EDUCATION FOR ALL

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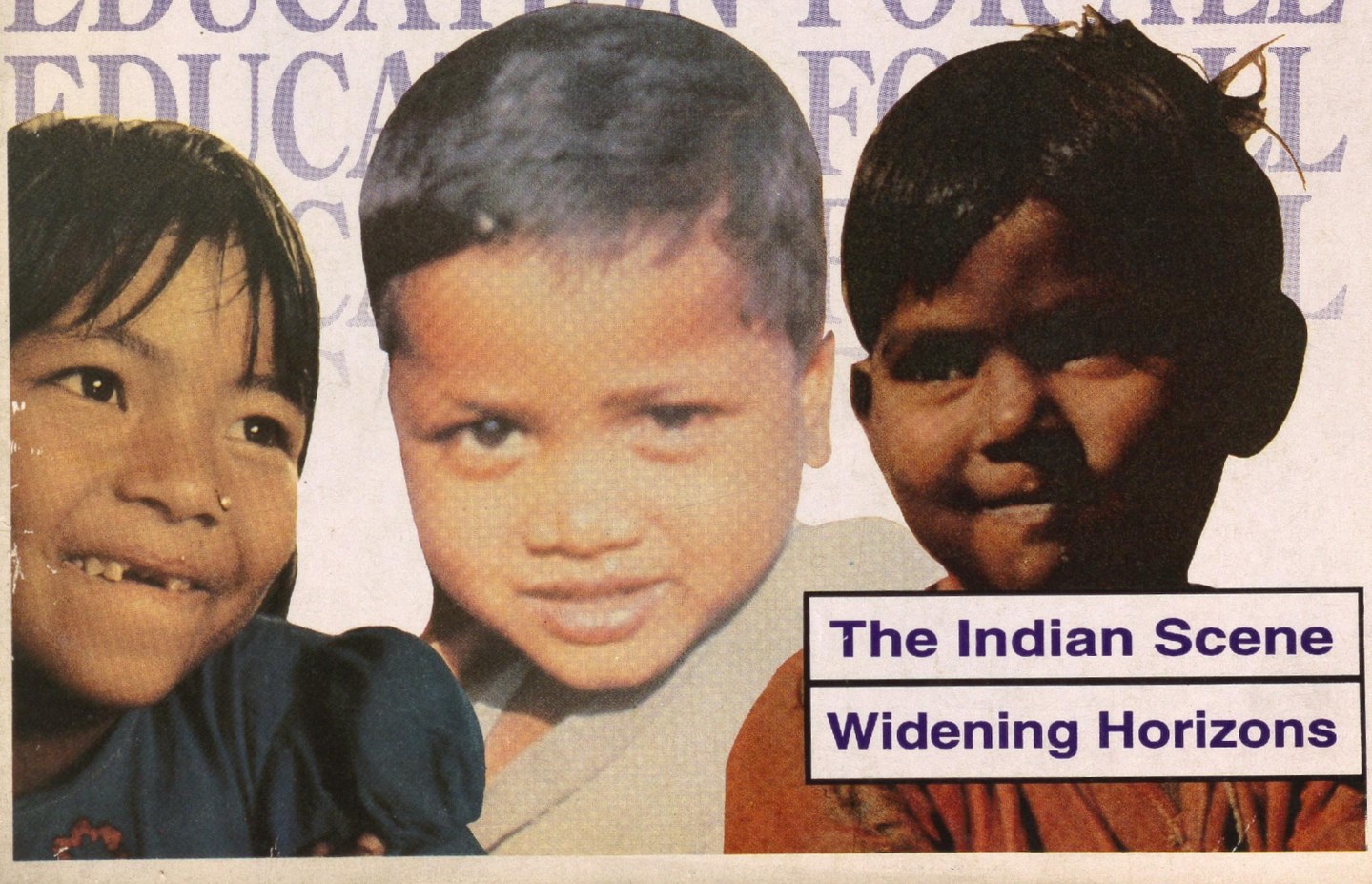

The Indian Scene

Widening Horizons

Produced by
Department of Education
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India
With Support from UNICEF

Education for All
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Department of Education
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India
December 1993

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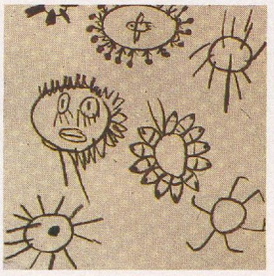

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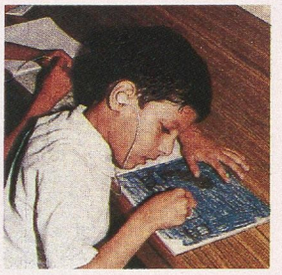

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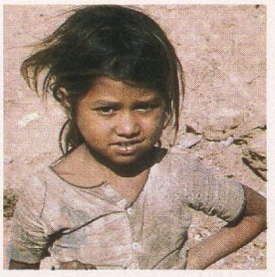

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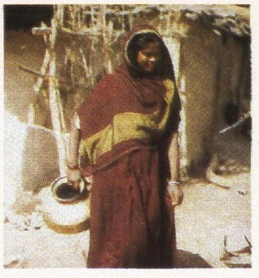
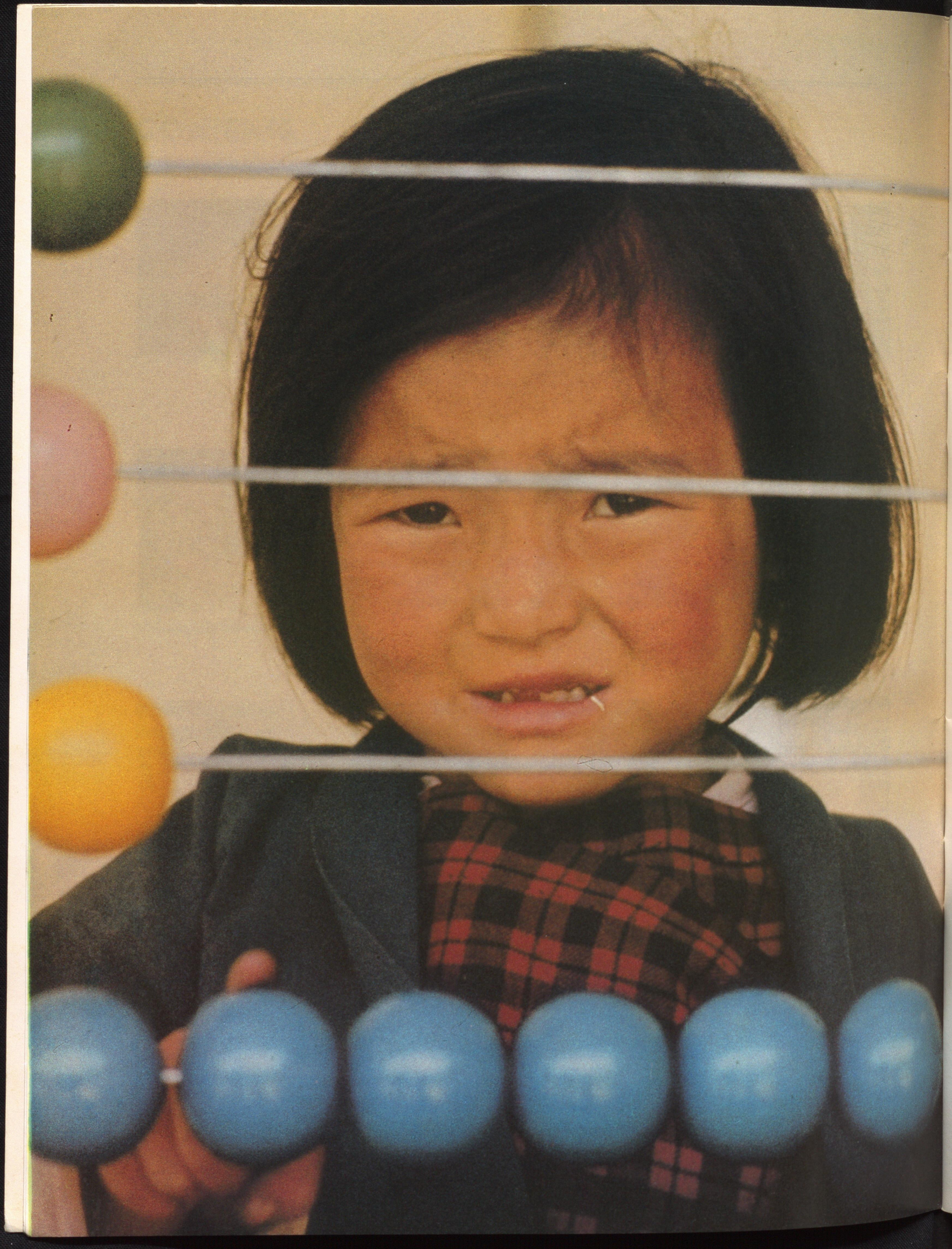




I'm learning how to read

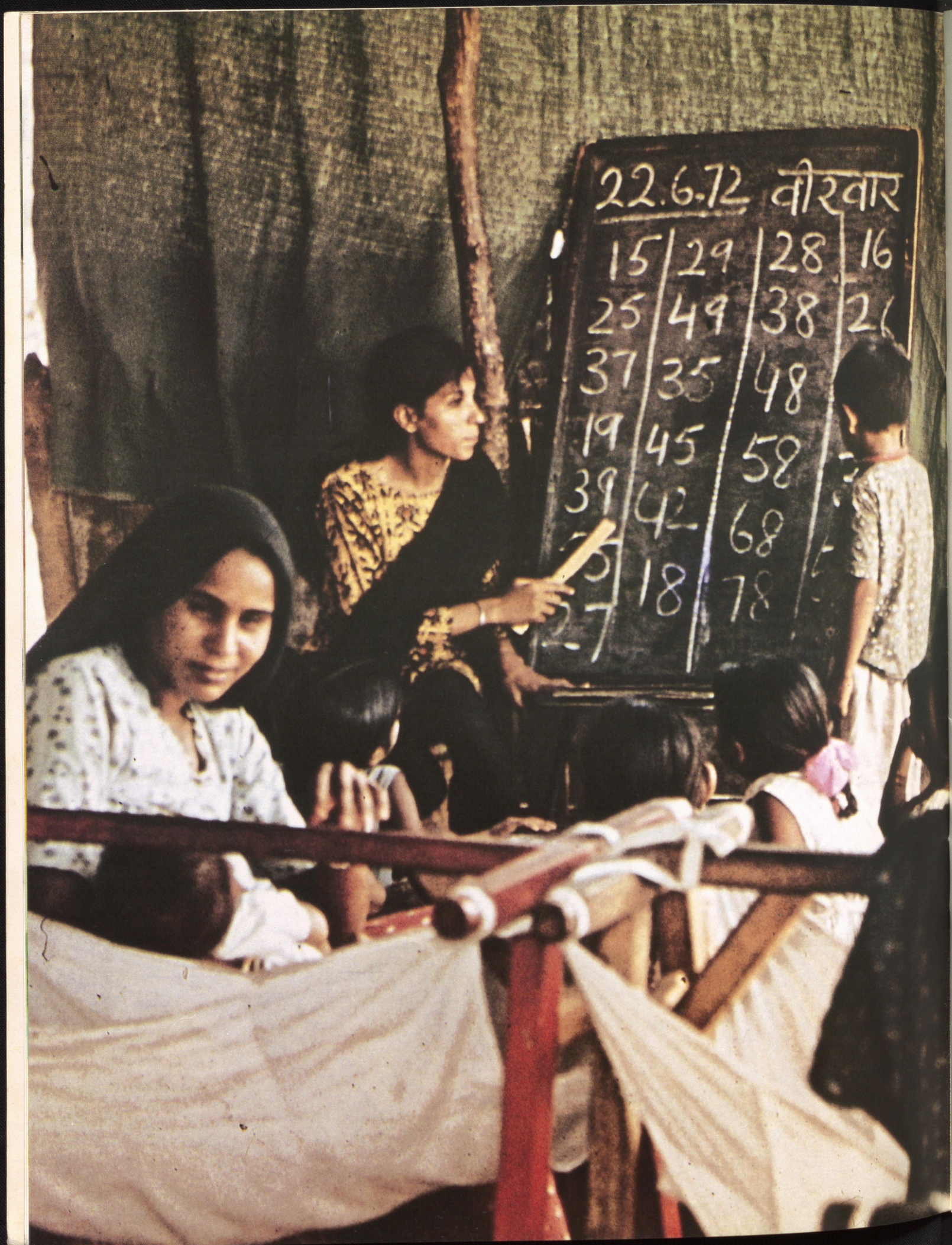
So that I can read my own destiny

I'm learning how to write

So that I can write my own destiny

I'm learning how to count

So that I can keep an account of my rights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This document presents a panoramic view of some initiatives by the State, the voluntary sector and various others to translate the goal of Education For All into reality. They are illustrative of several such ventures. The sketches which follow do not attempt to encapsule the range and diversity of the Indian experience. Instead they are indicators of the complexity of a situation unrivalled.

As thumbnail sketches they provide a glimpse of the processes at work and hint at the movement for change. These stories are less about projects, organisations or educationists and more about the people whose lives are changing with the spread of education.

They are a recognition of the role of parents, teachers, administrators, activists and learners in:

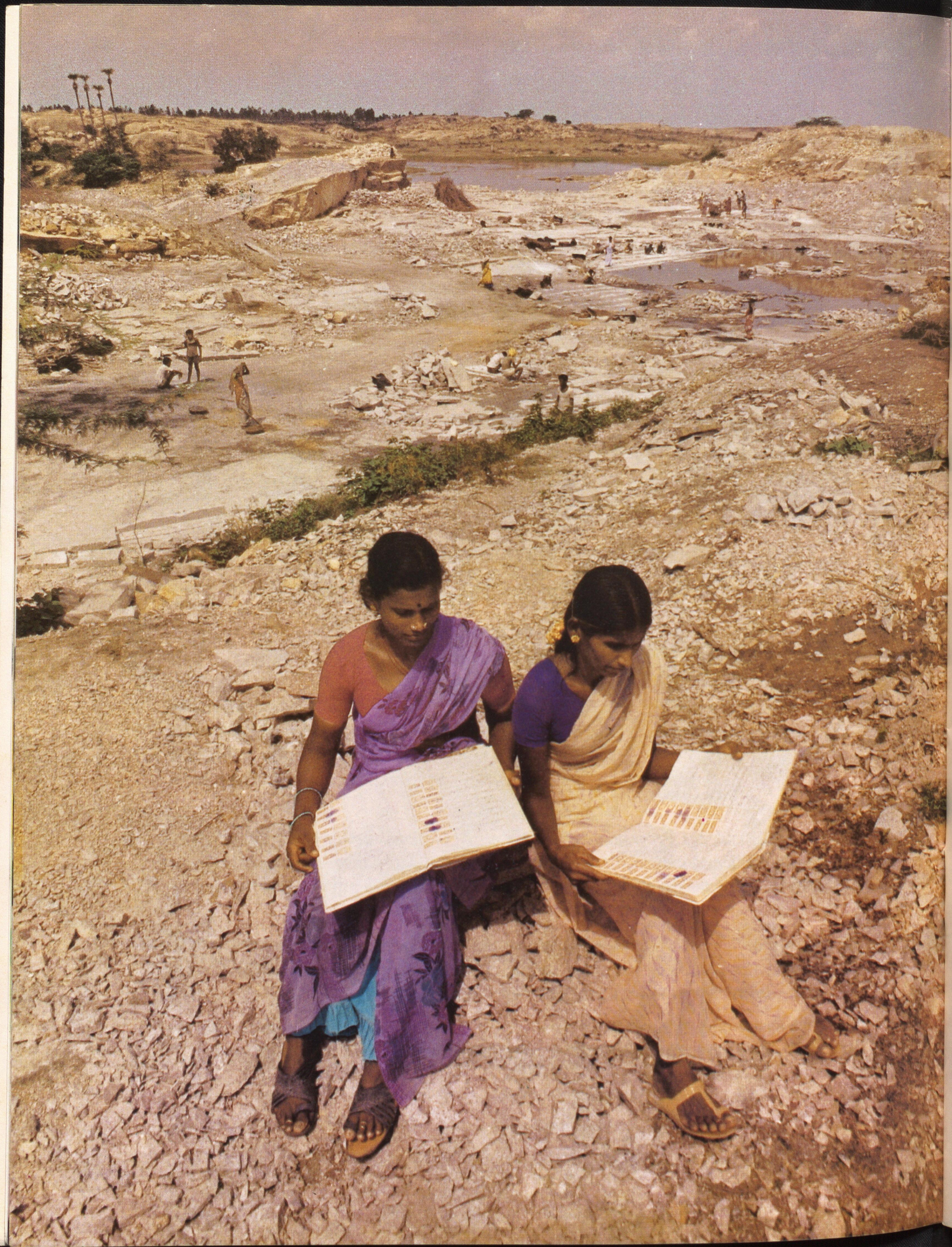
- ☞ *Universalising access to education*
- ☞ *Retaining all children below the age of 14 within the school network*
- ☞ *Encouraging adults to educate themselves and providing all facilities to accelerate the process and*
- ☞ *Ensuring a qualitative improvement in Education for All.*

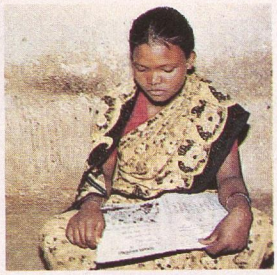
The articulation of these goals followed a self-appraisal of the state of Indian education. Recognising the need to accomodate the country's geographical, cultural and economic diversities in deciding educational priorities, the National Policy of Education catalysed a change in philosophy. While laying down the minimum levels of learning, it provided space within the formal structure for innovative, people-centred, experiments in pedagogy.

Towards this end, the Programme of Action of the National Policy of Education channelled State action to universalise elementary education. Mobilising local communities to take responsibility for the quality of education, was accepted as a pre-requisite for achievement of these goals.

The area-specific approach which is evolving has given local communities more control over resources. Within the changing milieu, as responsibilities devolve, a holistic plan emerges - designed to solve local problems with available expertise.

This document thus reflects some of the responses to policy changes in the years since the national policy charted a new course of community-based education for development.





The Countdown has Begun

Ernakulam district is 100 per cent literate. Even from a state regularly compared to the most advanced nations, this was news. In the space of one year, all 1,85,000 illiterate people in Ernakulam district were taught to read, write, add, subtract, multiply and divide. At the end of the year, one district in India had eradicated illiteracy.

A small district in Kerala, India's most educationally advanced state, Ernakulam, was an unlikely start for a national mission to eradicate illiteracy.



In Ernakulam, folk musicians, (Left) educationists and volunteers exhort people to learn



Yet a year later, the Ernakulam experience was accepted as the model for a mass campaign to literacy. To rewind a little, in 1988, India launched a National Literacy Mission with the objective: 80 million young and illiterate citizens between the ages of 15-35 should become at least functionally literate by 1995 and all Indians should be functionally literate by the year 2001.

In a country which has worshipped learning for centuries and where knowledge-seekers are placed on a pedestal, the mission's success was guaranteed.

Through the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) the mission has attempted a national awakening. Today it covers more than 200 districts in the country. More than five million volunteers, two-thirds of whom are women, have been mobilised. In just five years, 33 million people have been made functionally literate. The figures, though impressive, do not reflect the innovative mobilisation techniques and the novel management structure which have made this effort successful.

Cycling towards emancipation

The Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) and the Post Literacy Campaign (PLC) have significantly and qualitatively changed the life of the people of Pudukottai in Tamil Nadu.

The heart of Tamil Nadu cycled its way onto frontpages and into the imagination of millions of illiterate and neo-literate men and women throughout the country when in August 1992, Pudukottai district achieved 'total literacy'.

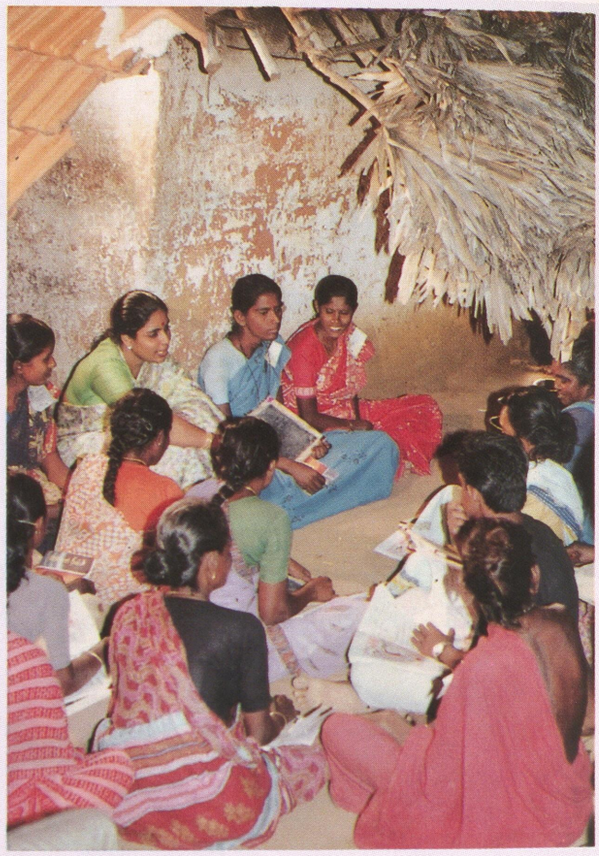
When the district was proposed for the TLC in March 1991, catalytic social change was not on the agenda. The numbers, though impressive, do not even hint at the forces unleashed.

The district convention formally launched the TLC on July 23, 1991 and following an intensive and highly compressed motivation phase, actual teaching began on October 2, 1991. There followed a year of hectic activity and in August 1992, the PLC was inaugurated. During that year, 250,000 learners, out of a potential 290,000 were enrolled under the TLC. While all completed the first primer, 200,000 learners completed the second primer and of these 180,000 achieved the final TLC stage of completing the third primer.

But the crucial fact about TLC in Pudukottai is not the number of neo-literates achieved by the campaign but the transformation of the campaign into something wider and more emancipatory than reading, writing and numeracy – something that has led to the empowerment of the people, especially of women.



Learning together



Comparing progress

To understand why the TLC went beyond literacy, understanding the people involved in the campaign is crucial. The enthusiasm of the collector (chief administrator of a district) ensured the cooperation of the district administration.

Most important was the participation of the people especially the women. Both as learners and volunteers, women came in large numbers to the Arivoli Iyakkam (Light of Knowledge Movement) as the TLC was known in Tamil Nadu. As a result, the TLC in Pudukottai was one of the first to use women in the campaign's management in a big way. Twenty per cent of full-time Arivoli Assistant Coordinators were women. Every block and panchayat had a female convenor as well as a male one.

The large-scale participation of women was in itself a reason why Pudukottai's Arivoli Iyakkam was not confined to the spread of literacy.

As adults, their learning could not be limited to the alphabet or the lessons in the primers. In addition, the women needed to learn about matters that immediately affected them: health, hygiene, childcare and means of self-employment.

From this grew an awareness of their rights and of the facilities provided. Thus, they learnt that the attendance of one woman doctor at every Primary Health Centre for a specified number of hours every month was mandatory. There arose a demand that such services be provided regularly.

In the initial stages of the Arivoli Iyakkam, a fifth component i.e. mobility was added to the four prescribed by the NLM. A scheme was initiated to teach women cycling in the face of much initial scepticism ("what did cycling have to do with literacy?").

The idea caught the imagination of the women and everyone, not just the volunteers, wanted to learn cycling: Leading to a shortage of ladies' cycles in the district! Undeterred, many women learnt to handle men's cycles.

On March 8, 1992, 1500 women cyclists staged a rally in Pudukottai town to mark International Women's Day. Arivoli Iyakkam organised cycling exhibitions-cum-contests and, in one week, over 70,000 women demonstrated their newly-acquired skills.

Said one of Arivoli Coordinators, herself one of the first to learn cycling: "The main thing was the confidence it gave to women. It reduced their dependence on men. It is difficult for people to understand how important this is for rural women. People may laugh. Only the women know how important it is."



No longer a male preserve



The determination is evident

The new-found self-confidence of the women has found a variety of expressions. One of the most significant is the anti-arrack movement. Roused by the Arivoli Iyakkam, women have led campaigns against arrack distillation in the district. In some cases villages have agreed to a ban. There have also been other cases of activists suffering physical injury and social ostracism because of their campaign.

A DWCRA initiative, for income generating activities encouraging women to form groups to undertake a trade or business, coincided in Pudukottai with the launch of the TLC. Not surprisingly, it was the women motivated by the Arivoli Iyakkam who were most active in these schemes.

Women quarry workers in the district, who were employed by contractors for day labour, began to bid directly for the contracts and were encouraged by the district administration. Several women, now manage their own quarries and even employ the male members of their family; besides they can now maintain the books of the business without assistance. Women breached a traditional male bastion by entering the gem cutting industry. In other areas like flower cultivation, pickle making and pottery, women are now entrepreneurs, confidently managing the business either as individuals or in groups. The people of Pudukottai district know, 'Arivoli' is not just the attainment of literacy and numeracy but in real sense it is social awareness working for social change.

The success has led the nation to now aim at making 100 million people literate by mobilising 10 million volunteers by mid-1998.

The mass contact programme which launched the TLC was also a giant, nation-wide enlistment of learners, volunteer-teachers for literacy. The system of using three grade primers kept a constant target within reach of the learners. The levels of achievement were thus easy to grade and evaluate.

The TLCs used a multi-media approach to recruit learners and volunteer-teachers. Both traditional and mass media were utilised to spread the message quickly throughout the country. The jathas were part of a media blitzkrieg, playing dual roles of motivator and awareness-raising. Puppet shows, kala jathas (cultural troupes), which included folk artistes, school teachers and volunteers covered the country informing and motivating people to learn and created an environment supportive of learning.

The Bharatiya Gyan Vigyan Samiti (Indian com-





(Top) The jathas are successful
(Above) Motivated women learners are hard at work



One step at a time

Stepping stones

- ☞ Conducting an area survey to identify illiterate adults. The meeting with the villagers is also used to introduce them to the campaign and the need to be literate.
- ☞ Involving the entire community in the exercise. Educated persons could double as motivators and volunteer-teachers. The voluntary character of the campaign needs to be emphasised.
- ☞ Locating the adult education centres in convenient places. The decision on where the centres should be located needs to be taken in consultation with the entire community and especially the potential learners.
- ☞ Requisitioning of teaching/learning materials. Providing a welcoming touch to the centre. Potential learners and other members of the community could be asked to help set up the centre. Creating a sense of ownership and participation of the movement.
- ☞ Determining a reasonable time-frame within which total literacy can be achieved. Again members of the community would need to be involved in deciding the pace and rhythm at which the adult learners are comfortable.

mittee for scientific knowledge) set up in 1989, was mandated to popularise the need for literacy.

The jatha planned for 1990 promoted the idea of literacy and science for national integration and self-reliance. As the BGVS document admits, "a literacy programme wherein millions of volunteers are engaged in making tens of millions of persons literate may release social forces of such magnitude that a revolution may be the result". The jatha was consciously moulded to catalyse revolutionary social change. With jathas between 1990 and 1992, the TLCs took root across the country.

The national campaign was coordinated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in different areas. Their intimate knowledge of the region, problems and local people helped accelerate the process from mere motivation to basic literacy.



Towards the goal

Dubbed the 'area approach', the mission asked NGOs to choose a village, cluster, block, municipal area or even a complete district. In over 40 districts, TLCs are being conducted by a wide variety of NGOs.

At the crossroads

One of the most ambitious and innovative plans of the National Literacy Mission is the use of the electronic media to teach as well as to mobilise. Radio reaches over 90 per cent of the people and over 72 per cent of the country is under the footprint of television. Use of these media will keep alive India's oral traditions albeit in a different garb.

Explains a consultant to the TLC, "use of radio and television could enhance the learning experience and perhaps shorten the duration of learning". He adds that the teaching-learning process would be incomplete without sustained and adequate back-up through regular class interaction.

Soon, television stations all over north India will beam a set of 40, 15 minute films. Designed to teach reading and writing of the Hindi alphabet, the Chauraha (crossroads) series uses sophisticated computer animation techniques. Learner interest is maintained using the familiar docu-drama format of many TV serials.

Three puppets play the role of sutradhar (narrator), live characters push developmental messages and a magic pencil teaches viewers how to write the alphabets.

The series is backed by a set of printed materials which double as work books. Poems, stories and anecdotes lace the text ensuring wide popularity for the material.

A similar venture using the more readily available radio sets, was attempted in 1991. Under 'Project in Radio Education for Adult Literacy' (PREAL), eight stations of All India Radio broadcast a weekly lesson in Hindi.

Over 100,000 women in 3,500 adult education centres all over India tuned in to the broadcasts. Aimed at reinforcing the regular lessons, the programmes proved extremely popular in North India.

Though the classes were not repeated after the initial run, the PREAL classes have been widely disseminated as a series of audio cassettes.

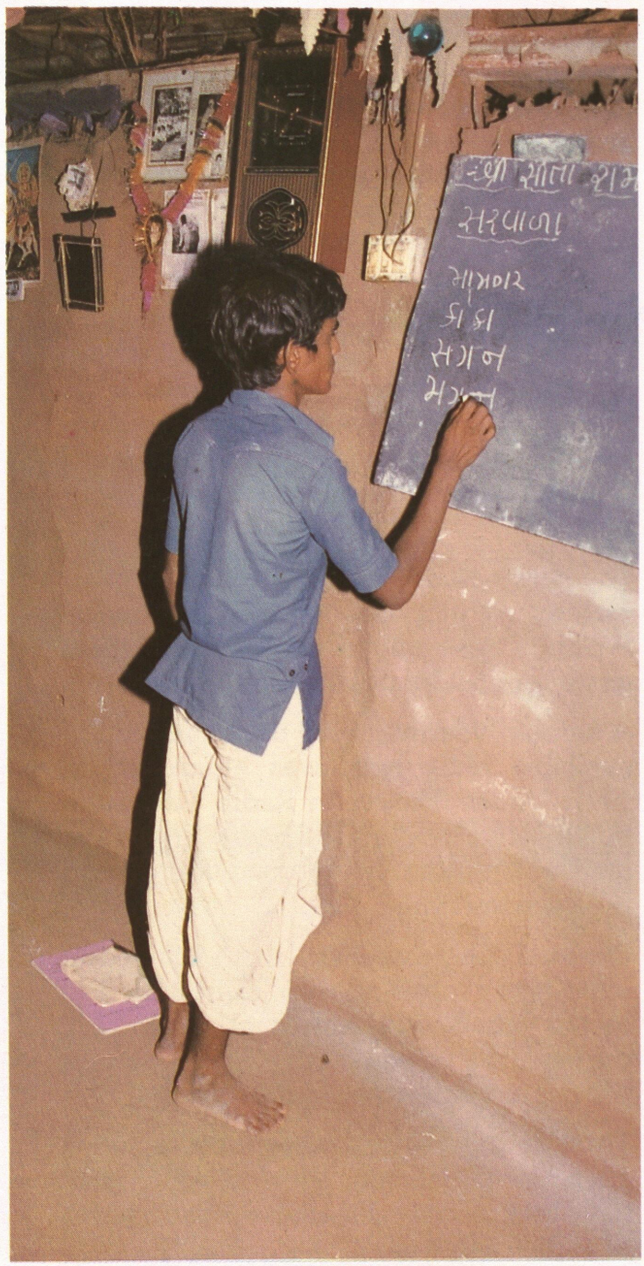
The success of the TLCs in mobilising communities to participate in schemes like 'Each One Teach One' as learners or volunteer-teachers would have flopped but for the exceptional training programme.

The programme places a premium on commitment, knowledge of the situation at the grassroots and working in the field. Thus all levels of trainers be they key resource persons, master trainers or the lakhs of volunteers, all are put through a short but intensive training programme.

In the case of volunteer-teachers, the training is conducted throughout the year before the start of the campaign, then after two months and again after a six month period.

This only partly explains why 30 million Indians are today motivated to achieve literacy. As an activist/volunteer in Karnataka comments: "The atmosphere today shows that the real leaders of the campaign are the neo-literates themselves. Our success lies in this."

Nothing succeeds like success.





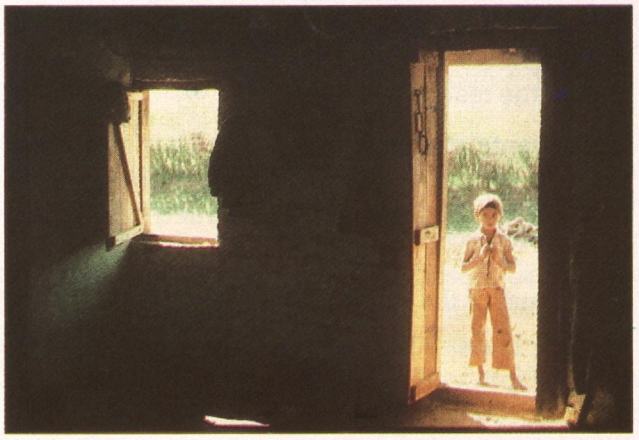
Working hard



Quality Plus Equity

There has been widespread concern with the quality of education being provided in our schools. Educationists, the government and millions of ordinary citizens have engaged in a process of reflection and reassessment. The National Policy for Education (NPE), 1986, emphasises the need for all children to achieve minimum standards of learning.

The need to lay down 'minimum levels of learning' (MLL) emerges from two basic concerns: (i) excessively heavy curriculum and low quality of learning at primary levels (ii) need for equity. The MLL approach seeks to focus on a minimum quantum of learning which practically all children, even disadvantaged children, can acquire.



Entering a new world

The effort is, therefore, to combine **quality** with **equity**.

In the MLL approach, achievement is defined in terms of **competencies**. Every child should have mastered the basic minimum competencies by the end of the corresponding age or stage of development. Every child should not only have skills, but a good combination of knowledge, understanding, problem solving abilities and values.

The MLL approach emphasises the **learning** of skills rather than rote memorising or curriculum completion. Thus teaching is directed towards ensuring that all children attain the basic minimum skills or competencies at the level of mastery.

The Genesis: In 1990, an all India committee was set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to suggest a comprehensive strategy for improving the quality of primary education in the country. This committee (the Dave Committee) not only submitted its report within record time but the Ministry took immediate steps for the implementation of the approach. A number of agencies were assigned the responsibility for implementing the MLL approach in all the schools of India in three phases.

In the first phase, 15 locations were identified in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Karnataka. About 2,000 schools, 9,000 teachers and 35,000

Resource Persons: "For a few months things moved very slowly, then as the teachers gained confidence and became competent in the new methods, we found that they were very enthusiastic. A certain climate was created. They kept discussing what was happening in the classroom, with each other – even at lunch-time there would be a buzz of talk about this. There have been behavioural changes. Teachers want to go deeper into their own subjects. Now that the teachers are motivated, some of the most active teachers are helping to train others elsewhere."

"We found that the children were learning more – within a few months, the difference was noticeable."

learners were brought within the project's ambit.

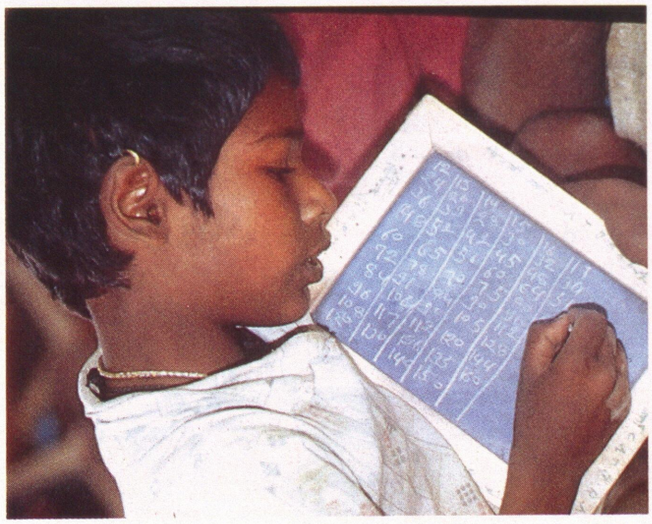
In the second phase, the programme has been extended to Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Plans are afoot to add Haryana, Delhi, Orissa and Assam to this list. In the third phase, the programme will be extended to cover the entire country.

To cite an example, by early 1991, the National Council for Educational Research and Training, (NCERT), had drawn up an action plan. Initial surveys in different parts of the country, carried out by NCERT's MLL team, revealed that out of a 100 children in class 4, only 50 can read, out of this only 25 can write. Four educationally backward blocks were selected, Nawabganj block in Uttar Pradesh; Pisanganj block in Rajasthan; Vidisha block in Madhya Pradesh; and Minapur block in Bihar. These four states, all situated in the central 'Hindi-speaking belt', are among the most backward in terms of levels of poverty, low enrollments in school and high dropout levels.

In Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh the scheme was implemented throughout the primary level, that is Classes 1 to 5, whereas in Rajasthan it was restricted to Classes 1 and 2, and in Bihar to Classes 1, 2 and 3.

Nodal agencies were identified in all four blocks and volunteers trained as key resource persons. Along with NCERT's team members, the key resource persons then trained all the teachers. In Nawabganj block written material was developed with full participation of teachers.

Textbooks as well as handbooks for teachers



A class 3 child: "I was in Class 2. I would mug up mathematical operations, that is how all of us did it. I was doing very well sometimes, sometimes very badly. After the new approach began, my teacher started for the first time trying to help me to improve my performance. He started explaining to me what subtraction means, I don't think I had quite understood earlier. When I understood, I found I could do any sum! My teacher asked me a sum of 3 digits from the Class 3 level textbook. I said, Why only this? Give me a sum with any number of digits, I will be able to do it!"

were designed, made comprehensive by the inclusion of all three subjects – that is, Language, Mathematics and Environmental Studies. These materials were adapted in workshops in the other blocks, so as to suit the different regions.

A cluster of schools was allocated to each resource person. They provided on the spot guidance, regularly monitored the progress in these schools and provided feedback and support to the teachers.

The scheme encourages specific changes in the teaching-learning processes by making them competency-based, activity-oriented and enjoyable.

The thrust of the effort:

- ☞ Emphasis shifts from teaching to the learning of competencies by practically all children.
- ☞ Focus shifts to the development of competency rather than the 'coverage' of content.
- ☞ Emphasis is placed on the understanding of concepts and problem solving rather than memorising text.
- ☞ At the beginning of each session, entry level tests to establish benchmark data are held for each class and the teaching – learning is to be based on the results of the tests.
- ☞ The teaching and learning is directed towards acquisition of basic competencies in listening and speaking, reading and writing.

A teacher: "Initially, we felt that this approach would place an extra burden upon us. It took us some time to understand what exactly this new approach is. In the first three months, for instance, I found it very difficult to make selections from the textbooks. But as I learnt how to do it, I found students taking more interest, learning more, and I grew more confident."

- The curriculum is specially delineated in the subjects of Language, Mathematics, and Environmental Studies to give a special focus to quality, without excluding other areas of learning.
- The competencies are designed sequentially, that is from simple to complex, for effective learning.
- In Classes 1 and 2, emphasis is on oral testing. Language at this stage is perceived basically as a means of enhancing communication skills. In Classes 3, 4 and 5, evaluation is carried out through a combination of oral and written tests.
- The MLL approach includes an integration of testing and continuous evaluation for raising the performance to levels of mastery. The testing is competency-based. Only when all children have mastered the earlier concept does the teacher move ahead. This has been modified in practice. If over 80 per cent of the children have mastered over 80 per cent of the concept, the teacher can take it as a green signal to move on to the next concept. The teacher however must take remedial classes for those who were slower in learning.
- In this approach, textbooks are used only as resource material, rather than the exclusive base for teaching.
- More and more examples are cited from daily-life situations for effective learning. There is flexibility, so as to make the curriculum relevant and functional. For instance, in Language teaching, local languages/dialects can be used at the early stages, with a subsequent gradual transition to the common language of the region. In Environmental Studies, the learners should first know about their own district before studying about the state; to this end, the chapter related to district will vary from one district to another.

Moreover, locally available materials are to be used as teaching aids, in addition to the more standardised material that is currently supplied.

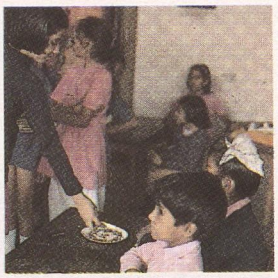
There has been a significant breakthrough in the critical area of quality upgradation at the primary level through the MLL strategy. It is possible to ensure that more and more children actually learn the basic competencies. The approach can be systematically implemented, the most crucial element that has to be ensured being the recurrent training of teachers.

The MLL approach has been incorporated as an integral part of various schemes, including all primary and basic education schemes and the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). The approach extends to all children, whether in the formal school stream or in non-formal education. Textbooks will continue to be adapted to different locales, and new material generated as well. Today it forms a fundamental component in all teachers' training programmes as well.

Since the results obtained so far have been very encouraging, more and more states and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are planning to replicate and adopt the MLL strategy. In the second phase, implementation of the strategy has been expanded to cover about 40 districts. The plan is being further expanded to cover all states and districts as soon as possible, to fulfil the goals of education for all at a desirable level of quality of learning.

A community member: "Our Village Education Committee was not functioning. These people came and started holding meetings. Some of us got interested in this new approach. After all we are keen that our children learn, so even the Village Education Committee (VEC) got activised. Earlier, we would say 'This is a government programme.' Now, we feel, 'This is our programme!'"





The Harbinger of Change

The east Indian state of Bihar is the seat of one of the oldest civilisations in the world. Its tradition of learning and culture have contributed to India's position in the world of scholarship. Yet, today in Bihar every major indicator of educational development is low when compared to the national average.

Bihar is an educationally backward state. The enrollment ratio of 81.61 per cent is well below the all-India rate of 99.96 per cent for the age group 6-10. For the age group 11-14, the gap widens even further. Bihar has an enrollment of 33.48 per cent while the all-India rate is 59.15 per cent. The huge gap in the higher age group is a corollary of the state having the country's highest drop-out rate. Thus 66.37 per cent of the children enrolled in Bihar drop-out without completing Classes 1-5.

With the focus on universalising primary education in the country, the first basic education project, the Bihar Education Project (BEP) was born in 1991. BEP was launched with the view to operationalise a comprehensive and broad-based Education for All project.

Known to educationists for having the highest dropout rate of in the country, Bihar is less known as the employer of over 100,000 teachers



Courtesy: G.D. Sharma, Directorate of Adult Education

Children and adults gather for a lesson

The Checklist

The overall goals of the Bihar Education Project are:

- ☞ Universalising primary education for all children at least until they are 14.
- ☞ Facilitating access both through the formal school system as well as through the NFE programmes.
- ☞ Retention of all children in school at least until they complete the primary stage.
- ☞ The achievement of the minimum levels of learning by all children.
- ☞ Modifying the education system to make it more responsive to the needs of women and to ensure that it actively promotes equality for women and facilitates their empowerment.
- ☞ Interventions which provide equal educational opportunity to members of the socially oppressed castes, ethnic communities and the poorest sections of society.
- ☞ Relating education to the living and working environment of the people thus providing closer identification with the benefits of education.
- ☞ Special emphasis on the creation and sustaining of a scientific temper and inculcation of a sense of social justice.



in the formal schools system and 200,000 in the non-formal stream – one of the better teacher-student ratios in the land.

More important, the teachers' organisations are motivated and willing to work for an improvement of the education system. They have campaigned to involve local communities in the management of the system.

With the aim to catalyse a mass movement in the state through educational reconstruction, BEP focuses on motivating the educationally and economically deprived sections, women and girls, ethnic and tribal communities and members of the backward castes to enter and remain within the school system.

First initiated in three districts (Ranchi, Rohtas and West Champaran) in 1991, the project has since been expanded to include East Singhbhum, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur and Chatra. The aim is to cover 20 districts by 1995. The district level projects are the middle level interventions of the BEP. Macro interventions are planned across the state just as innovative micro-projects are initiated in many parts of the state.

The principal objective of the BEP has been to create conditions for universalisation of primary education. The formation of 3,859 village education committees (VECs) has enhanced community involvement. The entry of an additional 1.5 million children into the school system can be directly attributed to the involvement of the community.

The enhanced enrollment in schools is only one result of the BEP approach. Having adopted a holistic approach in preference to the more



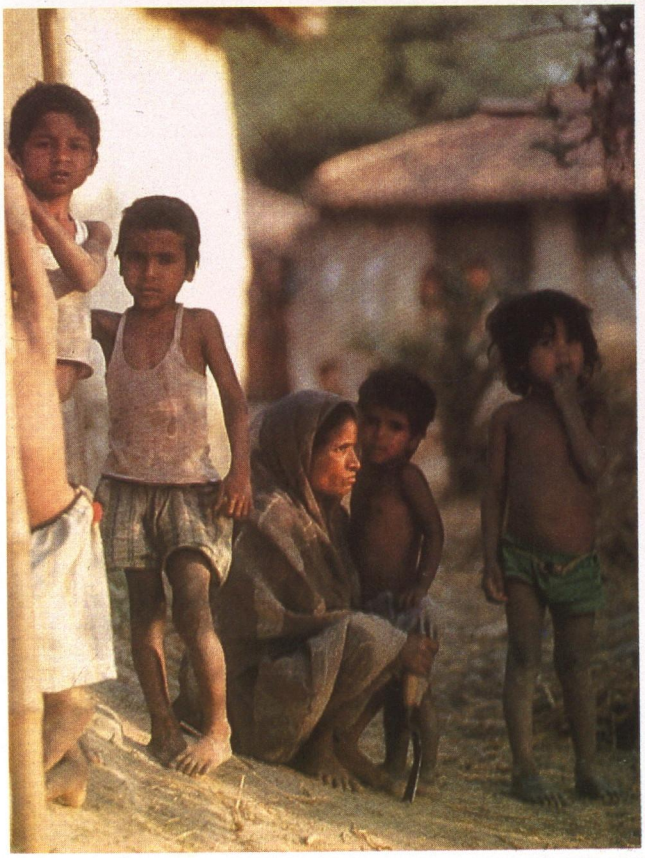


From the cradle of a mother's arms (Top left) to the school is not always a straight road
(Top) Children finish work in the field

Charting the course

The Bihar Education Project's approaches and strategies include:

- ☞ The content and process of education.
- ☞ An elaborate system of training of teachers, animators and village communities.
- ☞ Forging an alliance with political parties, social activists, employers, trade unionists, voluntary agencies and teachers.
- ☞ Creating conditions for the genuine and complete involvement of teachers.
- ☞ Village schools and the non-formal system to be made accountable to the community.
- ☞ In-built process for learning, periodic revision, critical appraisals and innovations.



Unsure of the future

common compartmentalised approaches – non-formal education, adult education, formal schools – BEP incorporates almost all conceivable programme components related to basic education.

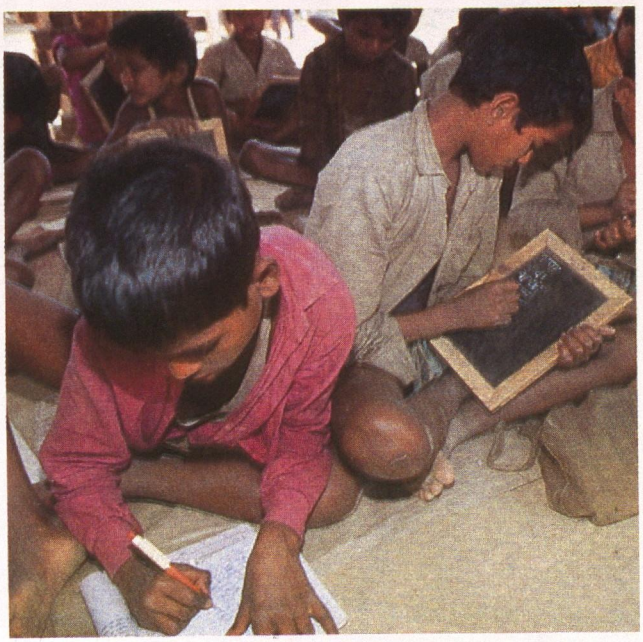
Thus the VECs also supervise the over 2,000 non-formal education (NFE) centres in the project area. Run by the 50 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) associated with the project, 52,000 learners today use these centres.

The community ownership of the education system is especially evident in the construction and maintenance of school buildings. Villagers contribute time, land, money and labour to provide basic amenities to school-going children.

Regular and recurrent training of teachers and VEC members has led to increased awareness of the need to educate women and girls. A comprehensive Jag Jagi, (wake up girls), programme has recently been initiated.

It aims to encourage and prepare girls to enter and remain in schools. Setting up of NFE centres for adolescent girls, empowerment through education of women and facilitating the participation of women in VECs and samoohs (collectives) is another facet of the programme.

The establishment of village structures for women's empowerment in 800 villages in six districts has helped mobilise the community



Writing their own destiny

and facilitated access of women and girls to education.

The BEP is administered by an autonomous body, the Bihar Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad (Bihar Education Project Organisation). Both at the state and the district level, BEP is administered by a team which includes people from within the government and outside. At the sub-district level however, the team works closely with local institutions.



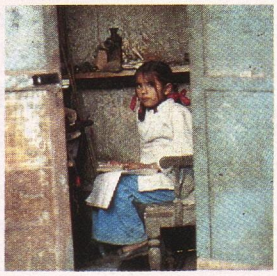
This unique, decentralised management structure has catalysed village communities to perceive the education system as community property. The sense of belonging and ownership has begun a people-led and community-centered movement for social change.

It is a movement which is swiftly spreading across the state. The teachers in Jehanabad have taken the lead in improving the quality of education, the Sitamarhi micro-planning exercises have provided lessons for the whole country, in Ranchi hundreds of voluntary groups came together to work for the common goal.

All these and countless other stories have made the BEP a movement cloaked in a project. A movement with the potential to turn Bihar into a model, the rest of the nation would vie to imitate.

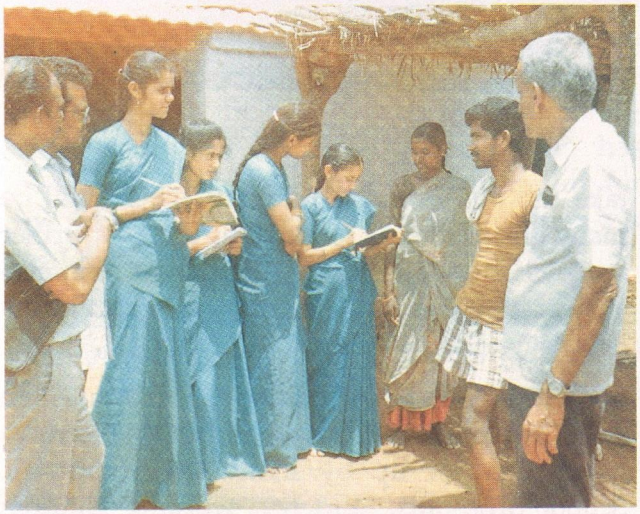


The community awaits the change



Channelling the Potential

In a movement for social change, activists, doctors, teachers, women's associations, youth clubs, philanthropists and administrators have linked skills. Working in tandem with project staff, the community has ensured the success of the Area Intensive Education Project (AIEP). Their efforts have transformed Krishnagiri, a small slice of Dharmapuri district in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.



(Above and right) Surveying the area: Teams of AIEP staff and volunteers collect information

The AIEP impacts all aspects of social life and activity of the 75,000 villagers in the area. It was conceived as a holistic education programme. Providing non-formal and early childhood education to villagers, training teachers and field- staff and establishing linkages between existing education and health schemes was perceived to be the role of AIEP.

The project soon outgrew its mandate as a time-bound educational project and grew into a mass action for the holistic development of the community.

Selected because of the area's educational and social problems, Krishnagiri is today a beehive of social and welfare activities. By day, animators from the AIEP conduct lessons in the under-staffed and single-teacher primary schools. In the evenings, free tuition classes for school-students are run alongside adult literacy classes in the Education and Development Centre in each village.

Trained by AIEP staff, children from the local orphanage chip in by performing animated street-plays carrying the message of literacy and girls' education. Women's associations, among other activities, send delegations to industrial concerns demanding an end to the pollution of the Then-Pennar river by chemical effluents.

Doctors offer both medicines and services free of charge, during health camps and eye-treatment camps. Volunteers of the Science Forum organise educational, cultural and sports activities for the children of the villages.

The total involvement of the AIEP staff in the day-to-day problems of the villagers and their prestige and popularity in the community are



Area Intensive Education Project, Krishnagiri

easily discernible. At the request of the AIEP director, a garland-maker in the centre of the town agrees to employ several destitute women for a nominal payment.

In another such gesture, the principal of the local college assists the AIEP by deploying a team of students under the National Service Scheme to assist villagers and AIEP volunteers to lay a road to one of the interior villages.

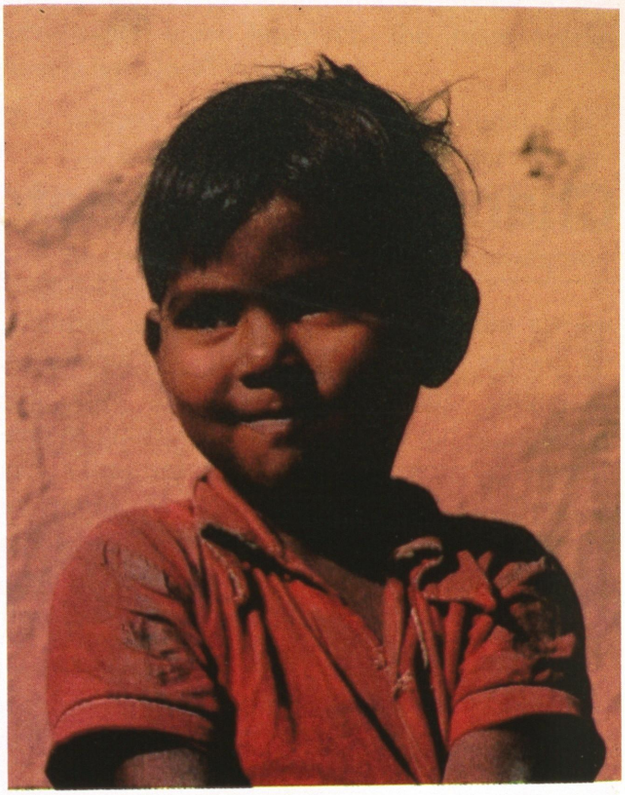
Teacher-trainees are mobilised to conduct a survey in the tribal colony on the hill and AIEP volunteers construct a shed for the tribal women for shelter during confinement.

The goodwill and support of local businessmen and philanthropic associations such as the Rotary Club, Jaycees Club and Lions Club have also been mobilised by the AIEP director for Krishnagiri. As a result, there is no dearth of sponsors for the various activities that are organised. "So you don't really need lots of money", he points out. The AIEP runs its many activities on a relatively small budget.

The growth of the AIEP has however not been painless. In one instance, the resentment of a group of youngsters was converted into an opportunity to mobilise people by the perceptive AIEP field officials. They suggested avenues through which the young people could participate and contribute in the area's overall development. Today the village of Turinjipatti has a Youth Club which is the centre of many educational and cultural activities.

The AIEP office is aptly named, the Multi-Purpose Resource Centre. This is where the villagers have their petitions for drinking water supply, roads, bus routes, etc. drafted and sent to the authorities.

This is also where the hesitant father and the confident volunteer alike bring in young school drop-outs and request the AIEP director to enroll them in some useful training programme or trade. Their request is promptly complied with. It is suggested, "Let the older girl join the tailoring class. The younger one has studied upto class VIII, let her enroll in the training for Early Childhood Education. Send both in tomorrow morning. They must bring their lunch. They can take the bus from Natrampatti. There will be many others coming to the Centre". Any further anxious questions from the parent are also answered patiently and the grateful visitors leave sure of the future.



Looking forward to a bright future

In the five years since its inception, 76 Education and Development Centres and 28 sub-centres have been set up by motivated volunteers. School drop-outs, students, working children and adults frequent these centres. As the early childhood care and education (ECCE), and the non-formal education (NFE) programmes, were suffering because of inadequate infrastructure, the AIEP centres became the centres for all these activities. Orientation and training programmes for Child Welfare Officers, for primary school teachers on Minimum Levels of Learning, and voluntary running of NFE programmes, are some of the activities held here.

In addition, this is the hub for a variety of skill-enhancement programmes: doll-making, tailoring, carpentry, even motor winding. AIEP has also started employment generating activities such as mushroom cultivation, type-writing and fibre-based handicrafts in the area.



Under the spell of science

AIEP volunteers helped to conduct literacy surveys and baseline studies in the villages and tribal areas and persuaded young school students to motivate adults to learn to read and write. Intensive enrollment drives were conducted for primary schools, as a result of which three-quarters of the primary schools have achieved 100 per cent enrollment in their catchement areas. In the rest, over 95 per cent enrollment has been achieved. The AIEP has motivated 105 school drop-outs to appear for the School Leaving Certificate examination via the Open School System in the last year.

Not having access to the prescribed primers for non-formal education, the AIEP staff developed their own primer. Motivational cultural programmes, songs, dances, skits and street plays, support dying cultural forms like "therukoothu" (street plays) amongst other activities.

Another important aspect of the AIEP is the organising of micro-level planning meetings in the villages, designed to involve the villagers actively. The AIEP director also convenes block-level meetings to which he invites most of the prominent persons in the community.

