspects of FLN such as foundational language, literacy, numeracy, competency-based learning, assessment, teacher education, community participation and institutional monitoring. The Assam government's NIPUN Axom framework gives information on state level structures, learning materials, teacher training and multilingual implementation.

5.3 Method of Analysis

The study uses a thematic analysis. The main themes are:

- Goals and policy vision for FLN.
- Development of language and literacy.
- Pedagogy of numeracy.
- Teacher preparation.
- Classroom resources and learning materials.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Inclusion and multilingualism.
- Community engagement.
- Institutional and infrastructure barriers.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The paper is conceptual and policy-oriented, rather than an empirical survey of a statistically representative sample. Therefore, it does not claim to measure actual learning outcomes across all Assamese medium schools. It seeks to critically interpret the implementation framework and identify the conditions for effective classroom practice. A future field-based study may validate this analysis thru classroom observation, teacher interviews, child assessments and case studies at the school level in districts such as Golaghat, Jorhat, Nagaon, Dibrugarh and Kamrup.

6. Review of Literature

6.1 NEP 2020 and FLN

The NEP 2020 states that foundational literacy and numeracy is the topmost priority of the school education system. It says the rest of the curriculum is useless if children can't learn the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. The policy envisages curricular, pedagogical, assessment and institutional reforms to meet the objective that every child must attain FLN by Grade III. The importance of the policy lies in its shift from an input-centred approach to a learning-outcome-centred approach. Previous education programs had tended to measure success by enrolment, infrastructure, distribution of textbooks and appointments of teachers. By contrast, NEP 2020 centers children's actual competencies in educational planning. This is important because just going to school does not mean you will learn (Bashir and Jan).

6.2 NIPUN Bharat Mission

NIPUN Bharat operationalises the FLN vision of NEP 2020. Its goals include oral language development, phonological awareness, print awareness, decoding, vocabulary, reading comprehension, reading fluency, writing, pre-number concepts, number operations, measurement, shapes, spatial understanding, patterns and data handling (GOI).

The mission requires hands-on and joyful learning. Its guidelines include storytelling, toy-based pedagogy, art integration, sports integration, role play, group work, project work, picture reading, read-aloud activities, and the use of locally available materials. It also advocates competency-based learning in which children progress through clearly defined and measurable learning outcomes rather than merely completing textbooks (Zoya Ansari).

The assessment under NIPUN Bharat is meant to be formative, continuous and child-centred. Recommended are observation, anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios, peer assessment, self-assessment, and holistic progress cards. These approaches are particularly suitable for young children as the foundations for learning are built up over time and cannot be adequately captured in one written test (Govt. of India).

6.3 Language, Mother Tongue and Foundational Learning

The research on early childhood education has generally supported the use of children's language of familiarity in the early stages of learning. A solid home language foundation supports children in building vocabulary, oral expression, comprehension, and confidence. NIPUN Bharat also acknowledges the importance of oral language development in the home language and suggests that children who develop a strong base in their first language can learn a second language better (Govt. of India).

This principle is of considerable importance for Assamese medium schools. Assamese gives children access to familiar stories, songs, cultural references, local vocabulary and community experiences. When children can connect classroom learning to their home and environment, learning becomes more relevant.

But language is not an unproblematic or straightforward category in Assam. Assamese medium schools can admit children whose home languages are Bodo, Mising, Karbi, Bengali, Hindi, Rabha, Tiwa and others. Therefore, the use of Assamese as the formal medium should not result in the marginalisation of the home languages of the children. A sensitive multilingual approach may use children's knowledge of their home language as a bridge to acquiring Assamese literacy (Govt of Assam).

6.4 Assamese-Medium Schools and Contextual Resources

Assamese as a medium of instruction in primary education has several pedagogical advantages. Firstly, it can bridge the gap between school knowledge and children's life experiences. Secondly, Assamese has an extensive literary tradition which helps in the preparation of graded reading materials, children's literature, poems, stories and textbooks with local context. Third, teachers can use familiar examples to promote oral interaction and participation in the classroom.