Of the 110 grass-roots level workers of the AIEP, a large number are young women who radiate confidence and are motivated by the personal example and involvement of the director. Further, the AIEP in Krishnagiri is by no means a 9-to-5 job. It extends beyond the office hours and spills through the weekends.

The nature of the work is demanding and is effective because of the culture which places a premium on flexibility and non-bureaucratic administration. In addition, the field level officials personally select their staff. This is an important factor ensuring the quality of the work-force.

Asked what is the secret of the success of the AIEP, the project director smiles and is at pains to explain that it is the involvement of the people. At the same time, he refers to his own activist background in the Tamil Nadu Science Forum, saying that it was the inspiration derived from the dedicated voluntary work of co-activists and the simplicity which characterised their service that motivated and sustained him.

He emphasises that it is basically the desire to help activate social change that ensures the dedicated work of these people.



The next generation of volunteers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Blazing New Trails

On India's north-west frontier, Rajasthan makes the mystique of regal splendour and quaint folk tales come alive. Vast sweeps of desert, where sand dunes hide a palace escaped from a fairy tale, also lay bare one of the poorest and backward states.

The air of Rajput historicity which so attracts the tourist, veils the unpalatable fact that in Rajasthan over 45 per cent of all males and 80 per cent of all women are illiterate. Over half the children of school-going age (6-14) do not attend school. A statistical profile of the state reveals that of every 100 children deprived of primary education, 70 are girls.

Though the need for education is accepted by all, the disillusionment with a system which has been unable to keep pace with the demands being made on it, is evident. Parental apathy keeps children away from schools. Add to this an infrastructure where over 10,000 habitations do not have any facility for primary education and the need for a Lok Jumbish (Movement of the people and for the people) is apparent.

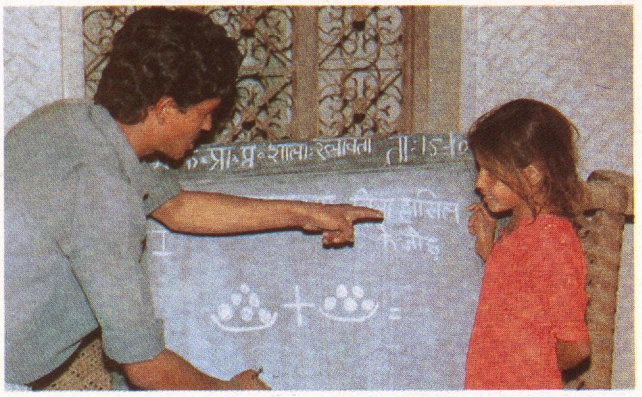
The project with the goal of Education for All Rajasthanis by the year 2000 is attempting to return people to the centre of the education system. Begun in five blocks in 1991 the project was swiftly upscaled from five blocks in three districts to 15 blocks in 13 districts. It aims to cover 25 blocks by June 1994.

Perhaps the most significant aspect has been the centrality of a gender perspective in the project. Traditional Rajasthani society actively discourages women from stepping outside the homestead. Thus in only one district (Ajmer) does the female literacy rate cross 35 per cent. Of the other 26 districts in the state, in 19 the female literacy rate is below 20 per cent. To bring about any change, Lok Jumbish specially focusses on drawing women and girls towards education. The creation of a people-accountable

Yardstick for evaluation

Concentrating on universalising primary education for all children between 6-14 years, the project attempts:

- ☞ Universal access and participation of all children and achievement of the minimum levels of learning by all participants.
- ☞ To ensure availability of opportunities to upgrade educational levels to the functionally literate and those who have completed primary education.
- ☞ Empowerment of women is central to the Lok Jumbish approach. The creation of structures and initiating processes which would make education a facilitator in the process of empowerment.
- ☞ Helping the most backward tribes, socially and economically deprived sections to have equal access and participate on the same footing is a priority for the project.
- ☞ Creating a conducive environment for the spread of education underlines all other goals of the project.



Adding upto a new life

The future beckons

Tucked away in a corner of Ajmer district is Akodia village. The comparative prosperity of the village raises it above the rest of the area as does the over 700-year old temple in the village. Electrified as far back as 1979, the village gets piped drinking water, has a police outpost, a veterinary clinic, two early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres, a milk cooperative and even a sub-centre for primary health care.

Despite being well-endowed with state-sponsored amenities, the village like the rest of the district has remained educationally backward. At the end of March 1992 only one out of every six girls went to school and of every two boys, one stayed away.



About 18 months later the situation changed dramatically. Of the 316 boys in the age group 6-14, 287 now go to school and 171 of the 317 girls attend school regularly.

But the impressive figures only hint at the changes taking place in the community. Akodia is one of the 11 villages of the cluster of 29 where a core team is in place, one out of six villages where school mapping has been completed and only one of the five villages which has a functional Mahila Samooh (Women's Group).

Identification of five members of the core team and their training was completed by October 1992. The team then began school mapping exercises in consultation with the headmaster. Using a map roughly sketched by the villagers, the team conducted a house to house survey. Using the opportunity to inform adults on the need to educate children, the core team also raised public awareness of the goals and strategies of the project.

The Village Education Register was born from the venture. It documents the date of enrollment and participation status of all children in the age group 5-14. When the results were communicated to the villagers (The survey showed that over 75 per cent of the girls and a majority of the boys in the village did not attend school) they were galvanized into action.

Resolving to ensure quality education for all children by the end of 1994, the villagers chalked out proposals to improve school infrastructure. Repair of the school building, establishment of seven non-formal education centres in the village and provision of a field centre were mooted by the villagers.

By July 1993, the Building Construction Committee of Akodia was in place. Selected by the core team and the headmaster, the committee includes masons, a member of the women's group and a member of the scheduled caste community.

The inclusion of a member of the scheduled caste community is particularly significant in an oppressive social system which ignores the rights of the backward communities.

The subtle attempts at social engineering are slowly bringing about a change in attitudes. A major difficulty proved to be the evolution of the Mahila Samooh. Earlier only the Sathin (Partner) was identified as the lone woman member of the core team. The difficulties in finding motivated women to join the core team multiplied when the team attempted to help form a Mahila Samooh.

The success with the Mahila Samooh more than any other factor signals a change in the educational fortune of the state. Having identified catalysts of change, the climb up the educational ladder should be easier.

management structure was the pre-requisite for the project's success. Dovetailing the experiences of the state administrative machinery and the work of non-governmental organisations, an innovative synthesis has been evolved.

The structure is significantly dependent on the sustained, consistent support of the community for the implementation of its plans. This lends itself to a participatory process of social engineering which will empower people and revitalise the primary education system.

Aiming to create an environment for learning, Lok Jumbish uses people's knowledge and skills at every stage of the process. Thus the involvement of teachers in the process of providing quality education, relevant to the child and the community is a major plank of the project.

With the help of the village education committee (VEC), the teachers are drawn into the community's efforts to revitalise the education system. Regular interaction helps teachers find their lost sense of pride in their work; respect for their efforts from the community automatically follows.





As a consequence the achievement of minimum levels of learning by all children is accepted as the primary responsibility of the teachers. Just as the community is made accountable to ensure that children are brought into the system. Retention of children in schools is thus the joint responsibility of teachers and the village community.

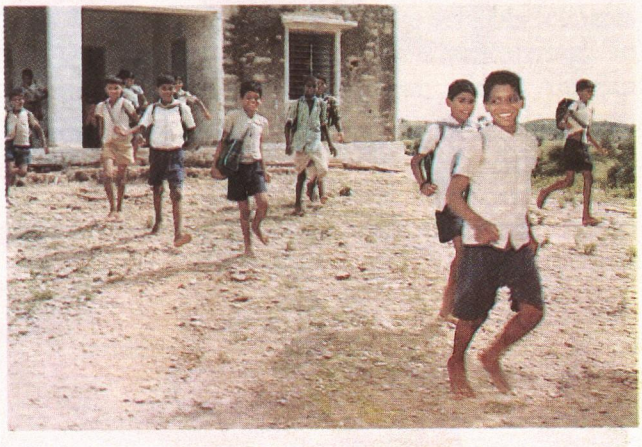
Conceptualised in the mission mode, the small 10-member project team at the state capital provides policy support to Block Steering Groups which are responsible for all activities in 100-150 villages.

The steering groups though are expected to play an advisory role. The power to open schools, upgrade primary schools, create new posts of teachers are all vested in the Khand-stariya Shiksha Pradhan Samiti (block management committee) which is composed of local individuals and organisations willing to work towards achievement of Lok Jumbish goals.

Further decentralisation follows with each block sub-divided into clusters of 25 villages where the work is carried out by a mobilising agency.

These agencies mobilise village communities, help start school mapping and micro-planning exercises, identify citizens in each village who can grow into core teams and begin work on the establishment of a field centre.

The challenges and achievements of Lok Jumbish cannot be measured in stereotyped monitoring of numbers. It touches the very lives of the people.



From workers to students - stepping into another world





The slate replaces the jug as the community learns the value of education for girls

For when 61-year-old Pannalal Oran questions the labelling of the girl child, paraya dhan, (a visitor in her parent's home) and persuades families to send girls to school, can sustainable, society-wide attitudinal changes be far behind?



Women lead the way

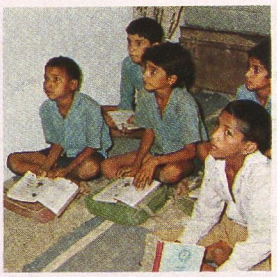
"They all began with their faces covered, within two weeks they gave up the veil and began to face the man's world." Discarding the veil had more than symbolic significance. As an observer from a voluntary agency writes, "A quiet revolution is taking place in the lives of 30 women from Kalu village".

In Lok Jumbish, learning the techniques of making buildings are also the opportunities to catalyse social change. Thus a mahila mistry (woman mason) training programme is being experimented with and a Building Centre which will train local talent is coming up in Garhi, in Kishangarh district.

In keeping with the Lok Jumbish philosophy, attempts are being made to make buildings more conducive to the process of education. The effort is urgently required. In Rajasthan at least 10 per cent of the schools do not have a building, over 80 per cent of the roofs leak and most lack basic amenities like drinking water facilities.

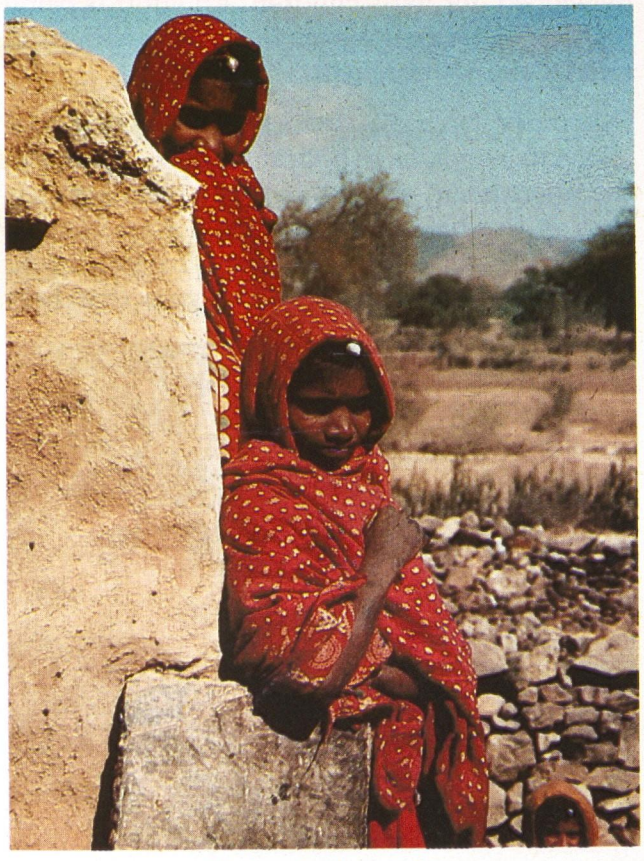
Though the school buildings are of direct concern to the village community, building of learner-friendly field centres is of critical importance for the project.

They are planned as the training centre for core teams, mahila samooh and VEC members. At a later stage it is also expected to serve as a resource centre for Shiksha Karmis (Educational Workers), NFE (Non-formal education) workers and teachers.



Filling the Vacuum

A mid-term review of the project was carried out in 1991. An extract from the report - "Why did children in the Shiksha Karmi Project have better skills in literacy and numeracy when their schools were equipped scantly, their teachers less educated and trained more briefly than their counterparts in the government schools? Why were the children enthusiastic enough to carry on beyond their class level or test? Why were the children in remote villages and tribal areas better informed than those attending a regular school system?"



Waiting for the teacher

In remote and inaccessible villages, often no teacher would come to teach. The primary school building, dilapidated and forlorn, would lie in wait.

Some 30 per cent of Rajasthan's population lives in remote areas. To tackle the chronic problem of teacher absenteeism, a novel idea was generated. A pilot project was launched in Silora block of Ajmer district. In 1987, the project spread to several parts of Rajasthan.

The crucial innovation in this, the Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP), is the selection of two ordinary villagers, to replace the (formally qualified but chronically absent) primary school teacher. These two ordinary villagers would henceforth be responsible for teaching all the children of their village.

The scheme explicitly relies on the extraordinary potential of ordinary people. The Shiksha Karmis are ordinary in the sense that they may themselves have only a smattering of formal education (up to Class 5 for women and Class 8 for men). What they do have, however, is enthusiasm, and a keen desire to teach. The term Shiksha Karmi translates literally as Education Worker.

Through their effective teaching, the Shiksha Karmis have actually inspired children, parents, and the community to view the schools/centres as positive and desirable places of learning. To accommodate more and more girls, Aangan Pathshalas (courtyard schools) have also been opened. Another imaginative innovation entails utilising the services of elderly women as Mahila Sahyogi (woman helper) to escort girls to school in difficult areas and take care of their siblings.

The Shiksha Karmi Project is proving successful because of its emphasis on the quality of support and encouragement provided to the Shiksha Karmis.

Voices

The Shiksha Karmis realise that if they are to teach, they must first learn. Chintamani, of Jawli village, attended school only up to Class 5, while Arjan Singh, her husband, is (as they put it) 'tenth fail'. Both have become Shiksha Karmis. Lad Devi, of Dadia village, left school at the age of 13, when she got married. She says: "I had forgotten all that I had once learnt and read. During the training programmes, I relearnt everything, and more!".

Says Sarvesh Kumari, (village Keshupuram) "The training programmes are exciting because I am beginning, once again, to enjoy reading and writing!"

And Hawa Kanwar, of Mithalia village, asserts that she quit school after passing Class 5, because she did not enjoy her schooling. Initially scared of her new 'job' of teaching children, she soon mustered up the confidence, and now enjoys it tremendously.

Santosh Sharma, Shiksha Karmi from Bamolav village, recalls – "Initially the villagers objected to my selection, saying how will a person who has passed only Class 5 teach our children? When I taught children through songs, the villagers would object thinking that I sing in the classroom because I do not know how to teach the subjects.... Now, they do not criticise me. They say that I teach well. They see that I am patient and affectionate – something that I missed in my own teachers!"

Affirms Sarvesh Kumari, of Keshupuram village – "Through the training programmes I have learned to teach children through the medium of songs and stories and poems, but above all to teach them with love and affection."

Towards this end, frequent training workshops are held for all the Shiksha Karmis. During this training, the Shiksha Karmis learn to study as well as to teach. They are supported in their endeavours to upgrade their own knowledge and understanding of Language, Mathematics and Science. They are urged to make their teaching relevant, taking into account local environment and local needs. They are assisted by resource people, by local voluntary groups and by governmental agencies. Appropriate curricula are being devised to suit the diverse needs of different areas.

The Shiksha Karmis bring back life into the once-empty primary school buildings. It is here that they hold regular classes during the day.

They aim to ensure minimal levels of learning for all children (aged 6 to 14) in the villages. For working children, who are unable to attend the day school, the Shiksha Karmis organise night classes.

Most of the students had never before attended school – or had attended for a short while, before dropping out. Special curricula, with a practical and functional thrust, are being developed for these children. An effort is being made to foster creative methods of teaching and a congenial environment.

Obviously, the project incorporates some crucial elements which have hitherto been neglected in the mainstream system. It trusts ordinary persons as capable of learning, and of teaching, if provided with critical support: "To feel linked with the larger world, to feel sure that help



In action: A Shiksha Karmi helps students



A woman Shiksha Karmi takes a mixed class of adult learners and young girls

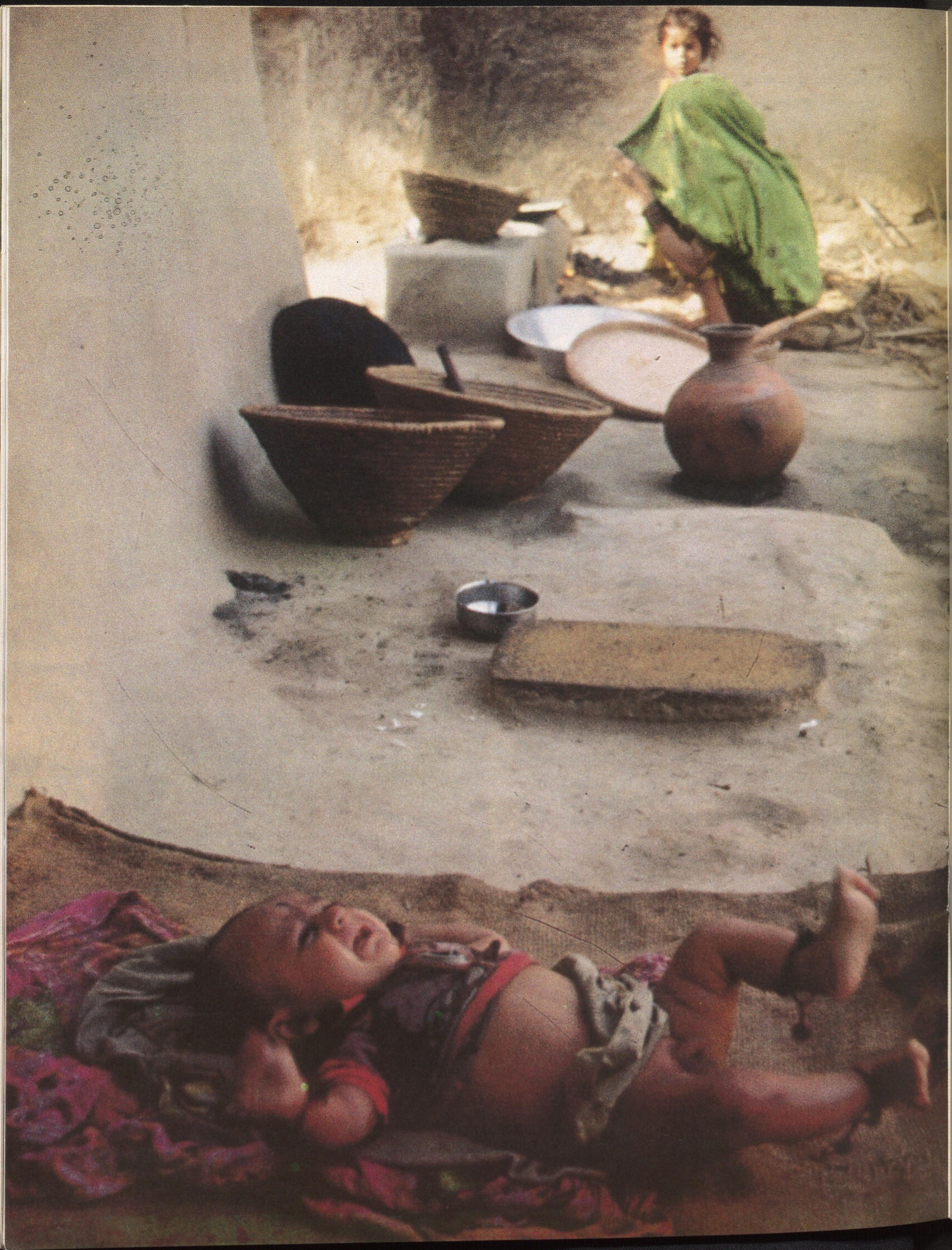
would be available when needed, and to have the opportunity to interact with caring and concerned adults – these made the SKP succeed against all odds."

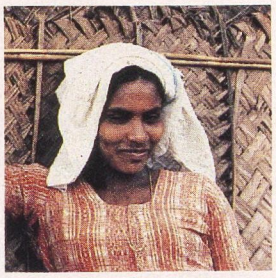
An effective model has been devised for innovative teacher-training, child-centred multi-grade teaching and the overall support, supervision, and monitoring of primary education in remote rural areas. Students' achievement levels are proving comparable to those in the formal system.

The challenge is to sustain this ethos – an ethos of involvement at the level of feelings, a sense of belonging, cooperation, and understanding. At present it is a very live, fluid situation. As long as the project can continue its present system of open dialogue, there will continue to be fresh horizons opening up in remote parts of Rajasthan. It is proposed that permanent resource centres and in service training programmes, continuous participatory evaluation and networking through newsletters be made integral parts of the project. As long as an attitude of 'learning' is maintained by one and all, the project will keep developing as a truly meaningful educational alternative.

Some Major Achievements

- ☞ 782 villages in 64 blocks of 23 districts have been covered.The plan is to cover some 1,050 villages during the project period i.e. 1987-94. 1,649 Shiksha Karmis have been selected, trained, and placed in 714 day schools and 1,489 evening/night schools.
- ☞ A 300 per cent increase in enrollment of children in the age-group 6-14 years in schools run by the Shiksha Karmis, i.e. from 30,000 at the time of take-over to 90,000 in September '93.
- ☞ 98 per cent boys and 70 per cent girls of the 6-14 age group in the village covered have been enrolled in the project schools.
- ☞ In 83 project villages, 100 per cent children have been enrolled.
- ☞ Monthly attendance of school children has increased from 53 per cent at inception to 85 per cent at present.





Enroute to Empowerment

"To empower women to take control of their own lives". With this aim, the project provides the crucial conceptual and practical link between empowerment and education. Working on the premise that empowerment is essential for women to be active participants in the educational process, Mahila Samakhya (Women's Empowerment) "presupposes that education can be a decisive intervention in the process towards women's equality".

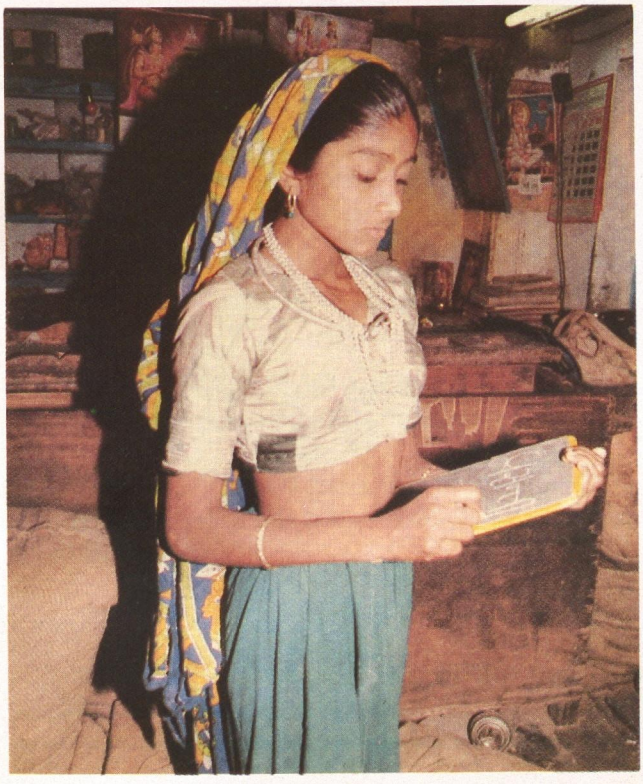
Mahila Samakhya was born from the need to translate the National Policy on Education's vision that "education can be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women". Operationalising this commitment, literacy is perceived as one component of an overall strategy of empowerment.

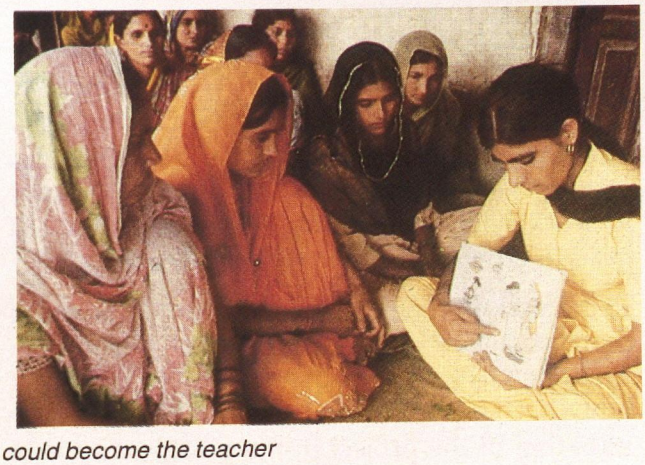
Thus the project attempts to create a demand for literacy but in keeping with the overall philosophy of moving at a pace determined by the women. Without the pressure to fulfil quantitative targets, resource persons and field staff have more time to catalyse an attitudinal change in the community.

Launched in 10 districts spread over three states in April 1989, the project today covers 14 districts in four states. The states of Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh where the project was launched present diverse sociological, economic and even physical profiles. Last year, the project was extended to two districts in Andhra Pradesh. Soon the project will be extended to cover more districts in the participating states.

In over 1200 villages today, Mahila Sanghas (women's collectives) have grown into a tangible force based on the collective determination of the village women. They feel the need for literacy urgently as they gain confidence and want more information and knowledge.

Sahayoginis (Guides) are the initiators and mentors of Sangha work. Living in one of the 10 villages she coordinates, facilitates and guides the collectives. The role of the Sahayogini constantly changes. While in the initial phase the women's fears have to be soothed, as the Sangha evolves,





The first steps: The learner could become the teacher

Not negotiable

One of the most interesting aspects of Mahila Samakhya is the articulation of a 10-point agenda on which no compromise is entertained. These inviolable principles provide a guide which will underline evolving strategies and will be the basis for mobilisation for education. They are:

- The initial phase, when women are consolidating their independent time and space is not hurried or short-circuited.
- Women participants in a village determine the form, nature, content and timing of all the activities in their village.
- The role of project functionaries, officials and other agencies is facilitative and not directive.
- Planning, decision-making and evaluation processes at all levels are accountable to the collective of village women.
- Education is understood as a process which enables women to question, conceptualise, seek answers, act, reflect on their actions and raise new questions. Education is not to be confused with mere literacy.
- Acceptance that as an "environment of learning" is being created what women decide to learn first may not be reading or writing. Women's priorities for learning must always be respected.
- Acceptance that given the time, support and catalysts for such reflection, women are of their own volition seeking knowledge, with which to gain greater control over their lives.
- The educational process and methodology must be based on respect for women's existing knowledge, experience and skill.
- Every intervention and interaction occurring in the project must be a microcosm of the larger process of change; the environment of learning, the respect and equality, the time and space, the room for individual uniqueness and variation must be experienced in every component of the project.
- A participatory selection process is followed to ensure that the project functionaries at all levels are committed to working among poor women and that they are free of caste/community prejudices.

(From the Revised Project Document: '**Mahila Samakhya Education for Women's Equality**')

the Sahayogini has to provide information and link each Sangha with the support system at the district, state and national levels.

The recruitment of project personnel at all levels emphasises an ability to communicate, a desire to work with women and an awareness of the need to grow and evolve with the Sanghas.

The Sakhi or Sahayaki (Friend) are the focal point of all Samakhya work in a village. Women from the same village, they are expected to grow with the Sangha. Selected a few months after the initiating of the project in the village, the Sakhi is elected from among the Sangha members. The position is usually rotated among the women.

In a majority of the cases, the Sakhis are illiterate and learn with the rest of the Sangha at the pace set by the group. Being pivotal to project work, the Sakhis work closely with the Sahayoginis whom they meet three to four times a month when the Sahayogini visits the village.

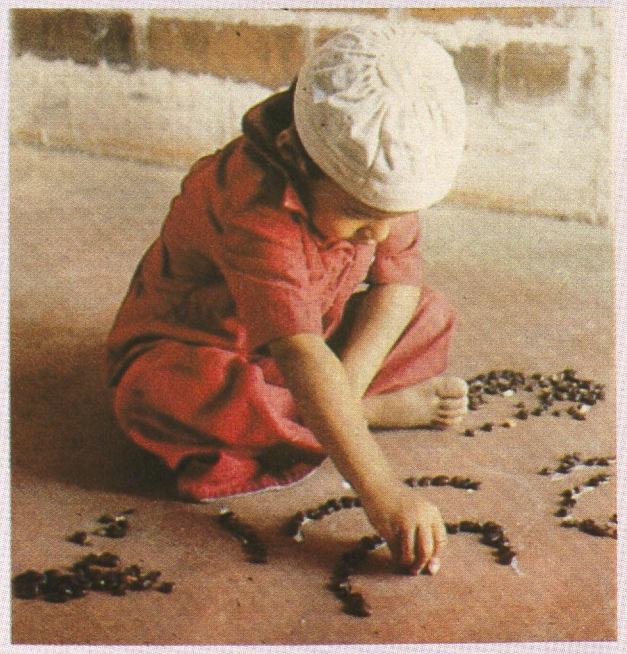
The flexible project framework and diversity of the states, have seen different models of Sakhi-Sahayogini-Sangha relationships emerge.

Flying high

'Zindabad!'. The confident, clarion call of the independence movement from the lips of a child is the first sign that things here are different. Throughout Varanasi, one of the project districts in Uttar Pradesh, young children are imbibing a spirit long thought lost. In schools with the visionary, if unlikely, sobriquet of Udan Khatolas, (Flying Carpets) children learn the alphabet, the numbers, identification of plants, animals and birds, play games, sing and even devise plays all at the same time.

The initiative did not come a day too soon. One of the holiest sites of India and home of a major seat of advanced learning, Varanasi is also one of the more backward districts of Uttar Pradesh. With a female literacy rate of 29.2 per cent and a total literacy rate of only 47 per cent, the district is home to over 20,77,000 illiterate people of whom about 65 per cent are women.

The creative learning centres emerged from discussions among Sakhis. A meeting in January 1990 proved crucial for the formulation of the idea. The search for alternative avenues to break centuries-old barriers was significant in conceptualising the Udan Khatolas.



Learning can be fun



Encouragement goes a long way

These creative learning centres were devised as special schools where children would want to go and where the Anudeshika, (woman teacher), will encourage the children's creativity. All over the district, girls make up more than 50 per cent of all students in Udan Khatolas. In some centres, there are only girl students.

Beginning with a bal mela (children's fair), in Khargupur village the concept has spread across the district and spilled into neighbouring ones too. In Saharanpur where the Mahila Samakhya programme is operational, the concept has been adapted to suit the area.

And in a few cases, the 'flying carpets' have managed to 'airlift' girls to formal schools. With the active support of their families, the girls are able to attend regularly breaking the age-old barriers. With women sitting in on classes, these 'flying carpets' have swept away some of the socially repressive thoughts and attitudes.

It may not have been the smoothest of take offs but then on a 'flying carpet' does the sky have to be the limit?



Learning and teaching

Sensitivity to regional diversity has manifested itself in different ways especially the remarkable gains made by the women in project areas.

Thus in Bidar district of Karnataka, the implementation unit with the help of a local voluntary agency created learning materials to which the women could relate.

The teacher training-cum-literacy workshops provide maximum possible flexibility on the pace of learning and timing of classes.

In the largely tribal district of Saberkantha in Gujarat, a self-learning primer based on the life-history of a local village woman has been developed. The Sahayoginis and Sakhis in Saberkantha are also trying to produce educational material in local dialects.

One of the most interesting and innovative experiments has been the Udan Khatolas or creative children's education in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

The project in four states has touched the lives of some of the most oppressed communities in the country. Finding words to articulate problems and gaining strength from each other, these women are shedding the baggage of social discrimination. Education, under Mahila Samakhya, opens vistas not just to read and write but to organise for change.



Leading with a smile



For collective action



Towards empowerment



Empowering Teachers

The aim of the Shikshak Samakhya Project is the empowerment of the teacher. An empowered teacher can provide effective education by improving his/her teaching.

'Shikshak Samakhya' literally translates as 'Teachers' Empowerment'.

The Shikshak Samakhya Project was launched in September 1992. It is envisaged as an important part of the strategy for achieving Universal Primary Education in Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh is the largest state in India and has a wide variety of cultural zones. It was recognised that a continuous teacher education programme, even if it is experimental, should be tried in more than one place to ensure that it could be replicated in similar areas. Therefore, five districts were selected for the initial phase of this project of teacher education: Raigarh, Jabalpur, Tikamgarh, Dhar, and Raisen. There are over 23,000 primary school teachers in the five project districts.



Courtesy: UNICEF Bhopal

Teachers and students enjoy using teaching aids

Madhya Pradesh is one of the educationally most backward states in the country. Its overall literacy level is a mere 43.45 per cent. Enrollment in primary school is reported to be as high as 83.86 per cent, but the dropout rate of 34 per cent (between Classes 1 and 5) considerably brings down the effective level.

The major objective of the Shikshak Samakhya project is to develop a replicable strategy for improving the quality of primary education in the selected districts, with the aim of achieving Universal Primary Education, (UPE), throughout the state.

The project, besides enhancing the competence of the teachers, also provides for making the classroom an attractive place to be in and evolution of effective and relevant teaching-learning materials and aids through a participative process.

There are some basic assumptions on which the project has been designed. These are:

- ☞ All parents want their children to go to school and learn.
- ☞ Parents will send their children to school if they learn in school. Children will come to school regularly if they find the learning process enjoyable and attractive.
- ☞ Financial and non-financial incentives are poor substitutes to good and enjoyable learning in the classroom.
- ☞ The community will support the teacher and will accept the school as its own when and only when they find their children are learning well.
- ☞ India, being a poor country, has to find low

cost yet high quality solutions to the problems of primary education.

☞ About 10 per cent of teachers will teach under any circumstances, while the large majority has to be motivated to teach. Settling of all administrative and financial claims, and ensuring promotional channels as well as openings for professional growth, will go a long way.

☞ Teachers will become highly motivated if they are involved in decision-making in the project activities. If they prepare their own teaching-learning materials they will in the process discover their hidden talents as well as gain recognition from their local community.

Five critical workshops were organised in which a consensus about the basic strategy of the project was developed. Resource centres were established, each of which covers approximately 30 primary school teachers within a range of 8 to 10 kilometres. These teachers meet once a month in their respective centres to discuss their problems, their experiences, and suggestions to make their teaching interesting. These resource centres have been provided with materials. The teachers have also been provided training and regular academic support.

In Badnawar block of Dhar district, 23 resource centres were set up, and subsequently in each of the 186 primary schools of the block, teachers began to get interested in the project. Within a year, there has been a remarkable change in the ethos of the primary schools of Badnawar. Says Sardar Singh Rathore, Head Master, Nagda, Badnawar block, "The project has helped the teachers regain their lost pride, dignity, self respect and self esteem. Not only are they enjoying their work of teaching in the classrooms, but they have been able to make teaching so interesting and effective that children are eager to come to the school. The latent qualities and talent of many teachers have not only come into the open but have been widely recognised and appreciated. Seeing the children learning and longing to go to school, the parents and community have come forward to support the teacher and the school. This change of attitude has given the teachers a greater desire and has motivated them to work still harder."

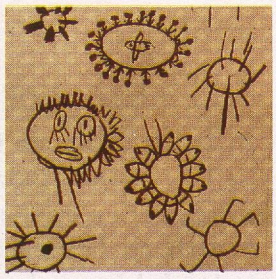


The joy of using teaching aids is revealed by the smile

The educational changes taking place in Badnawar are rapidly spreading to the other blocks of the district as well as other districts. Badnawar has demonstrated that the unachievable is easily attainable. With this achievement in Badnawar and the continuous academic and moral support of the teachers of Badnawar to all the blocks in the district, those involved are very hopeful and confident of achieving UPE in the whole district and even the entire state.

Seeing the cost-effective and rapid success of the project, the Madhya Pradesh government has recommended its adoption for all the schools of the entire state – that is, some 7,70,000 schools.

Already, the Shikshak Samakhya strategy has been integrated into the district plans of 20 districts. It has taken root in many areas of the state and has created its own demand.

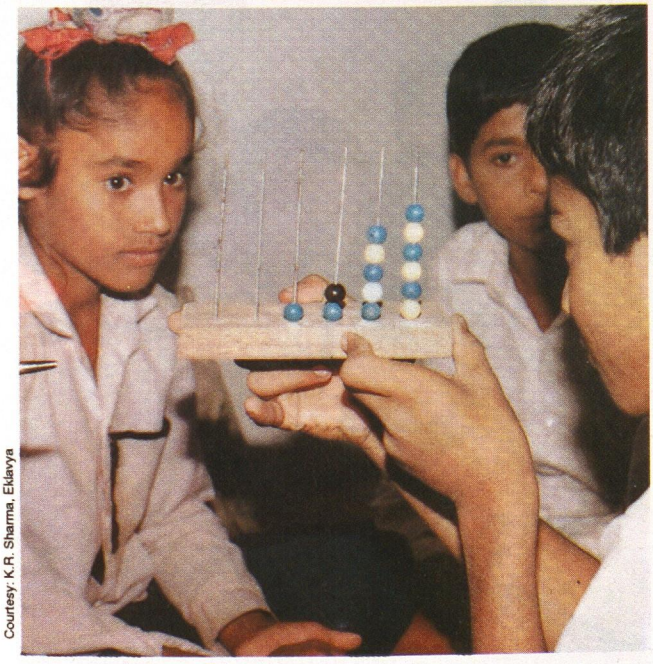


No Boundaries to Knowledge

Prashika is the primary school programme being run in several schools of Madhya Pradesh, by a voluntary group called Eklavya. This group was formed in 1982. While preliminary work with primary schools began in the same year, the 'Prashika' was formally named in 1986. The name 'Prashika' is coined as a short form of 'Prathmik Shiksha', which, in Hindi, means 'Primary Education'.

While work with primary schools began initially as a language teaching programme, it was soon felt that it was neither possible nor desirable to separate the teaching of Language, Social Sciences and even Mathematics, at the primary level. The group turned its attention towards the creation of an integrated curriculum, based on interesting activities leading not only to the learning of subjects but also to the over-all cognitive growth of children.

In the earlier phase, extensive socio-linguistic and psychological surveys were conducted. The cultural connotations of literacy among first generation learners rooted in the local tradition were explored. Activities and materials were evolved, and tested, in the field areas. In 1986, all this work was put together to form a tentative curriculum. Members of the group taught this in place of the normal school teachers, during 1986-87. One school was in a rural area – at a village called Pahawadi, the other was in Harda, a small town.



Courtesy: K.R. Sharma, Eklavya

Learning by experimenting

The consolidated curriculum was introduced in several schools, teachers trained, and the programme systematically monitored.

Textbooks evolved out of this process, and were later revised on the basis of feedback from schools.

Special teacher-training methods have been designed, to rid the teacher of his/her inhibitions in dealing with children at their own level. The teachers are acquainted with the need to create classroom contexts that involve and activate children's minds.

Extract from an Eklavya document:

"..... A war is waged against adult notions of what children 'should' learn, and the way in which they should learn, that is rote learning. Children learn what makes sense to them. It is criminal to expect Class 1 or 2 children to be able to read, memorise the whole alphabet, learn numerals up to 100 and be able to perform such mathematical operations as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of all kinds. Children fail to learn all this because it is often thrust upon them before they are cognitively ready to do so. What is presented to them is incomprehensible to them because of the way in which it is presented and because of its irrelevance to their day-to-day lives."

Spirit of self-learning

In India, everyone knows the story of the little boy named 'Eklavya'. He was an ordinary tribal, with a tremendous urge to learn the art of archery. The teacher he approached refused to teach him, so he practised on his own and learnt the skill anyway. While practising, he would place an earthen image of the teacher in front of him. Later, that teacher demanded the fee: Eklavya's right thumb which Eklavya promptly cut off and gave him. Some lessons from this story permeate the philosophy of the Eklavya group, which has borrowed the name of this remarkable youth. The group interprets the story in a new way. The message today is that education is open to all children, regardless of class, creed, or caste. Education has a liberating influence with the potential to challenge and change the social equations.

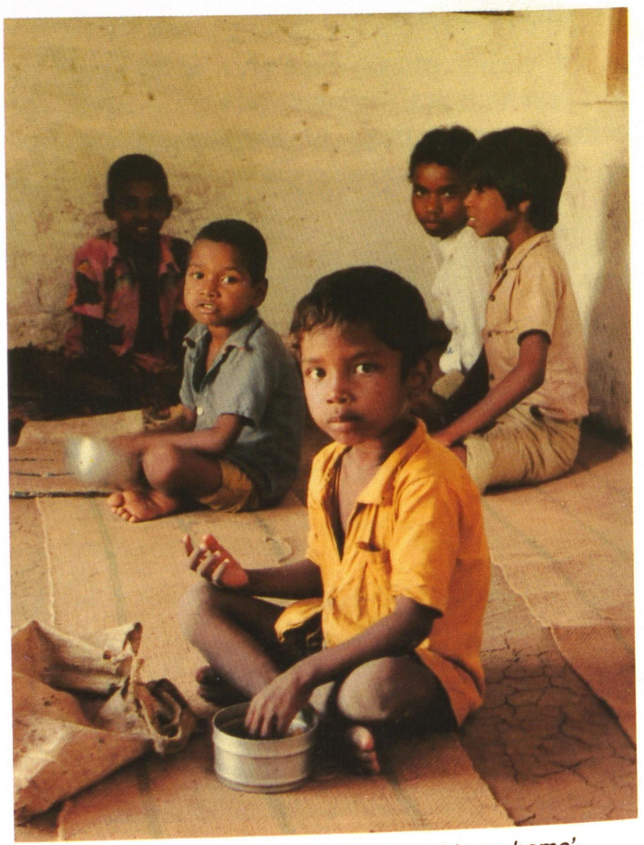
Eklavya believes .....

- That education should first be centred around the needs and thought processes of the child, and only later address the needs of the concerned disciplines.
- That the teacher's role is crucial not only in the process of teaching, but in the evolution of educational innovations. The teaching community should be given its due in all matters pertaining to education.
- That the process of education should be one of constant change and evolution in terms of content and methodology.
- That education equips children with motor and mental skills, as well as methods for analysing the physical and intellectual world. It helps to develop problem-solving skills, the spirit of inquiry and scientific temper.
- That education cannot be looked at in isolation from the society and environment in which it is situated. It is in fact a means to motivate people to reflect on and improve the conditions in which they live.

The basic focus of the content is the children, their interests and worldview. In other words, the curriculum is child-centred.

The emphasis in the first few years is on 'opening up' the child, removing fears in order to make the learning process joyful and the school a place where the child likes to be. Curriculum learning takes place through activities which involve the learner in a dynamic interaction with learning materials.

Working as it does in physically stringent and materially deprived conditions, Eklavya's primary school programme believes that more important than the materials is the way in which they are created and used. A sensitive and skillful teacher can use any material in such way that children get involved and learning takes place through participation, rather than by memorisation of numbers and paradigms. It has been possible, for instance, to use a simple poem which children love to sing together for exposing children to a variety of processes that underlie the acquisition of complex mathematical and linguistic abilities. This brings into focus the importance of working in close collaboration with teachers: there is no short-cut to this.



'Sometimes, children did not want to go home'

CHAKMAK

Every month Eklavya publishes a children's science magazine called 'Chakmak'. December 1993 will see the 100th issue of this extremely popular magazine.

During the course of its work in primary schools, Eklavya became acutely aware of the paucity of good reading material for children in rural areas. In fact, there were barely any books or toys to be found in the homes of most of these children. This would have negatively affected the children's efforts to gain literacy and proficiency in language. Along with designing textbooks, Eklavya conceived of Chakmak as a regular input to enrich the children's learning experience.

Chakmak is circulated to all middle and high schools in Madhya Pradesh, as well as outside the state. Children in schools covered by Eklavya programmes can obtain copies of the magazine at a highly subsidised rate. The magazine is tremendously popular. It has made a real impact. Children send in their own poems, stories, and drawings. About 25 per cent of each issue every month is made from material sent in by children. Chakmak Clubs have sprung up in villages, enriching the school activities. The entire process is aided by the availability of specially designed educational toys that Eklavya is manufacturing at its toys workshop.

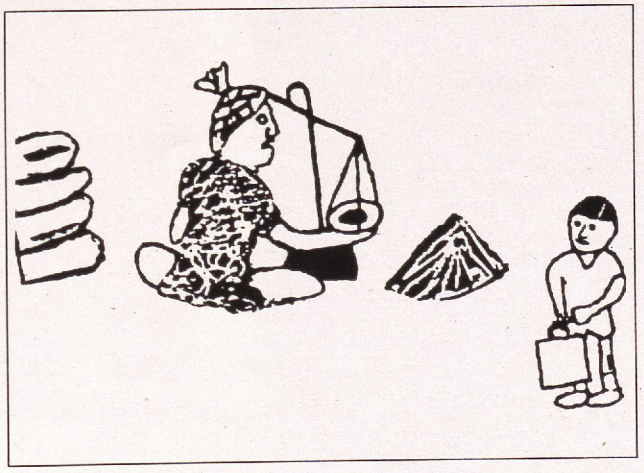
Eklavya's other school programmes focus on the teaching of science, and the social sciences, at the middle school level.

In 1982, Eklavya took over the responsibility for running a School Science programme. The programme is popularly known as the 'Hoshangabad Vigyan Shikshan Karyakram', or **Hovishika**. Between 1982-86 the programme was seeded in 14 districts of Madhya Pradesh, and to date over 450 schools are covered, with 50,000 students each year in Classes 6, 7 and 8.

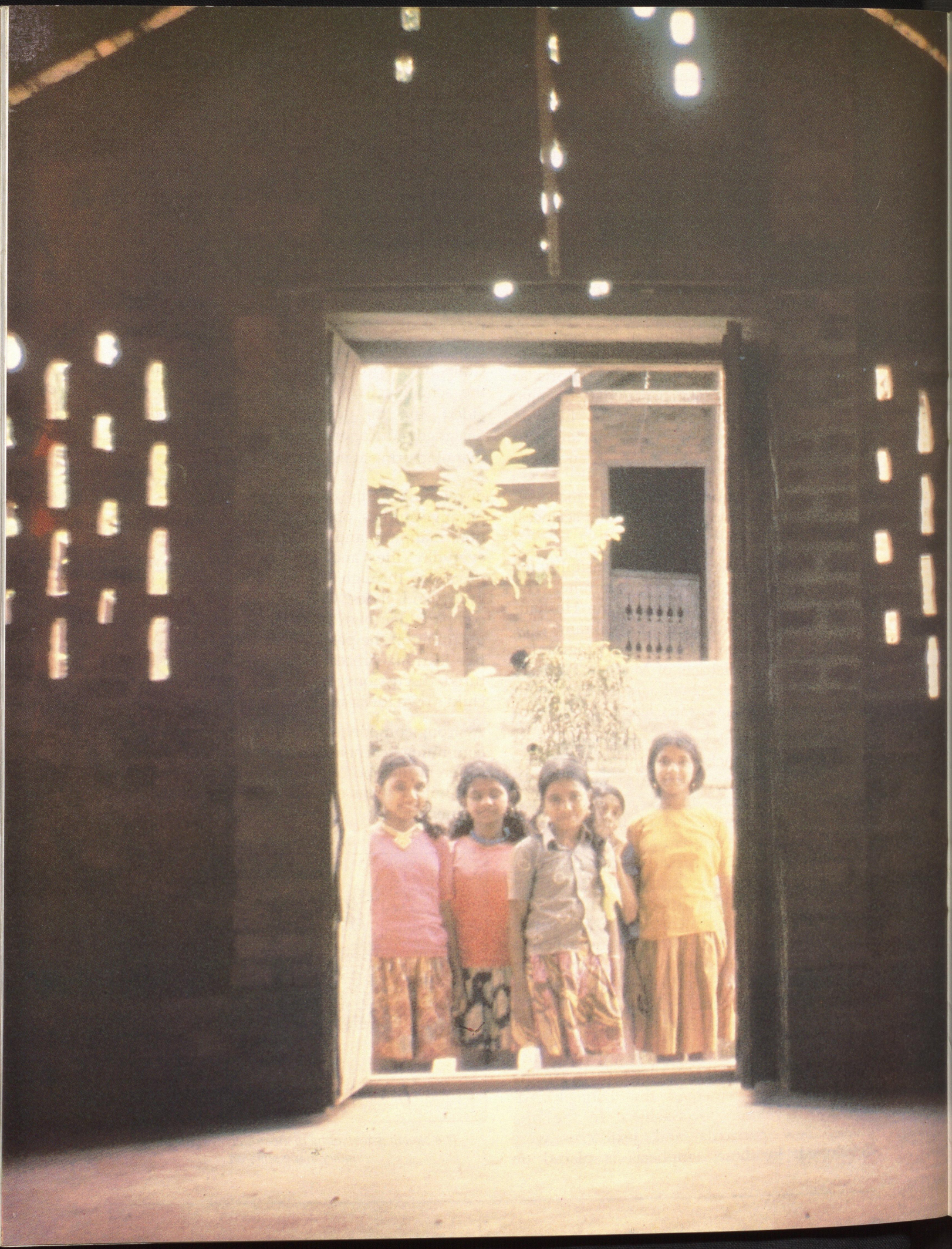
Through the School Science programme emphasis in Science teaching has shifted from content to methodology. Science is taught now through experiments, analysis, group discussions and field trips. Part of the content is tailored around the student's life and environment. A low cost kit is provided to the schools, and children perform experiments in small groups, with the teacher moving from group to group. Such an arrangement changes the standard architecture of the classroom wherein children sit in rigid rows. It also changes the role of the teacher: from being a "fountain of knowledge", he/she becomes friend, philosopher and guide to the students.

Systematic intervention in the Social Science teaching in middle schools was initiated in the mid-1980s. Thus emerged the 'Samajik Adhyayan Karyakram' or **Sashika**. In the first phase, new curricula and textbooks were developed. In these, emphasis is placed on developing skills of historical analysis, comparative studies, observation and data compilation, mapping, and application of principles to everyday life, and on understanding social processes through subjects like history, geography and civics. Children are encouraged to compare their own social environment with that obtaining in the past and in alien lands. An active learning process is ensured through structured discussions, in lessons which elicit the child's own ideas and information.

A strong component of all these programmes is continuing teacher orientation and an entirely different method of examinations – open-book, and with a stress on understanding rather than memorising.



The sketch is testimony to the creativity and spirit of inquiry in the children





The Future is Inviting

Pune district in Maharashtra has been the educational laboratory for the future. Since 1979, the Indian Institute of Education, (IIE), has been studying the problems related to mobilising rural communities in different parts of the district.

The action-research project, now in its third phase is propelling 137 villages to take responsibility for the quality of education provided in the non-formal, stream and in the formal system.

Choosing a geographically homogeneous area south of the city, the IIE launched the Promoting Primary and Elementary Education Project, (PROPEL), in 1988. Working in the Shivganga-Gunjavani-Nira Valley, the project area covers four tehsils (blocks). Explains the project coordinator, "Selection of the area was based on the cultural relationships and social homogeneity rather than administrative convenience".

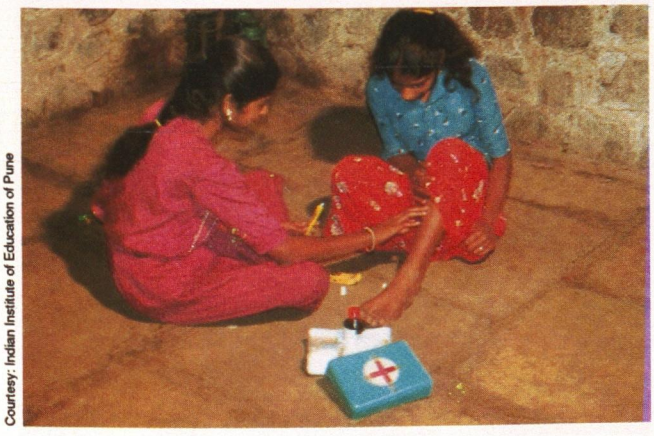
Though begun as an intervention through the non-formal education system, the project evolved into a holistic scheme of community-centred education. As the project coordinator ruefully admits, "A holistic approach was essential. We have seen that sectoral approaches always fail".

Thus the Non-Formal Education (NFE) centres for working children and adult literacy classes make up a fraction of the project activities. The project trains women's groups in personality development and encourages them to work as volunteer teachers or animators, mobilises youth to work as NFE instructors and has set up immensely popular child recreation centres in 30 villages.

"Though the demand for these centres has come in from all 137 villages", explains a member of the IIE-based research group, "resources have allowed the setting up of only 30 such centres." They provide an opportunity for the research team to make the first forays in the field of health.

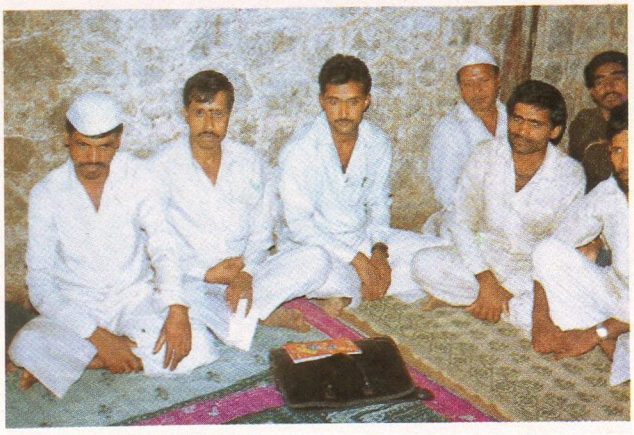
From the first phase of the project, each NFE centre would be distinguished by the presence of a bucket of clean water and a mug. The emphasis on hygiene and its relationship to health is carried home.

Chandrakant Sarpale, the deputy sarpanch (village head) and member of the Village Education Committee, (VEC), of Sonde Sarpale village proudly explains, "through the VEC we got a Primary Health Centre, (PHC), opened in the village". A few years ago that would have been



Courtesy: Indian Institute of Education of Pune

Learning by doing



Chandrakant Sarpale and other VEC members





Neo-literates examine new books

seen as the duty of the panchayat (village committee). Now VECs are broadening their definition of education and beginning to demand related services.

The demand however did not materialise overnight. Though the state has a long tradition of social reform and education-for-the-masses movements, education especially for girls was never seen as a priority.

During the first phase of the IIE's action-research project (1979-1985), 100 villages in five agro-climatic zones of Pune district had been covered. Many of the elements from the first phase and the short two year replication phase have been retained.

The most important element of the research design was that control of the project would rest with the villagers. Thus the VECs were asked to select the site for the centre, they chose the NFE instructors and even decided the timing of the classes. Explains a member of the research team, "We emphasise to the villagers that we are only researchers. Thus the credit for the success of the programme would be that of the village. But so would the responsibility for any failure."

With the villagers taking responsibility for crucial elements of the system, the project team concentrates on training programmes for field staff and villagers and on the provision of materials.

IIE has devised its own curricula for the two-year NFE programme. The training material though is evolving. It began with a well-produced text-book which the students could not relate to. "There were problems with the dialects and the book was not region-specific, so children in the hills could not understand many of the ideas", explains the project coordinator.

Later it evolved into a series of four books which do not bore children and encourage self-study. The training materials are now also being used in the formal primary schools as the state



Post-literacy class in session



NFE techniques being used in primary schools



Training programme for women



VEC members

attempts to include elements of the non-formal system.

But perhaps the most interesting aspect has been the involvement of all sections of the community in the work of the project and the demand for more services. Thus a training programme for women led to a request that a similar programme be conducted to sensitise the men. Such requests provide the first signals of the changing social milieu.

Though there is no attempt to shift gears on social issues, accelerating the process is high on the agenda. Thus during training for women's groups and VEC members, the effect of early marriage on a child are explained and the decision left to the villagers. Explains a research team member, "Earlier girls were married at the ages of 10 or 11. Now it has reached 14-15".

Providing clues to the future, Propel has managed to reduce the need for non-formal education. Mothers whose children attend NFE centres are willing to put younger children through the formal system.

But to cater to the demand for more non-formal education, a course called NFE (Higher) has been devised. Catering to those who have been through the regular NFE programme and for Class 5 dropouts from the formal system, the programme will go on-stream in January 1994.

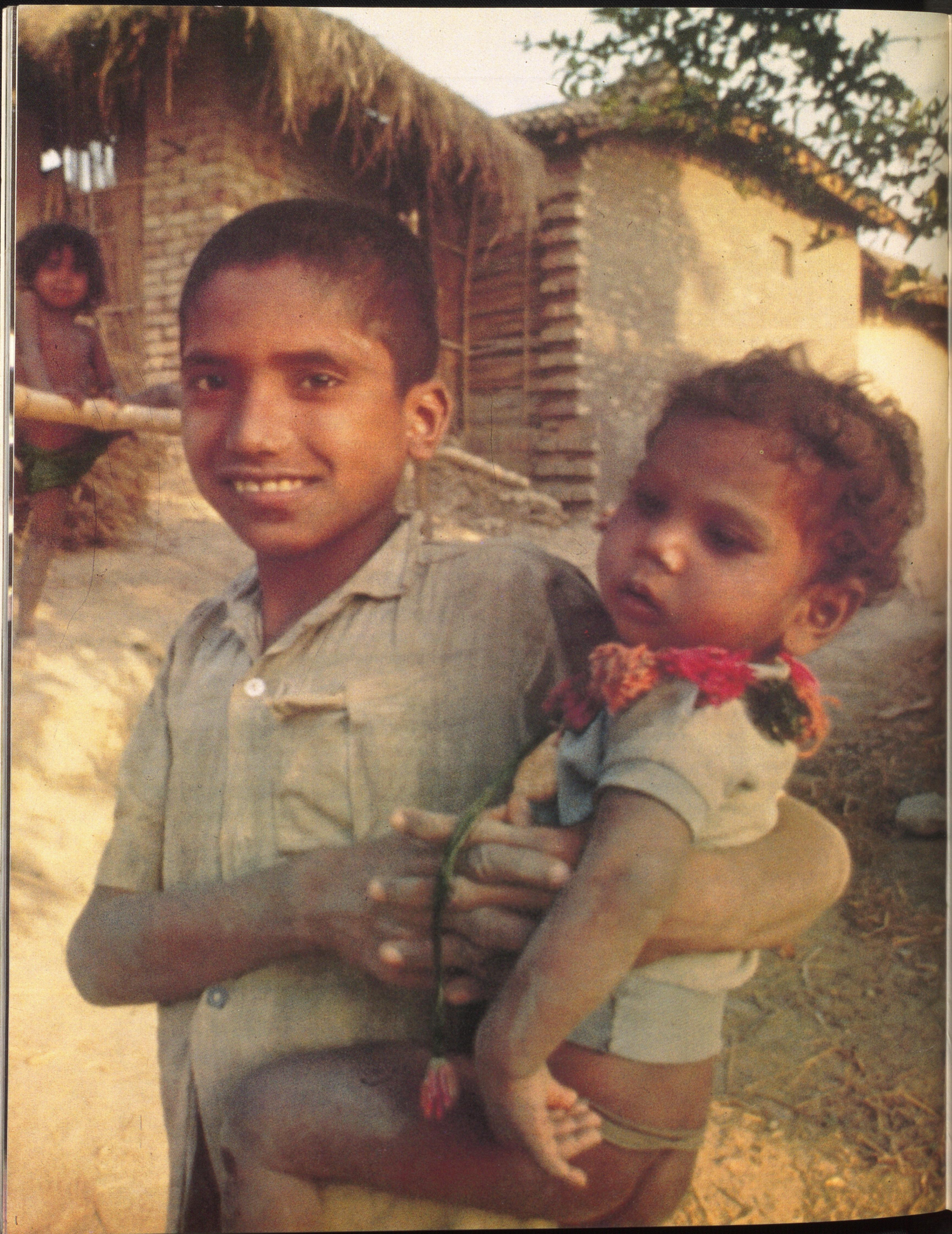
Though it is difficult to isolate the reasons for success of the project, dropout rates have diminished, over 70 per cent of those who go through the NFE programme are able to complete the course, the commitment and zeal of field staff and research team are major motivating factors.

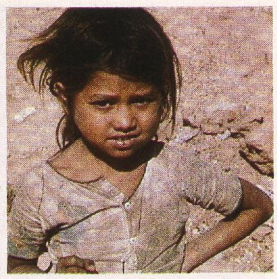
Selected as one of UNESCO's 'Showcase Projects', Propel's horizons are broadening. From facilitating NFE centres, to training primary school teachers in non-formalising the formal school is a giant leap from a small beginning.





Training sessions for youth and animators





An Education for Life

If education is to reach the poorest of poor children, then it will have to be made relevant to their contexts. A standardised format cannot meet the varied needs of one and all.

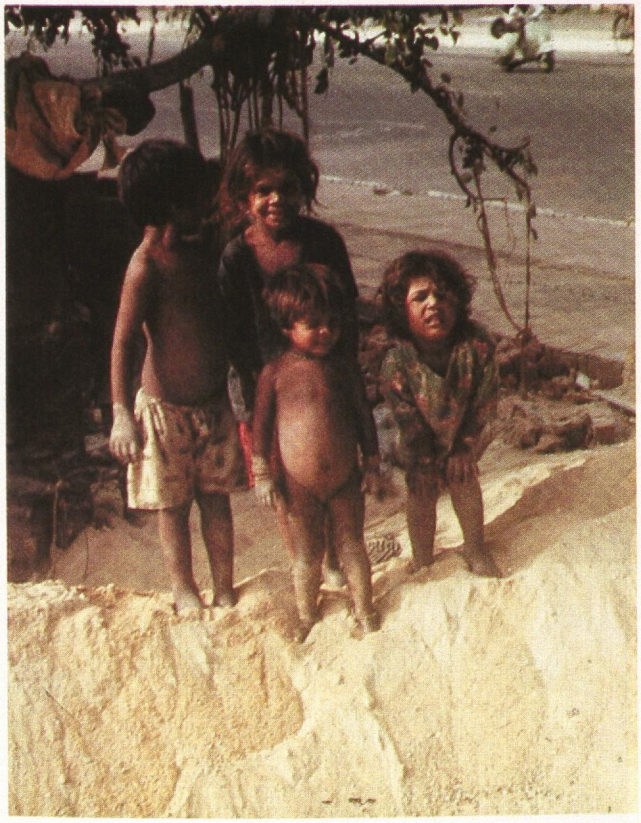
In 1987, several Delhi-based Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGOs), assembled on a common platform so as to collectively work out an action plan to initiate programme intervention for street and working children in Delhi. Thus the Delhi NGO Forum for Street and Working Children was born.

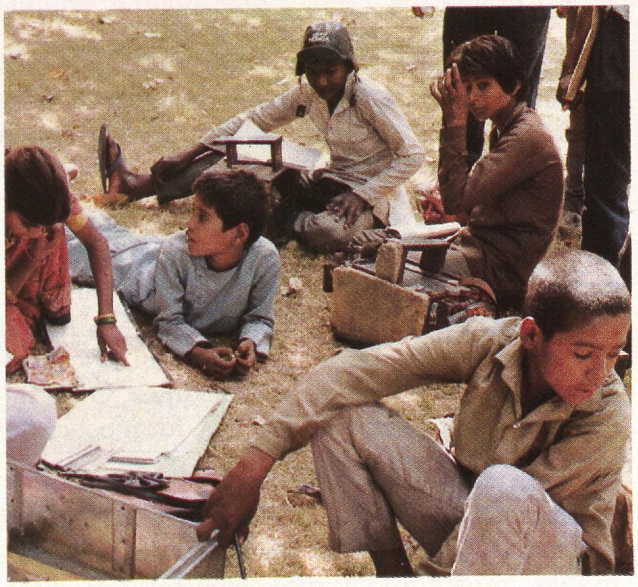
The capital of India, Delhi, is a city of dense commercial activity, buzzing with politics and media happenings, a sprawling bureaucracy, and huge slums. Large numbers of children – as also adults – migrate to Delhi. A search for better work opportunities is the major reason for migration. Most of the street and working children of Delhi have come into the metropolis from surrounding states, i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh. It is estimated that in Delhi alone, there are about 400,000 child workers and 100,000 street children.

'Working Children' are those upon whom work is imposed, at the cost of learning and play. The most common work is as helpers in small wayside restaurants and tea shops, while a large number work as vendors. Small industrial units also depend heavily on child labour. Many children work as porters, shoe-shine boys and ragpickers.

'Street Children' can be categorised as follows :

- ☞ 'Children on the street' – by far the most numerous – are those who engage in some street trade, but usually return .in the night to some shelter.
- ☞ 'Children of the street' is a group that has chosen to live on the street. It is here that





The bleak morning gives way to a mid-day meeting. There is comfort in togetherness

Salim

Salim cannot remember a happy home where there was laughter and happiness. He can recall times of hunger, beatings and forced work. Ten year old Salim is a new entrant to Delhi. It is little over a year since he ran off from home. If you ask him about home and why he ran away, he becomes pensive, his eyes become troubled and you feel you should not have asked. Salim revealed that when he was around 5-years-old his father went away and never returned. His mother married again, he has a younger brother, one step brother and sister. Salim never went to school. He was forced to work at a cycle repair shop. He does not know how much he earned, his step-father collected the wages. Salim said there was never enough to eat; "I was always hungry. My step father drinks and he then starts beating me and my mother. One day he hit me so much that I fainted. My mother kept crying and saying why don't you go away. A week later I boarded a train and I did not know where it was going. My only thought was of getting away from home. It brought me to Delhi."



Salim sleeps at one of the busiest bus stations in Delhi. He and his four companions have been sleeping at this bus station for the past one year. They collect scrap, specially plastics and bottles. Their only possession is a huge gunny bag and the tattered clothes on their back. Salim has an old canvas shoe on one foot and a half torn leather shoe on the other.

They spend about eight hours every day picking scrap and they earn about Rs.10/- to Rs.15/-. Salim and his friends go on their rounds as early as 3 a.m. in the morning and the day's work is finished by noon. Sometimes they start their work in the evenings. It all depends on their moods. Quite often Salim is caught by the police and taken to the police station on the assumption that he has stolen something. He is cross-examined, often beaten and asked to empty his pockets. Twice he was arrested and sent to the Children's Home, from where he ran off.

they seek shelter, companionship and a livelihood.

☞ Abandoned children – are the most vulnerable section. They have no ties with their families. So they are entirely on their own for material as well as emotional survival.

Although the NGO Forum has some 22 member groups, only a few have been concretely working with street and working children. The common features in their programmes are health and nutrition components, education, vocational training, and recreational facilities. Over the years the focus on education has, for most of the groups sharpened and clarified.

Ankuran, founded in 1982, has a pre-school education centre with play and learning activities, music and dance. Non-formal education, (NFE), centres are run for children in the 7-14 age-group, in the day as well as in the night. Through these classes children gain interest and confidence, and many go on to join formal schools. For school-going children,



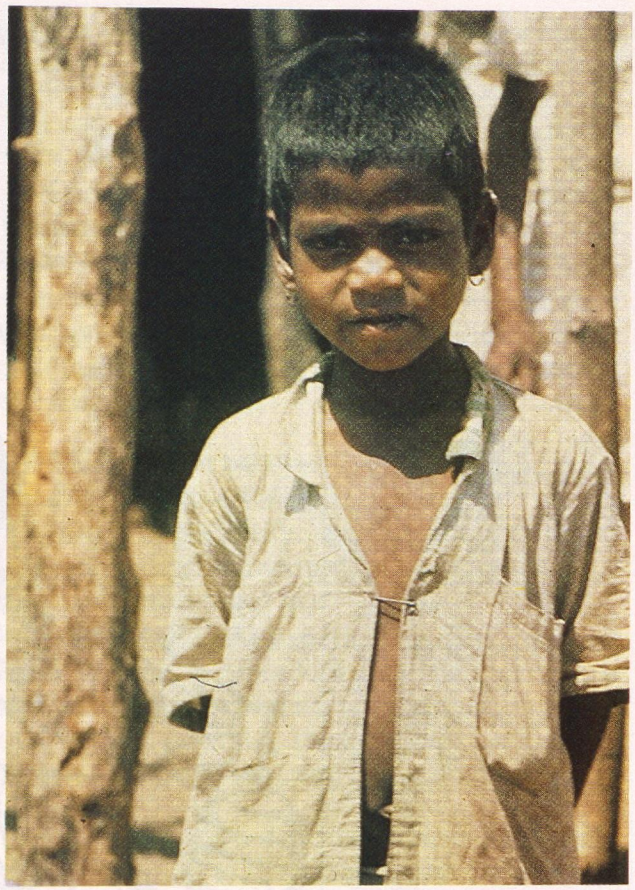
Weaving a life off the streets

Ankuran organises Remedial Education Centres, to provide academic help. This has resulted in a reduction in drop-outs. Two Adult Education Centres are also run for which the curriculum was specially designed, so as to impart knowledge on issues of health, hygiene, sanitation and so on.

Asha Project began in 1988, with the aim of promoting educational, social, physical and psychological development of street and working children. A large number of children, mainly girl **coolies** (porters) participate in the project's activities. NFE and literacy classes, as well as Adult Education classes (for the parents of working children) are important components. Children are often taken out on trips and educational tours, and encouraged to participate in cultural activities. Street Educators, who work with the children, make an effort to continually upgrade their own skills to provide effective and creative inputs to the various activities.

Bal Sahyog, set up in 1954, has emerged as a centre for the overall care and education of deprived children. Children aged 12-16 years can stay at the home. Schooling is provided upto Class 8, after which children are enrolled





in other schools. There is also provision for vocational training, in cane work, wood work, scooter repair, tailoring, welding and so on.

Self-employed Women's Association – Delhi began working in 1981 with ragpickers. A NFE Scheme was launched for these largely illiterate children, a job placement service, and a saving scheme. Today SEWA-Delhi works with 700 families of ragpickers.

Theatre Action Group began working in 1988, with unlicensed child **coolies**, at New Delhi Railway Station. Although there are some 1,000 such children at the station, only a small number began to come regularly to TAG's meeting place, which is a community hall near the station. Formal literacy classes are held in the evening, while during the day they discuss their various problems, and possible solutions. TAG managed to involve these children in creative expression through innovative theatre, the children produced a play which depicted starkly their own living condition, hopes, and experiences.

Delhi Council For Child Welfare undertook a project providing NFE, health and nutritional

Maya

Maya's mother was forced to leave her home when her husband married for the second time. She was told in no uncertain terms that she must leave the place. The mother and her five year old daughter took a train to Bhubaneshwar with no plans as to what they would do at Bhubaneshwar.

From Bhubaneshwar they headed towards Delhi. Their future was very bleak. The mother being unskilled and illiterate there wasn't much choice. They have been staying at the station for the past three years.



Maya's mother found that begging was the simplest occupation she could get into. Maya too started to beg so that they could earn enough to have two meals, but it was not easy. Maya's mother had finally to sell her body so as to have a regular income. Maya has friends at the station, but her best friend Meena has gone away. A man who works at the station told Meena he would look after her and she could stay at his place. No one has seen Meena ever since. Maya has her mother for protection but for how long?

While talking about her life at the station, she said "whenever there is an inspection we have to disappear for a day or two. During those days we sleep out. At night we sleep on platform one as it is safer than platform five where strangers come at night and disturb us. But during the day we spend all our time on platform five". When we asked Maya what she desired most, she remarked, "red plastic slippers".

services, play and recreational activities, and vocational training to street and working children. Two centers were started, in 1990, one at Old Delhi Railway Station, and the other at Paharganj, an urban slum. Vocational classes are held for girls; literacy classes are held for both girls and boys. Counselling facilities are available for children. Another activity is the specialised homework classes organised in seven villages for school-going children.

Development Justice and Peace is a project run by the Archdiocese of Delhi. It began in 1988. The goals and strategies have evolved from activity to activity. The emphasis is on conscientisation, education and mobilisation of people. There is a literacy programme for ragpickers, both boys and girls, a scooter training class for boys, and tailoring classes for girls. DJP also runs 32 pre-school centres for children from economically disadvantaged families. A condensed course of continuing education for school dropouts, particularly girls, has also been initiated.

Prabhatara, started in 1987, has a number of programmes for street and working children, and women. It believes in equipping the poor children and women with skills and knowledge which would ultimately lead to self-confidence and self-reliance. Apart from NFE classes, there are coaching classes, awareness generation programmes and an Earn-While-You-Learn scheme, that is intensive vocational training.

'Prayas' Juvenile Aid Centre was founded in 1988, as a centre for delinquents and other neglected children. The aim is to prevent the vulnerable young from crimes and delinquency, by inculcating a sense of individual dignity and social responsibility. Through vocational programmes and psychological support, the effort is to build the way for a healthy and

productive life. Elementary NFE, vocational training and counseling services are provided to the children. The centre is based in Jahangirpuri, a sprawling urban slum.

Butterflies, set up in 1989, has a team of Street Educators who initiate contact with street children, through regular visits and meetings. 'Bal Sabha' ('Childrens' Meeting') are held every fortnight at each of Butterflies' eight contact points. In these, children voice their concerns which could in time build up into a "children's movement". They discuss issues such as police harrassment, non-payment of wages, drug addiction, gambling, health care and education. The Street Educators run NFE classes (in which 285 children are participating regularly). Alternative teaching materials are being generated here. Street Educators also extend counselling services for disturbed children. Butterflies aims at identifying street children who could over time take on the task of Street Child Educators.

Future Plans: Each of these NGOs plans to intensify its own specific work in the area of providing relevant education to Delhi's street and working children. The Forum will also continue to function as an interest group for street and working children, for initiating action in the area, sharing experiences, and providing mutual support. The groups also hope to initiate a joint action plan, as well as work together to create greater public awareness, as well as urging interventions by the formal school system and other NGOs. For instance, the Forum has suggested that the Municipal Corporation and private schools plan NFE classes in the evening for these children. The strength of this collaborative venture would be that the coverage of the programmes would be larger, and low-cost.

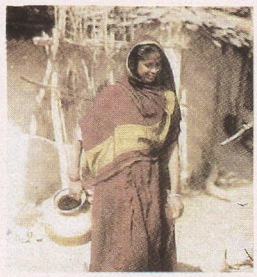
About 80 per cent have never been to school. Yet, having lived on the street for so long, and being wage-earners, they already have an extensive knowledge, particularly of their work situation environment, and life itself. 'Difficult circumstances' has been their school for learning the skills of survival.

The NGO Forum believes that these children are capable of blossoming if given the understanding, opportunity, and space to grow. Education for them would be an education for life, an education that is based on their knowledge and life experiences. They already have a value for freedom and the courage to handle a difficult present, as well as a discipline that follows no rules. They already have a certain self-reliance, and spirit of sharing.

There is a beauty, a delicacy, a tremulous groping, in the mind of every child. The challenge is to reach out to these minds... to understand their suffering as well as their simplicity. Even as these children strive to survive in harsh conditions, the challenge is to be able to help them - to teach them what they are groping to learn, struggling to comprehend. Like all children everywhere, these children too want to learn - they want to fly... high. They want to paint the sky with bright colours – their own bright colours.



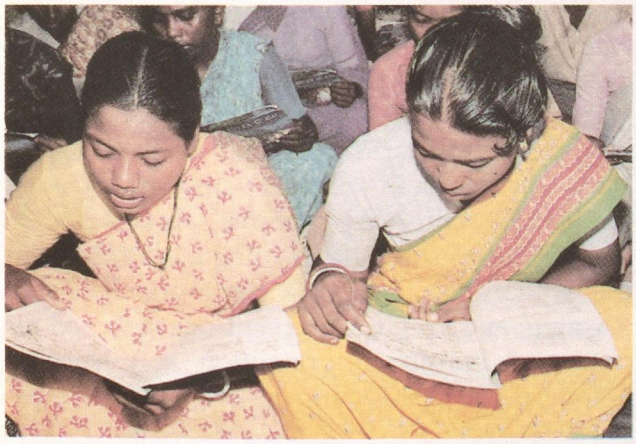




The Torch Passes On

Seventeen teachers' organisations in the state of Orissa have committed themselves to work together for universalisation of primary education in the state.

The long-term objective of this forum called 'Teachers for Universalisation of Primary Education', (TUPE), is to draw all children in the 6-14 age group into schools. The teachers' commitment extends not only to enrolling all the children, but also ensuring attainment of minimum levels of learning for all and minimising the dropout rates.



The commitment shows

A thousand temple walls in Orissa speak of the rich history of its people, bred in a heritage of art, crafts and learning. Acres of green fields, colourful tribal traditions, and up-coming industry coexist oddly with pockets of intense poverty and malnutrition.

The educational scenario is disconcerting. Of a total population of 3.15 million, only 48.5 per cent are literate. Of the literates, only 34.4 per cent are women. Around 20 per cent of the children in the 6-10 age group, do not enter schools at all. Out of every 100 children enrolled in Class 1, only 54 children complete Class 5!

Although there are some 40,000 primary schools in Orissa, and over 10 million primary school teachers, yet for every 38 students, there is only one teacher available. In remote or tribal areas, a child may have to walk about 4 kms to reach a school.

TUPE's Plan of Action: In 1992, on 5th September (that is Teachers' Day), some 2,000 teachers gathered in the town of Cuttack, and pledged to work unitedly for the universalisation of primary education. That was the beginning of a massive campaign of mass mobilisation of school teachers, children and the communities as a whole. This was symbolised by means of the "Gyana Jyoti" – a "torch of learning" – that was lit by Orissa's Chief Minister and then carried, by the teachers, throughout the villages and cities of the state. In 70 days over 500 public meetings were held, enroute. In the meetings, the leaders of the teacher's organisations urged



The smiles tell their own tale

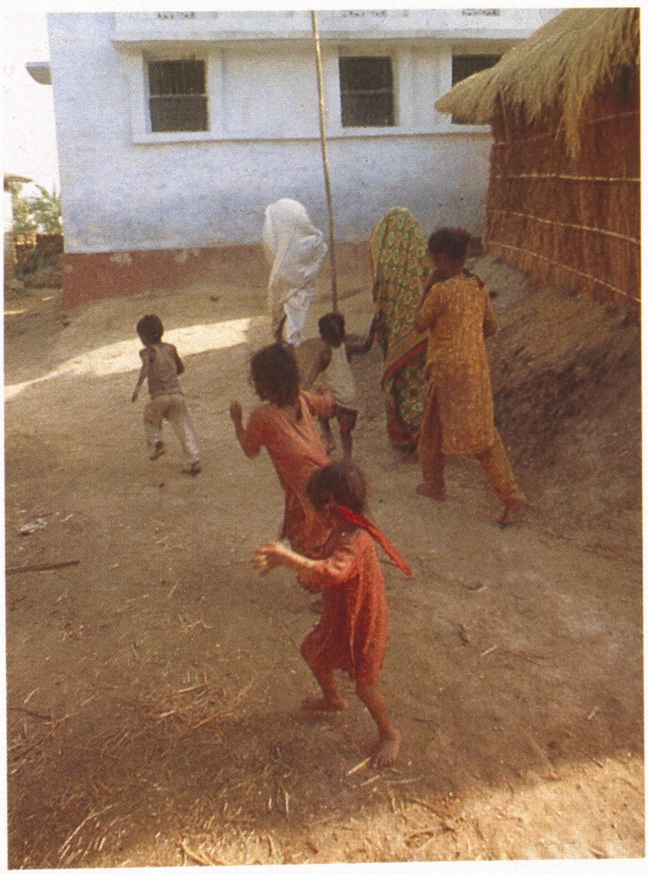
the people to enroll their children and ensure their regular attendance and completion of at least primary school level education. On 14th November, the Gyana Jyoti reached Bhubaneshwar, the capital of Orissa and was welcomed by a gathering of over 50,000 teachers and female health workers. The state-wide tour helped create a ripple of excitement and anticipation and an atmosphere of goodwill among the people of the state.

Whether a tiny hamlet, or a small gathering, the teachers stopped at every place to fulfil their mission....

The hills and forests of Koraput, the southern tip of Orissa, echoed the tumultuous welcome that its tribal inhabitants gave to the Gyana Jyoti. The old and the young together greeted the light with music and dance....

The journey was replete with symbolic acts – throwing of coloured powders, marching bands, a handicapped child receiving the torch....

This is just the beginning of a real pilgrimage for Orissa's teachers. The shoulders that bore the Jyoti from village to village must now take on the burden of the job of educating children but with a new enlightenment within their own hearts and minds....



On the way to school?

TUPE's vision

- ☞ Universalisation of Primary Education is a demand from below and we have to go to the masses to have interaction with them.
- ☞ The goal involves drastic social change.
- ☞ We urge the introduction of a common school system for all children.
- ☞ We draw upon the political will of our planners and policymakers.

The next step was to draw up strategies and a detailed plan of action, which was finalised in a workshop held in December 1992. The plan envisaged holding block level convention (in 314 blocks) involving primary school teachers, health workers, and village leaders to generate awareness about Universalisation of Primary Education; to conduct house-to-house surveys and enroll all children (aged 6-10 years) in school by the next academic session; arresting teachers' absenteeism; students' drop-out rates; creating an appropriate learning environment in the schools and ensuring minimum levels of learning; and specific interventions required for improved enrollment, retention and learning among girl children, and among under-served castes and tribes.

Encouraging Enrollment and Retention: Block-level conventions were held by TUPE in Dhenkanal, Nimapada, Jatni, Tangi Chodwar, Anandapur, Bhubaneshwar, Kendrapada, Aska, Matabadi, Bhadrak Circle, Tirtol, Badachana, Chandikhol, Karlamunda, Kujunga... followed by house-to-house survey and enrollment drives. Large members of never-enrolled or dropout children (6-10 years old) began to be enrolled in the schools. At particularly difficult spots, such as Karlamunda block in Kalahandi district, slates, pencils and dresses were also given as an incentive for enrollment.

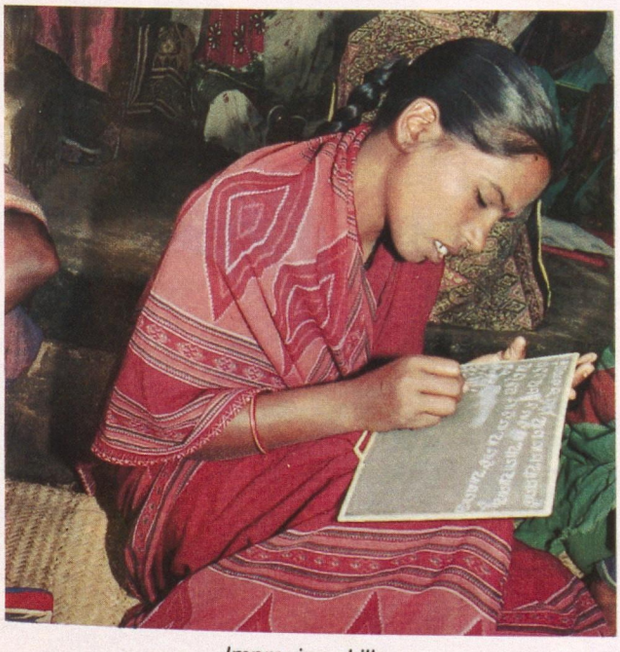
Some problems voiced by the people during this phase were articulated as demands by TUPE. For instance, the dates of enrollment should be

shifted and school timings should be made flexible.

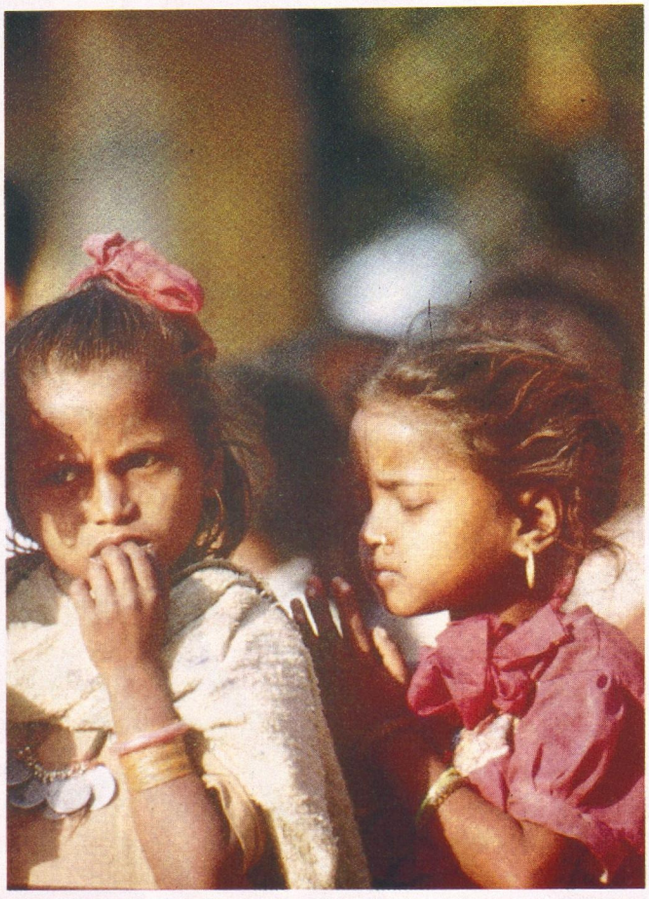
Children will continue attending school if they enjoy the time they spend there. As a first step, teachers must be sensitised to the needs of the child. There is a serious plan to organise better pedagogical education and training for the teachers, so that they are better equipped with reference to communication and interaction skills, language teaching, and methodologies of teaching. In-service and continuing education programmes will be devised.



The teacher's involvement in her work is complete



Improving skills



Broadening horizons for children

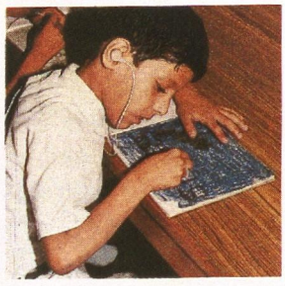
At the same time, TUPE emphasises the importance of according full respect to the teachers. Teachers' image and self-confidence need to be enhanced, their participation is to be actively sought, extraordinary achievements are to be recognised and honoured and policies with regard to posting, housing, welfare and so on to be rationalised.

Availability of textbooks and other teaching material should be reviewed. Facilities in the schools need to be improved.

The classroom should become an interesting place, a place where the child can learn freely. It is suggested that the emphasis shifts from rote memorisation to the actual mastering of basic competencies and skills. Games, stories, and play methods should be encouraged.

Primary schools should be provided within a distance of 1 km, and programmes for part-time non-formal education set up for those children who cannot attend whole-day schools and children in habitations which do not have any schools.





Help Me Learn

My world is dark

For I have no eyes

Can you not light the lamp

Of learning within me?

My world is still

For I cannot hear

Can you awaken within me

A knowledge of words?

What if I cannot speak?

What if I have lost a limb?

Can you still, can you still,

Help me?

Help me learn,

Help me dream

Help to heal

The wounds within !

Some children are especially disadvantaged. At the same time, they are under-served by basic educational services. The realisation has dawned on the part of educationists and administrators that such children need, in fact, special attention. It is the educational services that will have to be appropriately designed so as to reach out to these children. If children with physical disabilities are to be taught, then the methods of teaching will have to be suitably adapted.

The Project Integrated Education for the Disabled, (PIED), has taken up the challenge to bring light to those who have visual handicaps and sound to those who have hearing impairments. The aim is to help identify, diagnose and educate those children who have any of a wide range of disabilities.

The project was launched in 1988. At present it is being run in eight states – Haryana, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Maharashtra and two cities, i.e. Delhi and Baroda. So far nearly 14,000 children suffering from various disabilities have been identified.

How are these children identified? How are





Very special artists

The Mizoram experience

India's north-east: gently rolling hill-slopes with diverse tribes, lilting mellifluous music and the rhythm of dance. As we zoom in to have a closer experience of such graceful life, we find in the idyllic villages much laughter – and also sorrow, poverty and many problems.

So when the Project Integrated Education for the Disabled made its initial forays into the region, it was to discover a substantial number of children with hearing disorders, visual defects and mental retardation.

PIED was launched in 1988 in Mizoram, in Khawzawl block. The block covers 43 villages with 116 schools.

To begin with, block teachers were contacted and oriented into the ways to identify disabled children. The teachers proved to be enthusiastic, and soon they carried out door-to-door surveys in all the villages. They motivated parents to prepare their disabled children for school. Community contact meetings were held and workshops organised to train parents. "School readiness" surveys were conducted, and the degrees of disability measured.



Going to school

Rungnu Thanda had gone to school when he was four years old. But within a few days, he had stopped attending school. In September 1988, the school teachers tested him and found that he had some learning disabilities. They then made special efforts to draw him back into school, and help him once he was there. Soon he began to enjoy his time in school. Though a little slower to learn than others in his class, he now feels one of them – he sings and draws, reads and writes.

Like Rungnu, many other disabled children were gradually brought into the school system, integrated with the rest of the children.

As early as 1991, a teacher noted "Within the past two years I have noticed a significant change in these children. Now they do not shy away from others, or from the public eye."

A few teachers in the block received more specialised training, so they act as resource persons for the entire block. Non-Governmental Organisations, (NGOs), in the area also pitch in, doing follow up of cases, tuitions for disabled children, identification and referral, home visits, and so on. Anganwadi (pre-school centre) teachers were trained to help pre-school disabled children.

Special resource centres were set up, so the child who needs to can avail of special aids, books in Braille, and so on. Other children also learn to value and help those children who are disabled. This is a very important element in the process of integration.

A primary school teacher recalls – "Initially we had many doubts about the programme, but now we have made it work. Now the community as a whole accepts it".

Smt. Lalkum, a Mahila Samiti (women's group) member in her village expressed her appreciation – "Now the children have the opportunity to bloom like flowers". Another community member notes quietly, "Working in the PIED is nothing less than serving God".

The Mizo Youth Association wants to extend PIED to provision of vocational training to disabled youth.

Special materials

Under PIED, a large number of books and handbooks have been developed as well as motivational films, audio-visual material and innovative special education aids. The following extracts are from source books for teachers of hearing impaired and visually impaired children.

For the child with hearing impairments:

Early detection and diagnosis are very important because the first two years of life are crucial in learning to listen and the development of language and speech. Parents and the family can learn how to help their child.

Language acquisition is difficult for the deaf child because language is an auditory vocal process. For the language development of the child, learning to read is especially important. The hearing child learns to read the language he already knows; the deaf child gets to know the language he has learnt to read.

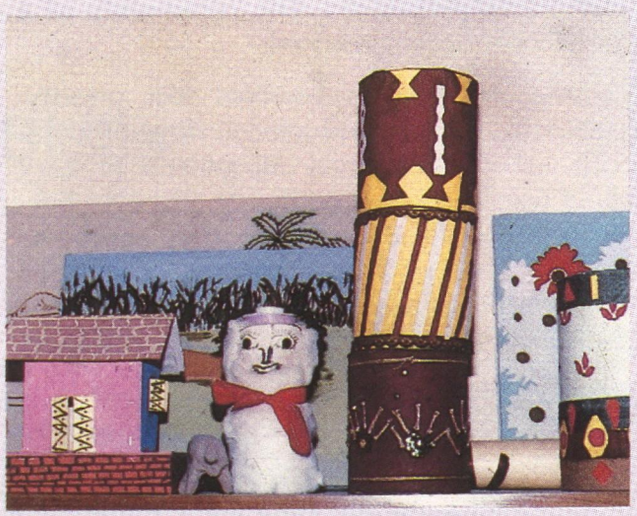
Preparation of hearing-impaired children for school is a joyful and rewarding experience.

For parents, for teachers:

Identify and assess the type and degree of impairment. Observe behaviour patterns and learning difficulties. Make systematic records. Work out specific strategies to help each child.

For the visually handicapped child:

Help the child pick up daily living activities in a graded manner. The visually handicapped child can learn the skills of dressing, toilet habits, eating habits, rolling up mattress, making one's bed, sweeping the floor, combing one's hair, cutting vegetables, washing utensils.... The child's readiness counts a lot in the acquisition of skills. Teaching these skills may go along with other subject areas, physical education, and so on.



Creativity unlimited

The visually handicapped child can learn as well as any other child. Not through sight but through touch, through hearing, and through the asking of questions. Appropriate aids and methods may be required, and an appropriate environment.



Helping hands

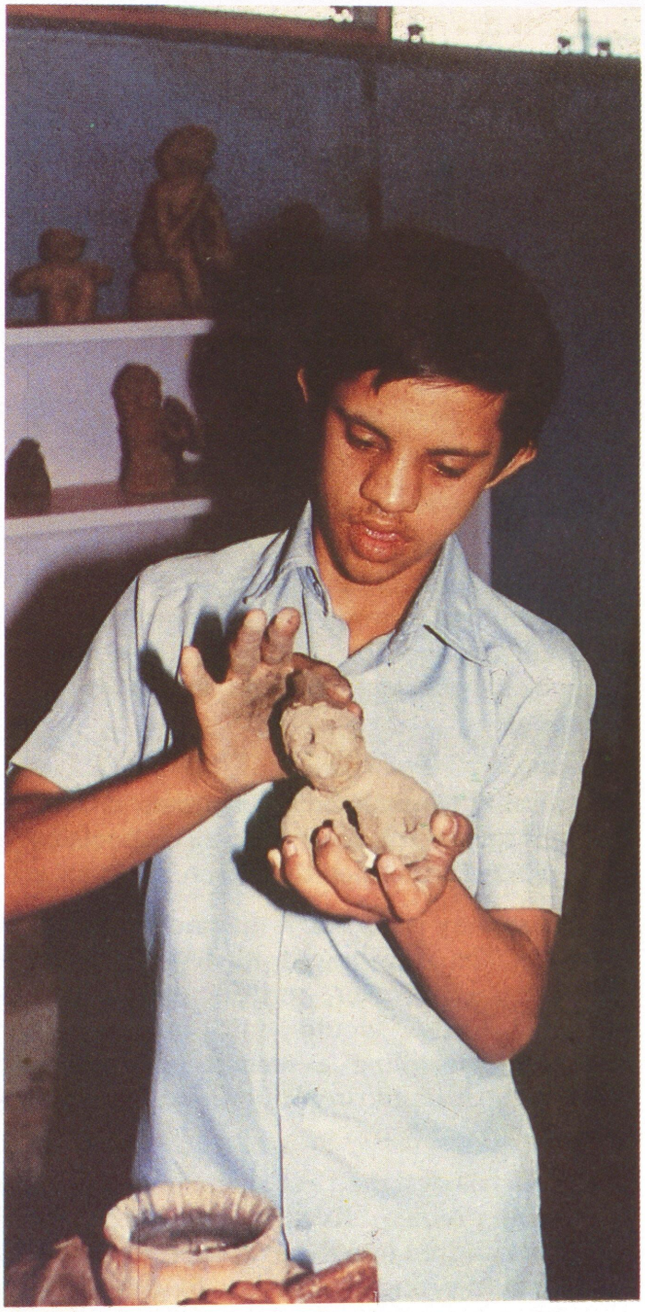
their disabilities assessed? Sometimes, if the disability is severe, it is obvious to all. Schools have often refused admission to such children.

If the disability is partial, it may not be detected so easily. The child might attend school. Since there would, however, be difficulties in learning, the child would fall behind other classmates, instilling a feeling of inferiority. Most such children drop out of the school system, sooner or later.

The PIED has designed a systematic approach to the whole problem. Its aim is to integrate the disabled children into the existing schools. PIED has a multi-pronged strategy to achieve this end. Most important, the school system has to be sensitised to the specific needs of children

who suffer from various disabilities. Parents need to be trained in the care and educational needs of such children. The community as a whole needs to be sensitised.

Training of teachers receives top priority. Teacher training is conducted at three different levels. At the first level, all general primary school teachers are provided an intensive five-day training on special education inputs, so that they develop skills for identifying children with disabilities, both within and outside the schools. At the second level, six-week training



Creating a new world



Music lights up our life

is imparted to a large number of teachers, in which they become aware of theoretical and practical issues regarding the various kinds of disability.

At the third level, a small number of highly motivated and interested teachers are selected for a one-year multi-category training program. These become resource personnel in their areas, each serving a cluster of six to ten primary schools within walking distance from the resource centre. Thus each educational block would become self-sufficient to meet the special needs of all categories of disability, as an integral part of the general educational system.

The school teachers contact parents, as well as the general community. Initially many people felt that the project was impractical. But slowly, support from the communities has been forthcoming. Relevant instructional material, resource books, films, slides, and computer programmes have also been developed.

The focus for the next few years is to be on consolidation and strengthening of the existing programmes.

The integration of disabled children into the world is possible if they are first integrated into the mainstream educational system.

"We need not pity but love ...

not charity but education".

The PIED experience is providing guidelines for demystification of "special education", ensuring that it is provided within available infrastructure, without waiting for the uncertain availability of professionals.



Investing in Teachers Skills

The objective of the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP) is to improve primary schooling. It has two broad-based components – teachers training, and school building construction. The key pedagogic innovation is activity-based learning, the key institutional innovation is the Teacher Centre at the sub-district level. The key process innovation is systematic planning of teacher-training. The project was launched in 1989.

Implementation of the project is undertaken primarily at the district and mandal levels. (Andhra Pradesh is divided into 23 districts and 1104 mandals). Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs) are worked out at the level of each district. The plan identifies the mandals to be covered in the year, and allocates all teachers, mandal resource persons, supervisors, and Teacher Centre secretaries to particular courses. Detailed schedules are drawn up for all training programmes as well as Teacher Centre meetings. The DIP has proved an effective means by which responsibilities can be assigned to the district and mandal levels while permitting the centre to retain overall coordination.

Teacher-training is organised on a 'cascade basis'. District Institute of Education and Training's, (DIET), teacher educators are trained by the Project Headquarters. These in turn train mandal trainers who, together with DIET staff, conduct in-service training of teachers and Teacher Centre staff.

The following principles are always kept in-mind:

- ☞ providing teacher generated learning activities
- ☞ promoting learning by doing, discovering and experimenting
- ☞ developing individual, group and whole-class work





The student turns teacher



Organised group learning

- ☞ providing for individual differences
- ☞ using the local environment
- ☞ creating an interesting classroom by displaying children's work and organising it effectively.

There is flexibility and scope for considerable variation in the conduct of particular courses. An interesting feature of several courses is that demonstration lessons are given to groups of children in order to illustrate how the new pedagogic techniques can be managed in the classroom.

Impact of the Project: Now in its fourth year, the project has trained almost 80,000 teachers and more than 10,000 personnel. More than 3,000 Teacher Centres are operational.

Evaluation of the project has been undertaken in a variety of ways. Teachers' reports on what they are doing are cross checked by direct observation by DIET staff; profiles of teacher behaviour are drawn up which are independently verified by profiles of pupil behaviour in the classroom; and surveys are undertaken to measure the reactions of pupils and parents. Case studies and qualitative monitoring are undertaken.

Significant differences have been found in the classroom behaviour of both teachers and pupils in project schools as compared with non-project schools. Purely didactic methods in which the teachers talk to the whole class are far less prevalent and teachers are asking more questions designed to encourage individual response or general discussion. Teachers have been spending more time on organizing materials or helping children to engage in their own learning.

Centre for teachers

At a Teacher Centre in a rural elementary school in southern Andhra Pradesh, all the 28 teachers (18 male and 10 female) from 11 schools were busy displaying the work of children, and their own work, on the strings tied against the walls of the meeting room. They were then viewing others' work and enthusiastically discussing and enjoying the displays.

A teacher gave a demonstration lesson on fractions in mathematics demonstrating how pedagogical innovations could be applied to improve teaching. The participants were divided into five groups. Each group identified the lessons which they would be teaching between this meeting and the next and possible activities which could be done with children and for which some teaching-learning aids could be developed. Teachers began collecting materials from the almirah to develop teaching-learning material. A group dealing with Class 4 was struggling since they could not think of activities which could be done on the topic of social studies identified by them. The Teachers Centre Secretary and an experienced teacher from Class 3 came to their help to identify some activities. The floor was full of fresh materials prepared by teachers.

Towards the end, one teacher raised the issue of assessment.He wanted to develop questions testing understanding and interpretation. Everyone discussed characteristics of such questions and then wrote sample questions in groups and exchanged items. It was decided that each participant would develop more such questions and bring them to the next meeting for review and refinement. The agenda for the next meeting was identified and the meeting ended with a lot of satisfaction amongst the teachers.

Visiting a rural school

The school is in hilly country in northern Andhra Pradesh near the Orissa border. Most of its children are scheduled caste or scheduled tribal origin. From the outside it is a typical two-classroom school. On the inside it is a hive of activity.

The walls of both classrooms are completely covered with children's work and teachers materials; pieces of writing, pictures, maps, charts, diagrams in abundance. Both classrooms and the almirah were packed with classroom aids, all made at the school at practically no cost. Dozens of clay figures of animals and houses enliven the little children's corner.

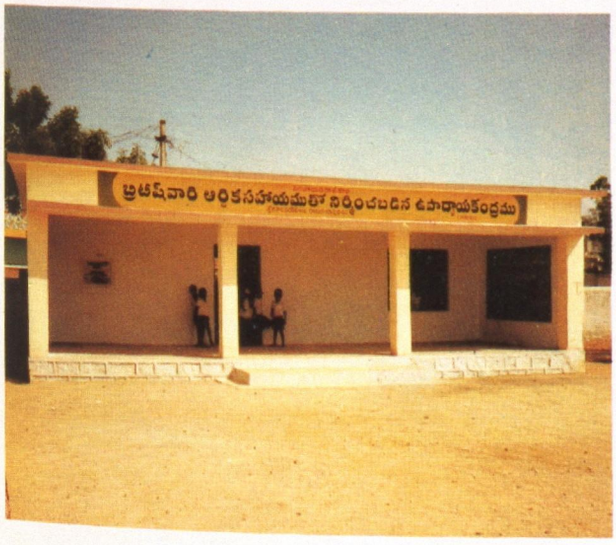
A box in a science corner contains different soil and plant varieties, all carefully labelled. A drum lurked in the almirah, promising a joyful time to come. The children glanced up at the visitors and then ignored them.

One class was practising hundreds, tens, and units. They had divided into groups, each with an abacus. A number was written on the blackboard and then the race began to see which group could get to the teacher first with the abacus correctly recording the number on the blackboard. Tension, excitement, and squeals of delight when one's team won!

Pupils in schools where the new pedagogy is practised are enjoying school more. The level of pupil enjoyment was found to be significantly and positively correlated with the degree to which the new principles were being implemented.

Absenteeism is lower in project schools than in non-project schools for both boys and girls. Absenteeism for girls dropped by nearly 13 per cent in project schools.

Sustainability has been a focus of attention in the project. It has become apparent that if the project is to be sustained, it will be necessary to train as many teachers as possible. This is because the project has been implemented most effectively in those schools where all teachers have been trained and which have not received an influx of untrained teachers. Teacher Centres will have a vital role to play in maintaining a support system amongst teachers.

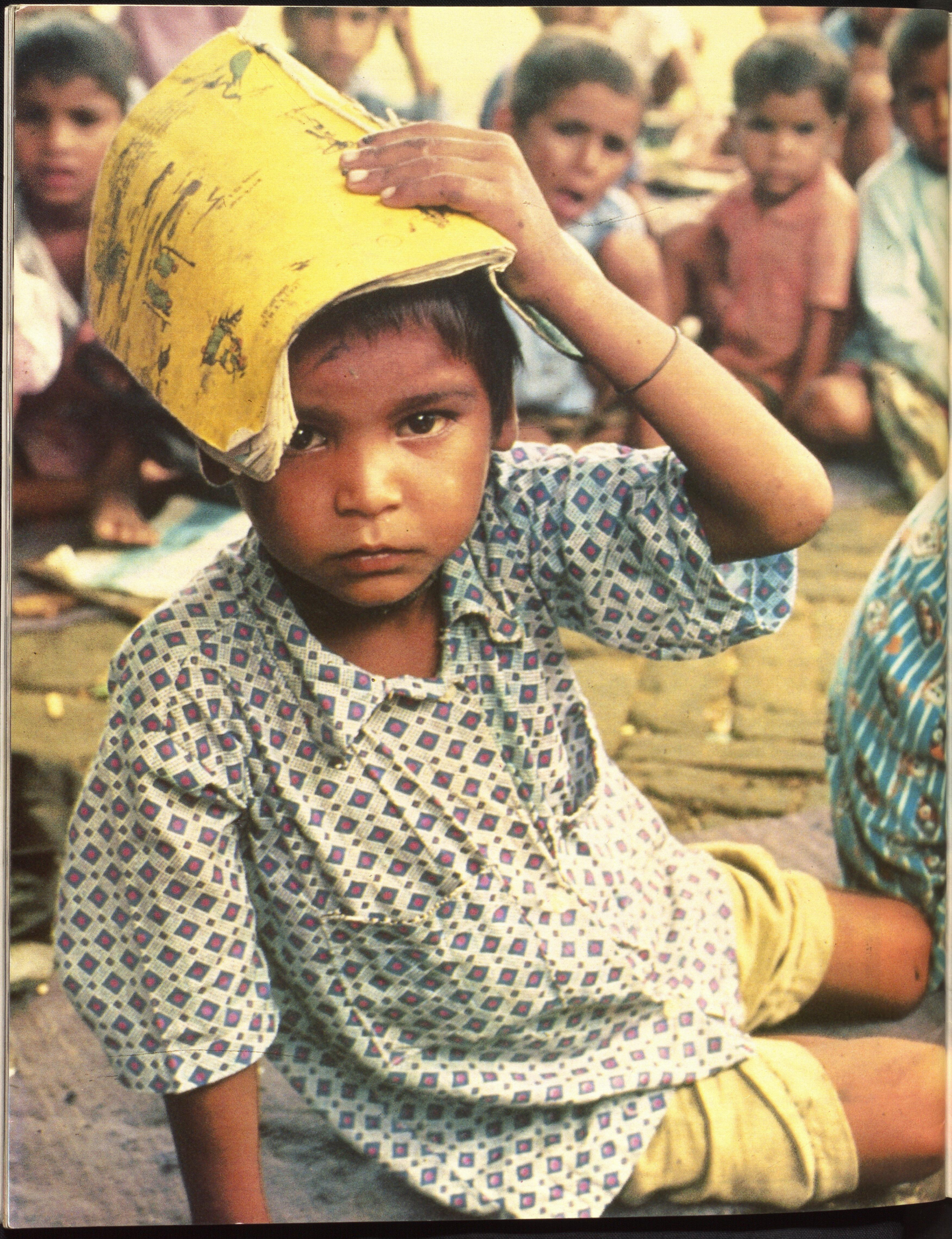


Accommodating more: Rural schools now have verandahs providing more space for students

It has become evident that the project should take into account the need to stimulate demand for education, as well as focus on the quality of its delivery; that the community needs to feel a greater sense of ownership of the project and its schools; and that maximum attention has to be paid to books, assessment and pre-service training.

It is not just in the classroom moreover, that capabilities have been developed. Planning skills have been refined and practised at different levels of the state education bureaucracy. In addition, specialist skills have been developed in critical fields such as evaluation, assessment and case study research.

In the next phase (1994 onwards) while the ongoing activities will continue, interventions will be developed within the parameters of the District Primary Education Programme, (DPEP), in certain selected districts.



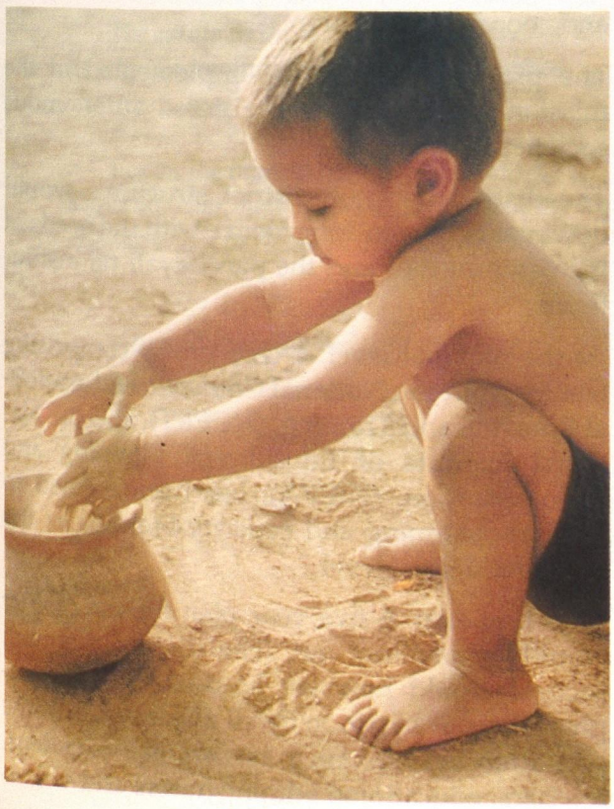


Reaching out Further

Evolving from the national experience with area-specific projects is an ambitious nation-wide plan to put local communities in charge of the education in their areas and enhance investments in primary education. Beginning with 46 districts in eight states, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is expected to cover at least 110 districts by the end of the Eighth Plan period.

The DPEP has primarily drawn its lessons from and builds on the gains of region-specific experiences of the Bihar Education Project, Lok Jumbish, the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project, Mahila Samakhya and the Shiksha Karmi project.

Earlier the trend had been towards sector-based investments such as Operation Blackboard or the Non-Formal Education, (NFE), programme. The planning for these and other programmes was centralised and schematic. EFA initiatives are now becoming more area and people specific.



Storing a future

Main Focus

The main thrust under the DPEP is:

- ☞ District level planning
- ☞ Community participation and decentralised management
- ☞ Focus on education for girls, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
- ☞ Improving effectiveness of education through training of teachers, improvement of learning materials and upgrading of infrastructure facilities.

The districts chosen under DPEP, represent those where female literacy is below the national average of 39.2 per cent and others where the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) have successfully generated a demand for elementary education. Spread over eight states, they provide a flavour of the entire country.

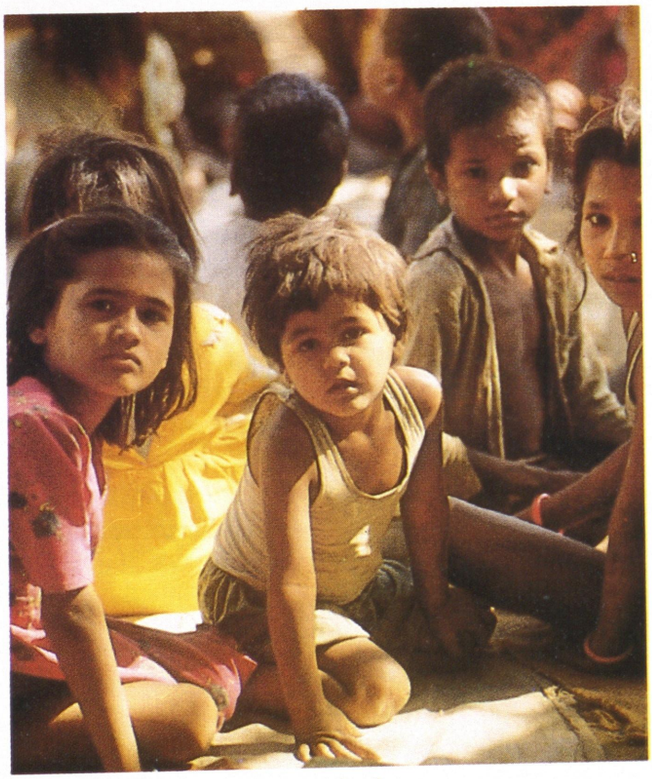
Just as in the Bihar Education Project and in the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, the investment in terms of human and material resources is concentrated in the chosen districts. Investments, principally target qualitative improvements. This district-specific intervention is then backed up by interventions at the state-level aimed at enhancing the capabilities of state level institutions.

The DPEP, however, has a much broader focus and agenda. It attempts little less than a complete overhaul of the system of educational planning in the country and to implement

Pulse points of DPEP

The DPEP has to be sustainable, cost-effective and replicable on a national scale. The programme will thus focus on:

- ☞ Providing all children with access to primary education either in the formal system or through the non-formal education, (NFE), programme.
- ☞ Reducing differences in enrollment, drop-out and learning achievement to less than five per cent between boys and girls as also for disadvantaged social groups.
- ☞ A reduction in the overall drop-out rate in primary education to less than 10 per cent for all students.
- ☞ An increase of at least 25 per cent in average primary learning achievement levels measured against benchmark surveys.
- ☞ Facilitating access for disadvantaged groups such as girls, socially backward communities and the handicapped.
- ☞ Improving the quality of education through a process of demand creation for better service.
- ☞ Recurrent and regular upgrading of teachers' skills.
- ☞ Involvement of communities in programme planning as distinct from project planning.
- ☞ Strategies for convergence with related services such as health care, early childhood care and education, (ECCE), and other government welfare schemes.
- ☞ Improvement of infrastructural facilities.
- ☞ Effective decentralised school management.
- ☞ Achievement of minimum levels of learning.



Awaiting the future

interventions in primary education in a holistic and coordinated fashion.

The programme is to be implemented in the mission mode through registered autonomous societies in each state.

The district and sub-district structures would however evolve in congruence with the needs of the communities and the panchayati raj institutions.

At the national level, a core group comprising faculty from the National Council of Educational Research and Training, (NCERT), and the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, (NIEPA), has been formed to facilitate planning and capacity building at the state and district level.

As a first step, a five year plan for the district would be chalked out. The district planning process would however be distinct in its emphasis on participation by all major actors in the education system, such as parents, guardians, teachers, educational administrators and voluntary organisations.

And Miles To Go ....

The outlines sketched are the portraits of the future. Impatiently awaiting their chance to be the present, they are slowly emerging from behind the curtains of time.

Testimony to a nation in a hurry, these sketches indicate a country's determination to break with the past. Their purpose, though, was less to paint a glorious picture of the state of education and more to provide clues to the emerging scenario.

The salute to the actors who are leading the movement to convert India into a totally literate society is a reminder of the distance covered.

For on the bumpy road to education for all, traversing just half the distance is an achievement. These sketches, just outlined, illustrated the ways and means chosen by local communities to accelerate and join the national mission.

After all there are miles to go ....