To cater to these needs NIPUN Axom developed FLN resources in Assamese and other media. The state has developed literacy and numeracy materials which include instructional designs, worksheets, conversation charts, letter cards, sentence cards, picture stories, reading books and numeracy work cards. This is an important step as the national materials may not always reflect the linguistic and cultural contexts of Assam. But availability of Assamese materials does not mean effective use automatically. Teachers should know the purpose of each material and how it can be integrated with classroom interaction. A worksheet without discussion, explanation, peer interaction, or individual feedback can turn into a mechanical exercise. The central question, therefore, is not only the production of material but the pedagogical ability to make good use of it.

6.5 Research Gap

Existing policy documents provide a broad framework for FLN, while available discussions largely address foundational learning, teacher preparedness, multilingual education and assessment at a general level. However, the specific implementation of these principles in Assamese-medium primary schools requires closer contextual analysis because Assam combines a strong regional language tradition with substantial linguistic diversity and uneven institutional conditions. The present study addresses this gap by critically interpreting how national and state-level FLN frameworks translate into the pedagogical and institutional realities of Assamese-medium classrooms.

6.6 Teacher Development and Support

The key actor in the implementation of the FLN is the teacher. NIPUN Bharat recommends ongoing professional development, academic mentoring and empowerment of SCERTs, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs. It also recommends that teacher training should include local-language materials, child development, assessment, inclusive education, classroom management and activity-based pedagogy (Govt. of India).

Assam has constituted state, district, block and academic task force structures for NIPUN Axom. It has also developed teacher training and support mechanisms. The state reports training activities for resource persons and teachers including literacy, numeracy, learning outcomes, assessment, remedial teaching, multilingual education and use of teaching-learning materials.

The ultimate question is whether training results in lasting change in the classroom. Short cascade training can convey information, but may not foster deep pedagogical understanding. Teachers need opportunities to practise activities, receive feedback, observe model classrooms, discuss challenges and adapt materials to local contexts. Training without continued mentoring may be just a formal exercise in compliance (Zoya Ansari).

6.7 Learning Outcomes and Assessment

The focus of NIPUN Bharat on learning outcomes and formative assessment is a welcome change. Teachers can assess children in Assamese-medium classrooms thru oral reading, storytelling, picture description, conversation, writing samples, counting activities, classification, pattern creation and problem-solving tasks. Such assessment can better reflect children's real abilities than rote-based tests. But assessment can become counterproductive if targets are treated as rigid performance quotas. Teachers may focus on checking boxes rather than understanding children's learning processes. Or kids could be forced into reading or writing too soon, ruining the fun and exploratory qualities of early education (GOI).

A balanced system requires clear competencies and flexibility. Teaching should be informed by learning outcomes, not anxiety. Assessment should be used to identify gaps in learning and provide remedial support, not to label children as successful or unsuccessful.

7. Conceptual Framework

The study conceptualises FLN implementation as a process in which the policy vision of NEP 2020 is operationalised through NIPUN Bharat and adapted at the state level through NIPUN Axom. Effective classroom implementation is shaped by the interaction of language context, teacher preparedness, pedagogy, teaching-learning resources, multilingualism, assessment, community engagement and institutional support. These interacting factors influence the extent to which children develop foundational literacy and numeracy competencies.

NEP 2020 → NIPUN Bharat → NIPUN Axom → Classroom Implementation → Foundational Learning Outcomes

Mediating factors: Assamese language and local culture; multilingualism; teacher preparedness; child-centred pedagogy; teaching-learning resources; formative assessment; community engagement; institutional and infrastructure support.