Abbreviations

AIEP	Area Intensive Education Project
APPEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
BEP	The Bihar Education Project
DIET	District Institute of Education & Training
DIPS	Detailed Implementation Plans
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DTERT	Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECEP	Early Childhood Education Programme
EDC	Education and Development Centre
IIE	Indian Institute of Education
LJ	Lok Jumbish (Movement of the people and for the people)
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MM	Mahila Mistry (women masons)
MPRC	Multi-Purpose Resource Centre
MYA	The Mizo Youth Association
NFE	Non-Formal Education Programme
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NLM	National Literacy Mission
NPE	National Policy for Education
NSS	National Service Scheme
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OSS	Open School System
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PIED	Project Integrated Education for the Disabled
PREAL	Project in Radio Education for Adult Literacy
PROPEL	Promoting Primary and Elementary Education Project

SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SF	Science Forum
SMMPE	Sitamarhi Micro Planning Exercises
SSP	School Science Programme
SSP	Shikshak Samakhya Project – (Empowering Teachers)
TLCs	Total Literacy Campaigns
TNSF	Tamil Nadu Science Forum
TUPE	Teachers for Universalisation of Primary Education
UPE	Universalisation of Primary Education
VEC	Village Education Committee

Glossary of Indian Terms

Anudeshika	Woman Teacher
Bal Mela	Children's fair
Chauraha	Crossroads
Jag Sakhi	Wake up girls
Kala Jathas	Cultural Troupes
Khand - Stariya Shiksha Pradhan Samiti	Block Management Committee
Mahila Samooh	A Women's group/collective
Mahila Mistry	Women masons
Mahila Samakhya	Women's Empowerment
Mahila Sanghas	Women's Collectives
Namaste	Greeting
Paraya Dhan	Looking after someone else's property for a specified time
Prathmik Shiksha	Primary School
Sahayaki	Friend/Helper
Sahayogini	Guide/Facilitator
Sakhi	Friend
Samakhya	Empowerment
Samooh	Collective
Sangha	Group
Sathin	Partner
Shiksha Karmis	Educational Worker
Sutradhar	Narrator
Therukoothu	Street Plays
Udan Khatolas	Flying Carpets
Zindabad	Long Live

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Education for All

National Plan of Action

INDIA

Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
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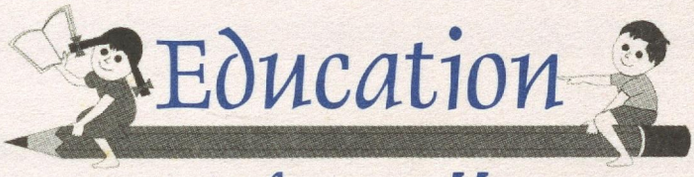

for All

National Plan of Action, India



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सत्यमेव जयते

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Foreword

One could without any hesitation consider the 1990s as the most active period for the development of basic education in the country. The efforts in this regard were set in motion by the recommendations of the National Policy on Education – 1986. These got a fillip through the global declaration on basic education adopted in Jomtien in 1990. Significant strides were made both in the area of elementary education and literacy during this period. For instance during the decade, the number of lower primary schools increased by 14 per cent and upper primary schools by 36 per cent. Altogether, 24.3 million more children entered school, 130,000 new schools were opened and 530,000 additional teachers appointed in the period. The share of girls in the total enrolment went up from 41 per cent to 44 per cent in primary and from 38 per cent to 40 per cent in upper primary schools. During the same period, literacy rate improved by a substantial 13.1 per cent (from 52.2% in 1991 to 65.4%). For the first time during the fifty years since Independence, the absolute number of illiterates came down by 32 million. Expenditure on education in the government sector went up from 3.84 to 4.11 per cent of GDP during the 1990s. These efforts were accompanied by vigorous debates and discussion on the issue of right to education, culminating in the historic declaration of elementary education as a fundamental right through an amendment to the Indian Constitution. Making this right a reality through necessary legislative measures and field-based operations is the challenge before us in coming years.

The new millennium has brought in new perspectives at the national and international levels. The Framework of Action for EFA adopted by the Global Conference of 2000 in Dakar presents a renewed focus for action to provide education for all. Simultaneously, major initiatives for strengthening policies and programmes related to EFA have been afoot in the country. The *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), which is the flagship programme of the national government, promises to achieve the goal of EFA by 2010 (five years ahead of the international commitment made at Dakar). The revised framework of the National Literacy Mission promises to reach a literacy rate of 75 per cent by the year 2007. The task of planning to achieve these goals became more concrete with the formulation of the Tenth Five Year Plan beginning in 2002. The present document therefore is a plan of action that creates convergent perspectives on the EFA goals set out by the Dakar Framework of Action and the ongoing policies and programmes of India to reach the goals of universal elementary education, eradication of illiteracy and other related aspects, as enunciated by the National Policy on Education.

In a large federally administered democracy consisting of more than 30 constituent states and union territories, it is not easy to prepare a national plan of action for EFA, as different states are in different situations with respect to the goals of EFA. A genuine National Plan has to take into consideration these inter-state variations. The Plan also has to reflect the perspectives of the civil society organisations which are involved in educational activities on a large scale across the country. With this in view, a series of four regional consultation meetings were conducted to elicit the perspectives of the official leadership and NGOs in different states. A national consultation was held involving NGO representatives and professionals. An attempt has been made to integrate the inputs received through these consultation in setting national level perspectives with respect to the six Dakar goals of EFA.

The EFA Plan marks the beginning of a critical period of implementation, monitoring and review, a process, which would feed back into the planning effort, especially at the district level, where we now have District Elementary Education Plans for all the 600 districts in the country. This has to be a truly national effort of the central government, state governments, local bodies, village education committees/school management committees/PTAs/mothers' groups, universities, academics and civil society organisations. We look forward to receiving a constant feedback on the implementation of the Plan.

(S.C. TRIPATHI)

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
AP	Andhra Pradesh
APPEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Programme
AW	Anganwadi
AWC	Anganwadi Centres
AWTC	Anganwadi Training Centres
BEP	Bihar Education Project
BRCs	Block Resource Centres
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CARE	Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere
CCE	Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation
CE	Continuing Education
CII	Confederation of Indian Industries
CLP	Child Labour Project
CLRC	Circle Resource Centres
CRCs	Cluster Resource Centres
CTEs	Colleges of Teacher Education
DEP	District Educational Planning
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DWCD	Department of Women and Child Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
ETV	Educational Television
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of India
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HRD	Human Resource Development
IASEs	Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEDC	Integrated Education of the Disabled Children
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IPTT-ITV	In-service Primary Teacher Training through Interactive Television

IT	Information Technology
ITU	International Telecommunications Unit
JSS	Jan Shikshan Sansthan
KGSV	Kasturba Gandhi Swatantra Vidyalaya
KSY	Kishori Shakti Yojana
KVS	Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan
LJP	Lok Jumbish Project
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MS	Mahila Samakhya
MSK	Mahila Shikshan Kendra
MT	Metric Ton
MTA	Mother Teacher Association
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCLP	National Child Labour Project
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NDC	National Development Council
NE	North East
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Non Formal Education
NFHS	National Family and Health Survey
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NIOS	National Institute of Open Learning
NLM	National Literacy Mission
NOS	National Open School
NPE	National Policy on Education
NSS	National Sample Survey
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
NYK	Nehru Yuvak Kendra
NYKS	Nehru Yuvak Kendra Sangathan
OB	Operation Blackboard
OBE	Open Basic Education
OBEP	Open Basic Education Programme
OLS	Open Learning System
PA	Private Aided
PL	Post Literacy
PMIS	Project Management Information Systems
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions (Local Government Bodies)
PROBE	Primary Report on Basic Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PUA	Private Unaided
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RCH	Reproductive and Child Health
RSP	Resource Support Programme
SAC	Space Application Centre
SC	Schedule Caste
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SHGs	Self Help Groups

SIE	State Institute of Education
SIEMAT	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SIG	Social Initiatives Group
SKP	Shiksha Karmi Project
SLM	Self Learning Material
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TERG	Teacher Education Resource Group
TLCs	Total Literacy Campaigns
TLM	Teaching Learning Materials
UDC	Urban Deprived Children
UEE	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UP	Uttar Pradesh
UPBEP	Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project
UPE	Universalisation of Primary Education
USNPSS	Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan
UTs	Union Territories
VECs	Village Education Committees
ZSS	Zilla Saksharta Samiti (District Literacy Society)

Education for All

CHAPTER 1

The Context

India is a vast country extending over an area of 3,287,263 sq. km. from the snow covered Himalayan heights to tropical rain forests of the south. According to Census of India 2001, India's population is 1,027,015,247 (531,277,078 males and 495,738,169 females). As the second most populous country, India is the home to 16 per cent of world's population.

For the purpose of governance, India is divided into 35 states and union territories (UTs). States and the Centre function under a federal relationship. The Centre governs certain subjects such as defence, railways and finance, while several other subjects are the responsibility of the states. There are other subjects on which both the states and the central government have concurrent powers. Education has been on the Concurrent List since 1976. Union territories are administered under the direct control of the Centre. The Constitution of India makes an elaborate distribution of governmental powers–legislative, administrative and financial– between the Union (Centre) and the states. Adequate mechanisms exist for sharing of resources and responsibilities between the Union and the states, for harmonious exercise of their powers in the larger national interest. A major challenge in national planning is to reconcile the planning priorities of states with the national plan frame. The National Development Council (NDC), with representation of chief ministers of all states, imparts a national character to the entire process of planning.

Expanding System of Education

During the post-Independence period, there has been considerable expansion in educational facilities and enrolment at the elementary stage, as revealed by successive surveys of educational facilities. Consequently, literacy rate has improved in every decade. Table 1.1 depicts the rise in literacy rates and the expanding system of primary education. Recent estimates indicate a significant rise in the literacy level. According to the National Sample Survey (NSS) estimates, the literacy rate has increased by about 13.17 percentage points in a period of ten years, from 52.21 in 1991 to 65.4 percent in 2001.

Organisation and Structure of School Education

There are broadly four stages of school education in India, namely, primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary. In pursuance of the National Policy on Education of 1968 and 1986, there have been attempts to evolve a uniform pattern of school education with 12 years of schooling, commonly known as 10+2 pattern. The 'plus two' stage refers to classes XI and XII, which constitute higher secondary stage in all 35 states/UTs. (In some states, higher secondary stage is part of collegiate education,

Table 1.1: Literacy Rate and Number of Primary Schools (1951–2001)

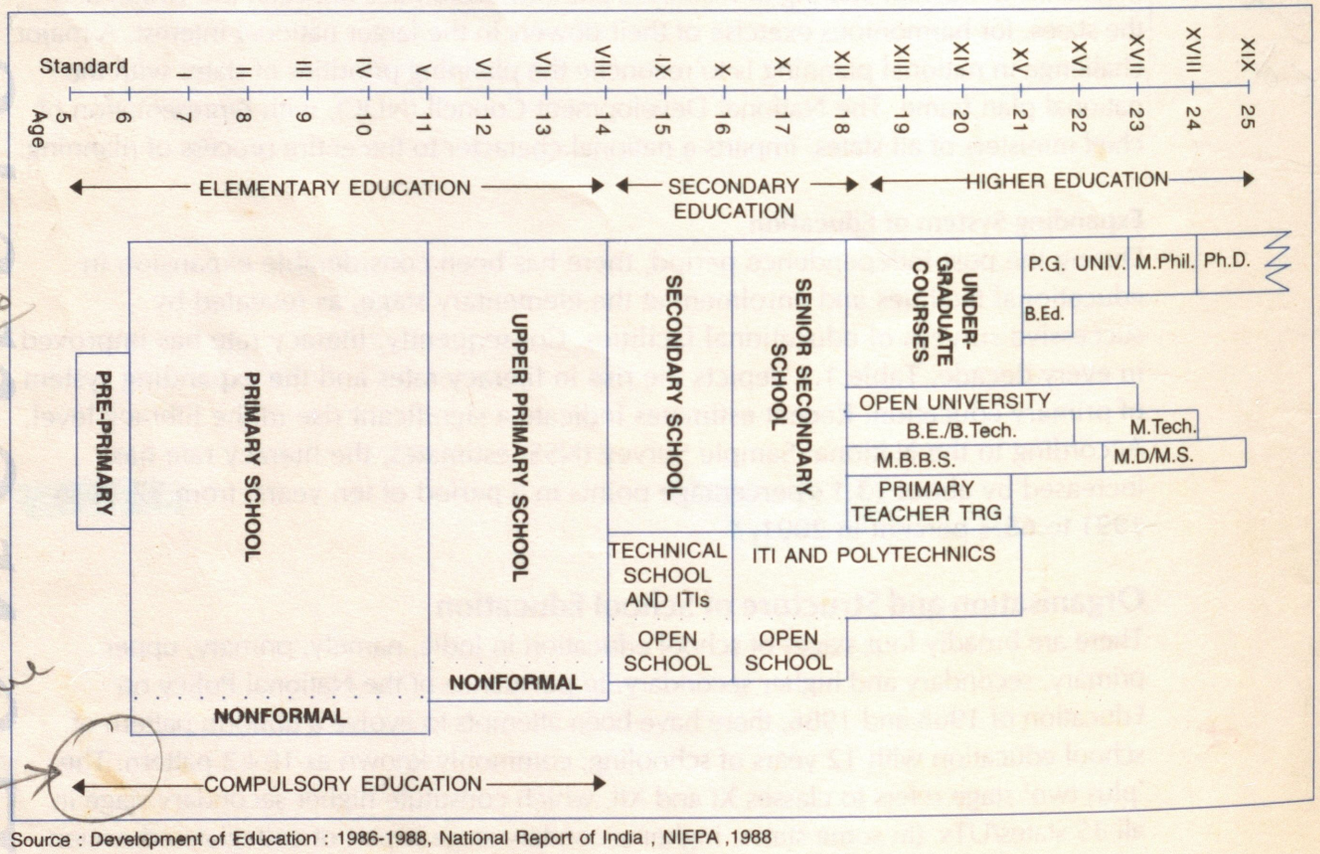
Year	Literacy Rate (%)			Number of Schools	
	Persons	Males	Females	Primary	Upper Primary
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	215,036	14,576
1961	28.31	40.40	15.34	351,530	55,915
1971	34.45	45.95	21.97	417,473	93,665
1981	43.56	56.37	29.75	503,763	122,377
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	566,744	155,926
2001	65.37	75.85	54.16	641,695	198,004

Note: Literacy rates of 1951, 1961 and 1971 relate to population aged five years and above. The rates for the years 1981, 1991 and 2001 relate to the population aged seven years and above.

known as junior colleges.) However, for the first ten years of schooling, the organisational patterns differ considerably among states/UTs. While in twenty-two states/UTs, secondary stage consists of classes IX and X, it consists of classes VIII, IX and X in thirteen states/UTs. The initial schooling stage up to class VII or VIII (as is the case in many states/UTs) is generally called 'elementary stage'.

Decisions regarding the organisation and structure of education are largely the concern of the states/UTs. Within the overall framework of the national policy on education, each state/UT has been independently determining the educational structure to be adopted. This is particularly true of the school stage. However, there is almost complete uniformity in the pattern of educational structure within a particular state or union territory. A broad consensus has also emerged for adoption by all states/UTs, as indicated in the following diagram.

Figure 1.1: Structure of Education in India



Source : Development of Education : 1986-1988, National Report of India , NIEPA ,1988

The 10+2+3 pattern of education introduced in the country envisages a broad-based general education for all pupils during the first ten years of school education. The curriculum at this stage is, therefore, largely undifferentiated and little attempt is made to introduce diversified courses at this stage. The focus of the curriculum at the primary stage is on development of basic skills of literacy and numeracy, study of environment in terms of physical and social phenomena, participation in activities which would develop productive skills, creative expression and habits of healthy living. In the initial years, the content and methodology are directed to achievement of communication and computational skills with a view to developing the basic tools of learning.

Both on the literacy and the primary education fronts, India has been implementing a number of specially designed programmes to move towards the goals of ensuring universal primary education and of eradicating adult illiteracy.

Overview of Recent Developments in EFA

Both on the literacy and the primary education fronts, India has been implementing a number of specially designed programmes to move towards the goals of ensuring universal primary education and of eradicating adult illiteracy. However, as a follow-up of the Dakar Framework of Action for Education for All (EFA), an attempt has been made to link national goals and targets with the global targets of EFA.

Apart from the increase in literacy rates and schooling facilities, there has been development in the following areas also:

- A separate Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, headed by an independent Secretary, was created in November 1999 within the Ministry of Human Resource Development to specifically focus on EFA goals.
- A Constitutional Amendment Act has been passed by the Parliament to make elementary education a fundamental right.
  - A Central legislation to enforce this right, which is under preparation, will contain the following:
    - Delineation of responsibility of various State organs such as central government, state governments and local bodies.
    - Setting the parameters of acceptable quality of education.
    - Providing for remedial mechanism at various levels for redressal when this right is violated.
- Expenditure on education as percentage of GDP increased from 3.84 to 4.11 in the government sector.
- Gender Disparity
  - Increase in girls' enrolment by 23 per cent in primary and 40 per cent in upper primary between 1990 and 2000: much higher than the boys.
  - Share of girls in total enrolment has gone up from 41 per cent to 44 per cent in primary and from 38 per cent to 40 per cent in upper primary.
  - Proportion of female teachers increased from 29 per cent to 36 per cent.
- Early Childhood Care and Education
  - 90 per cent of 5,652 blocks to be covered under the scheme by 2002.
  - Number of beneficiaries increased from 22 m in 1995 to 30 m in 2000.

Current EFA Strategies

At the present juncture, based on EFA 2000 Assessment and other reviews, the strategy for achieving total literacy and universal elementary education focuses on several interrelated strategies.

Box 1.1: Andhra Pradesh – Enduring Initiatives for Achieving EFA

MAABADI (Our School)

The MAABADI scheme was formulated in order to give access to all children in the age group of 6-11 years, even in small habitations with a population of 100-200. Government provides assistance to local communities to engage community instructors wherever there are at least ten learners. Assistance is also provided for training the community instructors. So far 1200 MAABADIs have been set up.

***Akshara Sankranthi* Programme**

In Andhra Pradesh, the most significant change is the strengthening of the self- help group (SHG) movement, and common interest groups have been formed around a variety of activities, ranging from thrift to management of forest resources. Keeping in view these developments, it was decided to take up a programme of revitalizing Continuing Education Centres, focusing on SHGs.

A special drive was launched in July, under which SHGs that were interested in implementing this programme were identified, along with the illiterates within the groups, as also a volunteer to teach them. A programme of basic literacy was launched on 2 October 2000, initially with the objective of covering around 6 millions illiterates. The proposal was to cover the first primer before the *Sankranthi* festival in the middle of January under a programme called *Akshara Sankranthi*. The programme had been earlier in a pilot form in West Godavari district, where 60,000 women belonging to SHGs were covered. The programme was taken up in all the districts and around 2.9 millions learners had completed the project by the end of March 2001.

The programme has resulted in Andhra Pradesh recording a literacy rate of 61.11 per cent in 2001 as compared to 44.08 in 1991. This represents a 17 per cent increase over the figure recorded in the 1991 census and the highest decadal growth ever to be recorded in the state.

(a) Government of India and the state governments are actively engaged in preparing contextualised action plans which would be implemented through the programmes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and National Literacy Mission (NLM). The focus is on reaching the unreached through innovative and alternative modes of schooling. Decentralised district wise planning introduced in the 1990s is expected to address local needs and demands more effectively.

(b) The second strategy is to actively involve the people at the grassroots through democratic devolution of powers. Though there are variations across the states, there is a decisive move towards decentralisation of educational governance all over the country. In some states, this is done through by transferring powers to the *Panchayati Raj* institutions (local self-governing bodies), while in others it is done through the creation of empowered village education committees and school management bodies. Micro-planning and participatory school mapping exercises, as in Lok Jumbish, are other means of involving people in the local-level planning for EFA.

(c) While recognising that the problem is closely linked to poverty and deprivation, employment of children in work is viewed as a direct denial of their fundamental right to education. Though direct action from the State has been slow to come, it has become a major plank of action in several parts of the country due to the significant role played by the NGOs. But much greater support and cooperation from parents and employers is critical for achieving success in this area.

(d) Another policy level action with far-reaching impact is the effort to remove legal hurdles in accessing basic education as a fundamental right. Towards this, the Indian Constitution has been amended, making basic education a justiciable right in line with the international convention on child rights.

(e) Social mobilisation and eradication of adult illiteracy are attempted through mass literacy campaigns, largely as a national programme but planned and implemented at the district level. These are complemented by actions initiated by state governments such as the *Jan Sampark Abhiyan* (people's contact campaign) of Madhya Pradesh and by civil society organisations such as *Prajayatna* (people's effort) in Karnataka.

Recent years have seen much greater coverage of basic education in the media, particularly TV, thereby helping to articulate public perceptions and mobilising public pressure groups. This has been coupled with an important move in many states towards 'right to information', which has helped to place facts related to basic education in the public sphere. Many state governments are attempting to use ICT capabilities for this purpose. Emergence of grassroots level community action groups and their coalitions at the national and state levels to articulate the voice of the civil society in favour of EFA is also a significant development.

Recent years have seen much greater coverage of basic education in the media, particularly TV, thereby helping to articulate public perceptions and mobilising public pressure groups.

CHAPTER II

Meeting Dakar Goals: The Indian Perspective

Contextualising Dakar Goals

The Dakar Conference of the World Education Forum met in April 2000 to review the progress made to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA). The Framework of Action adopted in Dakar identified the following six goals of EFA:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literary by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving every aspect of the quality of education, and ensuring excellence so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Recognising the importance of elementary education, the Government of India has been working with state governments for achieving the goals of universalisation of elementary education (UEE). In this context, the major initiative has been the launch of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the national programme to implement the fundamental right to free and compulsory education. Other initiatives include the District Primary Education Programme, Teacher Education Programme, activities under the National Literacy Mission and special programmes for promotion of early childhood care and education, inclusive education, etc. It is important to note that a major part of planned action in India takes place in individual states, which may not get fully represented in national plans and perspectives. It is within this framework that the following national goals, corresponding to the six Dakar goals, have been drawn.

- Integrated Child Development Services scheme being universalised–early childhood care and education an important component of the scheme (Dakar Goal 1)
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Movement for Education for All) launched with the aim of

providing eight years of quality education to all children in the age group 6-14 by 2010. (Goal 2 and 6)

- A comprehensive plan for adolescents, especially girls, in the Tenth Five Year Plan. (Goal 3)
- National Literacy Mission to provide functional literacy to all illiterate adults in the age group 15-35. (Goals 3 and 4)
  - Achieve sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent literacy by 2007.
- Special schemes targeted at girls, apart from focus on girls in general schemes. (Goal 5)
  - Removal of all disparities, including gender, in primary (class I-V) by 2007 and elementary (I-VIII) by 2010.

Early childhood education is considered a significant input to compensate for early environmental deprivations at home, by providing a stimulating environment to the children.

Setting Priorities in the Indian Context

The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) recognised that the World Declaration on EFA was, from the national point of view, a reaffirmation of the policy orientation given to elementary education in the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986. CABE endorsed the Declaration and called for further strengthening of the processes initiated through the NPE -1986. CABE highlighted the need for increased financial inputs to achieve the goals of EFA and formulated a broad operational framework for receiving financial assistance from international agencies for undertaking large scale projects to achieve the goals of EFA. Further, CABE emphasised that the additional resources generated through external assistance should be utilised for educational reconstruction, which should go beyond the conventional measures such as opening new schools, construction of school building and appointing teachers. The goals, targets and strategies enunciated in the National Policy on Education have been incorporated into successive Five Year Plan proposals.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Early childhood education (ECE) is considered a significant input to compensate for early environmental deprivations at home, by providing a stimulating environment to the children. While on one hand, it is expected to provide the necessary maturational and experiential readiness to the child for meeting the demands of the primary curriculum; it also affects positively the enrolment and retention of girls in primary schools by providing substitute care facility for younger siblings. Envisaged as a holistic input, fostering health, psychological and nutritional development, the policy emphasised the significance of making it play-based while cautioning against the danger of reducing it to the teaching of three R's i.e., reading, writing and arithmetic. The holistic and integrated concept of ECCE clearly represents this spirit.

Though programmes of early childhood care have been under implementation on a large scale through the programme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), efforts to integrate early childhood education into activities of these centres and to extend institutionalised educational facilities for children in the pre-school age group have begun only during recent years. Pre-school education in urban areas, which is fairly widespread, and is continuously expanding, is largely in the hands of the private sector without much supervision or support from the government. Considering the magnitude of resources needed to reach out to all children in this age group, the target set for the sector has been modest. It is envisaged that the network of early childhood education centres would expand to two million centres and cover about 70 per cent children in the pre-school age group by the year 2000.

Elementary Education

Universalisation of elementary education (UEE) has been accepted as a national goal since 1950. The Directive Principles of the Constitution of India envisage provision of free and compulsory elementary education to all children up to the age of 14 years. The Constitution was amended in December 2002 to include free and compulsory education for all children in the age group 6 –14 years as a fundamental right, while expanding the provision for children up to the age of six, to include early childhood care and education within the Directive Principles. The overall goal in this regard is to provide free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality to all children. It is significant to note that the National Policy on Education defines universal elementary education in a broad framework, changing the emphasis from enrolment to participation, retention and achievement.

The Constitution was amended in December 2002 to include free and compulsory education for all children in the age group 6-14 years as a fundamental right, while expanding the provision for children up to the age of six, to include early childhood care and education within the Directive Principles.

Universal Access

Though considerable progress has been made towards achieving the target of EFA as indicated by the overall figures, more rigorous and sustained efforts are required to universalise elementary education. A major bottleneck in this direction has been the persistence of regional and sectional disparities. The policy goal, therefore, has been to intensify the efforts to reach primary education to such deprived sections of population. Specifically, the goals of EFA with respect to universal access focus on:

- Universal enrolment of all children including girls, disabled children and children belonging to SC and ST in primary classes and provision of upper primary education for them.
- Provision of non-formal education (NFE) or alternative education for school dropouts, working children and girls who cannot attend formal schools.

Universal Retention

As mentioned earlier, the country has made significant progress in terms of provision of access to basic education. Recent surveys show that more than 95 per cent of the population has access to primary education within a distance of one km. Overall enrolment figures have also shown a massive increase. However, the number of children who participate in schooling regularly and complete the first cycle of education still needs to be improved substantially. For a number of reasons, many children initially enrolled in school do not complete their primary schooling. Here again, there are wide disparities among different states; for instance, while almost all children enrolled in the initial classes of primary school complete at least 4-5 years of schooling in the states of Kerala, Goa and Mizoram, the figures of school dropouts in certain other states continue to be very high. Thus, the policies have reiterated reduction in the number of dropouts as an important goal. The aim is now to achieve universal retention by 2010.

Improvement in Quality

The National Policy on Education - 1986 emphasises the importance of giving special attention to quality aspects of primary education for which several policy guidelines have been formulated.

Improved quality of school provision

With the expansion of the school system, a systematic exercise has been carried out to determine basic norms for provision, physical, human as well as academic, in each

Alongside provision of improved facilities in the school, policy makers have also focused their attention on the learning levels attained by children who attend schools.

school. These norms act as the guiding principle for creating additional schooling facilities for primary education.

Focus on learning outcomes

Alongside provision of improved facilities in the school, policy makers have also focused their attention on the learning levels attained by children who attend schools. A National Committee of experts set up by the Government of India in early nineties evolved a framework of "minimum levels of learning" to be attained by every student undergoing primary education.

Teacher Capacity Building

The critical role of teachers in ensuring quality education has also come into sharper focus. As in case of infrastructure, massive expansion of the system has also influenced the quality of teachers and the support system available for guiding them in their work. One of the major policy interventions in the last decade has been to make institutional arrangements at district and sub-district levels for in-service training of primary teachers. The emphasis is on decentralising the training arrangement and providing guidance and support to teachers on a continuous basis.

Adult Education and Literacy Programmes

The goal of the National Literacy Mission (NLM) is to attain full literacy (i.e., a sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent by 2007). NLM envisages that focusing on imparting of functional literacy to non-literates in the age group 15-35 would help achieve this goal. NLM seeks to bring non-literates to a level of self-reliance in the three R's. It also provides them facilities for skill development to improve their economic status and well being. It enables them to imbibe values of national integration, conservation of the environment, women's equality and observance of small family norms. And finally, it facilitates their participation in the development process. Functional literacy, encompassing all of the above, is the overall goal of NLM. A special programme has been launched targeting low female literacy districts. It is also proposed to expand the coverage of Jan Shikshan Sansthans to provide for access to life skill programmes for neo-literates.

Setting Targets for EFA 2002-2015

The last decade has witnessed a number of new initiatives to improve the access and participation of children in elementary education, as well as to improve the quality of education in primary schools. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is being implemented by the Government of India in partnership with the state governments with a long-term perspective on cost sharing and through district-level decentralised management framework involving local bodies. It is envisaged that the campaign, to be launched in a mission mode, will move towards achieving the following four goals:

- Providing access to all children in the age group 6-14 years through formal primary schools or through other equivalent alternative delivery means by 2003.
- Completion of five years of primary education by all children by 2007.
- Completion of eight years of elementary education by all children by 2010.
- Provision of elementary education of satisfactory quality for all by 2010.

Box 2.1: Innovative Programmes in Different States

Several state governments have designed innovative programmes to improve the quality of education in schools.

HEAD START

The Rajiv Gandhi State Mission in Madhya Pradesh has introduced a project on a pilot basis for using computers to improve the quality of teaching in rural elementary schools through indigenous customized educational software. The idea is to integrate the use of computers with classroom activities to improve the child's comprehension of difficult parts of each subject as well as to instill computer literacy. A syllabus mapping the difficult areas of learning has been developed and educational software on this for all subjects is being prepared for use in the academic year 2002-03.

Started in November 2000, 648 Head Start centres were operationalised in middle schools that have a primary section and serve as Jan Shiksha Kendras or school cluster resource centres for primary schools in a radius of eight km. A total of 2,358 teachers have been given training in computer-enabled education.

GYANKALASH

The District Primary Education Programme in Himachal Pradesh, in collaboration with All India Radio, Shimla, has started a 15-minute bi-weekly programme called Gyankalash to provide academic support to primary teachers. The programme helps in improving the teachers' access to knowledge, especially those in remote areas, as it is impossible to reach them through conventional means.

In the first phase of Gyankalash, topics were identified and radio scripts developed in workshops organised for the purpose. Resource persons, teacher educators from state and district level, practicing teachers in secondary and primary schools participated in the workshops. In the next phase, teachers and students from government primary schools were involved in the production and broadcast of the spots. In order to motivate teachers, certificates were given to teachers on the successful completion of the training under different phases of Gyankalash.

NALI KALI

The Nali Kali programme in Karnataka was introduced in privately managed schools in 1999. Under the programme, learning takes place in an interactive situation in accordance with age-wise competency. Children are divided into groups and they master one level of competency, then move to another group to learn the next level of competency. Children learn at their own pace and the move from one level of competency to another is not dependent on the whole group's learning achievement. All teaching-learning processes involve songs, games, survey, story-telling and use of educational toys. This method effectively eliminates the formal system of roll calls, examinations, promotions, ranking – all these now deemed unhealthy – at least between the ages of 5 and 14.

The programme will be implemented in a manner that will provide adequate opportunities for NGOs and the private sector to contribute towards the achievement of these goals and lead towards a community-owned initiative for universalising elementary education. Keeping in view past experiences, efforts under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will be underscored by effective decentralisation, sustainable financing, cost-effective strategies for universalisation, interesting curriculum, community-owned planning and implementation, and focus on girls, marginalised caste groups and ethnic minorities.

The National Literacy Mission has fixed the following two goals for achievement of EFA targets:

- To achieve a sustainable threshold level of 75 per cent literacy by 2007 and to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015.
- To expand continuing education programmes to cover all districts by 2007.

The commitment of pursuing quality basic education as a fundamental rights of all citizens demands a massive movement through political and social mobilisation that brings all sections of the society on a common platform and with the sole agenda of providing "Quality Education For All" as envisaged by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, as well as the Dakar EFA Declaration.

Process of EFA Planning and Monitoring in India

In a vast and varied country like India, it is not easy to prepare a national plan of action for EFA, as different states are in different situations with respect to the goals of EFA. A genuine national plan will have to take into consideration these inter-state variations. Second, the plan will also have to reflect the perspectives of the civil society organisations which are involved in educational activities on a large scale across the country. Third, it should have a professional basis in setting the goals and designing strategies. With this in view, a series of four regional consultation meetings have been conducted to elicit the perspectives of official leadership and NGOs in different states. The states are in the process of preparing basic inputs for the EFA plan with concrete reference to the six Dakar EFA goals. A national consultation was also held, involving NGO representatives and professionals so that the national plan of action reflects the concerns and perspectives of all stakeholders. In addition, several workshops and meetings were held on planning and capacity building for SSA.

There is no doubt that preparing a credible national plan for India that takes into account the variety of situations across the country is a real intellectual challenge. However, an action plan prepared only at the behest of the international community could remain a mere statement of intention. Making the plan a credible one and translating it into reality hinges critically on two factors. First, the international commitments made by the country towards EFA goals have to genuinely converge with the national level proposals. This is important, as EFA or UEE is an ongoing effort of the national and state governments of the country. In particular, this gains importance in the context of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Real convergence has to be viewed not only in terms of statement of goals and targets but also in actual field level actions. Also, the institutional arrangements adopted for achieving the goals have to match the international commitments. The second important prerequisite that injects credibility to any plan of action is the political commitment of the national leadership, as well as the genuine support of the civil society for the goals agreed upon.

It does not require any debate to convince that India cannot go on with the micro-incremental approach in its efforts to reach basic education for all. The change has to be much more substantial and the progress has to be much faster if the socio-economic aspirations of the people, as well as the newly made commitment of pursuing quality basic education as a fundamental right of all citizens, have to be met. This demands a massive movement through political and social mobilisation that brings all sections of the society on a common platform and with the sole agenda of providing "Quality Education For All" as envisaged by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, as well as the Dakar EFA Declaration.

CHAPTER III

Early Childhood Care and Education

Backdrop

Provision of comprehensive health care and education to children in the early stages of development prior to entering primary school is given a special place in the national education policies and programmes. This received further impetus in recent years with a specific mention on the subject under the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution, which enjoins the state to endeavour towards providing universal access to such services throughout the country.

Until the Eighty-sixth Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001, was passed, Article 45 (Directive Principles of State Policy) of the Indian Constitution directed the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen. The earlier inclusion of 0-6 year-old children within this constitutional directive implied the intent to provide conditions for holistic child development with pre-school education as an important component.

The Eighty-sixth Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001, has split the age group 0-14 years into two clear categories to cover their interests under separate Articles in the Constitution. Article 21A has been introduced as a fundamental right after Article 21 to read *"The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine."* Articulating the intent to specifically cater to the needs of the 0-6-year-old children, the Eighty-sixth Constitutional Amendment Act has substituted Article 45 (Directive Principles of State Policy) to read *"The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years."*

At the time of Independence, the need for pre-school education was primarily fulfilled by voluntary organisations. It was in the 1970s that child welfare services were expanded to the health, education, nutrition and other sectors. The National Policy for Children was adopted in 1974 and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme was launched as a sequel to it in 1975.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) adopted in 1986 views early childhood care and education (ECCE) as a crucial input in the strategy of human resource development, as a feeder and support programme for primary education and also as a support service for

working women. Some of the important policy directions in the NPE are as follows:

- *The National Policy on Children specially emphasises investment in the development of the young child, particularly from sections of the population in which first generation learners predominate.*
- *Recognising the holistic nature of child development, viz., nutrition, health and social, mental, physical, moral and emotional development, ECCE will receive high priority and be suitably integrated with the ICDS programme, wherever possible. Day-care centre will be provided as a support service for universalisation of primary education, to enable girls engaged in taking care of siblings to attend school and as a support service for working women belonging to poorer sections.*
- *Programmes of ECCE will be child-oriented, and focused around play and the individuality of the child. Formal methods and introduction of the 3 R's will be discouraged at this stage. The local community will be fully involved in these programmes.*
- *A full integration of childcare and pre-primary education will be brought about, both as a feeder and a strengthening factor for primary education and for human resource development in general. In continuation of this stage, the School Health Programme will be strengthened.*

The Tenth Five Year Plan document has reaffirmed the commitment to the young child. The approach outlined is:

- To reaffirm the commitment to the 'Development of Children' with a special focus on early childhood development, not only as the most desirable societal investment for the country's future, but as the right of every child to achieve his/her full development potential
- To adopt a rights-based approach to the development of children, as advocated by the draft National Policy and Charter for Children (2002).

Some of the major strategies outlined in the Tenth Plan document include:

- Reaching every young child in the country to ensure their survival, protection and development, as prescribed in the two National Plans of Action (1992) – one for children and the other for the girl child
- To ensure development through effective implementation of policies and programmes in the areas of health, immunisation, nutrition and education through nationwide programmes such as Reproductive and Child Health (RCH), ICDS, SSA, and other related programmes.
- To continue ICDS as the mainstay for promoting the overall development of young children and mothers, especially that of the girl child all over the country.
- To recognise that while early childhood up to six years is critical for the development of children, the pre-natal to first three years is the most crucial and vulnerable period for laying the foundations for the achievement of full human development and cumulative life-long learning.

To reinforce the commitment of family-focused and community-based interventions, in addition to the institution-based interventions, which is critical for enhanced survival, growth and development of young children, adolescent girls and women across the life cycle.

ECE in the National Context

The ICDS programme of the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) is the largest early childhood education (ECE) programme in the country. ICDS was started in 1975 in 33 blocks as a programme for the holistic development of children under six years to break the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality. ICDS provides health, nutrition, ECE and convergence services.

ICDS also provides support to the national efforts for universalisation of primary education, through increased opportunities for promoting early development, associated with improved cognitive and social skills, enrolment and retention in the early primary stage. By releasing girls from the burden of sibling care, it also enables them to participate in primary education.

ICDS is now operating 5,725 projects in the country, with more than 620,000 operational *anganwadi* (childcare) centres. With this, the programme covers most of the country. The total coverage for children in the 3-6 age group under ICDS is 169,555,641. ICDS will continue to be the major programme in the Tenth Plan period for the provision of ECCE services.

For the Tenth Five-Year Plan period (2002-2007) the projected outlay for the ICDS programme is Rs. 121,468.1 million.

Box 3.1: Major components of ICDS

Nutrition
- Supplementary feeding
- Growth monitoring and promotion
- Nutrition and health

Health
- Immunisation
- Health check-ups
- Referral services
- Treatment of minor illnesses

ECE and pre-school education
- Early care and stimulation for the 0-3 year-old child
- Early learning readiness programme for the 3-6 year-old child

Early Childhood Education under DPEP

Apart from the ICDS programme of the DWCD, efforts have been made by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy to impact the early childhood education scene through a variety of strategies under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and the Mahila Samakhya project.

DPEP is conceived as a holistic programme for ensuring universal primary education (UPE), emphasising therefore the centrality of pre-school education as the foundation for achieving UPE. Since the ICDS programme already has a large presence, and was to be universalised, DPEP works closely with the ICDS programme.

The DPEP programme adopts a multi-pronged strategy for ECE. This includes working with identified ICDS centres, and strengthening them through a basket of interventions, and also increasing timings to ensure that it coincides with the formal primary school, and thus seeking to impact on the nature of the ICDS programme at the field level. DPEP also attempts to directly provide pre-school education, though not on a large scale, through selected interventions and the opening of new centres in areas where ICDS is not in operation, as well as through the opening of pre-primary classes in formal primary schools, and offering school readiness packages.

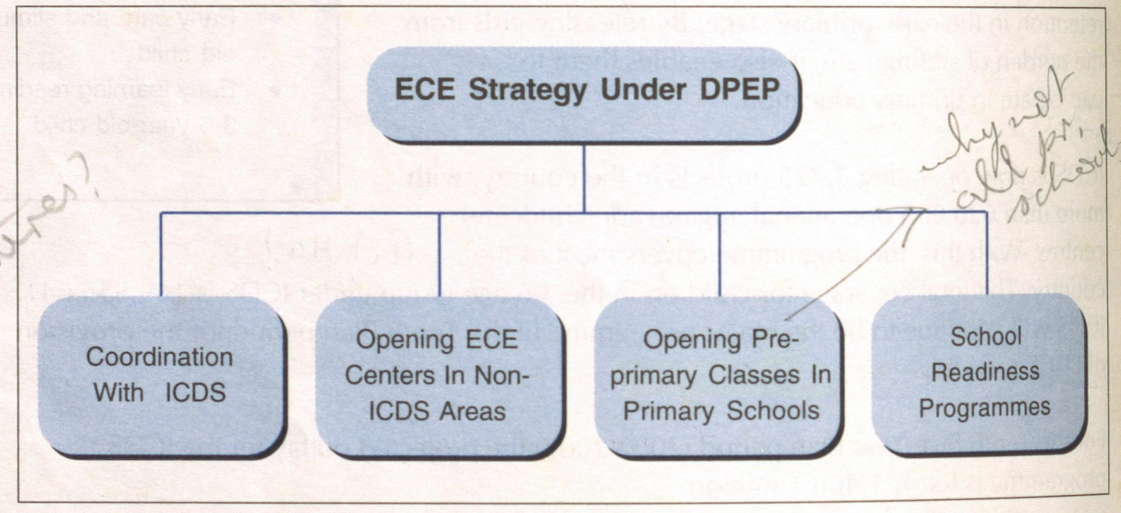
The ICDS programme, run by the DWCD, is the single largest provider of ECCE services in the country.

The DPEP guidelines state that

"DPEP would finance expansion of ECCE through establishment of ECCE centres in villages not eligible to be covered by ICDS. In states with limited experience of ECCE, new ECCE centres would be financed initially on a limited scale only, in one district, or in one block per district, where inter-district variations are substantial. This activity could be scaled up gradually over the project period. The DPEP would not finance nutrition.

In order to improve the quality of ECCE, DPEP would finance development of pre-school materials and training of functionaries in the ECCE centres set up under DPEP. It would also finance the training of ICDS anganwadi/ *balwadi (play school) workers in forging linkages with schools."*

DPEP followed a combination of different strategies for ECE. These are:



DPEP follows a combination of different strategies for ECE. These include coordination with ICDS for strengthening of the pre-school component and opening ECE centres in non- ICDS areas.

Since the ICDS programme, run by the DWCD, is the single largest provider of ECCE services in the country, the major strategy adopted by DPEP has been one of coordination with ICDS. The ICDS programme runs anganwadi centres (AWCs) in villages with a population above 1000 in selected blocks – with a relaxed norm of 700 for tribal areas. Now that the DWCD has extended the programme to cover all districts in the country, these centres will cover all DPEP districts.

The major areas of coordination involve:

- *Ensuring that school timings and AWC timings are coordinated to enable older girls who could not attend school due to sibling care burden to attend school*
- *Locating the school and AWC in close proximity to ensure better coordination between them*
- *Providing teaching-learning material (TLM) to strengthen the pre-school component*
- *Capacity building for ECE, mainly through training of* anganwadi *workers*
- *Academic support through the DPEP set-up*

Apart from these, DPEP has also set up new centres, modelled largely along the ICDS pattern. Some of the models set up under DPEP, however, have addressed specific issues of concern in the local context. The ECE centres-cum-alternative schools set up in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, for example, attempt to specifically address the question of sibling care. This has entailed site selection in villages with the need for ECE services and locating these close to the primary school, recruitment of ECE workers, as well as the development of curriculum, TLM and training modules.

These activities are carried out with the active support of resource groups that have been formed for ECE in many states. In many states an encouraging trend has been the involvement of the local community in the management of these centres, through mothers' groups and village education committees (VECs). Academic support for these centres is often provided through the structures set up under DPEP, namely, block resource centres and cluster resource centres. Another model that has been adopted has been to open pre-primary classes in the primary school. This has been taken up on scale in the state of Assam.

All states have, regardless of the approach adopted, taken up the issue of school readiness programmes for children entering primary school. This has usually been taken up towards the end of the pre-primary stage, either ICDS or DPEP model, and in some cases in the beginning of class I, in the primary school.

All states have, regardless of the approach adopted, taken up the issue of school readiness programmes for children entering primary school. This has usually been taken up towards the end of the pre-primary stage, either ICDS or DPEP model, and in some cases in the beginning of class I, in the primary school. The school readiness programmes also ensure that the curriculum and teaching in the ECE centres and primary schools is synchronised.

Although different models have been followed by the states, there are common issues that have dominated the overall strategy followed by them. The thrust areas for ECE under DPEP have been the following.

Building stronger linkages between the primary school and the AWC/ ECE centre:
This has included looking at issues like school readiness, transition monitoring from ECE to primary school, influencing curriculum to ensure a continuity, convergence for training of the ECE workers, augmenting infrastructure, impacting the sibling care problem for primary school-age group children, involving communities in the running or ECE centres, and convergence for monitoring

Impacting enrolment through relieving children from sibling care:
Social assessments and gender studies conducted highlighted that a major problem keeping children, especially girls out of school, has been the burden of looking after younger siblings. As a strategy to ensure that primary school-going age children are not prevented from attending school on this ground, an effort has been made to synchronise the timings of the AWC/ ECE centre and the primary school, and where possible, to locate them in the same premises or in close proximity. This enables children in formal primary schools to leave siblings in the ECE centre while they attend school and to thereby impact on the enrolment of children, especially the girl child.

Since a major objective of pre-school education is to familiarise children with the school atmosphere and to prepare them to join formal primary schools, many states have tried to bring the physical location of the two together, including where possible, the same campus.

Box 3.2: Balwadis: An Innovative Approach for ECCE and Community Empowerment in Uttaranchal

Supported by the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, the balwadis of Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora aim at providing a quality ECCE programme to 3-6 years old children in remote, economically poor Himalayan villages in Uttaranchal.

Twenty-nine community based groups from 10 hill districts of Uttaranchal work with a common philosophy of education and development as they try to create and develop socially and ecologically sustainable rural communities through education. Starting with two villages in 1988, the programme has now not only expanded to 321 villages catering to about 7,000 children, majority of whom are girls, but also evolved from being just a learning orientation to children to a forum for child development and community education.

In Uttaranchal, the geographical conditions make it imperative to have a centre flexible both in terms of the curriculum and admission procedures. Girls start attending the centre as soon as they are three years old and are enrolled in primary schools after they attain the age of 5-6. Over the years, universal primary education of girls in all villages having a pre-primary centre has been achieved. Primary school teachers welcome children from the Balwadis as they are more confident and articulate. Most of the girls, working as teachers, are now intermediate/graduates and want to pursue further studies. An offshoot of this trend has been that girls are marrying late in villages. A network of 412 women's groups called *Uttarakhand Mahila parishad* involving 12,000 rural women has been created as a direct offshoot of the balwadi programme.

Environmental education, an important component of the balwadi curriculum, aims to foster children's awareness and knowledge about the local environment and helps develop skills to enable them to translate their knowledge into action. Children learn songs, stories, poems, games in the centre. They also plant their own flower and vegetable beds and take part in campaigns to clean the village paths and water sources.

The community owns each centre and this sense of ownership and commitment towards balwadis is the driving force for education and sustainable development:

- Communities provide a room for the centre. Villagers have donated land and provided free labor to construct small buildings called *bal bhavans*
- Members of the women's group maintain the centre. They apply mud plaster on the walls and on the floor, help in digging the garbage pit, and installing a temporary sanitation facility near the centre. The land for these facilities is provided free by the community
- Each year, the local NGO, the community, and the centre organise a Bal Mela jointly. Children display what they have learnt.

The strong link of education to communities through balwadi centers helps provide a secure framework of learning to children as well as the village people. In each village, where a balwadi centre is functional, a women's group is formed. The programme is reviewed each month in village meetings organised by the women's group as well as by the local community based group. Regular meetings are held in USNPSS to review the programme and to initiate new activities.

In Uttar Pradesh, for example, the state government passed an order, saying that where available, primary schools would provide the space for AWCs in their campus.

Although there are problems in implementation, especially where the primary school is far from the habitation (making it difficult for pre-primary children to attend) the need was recognised. Where this has been achieved this is not only helping the smaller children to become familiar with schools, but also helping older children in taking care of siblings , so that they can attend school.

Transition to primary school

A different facet of this can be seen in states which are putting in place mechanisms for monitoring the transition from ECE centres to primary school. The very process of monitoring ensures that the linkage with the primary school, as well as the need for coordination, comes to the forefront. This linkage is crucial to ensure further linkages, in terms of curriculum, pedagogy and school readiness.

Involving communities in ECCE

Involving communities in ECCE has been another area where states have been working. In Bihar DPEP, for example, ECE centres are established by *Mata Samitis* (mothers' committees) who select the ECE workers, provide the space for the centres and purchase equipment/materials, etc., for the centre. They also organise *prabhat pheris* (torch rallies), *melas* (fairs) and meetings at the centres. Suitable training modules have been developed for ECE/AWC workers, ECE programme personnel, ICDS supervisors and Anganwadi Training Centre (AWTC) instructors.

ECE under Mahila Samakhya

Many Mahila Samakhya (MS) states took up ECE activities in villages where it emerged as a felt need among the women of the *sangha* (women's collectives). The process for setting up of these centres was different from those set up under other programmes, and was rooted in the MS process itself. The process followed by Mahila Samakhya in Gujarat is given below as an illustration.

It is during the analysis of women's and girls' problems in the sangha that the childcare needs of villages emerged. In the initial phase, an effort was made to evolve a model that suited the village conditions, with flexibility, both in form and organisation. A summary picture of each village was developed through simulated activities, where the participants shared their ideas about creating a model support system.

The highlights of childcare patterns evolved by MS in Gujarat included:

- Leadership and responsibility for childcare centres rest with the *sanghas*.
- Timings are fixed to suit the needs of the community.
- Programme was evolved with regard to the need for care/ education.

The various options that emerged were:

- Self-financed childcare centres, combining day-care and pre-school activities
- Linking day-care service to the existing anganwadi of ICDS
- Childcare centres only for a section of the population in the village (the poorest) where the demand is high
- Caring for children in more than one location

- Collective decisions about choice of place, time, caregivers, (who, how many and how) and payments.
- Finding a safe place that can accommodate the children, and is accessible to them, with some outdoor space for play .
- Promoting varied models and catering to a wide age group, including infants, pre-schoolers and if need be, older children
- The sanghas negotiate for resources at the local level, and with MS structures.
- Sangha members participate in the purchase of raw materials, maintenance of accounts and cooking of meals.
- Women brainstorm to explore alternative local resources from the community in the form of play material, fuel, water, floor spreads, *matkas* (pots), grains, etc. Community contributions (Rs. 5 to 10 per child) are collected towards the cost of the honorarium for the *balsakhi (child care-giver).*

Training for childcare was originally carried out by some external resource persons. MS developed specific modules for each of the components with the support of a consultant from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara. The primary concern was to adapt training to the needs of childcare centres emerging in the villages; to problems emerging in the villages; and to problems encountered by women in their initiation and management. The format took the form of camps, cluster meetings, workshops, village sangha meetings, field visits and celebrations.

ECE under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Under the scheme of SSA, the major vehicle for the provision of ECE services is the ICDS programme. However, the SSA programme has a provision for taking up ECE projects on a small scale, under the "innovations" head. A fund of Rs. 5 million is available in each district, each year for such projects (each project not to exceed Rs. 1.5 million). This can be utilised either for setting up new centres in areas where there are no ICDS centres or for strengthening linkages with the ICDS programme.

Under the proposed scheme "education of girls at the elementary level", under the SSA framework, provision is being made for setting up of community-based childcare centres, in areas where such services are not provided under ICDS.

By the end of the Ninth Plan a total of 5,652 ICDS projects had already been sanctioned, comprising 4,533 rural blocks, 759 tribal blocks and 360 urban slums. The total number of rural and tribal blocks is now 5,488, leaving only 186 blocks uncovered. Of the projects sanctioned, 4,608 were operational by the end of the Ninth Plan. In the Tenth Plan it is envisaged that the remaining 1,044 projects will be operationalised. With this, almost the entire country will be covered under the ICDS programme.

Table 3.1: Coverage under various Early Childhood Care and Education Schemes 1996–97

Programmes	Centres Sanctioned	Centres Operational	Beneficiaries
ICDS projects sanctioned	5652	4608	3,15,00,000 (0-6 children) 60,00,000 (pregnant and lactating mothers)

(As per the 2001 Census, number of children in the 0-6 age group was 15,78,63,145, so approximately 20 per cent children in the 0-6 age group are covered under the ICDS programme.)

शंकर गुहा नियोगी पुस्तकालय एवं सांस्कृतिक केन्द्र भिलाई ★ छत्तीसगढ़
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CHAPTER IV

Universal Elementary Education

Overview of Progress towards Universal Elementary Education

Elementary education in India is defined as the education from class I to VIII, and roughly covers , children from the age of 6 to 14 years. Elementary education is further divided into two stages: primary and upper primary education. Primary education lasts up to class V and covers children in the 6 -11 age group. Upper primary covers Class VI to VIII, and includes children in the age group of 11-14 years. However, while this is the national picture, there are minor variations in some states. Some have primary schooling up to Class IV only, while a few have upper primary up to Class VII only.

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) has been a national goal since Independence. The recent amendment to the Constitution, which has made elementary education a fundamental right of every citizen, guides the formulation of policies and programmes in this area. Concerted efforts towards the goal of UEE during the last five decades have resulted in a manifold increase in the number of institutions, teachers and students. (Table 4.1) During the period 1950-51 to 2000-01, the number of primary schools increased by more than three times, while the number of upper primary schools increased by fifteen times. Special projects and programmes at the national level launched during the 1990s gave further fillip to the process. The average annual growth rates for primary and upper primary schools during the decade were 1.51 per cent and 3.02 per cent respectively.

Table 4.1: Progress in Education since 1950

Indicators	1950-51	2000-01
Primary schools	2,10,000	6,38,738
Upper primary schools	13,600	2,06,269
Teachers in primary schools	5,38,000	18,96,791
Teachers in upper primary schools	86,000	13,26,652
Enrolment in primary	19.2 million	113.83 million
Enrolment in upper primary schools	3 million	42.81 million

Total enrolment at primary stage increased from 97 million in 1990 to 114 million in 2000-01. At the upper primary level, the increase in enrolment during this period was from 34 million in 1991 to 43 million in 2001. During this period the growth rate of girls' enrolment at elementary level was much higher compared to that of the boys.

Table 4.2: Sex-wise Enrolment by Stages, 1990–91 to 2000–01

(in million)

Year	Primary (Grades I-V)			Middle/Upper Primary (Grades VI-VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1990-91	57.0	40.4	97.4	21.5	12.5	34.0
1993-94	55.1	41.9	97.0	20.6	13.5	34.1
1994-95	62.3	46.8	109.1	24.5	15.8	40.3
1995-96	62.4	47.4	109.8	25.0	16.0	41.0
1996-97	62.5	47.9	110.4	24.7	16.3	41.0
1997-98	61.2	47.5	108.7	23.7	15.8	39.5
1998-99	62.7	48.2	110.9	24.0	16.3	40.3
1999-2000*	64.1	49.5	113.6	25.1	17.0	42.1
2000-01*	64.0	49.8	113.8	25.3	17.5	42.8

Source: Estimated average growth rates annual from Selected Educational Statistics, 2000-01, M/HRD, GOI
* Provisional

Over the years, the participation of girls at all levels of school education has increased substantially. The relative share of girls' enrolment in total enrolment at primary level was only 28.1 per cent in 1950-51, which has increased to 43.7 per cent in 2000-01. Similarly, at the upper primary level, the relative share of girls' enrolment to total enrolment was as low as 16.1 per cent in 1950-51, which has gone up to 40.9 per cent in 1999-2000.

Gross Enrolment Ratio

The most important indicator pointing to the participation of children in schooling is the enrolment ratio. Table 4.3 presents the gross enrolment ratios (GER), which represent school enrolment as a ratio of the total population in the age group of 6-14 years.

Table 4.3: Gross Enrolment Ratio - National[@]

YEAR	I-V Primary (6-11 years)			VI-VIII Upper Primary (11-14 years)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1991 (1990-91)	98.12	75.89	87.28	79.82	54.62	67.87
1992 (1992-93)	95.0	73.46	84.6	72.5	48.94	67.5
1996 (1996-97)	98.7	81.9	90.6	70.9	52.8	62.4
1997* (1997-98)	98.5	81.5	90.3	66.5	49.5	58.5
1999* (1999-00)	104.1	85.2	94.9	67.2	49.7	58.8
2001* (2001-02)	104.9	85.9	95.7	66.7	49.9	58.6

Source: Growth of School Enrolment 1950-1993 MHRD, Government of India
Selected Educational Statistics 1997-98 of MHRD, GOI.
@ These figures do not fully match with the figures provided during different years in the "Selected Educational Statistics" published by Government of India as the base population size used are different
* Provisional

Gross enrolment ratios have remained relatively static during the decade. This is particularly true of the figures for boys at the primary stage (6 -11 years). Corresponding figures for girls show an increase of about 6 percentage points. However, the figures indicate a decline with respect to enrolment at the upper primary stage. This is possibly due to several factors. One of these is the fact that children are not enrolled exactly at the official age specified by the state, which also varies from one state to another.

Out-of-school children

In the country, as a whole, approximately 35 million children (as on 30th September 2000) still need to be enrolled. Moreover, India being a large country, one sees a wide disparity in the educational status from one region to another. Thus, while there are some regions, which are close to achieving the goals of UEE, there are other regions which have still a long distance to go before they can achieve the same. This is clear from Table 4.4, which gives the number of out-of-school children as obtained from the educational statistics produced by Government of India every year.

Table 4.4: Child Population, Enrolment and Out-of-school Children in the States

(in million)

State	Primary			Upper Primary		
	Projected child population (6-11) as on 1st March 2000	Enrolment in year 2000	Out-of-school children	Projected child population (11-14) as on 1st March 2000	Enrolment	Out-of-school children
1 Andhra Pradesh	8.558	8.906	-	5.768	2.823	2.945
2 Arunachal Pradesh	0.139	0.163	-	0.076	0.053	0.023
3 Assam	3.481	4.041	-	2.091	1.505	0.586
4 Bihar	13.238	10.573	2.665	8.154	2.551	5.603
5 Goa	0.187	0.124	0.063	0.101	0.072	0.029
6 Gujarat	5.367	6.771	-	3.344	2.224	1.120
7 Haryana	2.558	2.018	0.540	1.480	0.935	0.545
8 Himachal Pradesh	0.784	0.695	0.089	0.428	0.413	0.015
9 Jammu & Kashmir	1.158	1.063	0.095	0.634	0.425	0.209
10 Karnataka	5.862	6.658	-	3.705	2.756	0.949
11 Kerala	2.977	2.594	0.383	1.838	1.789	0.049
12 Madhya Pradesh	9.974	11.113	-	5.925	3.483	2.442
13 Maharashtra	10.616	11.721	-	6.265	5.338	0.927
14 Manipur	0.294	0.286	0.008	0.160	0.121	0.039
15 Meghalaya	0.284	0.325	-	0.155	0.094	0.061
16 Mizoram	0.110	0.120	-	0.061	0.045	0.016
17 Nagaland	0.196	0.211	-	0.107	0.068	0.039
18 Orissa	4.183	4.710	-	2.637	1.465	1.172
19 Punjab	2.672	2.112	0.560	1.535	0.991	0.544
20 Rajasthan	7.074	7.922	-	4.233	3.278	0.955
21 Sikkim	0.066	0.090	-	0.037	0.027	0.010
22 Tamil Nadu	5.920	5.709	0.211	3.827	3.551	0.276
23 Tripura	0.441	0.471	-	0.241	0.155	0.086
24 Uttar Pradesh	21.557	14.160	7.397	13.284	4.970	8.314
25 West Bengal	9.348	10.016	-	5.849	3.053	2.796
26 Andaman & Nicobar	0.045	0.040	0.005	0.025	0.022	0.003
27 Chandigarh	0.102	0.067	0.035	0.057	0.040	0.017
28 Dadar & Nagar Haveli	0.023	0.028	-	0.012	0.009	0.003
29 Daman & Diu	0.016	0.016	-	0.009	0.007	0.002
30 Delhi	1.625	0.996	0.629	0.893	0.475	0.418
31 Lakshadweep	0.008	0.008	-	0.004	0.005	-
32 Pondicherry	0.128	0.103	0.025	0.071	0.064	0.007
Total	**118.991**	**113.827**	**5.164**	**73.006**	**42.810**	**30.196**

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 2000-01
Note: Figures for Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal included in unbifurcated states

The above is reinforced by other studies done on out-of-school children. Most recent surveys (NFHS-II-1999) indicate that nearly 79 per cent of the 6 -14 age group are attending school. This means that out of the population of 192 million in the age group of 6 -14 in 2000, the number of children attending is 152 million. Those outside the school system are mostly SC/ST girls, working children, children of poor families, disabled children and children in difficult circumstances.

Dropout Rates

The dropout rate in primary classes has been decreasing year after year from 64.9 per cent in 1960-61 to 40.7 per cent in 2000-01, as shown in Table 4.5. Similarly, for classes

With the country following a five-year planning process, the requirements for achieving the goals of UEE have been aligned to the planning process associated with the Tenth Five Year Plan, which is under implementation during the period 2002-07.

I to VIII the dropout rate decreased from 78.3 per cent in 1960-61, to 53.7 per cent in 2000-01. Some studies have indicated the repetition of grades by large number of children as a serious problem.

Table 4.5: Dropout Rates at Primary and Upper Primary Levels, 1960–61 to 2000–01

	1960–61	1970–71	1980–81	1990–91	1998–99*	1999–2000*	2000–01*
Class I-V							
Boys	61.7	64.5	56.2	40.1	38.62	38.67	39.71
Girls	70.9	70.9	62.5	46.0	41.22	42.28	41.90
Total	64.9	67.0	58.7	42.6	39.74	40.25	40.67
Class I-VIII							
Boys	75.0	74.6	68.0	59.1	54.4	51.96	50.33
Girls	85.0	83.4	79.4	65.1	60.09	58.00	57.95
Total	78.3	77.9	72.7	60.9	56.82	54.53	53.67

Source : Ibid
* Provisional

While the dropout rates have fallen over the years, the disparity between the more developed states and still developing states is glaring. The dropout rate from class I to V ranges from (-) 9.34 in Chandigarh to 60.50 in Mizoram. Similarly, for class I to VIII, the dropout rate ranges from (-) 12.22 in Kerala to 77.35 in Meghalaya.

Requirement and Targets for Achieving the Elementary Education Goals of EFA

Although the task of achieving UEE is stupendous in a country as diverse and large as India, several positive signals and opportunities have emerged in recent years. Most important of these is the ever-increasing demand for education from parents and the community all over the country.

Further, recognising the importance of the primary education sector, the central government has been working with state governments on a principle of shared responsibility for achieving the goal of UEE. This becomes even more important in the context of the commitment to make the 'right to elementary education' a fundamental one. With the magnitude of the unfinished task, the Government of India will continue supporting the initiatives in primary education while promoting the capacities of the state governments to meet the challenges effectively.

With the country following a five-year planning process, the requirements for achieving the goals of UEE have been aligned to the planning process associated with the Tenth Five Year Plan, which is under implementation during the period 2002-07. The goals of the Tenth Plan have been formulated so as to ensure that the requirements of the Dakar goals are fulfilled in the plan period itself and the projections for the EFA plan made so as to coincide with the year 2007, the last year of the Tenth Plan.

Targets for the period till 2007

Broadly, the targets for the period till 2007 are as follows:

(i) Universal Access

- All children (age groups 6 -11 and 11-14) should have access to primary schools,

upper primary schools or their alternatives within the walking distance of one kilometre and three kilometres respectively;

- Universal access to ECCE centres for all children aged 3-6 years;
- Need-based expansion of upper primary education facilities, particularly for disadvantaged sections. There should be one upper primary school for every two primary schools;
- All schools should have buildings, toilets, drinking water, electrification, playground, blackboards and other basic facilities; and
- Provision of one classroom for every teacher at elementary stage.

(ii) Universal Enrolment

- Enrolment of all children in schools or other alternatives by 2003; and
- All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.

(iii) Universal Retention

- Universal retention in primary cycle by 2007; and
- Dropout rate to be reduced to less than 10 per cent for grades VI-VIII by 2007.

(iv) Universal Achievement

- Improve all aspects of quality of education (content and process) to ensure reasonable learning outcomes at elementary level, especially in literacy, numeracy and in life skills.

(v) Equity

- Bridge all gender and social gaps in enrolment, retention and learning achievement in primary cycle by 2007. In upper primary it should be reduced to less than 5 per cent by 2007; and
- Special interventions and strategies to include girls, SC/ST children, working children, children with special needs, urban deprived children, children from minority groups, children below poverty line, migrating children and children in difficult-to-reach groups.

Expansion of Elementary Education till 2007

Before suggesting the broad strategies to be adopted to achieve UEE, it is necessary to estimate the backlog of non-enrolled children in the age group of 6 -11 and 11-14 at the primary and upper primary levels, respectively, at the beginning of the period and also the target child population during the period. This section deals with the target-setting exercise relating to the estimation of enrolment during the period. For the enrolment projection exercise, 1999-2000 has been taken as the base year. The relevant age-group population has been used after adjusting for over- and underage children in the target year.

For arriving at an estimate of the targeted population, use has been made of the enrolment data at the primary and upper primary levels for 1999-2000, as reported in the Selected Educational Statistics, 1999-2000, MHRD, as base year enrolment. To obtain the enrolment data in the target year (2006-07) in the relevant age group population (6 -11 and 11-14), adjustment has been made in the base year enrolment (1999-2000) by taking into consideration the difference in enrolment data as reported in Selected Educational Statistics, MHRD, 1993-94 and Sixth All India Educational Survey, 1993, NCERT. The enrolment figures reported by the MHRD have been deflated by 10 per cent at primary level and by 14 per cent at upper primary level. The target year child population in the relevant age group has been taken as the enrolment in the target year.

Consequently, the enrolment figures have been estimated on the basis of the share of the child population (6 -11 and 11-14 years) to total population in the target year (as estimated by the Expert Committee on Population Projections). The advantage here is that the population in the target year has been estimated on the basis of the average annual growth rate between the year 1991 and 2001, for which population figures are now available.

The projected population on the basis of average annual growth rate between 1991 and 2001 up to the target year, i.e. 2006-07, is given in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Projected Population from 2006 to 2010

Year	Male	Female	Total
1991 (Actual)	439,231,000	407,072,000	846,303,000
2001 (Actual)*	531,277,078	495,738,169	1,027,015,247
2006	584,298,977	547,070,028	1,131,369,005
2007	595,522,172	557,957,391	1,153,479,563
2008	606,960,942	569,061,426	1,176,022,368
2009	618,619,427	580,386,444	1,199,005,871
2010	630,501,848	591,936,845	1,222,438,693
Average annual growth rate (1991-00)	**1.92**	**1.99**	**1.95**

** Provisional Population Results, Census of India, 2001, Registrar General and Census Commissioner, New Delhi, March 2001*

Table 4.7: Projected 6-11 and 11-14 age group population in 2006 and 2010

(in million)

Year	Male	Female	Total
2006 (Total population)	584.3	547.1	1131.4
6-11 age-group population in 2006	56.71	53.88	110.59
11-14 age-group population in 2010	34.48	32.66	67.14

The share of child population (6 -11) to total population in 2006-07 was estimated to be 9.71 per cent for boys, 9.83 per cent for girls, and 9.77 per cent for total (Expert Group on Population Projections, Registrar General of India, 1996). Similarly the share of 11-14 age-group population was estimated to be 5.90 per cent for boys, 5.97 for girls, and 5.93 per cent for total (Expert Group on Population Projections, Registrar General of India, 1996). In this scenario, the 6 -11 and 11-14 age-group populations have been estimated by taking the same share as projected by the Expert Group on Population Projection to the total population (by taking 1991 Census data and 2001 Provisional Population Results of Registrar General of India, 2001) (see Table 4.7).

The adjusted enrolment of 1999-2000 has been taken as the base enrolment. The target enrolment at primary level for 2006-07 has been estimated by taking the 6 -11 age-group population as calculated above and then inflating it by 10 per cent to account for under- and overage. The percentage of under- and over-age was around 24 per cent at primary level in 1993-94. The National Sample Survey (NSS) 52nd round also shows the extent of under- and over-age at primary level to be around 19 per cent in 1995-96, which shows that the percentage of under- and overage children in total enrolment is decreasing. Since the target is to achieve universal primary education by 2006-07, this assumption of 10 per cent under- and overage in the target year 2006-07 is quite reasonable.

For upper primary level also, the adjusted enrolment of 1999-2000 has been taken as the base enrolment. The target enrolment at upper primary level has been estimated by estimating the 11-14 age-group population in 2010 (as mentioned earlier) and then inflating it by 10 per cent to account for under- and over-age.

Accordingly, the enrolment at primary level needs to grow at the average annual growth rate of 1.12 per cent for boys and 4.16 per cent for girls (2.51 per cent overall), and at

Table 4.8: Projected Enrolment at Primary and Upper Primary Levels, 2000–01 to 2006–07

(in million)

Year	Enrolment (Class I-V)			Enrolment (Class VI-VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1999-2000	57.69	44.56	102.25	22.57	15.29	37.86
2000-01	58.34	46.41	104.75	23.61	16.52	40.13
2001-02	58.99	48.34	107.33	24.71	17.84	42.55
2002-03	59.66	50.35	110.01	25.85	19.28	45.13
2003-04	60.33	52.45	112.78	27.04	20.82	47.86
2004-05	61.00	54.63	115.63	28.29	22.49	50.78
2005-06	61.69	56.9	118.59	29.6	24.3	53.9
2006-07	62.38	59.27	121.65	30.97	26.25	57.22
Required average annual growth rate (1999-2000 to 2006-07)	**1.12**	**4.16**	**2.51**	**4.62**	**8.03**	**6.08**

Note *: Provisional as reported in Selected Educational Statistics, 1998-99, MHRD, GOI

upper primary level, at 4.62 per cent for boys and 8.03 per cent for girls (6.08 per cent at upper primary level).

The year-wise estimated additional enrolments during the five-year period at primary and upper primary levels is given in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Year-wise Estimated Additional Enrolments at Primary and Upper Primary Levels

Year	Additional Enrolment					
	Primary (Class I-V)			Upper Primary (Class VI-VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2002-03	0.67	2.01	2.68	1.14	1.44	2.58
2003-04	0.67	2.10	2.77	1.19	1.54	2.73
2004-05	0.67	2.18	2.85	1.25	1.67	2.92
2005-06	0.69	2.27	2.96	1.31	1.81	3.12
2006-07	0.69	2.37	3.06	1.37	1.95	3.32
Total (2002-2007)	**3.39**	**10.93**	**14.32**	**6.26**	**8.41**	**14.67**

Programmes and schemes for achieving aims of UEE

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The national programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched to achieve the objective of UEE by 2010, would be the main programme to achieve the goals of UEE. SSA aims at providing universal enrolment by the year 2003, five years of quality primary schooling by the year 2007 and eight years of quality elementary education by the year 2010. Its specific goals are:

- All children in school, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centre, alternate school, 'back-to-school' camp by 2003.
- All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
- All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.

quality → contradictory

The scheme is an effort to universalise elementary education through community-ownership of the school system. The community is the key in the planning, implementation and monitoring of SSA.

- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.
- Universal retention by 2010.

The scheme is an effort to universalise elementary education through community-ownership of the school system. The community is the key in the planning, implementation and monitoring of SSA. The programme calls for community ownership of school-based interventions through effective decentralisation. In this programme, habitation has been made the unit of planning and the habitation-level plans are prepared first, which are then combined together to form the District Elementary Education Plans.

Some of the strategies to be adopted in the scheme are:

- Institutional reforms: As part of the SSA, reforms are to be undertaken to improve efficiency of the delivery system. The states will have to make an objective assessment of their prevalent education system, including educational administration, and carry out changes to improve the delivery system for elementary education.
- Community ownership: The programme involves community ownership of school-based interventions through effective decentralisation. This is augmented by involvement of women's groups, VEC members and members of Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs).
- Institutional capacity building: SSA conceives a major capacity building role for national, state and district level institutions like NIEPA/NCERT/NCTE/ SCERT/ SIEMAT/DIET.
- Community-based monitoring with full transparency: The programme has a community-based monitoring system. The Educational Management Information System (EMIS) correlates school level-data with community-based information from micro-planning and surveys. Besides this, every school is encouraged to share all information with the community, including that about grants received.
- Habitation as a unit of planning: SSA works on a community-based approach to planning, with habitation as a unit of planning. Habitation plans are the basis for formulating district plans.
- Accountability to community: SSA envisages cooperation between teachers, parents and PRIs, as well as accountability and transparency to the community.
- Priority to education of girls and other disadvantaged groups: Education of girls is one of the principal concerns in SSA. Further, there is a focus on the inclusion and participation of children from SC/ST, minority groups, urban deprived children disadvantaged groups and children with special needs in the educational process.
- Pre-project phase: SSA involves a distinct and well-planned pre-project phase, which provides for a large number of interventions for capacity development to improve the delivery and monitoring system. These include provision for household surveys, community-based micro-planning and school mapping, training of community leaders, school-level activities, support for setting up information system, office equipment, diagnostic studies, etc.
- Thrust on quality: SSA lays a special thrust on making education at the elementary level useful and relevant for children by improving the curriculum, and through child-centred activities and effective teaching-learning strategies. It recognises the

critical and central role of teachers and advocates a focus on their development needs.

Externally Assisted Projects

The four existing externally assisted projects in elementary education – the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP), Lok Jumbish Project (LJP) and GOI-UN (Janshala) Programme – would continue as part of SSA framework till the completion of their project periods. As SSA supports most of the programme components, strategies and interventions of these four externally assisted programmes, a smooth transition to SSA would be ensured in the project districts after the project period. The capacities and technical support built by these programmes at personnel and institutional level would be made use of in SSA.

Strategies to be adopted under the above programmes

Considering that three-fourths of the out-of-school children in the country are girls, and a substantial percentage of them belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the core strategy for achieving UEE will be the education of these children. It is felt that if the issues of UEE relating to girls and SC/ST children are addressed, all other issues will automatically get resolved. Simultaneously, there would be renewed efforts to address the educational needs of working children, children in minority groups, urban deprived children (UDC), children of migrant families, children of poor families, disabled children and children of hardest-to-reach groups. Most of the children in these categories are girls and SC/STs. Besides, there would be continued efforts to improve the quality of education and to ensure community participation in education. While strategies for girls and urban deprived children are dealt separately, strategies for some of the other sections are as follows:

Strategy to Improve Retention

Although dropout rate at elementary stage has declined from 78.3 per cent in 1960-61 to 54.5 per cent in 1999-2000, it is still very high. Most of the studies have pointed out economic reasons and also unattractive schools as reasons for children dropping out. Many children are not attending school because of poverty, high private cost of education, sibling care responsibility, household chores, work in the fields and factories, wage labour, work in family occupations, etc. A large number of children drop out of school because of school-related reasons like attitude of teachers, irrelevant curriculum, sub-standard teaching, teacher absenteeism, uninteresting teaching, corporal punishment, poor school infrastructure, inability to cope with the pace of learning, lack of parental support in the case of first generation learners, maladjustment in school, etc. Majority of the dropouts in all categories are girls.

As per the National Family Health Survey-II conducted in 1998-99, the main reasons for students dropping out after enrolling are lack of interest in studies, the private cost of education and the compulsions of work and poverty. These reasons account for almost 75 per cent of the dropout cases. The main reasons quoted by PROBE Report for children dropping out include high cost of schooling, children required for other works, children not interested in studies, poor teaching standards, etc. The stress would be on specific strategies for identifying dropout children and addressing their problems.

The economic reasons for low retention can be addressed by providing targeted

incentives. The SSA has taken a number of steps to reduce the private cost of education. It provides for free textbooks to girls and SC/ST students. Many of the states give free uniforms and other states would also be encouraged to adopt this. The Mid-day Meal Scheme is another programme aiming to increase attendance of students. The aim would be to ensure that all states give hot cooked meal, which would have direct impact on

Table 4.10: Reasons for Children not attending School (Percentage of children of 6-17 years who have dropped out-of-school)

Main reason for not currently attending school (dropped out-of-school)	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
School too far away	0.2	1.0	1.0	5.9	0.8	4.8
Transport not available	0.1	0.2	0.4	1.6	0.3	1.3
Further education not considered necessary	2.4	5.4	2.3	4.3	2.4	4.5
Required for household work	5.7	14.7	8.7	17.3	8.0	16.7
Required for work on farm/family business	4.7	1.6	9.2	2.9	8.0	2.6
Required for outside work for payment in cash or kind	11.3	3.0	9.9	3.7	10.3	3.5
Costs too much	15.2	17.0	13.3	11.4	13.8	12.6
No proper school facilities for girls	0.0	1.2	0.0	3.5	0.0	3.0
Required for care of siblings	0.2	1.5	0.6	2.3	0.5	2.2
Not interested in studies	42.5	30.2	40.0	24.8	40.6	26.0
Repeated failures	6.0	6.1	5.3	3.7	5.5	4.2
Got married	0.1	4.9	0.2	8.5	0.2	7.7
Other	5.8	8.2	5.3	6.2	5.5	6.6
Don't know	5.7	5.1	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.2
Total Per cent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of children	1,852	1,747	5,475	6,121	7,327	7,868

Source: NFHS-2, India, 1998-99

Table 4.11: Why Children Drop Out

	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
a) Circumstances whereby children drop out		
Not allowed by school/ teachers to continue	5	2
Child did not wish to continue	35	16
Withdrawn by parents	47	66
Other circumstances	13	16
Total	100	100
b) Circumstances whereby parents withdraw *		
Child needed for other activities	50	68
Schooling is too expensive	54	29
School is too far	0	6
Poor teaching standards at school	8	18
Hostile school environment	4	6
Child fell ill	4	9
Child is not bright enough	0	6
Child is not interested in studying	8	6
Parents are not interested	8	27
Other reasons	8	22

Source: PROBE Survey
* Responses are not mutually exclusive

attendance as compared to giving of mere foodgrains. If children are dropping out because of economic reasons, emphasis would be on involving the community in motivating the parents to bring the children back to school. For those children who have already dropped out, suitable alternative education systems would be provided such as bridge courses, remedial courses, back-to-school camps, etc., so that they can be mainstreamed into the formal system.

Regarding the reasons for the students not being interested in studies, emphasis would be on improving the quality of education and the focus would be on pedagogic improvement, making teaching-learning joyful, child-centred and activity-based.

Regarding the reasons for the students not being interested in studies, emphasis would be on improving the quality of education, the details of which are given in other sections. The focus would be on pedagogic improvement, making teaching-learning joyful, child-centred and activity-based. This would require further efforts on improving teacher training, development of local-specific teaching-learning material, interesting teaching methods, local contextual curricula and textbooks, instruction in mother tongue, flexible school timings, attractive classrooms, positive environment, good quality school infrastructure and facilities, more friendly evaluation techniques, etc.

Other strategies and approaches would include:

- Monitoring attendance by the community and grassroot level structures like VEC, parent-teacher association (PTA), mother-teacher association (MTA), *Mahila Samooh* (women's group), youth clubs, etc.
- Regular micro-planning exercise to be undertaken by the states to identify the number as well as the reasons for dropping out. Community and grassroot level structures to be involved in the micro-planning exercise. This would help mobilise parents for regular attendance of their children.
- Follow-up and tracking of dropout children to bring them back to school either through camps or bridge courses.
- Organising retention drives to put pressure on parents and the school system to ensure retention of girls. These drives would not be a one-time exercise but would be organised at regular intervals to sustain pressure and take up corrective measures as may be necessary.
- In pockets identified for intensive activities, attendance of each child to be monitored to prevent dropouts.
- Improving access to ECCE and pre-schooling facilities–this would help in school readiness besides relieving older children, especially girls, from sibling care responsibility.
- Improving school infrastructure and facilities in terms of playground, play material, toilets, drinking water facilities, classrooms and school buildings.
- Conduct remedial classes to assist those children not performing well.

Incentive Schemes for Enhancing Participation of the Poor

Studies have shown that in addition to social disparity, there were also economic reasons which weighed against universal participation in schooling of a large number of children, particularly girls belonging to SCs/STs and other such groups. In order to attract such children to schools and also to convince their parents of the value of education, a number of incentive schemes were launched at different periods of time during the last few decades. Broadly, these incentives were in the form of provisioning of mid-day meals to children in schools, supply of free textbooks, free uniforms, scholarship/ stipend, etc.

Box 4.1: Mid-day Meal Scheme in Tamil Nadu

The Mid-day Meal Scheme in Tamil Nadu was started on a humble scale way back in 1925-26 by the Corporation of Madras to improve school attendance. Subsequently, philanthropists and voluntary organisations were urged to start free school lunch centres in villages and towns all over the state. In July 1956, the school lunch programme was launched as a 'people's movement' for organised charity as part of the school improvement efforts. Impressed by the public response, the Government of Tamil Nadu (erstwhile Madras) took up the school lunch programme in 1957 and issued detailed rules for running the programme, which have been revised several times since then. In 1961, the state started receiving CARE (Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere) food commodities for feeding 500,000 children through the school lunch programme. In 1978, 1.86 million children in 32,000 schools were covered, and this number increased to 2.03 million in 33,306 schools in 1980-81.

The state achieved another milestone in 1982 with the launch of the Nutritious Meal Programme for schoolchildren in classes I to X. This programme is being implemented through Nutritious Meal Centres located in schools, and all children who are willing to enrol are fed. During 2001-02, 5.80 million children were enrolled for the Mid-day Meal Scheme.

Mid-day Meal Scheme

- Keeping in view the beneficial impact already made by the programme in states like Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and also in view of the comfortable position of foodstocks with the public sector agencies, the central government launched the scheme as centrally sponsored programme in August 1995 in a phased manner, expanding across the country in 1997-98.
- The objective of the programme is to give a boost to universal primary education by increasing enrolment, attendance and retention, and simultaneously impacting on the nutritional status of children studying in primary school in government, local and government-aided schools. Recently, the programme has been expanded to cover children studying in EGS and other alternative schooling centres opened in schoolless habitations.
- Under the scheme, the central government arranges for foodgrains (rice/ wheat or both) supplied through public sector agency, free of cost to the implementing agencies of the states/ UTs and also reimburses admissible transportation costs. The cost of conversion of foodgrain into a meal and other logistical support are required to be arranged by the implementing agencies. Recently, the central government has decided to construct kitchen sheds in schools under the rural development programme.
- Currently, 103 million primary school children studying in about 0.8 million schools are being targeted for coverage. The central government has allocated 3 million tonnes of foodgrains for this purpose. While more than one-third of the children are being served cooked meals, foodgrain at the rate of three kg per month for each child is distributed to others. The objective is to serve cooked meals to all children up to grade V.
- Evaluation of the programme has revealed that the scheme has attracted children of underprivileged sections to schools and has led to improvement in enrolment and attendance in many states.
- Various studies have shown positive impact of the programme on children not only in terms of attention in the classroom, regularity in attendance but also greater interest among parents to send their children to school and in participation in the programme itself, wherever cooked meals are served at the school site.

Free Textbooks to Girls and Children belonging to SC/ST Communities

i. Provision of reading materials for children of deprived sections is vital to educational process. Classrooms deprived of textbooks promote little in the way of reading, and students are obliged to adopt rote learning, recitation, and copying from blackboards.

Considering that under the prevailing socio-economic conditions, parents from deprived sections are unable to purchase textbooks, notebooks, etc., for their children, many states/ UTs have arrangement for supplying free textbooks since the 1960s for some specific groups.

ii. The central government has also made a provision for supply of free textbooks to girls, SC/STs in classes I-VIII who have not been covered by state schemes.

iii. Of about 158 million children currently enrolled in classes I-VIII, about 95 million are girls, and 32.27 million belong to SC/ST community. The central government has made provisions for spending Rs. 150/- per child per annum for supply of learning material for these children.

Special attention to the educational needs of SCs and STs is a national commitment, pursued in all the Five Year Plans. In many states, the progress with respect to enrolment and participation of children belonging to these sections has been quite satisfactory.

Education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

Special attention to the educational needs of SCs and STs is a national commitment, pursued in all the Five Year Plans. In many states, the progress with respect to enrolment and participation of children belonging to these sections has been quite satisfactory. However, statistics reveal that the objectives of equity are still elusive in many parts of the country. Considering that the SC/ST population is not homogeneous in all respects, the endeavour would be to refine the identification of target groups even among the SC/STs and identify particular sub-groups which are seriously handicapped and require greater attention. This identification may be done through micro-planning activities.

During the past few years, tribal education has witnessed a rapid transformation, particularly in the area of access, pedagogic reform and community participation. Much emphasis has been given to the improvement of access in tribal areas through the schemes of non-formal education (NFE), alternative schools, community schools and Education Guarantee Scheme, both under DPEP and outside it. However, there are still habitations in the tribal-dominated districts which remain unserved by primary education facilities. There is a need to address this issue on a priority in tribal areas. Also, the following interventions will need to be made:

- All school-attending SC/ST children would be provided incentives in the form of free textbooks, uniform, stationery, scholarship, and transport allowance of up to Rs. 250 per child per year to defray the indirect as well as opportunity cost of education. SSA provides Rs. 150 per child for textbooks to SC/ST children. Already most of the state governments have schemes to provide free textbooks and uniform to girls and SC/ST children.
- Improving access by setting up appropriate schooling facilities in unserved habitations, especially for STs living in difficult terrain and forests.
- Apart from further improving access and addressing the "quantity" aspects, as done in the past, the emphasis would be on improving quality of education for SC/ST children and ensuring equity.
- Engagement of community organisers from SC/ST communities to work towards raising the level of awareness for education among the community.
- Ensuring ownership and management of schools by SC/ST communities by greater representation of SCs/STs in VECs/PTAs.
- Training programme for VECs/PTAs and other community-based organisations among SC/ST population.
- Using local teachers available in the community and upgrading their capacity.

- Monitoring attendance, retention and achievement of children from weaker sections regularly.
- Providing context-specific intervention in the form of hostels, incentives or a special facility, as may be required for SC/STs living in different contexts.
- Preparing the school schedule in tribal areas as per the local requirements.
- Suitably adapting the curriculum and providing locally relevant teaching-learning materials to tribal students. If need be, local language and dialects may be used for teaching, especially in lower class; successful micro-level models in this area would be upscaled.
- Environment building is of immense importance in the context of educational development among SCs and STs.
- Considering the geographical and communication problems in tribal areas, it is crucial to restructure and decentralise the monitoring system. VECs will have to be given training in academic supervision and monitoring.
- Convergence between the Tribal Welfare Department, tribal development authorities and education department has to be further strengthened.
- Ashram schools, or residential schools, would be set up if SC/ST habitations are small and scattered.

Working Children

Educating children who are compelled to join the workforce prematurely instead of attending primary schools is a major problem, which has defied effective solution for a long time. Enrolling such young children who are already in the labour market and ensuring that they complete primary schooling assumes even greater significance in the current economic scenario of a liberalised economy. India has the largest number of working children in the world. Estimates of working children in the country vary very widely. According to 1991 Census, there were 11.28 million child workers, of which 91 per cent were in rural areas. Out of the total, 9.08 million children were classified as main workers and 2.2 million as marginal workers. Besides, 7 million are involved in household work, 88 per cent of them being girls. Thus if a comprehensive definition of work is taken, the total incidence of child workers is quite substantial and merits serious attention. Even though the estimates vary, the magnitude of child workers is quite large.

The Ministry of Labour, which is the nodal ministry to formulate and implement schemes relating to eradication of child labour, has initiated the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) to impart education to working children. The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy would coordinate and cooperate with the Ministry of Labour by providing academic support in the form of designing appropriate curriculum; development of MLL-based teaching-learning material, training of instructors, imparting vocational skills, designing modes for learners evaluation, etc. Further efforts would also be made to encourage NGOs who have already established a foothold in the community to take up specific innovative programmes to promote education for working children. It would be necessary to make education of school-going children obligatory on the part of those who engage them for work.

The strategies for working children focus on the following:

- The first step for providing education to working children begins with elimination of child labour itself, wherever possible. This requires multi-pronged efforts with strong

component of mobilisation of various stakeholders. The problem of working children and their education cannot be treated only as a responsibility of the Labour or Education Department. It is a multi-sectoral problem.

- Successful strategies and innovations tried out in the country would be upscaled, for example, the Back-to-school camp (UP), summer schools (AP), Shikshaghar (Firozabad), Back-to-school centre (Banaskantha), strategies for urban areas (Rajasthan), etc.
- Intermediary arrangement such as short-term camps, and bridge courses to prepare them for joining schools in the grade suitable for their age would be made. Camps would be seen as an occasion as well as process for transition for a child from a child labour to a student. This shift of position has to be carefully facilitated.
- All the stakeholders, i.e., parents, children, employees, PRIs, media, etc., need to be mobilised for the cause.
- Winning over children by making the camp/school atmosphere attractive and joyful.
- Continuous academic and emotional support after the children join school, through community teachers or orientation of primary school teachers inside the schools and through arrangement of coaching classes outside the school.
- Coordination and convergence of different departments/agencies working in the area of child labour, especially with the Department of Labour.
- Providing support to ongoing programmes like NCLP and others, after making assessment of the support they require. Teacher training and TLMs are two such areas where NCLP schools need to be supported.

The Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme supports strengthening of infrastructural facilities in pockets of concentration of educationally backward minorities, as well as inputs to support additional teachers to teach science, mathematics and languages with necessary TLM.

Children from Minority Groups

Recent studies have shown that there has been inadequate participation of children of minority groups in elementary education. Hence, special attention would be given to these children. In the case of Muslims, the effort to promote education among girls and literacy among adult women would be of particular importance. The curriculum and other programmes of *madrasas* and *maktabs* (religious schools) and similar institutions, catering to educational needs of minorities would need modernisation with the introduction of the teaching of science and mathematics. Specific arrangements for orientation training of teachers in those institutions to transact mainstream curriculum would be required. These models have been successfully tried out in Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. The Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme supports strengthening of infrastructural facilities in pockets of concentration of educationally backward minorities, as well as inputs to support additional teachers to teach science, mathematics and languages with necessary TLM.

Children below Poverty Line

There is a large number of children in India who are not attending school because of poverty. Although education is free, the private cost of education in terms of uniform, textbooks, stationery and transport is often beyond the means of poor parents. NFHS-II reveals that the cost of schooling is cited as the main reason for children never attending school or not currently attending school. This reason is mentioned in one-quarter of cases for both boys and girls. This reason is almost twice as likely to be mentioned for children never attending school as for children not currently attending school.

The average annual expenditure per girl in primary government schools in rural areas is Rs. 219 and in urban areas, Rs. 470 (NSSO 52nd Round, 1995-96). In upper primary it is

Table 4.12: Average Annual Household Expenditure per Student in Elementary Schools

	Primary			
	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Government	219	219	509	470
Local body	223	223	714	621
Private aided	693	529	1652	1525
Private unaided	902	925	1975	1866
Total	305	286	1197	1092
	Upper Primary			
Government	548	555	923	864
Local body	533	553	1148	995
Private aided	893	868	1884	1734
Private unaided	1240	1267	2933	2908
Total	640	641	1590	1456

Source : NSS 52nd Round, July 1995- June 1996, Government of India, October, 1998.

Rs. 555 and Rs. 864 respectively. The per girl expenditure in private unaided school is Rs. 925 (primary) and Rs. 1267 (upper primary) in rural areas compared to Rs. 1866 (primary) and Rs. 2908 (upper primary) in urban areas. According to the PROBE Report (1999) the average cost of sending a child to school works out at Rs. 318/- per year. The cost of schooling will be still higher if opportunity cost and indirect costs are added up with the direct cost. The system of government incentives is supposed to help parents with the financial pressure of education. However, only a few children actually receive these incentives in terms of scholarship, free uniform, textbooks, mid-day meal, etc. The coverage of the incentives does not exceed 13-15 per cent of students in any state (Sixth Educational Survey, 1993). The coverage of incentives might have expanded since 1993.

Non-enrolment, non-achievement or dropping out are generally found among children from the low-income category. As the NCAER survey (1994) points out, , enrolment rates show a distinct relationship with household income. About 82 per cent of households in the country fall in the two lowest income categories of below Rs. 20,000, and Rs. 20,000 – Rs. 40,000, and approximately the same proportion of children come from these income classes. The report says that resource constraint is the most important reason for dropping out. As unequal distribution of education is both a source and consequence of poverty and social exclusion, incentive schemes for all children below the poverty line are recommended to meet the cost of education. The incentives would be in the form of free textbooks, uniform, stationery, scholarship, and transport allowance of up to Rs. 250 per child per year. There is also an urgent need to revamp the incentive delivery system so that the benefits reach the poor.

Other Hard-to-Reach Groups

Children who are designated as hard-to-reach are those who are likely to be left out despite all interventions. They are children living in very small and remote habitations where no form of schooling is available, children of migrant families, children engaged in household chores, children of sex workers, children in juvenile homes, children living in coastal areas and belonging to fishing communities, etc.

Landless labourers or families from agriculturally backward areas in India are forced to move out of their villages when no work is available. The families go looking for work as wage labour on brick kiln sites, sugarcane or cotton fields, salt farms, construction sites, road repair and other labour-intensive seasonal work. The migration is seasonal in nature, i.e., the families leave their village for a specified period and return once the work is over. When the families migrate, their children accompany them. The wages for the work are so low that the entire family has to work to support themselves and also save money for the lean period. Children from such families either do not enrol or drop out of schools. Successful models for education of migrant children like the vocational

course, farm school, Ashramshala and seasonal community hall (all in Gujarat) and sugar school, brick kiln school (Maharashtra) have to be upscaled.

A large number of children, especially girls, do not attend school because they have to attend chores like cooking, bringing water, collecting firewood, washing and cleaning, taking care of their younger siblings, grazing the cattle, and taking food for their parents to their work sites. Strategies designed to address this group of children includes alternative schooling centres (Tamil Nadu) Aamaar Kendra (Assam), Shikshaghar (Uttar Pradesh), alternative schools (Madhya Pradesh, Assam), Apana Vidyalaya (Bihar), NFE centres (Karnataka, Haryana), Prerna Centres (Maharashtra), Back-to-School Centre (Gujarat),) and Balshala (Uttar Pradesh). These approaches need to be further strengthened.

The Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education scheme would be given importance to address to the educational needs of the hard-to-reach children. The scheme has provision for diversified strategies and flexible financial parameters. A range of options, such as EGS, Back to School Camps, Balika Shivirs, etc., is available. Other strategies are:

- Evolving a mechanism to set up seasonal schools at the site of work of migrants, such as sugar schools, brick kiln schools, etc.
- Providing identity card to children of migrant families to facilitate their entry into schools at different work sites.
- Organising bridge courses, seasonal hostels and mobile schools based on local needs.
- Opening permanent community-based schools, residential camps and multi-grade centres for very small, unserved habitations.
- Mainstreaming of older children, especially adolescent girls, through bridge courses and transition classes of different durations.
- Intense community mobilisation to ensure community-based monitoring of all these interventions for quality and sustainability.

Education of children with special needs

It is estimated that there are about 6-10 million children with special needs in India in the 6-14 age group, out of the total child population of 200 million in 2001. Out of these, only about 1 million children with disabilities are attending school. The goal of UEE cannot be achieved unless and until all children with special needs are included in the formal or informal education system. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 stipulates that free education would be provided to all disabled children up to the age of 18. All children with special needs would have access to schools, which would accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting their needs.

To achieve this objective, the following approaches and interventions are suggested:

- Every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, would be provided education in an appropriate environment. A zero rejection policy should be adopted so that no child is left out of the education system.
- A comprehensive component to provide education to children with special needs would be evolved and implemented, covering the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act.

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- The strategy for including disabled children would be based on a wide range of options, including regular schools, special schools, open learning system, open schools, non-formal and alternative schools, home-based education, itinerant teacher model, remedial teaching, part-time classes and community rehabilitation.
- All disabled children would be identified through surveys and micro-planning and functional and formal assessment would be conducted.
- As far as possible, every child with special needs would be in regular school with the necessary support services.
- All children requiring assistive devices would be provided with aids and appliances, obtained as far as possible through convergence with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, state welfare departments, national institutions or NGOs.
- Support services like physical access, resource rooms at cluster level, special equipment, reading material, special educational techniques, remedial teaching, curricular adaptation or adapted teaching strategies could be provided.
- Intensive teacher training would be undertaken to sensitise regular teachers on effective classroom management of children with special needs. This training would be recurrent at block/cluster levels. All training modules at SCERT, DIET and BRC level would include a suitable component on education of children with special needs.
- Wherever necessary, specially trained resource teachers would be appointed, particularly for teaching special skills to children with special needs. Wherever this option is not feasible, long-term training of regular teachers would be undertaken.
- An IEP would be prepared by the teacher for every child with special needs in consultation with parents and experts, monitored from time to time. The programme would test the effectiveness of various strategies and models by measuring the learning achievement of children with special needs periodically, after developing indicators.
- Parents of children with disabilities would receive counselling and training on how to bring them up and teach them basic survival skills. Strong advocacy and awareness programmes would form part of the strategy to educate every child with special needs. A component on disability would be included in all the modules for parents, VECs and the community.
- Resource groups would be constituted at state and district levels to undertake effective planning and management of the programmes in collaboration with PRIs and NGOs. An apex level resource group at the national level to provide guidance, technical and academic support to children with special needs may be constituted.
- Wherever necessary, special schools may be strengthened to obtain their resource support, in convergence with departments and agencies working in that area.
- Architectural barriers in schools will be removed for easy access. Efforts will be taken to provide disabled-friendly facilities in school and educational institutions. Development of innovative designs for schools to provide an enabling environment for children with special needs would also be part of the programme.
- Research in all areas of education of children with special needs, including research for designing and developing new assistive devices, teaching aids, special teaching material and other items necessary to give a child with disability equal opportunities in education, would be undertaken.
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation would be carried out to refine the programme from time to time. For this, appropriate monitoring mechanisms would be devised at every level and field tested at regular intervals.

- Special emphasis must be given to education of girls with disabilities.
- All activities, interventions and approaches in the area of education for children with special needs will be implemented in convergence with existing schemes like Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/fitting of Aids/Appliances, and Integrated Education of the Disabled Children (IEDC) in coordination with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, state department of welfare, national institutions and NGOs.

Urban Initiatives in Elementary Education

The urban population in India has grown from 159 million in 1981 to an estimated 330 million at present, which represents about 30 per cent of the total national population. Increasing urbanisation has led to mounting pressure on civic infrastructure, particularly since investments in these facilities have not been commensurate with the growth of the population. In addition, low incomes coupled with the high cost of living in urban areas have meant more and more people living in difficult and vulnerable circumstances.

The Working Group Report for the Tenth Five Year Plan estimated that approximately 65 million of the urban population would be in the 6 -14 age group by 2001, of which almost 15 million would be from poor families. These deprived urban children would be in different categories, including children living in slums or unauthorised colonies, working children or children engaged in domestic labour, children from migratory families, street children, children of sex workers, orphans, etc. Clearly, it would be necessary to plan for each of these groups distinctly, and no single plan would be able to cover the needs of all the groups.

Unlike rural areas, where administrative arrangements and structures tend to be similar, urban agglomerations can be vastly dissimilar. Although elementary education is a subject allocated to urban local bodies under the 74th Amendment to the Constitution, there is little uniformity in the management of the subject between cities. While education may be looked after by the urban local body in one city, in another it may be the responsibility of the state's Education Department. Accordingly, it is not possible to define any one strategy that can meet all requirements.

The issue is further complicated by the complex inter-relationships between developmental, social and political structures in urban areas. It may be recalled that the nature of rural-urban migration is such that most poor urban people occupy public or government land on which little or no investment for the improvement of infrastructure is deemed necessary. In as much as these slum clusters are unauthorised, the local bodies are not able to officially consider investing in development, as this could be seen as legitimising the initial encroachments.

The problems of educating the deprived urban child are complex and varied. These include the cost of education, lack of schooling infrastructure, lack of specific incentives for such children, unsuitable location of schools, and so on. This is compounded by the fact that since each city presents a different set of circumstances, no unique solution can be found to address the needs of every city.

Box 4.2: PRATHAM: "Every child in school and learning well"

Pratham was first established in Mumbai in 1994 as a public charitable trust by the Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, UNICEF and several prominent citizens. Since then the Pratham initiative has spread to 26 cities and five rural districts in 9 states around the country. On a daily basis, Pratham programmes reach over 200,000 children. The Pratham concept is simple. The objective is to bring every child to school and help them to learn well. Pratham believes that its efforts must be replicable and the interventions must supplement existing government initiatives to universalise primary education. Based on an understanding of the local context, community- as well as school-based programmes run by young women from the local community work towards achieving these goals. The organisation is based on a triangular partnership: corporate sector and other funding sources, government and citizens. Corporate leaders and other funding sources take the lead in providing resources; the government responds by opening its schools, providing support and sharing its facilities; and community volunteers, mostly young enthusiastic women from the slums, implement the programmes.

Pratham has been serving underprivileged Indian children through five main programmes.

- **Pre-school children**: Such children are reached through community-based child-care centres, or *balwadis.*
- **Out-of-school children** (including those who have never been to school or dropped out): Bridge courses prepare children academically and socially to enter regular school. Those who cannot be mainstreamed are prepared to take the National Open School examinations for certification.
- **Working children**: Outreach programme targets working children and children in difficult circumstances.
- **In school children**: These receive learning support and remedial education from a variety of community- and school-based interventions. The *balsakhi,* or community volunteer, can be in a school or in a community, conducting daily classes and/or running community-based libraries. The Remedial Education Programme provides support for the weaker municipal primary school children.
- **Computer Assisted Learning Programme**: It strives to familiarise municipal school children with computers.

Since the beginnings in 1994, Pratham has been able to mainstream over 30,000 children and bring them to school and help over half a million children to learn better. Since January 2003, close to 200,000 children have participated in an accelerated learning programme for reading. Given the extensive network of Pratham in the slum areas, it is easy to layer other services (health, computer education) at a minimum additional cost.

UNICEF parented Pratham during the initial three years. In 1997, ICICI Bank, a private sector bank in India, assumed the parental role. Since then, the involvement of corporate India has significantly increased. Today, the board of Pratham India Education Initiative consists of eminent leaders of the corporate world. The board oversees, supervises and guides the progress of the Pratham Movement and the board members, through their respective companies, have also committed financial, infrastructural and human resources support to Pratham.

Pratham strives to build a working relationship in the field of education between the people and the government. It seeks to make governance of education more effective through people's democratic participation and aims at a private-public partnership to address issues related to education and arrive at solutions to be put into practice.

It is also important to realise that there are wide socio-economic disparities in urban areas. While basic services are available to the economically better off, large sections of urban society living in unauthorised colonies/slum clusters have no access to basic facilities, including education.

Government schools in urban areas coexist with privately provided facilities, and are often ill-equipped in terms of infrastructure and basic amenities. Differences also exist in

the curriculum transacted, particularly with reference to the study of English. Further, even though children may be formally enrolled in schools, a large number of them, particularly girls, remain out of school. This may be on account of social and/or economic reasons. In general, there is a lack of incentive for poor children in urban areas to attend school. In fact, there may even be a strong disincentive in terms of loss of earning, poor quality of teaching, lack of infrastructure, the location of the school, etc. At times, the issues may be even simpler, as for example, the difficulties faced by small children who need to cross a busy road to reach the local school.

The city's management structure is also relevant—this structure varies from state to state. While in some states the local body may be charged with the responsibility of education, in others it remains with the education department of the state government. A multiplicity of agencies, generally uncoordinated, has an impact on the quality of elementary education provided to the child.

Keeping in view the issues related to education of the urban deprived communities, the following interventions and strategies need to be adopted:

- Convergence between government departments of education, social welfare, health, police, railways, labour, urban development, and the municipal corporation, including rationalisation of management structures/agencies involved in the education of urban poor children.
- Formation of educational plans for all children of urban areas. Grassroot level and community-based organisations like Mahila Mandal, youth clubs, etc., to be involved in the plan formulation and implementation.
- Opening of new schools and EGS centres based on the need of the area in cities.
- Relocation of government and local body schools near colonies and settlements, rather than maintaining them in areas where government schools are not required.
- Improving quality and the infrastructure of government schools in urban areas.
- Strategies like bridge courses, transition classes, camp schools, etc., to be adopted for providing education to children living in difficult circumstances. These courses can be organised with the help of private sector educational institutions and NGOs working in the area.
- The formal school system to undergo a process of preparation to accept children who are first generation learners and, therefore, lack the parental support in academics. In certain cases, remedial classes will be required for such children.
- Greater involvement of the private sector in the education of the urban deprived. All support to be provided to initiatives by some of the private schools in big cities in this regard.
- Improvement in coverage by early childhood care and pre-schooling facilities, especially in slums, where both the parents generally work.

These strategies are reflected in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which recognises the need to plan for each group of deprived urban children separately and states, "...a diversity of approaches is required to tackle the educational problems in urban areas. On account of separate administrative arrangements of schools in the urban areas, there is a need to coordinate and converge interventions across departments and local bodies responsible for elementary education in urban areas. This calls for a provision of planning distinctively for

As a broad policy, the Tenth Five Year Plan stresses on greater involvement of NGOs at all levels in the social sector for achieving participatory development and unburdening the administration unduly loaded with and inadequately equipped for implementation of development programmes.

the urban areas, either as separate plans or as part of district plans in the case of smaller towns. In either case, this would require partnership with NGOs, municipal bodies, etc."

In accordance with this philosophy, the states have been advised to plan distinctly for the urban areas, either as part of the overall district plan, or as a separate plan altogether.

Increased Role of NGOs

The government would view NGOs, which represent the third sector (or the voluntary sector), as partners in the march towards achieving the goal of education for all. This comes out of the realisation that no single delivery system, be it in public or private, alone can achieve the goal of UEE without the participation of the voluntary sector. Also NGOs that offer alternative development models have established reputation in terms of accountability, quality of services, cost effectiveness, innovation, closeness to the grass-root and effective management style. NGOs have made significant contribution in education in developing new models of pedagogy, innovative curriculum, teaching, learning aids, new textbooks, teacher training, community empowerment, effective school management, building environment and institutional development. Government agencies have adapted or replicated many of these innovations.

As a broad policy, the Tenth Five Year Plan stresses on greater involvement of NGOs at all levels in the social sector for achieving participatory development and unburdening the administration unduly loaded with and inadequately equipped for implementation of development programmes. The approach followed will be to enhance the role of NGOs in education. At present, involvement of NGOs is generally limited to running NFE centres and literacy programmes and implementing small-scale innovative experiments in education. It is recognised that NGOs have tremendous creative potential to contribute in innovating and implementing education programmes. While continuing with existing programmes of NGO involvement, the voluntary sector would be assigned a larger role by functioning alongside the governmental sector in a significant manner.

Expanding Role of the Corporate Sector

The corporate sector has taken a lead in recent times in working with the central and state governments and NGOs to achieve the goal of basic education. For instance, one of India's largest financial institutions, ICICI, has set up a Social Initiatives Group (SIG) to focus on development-related initiatives. Pre primary and primary education are among the three areas on which the SIG is focusing its attention. The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) has set up a Primary Education and Literacy Committee, through which it works with its affiliated units to build alliances to support EFA programmes. The Azim Premji Foundation set up by the Chairman of WIPRO – a leading IT company – is solely committed to the cause of elementary education and has been working with the governments of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. This expanding role of corporate citizens will provide an additional impetus to the EFA movement in the coming years.

Synergic partnership with the Private Sector

The task of providing basic education in a country as diverse as India is so stupendous that it is difficult to expect the governmental sector alone to meet the burgeoning needs of the society fully and effectively. Even though private initiative has always been a part

of the school education endeavour, it has neither been large nor of a sizeable magnitude in the efforts to universalise elementary education. The country has not been able to fully utilise the potential of the private sector. Without abdicating the responsibility of the governmental sector in providing basic education, a synergic public-private partnership would be evolved to achieve the objective of UEE.

The private sector can contribute not only in monetary and material terms but also in the form of expertise for quality improvement through effective management of the system and development of locally relevant teaching-learning materials. Some efforts in this direction have already been made by many states, including Karnataka, through its school adoption scheme. More collaborative efforts at institutional level, as well as programme implementation level, would be designed to expand the role of private initiative in elementary education. In case the private sector comes forward to improve the functioning of schools in the governmental sector, efforts to develop a partnership would be made within the broad parameters of the state policy. Depending on the state policy, DIETs and other government teacher training institutes could be used to provide resource support to private schools, provided additional costs are met by these schools.

Private fee-paying school system, a phenomenon till recently seen only in the urban areas, that too in the secondary education stage, is now gaining prominence in the elementary education sector even in rural areas. New private schools have contributed to raising parental awareness, even among poor and illiterate parents of how schools should function. Different surveys have given different estimates of the share of the private sector in the enrolment in elementary stage in India. As per the Sixth All India Educational Survey of NCERT (1993) based on school survey, the share of private unaided (PUA) in enrolment at elementary stage in rural India is 3.6 per cent while the household survey of NCAER (1994) puts it at 9.8 per cent and NSSO (1995-96) at 7.4 per cent. The urban bias in favour of private schooling is very much evident, and rural India still depends almost entirely on government schools. Only about 3 per cent and 6 per cent of the rural children go to unaided primary and upper primary schools, respectively, as against 26 per cent and 19 per cent in urban areas. The share of private sector must have certainly gone up in recent years. About 31 per cent of the total increase in enrolment (5.524 million) in India at elementary stage between 1986 and 1993 was accounted for by PUA schools. PUA schools accounted for more than 50.8 per cent of the increase in enrolment (3.813 million) in urban areas and 16.49 per cent in rural areas (1.711 million) during the period. The share of private schools would be still higher if the enrolment in private aided (PA) sector is also added up with PUA. Among states, PUA accounted for 111 per cent of the increased enrolment in primary in urban areas of Haryana during 1986-93, followed by Rajasthan 104 per cent, Uttar Pradesh 94 per cent and Andhra Pradesh 80 per cent. In upper primary level it was 106 per cent, 65 per cent, 15 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively, in these states. In some states the migration from government to private schools is fairly evident, since the enrolment in government schools is showing a decline.

Contrary to the general belief, there is not much gender difference in the choice of type of schools. On an average, out of 100 girls enrolled, 80.5 attend government schools, 11.5 PA and 8 PUA as against 81, 10 and 9, respectively, for boys. As the share of girls

Education for All

The major endeavour of OBEP has been to extend partnership with over 150 leading NGOs for strengthening the programmes of basic education.

in total enrolment is less, there would be more boys in PUA and PA schools as in government schools. However, some micro-studies show that private school enrolment is biased towards boys. Some of these private schools cater to low-income groups and disadvantaged children. However, the PROBE survey and also micro-level data of several studies show that private schools are biased towards more prosperous locations and privileged groups. The share of disadvantaged groups in private school enrolment is very low and the inroads made by the private sector are mostly among the "easy-to-reach groups." Therefore, the responsibility for providing education, especially to the poor and the disadvantaged, cannot be left to the private sector. At the same time, all support would be provided to the evening school system introduced by some of the best private schools in the country for deprived children. This model is now increasingly adopted by private schools to express the social commitment.

Certainly, the growth of private schools itself is a positive sign of the rising demand for education. Therefore, the roadblocks in opening new private schools would be removed but at the same time it would be regulated to ensure quality and minimum requirements. But if these schools are expanding rapidly because of the decline in government school quality and dysfunctional government schools or due to poor school infrastructure and management or on account of teacher negligence and absence, then these are areas of concern. It is the massive governmental school system on which the poor still rely for basic education, especially in rural areas. Therefore one of the thrust areas would be on improving the quality of government schools, teacher accountability and the infrastructure. The increasing share of the private sector in the additional enrolment has implications for projection of the requirements in terms of teachers, classrooms and other inputs to achieve UEE.

Open Learning System and ICT for Elementary Education

The open learning system (OLS) would form an important dimension of the efforts to reach school education to all. OLS at the school level would be strengthened for providing education from the elementary stage and above to meet the needs of those who are unable to seek education through full-time institutional system (especially girls, SC/STs and weaker sections), with assured equivalence to institutional learning in terms of certificates. The scope of the OLS channel would be expanded to bring more academic and vocational areas into its fold and cater to a larger student population from various segments of society, both in school and adult education sectors. Also, OLS would aim at ensuring optimum use of infrastructure and resources already available.

Recently, the open school system has been expanded through establishment of state Open Schools. Emphasis would be on networking and collaboration for use of distance education and information and communications technology (ICT) for basic education. At the national level, the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) offers open basic education equivalent to grade VIII level through distance education mode. The target group belongs largely to disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society. It also caters to the education and vocational needs of adult literates through its Open Basic Education Programme (OBEP). Its major endeavour has been to extend partnership with over 150 leading NGOs for strengthening the programmes of basic education. These efforts would be further strengthened in the next five years.

Box 4.3: Shree Ramakrishna Ashram, Kalahandi, Orissa

Shree Ramakrishna Ashram is a non-political, non-profit making voluntary organisation engaged in the upliftment and welfare of the downtrodden, under the guidance of senior monks of the Shree Ramakrishna discipline. Significant activities of the organisation include:

- mobile and outdoor allopathic and homeopathic health services,
- a students' home for 50 students (SCs and STs) studying in nearby schools,
- drug awareness, counselling and assistance centre for the prevention of consumption of liquor,
- an old age home for 50 distressed persons (free boarding and lodging),
- research for the promotion of national integration, and
- a mini agriculture farm to train inmates and rural youth for development of agriculture/horticulture.

Shree Ramakrishna Ashram started its innovative education project in August 1999 with MHRD funding. The project operates in Kalahandi district of Orissa, which is both tribal and rural, and targets fifty dropouts in the age group of 6-14 years. These children, who reside at the project centre, are provided remedial teaching, uniforms, study material and food free of cost, while their parents are provided Rs. 100/- per month as a stipend for admitting their children into the project centre. Value-oriented education is provided while following the textbooks of formal schools (Board of Secondary Education, Orissa). The subjects taught include language (Oriya and English), arithmetic, social studies, science and drawing. The children also have access to library and free medical facilities. The community is mobilised through public meetings and audio-visual shows using resource personnel. Community participation, in turn, enhances the knowledge of children on various aspects. The educational programme lays special emphasis on agriculture with the intention of enabling the children to earn their livelihood.

What lessons?

Some of the recent initiatives for enrichment of basic education programmes through use of ICT and distance mode are: (i) development of education programmes having special focus on education of the disadvantaged such as minority groups, girls, women, street and working children, children and youth from tribal and socio-economically disadvantaged communities; (ii) adoption of ICT as a major plan of its strategy to reach the unreached; (iii) organisation of video conferencing and placing its study materials on its website; and (iv) extending the facilities of on-demand examination at elementary education level. Some of the popular distance education programmes for upgrading the skills of teachers are: (i) audio conferencing; and (ii) video conferencing. The tele-conferencing modality is being increasingly used in all alternative educational programmes – formal, non-formal, alternative and innovative education.