8. FLN Implementation in Assamese-Medium Primary Schools

8.1 Curriculum and Classroom Pedagogy

The implementation of FLN implies a shift from a textbook-centred approach to a child-centred pedagogy. This can be done thru local stories, rhymes, folk tales, picture reading, conversation, dramatisation, environmental observation and games in Assamese medium schools. Children learn vocabulary from things around them, and numeracy from activities in the market, counting things in the home, measurement, games, and examples in nature (Govt. of India). The Assamese language is suitable for the activities based on the oral language. They may be asked to describe pictures, talk about family experiences, tell stories, explain procedures, and carry on group conversations. These activities develop listening, speaking, vocabulary, sequencing, reasoning and confidence before formal reading and writing. Number sense should be likewise grounded in the lived experiences of children. Mathematics can be made concrete by counting seeds, arranging leaves, comparing sizes, identifying shapes in the classroom, measuring objects, and discussing patterns in cloth or local designs. The NIPUN Bharat guidelines also place special emphasis on play, activity, toy-making, storytelling, group work and experiential learning (Zoya Ansari).

8.2 Teaching-Learning Resources

Development of Assamese FLN materials is one of the major strengths of NIPUN Axom. Materials prepared in the state include alphabet and vowel charts, letter cards, word cards, big books, picture stories, worksheets, reading books, conversation charts, numeracy work cards and posters. These resources can be

used to support print-rich classrooms and provide repeated opportunities for reading and writing (Bashir and Jan).

Their efficacy depends on availability and utilisation in the classroom. And materials should be available in sufficient quantities in schools, and teachers should know how to use them at different stages of learning. Materials should be attractive, culturally relevant, gender sensitive and inclusive of children with disabilities (Govt of Assam).

In rural and economically poor schools, locally available and inexpensive teaching aids are of great importance. Teachers can use bottle caps, stones, sticks, seeds, leaves, paper cards, discarded boxes and locally available objects for numeracy and language activities. These materials reduce dependency on expensive resources and encourage teachers to develop activities that meet children's needs (Govt. of India).

8.3 Classroom Challenges and Continuing Teacher Support

The teachers of Assamese medium primary schools have many responsibilities to perform. Beside teaching they may be engaged in administrative work, surveys, elections, midday-meal supervision, record maintenance and other duties. These responsibilities mean less time for planning, for individual support, for assessment. Also very different is teacher preparation. Some teachers may be familiar with child centred and activity based methods. Others may have been trained to lecture, to repeat, to copy and to complete textbooks. FLN requires specialised knowledge in early reading, phonological awareness, oral-language development, emergent writing, number sense, and formative assessment (Bashir and Jan).

In this way professional development should be ongoing and practice based. Teachers should be provided with:

- Demonstration Lessons in Assamese.
- Opportunities to observe peers.
- Mentoring by CRC, BRC and DIET faculty in schools.
- Support for adapting activities for multilingual classrooms.
- Training in inclusive and gender-sensitive teaching methods.
- Guidance for Using Assessment Records for Remediation Instruction.

8.4 Multilingual Classroom Challenges

One of the most important challenges is linguistic diversity of Assamese medium schools. A child can speak a different language at home but can understand Assamese. Another child may understand Assamese spoken but have difficulty with Assamese script. When teachers interpret this difficulty as a deficit in intelligence or effort, children may withdraw and disengage. Multilingual pedagogy should allow children to express initial ideas in their home language and then gradually build up Assamese vocabulary and literacy (Govt of Assam). Teachers can make multi-lingual word walls, encourage peer translation, use pictures and gestures, incorporate local stories, and compare words across languages. Community members are also able to contribute by sharing songs, stories and cultural knowledge. This does not mean that Assamese as the medium of instruction will be diluted. Instead it constructs a bridge from the child's existing linguistic resources to school language. Such pedagogy corresponds to the NIPUN Bharat emphasis on oral language, inclusion and local context (GOI).

8.5 Assessment and Support for Remedial Needs

Assessment has to be a part of the everyday teaching. A teacher can determine if a child is having difficulty with reading by observing if the child can identify letters, associate sounds and symbols, blend sounds, read familiar words and comprehend a short passage. Numeracy assessment may cover counting, one to one correspondence, comparison, classification, pattern recognition and simple operations (Tejaswini Priyadarshini Sethy and Laxmidhar Behera).