Why?

Computer Education

Computer education at elementary education level (particularly upper primary level) would be accorded priority in this period to make students familiar with computers. For this, three levels of computer education are envisaged. The first stage would be computer literacy or computer orientation to children and the second stage would be computer-aided learning, and the third stage would be computer-based learning. At present, a large number of elementary schools in the country are not electrified and there are no adequate infrastructure facilities to open computer learning centres in schools. To begin with, one or two schools in every cluster in the country, i.e., a total of about 60,000 clusters, would have facilities for computer-based learning that could be used by children in the adjoining schools. Networking of institutions in the form of school complexes would help in promoting the sharing of infrastructure and expertise.

Resource priority?

A two-tier strategy for computer-based education is envisaged. The first tier is for training of teachers and necessary sensitisation of states and their statutory bodies. This could be the first step for implementation of computer-aided education and use of ICT. The second tier could include creation of infrastructure, development of e TLM and formulation of scheme for making available additional resources. Action on both the tiers will be initiated simultaneously. The training programme for teachers would include a component for familiarity with computers and their use and to encourage them to create educational material in digital form, using different media in the classroom. The immediate challenge of training of in service teachers in this field is proposed to be tackled by offering a compressed module. The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the apex body for teacher education, will ensure that all teacher training programmes leading to certificate, diploma or degrees in the country should essentially have a suitable module on computer-based education.

Media, Advocacy and Communication

Mobilising civil society to participate in the programmes of basic education is essential for achieving the goal of UEE. Communication and media strategy would be designed to sensitise, mobilise and motivate the stakeholders, community, opinion leaders and the public for achieving the goals of UEE. A multimedia campaign approach with strong media advocacy, employing a wide range of vehicles of communication, from folk and traditional media to electronic media, outdoor publicity and print media, would be adopted. At grassroot level, the emphasis would be on effective use of folk, traditional media and local art forms to spread the message of education. An environment of enthusiasm and commitment, as witnessed during the total literacy campaign in the nineties, would be created for providing education to all children. A social mobilisation campaign strategy, deftly combining the mass media with the traditional media and *Kala jatha* campaign, would be launched. Cultural performances combined with exhibitions, processions and inter-personnel communication have been found very effective in bringing about social change and awareness. Extensive use would be made of radio, which reaches the remotest corners of the country. The media and communication strategy would be designed to address the following objectives:

- Sharing and disseminating information about the programme on education for increasing public awareness.
- Using the media as a platform for advocacy and developing media packages in support of education.
- Encouraging and supporting effective participation of all in achieving the goal of UEE.
- Increasing the visibility of the programme in elementary education and highlighting the issues and challenges in the area.
- Mobilising opinion makers, legislators and policy makers.
- Motivating the community, NGOs, local bodies, implementing agencies and all stakeholders.
- Capacity building of the state and other decentralised levels in the effective use of media.

CHAPTER V

Education of Girls and Women's Empowerment

Perspectives and Framework for Girls' Education and Women's Empowerment

The persistent low educational participation of girls till recently had adversely impacted on women's empowerment in India. Such educational backwardness of a defined segment of population has not only denied them individual growth and development, it has slowed down the pace of national development and resulted in skewed attainment of development indicators.

This is despite early recognition of the value and need for female education. In fact, much before international commitment to girls' education was expressed as a follow-up to the EFA goals, the policy environment in India had recognised the criticality of educating girls if UEE were to be achieved. This was evident from the pro-girls/women constitutional stance that empowered the state to make special provisions for women and children notwithstanding the fundamental obligation of non-discrimination on the basis of sex. This provision has enabled the state to draw up special policies and programmes to benefit girls and women to overcome their backwardness and address gender differences.

The National Policy on Education (NPE–1986) articulated the intent to "lay special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far." (NPE 1986, p.7) It saw a turning point in Indian education as it brought the issue of women's' equality to centrestage in all discourses on education and development. *"Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the*

Box 5.1: On Girls' Education

It is impossible to achieve universal elementary education (UEE) unless concerted efforts are made to reach out to the girl child. Girls who cannot attend formal schools or have had to drop out will be provided educational opportunities through non-formal education (NFE). Efforts will be made to design special NFE programmes for out-of-school and adolescent girls in order to get them back into the formal stream or enable them to qualify for the technical or vocational stream.

The rural girls are doubly disadvantaged by non-availability of educational facilities and by the work they have to do such as collecting fuel, fodder and water, sibling care and paid and unpaid work. Coordinated efforts, albeit with other departments/ministries, need to be made to provide the necessary support services to enhance their participation and performance. Provision of support services and childcare facilities should be seen as a necessary and integral adjunct of UEE.

Heightened interest and proactive measures have characterised national, as well as state level initiatives to achieve the goals of EFA with a special focus on school dropouts, working children, girls who cannot attend formal school and girl children of disadvantaged social groups.

status of women. In order to neutralise the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women.... This will be an act of faith and social engineering.... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services setting time targets and effective monitoring...." (Chapter IV, page 6, paragraph 4.2 and 4.3; NPE-1986, Government of India)

It was acknowledged that achieving universal elementary education (UEE) would be impossible unless concerted efforts are made to reach out to the girl child. Since the mid-1980s all basic education programmes have been designed to incorporate these policy perspectives and recommendations.

The national commitment to girls' education gained momentum through several initiatives in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The first generation basic education programmes, such as APPEP, Lok Jumbish, Bihar Education Project and the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, all emphasised the focus on girls' education. This intent was taken to scale through the District Primary Education Programme, which made female literacy rate a selection criterion for project districts and set goals of reducing gender disparities in enrolment, retention and learning. The clearly stated emphasis on girls' education has drawn the attention of planners, implementers and programme managers alike. Continuing in the same vein, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan reiterates the need to focus on girls' education to equalise educational opportunities and eliminate gender disparities.

Addressing the question of women's empowerment through education, the Mahila Samakhya programme was introduced in three states in 1989. From modest beginnings, the programme has spread to many more districts in the country and is poised for further upscaling during the Tenth Plan Period.

The thrust on female education received further fillip from the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, introduced in 2001, which emphasises equal access to women and girls, adoption of special measures to eliminate discrimination, to universalise elementary education, to eradicate illiteracy, to create a gender sensitive educational system, to increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and to improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning, as well as development of vocational/ technical skills. Reduction of gender gaps, achievement of sectoral time targets in existing policies and development of gender-sensitive curricula have also been stressed upon in the policy document.

Heightened interest and proactive measures have characterised national, as well as state level initiatives to achieve the goals of EFA with a special focus on school dropouts, working children, girls who cannot attend formal school and girl children of disadvantaged social groups. A sense of urgency was evident in governmental circles. Consequently, there have been significant gains, which were recorded at the Asia-Pacific Conference on EFA 2000 Assessment. Gains with a clear gender dimension are increase in primary school enrolment and expansion of early childhood care and education programmes (The Dakar Framework for Action for Education for All, adopted by the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000. p.57)

From Policy to Change

Forward looking policy statements need not necessarily mean actual change at the ground level. For change to be apparent, there has to be fuller utilisation of the policy statements in planning and implementation. In the case of India, the real challenge lay in translating the policy into action in order to impact on the overall status of girls' education. The sheer magnitude of the task of universalising basic education, in the Indian context, posed formidable challenges. The task assumed serious proportions in the case of girls as their participation rates were far lower than that of boys and required sensitive handling and greater efforts to lift them from their low levels of participation in the educational processes.

Table 5.1 : The Baselines for Female Education in 1950/1960

1950	Female literacy rate	8.86 %
	GER for girls (primary)	24.8 %
	GER for girls (upper primary)	4.6 %
1960-61	Dropout rates (primary)	70.9 %
	Dropout rates (upper primary)	85.0 %

The percentage share of girls in the total enrolment at the primary level has increased from 5.4 million (28.1 per cent) in 1950-51 to 49.8 million (43.7 per cent) in 2000-2001. In 1950-51, 0.5 million girls (comprising 16.1 per cent of the total enrolment) were enrolled at the upper primary level. This figure rose to 17.5 million girls (comprising 40.9 per cent of the total enrolment) in 2000-2001. The table below tries to bring out the decadal status of critical indicators for girls' education.

Table 5.2 : Decadal Status of Girls' Education

Year	Enrolment (%)		Dropouts (%)		GER	
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary
1950-51	28.1	16.1	N.A.	N.A.	24.8	4.6
1960-61	32.6	23.9	70.9	85.0	41.4	11.3
1970-71	37.4	29.3	70.9	83.4	60.5	20.8
1980-81	38.6	32.9	62.5	79.4	64.1	28.6
1990-91	41.5	36.7	46.0	65.1	85.5	47.0
1999-00	43.6	40.4	42.3	58.0	85.2	49.7
2000-2001	43.7	40.9	41.9	57.7	85.9	49.9

Source : Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001

Despite the improvements recorded, gender gaps have persisted in total enrolment and GERs.

The present scenario pertaining to some of the basic indicators for girls' education is as given in the table 5.4.

Though major gains have been recorded in enrolment and retention of girls over the years, and gender gaps have narrowed considerably, they still persist. Similarly, although the share of girls' enrolment to total enrolment

Table 5.3 : Gender Gaps in Elementary Education

Year	Percentage of Girls' Enrolment to Total Enrolment		Dropouts (%)				GER			
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary		Upper Primary		Primary		Upper Primary	
			B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
1950-51	28.1	16.1	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	60.6	24.8	20.6	4.6
1960-61	32.6	23.9	61.7	70.9	75.0	85.0	82.6	41.4	33.2	11.3
1970-71	37.4	29.3	64.5	70.9	74.6	83.4	95.5	60.5	46.5	20.8
1980-81	38.6	32.9	56.2	62.5	68.0	79.4	95.8	64.1	54.3	28.6
1990-91	41.5	36.7	40.1	46.0	59.1	65.1	114.0	85.5	76.6	47.0
1999-00	43.6	40.4	38.7	42.3	52.0	58.0	104.1	85.2	67.2	49.7
2000-2001	43.7	40.9	39.7	41.9	50.3	57.7	104.9	85.9	66.7	49.9

Source : Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001

B–Boys, G–Girls

Table 5.4 : Gender Differentials in the GER of SC and ST Children

Year	GER (%) Scheduled Castes				GER (%) Scheduled Tribes			
	Primary		Upper Primary		Primary		Upper Primary	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1986-87	103.8	64.8	52.7	26.6	111.0	68.0	45.6	21.9
1996-97	100.8	76.2	64.3	44.2	113.7	83.3	58.3	36.6
2000-2001	107.3	85.8	76.2	53.3	116.9	85.5	72.5	47.7

Source : Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001

Table 5.5 : Basic Indicators related to Girls' Education, 2001

Indicators	Total	Male	Female
Population	1,027,015,247	531,277,078	495,738,169
Literates	566,714,995	339,969,048	226,745,947
Illiterates	296,208,952	106,654,066	189,554,886
Out-of-school children (6-14)	59,000,000	24,000,000	35,000,000
Enrolment (Primary)	113,600,000	64,000,000	49,800,000
Enrolment (Upper Primary)	42,060,000	25,300,000	17,500,000

Source : Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001

at the primary and upper primary stages has risen sharply, and dropout rates have reduced, gender disparities still persist as can be seen from the tables above.

Challenges towards Educating Girls

Various factors have deterred the rate of growth in girls' participation in elementary education. With the passage of time and the mounting stress on girls' education, identification of the impediments became an imperative for contextual and responsive planning. Projects like DPEP systematically took up the task of identifying the major factors that hindered girls from participating in elementary education through specially commissioned research studies. All the factors thus identified were borne in mind in designing the various strategies and interventions for strengthening girls' education and women's empowerment. Some of the significant factors identified were socio-cultural and economic in nature as also rooted in the school environment itself. The specific factors highlighted by the research included the following.

Socio cultural factors

- Despite a growing demand for girls' education, the demand is not yet universal. Many communities still do not consider it appropriate to send girls to schools. Even when girls are sent to school, they are withdrawn by the time they attain puberty.
- Where the school is at a distance, concern for girls' safety often becomes a reason to keep them out of school.
- Early marriage remains one of the major reasons for girls dropping out of school.
- A large number of out-of-school girls belong to families of first generation learners. Parental indifference to education of girls and their own illiteracy also keep girls out of school.

Economic factors

These can largely be classified into the cost of educating girls and the opportunity cost of sending them to school.

- Although elementary education is free in India, the cost of educating girls still comes up as a barrier. Additional expenses (other than school fees) include the cost of stationery, books, uniform, etc. Male priority in education also denies girls the opportunity to be in school.
- But more than these costs, it is the opportunity cost of sending them to school that is a major deterrent to girls' education. Girls are employed in a variety of work that is crucial to poor families, as it has a bearing on family livelihood. Within the family, the girl's responsibility of sibling care and household work makes her indispensable

while her mother goes for wage labour or other work contributing to the family income. Seasonal irregularity of girls at school is another phenomenon that is seen in India. There are times when work at home increases and she is expected to perform certain stereotyped roles and responsibilities, as during festivals, marriages and agricultural seasons. Long gaps in school attendance even leads to her leaving the school.

- Similarly, support to family occupation, especially at sowing or harvest time, often keeps girls away from school. In many areas, wage labour is also a significant factor that keeps girls out of school.

School environment

Within the school, the environment is sometimes not conducive to girls' learning.

- Inadequate school infrastructure in the form of toilets for girls and boundary walls have been identified as a significant factor in keeping girls away from school, especially at the upper primary level. Lack of boundary walls where the school is located in areas like the market place or remote isolated areas can also pose a barrier to girls' participation in school.
- Lack of female teachers and the consequent fear of girls' safety, is often a deterrent to girls' education.
- A lack of sensitivity on part of teachers to the issues that impinge on girls' education deprives them of a congenial learning environment. Often the problems that girls face, such as lack of time to study and low encouragement at home for studies, greater malnutrition, etc., also inhibit girls' participation in class.
- The overall classroom environment that reinforces gender stereotypes also places lower importance to the education and self-esteem of girls as compared to boys.
- Gender stereotyping gathers strength from a curriculum and textbooks that are not entirely free from gender bias.

A number of national and state level initiatives directed at girls and women have been the hallmark of educational interventions for improving the educational status of girls and women. These were operationalised from time to time to address the impediments to universal elementary education among girls.

Governmental Programmes

A number of national and state level initiatives directed at girls and women have been the hallmark of educational interventions for improving the educational status of girls and women. These were operationalised from time to time to address the impediments to universal elementary education among girls. Some of the significant ones that are currently under operation are briefly described below.

Non-formal Education

Under a centrally sponsored scheme, a programme of non-formal education had been running since 1979-80 till March 31, 2001, for out- of -school children in the 6-14 years age group. Recognising that large numbers of girls and working children have been left out of the ambit of education, the NFE scheme provided the flexibility, relevance of curriculum and diversity in learning activity to reach out through a decentralised management system.

Implies: no policy for school transformation?

The scheme was being implemented in 25 states/union territories. These included both educationally backward states as well as those having urban slums, and hilly, desert and tribal areas, with a particular emphasis on working children. Of the 241,000 NFE centres, 118,000 were exclusively for girls throughout the country.

Education in Mahila Samakhya is understood as a continuous process of gaining the consciousness and ability to critically engage with one's environment and society and to acquire the knowledge from a position of strength.

Based on the suggestions made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee, Planning Commission, and others, the scheme of NFE was revised as the Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education. The scheme provides for extending access to small and un-served habitations, flexible strategies for out-of- school children, bridge courses, back-to-school camps, and residential camps for out- of-school girls. A new feature is making community management of such centres mandatory.

Mahila Samakhya : Education for Women's Equality

To concretise the NPE policy objectives into an implementable strategy, the Mahila Samakhya programme was designed to mobilise and organise marginalised rural women for education by creating an environment for learning. The programme was launched in 1989 as a 100 per cent Dutch-assisted project and subsequently extended in some states with funding under the District Primary Education Programme. The programme is currently being implemented in over 9000 villages in ten states in the country.

The Mahila Samakhya programme starts from an acceptance that the fundamental issues that influence women's education–low status, survival tasks and poverty–are essentially outside the educational domain and yet education may be the critical factor that could help women break out of their predicament. The centrality of education in the struggle to achieve equality is an important focus of Mahila Samakhya.

The strategy acknowledges that the entire range of social, cultural and economic factors that have inhibited women's access to knowledge, information, education, mobility and justice cannot be tackled through piecemeal interventions. The complex interlinkages between the social and the personal, one reinforcing the other, cannot be tackled without the active participation of women in a self-driven and self-motivated strategy for a basic change in the mindsets of the individual and people in society. Movement from a passive state, where women accept their predicament and relate to the world around as recipients of welfare and charity to one where they become active agents in their own transformation is the essence of empowerment.

Education in Mahila Samakhya is understood as a continuous process of gaining the consciousness and ability to critically engage with one's environment and society and to acquire the knowledge from a position of strength. Women are enabled to question, analyse, learn new ways of thinking and doing, make informed choices and set their own agenda.

The *mahila sangha* or *mahila samooh*–the women's collective–that is established in each of the programme villages provides the space where women can meet, be together, and begin the process of reflecting, asking questions, speaking fearlessly, thinking, analysing and above all feeling confident to articulate their needs through this collective. Educational inputs in the form of adult education, non-formal education, vocational training, support services, Mahila Shikshana Kendras, and ECCE Centres are introduced in a phased manner, responding to the needs and priorities expressed by the women.

Whereas education for life skills underlies all activities in Mahila Samakhya and is largely communicated through non-verbal means and interactive behaviour, a large part of the education is the acquiring and effective application of information and knowledge. This

respect of education has been separated from literacy, because many Sangha women, while being illiterate or only marginally literate, assimilate vast quantities of information at workshops and meetings, which is regularly applied in everyday life – specifically in the areas of health, environment, law, government schemes and programmes. This not only enables women to take action themselves (e.g., with reference to traditional medicine, health practices) but also enables them to access the primary health centre, *anganwadi*, school, Block Development Office, bank, police station, courts, etc. Literacy is seen as essential to making things happen in all these arenas.

In states like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, sanghas are playing a pivotal role in ensuring that young girls are not initiated into the jogini/devdasi system. Sanghas are also taking decisions against child marriage and ensuring that girls have access to education.

The spheres of sangha activity and action are ever expanding, ranging from accessing basic civic amenities; learning to deal with health issues; committing themselves to ensuring learning opportunities for their children, especially girls; doggedly trying to make themselves literate; breaking gender stereotypes in acquiring new skills like becoming mechanics; learning to manage credit, effectively participating in Panchayati Raj processes (local self-government); learning legal procedures and understanding how administrative and social structures work; gaining the strength to demand accountability and effective delivery of services; confidently addressing issues like violence against women, child marriage, etc.

The diverse impact of this learning process is discernible in all the Mahila Samakhya states. In all this, women are learning why problems exist, what are the obstacles–social and structural–that obstruct resolution of problems, where help can be sought from and, above all, the need for their own initiative to begin the process of setting things right. Starting from very small moves like applying for a ration card, or exercising the right of access to public space and mobility, sanghas are gradually moving from addressing livelihood issues to articulating their concerns on social practices, which subordinate women. In states like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, sanghas are playing a pivotal role in ensuring that young girls are not initiated into the *jogini/devdasi* system. Sanghas are also taking decisions against child marriage and ensuring that girls have access to education. In executing these actions, sanghas have demanded literacy for themselves and have directly addressed the issue of girls' education. Persuading parents to send their children to schools, monitoring teacher attendance are common activities of sanghas in many places.

An interesting outcome of organising women has been the emerging focus on girls and adolescent within the programme. In several states, forums of adolescent girls have emerged, where health, and legal education on issues relating to their lives are discussed. The Mahila Shikshana Kendra (MSK) is a unique learning opportunity for adolescent girls and young women. A residential programme varies in its focus and curriculum, as it is designed to meet specific local needs.

A host of other innovative, gender-sensitive educational interventions have emerged from this process. These include the Bal Mitra Kendra, designed for working 9^{+} girls in Andhra Pradesh; the Jagjagi Kendra in Bihar, NFE centres designed for adolescent girls; the Kishori Sanghas, etc. The programme has evolved educational institutions like the Balika/ Mahila Shikshan Kendras, the Jagjagis, Kishori Sanghas and the Bal Mitra Kendras, which address the educational needs of dropout girls, adolescent girls, working girls, etc. Through the Mahila Samakhya process, a gender-sensitive pedagogy and

teaching-learning materials are being developed. The programme is now being expanded to cover educationally backward blocks in 240 districts across 17 states.

Operation Blackboard and Various EFA Projects

The scheme of Operation Blackboard (OB), started in 1987-88 to provide basic minimum facilities in elementary schools, has now been integrated into Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The programme sought to upgrade primary schools in low female literacy blocks by providing additional women teachers and teaching-learning equipment. The scheme had a special focus on the recruitment of women teachers and the revised scheme of 1993-94 made it mandatory that at least 50 per cent of the teachers be women.

State-specific holistic programmes for the universalisation of primary/ elementary education were introduced in some states, for example, the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Programme (APPEP), the Bihar Education Project (BEP), the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Programme (UPBEP) and Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan. As holistic programmes that were outcome oriented, all these programmes emphasised the goal of equity in education--between boys and girls. The effort to create a gender-sensitive environment emerged as a strong focus. The goals specifically included bridging the gender gap. The programmes also saw people's, especially women's mobilisation and the creation of mechanisms for effective involvement of women in school management.

As in all basic education programmes, the focus has been on recruitment of women teachers. Recognising that women teachers themselves face several problems both at the workplace and in the domestic sphere, Lok Jumbish has organised forums of women teachers called *Adhyapika Manch*. These forums serve the purpose of focusing attention on gender issues.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

The District Primary Education Programme has taken further the initiatives for girls' education, initiated in the earlier Basic Education Projects in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. DPEP is a national initiative with a holistic approach to reduce gender and social disparities and to universalise access, retention and achievement. Initiated in November 1994 in 42 , DPEP now covers 271 districts in 18 states of the country.

Gender and equity concerns have informed all aspects of the programme design. The programme has been launched in low female literacy districts. Since DPEP attempts at a systemic change, an integrated approach to gender has been built into planning and management, pedagogical improvement, affirmative interventions for girls' education and strategies for community mobilisation and participation.

The entire process of project preparation, implementation and monitoring has integrated a gender perspective. Gender-related activities are clearly articulated in annual workplans. To concretise and sustain the gender focus within the programme, gender coordinators have been appointed at the state and district levels. At the village level, representation of women in the village education committees (VECs) has been made mandatory in most states. Gender sensitisation of all functionaries is a core and

continuing activity. Improvement in educational facilities like opening of new schools within reach of habitations, provision of drinking water and toilets has also had a tangible impact on girls' enrolment and retention.

Recognising that girls' education cannot be furthered without the active and willing participation and support of the community, DPEP has adopted a variety of strategies for awareness building and enabling active involvement and ownership of the programme by the community. Women have been mobilised, in some cases through convergence with programmes like Mahila Samakhya. Community participation has been institutionalised within the programme through VECs, MTAs, PTAs, mothers' associations and self-help groups, thereby ensuring a greater ownership of the educational process.

Recognising that girls' education cannot be furthered without the active and willing participation and support of the community, DPEP has adopted a variety of strategies for awareness building and enabling active involvement and ownership of the programme by the community.

Women's participation in VECs and other activities of DPEP has been influential in focusing attention on the needs of girls. The active involvement of women has had an impact in various ways. They have been able to influence location of schools, as well as alternate schooling and ECCE centres, ensuring easy access. They have emerged as opinion makers at the community level to promote girls education. A significant outcome of women's mobilisation has been that they have focused community attention on issues like child marriage and other social practices that affect the girl child.

Several other supportive activities like ECCE have also been addressed, thereby freeing girls from the responsibility of sibling care, so that they are able to attend school. Appointment of women teachers has received priority. Converging with and strengthening the existing ICDS for pre-school education, and extending timings to synchronise with primary school timings are showing a positive impact.

To reach working girls, minorities and other marginalised groups, innovative alternative schooling has emerged as an effective intervention. In addition to providing facilities and creating a supportive environment, DPEP is consciously trying to develop a gender-sensitive pedagogy, sensitising teachers to the social complexities of gender and the ways in which this impacts the lives of girls, to enable them to confront and change their own biases and attitudes. Gender review of learning material, and the overhaul of most textbooks have been completed in all the states. An integrated approach to gender sensitisation, which synchronises textbook renewal and development of teacher/ academic support training packages, has proved to be an effective strategy.

The programme strategy has had an overwhelming impact on girls' enrolment, especially SC/ST girls. The parent and community now recognise the need and are willing to send girls to school. With a conducive environment for girls' education created at the community level, girls' enrolment has shown a significant upward trend in DPEP districts as compared to non-DPEP districts.

Interventions such as these have certainly helped improve the situation and have brought us closer to the goal of universal education for girls. However, there are gaps yet to be met at the primary level and greater emphasis is required at the upper primary level.

To give a greater focus to the hard-to-reach groups of girls, especially those residing in small, scattered habitations, which are distant from schools, the Kasturba Gandhi Swatantra Vidyalaya scheme for provision of residential schools in the identified backward blocks is being proposed, with a special focus on girls from marginalised communities.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan: Special Emphasis on Girls

The basic education programmes were succeeded by the national programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a nationwide programme for the universalisation of elementary education. It is expected that all children would complete five years of primary schooling, and gender gaps at the primary level would narrow by the year 2007. By 2010, it is aimed to have all children complete eight years of elementary education and bridge gender gaps at the upper primary level.

In blocks identified as educationally backward in terms of women's education (approximately 1/3 of the country), a special package has been designed to give a thrust to girls' education through intensified community mobilisation and local-specific interventions that focus on the school environment, support services like child-care centres, and special incentives in the form of the National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level under SSA.

To give a greater focus to the hard-to-reach groups of girls, especially those residing in small, scattered habitations, which are distant from schools, the Kasturba Gandhi Swatantra Vidyalaya scheme for provision of residential schools in the identified backward blocks is being proposed, with a special focus on girls from marginalised communities.

Perspectives for the Future

Experience in the sector has shown that large omnibus UPE/ UEE programmes can significantly impact girls' education. The large reach of such programmes ensures that strategies can reach a larger group in short periods of time.

However, there is a need for greater emphasis on backward pockets. While issues like enrolment and retention have been addressed by states, those relating to pedagogy, building the self-esteem and confidence of girls and removing gender stereotyping have been only partially addressed. It has been seen that other issues can and do easily overtake gender issues, since gender remains only one of the concerns in the programme.

The experience of the Mahila Samakhya has shown that concerted attention on women's and girls' education requires a separate thrust. This ensures that gender concerns are built into every intervention and strategy and are not lost sight of in front of larger UEE targets. It has also enabled the building of capacities for girls' education, in terms of staff, in terms of institutions and teaching learning materials. Girls in the programme are more aware, self-confident and aware of gender issues, as these are thrust areas in the programme. These are reinforced through both the education process as well as the grass-root processes in the sanghas, which impact on the family and the community. The programme has also been able to focus on marginalised communities. These are the communities that are the hardest to reach and to bring into the educational stream, since they are inhibited by livelihood and socio-cultural issues and taboos. The effort needed to bring these girls in the system is greater than for other communities.

The country strategy has, therefore, been a two-pronged approach, including gender mainstreaming and introduction of specific schemes for promoting the education of girls

and women. The gender mainstreaming approach is targeted through the UEE programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its components, the District Primary Education Programme, Lok Jumbish Programme, the teacher education programmes and the Mid-day Meal programme. The thrust areas for such programmes shall include:

- Community mobilisation to elicit support for girls' education, both in terms of enrolment of girls and their retention in elementary education, particularly in day-to-day monitoring of progress and performance and creating a supportive environment in the school and village;
- Gender sensitisation and training of planners, teachers and educational managers to ensure that girls' education remains an area of focus;
- To ensure girl-child friendly classrooms and textbooks and other teaching-learning materials;, and
- Provision of special incentives.

The gender mainstreaming approach is targeted through the UEE programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and its components, the District Primary Education Programme, Lok Jumbish Programme, the teacher education programmes and the Mid-day Meal programme.

More focused and specific gender-based interventions shall be implemented through gender-based programmes, which focus exclusively on women and girls. This will ensure special attention and earmarking of funds for girls, especially those in educationally backward areas and more disadvantaged groups like the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Such programmes shall also provide support to UEE programmes for planning and implementation. During this plan, attention will also be focused on building of resources that will facilitate the training and implementation of such programmes. It is important to ensure that the experience of girls' education is reflected in the policy and strategy for larger programmes as well. Suitable convergence measures will be ensured to enable such influence. The thrust areas for these specific educational schemes will include:

- to focus on educationally backward areas in terms of girls education;
- to focus on disadvantaged sections of girls like those belonging to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, etc.;
- to tackle gender-specific issues that prevent access of girls and women to education;
- to focus on the educational needs of adolescent girls, including special schools;
- to enhance the self-image and self-esteem of women and girls, reinforcing their need for participating in educational programmes;
- to provide women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structure, and formal and informal learning environment to create opportunities for education.
- to help girls to overcome socio-cultural and economic factors inhibiting their access to elementary education, including the provision of childcare services; and
- to set in motion circumstances for larger participation of women and girls in education programmes, and to create an environment in which education can serve the objectives of women's equality.

These objectives are proposed to be met through the three programmes for the education of women and girls that have been mentioned above, i.e., the Mahila Samakhya programme, the National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level under SSA, and the scheme of Kasturba Gandhi Swatantra Vidyalaya.

NPEGEL

In addition to these three schemes, a new scheme for free education for girls at the secondary level has been proposed. Under this scheme, the following provisions are proposed :

- Construction of secondary and higher secondary schools in 500 identified educationally backward blocks @ Rs 100 million per school, with Rs 5000 million for the Tenth Five Year Plan period.
- Supply of free textbooks to girls from families below the poverty line in classes IX and X in educationally backward blocks at a cost of Rs 6577.76 million for the Tenth Five Year Plan period.

It is hoped that the combination of these two strategies would enable us to not only bridge gender gaps in enrolment, retention and achievement, but would also enable the creation of a gender-sensitive and equitable school environment.

Education for All

Missing: Notion of quality — holistic / Notion of h.
Relevance vs. quality
Quality vs. evaluation parameters.
Quality vs. linkages ⇄ higher stages
Work ⇄ knowledge
No pre-vocation & work education



CHAPTER VI

Meeting Quality Concerns

The elementary school system in India has grown in size consistently, achieving an enrolment of nearly 150 million. This obviously poses a major challenge not only for efficient management but also for mobilising resources needed to maintain even a reasonable level of quality. It is recognised that quality improvement in education cannot be carried out on a turnkey basis in a pre-specified time-frame. Persisting with efforts to move ahead on all fronts is seen as the most important factor. Keeping this in view, a number of programmes and schemes have been initiated by the central, as well as state governments. Also, the quality improvement component has been given high priority in all the EFA projects such as DPEP and Lok Jumbish. It is also the main thrust of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Quality improvement is a complex question, unlike improvement in infrastructure, appointment of teachers or even of equipping schools with better academic facilities. Learning from past efforts, it is realised that there is no single-factor solution for the problem. With this in view, the government has pursued a five-fold strategy consisting of (a) improvement in provision of infrastructure and human resources for primary education; (b) provision of improved curriculum and teaching-learning material; (c) improving the quality of teaching-learning process through the introduction of child-centred pedagogy; (d) attention to teacher capacity building; and (e) increased focus on specification and measurement of learner achievement levels.

Improving Provision of Infrastructure and Human Resources

With the expansion of the school system, the state has been burdened with facilities that are vastly inadequate to meet the demands of the burgeoning numbers. In view of this, a systematic exercise was carried out to determine basic norms for provision–physical, human, as well as academic, in each school. As already pointed out, the goal of providing a school in every habitation having a reasonable population has been pursued in the country for several years. This has resulted in practically universalising primary schools in almost all the habitations of the country. However, field studies and periodic surveys have revealed that a large number of habitations are small, and therefore the primary schools in these habitations are relatively small in size. What type of infrastructure and human resources should these schools have has been a matter of extensive analysis. It is in this context that the Operation Blackboard Scheme, launched in the wake of the National Policy on Education (1986), specified basic norms for equipping a primary school. While recognising that physical infrastructure and academic

resources in a school would directly depend on the number of children enrolled, it was specified that every school should be provided with (a) two teachers; (b) two all- weather classrooms (30 sq.mt each) with covered veranda, 8-9 ft. in depth; (c) usable separate toilets for boys and girls; (d) teaching-learning materials of specified standards, supported by special orientation to teachers for using the material.

School Infrastructure

Considering that the country has more than half a million primary schools, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the status of provisions in all the schools. The Fifth and Sixth All India Educational Surveys, conducted by NCERT, showed that though there has been some improvement between 1986 and 1993, schools continued to suffer from deficiencies in infrastructure facilities. Most of the primary and upper primary schools being co-educational, the absence of separate urinals and lavatories for girls, particularly in upper primary schools, can be a major hurdle in the participation of girls.

The Sixth All-India Educational Survey has also provided data on deficiencies that have a direct bearing on teaching and learning. These include the following:

- 60 per cent of primary schools had no libraries;
- 35 per cent of primary sections and 17 per cent of upper primary sections had no blackboards;
- 35 per cent of primary sections and 33 per cent of upper primary sections had no mats/furniture for students, while 47 per cent of sections in primary and 29 per cent sections in upper primary had no furniture for teachers;
- About 985,000 additional classrooms are required in primary and 3,54,000 additional classrooms in upper primary.

During the 1990s, the attempt has been to ensure that expansion, as well as upgradation, of primary school network in different states conforms to the basic specifications made under Operation Blackboard. Under the scheme, the government of India has spent on an average about Rs. 400 million per year during the last ten years. More than 182,000 classrooms have been built and 149,000 additional teachers have been appointed. Besides, 42,000 posts of teachers have been sanctioned, in order to add a third teacher to schools with an enrolment of more than 100. A standard set of school equipment has also been supplied to all primary schools. In fact, these norms were further improved for expansion of schools under DPEP and other EFA projects initiated during the last decade.

Table 6.1: Infrastructure Facilities at Primary and Upper Primary Levels, All-India, 1993

(in percentage)

Particulars	Primary Schools		Upper Primary Schools	
	1986	1993	1986	1993
a. Buildings				
Open Space	7.5	3.8	2.1	1.8
Tents	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.1
Thatched huts	5.5	3.0		1.6
Kuchcha	13.9	9.1	18.4	7.2
Partly Pucca	16.3	18.7	18.4	20.8
Pucca	56.3	65.1	69.4	68.5
b. Classrooms.				
% of schools with adequate number of classrooms	18.7	37.6	20.7	35.2
c. Drinking Water/Toilets				
Drinking water	47.4	44.2	67.1	63.5
Urinals	15.5	18.9	41.5	48.4
Separate urinals for girls	5.2	8.7	21.7	31.5
Lavatories	6.3	10.9	21.7	29.9
Separate lavatories for girls	2.8	5.1	11.2	17.2

It is envisaged that this norm-based provision should help improve the quality of facilities in primary schools significantly. These norms will continue to act as the guiding principle for creating additional schooling facilities for primary education. Two significant actions need special mention in this regard. One, the all India survey of schools conducted by the NCERT in September 2002 would act as the baseline to design future actions for strengthening the quality of primary schools in terms of infrastructure and other provisions. Second, as a follow-up to the constitutional amendment making education a fundamental right, a new central legislation is being promulgated, which clearly delineates basic minimum provisions to be made available in every school. This should facilitate monitoring the quality of school provisions to a great extent. These will inform the establishment of new schools, as well as upgradation of existing facilities, under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Table 6.2: School-related Construction in DPEP States upto 2002

	Planned	Completed
New school buildings	5156	2709
Additional classrooms	6603	3680
Toilets	6716	5260
Drinking water	3493	1968

Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, each of the 0.85 million elementary schools is receiving Rs.5000 maintenance grant and Rs.2000 school improvement grant on an annual basis. Further, all teachers in these schools are entitled to a grant of Rs.500 every year to develop TLM. The SSA also envisages a massive programme for construction of additional classrooms, new school buildings, toilets and drinking water facilities. About one million new additional classrooms are expected to be constructed by 2007.

Teachers

With the expansion of educational facilities over the years, the number of teachers has also increased. The government policy is to provide at least two teachers to every primary school initially, and ultimately, the endeavour is to provide one teacher for every class or section in primary schools. In the upper primary schools, the teachers are provided on the basis of subject teaching and teaching workload. Table 6.3 gives the growth in the number of teachers over the last few years in the primary and upper primary schools.

Table 6.3 Increase in Number of Teachers

Year	Number of Teachers in					
	Primary Schools			Upper Primary Schools		
	Total	% of Trained Teachers	% of Female Teachers	Total	% of Trained Teachers	% of Female Teachers
1990-91	1,616,020	85.25	29.24	1,072,911	88.02	33.24
1991-92	1,643,701	85.31	29.92	1,079,034	88.24	33.82
1992-93	1,651,416	83.54	31.14	1,085,301	87.32	34.63
1996-97*	1,789,733	88.00	32.68	1,195,845	88.00	35.77
1997-98*	1,871,542	87.00	34.34	1,211,803	88.00	36.08
1998-99*	1,904,000			1,278,000		
1999-00*	1,919,000			1,298,000		
2000-01*	1,896,000	86.00	35.48	1,326,000	89.00	38.27

* Provisional

Table 6.4: Teacher-Pupil Ratio at Primary and Upper Primary Levels, 1950–51 to 1999–2000

Year	Primary	Upper Primary
1990-91	1:43	1:37
1995-96	1:47	1:38
1996-97	1:45	1:38
1997-98	1:42	1:37
1998-99*	1:42	1:37
1999-2000*	1.43	1.38
2000-01*	1:43	1:38

* Provisional

Table 6.5: Teacher Rationalisation and Recruitment between Primary and Upper Primary

(in '000)

	Primary	Upper Primary	Total
Total number of additional teachers required upto 2007	358	559	917

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

During 1990-91, the teacher-pupil ratio in primary schools was 1:43, and in middle schools it was 1:37, which remained constant in 2000-01. Over the years, teacher-pupil ratio has remained constant, with the increase in teacher recruitment not keeping pace with the increased enrolment.

Teacher Rationalisation and Recruitment

Based on the projections made of expected enrolment, the total number of additional teachers required up to 2007 is estimated to be 9,17,000, distributed between primary and upper primary as in Table 6.5.

Seeing the role of women teachers in increasing the enrolment and retention of girls, it has been stipulated that 50 per cent of the teachers being recruited henceforth would be women.

Prior to the process of recruitment, the states would be carrying out intensive rationalisation of the existing teachers. Because of lopsided development, it is seen that certain schools and areas, especially urban localities, have teachers much in excess than what they should have as per the 40:1 norm. In contrast, remote areas are often starved of teachers. To rectify this anomaly, the states would have to take up the exercise of rationalisation first before they embark on the recruitment process.

Since a large number of teachers are required in a short period, traditional methods of recruiting teachers would not be sufficient to meet the needs. Hence, alternative methods are being attempted to recruit teachers in various states. States where the requirements are comparatively less would continue to follow the traditional route of recruitment. However, other states are seeking to decentralise the teacher cadre, so that the teacher recruitment takes place at least at the district level, if not at the village or block level. Some states have made the local self-government bodies (Panchayats) responsible for managing the teacher cadre. Other states too, while retaining the teachers as government functionaries, have decentralised the management to the district or block level. This would not only facilitate easy recruitment but also enable better accountability and easy monitoring.

One problem being faced by many states is the non-availability of trained manpower slowing down the recruitment process. While efforts would continue to expand the capacity of pre-service training in partnership with the private sector, the states have been given the option to fill up the immediate needs through recruitment of community teachers. This would involve recruitment of academically qualified persons from the community by the village itself. These community teachers would be given compressed orientation training before they start teaching, which would be reinforced annually through a series of modules, with the aim of providing them the professional qualification after 3-5 years. The distance education mode would play an important role in this training. Some states, like Bihar, have already adopted this model and

started the process of teacher recruitment. The training of teachers through the distance mode has also been successfully implemented in the North-East and is being expanded to other states.

Teacher Capacity Building

Improvement in the quality of teachers through effective programmes of teacher education is central to any quality improvement programme in basic education. It is with this in view that, as envisaged in the National Policy on Education (NPE), a national programme of restructuring teacher education in the country took shape in the 1990s. The programme got further reinforcement through actions initiated under different EFA programmes, including DPEP. These efforts are being continued with further strengthening on an all India basis for moving towards the goal of providing quality basic education for all.

Establishment of a three-tier mechanism in each district

Before 1987, the main source for academic support and training for teachers in elementary schools was the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) in each state. This was proving to be woefully inadequate to meet the capacity building needs in most of the states. The core strategy followed during the last ten years to improve this situation has been to decentralise the technical and academic support mechanism as envisaged in the National Policy on Education. The country has moved ahead considerably in this process of decentralisation of academic support Towards this end, a national programme was initiated to establish a District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in each district exclusively to cater to the development needs of elementary education of the particular district, and to work out mechanisms for providing support to teachers at sub-district levels.

The establishment of a DIET in each district following the NPE-1986 was therefore a major step in taking the support system nearer to the field. During the last ten years more than 400 such district level institutions have been established. This process of decentralisation has been further extended under EFA projects through the establishment of block resource centres (BRCs) and cluster resource centres (CRCs). The main function of these sub-district level institutions is capacity building among teachers. Recent reviews of DPEP report the creation of 414 BRCs and CRCs across different states of the country. It is proposed under SSA that the decentralised system will be extended to cover all parts of the country.

Three key roles for the sub-district centres have emerged: teacher training, supportive visits to schools, and a monthly cluster

Table 6.6: Number of BRCs/CRCs under DPEP upto 31.3.2002

Sl.No.	State	Number of Block Resource Centres Functional	Number of Cluster Resource Centres Functional
1.	Andhra Pradesh*	990	5664
2.	Assam	56	1003
3.	Bihar	152	1894
4.	Gujarat	55	482
5.	Haryana	55	544
6.	Himachal Pradesh	33	230
7.	Karnataka	112	1206
8.	Kerala	55	627
9.	Madhya Pradesh	236	4325
10.	Maharashtra	73	189
11.	Orissa	170	885
12.	Tamil Nadu	106	1023
13.	Uttar Pradesh	645	6365
14.	West Bengal**	326	324
15.	Rajasthan	132	1041
16.	Chhattisgarh	134	1949
17.	Jharkhand	55	476
18.	Uttaranchal	38	280
	Total	**3423**	**28507**

* Andhra Pradesh has mandal resource centres and teacher centres in place of BRCs and CRCs.

**West Bengal has circle resource centres (CLRCs) in place of BRCs/CRCs.

meeting of teachers to discuss issues related to classroom transaction. These resource centres provide a modality for involving teachers in the process of quality improvement. Regular school visits by CRC coordinators have made a contribution to the functioning of schools and classroom transaction, and given teachers improved confidence that they are not isolated. There are many examples of BRCs and CRCs holding vibrant academic discussions in monthly meetings, documenting folklore for use in classrooms, establishing maths labs, developing libraries, etc. The sub-district resource centres also have tremendous impact on the nature of in-service training for teachers. Infrastructural residential facilities at the grassroots (block level) make it possible to have frequent training programmes on a wide range issues such as multi-grade, teaching, developing TLM, student evaluation, specific content areas, basic pedagogic issues (how children learn, approach to content-based teaching) and so on. The resource centres also provide a forum for the most gifted teachers to play a leading role.

In order to make the resource support mechanism for teacher more effective and based on need assessment studies, the following thrust areas in teacher education have been identified for the next five years:

- Development and strengthening of teacher education institutes: This includes an enabling policy environment, assessing institutions in terms of their functioning, capacity building and encouragement of institutional initiative.
- Training of teachers, pre-service as well as in-service: First, the training of para-teachers, especially if untrained, is to be given emphasis. Secondly, pre-service and in-service training need to be upgraded qualitatively. Formalisation of in-service training in terms of accreditation, etc., needs to be considered to ensure quality.
- Professional development of practitioners, i.e. teacher educators, managers and others: This was identified as a major emerging need for improving the school system as a whole.

The major strategies to bring about vibrancy in teacher education are as follows:

- Central funding will be based on state plans, to encourage context-relevant strategies. Diversity will be supported. While preparing its plans, each state will be expected to review in detail the status of teacher education in the state through consultations and studies, and formulate appropriate strategies to improve it. The state perspective plan will be expected to identify clearly major gap areas, as well as strategies and activities that appear to have a good potential for upgrading teacher education.
- States will be encouraged to innovate in the structure of teacher education institutes. The funding pattern has been kept highly flexible.
- A Teacher Education Resource Group (TERG) of outstanding professionals in teacher education will provide support to the states. The TERG is envisaged as a modality of promoting interaction among professionals, as well as disseminating knowledge of new ideas. It is hoped that the best teacher educators of the country will get involved in supporting grassroots institutions.
- A Resource Support Programme (RSP) that is dynamic, responsive to emerging needs and builds on existing strengths of various institutions needs to be put in motion to upgrade the quality of teacher education in the country. The RSP will provide a framework to support the development of specialised professionals such as curriculum developers, evaluators, and educational management experts, experts in the teaching of mathematics, science and other disciplines. It would be a critical

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A teacher is a flame that lights the path of a child.

सर्व शिक्षा अभियान

सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

the national programme
initiated by the Government of India to achieve
Universalisation of Elementary Education



Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Hon'ble Prime Minister



Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi
Minister for Human
Resource Development



Dr. Sanjay Paswan
Minister of State for Human
Resource Development

Department of Elementary
Education & Literacy
Ministry of Human
Resource Development
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Salutes the entire
teaching community on

Teachers' Day

&

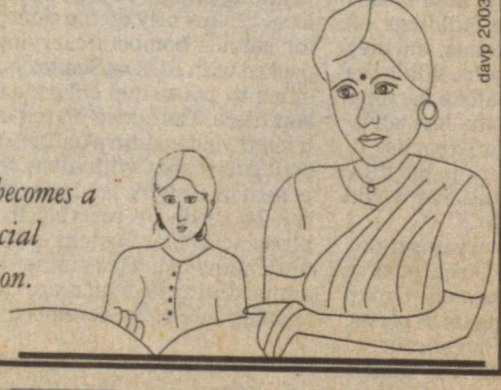
invites them to join hands
in Nation Building by
bringing quality education to
every village of the country

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan takes unprecedented strides
by issuing landmark sanctions in 2003-2004

- **4 lakh** teachers' posts
- **6 lakh** instructors for Centres under Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Programmes (AIE)
- Teacher's Grant to more than **31 lakh** teachers
- Teacher Training Programmes for over **34 lakh** teachers

Hand in hand with
the community...

...a teacher becomes a
vehicle for social
transformation.



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सर्व शिक्षा अभियान

सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

Quality elementary education is the fundamental right of every child

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

celebrates

Literacy Day

In its endeavour to
bring all children to school by 2003
the Government of India

takes gigantic steps this year

&

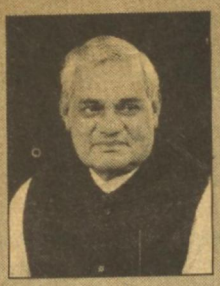
provides large scale educational facilities

- **New schools** — **62,260**
- **New teachers** — **4 lakh**
- **EGS/AIE instructors** — **6 lakh**
- **New school buildings** — **40,171**
- **Additional classrooms** — **86,636**
- **Toilet facilities** — **53,130 schools**
- **School grants** — **7,22,049 schools**
- **Teacher grants** — **31 lakh teachers**
- **1.22 Crore children to be enrolled in Education Guarantee and Alternative and Innovative Education Centres**

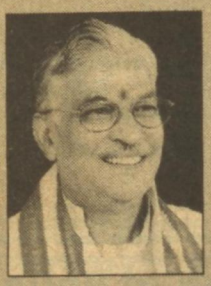
An outlay of Rs. 9401 crore for 2003-2004 covering 583 out of 600 districts approved

Calling all individuals and communities to join hands in ensuring that

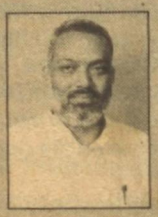
no child remains out-of-school



Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Hon'ble Prime Minister



Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi
Minister for Human Resource Development



Dr. Sanjay Paswan
Minister of State for Human Resource Development

Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
Ministry of Human Resource Development
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aspect of the education of teacher educators. It will also be instrumental in developing the knowledge and material base in these areas.

- SCERTs will be strengthened further so that they can provide leadership. Computer education cells will be set up in SCERT.
- All teacher education institutes will be linked by computer networks.

The last ten years have witnessed a variety of activities in the area of curriculum and TLM preparation in all the states. These efforts will be strengthened and continued in the coming years.

Distance education for teacher capacity building

It has been realised that even with the establishment of an extensive institutional network, continuous upgradation of knowledge and skills cannot be done effectively in view of the perpetually expanding system of schools and teachers. With this in view, a major move was made in the 1990s to use modern technology and distance education mechanisms to reach out to schoolteachers on a continuous basis. Two programmes in this regard need to be mentioned. One is the expanding programme of reaching out to teachers and teacher educators through satellite-based teleconferencing network. The second is the fairly large-sized Distance Education Project within the framework of the DPEP. Both the programmes are operated in a collaborative fashion involving various organisations such as IGNOU, NCERT, Space Application Centre (SAC) and several other national and state-level organisations. In fact, one can see that distance education is gradually emerging as an effective means of providing academic and technical support to schoolteachers on a continuous basis.

Curriculum Renewal and Development of Learning Material

Considering that curriculum and textbooks play a very significant role in quality improvement efforts, special steps are being taken to revise the curriculum for all stages of schooling and to bring out improved versions of textbooks. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education-2000 emphasises development of independent and rational thinking, ability to construct knowledge and solve problems among learners. However, curriculum prescription and textbook preparation for schools is a decentralised phenomenon and essentially a subject handled by state governments. Only a broad national level curriculum is suggested. State-level authorities decide on the specific curricular inputs and teaching-learning material to be followed in all the state-supported schools.

Textbook Preparation

The last ten years have witnessed a variety of activities in the area of curriculum and TLM preparation in all the states. These efforts will be strengthened and continued in the coming years. The purpose of the exercise has been mainly to make the material more relevant, interesting and child-friendly. The specification of minimum levels of learning (MLL) in the early 1990s at the national level also prompted the states to take up the task of curriculum and textbook revision. A series of activities in all the states with EFA projects, as well as others, was set in motion.

Three factors have characterised the process of material development. First, a participatory approach has been the high point of the textbook development process, involving teachers, field personnel and experts from SCERTs. Secondly, people involved in textbook development have been periodically exposed to 'good practices' of other states and also NGOs. Thirdly, in most states, field trials of textbooks and other material have been undertaken to identify gaps that could be corrected before large-scale introduction took place.

The books now offer space to build in the local context for classroom transaction. Attention is also paid to illustrations and font size in an effort to make them more child-friendly.

As a result of the above processes, the new textbooks for primary school grades are significantly different from the old ones. The language used is much simpler and familiar to the child. The books now offer space to build in the local context for classroom transaction. Attention is also paid to illustrations and font size in an effort to make them more child-friendly. Some states have embarked on preparing integrated textbooks, e.g., using the same lesson to transact language skills, as well as environmental science skills, especially for the first two classes. Teachers' guidebooks have also been developed to facilitate classroom transactions.

Availability of Textbooks

Improving the availability of textbooks is another important area to be strengthened. Over the years, state governments have launched a number of schemes to ensure free textbook provision for marginalised children. This was further reinforced under the District Primary Education Programme. These efforts for provision of academic inputs in terms of textbooks and TLM will be institutionalised as a frontal mainstream initiative under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. All SC/ST children and girl students at the elementary level, in the whole country, would be provided free textbooks.

Strengthening TLM Preparation and Use

The two-fold strategy of curriculum renewal and textbook revision will continue in the years to come as a regular feature. It is, however, realised that the effectiveness of transaction will depend on use of a variety of teaching-learning material in the classrooms. It is with this in view that under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, special emphasis is laid on preparation and use of instructional material by classroom teachers. Towards this end, a TLM of Rs.500/- will be given to each teacher every year, which would allow teachers to make and use different kinds of materials as per need. The purpose of the scheme is to help the teachers prepare low-cost TLM for activity-based transaction of the curriculum in different subject areas. Experience gained in this regard from the earlier efforts under DPEP will be used in streamlining the scheme.

A second strategy would be to simultaneously encourage states to develop school libraries to augment the academic resource base for teachers, as well students. The experiment of providing mobile book vans tried in several states will also be expanded.

Resource Material for Teachers

Self-Instructional packages are being developed to provide in-service training to primary school teachers in order to promote awareness about MLL, comprehensive and continuous evaluation (CCE), developing school readiness in children, school climate, education of special groups, education of girls, value education and multigrade teaching. Apart from this, the contents would also include subject upgradation in areas of languages, mathematics, environmental studies, art education, health and physical education and work experience. The print material is being supplemented by ETV package, consisting of video programmes and user's guide for the effective use of ETV programmes in the transaction of print material. The training package has been adopted and adapted by the states/UTs in their regional languages.

Multimedia Support

Expansion and diversification of education programmes through open and distance learning and use of multimedia has come to occupy a significant place in basic education, particularly for supporting teacher development. This will be further strengthened in the next five years on the following lines:

- The distance education mode is effectively used for in-service education and training of teachers. The technology options available for use in distance education mode are print material (self-instruction), and video programmes (broadcast and non-broadcast), teleconferencing, audio graphic, computer, etc. These options are used in various combinations, keeping in view the target group, the nature of training inputs, etc.
- One-way video and two-way audio teleconferencing is being used to provide short-term training to primary and secondary school teachers since January 1996, when the first teleconferencing programme was conducted to train primary school teachers of Karnataka. Since then many teleconferencing programmes have been organised by agencies such as DEP-DPEP and state department of education of Gujarat and Karnataka by addressing the training needs of teachers and other personnel. This process will be further enhanced in size and coverage.
- Radio and television have been extensively used for the professional growth of teachers by NCERT and IGNOU. An experiment on audio teleconferencing for primary teachers of Indore district through All India Radio was conducted by NCERT in 1999. The identified themes were translated in three phases (i) problem phase, (ii) discussion by other teachers and (iii) discussion by experts. Experience from this pilot experiment will be utilised to expand the programme further.
- Gyan Darshan (educational TV) channel is being used for telecasting video programmes for the benefit of teachers, as well as children. Efforts will be made at the national level to constantly develop and telecast programmes addressing the needs of the teachers for their professional growth.
- Multimedia learning packages have also been developed by NCERT, SCERTs and SIEs for use by trainers in training teachers. Different states under DPEP have developed training packages consisting of print and audio-visual inputs for distribution to the training centres.
- A project sponsored by the Government of India, UNESCO and International Telecommunication Unit (ITU), entitled In-service Primary Teacher Training through Interactive Television (IPTT-ITV), is being implemented on a pilot basis in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. It proposes to use two-way video interactive teleconferencing for the continuous in-service training of primary teachers and teacher educators working in DIETs.
- In order to clear the backlog of untrained teachers and underqualified teachers, IGNOU has introduced a two-year distance education B.Ed programme for in-service teachers. It is also offering a certificate in primary education specially designed for the teachers of Sikkim and other north-eastern hilly states of India, where there is a large number of untrained schoolteachers.

Continuing the Programme of Pedagogic Reform

In the final analysis, quality of education depends on the nature of the teaching-learning process. In fact, studies have also brought out that non-attendance of children in schooling and subsequent dropping out from school for many of them is determined by

the nature of the teaching-learning process. It is in this context that a number of activities to improve the quality of classroom interactions and making them child-centred and joyful have been initiated during the last several years. These initiatives would be further reinforced.

The main thrust of action is to help teachers make the classroom processes more contextualized to the local conditions characterising the school and the community. It is recognised that many schools have to continue working under minimal infrastructure and learner support material for the time being. In spite of additional teachers being appointed in many project schools, the majority of schools in the country–around 80 to 85 percent–involve multi-grade teaching. This, perhaps, is inevitable with more schools in smaller habitations being opened. Adapting to such conditions and making the teaching-learning process still effective is a big challenge faced by a primary school teacher. This has been the main focus of all EFA initiatives in the country. An effective arrangement will be arrived at for dissemination of experiences from across state boundaries and their meaningful adaptation in larger areas as an essential feature of the efforts for pedagogic renewal process under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Through the pedagogic reform processes initiated under DPEP, a very close linkage has been established between textbook preparation and teacher training. Taking this into account, the strategy has been that states, to begin with, concentrate on effecting changes in the classroom transaction through intensive training programmes and eventually move to bring about changes in materials and textbooks through participation of teachers. It is expected that such an approach will provide space for innovations in the training programmes also. Several states are already in the midst of trying out new approaches. For example, Bihar has decided to undertake cluster-wise training. This means that the trainers would interact with all teachers from one cluster before moving to the next cluster. At the end of each cluster training programme, the cluster coordinator for the CRC is selected. Like this, many new ideas are being implemented in other states. For example, Karnataka has brought out a series of educational films to support the teacher training efforts. The films cover areas ranging from the hindrances to primary schooling, including social issues, to specific areas such as the teaching of language. The films are regularly used at the block level training programmes for generating discussions.

Kerala conducted a 16-day children's summer camp, called Kinginikkoottam, in which more than 5,00,000 children, in 3,500 schools spread over six districts, participated. The camp is a carefully designed effort to regain the joy of learning through meaningful and enjoyable experiences for children, in a totally informal and relaxed manner. About 28,000 teachers and thousands of parents took part in Kinginikkoottam. Issues related to specific areas in pedagogy and classroom practices such as student evaluation and multi-grade teaching were also tackled.

Increased Focus on Learner Achievement

The 1990s witnessed a high level of importance and attention given to the assessment of learner achievement. The first prompting for this came from the special emphasis given to learner achievement in the NPE. However, the main thrust for activity in this regard came from the specification of minimum levels of learning at the national level through an expert body set up by the Government of India. Following this, most of the state

governments with the help of NCERT and SCERTs not only revised their curriculum and textbooks but also initiated programmes for measuring learner achievement on a regular basis. The Government of India supported 16 large-scale projects to study and streamline this process and work out the processes needed for achieving competencies by all children.

A second set of efforts in this direction emerged with the launching of EFA projects which carried out baseline studies to assess the achievement of learners in various classes of the primary school. Some of the projects have even set targets for raising the learner achievement levels in a phased manner. For instance, DPEP has set the target of raising achievement levels by 25 per cent during the project period. Towards monitoring the programmes to raise the achievement levels, periodic surveys have been carried out both in DPEP and Lok Jumbish. Have these efforts helped to increase the levels of learner achievement? It is difficult to respond categorically to this. First of all, no all India survey has been conducted to determine the current levels of achievement. Further, since the programme content, as well as context of schooling, is quite different in each state, it will be difficult to generalise on the progress made in this regard. Finally, though the initial results show positive change in the learning levels of children in different project schools, both under Lok Jumbish and DPEP, one cannot expect any dramatic upswing in the learner performance. Performance of learners does not depend only on inputs provided in the school. They are also influenced by many other socio-economic contextual factors which do not fall within the purview of education development projects. Also, it may be counter-productive to start anchoring all quality improvement efforts only to improvement in performance of learners in achievement test in selected subject areas. They have to be coupled with focus on other areas of learner growth and development, which are not necessarily performance-based and measurable outcomes.

Learner achievement levels will be monitored by conducting nationwide periodic achievement surveys in all states at different stages of elementary education. The baseline achievement surveys at the end of class V and class VII/VIII are in the final stages of analysis.

Arrangements for Monitoring Learner Achievement Levels

Learner achievement levels will be monitored by conducting nationwide periodic achievement surveys in all states at different stages of elementary education. The baseline achievement surveys at the end of class V and class VII/VIII are in the final stages of analysis. The results will be available by mid-2003. Tests for another survey at the end of classes VII/VIII have been finalised and these are being administered in 2003. In view of the significance of the primary stage, a baseline survey at the end of class III has also been proposed for the years 2002-2004. It is envisaged that these three surveys will provide us the base for assessing the enhancement in achievement levels as a consequence of various inputs provide under SSA.

Further, mid-term assessment surveys will be undertaken again after a gap of about three years to initiate mid-term corrections, if required, in the implementation of SSA. These national studies will also be supplemented with state-specific monitoring processes, which are needed to understand the dynamics of teaching-learning contexts.

Finally, a nationwide terminal survey will be conducted around 2010 to gauge the extent the goals of universalisation of quality education at elementary stage have been achieved. All these surveys will be comprehensive studies of the impact of school environment, home environment and personal characteristics of studies and teachers on the teaching-learning process. For actual monitoring and follow-up actions, NCERT will be involving

Box 6.1: Shiksha Mitra Yojana: Calling Women Teachers

In order to meet the increasing demand for primary school teachers, especially female teachers, the Government of Uttar Pradesh has started the *Shiksha Mitra Yojana*, whereby local persons are recruited as teachers for primary schools by the village education committees. These teachers are called *Shiksha Mitras*. There is 50 per cent reservation for women in the scheme. A total of 18,147 posts of *Shiksha Mitras* have been appointed by the VECs of the Gram Panchayats and another 35,000 are currently under recruitment.

SCERT/SIE of different states and will provide all technical guidance. It is expected that a monitoring culture will be built to sustain the efforts on a regular basis in all the states.

Acting at the School Level: School Improvement Programmes

The experience of implementing EFA projects during the last ten years has made it clear that along with the macro-level initiatives described above, micro-level activities looking at schools as institutions and dealing with school-specific problems are necessary. With this in view, several states have undertaken school-based quality improvement programmes, in which quality related activities are undertaken on the basis of school needs. This has been supported intensively from the central level. Strengthening these efforts will be one of the major strategies for quality improvement under SSA.

Documentation and Dissemination

A great deal of the impetus in pedagogical improvement came from studies that were concerned not with academic questions but with regard to strategies followed in various states. Notably, studies were conducted to characterise the pedagogic practices and processes of student evaluation adopted in schools. These studies provided improved understanding and direction for future interventions. Dissemination of this knowledge and discussion was also stimulated through a journal for teachers.

Collaboration with NGOs, Universities and Resource Institutions

EFA projects during the 1990s accessed tremendous resource support from many sources, and collaborated with a wide range of institutions and resource persons. This was done by including resource persons from NGOs and universities in state resource groups, through consultative workshops, and engagement of resource persons in specific activities such as textbook development, teacher training and research. The national level coordination played a key role in fostering this collaboration. This enriched quality improvement effort as a whole and the process of pedagogical renewal, in particular, significantly.

Encouraging Innovations

It has been the policy of the government to encourage innovations in education with a view to learning from the experience of such innovations and mainstreaming the successors. Under the SSA, each of the 600 districts will be able to access up to Rs.5 million every year to carry out innovations in the field of early childhood care (ECC), education for girls and SC/ST children, and computer education. The districts are expected to associate resource institutions, university departments and DIETs and NGOs in this process. Moreover, under the scheme of Innovative Education, the central government will continue to support NGOs and other groups working in the field of elementary education, both on issues related to targeting the more difficult groups of out-of-school children, as well as on improving the quality of learning.

Education for All

Box 6.2: School-based Quality Improvement Programmes

It has been found that a majority of primary school children do not acquire the basic language and maths skills even by the end of grade V. In the absence of these basic competencies, children find it difficult to engage with the course content of higher grades. The examination system fails to capture this fact as it tests only for memorization and recall, while learning deficits go on accumulating. A host of interrelated factors are responsible for this non-learning–some rooted in classroom practices, but many stemming from systemic inadequacies. Besides, it is also evident from various field reports and studies in DPEP states that macro inputs (in the form of text book renewal, mass teacher training, provision of TLM grant and setting up of block and cluster resource centres), while impacting the system substantially, are not sufficient to change the culture and pedagogy in the classrooms. They need to be supplemented with contextualized, school-based inputs.

Some school-based experiments

The answer to the quality issue seems to lie in working directly with schools. This idea was concretized in the form of small pilot projects in district Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh; district Chamba, Himachal Pradesh; and district S.24 Parganas, West Bengal, which were initiated during 1999-2001. In these projects, work was taken up with a small number of schools for one academic year. Many school-based and systemic issues which act as obstacles to children's retention and achievement came to light, such as high PTRs, multigrade situation, poor physical conditions, excess of non-teaching tasks, high absenteeism, delays in material supply, ad hocism in school functioning, lack of academic support, mid-session teacher transfers, etc. The exact conditions varied from school to school, but it was clear that no single solution could work; each school had to be dealt with individually.

A more comprehensive school-based quality improvement programme was initiated in Andhra Pradesh, as the Learning Guarantee Programme. The process began in a small number of schools in 2001-02, and expanded to 83 schools in two mandals of Rangareddy and Nalgonda districts in 2002-03. In the first phase, it was clear that a majority of the schools were struggling with the same basic functional problems as the ones mentioned above. In the second phase, an attempt was made to design an input framework that addressed the needs of individual teachers and schools. Support was provided in a time-bound manner from state and district to streamline the functioning of individual schools. Teachers also assessed the learning levels of each child in language and maths. A six-week remedial programme was conducted for children of classes III-V to address their basic reading, writing and number skills of class I & II level.

At the end of the course, children across the schools showed remarkable improvement in the above abilities, and became better equipped to handle their grade level texts. Besides, a new classroom culture, a new teacher-child relationship, and also a new 'teacher' began to emerge. The same government school teachers who were earlier indifferent and disinterested in their work, now energetically facilitated children's learning, and the schools which were dreary, unattractive places began to buzz with excitement. A clear indicator of this was that children's attendance and punctuality levels went up significantly. Moreover, learning was no longer restricted to just a few; teachers were able to engage almost every child in class. Children produced a lot of work, which clearly displayed their improved reading, writing and drawing abilities. Teachers too began to independently design varied learning activities. The classrooms became challenging and attractive for both children and teachers. The level of discourse itself changed among the teachers. They now had personal stakes in improving their schools, and more specifically, the learning achievement of each child.

The next step in the programme, subsequent to the remedial, is of linking children back to their regular grade level course. Some bridging would be required to enable children of classes IV and V to go to their grade level texts after the remedial (covering grade I & II competencies). This programme envisages that while on the one hand the learning deficits of children of classes III, IV & V are being addressed through remedial and bridging measures, fresh class plans are to be introduced in classes I & II simultaneously, so that new entrants to school learn in a proper way right from the beginning. By the third year the regular plans would be functional in all five classes, and there would be no more need for remedial and bridging.

CHAPTER VII

Education of Out-of-School Youth and Adolescents

Adolescents, or persons aged 10 to 19 years, are imbibed with a sense of idealism, justice and truth. With positive stimulation and a congenial environment, they rise to the occasion, fought for justice and devote their energies to constructive activities. Adolescent are powerhouses of the energy that could be channelised for social development and nation-building. However, a section of the adolescent population, because of one reason or the other (which may be economic, social or psychological), gets distracted from the normal path, and needs special attention. A majority of the adolescents from this section leave the regular education stream and join the group of out-of school youths.

As per projections of the Planning Commission's Technical Group on Population Projections, adolescents constitute 22.8 per cent of the population of the country, which means approximately 230 million persons in India belong to this group. Out of this, the male adolescents constitute 12 per cent and females, 11 per cent.

Adolescents have very special and distinct needs. The most important issues pertaining to adolescents include health, nutrition, education (both formal and non-formal), vocation, recreation and sports, child labour, children in difficult situations, alcohol and drug abuse. All adolescents need to be made aware of issues like safe motherhood, reproductive health rights, sexuality and sexual responsibility, age of marriage and first pregnancy, family size, health care, hygiene, immunisation, HIV/AIDS prevention, importance of education (particularly of girls), drug and alcohol abuse. They should also have some legal literacy and be made aware of vocational opportunities and career planning.

On the front of education of adolescents, poor attendance in schools and higher dropout rates are causes of concern. The situation is more discouraging in rural areas, where only 49.6 per cent of the boys and 30.6 per cent of the girls in the age group of 15-19 years were found to continue their education beyond class VIII, as compared to 67.4 per cent for boys and 63.8 per cent for girls of the same age group in urban areas. Both adolescent boys and girls, especially those out of school, have little opportunity to grow into self-confident, aware and healthy persons. The formal system has very little to offer to the dropouts and out-of-school adolescents.

The encouraging news is that the gender gap of literacy percentage was reduced to less than 10 per cent in 1991, as compared to more than 20 per cent in year 1981 because of certain initiatives of the government.

Policies and Programmes for Adolescents

The issues related to adolescents as described above fall under the purview of different ministries of the Government of India, including the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Departments of Elementary Education and Literacy, Secondary and Higher Education and Women and Child Development) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Ministry of Youth and Sports is the designated nodal ministry for the development of adolescents.

There are several policy documents addressing the needs of adolescents. The draft National Youth Policy 2001 provides a comprehensive overview of youth issues and concerns. It views youth as a vital resource to be nurtured for the development of the country and advocates "working with youth and not merely for youth", thus underlining the importance of youth participation in all programmes. The policy highlights several areas of concern for adolescents and youth in the country and emphasises an inter-sectoral approach, stressing on empowerment and gender equity. It gives a special focus to the educational needs of adolescents, including non formal education. The Draft Youth Policy makes a distinction between the age of adolescence (13 –19) and the age of attainment of maturity (20 –30 years), marking a shift towards distinguishing between these different phases. By marking the age of adolescence, the policy facilitates efforts to focus on adolescents in government programmes.

The National Policy on Education, 1986, as modified in 1992, in emphasising universalisation of primary education and eradication of illiteracy, especially for the 15 – 35 age group, covers youth and adolescents. The policy also refers to meeting the non formal education vocational skill requirements of youth. The section entitled "Women's Equality" has special reference to the education programmes for adolescents. The National Population Policy 2000 has recognised the earlier invisibility of adolescents and views them as a section of population which needs special attention. Thus, the policy includes them as the subject of one of the twelve strategic themes. There is a special mention about developing a health package for adolescents and enforcing the legal age of marriage. The National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001 recognises the girl child as a separate category and within this category, adolescent girls. The policy covers their nutrition, education, holistic approach to health, violence and sexual abuse against them, and the rights of the girl child.

While the above policies and the several programmes and schemes across ministries covered adolescents, there was no comprehensively policy exclusively addressing the needs of adolescents, especially those who were out of school. Recognising this need, the Planning Commission constituted a Working Group to look into all aspects of the issues related to adolescents, analyse them and submit the recommendations for consideration and implementation during the Tenth Plan period (year 2002-2007). The Working Group has emphasised that adolescence is a special period for learning. It has suggested that government programmes may learn from many groups across the country designing 'relevant' curricula, both for school and out-of-school adolescents, within an

empowering perspective and equitable context of education for all. Education for out-of-school adolescents must be linked with enhancing their self-esteem, survival and employment, better health and sexuality, awareness about their rights-social and political– and with mobilisation for community issues. For girls, the challenge is to design an interesting and meaningful learning programme that can compensate for the early years of social and educational neglect and also provide motivation to continue with enhanced zeal and confidence.

On the basis of the recommendations of the Working Group constituted by the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is developing a new programme to address the educational needs of adolescents with due emphasis on girls.

On the basis of the recommendations of the Working Group constituted by the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is developing a new programme to address the educational needs of adolescents with due emphasis on girls. Under this programme, financial and technical support would be provided to autonomous bodies of the central, as well as state governments, local government bodies (Panchayati Raj institutions) and NGOs for creation of an environment wherein the special needs of adolescents are recognised, and they are provided with friendly services. This would include sensitisation of parents, teachers, government functionaries, law enforcement agencies, media, youth and adolescents through sustained awareness and advocacy campaigns, towards the needs and problems of adolescents; capacity building of NGOs and government functionaries dealing with adolescents; and development of sound database on adolescents and encouragement of research on the issues relating to adolescents in difficult circumstances.

The cooperation and involvement of various agencies is being sought to fulfil the objectives envisaged in the scheme under reference for the benefit of adolescents. The objective awareness generation about the special needs of adolescents would be fulfilled through thematic competitions, exhibitions, fairs, recreational events, and developing and distributing infotainment material (print, audio as well as video).

The parents, teachers, community leadership, government functionaries, health workers and law enforcement agencies would be sensitised by advocacy campaigns using print, as well as electronic media, involving them in debates and other activities with the participation of adolescents.

The scheme is also for capacity building, along with sensitisation of other stakeholders like teachers, health workers, government functionaries and law enforcement agencies by conducting workshops, seminars, short duration in-service training programmes, as also offering full-fledged diploma level courses. Outreach programmes, like holding seminars/workshops could combine both career guidance and psychological counselling and could be organised in cooperation and consultation with educational institutions for adolescents in classes IX to XII.

Life skills, as defined by the World Health Organisation, are the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with demand and changes of every day life. Life skills may be broadly classified as thinking skills, social skills and negotiating skills. Adolescents would be offered educational programmes by NGOs and government bodies like Nehru Yuva Kendra, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti on life skills to empower them with the ability to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life effectively and to enhance their productivity,

It has become one of the largest grassroots organisations in the world, catering to the needs of more than eight million non-student rural youth enrolled through 189,000 village-based youth clubs.

efficacy, self-esteem, self-confidence and interpersonal relations. The module of life skill education would be based on the ones developed by some NGOs and KVS with the support of UNFPA and UN Interagency Working Group on Population.

The provision for psychological counselling and career guidance of adolescents by providing appropriate information in a non-judgmental way has been made to address their various concerns, including health, familial, financial, psychological, social, and emotional problems. This would help the youth in making realistic choices, preventing them from disruptive deviations and overcoming stresses and strains of everyday life. These career guidance centres for both school-going and out-of-school adolescents would be set up in universities and educational institutions having psychological and counselling departments. There is also a proposal for setting up of telephone helplines in cities and small towns.

The Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) is an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, with offices in 500 districts of the country. It has become one of the largest grassroots organisations in the world, catering to the needs of more than eight million non-student rural youth enrolled through 189,000 village-based youth clubs. These clubs work in the areas of education and training, awareness generation, skill development and self-employment, entrepreneurial development, thrift and cooperation, besides development of the body through sports and adventure, and mind through sustained exposure to new ideas and development strategies. For implementation of the programmes, every district NYK has a network of trained cadre of district youth coordinators, national service volunteers and youth leaders. The strength of NYKS is its vast network of youth clubs at the grassroots level.

The NYKS is plans to cover all districts of the country during the Tenth/Eleventh Five Year Plan for effective mobilisation of rural youth. NYKS is expected to organise one youth club/*mahila mandal* in each village having a population of 300 or above, so that the goal of covering nearly 600,000 villages in the country is achieved during the next fifteen years.

It is also planned that at least one youth development centre would be set up in each of the 5000 blocks of the country during the next fifteen years and 1000 such centres would be upgraded to serve as real centres of information to the rural youth by providing them with internet connectivity.

Open Learning

The Ministry of Human Resource Development had established an autonomous institution, the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in 1989 (then known as National Open School) primarily to take care of the educational needs of those who had to discontinue their formal school education because of one or the other.

NIOS has an average annual enrolment of 250,000 students with total enrolment of 750,000 students, who receive support and education in 1700 centres located throughout the country and abroad (Nepal, Middle-East and Canada). Out-of-school adolescents and dropouts are encouraged to enrol and continue their education through a new facility, which allows the students to choose the subjects of their interest, offers a

flexible examination system and allows transfer of credits from other boards. Under this system, a candidate may opt for examination at a time of his/her convenience and in as many courses/papers in which he/she feels comfortable.

NIOS took initiative by launching the Open Basic Education (OBE) programme with the objective of providing basic education to the neoliterate, as well as out-of-school adolescents, among others. The education at OBE stage is free. This programme is being launched with the help of more than 150 NGOs, who implement this programme through NFE centres. NIOS has also laid special emphasis to the special educational needs of physically and mentally challenged persons, including adolescents, and established a cell to implement and monitor the initiatives taken in this regard.

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NIOS, in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Union Ministry of Labour, has undertaken the Child Labour Project (CLP). Under this project, NIOS is developing relevant and need-based curriculum, self- learning material (SLM), audio-visual instructional materials, transactional strategies and evaluation processes to cater to the specific learning needs of children (9-14 years) receiving education under the National Child Labour Rehabilitation courses. About sixty vocational education courses for out-of-school children in the major areas of agriculture, business and commerce, engineering and technology, paramedical and health, applied sciences and social services sector are being offered, mainly through the open schooling system. Taking advantage of modern technologies and with the objective of addressing the need of vocational education in rural areas, NIOS has initiated the programme of rural community workshops to provide need-based infrastructure for rural vocational education/training-cum-service centres.

Education of Adolescent Girls

The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy has focused on the specific needs of girl adolescents and took care of this section of adolescents through the Mahila Samakhya programme. Mahila Shikshan Kendras (centres for girls' education) are in operation in six states, namely, Karnataka, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Assam, under Mahila Samakhya, which has the objective of ensuring equal access to educational facilities for adolescent girls and young women. Adolescent girls, who have dropped out from the formal education system are provided educational opportunities through NFE centres. The programme has gained considerable popularity in the last few years, as it has responded well to the growing demand among adolescent girls for completion of formal education, as well as acquisition of leadership and vocational skills. Under the programme, *kishori/cheli sanghas* (adolescent girl groups) have been set up, which provide life skills education to out-of-school girls. *Kishori melas* (fairs for adolescent girls) are organised under Mahila Samakhya with the aim of creating opportunities for education and self-development of adolescent girls. An expansion of Mahila Samakhya to 240 districts is planned, as outlined above.

Lok Jumbish, a programme jointly launched by the Government of India and Government of Rajasthan in 1992, has been organising residential camps of about six months' duration for adolescent girls since 1995. The participants of such camps are provided with primary education. They are also taught various empowerment activities. Lok Jumbish also started short-duration camps for boys and girls in upper primary classes

The Department's main programme is the ongoing scheme of Kishori Shakti Yojana, which aims at the empowerment and self-development of adolescent girls in preparation for their future productive and reproductive roles as confident individuals, not only in family-building but also in nation-building. The KSY, now in operation in 2000 ICDS blocks of the country, will be expanded further to another 2500 blocks.

to introduce the students to reproductive health and other issues relevant to adolescents. It has also launched a non-formal education programme.

Activities under the Department of Women and Child Development

The Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) also supports policies and interventions for adolescent girls. It is recognised that the adolescent girl child still continues to experience discrimination throughout her life, and unfortunately, the existing socio-cultural practices also make it difficult for her to overcome the handicaps posed by her unequal status. Taking note of this situation, the Tenth Plan reaffirms the life-cycle approach for the adolescent girl child. During this period, efforts will be concentrated to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violation of the rights of the adolescent girl child by undertaking strong legal measures, including punitive ones. These include strict enforcement of relevant legislations along with eradication of harmful practices such as female foeticide/ infanticide, child marriage, child abuse, child labour and child prostitution.

The Department's main programme is the ongoing scheme of Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY), launched in 1991 92. The programme aims at the empowerment and self-development of adolescent girls in preparation for their future productive and reproductive roles as confident individuals, not only in family-building but also in nation-building. The KSY, now in operation in 2000 ICDS blocks of the country, will be expanded further to another 2500 blocks. Moreover, to the present package of health, education and nutrition awareness, it is proposed to add counselling facilities, besides strengthening the component of vocational training and development of entrepreneurial skills.

A long-term developmental measure launched during the Ninth Plan in the name of Balika Samriddhi Yojana will be expanded widely during the Tenth Plan to extend incentives not only to the girl child but also to the mother of the girl child, so that she is assured of state support for the future of the girl child. Similar initiatives, which have already proved to be successful in some of the states, will be replicated in other parts of the country.

Activities of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment deals with the social issues related to adolescents and also support the education of adolescent girls from socially backward section of society such as schedule castes (SCs) and schedule tribes (STs) through a scheme for providing scholarship and hostel facilities.

The Ministry is implementing the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 through a programme for juvenile justice to cater for the care, protection, development and rehabilitation of both neglected and delinquent adolescents. The aim of the programme is to enhance the quality of institutional care to the affected adolescents and to develop and support a system for separate handling of non-delinquent and delinquent children at various stages of their apprehension, processing and rehabilitation. The Ministry has adopted the approach of processing the case of those juveniles through the formal system of police, courts and correctional institutions, which could not be handled by the informal social control mechanisms within the family or

Box 7.1: Doosra Dashak

'Doosra Dashak' means the second decade. This programme is about education and development of persons in 11-20 age group, mainly adolescents, and to make it a lever for social and economic development.

Rationale: Adolescents comprise about 23 percent of India's population. They go through physical and psychological changes, which seriously impact their lives. There is a feeling of alienation among them and they have a tendency for drug and alcohol addiction. Persons in this age group also have boundless energy and are imbued with idealism. If they are provided relevant education and skills they can become a source of social change and economic advancement. The Dakar Framework of Action for Education for All recognises the importance of this age group and calls for organisation of need-based equitable learning opportunities for them.

Objectives: With reference to persons of 11-20 age group, the objectives of this project are as follows:

- To meet their basic learning needs;
- To equip them for adolescence and family life through improvement in their understanding of health/RH related issues;
- To create an awareness about the underlying causes of socio-economic and gender inequality;
- To enhance vocational and life skills;
- To harness their energies for nation-building; and
- To employ science and technology for improving lives.

Strategies: The main strategies and activities are:

- community mobilisation;
- organisation of good quality residential camps for education, integrated with health, life skills, value inculcation, etc.;
- building up a new leadership of youth so that they may take back to their peers and the larger community what they learnt in residential camps;
- promotion of forums of adolescents and youth, inter alia, to create a gender-sensitive socio-cultural environment; and
- advocacy and dissemination.

The programme was started in June 2001 and is being implemented in two blocks of Rajasthan. Funds for this project are provided by Tata Education Trust, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNIFEM.

Outcomes: The main outcomes so far are: (a) social mobilisation in 80 villages; (b) provision of residential training to 700 adolescents; (c) formation of youth/adolescent forums in 42 villages where village development projects have been taken up; (d) relief to persons affected by famine in both the blocks; and (e) large-scale acceptance of the programme by government and NGOs.

community. The Ministry utilises the services of voluntary welfare agencies to the maximum at various stages of referral, treatment and rehabilitation of juveniles, especially with regard to non-delinquents.

The training and orientation programme for NGO personnel and the government officers deployed in institutions established for children under the Juvenile Justice Act are being conducted. There is a provision for incentive to those who have successfully undergone the training.

The children being processed under the Juvenile Justice Act who excel in academics or in extra-curricular activities are encouraged by scholarships.

Activities of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare supports initiatives to address HIV/AIDs education in schools; broadcasts radio and TV programmes to target adolescents; and

implements Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme providing maternal care, including safe motherhood, nutrition facilities and prevention of unwanted pregnancies, etc. The Ministry has joined hands with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in running drug de-addiction centres and supporting NGOs in the same cause.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is engaged in taking care of health- related needs of adolescents. It realises that AIDS is a major problem among the youth and nearly 50 per cent of the new HIV infections are occurring in young people between 15 and 24 years of age. The fundamental risk for young people is their ignorance about issues of sexuality, HIV/AIDS/STIs and the dangers of unprotected sex. With regard to this, the Ministry has gone for early intervention, targeting adolescents, with information on HIV/AIDS/STIs, as well as skills to improve their self-confidence.

Education for ALL

CHAPTER VIII

Literacy and Life Skills Programme for Adults

Presaging EFA: NLM Role in Tackling Adult Illiteracy

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in pursuance of the National policy on Education (NPE), 1986, and its Programme of Action, for eradication of adult illiteracy. By the time the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) at Jomtien in 1990 began to survey the literacy efforts, India had already embarked on a programme of eradication of illiteracy in a mission mode. A mass campaign approach emerged as the main strategy to tackle the problem of adult illiteracy. By the time the "Year 2000 Assessment of Education for All" was undertaken, NLM had traversed a long distance, covering most parts of India by the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) while also fine tuning the strategies for linking literacy with skill upgradation, quality of life improvement, etc., under the post-literacy and continuing education programmes. These were the very concerns that the successive EFA meets voiced. Simultaneously, NLM also began to address specific issues like community involvement and NGO partnership. Thus, by virtue of constantly benchmarking its strategies in relation to the EFA concerns, NLM was able to keep the target fulfilment far ahead of the dates set by the Dakar Framework for Action.

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Coverage

Starting with the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) in Ernakulam in 1990, NLM has covered 587 out of the 600 districts in the country under literacy programmes. By March 2003, 190 districts were in the TLC stage. One hundred and ninety-six were under the post-literacy phase, while 201 had moved to the continuing education (CE) stage. Through its mass campaign approach, NLM has reached out to more than 150 million non-literates and made 98 million people literate. More than 60 per cent of them are women. The socially disadvantaged scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST) together account for 36 per cent.

Current Status of Literacy: National Scene

The above data indicates that the increase in population of the age group 7 years and over has been 26-27 per cent during each decade. Increase in literates was by about 52 per cent during 1981-91 and by

Table 8.1: Growth of literacy in India during 1981–2001: Age group 7 years and above

(in million)

	1981*	1991**	2001
Population	541.4	688.1	867
Literates	235.9	359.3	567
Illiterates	305.5	328.8	300
Percentage of literacy	43.5	52.2	65.4

Source: Census of India Reports
*Excludes Assam, where 1981 census was not held
**Excludes Jammu and Kashmir, where 1991 census was not held

In the five decades after Independence, the increase in literacy rate during the last decade has been the highest, i.e., from 52.2 to 65.38 per cent, which is an increase of 13.2 percentage points. For the first time, the country witnessed a faster growth in female literacy, i.e., 14.87 per cent (from 39 to 54 per cent,) than that of males.

about 59 per cent during 1991-2001. Absolute number of illiterates increased during 1981-91 but substantially declined during 1991-2001. In terms of percentage of literacy, the increase during 1981-91 was by 8.7 percentage points, while the increase during 1991-2001 was by 13.2 percentage points. This analysis indicates that the progress of literacy during 1991-2001 has been much higher as compared to the progress made during the earlier decade. This progress is attributed to better educational efforts during the decade 1991-2001 as compared to the earlier decade. For the first time, educational efforts seem to have overtaken growth in population and the absolute number of illiterates has started declining rather than increasing.

In the five decades after Independence, the increase in literacy rate during the last decade has been the highest, i.e., from 52.2 to 65.38 per cent, which is an increase of 13.2 percentage points. For the first time, the country witnessed a faster growth in female literacy, i.e., 14.87 per cent (from 39 to 54 per cent,) than that of males, which increased by only 11.72 per cent, (from 64 to 75 per cent.) This also reveals the bridging of the gender gap in literacy, which was 25 per cent in 1991 and got reduced to 20 per cent in 2001. There is also, for the first time, a converging trend in the rural-urban literacy gap. Between 1991 and 2001 rural literacy rates increased by 14.52 per cent while urban literacy rates increased only by 6.98 per cent, thereby reducing the urban-rural gap from 28.39 per cent in 1991 to 20.85 per cent in 2001. Similarly, for the first time, there was a decline in the absolute number of non-literates, from 328 million in 1991 to 296 million in 2001.

Literacy: The Regional Dimension

Going beyond national aggregates, there is considerable variation in the literacy scene among the states. Nine out of the 35 states and union territories (UTs) have come under **the high literacy rate** category, ranging between 81 and 90 per cent. There are 13 states which come under the **above national average** of 65.4 per cent. The remaining 13 states and UTs are still **below the national average**–the state with the lowest literacy rate (47.53 per cent) being Bihar.

Box 8.1: Himachal Pradesh: The Continuing Success Story

Himachal Pradesh had been showing significant progress in literacy rates over time--from 21.26 per cent in 1961 to 77 per cent in 1997. In terms of rural literacy rates, its progress has been remarkable. Himachal ranked second among 16 major states, as far back as 1981 and has retained its ranking. This is all the more impressive as Himachal has several factors that make educational progress difficult. In the same fortitude the literacy rate according to the 2001 census was 77.13 per cent, which is far higher than the national average of 65.38 per cent. The state has surged forward to take third position among major states in the country.

Even within this disaggregated data, and particularly among the below-average states, there are many which recorded impressive gains in literacy in the last decade. In these states, adult literacy and primary education programmes were effectively implemented. Rajasthan, for example, recorded the highest increase, viz., 22.75 per cent (and 20.44 per cent in female literacy). There are also states like Chhattisgarh, where the increase in female literacy has been the highest in India viz. 24.88 per cent, taking its female literacy from 27.52 per cent in 1991 to 52.40 per cent in 2001. Madhya Pradesh is another state which recorded a similar growth in female literacy, i.e. 20.93 per cent.

Residual Illiteracy

Impressive as the gains are, the problem of illiteracy

is far from over. There are at least seven major states with more than 15 million illiterates each, accounting for 64.81 per cent of India's illiterates. Only four of them viz., Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan account for 42.84 per cent of India's illiterates. Besides these, there are also at least four other states with an illiterate population ranging from 10 to 14 million each. The gender gap in literacy is still considerable, at 21.70 per cent. Similarly, there is also a considerable leeway to be made to bridge the rural-urban divide in literacy, the difference being more than 20 per cent. The most acute problem, however, remains the rural female literacy, at 46.58 per cent, as compared to the national average of 54.03. The literacy position among the SCs and STs is also far below the national average–literacy among SCs is 53 per cent, and among STs, 49 per cent, as per the NSS (1999-2000) assessment.

Table 8.2: Growth of literacy in India: 2003 to 2015 (age group 7 years and above)—A Projection

(in million)

	2003	2015
Population	900	1075
Literates	612	892
Illiterates	288	183
Percentage of literacy	68	83

During the last decade, literacy rate increased by about 1.3 percentage points per year. Taking into account this trend and slight decline in population in the age group 7-14, the literacy rate is expected to go up by at least 2.6 percentage points during the two years from 2001 to 2003. It has therefore been assumed to be 68 per cent for the year 2003. The number of literates and illiterates has been calculated on the basis of population projections for 2003. The increase in the number of literates is about 4 per cent per annum, while the number of illiterates reflects a declining trend.

Population projections[1] for India and states up to the year 2016 were worked out by a technical group constituted by the Planning Commission. The population data arrived at in the projections made by the group has been used with minor adjustments on the basis of the 2001 Census results. During the last decade the increase in the number of literates was at an average rate of 20 million per year. The projected figure of the number of literates for the year 2015, viz., 892, takes into account an average annual growth of around 23 million literates per year. It is based on an intake of about[2] 17 million per year in class IV retainable literacy level of the primary school system in the country and an average of 5 to 6 million persons made literate through the adult literacy programme. On the basis of these projections, the literacy rate for the age group 7 and above for the year 2015 works out to 83 per cent and the number of illiterates works out to 183 million.[3]

The Dakar Framework for Action

EFA Focus Areas in Adult Literacy

The Dakar Framework for Action, especially in respect of adult literacy, is:

- Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
- Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Achieving the Dakar Goal of Fifty Percent Improvement by 2015

For purposes of measuring adult literacy, UNESCO considers the population in the age group 15 and over. Growth of adult literacy in India during the last decades has been as Table 8.3.

Table 8.3 Growth of Adult Literacy in India

(in million)

Census Year	Adult Population	No. of Adult Literates	No. of Illiterates	Adult Literacy Rate (%)
1971	317.82	108.31	209.51	34.08
1981	401.85	164.03	237.82	40.82
1991	526.20	255.42	270.78	48.54
1998-99*				58.46

*NFHS-2 - Based on sample study

Table 8.4: Extrapolation Figures of Adult Literacy

(in million)

Census Year	Adult Population	No. of Adult Literates	No. of Illiterates	Adult Literacy Rate (%)
2001	675	412	263	61
2003	710	452	258	64
2015	900	720	180	80

According to UNESCO estimates, the adult literacy rate for India in 2000 was 57.2 per cent as indicated in the Monitoring Report 2002.[4] However, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), 1998-99, estimated the adult literacy rate to be 58.5 per cent for the population 15 years and above. Projection of this trend indicates that the adult literacy rate in India should have been 60 per cent in the year 2000. On the basis of the trend indicated by the results of the NFHS and 2001 census, it is estimated that the literacy rate of the adult population for 2001 was 61 per cent. (age-wise literacy rates from 2001 census are still awaited).[5]

Extrapolation of this trend indicates the situation likely to emerge in the year 2015 as Table 8.4:

Population projections are based on the projections made by the Registrar General of India (Technical Group [3] on Population Projections) with minor adjustment based on the 2001 census results.

The adult literacy rate increased by 6 percentage points during 1971-81. It increased by 8 percentage points in the next decade, viz., 1981-91. The estimated increase during 1991-2001 on the basis of NFHS survey results was about 12 percentage points. It has been observed that the number of adult literates, which increased by an average rate of about 5.6 million per year during 1971-81, increased by an average of 9 million during 1981-91. As a result of greater efforts during 1991-2001, the average annual increase during this period was about 16 million. This trend is likely to go up further during the 21st century. It has been estimated that the present (2003) literacy rate of 64 per cent will improve to around 80 per cent by the year 2015. The accelerated growth of literacy in the younger age group of 6 to 14 will move to the age group of 15 and over by the year 2015. The declining growth rate of population in the age group 6 to 14 at present will impact on the age group of 15-25 by that time. Thus, India can be placed in the category of countries which are likely to reach adult literacy rates of 70-90 percent in the year 2015.

For the year 2000, as shown above, the adult literacy rate in India was about 60 per cent. To achieve the Dakar goal of halving the illiteracy rate by 2015, India needs to reduce illiteracy rate by 20 per cent. As indicated by the above projections, India is likely to reach this goal by 2015 in terms of halving the illiteracy percentage from 40 per cent in 2000 to 20 per cent by 2015.

In terms of absolute number of illiterates also, there is likely to be a substantial decline, from about 263 million illiterates in the year 2001 to 150 million in the year 2015.[6]

Box 8.2: Employment-linked Vocational Training Programmes for Neoliterates–Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Coimbatore

Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Coimbatore, conducts a number of need-based and employment-oriented vocational courses for illiterates, neoliterates, physically challenged, slum dwellers and unemployed youth. The courses include two-wheeler and four- wheeler maintenance and repair, motor winding, electrician, tool and die making, lathe operator, machine operator-cum-moulder, plumbing and sanitary work, web-page designing, computer applications, beauty culture, refrigeration and air conditioning, maternity and child health, nursing assistant, laboratory technician, cutting and tailoring, embroidery and dress designing, metal embossing, etc. The courses are identified and developed in consultation with local industry, district employment exchange, hospitals, automobiles service stations, prospective employers and experts in different fields.

Coimbatore district has a large number of textile mills–large, medium and small. The adjoining Salem and Erode districts are also industrially developed. By linking the vocational training programmes to the needs of local industry and service sector, the JSS Coimbatore, has established effective employment linkages for the neoliterate trainees.

From 1997-98 to 2001-02, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Coimbatore, trained 8,457 persons in various skills, and all of them are recorded to be either wage employed or self-employed.

NLM Thrust Areas

In 1999, before the "Year 2000 Assessment of Education For All", and as part of the on-going realignment of approach to the literacy movement, NLM began paying special attention to some of the aspects that later came to be highlighted in the Dakar Framework for Action.

- Achievement of 75 per cent literacy level by 2007.
- A multi-pronged strategy in order to address the regional, social and gender disparities in literacy.
- Refocusing the literacy, post-literacy and CE programmes to increase and strengthen women's participation, so as to bridge the gender gap in literacy.
- Encouraging PL and CE districts to pay special attention to mobilisation and organisation of women into neoliterate and self-help groups (SHGs).
- The priority areas for the Tenth Five Year Plan were set up, which included special attention to socially disadvantaged groups like SCs/STs and women.
- Regional disparities, and especially low literacy states, were identified for special attention. Forty-five districts with female literacy rates below 30 per cent have been targeted for a multi-pronged strategy to improve the female literacy rates.
- An integrated approach to make the basic literacy, post-literacy and continuing education phases into a learning continuum.
- District Literacy Society (*Zilla Sakshartha Samiti*), the autonomous body which implements and oversees the literacy, post-literacy and continuing education programmes, would have freedom now to use grassroots participatory networks like youth clubs, *mahila mandals*, voluntary agencies and local self-government bodies like Panchayats, cooperatives, etc., as partners in CE implementation.

On the basis of the results of Census 2001, districts where female literacy is less than 30 per cent have been identified. Forty-five such districts have already been taken up for the literacy special drive.

- Conscious of the need for administration-civil society partnership, ZSS are now empowered to co-opt NGOs in the implementation of CE programme, including devolving funds to run CE centres in the areas where the NGOs are active.
- Increase in the number of Jan Sikshan Sansthan (JSS), earlier known as Shramik Vidyapeeths, to 122. Provide non-formal vocational training to neoliterates.
- Extension of activities of JSSs which are performing well to neighbouring districts.
- In view of social and gender disparities in literacy, NLM lays special stress with the ZSS to specifically highlight the strategies to take up literacy and skill upgradation programmes for the socially disadvantaged like the SC/STs and women in particular. Conscious of the social disabilities and acute economic problems, separate centres for SCs in their own colonies are encouraged. It is also stressed that the content of the CE programme in such areas could address issues affecting their health, quality of life and skill improvement.
- In the case of scheduled tribes, given their poverty, exploitation, ill health and their scattered habitation pattern, NLM provides a special relaxation in the matter of funds allocation. This is done so as to pay special attention to the needs of the tribals, especially the females, so that it addresses regional, social and gender inequities in literacy simultaneously.

Strategies for Bridging Gender Disparity in Literacy: States and NLM

Education in India, including adult literacy and CE is a concurrent subject, and both the central and state governments are equally responsible for its development. NLM defines the broad policy contours and provides the major share of funds. But the state governments also have a commitment to EFA, and pursue the NLM objectives, according to their own resources.

On the basis of the results of Census 2001, districts where female literacy is less than 30 per cent have been identified. Forty-five such districts have already been taken up for the literacy special drive.

Some states that have these low female literacy districts have started working out a multi-pronged strategy to improve their female literacy.

Different states are following different strategies and methods to tackle the gender disparities in literacy. Andhra Pradesh is using a mixture of two approaches. The state uses SHGs as the nucleus to eradicate residual illiteracy, especially among women, and as a bridge to their increased participation in the continuing education programme. Second, a new approach of a combined literacy, post-literacy and CE programme, organised in the CE centre with suitable capacity building of *preraks* (motivators) and a well articulated community ownership strategy.

Rajasthan is developing a strategy of involving the Panchayats to spearhead the drive to eradicate female illiteracy in low female literacy districts.

Madhya Pradesh also has a special state-supported programme for female literacy, called the 'Mahila Padhna Badhna Andolan'.

Box 8.3: The Sari Weavers of Kaithun: A ZSS Jan Shikshan Sansthan Success Story in Literacy

Kaithun is one of the sectors in Ladpura block in Kota district of Rajasthan. Famous for the finely crafted *Kota Doria* saris, it was one of the most difficult areas for literacy workers to work in. The literacy rates were dismal, and the poverty immense. Every household is engaged in sari weaving. A child here may not be able to read but can easily recognise a design.

Initially, the women were very reluctant to give up their valuable weaving time to attend literacy classes because time lost meant wages lost. But concerted efforts of the Zilla Saksharta Samiti (ZSS) functionaries and volunteers made a huge impact. Literacy was followed by the formation of self-help groups. A comparative look at the census literacy figures for the years 1991 and 2001 for Kaithun city sector speak for themselves:

Year	Total	Male	Female
1991	40.55	55.63	24.03
2001	81.25	89.59	77.61

The Zilla Saksharta Samiti and the Jana Shikshan Sansthan, Kota, contributed not just towards making these women literate but also ensuring that their economic interests were protected.

Another strategy that is emerging distinctly in respect of gender disparities is the formation and use of women's SHGs as literacy centres. These are emerging as effective vehicles for women's mobilisation, empowerment and improvement in the PL and CE stages. There is an increasing trend of using these groups as basic units of eradication of residual illiteracy among women, using the literates among them as the volunteers and the ZSS providing the training, teaching-learning material and supervision of teaching-learning progress.

The Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh strategies are centred around SHGs and active community participation in monetary terms as well.

In Uttar Pradesh, eight low female literacy districts have been brought under an accelerated programme of basic female literacy, which is being implemented through a network of about 100 NGOs. Approximately 2.4 million women are expected to be made literate within a period of about six months.

A programme on similar lines is being considered for implementation in Orissa in seven districts, where female literacy is below 30 per cent, and two other adjoining districts.

A different model has been adopted in Bihar to cover the 15 low female literacy districts with involvement of Panchayati Raj functionaries, women volunteer teachers and women's SHGs. Approximately 3 million non-literate women are expected to be covered within a period of 6-12 months.

Similar interventions are planned in the remaining low female literacy districts in other states.

The mainstream CE activities include setting up CE centres to function not only as libraries or reading rooms but as focal points for diverse continuing education programmes, training, information, discussion, development, culture, sports, recreation and other individual interest promotion.

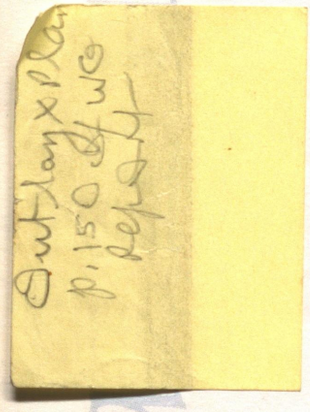
Continuing Education

The objectives of the literacy movement as NLM evolved over the years are broadly two-fold. One, imparting functional literacy in the initial TLC phase, its consolidation and upgradation to a self-reliant level in the post-literacy phase, and self-directed learning and its application through continuing education, towards a learning society. The second objective relates to improvement not only through the ability to apply literacy skills, but also through the upgradation of life and occupational skills.

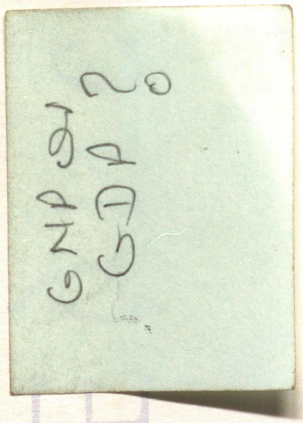
Given the short duration, the initial literacy (TLC) phase addresses mainly the literacy objective, and the improvement-oriented concerns take centrestage during post-literacy and CE stages.

The adult literacy movement initiated by NLM aims at imparting functional literacy to all non-literate adults in the 15-35 age group. But more than 60 per cent of the learners have been women at the basic literacy TLC, PL as well as CE stages. Conscious of this reality, strategies of social mobilisation at the TLC stage and life-skills oriented programmes at PL and CE stages have been dovetailed to address women's needs.

The mainstream CE activities include setting up CE centres to function not only as libraries or reading rooms but as focal points for diverse continuing education programmes, training, information, discussion, development, culture, sports, recreation and other individual interest promotion. Besides these regular functions, the CE schemes also take up certain target-specific programmes like equivalency, quality of life improvement, income generation, individual interest promotion, depending upon local conditions, needs and resources.



In some states, there is a trend towards increasing role of the community not only in the management of activities at the CE centre, but with regard to the range of CE programmes itself. In order to develop a sense of community ownership towards the CE programme, a system of neoliterate societies, based on membership, linked to a nominal fee, has been introduced in some states. Besides this, a system of corpus fund collection is also taken up, so that beyond the state-funded duration of five years, the community can take over and run the programme. Started in Andhra Pradesh, this practice can become a model for other states as well.



As more and more districts in the country complete the total literacy and post- literacy phases, they would graduate to the CE stage. The NLM expects to cover all districts under CE by the end of the Tenth Plan period, i.e. 2007, bringing the entire country under CE by that time.

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1 Population Projections for India and states 1996-2016, Registrar General India New Delhi, 1996
2 Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001, Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi.
3 Population Projections for India and states 1996-2016,- Registrar General of India, New Delhi, 1996.
4 Education for All -Is The World on Track?
EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2002, UNESCO.
5 Ibid.
6 Population Projections India and states 1996–2016, Registrar General, India, New Delhi, 1996.

CHAPTER IX

Financing the Programmes of Education for All

Investment in EFA since 1990

The statement made in the National Policy on Education, 1986 and 1992, that from the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) onwards the outlay on education would uniformly exceed 6 per cent of the national income is yet to materialise. At present (2000-01), 4.1 per cent of the GNP is being invested in education. The share of elementary education in GNP in India has been relatively low, even though this has also increased by three times, from 0.48 per cent to about 1.7 per cent, during the last five decades. The expenditure by education departments as a percentage of GNP at current prices has increased from 0.68 per cent in 1951-52 to 4.1 per cent in 2000-01.

The central expenditure on education has increased substantially over the last ten years. The central plan expenditure increased from Rs. 30,360 million in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) to Rs. 74,430 million in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97). The government's commitment to raise the expenditure on education to six percent of GDP, as against the level of 3.9, by the end of the Ninth Plan, has not yet been achieved.

Fifty per cent of the enhanced allocation is expected to be spent on primary education. This increasing financial participation of the central government through central and centrally sponsored schemes for promotion of primary education is in keeping with the spirit of partnership between the central and state governments. Table 9.1 gives information about

Table 9.1: Percentage of Expenditure on Primary and Elementary Education

Years	Current Public Expenditure as %age of Total Current Public Expenditure on Education		Current Public Expenditure as %age of GNP	
	Primary (Class I-V)	Elementary (Class I-VIII)	Primary (Class I-V)	Elementary (Class I-VIII)
1990	34.30	46.30	1.25	1.69
1991	34.22	46.30	1.18	1.60
1992	33.69	45.20	1.14	1.53
1993	34.20	46.20	1.02	1.38
1994	34.05	46.40	1.00	1.36
1995	35.30	48.50	1.05	1.44
1996	36.50	50.10	1.05	1.44
1997	37.10	49.08	1.08	1.85
1998	-	49.60	-	
1999	-	49.03	-	
2000	-	45.54	-	

Source: Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure, MHRD

Mobilising of community resources for primary education on a larger scale has also received considerable attention during this period, especially for improving physical infrastructure of schools.

elementary education and its funding as a percentage of current public expenditure on education.

In the 1990s, there has been a marked increase in the proportion of central plan allocations made in the five-year plans for elementary education to the total outlay for education. The proportion in the Seventh Five Year Plan, which ended in 1990, was 38 per cent while in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), the proportion for elementary education was raised to 49 per cent.

One of the most significant factors related to change in the pattern of expenditure on education in recent years is the gradual increase in the proportion of funds spent on elementary education in comparison to secondary and higher education sectors. The last three five-year plans have witnessed a significant shift in the expenditure of the Department of Education in the central government towards primary and adult education and away from tertiary education. This highlights the proactive role that the central government is playing towards achieving the goal of EFA.

Until recently, primary education in India was almost free from large-scale external funding. The 1990s witnessed introduction of several externally funded primary education projects, in particular the District Primary Education Programme. However, external funding of elementary education is less than 5 per cent of the total expenditure by the Centre and the states on this sector. Mobilising of community resources for primary education on a larger scale has also received considerable attention during this period, especially for improving physical infrastructure of schools.

Requirement of funds for EFA

India has consciously decided to align the planning process of EFA with the planning process of the country, which is reflected in the five-year plans. The Tenth Five Year Plan started in 2002 and would remain in operation till 2007. While formulating the goals of the Tenth Five Year Plan, it has been attempted that requirements of the EFA goals set in Dakar are fulfilled in the Plan period itself. Accordingly, the fund requirement for EFA has been projected till 2007 only. The fund requirement has been calculated sector-wise, and has then been aggregated to arrive at the total requirement of funds for EFA. The sectors covered are:

- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Elementary Education
- Mid-day Meal in Schools
- Education of Girls and Women's empowerment
- Teacher Education
- Education of Out-of-school Youth and Adolescents
- Adult Education Programmes

As it is apparent, the above sectors target all the six EFA goals. Therefore, it would be imperative to provide the requisite funds if the Dakar goals are to be achieved.

Fund requirement for ECCE

The funds for early childhood care and education are available under a number of programmes for UEE. For example, SSA provides Rs 1.5 million per district per year for

innovative interventions under ECCE. Similar components are available under other programmes like DPEP, Lok Jumbish and Mahila Samakhya. However, these programmes reflect only a small component of the entire interventions towards ECCE and funds for these have already been provided for under the respective programmes.

The main intervention towards ECCE is through the ICDS programme, which is being universalised under the Tenth Plan. The total allocation in the Tenth Plan for this programme is Rs 122,470 million.

Table 9.2: Funds Required for ECCE

(Rs. `0,000,000)

Sl. No.	Scheme Component	Outlay
1.	Integrated Child Development Services	10392
2.	World bank Assisted ICDS projects	1293
3.	Training of ICDS functionaries	462
4.	Balika Samridhi Yojana	100
		12247

Fund Requirement for Elementary Education

The programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, as explained in Chapter IV, is the primary vehicle for achieving the Dakar goals relating to elementary education. The programme supports a number of initiatives, details of which are given in Table 9.3.

Based on the projections given above, the total requirement for UEE comes to Rs 980,000 million over a ten-year period till 2010. Of this, the requirement of funds projected for the period till 2007, the target date for universalisation of primary education, is Rs 522,800 million, to be shared between the center and the states. To ensure the sustainability of this funding, the sharing pattern between the Centre and states has been modified for SSA.

The traditional pattern of funding of schemes sponsored by the central government has been to provide resources up to the end of the Five Year Plan period, in which the programme is being implemented. When the Plan period comes to a close, the liabilities on all recurring expenditure are transferred to the state government concerned, which is then expected to provide resources for continued implementation. Such an arrangement has not always been conducive to long-term planning and execution of the EFA programme. For instance, states have been reluctant to appoint teachers on a large scale in view of the fact that they would have to meet the entire expenses of the salaries after a few years.

The main intervention towards ECCE is through the ICDS programme, which is being universalised under the Tenth Plan. The total allocation in the Tenth Plan for this programme is Rs 122,470 million.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan breaks away from this established mould by creating a long-term financial partnership between the central and state governments. The sharing pattern between the central and state governments, which was on a 85:15 basis in the Ninth Five Year Plan, would be on a 75:25 basis during the Tenth Plan and on 50:50 basis thereafter. This arrangement ensures long- term sustainable financing, and would allow greater flexibility to states. They will, for example, are enabled to fill in teacher vacancies as per requirement with the assurance that funding, on a reducing basis, will continue to be available from the central government. SSA is perhaps the first programme, which writes in such multi-plan funding support to the states, underscoring the importance of the EFA agenda.

The second and equally significant change is in the method of fund flows. SSA funds will be transferred directly to state implementation societies, which in turn are expected to transfer funds, along with the state share, to bank accounts maintained by village education committees (VECs), school management committees (SMCs), etc. These will

Table 9.3: Permitted Interventions under SSA and the Overall Requirement in the Project Period

Sl. No.	Item	Norms	Total Numbers Estimated
1.	Setting up of new schools	◆ Primary school if there is no school within 1 km and ◆ upper primary school to maintain a ratio of 1:2 between upper primary and primary	Number included in the classroom requirement given below
2.	Sanction of teachers	◆ To maintain ratio of 1 teacher for 40 children, ◆ At least two teachers for primary ◆ At least one teacher per class for upper primary	1.15 million teachers
3.	Additional classrooms	◆ A room for every teacher in primary and upper primary ◆ A room for headmaster in upper primary.	1.135 million classrooms (including new school buildings)
4.	Free textbooks	◆ To girls and SC/ST children, if the states have not been providing it.	100 million children
5.	Maintenance and repair grant	Rs 5000/- per school per year.	800,000 schools
6.	Teaching-learning material	@ Rs 10000/- for primary and Rs 50000/- for upper primary	180,000 primary and 85,000 upper primary schools
7.	School grant and teacher grant annually.	@ Rs 2000/- per school and Rs 500/- per teacher	800,000 schools and 4.2 million teachers
8.	Teacher training,	20 days for in-service, 60 days for untrained teachers and 30 days for new teachers	4.2 million teachers
9.	Setting up of SIEMAT	One time grant of Rs 30 million	One per state where SIEMAT does not exist
10.	Provision for disabled children	@ Rs 1200/- per child	8 million children
11.	Setting up of block and cluster resource centers	For every cluster consisting of 10-15 schools and for every block	3000 BRCs and 30000 CRCs
12.	Innovative activity	@ Rs 5 million per district per year.	600 districts
13.	Training of community leaders	2 days training for 8 persons per VEC	6.4 million persons
14.	Research, evaluation and monitoring grant	@ Rs 1500/- per school	800,000 schools
15.	Management cost	Up to 6% of the cost	
16.	Opening of EGS centres	In unserved habitations	180,000

be responsible for expenditure on school construction and maintenance, school and teacher grants, and emoluments paid to alternative schooling teachers (and in some cases to regular school teachers). Such decentralised structures would lead to greater accountability and social auditing.

In addition to SSA, a number of other programmes, viz. DPEP, Lok Jumbish Project (LJP), Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP) and Janshala would also be contributing towards UEE. These programmes have a slightly different financial sharing arrangement between the Centre and the states. While DPEP's sharing is in the ratio of 85:15 between Centre and states,

Janshala is 100 per cent centrally funded. Under LJP the Centre funds five-sixth of the costs with the states, while under SKP the sharing pattern is fifty-fifty. Based on this pattern, the total central share comes to Rs 397597.5 million out of the total Tenth Plan requirement of Rs 522,800 million, with the state share being Rs 125202.5 million, as indicated in Table 9.4. Of this total Centre's share, the Planning Commission has provided Rs 212,710 million for the Tenth Plan period. Additional resources would be required to bridge this gap and for this, negotiations are going on with external funding agencies and the Planning Commission for an additional allocation to bridge the gap. (Table 9.5)

Table 9.4: Requirement of Funds for Elementary Education at the Centre and State level till 2007

(Rs. `0,000,000)

Programme	Total Outlay	Sharing Pattern	Centre Share	State Share
SSA	46,133.00	75:25	34599.75	11,533.25
DPEP	5,647.00	85:15	4,800.00	847.00
LJP	300.00	5:1	250.00	50.00
SKP	180.00	50:50	90.00	90.00
GOI-Janshala	20.00	100% Central	20.00	0.00
	52,280.00		**39,759.75**	**12,520.25**

Fund Requirement for Mid-day Meal in Schools

The Government of India had launched the Mid-day Meal Scheme in all primary schools in the nineties. Earlier it was restricted to formal schools only, and the supply in most states was in the form of raw foodgrains to be taken home by children. However, the emphasis in the Tenth Plan period is to ensure that cooked food is given to all children instead of mere foodgrains and to extend this scheme to the non-formal system also. The total requirement of funds is as follows:

Table 9.5: External funding during Tenth Plan Period

(Rs. `0,000,000)

Sl. No.	Programme	Allocation during Tenth Plan	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
1.	DPEP	4000.00	858.29	1199.35	1287.00
2.	Shiksha Karmi	47.00	24.46	10.00	15.02
3.	Lok Jumbish	137.00	56.10	50.00	60.00
4.	GOI-UN (Janshala)	20.00	0.00	10.00	13.50
5.	Mahila Samakhya	100.00	8.74	7.75	9.00
6.	SSA	600.00			27.00
	Total	**4904.00**	**947.59**	**1277.10**	**1411.52**

Annual requirement (200 days) of grains for 11 crore children	2.2 million MT
Cost of foodgrains @ Rs 5500 per MT	Rs 12100 million
Transportation charges @ Rs 500/- per MT	Rs 1100 million
Conversion cost @ Rs 1 per child per day (borne by states)	Rs 22000 million
Total cost till 2007	
Centre	Rs 66000 million
States	Rs 110000 million
Total	**Rs 176000 million**

Thus, Rs 176,000 million would be required towards the mid-day meal programme as part of the incentive scheme for primary education.