When learning gaps are identified, teachers should target support. Children in Grades IV and V who have not acquired foundational skills require supplementary materials appropriate for their age, individual guidance and peer support. NIPUN Bharat explicitly addresses this need, rather than assuming all children will acquire the same competencies at the same pace. The Holistic Progress Card can improve a wider understanding of children's development. SCERT Assam has released resources of Balvatika and Grades I and II foundational-stage progress-cards in Assamese language. But such cards require time, training and clear direction to use. Otherwise they might become another paperwork burden (Govt. of India).

8.6 Community Engagement and Institutional Support

Effective implementation also depends on supportive institutions and meaningful participation by families and communities. The wider analysis of this paper shows that state, district, block and school-level structures, along with DIET, BRC and CRC support, are essential for mentoring and contextual adaptation. Parents and community members can contribute through oral language activities, storytelling, games, regular attendance and encouragement without being burdened with formal teaching responsibilities.

9. Policy–Practice Gap in FLN Implementation

A central issue emerging from the analysis is the gap between the aspirations of policy and the conditions of classroom practice. NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat envisage activity-based pedagogy, continuous assessment, multilingual sensitivity, individual support and sustained professional development. In practice, however, schools may face uneven teacher preparation, administrative workload, limited time for planning and assessment, inadequate infrastructure and varying levels of parental participation. The availability of materials and training, therefore, cannot by itself guarantee learning transformation. Implementation requires flexibility, mentoring, teacher autonomy and adaptation to local conditions.

10. Critical Analysis of FLN Implementation

10.1 Strengths of the Existing Framework

- It stresses basic learning instead of assuming that foundational skills are automatic outcomes.
- It links literacy and numeracy to play, experience, language and child development.
- It encourages formative and competency-based assessment.
- It recognises the importance of local languages and culturally relevant materials.
- It provides institutional responsibilities at national, state, district, block and school levels.
- It promotes the involvement of parents and the community.
- Assam has developed FLN material in Assamese and other regional languages.
- The state has set up administrative and academic mechanism for NIPUN Axom.

These strengths provide a firm footing for policy. This framework is particularly useful because it treats FLN as a broad mission rather than a narrow reading campaign.

10.2 Implementation Challenges and Limitations

The main limitation is the disconnect between policy design and classroom reality. Policy documents generally presume that schools have sufficient teachers, time, materials, training, and institutional support. But these conditions are uneven in practice.

The second limitation is the risk of over-standardisation. Standardised learning targets can support tracking progress but also have the potential to overlook differences in children's language, disability, socioeconomic background, preschool experience and rate of development. Different forms of support may be required for the same competency in an urban Assamese medium school and a remote rural school.

A third limitation is teachers' autonomy. If teachers are required to adhere to a rigid lesson plan and fill out monitoring formats, they may have limited flexibility to adapt activities. FLN is a matter of professional judgement especially in mixed-ability and multilingual classrooms.

A fourth limitation is the danger of conflating materials with pedagogy. Charts and cards and worksheets and books are only as good as they can foster interaction and meaning-making. Just because they are up on classroom walls does not mean children are learning.

10.3 Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

While implementing FLN, social and educational inequalities have to be addressed. Disadvantaged households may lack books, digital devices, preschool exposure and adult support at home. Children with disabilities may require adapted materials and extra time, assistive devices and specialised intervention. Boys and girls should have equal opportunity in speaking, mathematics, leadership, games and classroom responsibilities. Learning materials should be free of gender stereotypes and reflect children from a variety of social, cultural, linguistic and physical backgrounds. NIPUN Bharat guidelines are explicit about equal expectations and non-discriminatory classroom practices (Bashir and Jan).

10.4 Community Participation

Sharing stories, talking, playing local games, counting household items, and reading together are some of the ways parents and community members can promote reading and numeracy. In regions where parents have limited formal education, schools should not regard them as incapable of participation. Instead they can be supported to promote oral language, attendance, regular practice and children's confidence.

Community engagement has to be practical and respectful. Parents should not be burdened with formal teaching responsibilities which they cannot perform. The school should give simple suggestions in Assamese and other relevant languages.

11. Major Findings of the Study

The critical analysis leads to the following findings:

- FLN has been appropriately positioned as the central priority of primary education.
- NIPUN Bharat provides a comprehensive framework covering curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, teacher education, governance, and community participation.
- NIPUN Axom has translated the national mission into a state-level programme and has developed resources in Assamese and other regional languages.
- Assamese can strengthen foundational learning by connecting school language with local culture, oral traditions, and children's experiences.
- Multilingual classrooms require flexible strategies that use home languages as learning resources.
- Teacher training is necessary but insufficient unless it is continuous, classroom-based, and supported by mentoring.
- The availability of teaching-learning materials is a positive development, but their pedagogical use remains more important than their distribution.
- Formative assessment can improve FLN when it leads to immediate remedial teaching.
- Administrative workload, uneven infrastructure, and limited time weaken implementation.
- Excessive focus on targets and documentation may reduce the joy, flexibility, and creativity of foundational learning.
- Inclusion requires stronger support for children with disabilities, first-generation learners, and children from linguistically diverse communities.

12. Educational and Policy Implications

The analysis has several implications. Pedagogically, FLN requires play-based, activity-oriented and context-sensitive practices rather than mechanical completion of textbooks. For teacher education, short-term training must be supplemented by school-based mentoring, demonstration lessons and opportunities for reflection. At the policy level, implementation should allow contextual flexibility and reduce excessive documentation and non-academic workload. Institutionally, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs need to provide sustained academic support. Community participation should focus on simple, culturally familiar activities that strengthen oral language, confidence, attendance and everyday numeracy.

13. Suggestions

The following measures may improve FLN implementation in Assamese-medium primary schools:

- Develop district-specific FLN plans that reflect linguistic, geographical, and socioeconomic diversity.
- Strengthen Assamese children's literature through graded storybooks, poems, picture books, folk narratives, and local informational texts.
- Prepare multilingual bridge materials for children whose home language differs from Assamese.
- Make teacher training continuous, practical, and school-based rather than limited to short cascade programmes.
- Establish regular classroom mentoring through DIETs, BRCs, and CRCs.
- Reduce teachers' non-academic workload during the foundational stage.
- Provide sufficient libraries, print-rich materials, numeracy kits, and low-cost teaching-learning resources.
- Use play, storytelling, music, local games, art, and environmental activities as regular pedagogical practices.
- Ensure that assessment records remain simple and useful for planning instruction.
- Organise remedial and individualised support for children who are behind expected competencies.
- Provide accessible materials and specialised support for children with disabilities.

- Involve parents through simple Assamese-language activities that can be practised at home.
- Encourage teacher-led action research on FLN practices in Assamese-medium classrooms.
- Conduct independent evaluations of NIPUN Axom that measure actual learning, not only training completion or material distribution.
- Recognise successful local practices and facilitate sharing among schools.

14. Conclusion

The FLN implementation in Assamese medium primary schools is a great opportunity to transform early education in Assam. NEP 2020 gives the vision, NIPUN Bharat gives the national framework and NIPUN Axom gives a state-level mechanism for implementation. Major achievements include the preparation of learning materials in Assamese and development of state, district, block and academic support structures.

But the success of the mission will depend on the reality of the classroom. Children need skilled, supported teachers, meaningful language experiences, joyful math activities, appropriate materials, ongoing feedback, and welcoming school environments. Assamese has to be more than a means of translating textbooks, it has to be a living language of conversation, imagination, reasoning and cultural expression.

The challenge is to move from program implementation to learning transformation. This will necessitate ongoing investment in teacher capacity, multilingual pedagogy, school-based assessment, community participation and context-sensitive academic support. If these are ensured, Assamese-medium primary schools can be powerful spaces to build confident readers, writers, thinkers and problem solvers.

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