Fund requirement for Girls' Education and Women's Empowerment

The total fund requirement for the three major programmes of girls' education in the Tenth Plan is Rs 41,080 million, as given in Table 9.6.

Table 9.6: Requirement of Funds for Girls' Education and Women's Empowerment

(Rs `0,000,000)

Scheme	Centre	State	Total
Free Education for girls	1125	375	1500
Mahila Samakhya	250	0	250
KGSV	1200	0	1200
Secondary Education	1158	0	1158
Total	**3733**	**375**	**4108**

Fund Requirement for Teacher Education

Apart from the investment on the quality aspect to be made under SSA, the country would be launching another programme on teacher education. Realising the importance of the programme in ensuring quality, it is felt necessary there should not be any shortage of funds due to sates not being able to meet their contribution in any sharing pattern. So it has been decided that this programme would be 100 per cent centrally sponsored. This would supplement SSA and help it to address the quality-related issues.

The total amount allocated for the teacher education programme is Rs. 9500 million over the Tenth Plan period. Funding under this scheme will take place in two ways. First of all, funds will be allocated on the basis of state perspective plans on teacher education. This will cover funding of DIETs, CTEs, IASEs and SCERTs. Secondly, some funds will be allocated centrally for education of teacher educators and for innovations in teacher education. This will include promotion of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) under the Resource Support Programme. Universities and other resource institutions would be expected to apply to the department for these funds. National level funds will also be used for supervision and resource support of state activities. Funds have been earmarked for each state on the basis of number of students. Depending on its expenditure, a state would be able to access upto 50 per cent more than the amount indicated, if funds are available. Ceilings have been kept for various activities but a state will be able to choose its own priorities.

Education of Out-of-School Youth and Adolescents

The Working Group on adolescents, constituted by the Planning Commission for the Tenth Five Year Plan, recommended the allocation of Rs. 1120 million for the nodal ministry, i.e., the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for the Tenth Plan period to carry out welfare activities for adolescents. Out of this sum, Rs. 1000 million have been earmarked for integrated projects covering a population of around one million adolescents over a period of five years. A provision of Rs. 80 million is recommended for conducting camps for adolescents. Rs. 20 million each has been recommended for administration and research. In addition, UNFPA has committed Rs. 125 million for the scheme. Other ministries such as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Labour, Health, Department of Rural Development will continue to support programmes targeting adolescents out of their own funds.

In addition to this budgetary allocation, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports would consider tapping other resources like Indian and external funding agencies, local bodies like Panchayati Raj institutions, municipal corporations, individuals and corporate donors, as suggested by the Working Group. The allocations for various schemes

Table 9.7: Allocation for Teacher Education

(Rs. `0,000,000)

1.	Total allocation for Tenth Plan	950.00
2.	Allocation for national level activities	47.5 (5%)
3.	Allocation for NE states	95 (10%)
4.	Amount to be allocated for other states and UTs	807.50

Table 9.8: Allocation for National Level Activities

(Rs. `00,000)

1.	Appraisal and supervision of state activities	
	a) State plan appraisal	48.00
	b) Supervision of states through TERG	122.50
	c) Mid-term reviews, researches and strengthening of ministry	100.00
	d) Support to NCTE for salaries.	50.00
2.	Coordination by NCTE of ICT in computer education	500.00
3.	Resource support programme	3836.50
4.	Management of resource support programme	93.00
		4750.00

of the Ministry of Human Resource Development targeting the education of out-of-school youth and adolescents for the Tenth Plan and Annual Plan 2002-2003 are given in Table 9.9.

In addition, the Ministry is also running adult education programmes, and the Mahila Samakhya programme, which specifically target youth and adolescents. Since the funds for these have already been provided under the respective programmes, they are not being reflected under this head.

The Ministry of Social Justice has also allocated Rs 1000 million for interventions related to adolescence.

Thus, the total fund requirement for out-of-school youth and adolescent is Rs 17,520 million as indicated in Table 9.10.

Table 9.9: Tenth Five Year Plan Allocations for Education of Out-of-school Youth and Adolescents

(Rs. `0,000,000)

Name of Scheme	10th Plan Period
Vocationalisation of secondary education-	
Centre sector	350.00
State sector	650.00
Community polytechnic	475.00
National Open School (NOS)	65.00
Total	**1540.00**

Table 9.10: Fund Requirement for Education of Out-of-school Youth and Adolescents

(Rs `0,000,000)

Ministry	Centre	State	Total
Youth Affairs	112	-	112
HRD	890	650	1540
Social Justice	100	-	100
Total	**1102**	**650**	**1752**

Fund Requirement for Adult Education Programmes

As per Census 2001, there are about 296 million illiterate persons in the country at present. While these are the primary target group for NLM, the scheme of continuing education targets the whole population of neoliterate and other sections of the society.

Table 9.11: Fund Requirement for Adult Education

(Rs `0,000,000)

Scheme	Category	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	Total
Literacy campaigns and Operation Restoration	Central	130	130	110	60	34	464
Continuing education for neo-literates	CSS	670	918	1166	1240	1256	5250
Jan Shikshan Sansthans	Central	40	45	50	55	60	250
Cultural exchange programme	Central	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5
National Literacy Mission authority	Central	3	3	3	3	3	15
Directorate of Adult Education	Central	26	28	30	32	34	150
Population Education in Adult Education	CSS	3	4	4	4	5	20
National Institute of Adult Education	Central	3	3	4	4	5	20
Support to NGOs	Central	30	32	34	36	38	170
Total		**905**	**1,163**	**1,401**	**1,434**	**1435**	**6,340**

The target in the Tenth Plan is to make approximately 100 million persons literate and ensure that about 100 million neoliterates do not relapse to illiteracy. Based on this, the total projections for the Tenth Plan come to Rs 63,400 million. The detailed scheme-wise break-up is given in Table 9.11.

Total Fund Requirement

Thus, the total fund requirement for implementing the National Plan of Action for EFA is Rs 952,770 million as indicated in Table 9.12.

Table 9.12: Total Funds Required for EFA

(Rs `0,000,000)

Sl. No.	Sector	Centre	State	Total
1.	ECCE	12247	0	12247
2.	Elementary education	39760	12520	52280
3.	Mid-day meal	6600	11000	17600
4.	Girls' education	3733	375	4108
5.	Teacher education	950	0	950
6.	Youth and adolescent	1102	650	1752
7.	Adult education	6340	0	6340
	Total	**70732**	**24545**	**95277**



CHAPTER X

Organisational Arrangements for Planning and Monitoring Programmes

Towards EFA Goals

EFA occupies the topmost priority in the national planning process. To ensure that this priority is translated into action in day-to-day activities, it has been ensured that the organisational set-up and the monitoring structure draw their authority from the highest political levels in the country. While the Prime Minister heads the National Mission for EFA, the monitoring of the progress made under the Plan is being done at the highest level. The importance being attached to the Plan can be gauged from the fact that in the Tenth Plan, of the 11 monitorable targets fixed for the Plan period, three relate to EFA. These are:

- All children in school by 2003; all children to complete five years of schooling by 2007.
- Reduction in gender gap in literacy by at least 50 per cent by 2007.
- Increase in literacy rates to 75 per cent within the Plan period.

The EFA Plan would be implemented through the institutions already established for implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. These institutions would be suitably modified to include elements not included under SSA at present.

Management Structure at the National Level

In order to facilitate convergence, there would be a National Mission having representation from all stakeholders of the programme. This would be the existing National Mission of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, with certain additional stakeholders included to take care of the greater canvas of the EFA plan. The General Council will be headed by the Prime Minister, with the Human Resource Development Minister as the Vice-Chairman. The Chairman of the Executive Committee will be the Minister for Human Resource Development. The Secretary, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy will be the Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Joint Secretary (Elementary Education) will also be the Director General of the National Mission of Sarva Shiksha Mission. He/she shall be the Member Secretary of the General Council and the Executive Committee. While the individual elements of the EFA plan would be implemented by the respective line departments already working in the area, the National Mission would play a coordinating and monitoring role. This would also be the highest decision making body as far as the EFA plan is concerned.

Several state governments have already initiated the process of decentralising the management of primary education. New legislation has been adopted to provide for the changed framework to operate effectively.

State Mission Authority

The State Mission Authority of SSA would be suitably expanded to make them the Mission Authority of EFA. The General Council would be headed by the Chief Minister, and the Executive Committee by the Chief Secretary/ Development Commissioner/ Education Secretary. Involvement of NGOs, social activists, university teachers, teacher union representatives, Panchayati Raj representatives, and women's groups would be ensured so as to give full transparency to the activities of the Mission.

The implementation team under EFA will work within a framework of decentralised management of education with full accountability to the community. The Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) and school level committees will be involved in programme implementation, along with the mainstream structures.

Decentralised Planning and Management

The management structure at all levels will be accountable to the state-specific arrangements for decentralised management of education. The National Policy on Education 1986 had proposed decentralisation as a fundamental requirement for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of educational planning and management and for creating a meaningful framework for accountability. Several state governments have already initiated the process of decentralising the management of primary education. New legislation has been adopted to provide for the changed framework to operate effectively. Some states have also gone for much closer collaboration and involvement of the community in decentralising the system of educational management. The country will continue to work towards the goal of decentralisation by initiating processes of community involvement and gradually shifting the locus for decision making from state to district level and downwards through Panchayati Raj bodies.

This shift in planning and management strategy will also require a large effort to train and continually give support to educational bodies constituted under the urban local governments and PRIs. There is an urgent need to reorient the outlook and role perception of government functionaries. Efforts will be made to reorient the programmes of various resource institutions at national and state levels to meet these requirements. Towards this end, the local-level institutions in education and allied sectors will be strengthened adequately. Besides, it is envisaged that distance education mechanisms, suitably strengthened and reoriented, will play a significant role in the task of building capacities among personnel working at local levels.

District as the Unit of Planning

Traditionally, planning for development of education has been done at the state government level. The National Literacy Mission changed this trend and adopted district level campaign mode. All assessment for action was done from the district. Following this, planning for primary education, particularly under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), has been firmly anchored at the district level. Keeping the advantages, the country proposes to adopt an integrated approach for planning at the district level for development of education. This approach, it is envisaged, will help identify districts needing more attention and varied types of inputs, thereby tackling the question of equity in an appropriate manner. Movement towards planning at block, cluster and village levels in partnership with NGOs will be encouraged and supported.

While the district will be the basic unit for educational planning, actual plans will be designed with habitations, villages and specific groups and their needs, as the primary focus. The district plan will evolve from the programmes that take into consideration the needs and educational situation of communities at the grassroots level. As has been indicated earlier, action to promote enrolment, retention and achievement of children must be area-based and community-specific so that problems faced at those levels are effectively addressed on the basis of empirically identified needs.

Community Ownership

Community ownership and creating community demand for education would be encouraged to ensure universal elementary education. Increased involvement of the community in education will also improve the quality of education. Higher the demand for education, higher will be the quality. The following steps would be encouraged:

- Community participation in promoting enrolment, retention and other aspects of education would be further encouraged. PRIs and grassroots-level structures like VECs, PTAs, MTAs, etc. would become vehicles for community mobilisation.

Box 10.1: People's Education Reports: An Act for Creating Public Accountability for Quality

Jan Shiksha Adhiniyam, or People's Education Act 2002 of Madhya Pradesh is shaped by the vision of education as a collaborative process of the teachers, learners and the local community and the role of the government as facilitating this process towards the twin goals of equity and quality. The Act recognises the right of every child to basic education and seeks to remove impediments to access and participation in schools both by improving delivery as well as by creating social pressure. Parental responsibility for compulsory education up to age 14 is enforceable by *Gram Sabha*. Strengthening decentralisation, the Act lays down clearly the roles and the responsibilities of key agencies: parents, teachers, local bodies and government. A crucial role is assigned to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to be set up for each school.

The Act aims at fostering processes that helps the school to emerge as a strong unit accountable to the local community of parents. To make planning responsible to the local educational needs, a *jan shiksha yojna* or People's Education Plan emanating from the PTA level is envisaged. A People's Education Report (PER) is envisaged as reporting on a set of indicators that are critical inputs, processes and outcomes, specially learning outcomes school wise, that the teacher puts together and then presents for wide discussion in the collective forum of the PTA, every quarter from where it then goes up to the District and State Government, and annually to the legislative assembly, constituency-wise. Some of the critical parameters in terms of inputs are access, teacher provisioning, qualification, training status, availability of textbooks and other academic infrastructure, and in terms of outcomes are indicators with special emphasis on equity. The aim is to make the public education system accountable to the civil society by inducing transparency and political ownership for what happens in the school and what it delivers and thereby compelling reform. These reports are expected to feed back into the *jan shiksha yojnas* for incremental improvement; thereby creating an organic relationship between planning and evaluation, placing their outcomes in public space for reinforcing people's right and the state's responsibility for better quality education.

To provide a reliable database for the monitoring process, two kinds of information systems have been developed. One is the Educational Management Information System, under which school-level data is collected every year with September 30th as the record date.

- A community-based monitoring system would be evolved with full transparency.
- Community mobilisation through intensive micro-planning and school mapping would be made mandatory.
- Implementation of goals and strategies would be participatory.

Convergence in Management and Delivery of Programmes

With the expansion of the education system in the country, the administrative machinery has also expanded tremendously at all levels. Often, separate administrative structures are found to have a common goal and even common set of activities, for instance in primary education, non-formal education, and adult education. The trend of creating parallel administrative machinery has led to an over-expanded bureaucratic machinery and problems of overlap, where efforts towards coordination are often counterproductive. It is against this backdrop that the goal of integrated planning and convergence in delivery of services would be pursued in three main directions:

- Creation of parallel structures for implementation of different development programmes will be avoided.
- Effort will be made to re-examine the norms and patterns of operation specified under different schemes and projects to ensure greater convergence.
- State governments would be encouraged with adequate support from the Centre to reorganise education management structures so as to achieve greater coordination in planning, and effective convergence in implementation of education development programmes.

While convergence with the education sector is important, there is need for convergence among the education and other departments, particularly those which aim at providing services for improving the quality of life: housing, nutrition, family welfare, poverty alleviation, creation of opportunities for remunerative work, upgradation of returns from existing occupation, diversification of communities' occupational structures, etc. It needs to be required that all these have impact on education, particularly in creating capacity, and willingness for availing the already available educational opportunities and for creating demand for education of children.

Monitoring and supervision

Monitoring is envisaged as a three-tiered activity: monitoring at the local community level, at the state level and the national level. The community, through its representative institutions like village education committees (VECs), has been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that schools are functioning effectively. Most of the qualitative impressions on school functioning can be effectively monitored only at local level and are difficult to capture either at the state level or the national level. For monitoring the qualitative aspect from the national level, reliance would be placed more on assessing the effectiveness of community-based monitoring at the local level and ensuring that this system is functioning properly. In addition, monitoring at the state and national levels would focus more on the quantitative aspect of both the status of project implementation and the progress made towards the achievement of EFA goals.

The community monitoring system would be operationalised by providing for a greater role for local self-government bodies (Panchayats) in the district, block, village and urban

Box 10.2: National Commission for Children

The government has decided to constitute a National Commission for Children, which would be a statutory body set up under an Act of Parliament to give further protection to children and act as an independent ombudsman for them. The Commission would have certain judicial powers and would guide policy on child-related matters, and take effective steps for review and better implementation of laws and programmes meant to ensure the survival, development and protection of children.

Structure of the Commission

- The proposed Commission will have a chairperson and six other members, a member secretary and other supporting staff.
- The chairperson will be either a sitting or former judge of the Supreme Court or a person of eminence who has done outstanding work in this area.
- The six members would be experts in the field of child health, education, child-care and development, juvenile justice, children with disabilities, elimination of child labour, child psychology or sociology.
- The officers and the staff of the Commission will be provided by the central government.

Functions, Powers and Budget

The proposed Commission will have the following functions:

(a) investigate and examine matters relating to the safeguards provided for children under the existing laws;

(b) present to the central government, annually and at other intervals, reports upon the working of such safeguards;

(c) undertake research and periodical review of policies, programmes and other activities in respect of children and make recommendation for their best implementation;

(d) fund litigation in public interest, involving issues affecting children;

(e) inspect or cause to be inspected any juvenile custodial home, or any other place of residence or institution meant for children, under the control of the central government or any state government or any authority, including any institution run by a social organisation, where children are detained or lodged for the purpose of treatment, reformation or protection and take up with these authorities for remedial action, if found necessary;

(f) inquire into complaints and take *suo moto* notice of matters relating to deprivation of child rights, non-implementation of laws providing for protection and development of children and non-compliance of policy decisions, guidelines or instructions aimed at mitigating hardships to and ensuring welfare of children and provide relief to such children or take up the issues arising out of such matters with appropriate authorities; and

(g) any other matter incidental to the above functions.

areas. The *gram sabhas*, i.e., the general body of villagers, would also be motivated towards taking an active part in the EFA processes. It is envisaged that the local level EFA plan be placed before these bodies at the beginning of every year and the progress made against the plan be evaluated at the end of the year. To facilitate such an evaluation, the chief executive of the local body would have to prepare a report annually on the progress made. This would not only ensure local accountability of the field functionaries, but also enable corrective measures at the local level.

To provide a reliable database for the monitoring process, two kinds of information systems have been developed. One is the Educational Management Information System (EMIS), under which school-level data is collected every year with September 30th as the record date. These would enable measuring of a number of indicators like enrolment, gross enrolment ratio, net enrolment ratio, retention rate, dropout rate, completion rate, repetition rate, transition rate, etc. The second information system being developed is the Project Management Information Systems (PMIS), in which the emphasis would be on

recording the progress made, both in physical and financial terms, towards the implementation of the perspective plans and annual plans.

The country is also conducting the Seventh All India Educational Survey, which would involve detailed collection of educational data from all habitations of the country. This would provide a baseline for the EFA process.

While continuous monitoring would be an ongoing process, this would be supplemented through sending of two supervision missions every year to the states. The supervision missions would have representatives of the Government of India and funding agency (if any). The supervision missions would be expected to visit individual states and look first hand at the implementation of the programme through visits to select districts of the state. The approach would be a holistic one, with emphasis on assessing both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of programme implementation. The missions are expected also to flag the areas of concern, both in programme implementation and also in the general educational scenario in the state. These areas of concern would be also one of the foci of monitoring till these are assessed to be suitably rectified by a future supervision mission.

As it is seen, the task of monitoring and supervision is a mammoth one, requiring considerable effort on a continuous basis. Instead of carrying out this centrally, and having a large establishment for this purpose, professional institutions would be involved in this task. These institutions would be allocated individual states, with which they will develop long-term partnerships. They would not only carry out the task of supervision and monitoring but also act as partners of the states in the implementation of the programme. Accordingly, a list of institutions would be identified for individual states for carrying out this task. While arriving at a pool of institutions, central universities, ICSSR, institutions, university departments of education and other professional institutions having expertise in this areas would be relied on. The emphasis would be on the institution having a competent and committed set of personnel, oriented towards carrying out similar work in the social sector. Generally, each state would have one institution attached to it, except the larger states, which would have two or three institutions attached.

The selected institution(s) would be expected to get reports on the implementation of the approved plan every quarter and send a consolidated report to the central/ state government. They would also be expected to get reports on progress made in achievement of some key outcome indicators like enrolment, out-of-school children, access to remote and unreached habitations, etc., every quarter and send a consolidated report to the central/ state government. They would also make quarterly visits to select districts and make an assessment of the ground reality. And at the end of the year, they would have to calculate the specified monitoring indicators such as GER, NER, out-of-school children, dropout rate, completion rate, transition rate, repetition rate, etc.

The institutions would be expected to launch two supervision missions per year in the months of September-October and April-May. Apart from these activities, the institutions would also be expected to carry out/coordinate research studies pertaining to the areas of concern in the states. These studies would be expected to find the reasons for some of

the problems encountered in the field and suggest solutions to tackle the same. They may also be in the nature of evaluation or impact studies to assess the effectiveness of any specific intervention. At the national level the coordination of the institutions would be done by the national institutions like NIEPA and NCERT.

In addition to the use of institutions for intensive supervision and monitoring, the country would be further using the services of independent auditors for concurrent auditing and financial monitoring. This would be in addition to the requirements of statutory audit.

The Real Challenge is not of Numbers

The new millennium begins with new expectations. The revised framework of the National Literacy Mission proposes to reach a literacy rate of 75 per cent by the year 2007. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is the flagship programme of the national government, expects to achieve the goal of EFA by 2010 (five years ahead of the international commitment made at Dakar). This would mean that all children (in all states) would complete at least five years of schooling (or its equivalent through non-formal means) by the year 2005; all of them would transit to upper primary schools and complete at least another three years of schooling by 2010.

There is no doubt that the SSA targets are ambitious, surpassing the international expectations articulated in the Dakar Summit, which sets the target of 2015 for achieving the goal of EFA. While one can debate on the relevance of setting such ambitious targets, ignoring the practicability of mobilising necessary physical, financial and human resources, an important point needs to be borne in mind. For the poor and the marginalised, basic education continues to be the only hope and means of redemption. But across socio-economic considerations, a deep sense of desperation is setting in the minds of the people with respect to the capability of the state to meet their educational needs. An urgent requirement is to dispel this sense of despair and re-establish public faith in the state-sponsored delivery mechanisms, be it primary schools or adult literacy programmes. This can be done only through actual demonstration of effectively functioning institutions that produce desired results and meet the aspirations of the society. It is this resolve and determination of all those concerned with EFA in the country to persist with accelerated efforts that holds the key for achieving the goal of Education for All.

पुस्तक क्रं.

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शहीद शंकर गुहा नियोगी पुस्तकालय एवं सांस्कृतिक केंद्र, भोपाल

पुस्तक देय तारीख -

परिग्रहण सं. -- कूट सं. --

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शहीद शंकर गुहा नियोगी
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परि. सं. . . . . कूट सं. . . . . .

1. देय तारीख तक किताब न लौटाने पर नियमानुसार विलंब शुल्क देना होगा।
2. यदि किसी और को जरूरत न हो तो किताब दोबारा जारी की जा सकती है।
3. किताब पर कोई भी निशान लगाना या कुछ भी लिखना सख्त मना है। इस पर दंड का प्रावधान है।
4. किताब को गंदा करने, फाड़ने, खोने या देय तारीख के 30 दिन के अंदर न लौटाने पर उसकी जगह वही नई किताब या दुगुनी कीमत देनी होगी।

कृपया किताबों को साफ़–सुथरा रखने में मदद करें।

संपर्क
ईमेल – shaheedniyogipustakalaya@gmail.com

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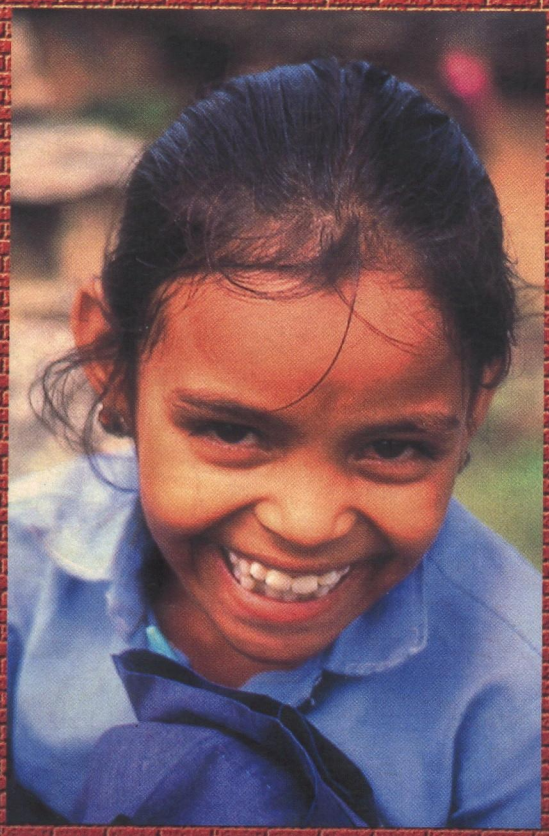
DPEP moves on...



DPEP

जिला प्राथमिक शिक्षा कार्यक्रम
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

...Towards Universalising Primary Education

DPEP Moves On...

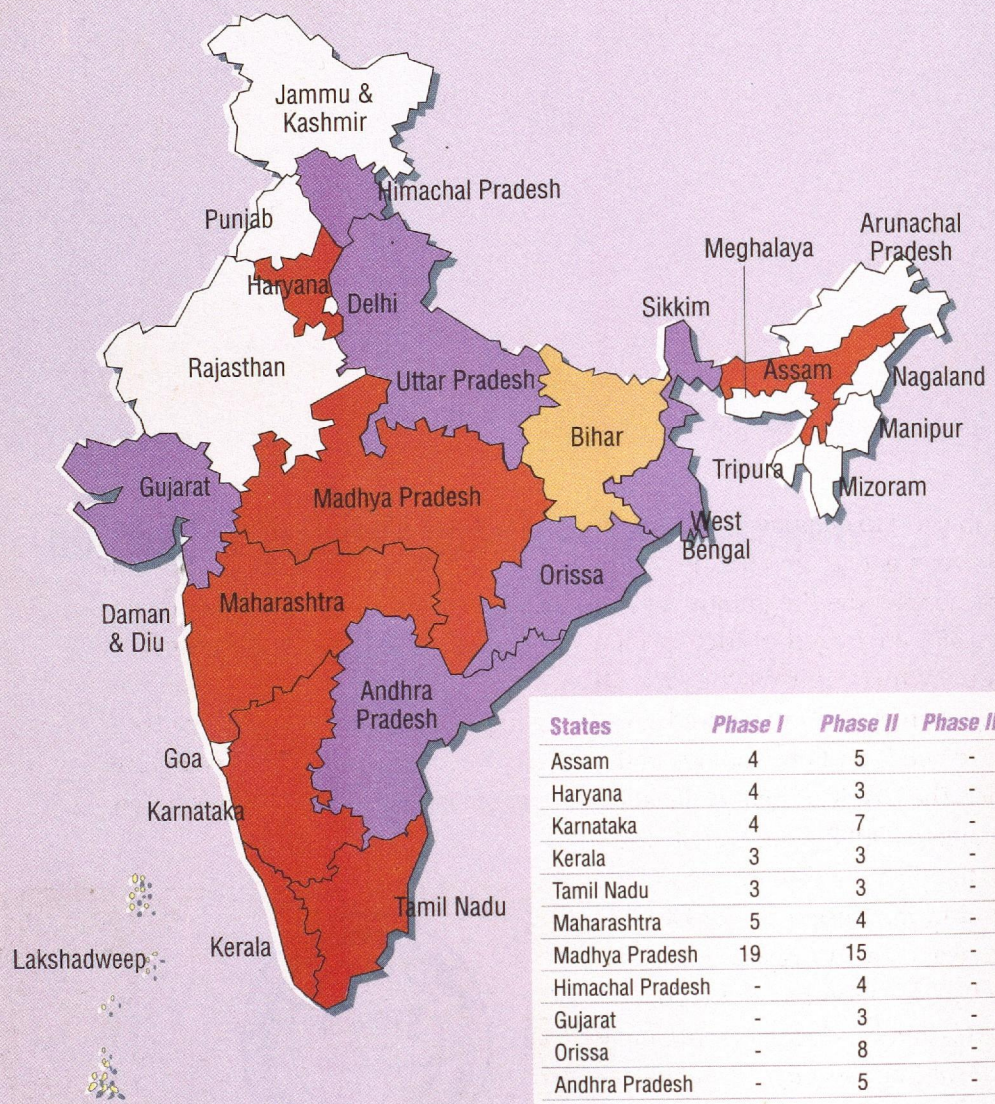
... Towards Universalising Primary Education





Department of Education
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India
New Delhi

DPEP COVERAGE



States	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Assam	4	5	-
Haryana	4	3	-
Karnataka	4	7	-
Kerala	3	3	-
Tamil Nadu	3	3	-
Maharashtra	5	4	-
Madhya Pradesh	19	15	-
Himachal Pradesh	-	4	-
Gujarat	-	3	-
Orissa	-	8	-
Andhra Pradesh	-	5	-
West Bengal	-	5	-
Uttar Pradesh	-	15	-
Bihar	-	-	27
Total	**42**	**80**	**27**

An epochal approach

In an effort to engineer a closer link between education and the life of the people, the Programme of Action, 1992 envisaged district-specific projects which, within the overall strategy framework, are tailored to the specific needs and possibilities in the district. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) launched in 1994 seeks to operationalise this objective. Central to the design of the DPEP is the concept that in a vast country such as India education has to be contextual. This involves local area-planning with disaggregated targets and decentralised planning and management. Ideally, the planning should be from below, from the village upwards. A beginning has been made, in DPEP, with the focus on the district as a unit for planning and implementation.

DPEP recognises that community participation is the key to universalisation of education. More so for a country like India with twenty-six states, six union territories and about fifty languages of instruction. After decades of state level planning, there is a growing realisation now that the commu-



nity would know its own needs and requirements in so far as education is concerned. The cornerstone in shaping that vision of community ownership was the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and this tradition is being assiduously cultivated by the DPEP. The Programme focuses on a participatory process with community support to facilitate faster educational development in the educationally backward districts of the country.

The Programme objectives are in line with the guidelines framed by the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE). The CABE parameters with respect to basic education projects in India are:

- the project must be in total conformity with the national policies, strategies and programmes;
- the project formulation should be the responsibility of the Centre/State Governments/other national agencies and that project formulation should be a process of capacity building;
- the project must be drawn up on innovative lines emphasising people's participation, improvement of quality, equality of education and a substantial upgradation of facilities.

DPEP builds upon accumulated national experience in pursuit of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) as well as experience gained from some state-specific and area-specific projects.

The Programme targets districts:

- that are educationally backward with female literacy below the national average ;
- where Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) have been successful, leading to an enhanced demand for elementary education.

Objectives of DPEP

To provide all children with access to primary education either in the formal system or through the non-formal education (NFE) programme.

To reduce differences in enrolment, dropout rates and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5 per cent.

To reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10 per cent.

To raise average achievement levels by at least 25 per cent over measured base line levels and ensuring achievements of basic literacy and numerate competencies and a minimum of 40 per cent achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children.

Equity is a major concern in DPEP, as reflected in the DPEP objectives. All DPEP plans, strategies and interventions are tailored to address the special needs of the disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST and disabled children, and children belonging to minority groups as well as girls. Action programmes are woven into all components of DPEP. For instance, the Programme ensures that VECs will have a minimum of 33 per cent women members and at least one representative from SC and ST communities. Also, DPEP States have nominated at least one parent (with disabled children) as a member of VEC.

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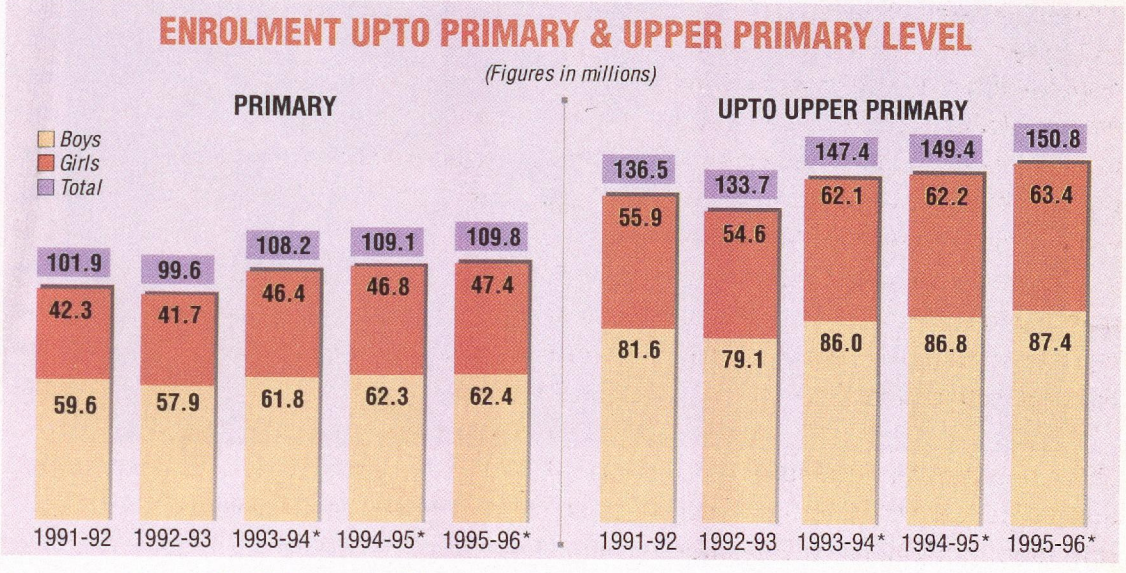
DPEP is a centrally sponsored scheme whereby districts develop proposals for improvement in primary education. Once these proposals are appraised and approved, the Government of India provides 85 per cent and the concerned State Government provides the remaining 15 per cent of financial requirements.

Reflecting the political consensus and



Source: Annual Report, 1996-97, Department of Education, MHRD, GOI

* Provisional

the national will to eradicate illiteracy in India, expenditure on education has been stepped up.

The innovative nature of this programme has given birth to a management structure where there is administrative flexibility and smooth flow of funds and mechanisms to ensure accountability. Equity focus, decentralised planning and management, participatory planning, local specific strategies, managerial flexibility and a rigorous Management Information System make District Primary Education Programme a programme with a difference.

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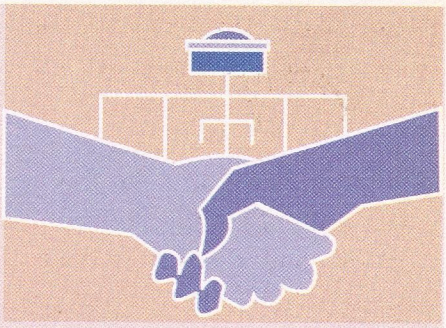
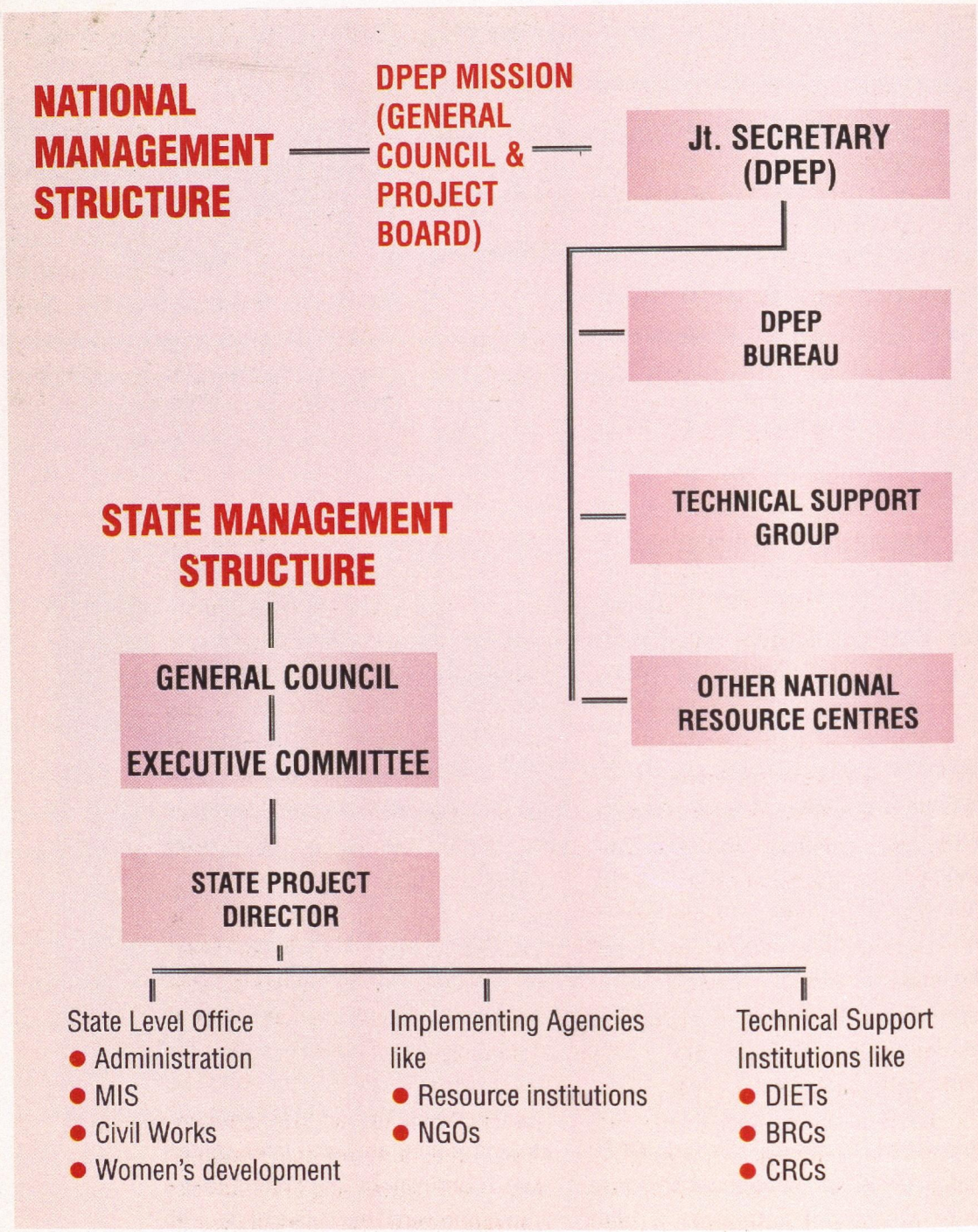


A responsive and flexible system

The District Primary Education Programme intends to achieve the long cherished goal of UEE by creating a sustainable and decentralised educational management system, and invoking community participation in the whole process of the programme. This is a major experiment of its kind in the social development sector in the country where decentralisation and community participation are being put into practice on a very large scale.

In response to this massive task, DPEP has evolved a management structure with substantial autonomy, a high degree of flexibility in administrative functioning; and above all, space to experiment with different methods and models. Understanding the fact that in a responsive system priority is to the people, a planning process that is initiated from below has been operationalised.

The DPEP Mission is the apex body in the structural arrangements for programme management. The Mission comprises of the General Council and the Project Board. The General Council deliberates on all aspects including policy and facilitates centre-state coordination. The Project Board is an empowered executive body, with inter sectoral and NGO representation.


NATIONAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
DPEP MISSION (GENERAL COUNCIL & PROJECT BOARD)
Jt. SECRETARY (DPEP)
DPEP BUREAU
TECHNICAL SUPPORT GROUP
OTHER NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES
STATE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
GENERAL COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
STATE PROJECT DIRECTOR
State Level Office
Administration
MIS
Civil Works
Women's development
Implementing Agencies like
Resource institutions
NGOs
Technical Support Institutions like
DIETs
BRCs
CRCs

The DPEP Bureau, which services the DPEP Mission, is vested with specific tasks to appraise, evaluate, finance and supervise the project. The Bureau is responsible to the Project Board and the Mission General Council for the implementation of the Programme within the framework of the DPEP guidelines and in consonance with the external financing agreements. The Technical Support Group (TSG) for DPEP provides professional support and technical assistance to the DPEP.



At the state level, autonomous societies have been registered and a State Project Office has been set for the implementation of the DPEP. The structure of the society at the state level is comprised of two bodies, namely, the General Council (GC) and Executive Committee (EC). Members in both the bodies include representatives of the Central and State Education Department, representatives of NGOs, Universities, noted educationists, teachers, women activists, and personnel from other related state government departments. The EC and GC meet regularly to review progress of the Programme, to accord approval of work plans and to facilitate implementation. The nature of the composition of the GC and EC facilitates better coordination between various government departments and promotes convergence of services at various levels.

All the districts have established a district DPEP Committee with representatives from the district education department, NGOs, *Panchayat* members, VECs as well as functional specialists. This Committee reviews the progress of DPEP in the district and works towards widening the network of supportive agencies and provides coordination between different participating agencies. At the district level, that is the cutting edge, the Programme operates through the existing machinery of the State Education Department, which is augmented by specialist staff as well as flexibility in procedural aspects.

The DPEP management structure envisages initiation and completion of the process of planning at the district level first. State level intervention strategies and plans are meant to provide

Planning Paradigm: From Blueprint to Process

DPEP's planning process evidences a major shift of planning paradigms. The process approach to planning with decentralisation as its essential defining characteristic reflects a marked move from blueprint planning.

DPEP planning is need based and is considered as a continuous process not limited to the preparation of a blueprint plan. The mechanisms envisaged for planning of DPEP are dynamic in character providing for preparation of project plans, annual plans, appraisal and supervision reports as part of a continuing planning process. Planning and implementation are regarded as mutually dependent activities that refine and improve each other. Monitoring and evaluation systems form important links in the process of planning and implementation by providing continuous feedback on impact and giving the insight to replan. Planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation are thus seen as part of a continuous process providing possibilities of revisions and mid term corrections to original plans through the dynamic mechanisms of appraisals, annual workplans, mid term reviews and supervisions. This is the difference between a blueprint plan and a process project.

A unique feature of the Programme is that the project States and the Centre work in partnership to further the goals of UPE. A decentralised approach to preparing plans also involves initiating participatory processes at district, sub-district and village levels. DPEP planning process emphasises on development of micro plans at District and State levels. The preparation of detailed project and annual plans is the responsibility of project states and districts. Project plans are required to provide an analysis of district and state specific problems and issues leading to a clear definition of project objectives, an analysis of district and state specific problems and issues and detailing out of project strategies and implementation plans combined with flexibility about the means by which the project objectives are to be achieved. The effort of preparing a project really pays for itself several times over when it is well planned.

Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWPBs) provide opportunities for district and state plans to be adjusted as the project proceeds allowing for continuous redesign during implementation. They offer a dynamic mechanism for assessing the degree to which resources and efforts are socially and geographically targetted.

administrative support to the Programme across districts and facilitate wider resource networking.

The district level plans are developed through a consultative process in order to arrive at an agreed set of priorities. There is also a heavy emphasis on active participation of the public, namely, *Panchayats*, parent-teacher associations, teacher unions, Village Education Committees and educational functionaries at the local level. Micro level planning exercises have provided tremendous scope for involvement of the people and local ownership of the programme.

District planning under DPEP takes into account the ongoing activities of the education department as well as activities undertaken by other social sector departments in order to achieve horizontal convergence at districts.

The district plans are drawn up for a period of five to seven years indicating broad strategies to achieve programme objectives. On the basis of this, detailed Annual Work Plan and Budgets (AWPBs) are prepared. The allocations are made each year based on the performance in the previous year and requirements of the coming year.

The district level plans are developed through a consultative process in order to arrive at an agreed set of priorities. There is also a heavy emphasis on active participation of the public, namely, *Panchayats*, parent-teacher associations, teacher unions, VECs and educational functionaries at the local level.

Each district prepares the AWPB reflecting the funds received and expenditure over the past year, achievements in that year and proposed targets for the next year. The district plans are put through a process of participatory appraisal and review by the Project Board of DPEP.

The flexible approach in annual work planning, smoothens the edges in the implementation of a complex programme like DPEP. While maintaining public and financial accountability, this arrangement also facilitates quicker administrative decisions. Decentralisation of decision making and the elaborate consultative process have indeed raised the expectations of the people *vis-a-vis* the Programme and has created a participatory ambience for achieving UPE.



Building community ownership

Community participation is an inbuilt intervention in DPEP. It is based on the fundamental premise that participatory mechanism in programme implementation would ensure success of the programme. The Programme has succeeded considerably in eliciting active involvement of the community in general, and the SC, ST and Backward Classes of the society, and women in particular. A primary aim of this large scale innovative venture is to empower the community to participate in the development process, especially primary education, enabling them to become stakeholders in the programme and manage schools.

Given the social, economic and cultural diversity in India, community participation is an enormous challenge. DPEP has made concerted efforts to promote wider mobilisation by focusing on participation by the poor, deprived and disadvantaged people. This is in consonance with the new democratic processes initiated in the country in the wake of the recent 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments providing statutory legitimacy to local self-governments.

DPEP stresses on the participative processes whereby the local community is enabled to play an active role in promoting enrolment, achieve-

ments and social change. This process is being institutionalised through the Village Education Committees (VECs) and bodies like Mother-Teacher Associations and Parent-Teacher Associations.

In DPEP, strategies and interventions include, amongst others, construction of school buildings, improvement of teaching-learning materials and teacher training practices as well as capacity building for academic support, designed through wide ranging consultations with grassroot level functionaries, NGOs, teacher representatives and academic support institutions. This approach actively involves the local community, particularly women, in crucial decision making. Environment building and advocacy, particularly with respect to the enrolment of girls, are areas of focus wherein both community support and participation are galvanised.

In Haryana, a high level of community mobilisation and participation in DPEP has been witnessed through representation and active participation of women members and members from the Gram Panchayat, Anganwadi, SC community and Parent-Teacher Association in the VEC. The provision of school improvement grant and carrying out a large number of civil works by Village Construction Committees,

DPEP's experience has shown that when interventions are designed by the community and are tailored to a village's distinctive characteristics, then the best results follow. Instances of community members volunteering their time and resources are being related.

which are invariably headed by a woman, have had a major impact in expanding the role of the community. Before DPEP, the community per-

Village Education Committees

All the DPEP states have formed VECs of varying size and tenure ranging from three to five years. VECs have been entrusted with specific powers, functions and resources. These institutions have been cooperating with the DPEP officials in planning, implementing and monitoring. VECs also play an assertive and supervisory role in managing Non Formal Education, Alternative Schooling and Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Centres. VECs are increasingly playing a crucial role in civil works, community mobilisation, motivating parents to send their children to schools and raising voluntary contributions from the people.



ceived the existence of the school as its only area of concern. Recent developments show that the community is increasingly participating in issues related to the school environment, the need for improvement in pedagogical practices and learning achievement levels of children.

In the state of Maharashtra, VECs have been constituted and women comprise half of the total members. VECs meet once a month, and review schools' functioning, particularly the drop-out position of girls and socially disadvantaged groups. In addition, progress of civil works, functioning of Anganwadi Centre (AWC) and effectiveness of mobilisation campaigns are often discussed. VECs undergo a systematic training programme which includes a focus on alternative, cost-effective methods of constructing infrastructural facilities for schools.

The increasing involvement of parents and the wider community is also having a salutary effect on the teaching-learning process. Moreover, DPEP's experience has shown that when interventions are designed by the community and are tailored to a village's distinctive characteristics, then the best results follow. In fact, from Assam to Kerala, instances of community members volunteering their time and resources are being related.



Imparting a gender perspective

It is imperative that education, if it is to fulfil its potential as a decisive intervention towards social equity, must move beyond the domain of literacy to create an environment where women are enabled to come together to explore their situations, recognise and affirm their own strengths and capacities, and act to bring about change. A direct spin-off was envisaged in enhanced awareness and emphasis on girls' education.

Towards this end, a gender perspective has been incorporated in all aspects of planning and implementation, and is an integral part of DPEP. Programme goals include a specific focus on reduction of gender disparities in education, as reflected in lower enrolment, retention and achievement of girls, particularly those from socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Pertinent lessons have been drawn from the *Mahila Samakhya* Project where women are helped to recognise and affirm their own and each other's strengths and skills, and overcome their fears and inhibitions.

Specific strategies have been designed in the Programme to enhance girls' access, enrolment and retention in the school system:

- Educational incentives such as free text books;

- Flexible school timings;
- Gender sensitive curricula and textbooks;
- Improved school buildings with provision of toilets for girls;
- More female teachers;
- Escort systems in some states;
- ECCE centres close to primary schools and convergence with the ICDS to support girls' attendance in schools;
- School health programmes;



Apart from these, the Programme recognises the crucial importance of enabling communities, particularly women, to play an active role in every aspect of the Programme:

- Formation of village-level women's collective and training of local women activists to catalyse collective actions around education issues.
- Empowerment of local bodies such as Village Education Committees, Mother-Teacher Associations and women's groups to enable them to take the responsibility for promoting education in their areas.
- Intensive capacity building for community and women's groups, to focus on issues of education for girls.
- Involvement of community and women's organisations in mobilisation and school management, and in monitoring enrolment, retention, levels of achievement and classroom transactions, with emphasis on girls.
- Mobilising informed and active participation at the local level to build and sustain an environment supportive of girls' education.
- DPEP either funds *Mahila Samakhya* programmes or works in close coordination with them.

DPEP recognises that institutions in charge of catalysing change and enforcing gender awareness policies



Developing Gender Sensitivity

A number of affirmative activities have been taken up to deepen gender awareness and build capacity for the same. These are carried out in the form of regular interactions with state level coordinators, by evolving district-specific gender sensitive strategies, building local resource institutions and facilitating information flow on emerging concerns:

- DPEP has created the post of Gender Coordinator in all districts and state project offices to ensure an on-going integration of a gender perspective.

- In December 1995, an exercise was conducted with national level gender coordinators to clarify the conceptual basis of gender relations. This helped the participants to understand the fact that gender needs have broad implications for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- A two-day meeting of the gender coordinators was held in April 1996 to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the gender coordinators in relation to the DPEP interventions. By the end of the exercise, participants found that they had been and would continue to play multiple roles within the organisation as catalysts of gender action, in-house gender resource persons and as internal ombudsmen.

- In September 1996, the NCERT designed and conducted the first DPEP National Workshop on Early Childhood Education. Viewed as critical to retaining school age girls in the classroom and developing the learning habit among children, the workshop helped clarify the links between primary schooling and ECE and the effective role of this linkage in supporting girls' entry into and retention in primary schools.

- Quarterly meetings of all DPEP gender coordinators are held for interstate sharing of experiences and also to build their capacities to handle specific thematic areas. Previous meetings have concentrated on role definition, pedagogical renewal and gender monitoring.

need constant reiteration about their roles and responsibilities to build sensitivity on a sustained basis. Efforts for developing monitoring indicators and detailing a Gender Audit Framework are underway to ensure that a system of monitoring from a gender perspective becomes an integral part of the programme.

Though slow, changes are now perceptible. There is discernible evidence to show both higher enrolment and retention amongst girl pupils and a more affirmative climate in the community to support education of the girl child. Women are taking on new roles, of effective political participation, of acquiring new skills and qualifications, of acquiring control over local resources, of building an autonomous and independent identity and of building links and networking with other groups and movements.

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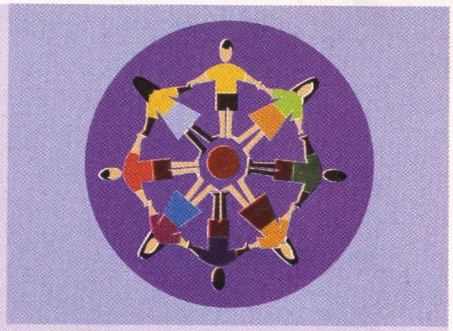


Striving for social equity

One of the major objectives of DPEP is to reduce the disparities between tribal and non-tribal children in enrolment, retention and learner achievement to less than 5 per cent. Since the tribals are not a homogenous group with regard to socio-economic conditions, literacy levels, etc., the approach under DPEP is group/region specific. Access and retention are the issues in tribal areas because of small and scattered habitations, involvement of children in various economic activities/household chores and migration. In many places, the problems are acute as the curriculum and text books have little relevance to tribal culture.

Based on these issues, the following have been identified as precedence areas under DPEP by the states :

- Identification of tribes having specific problems and addressing them under the DPEP.
- Covering all the tribal habitations by setting up schools or its alternative.
- Opening ECCE centres in tribal areas on a priority basis.
- Campaigning and contact programmes in tribal areas.
- Reviewing of the curricula and instructional materials and teacher sensitisation programmes.
- Developing innovative alternative arrangements for migrating population.
- Sensitising the field functionaries toward tribal-specific areas.

Towards this end, efforts are constantly on to increase the tribal com-

munities' access to education and development while maintaining their distinctive culture. Education in tribal areas has received a boost with DPEP giving priority to the opening of schools in tribal areas. Some of the interventions include setting up of residential schools, creating a cadre of parateachers within the community, involvement of NGOs, teaching in local dialects and developing culturally-sensitive education material. Several national-level workshops have been organised to facilitate inter-state sharing and networking with resource organisations and institutions working on tribal education.

Future strategies include identifying the focus areas and the needs of the states with respect to tribal education and providing the necessary support, ensuring the provision of complete access in tribal areas, targeting the migrating tribes of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, revision in the method of teaching Language and Mathematics to tribal children, attitudinal and language training for the teachers and identifying pockets with high incidence of child labour and addressing these issues under the DPEP.

Similarly, DPEP is in the process of galvanising and mobilising resources for the educational upliftment of the scheduled castes and the minority community with a view towards ushering in social equity and justice for all. It is stipulated that VECs must have at least one representative from the SC community. Educational incentives

Alternative Schooling

It is clear that despite efforts at quality improvement in formal schools, certain categories of children would not be able to participate in the formal schooling system.

Every state is deciding to set up different forms of alternative schools to ensure participation of working children, street children, children of migrating communities, drop-outs, etc. Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Haryana and Tamil Nadu have set up Alternative Schooling (AS) centres for such target groups.

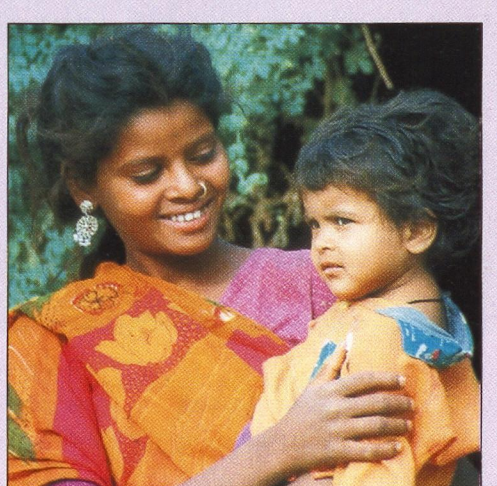
Other innovations like summer camps, school libraries, mobile schools, etc., are also being planned. The stress is on development of flexible schooling strategies that are sensitive to the requirement of particular groups. The pedagogic practices of multi-level, multi-grade transactions which are at the core of a flexible alternate school are being given a lot of attention.

Provision of minimum educational facilities for child labourers and street children have also been started.

Education of Tribal Children

Assam : Efforts are made to utilise the NFE centres as alternative schooling facilities in tribal areas and eleven centres have been taken up on a pilot basis. Tribal bazaars have also been used effectively. To get a first hand knowledge of ethno-linguistic background of the different areas and the resulting language issues, a linguistic mapping of all the districts has been carried out by the Guwahati University.

Madhya Pradesh : Here, the DPEP and the Tribal Welfare Department are working together towards the construction of primary schools and have shared costs. The DPEP, Madhya Pradesh is working to ensure that the parents and community support education of the tribal child. Tribal consultants have been appointed and take charge of the environment building activities.



Maharashtra : A tribal dialect dictionary has been developed to help the non-tribal teachers to reach the tribal child. A special awards scheme has been devised to recognise the efforts of teachers posted in tribal schools. Also an innovative programme of 'adopting' 1,000 tribal students has been initiated. Educational materials, books, socks and shoes have been given to them with contributions from the local people.

Tamil Nadu : The state has decided to open 23 NFE centres in each tribal block on a pilot basis. A special training programme for teachers posted in tribal schools has been developed. This programme will orient them to the special needs and culture of tribal children and help to evolve good classroom practices which are child-friendly. Coaching classes are also being held regularly to help tribal children improve their achievement rates.

Orissa : Through a number of participatory workshops with teachers working in tribal areas, attitudinal and classroom transactions important for tribal areas have been identified.

such as free textbooks and reading and writing material are provided to the disadvantaged children to encourage them to enter and remain in school. Demand generation at village level to bring the disadvantaged children to school is definitely encouraged, and increasing emphasis is being laid on pedagogical renewal and new and innovative schemes to enhance child participation rates. A draft approach paper on the problems of SCs and minorities is also under preparation. It would not be far removed from the truth if we say that DPEP is not only a programme for educational transformation but helps social transformation as well.

DPEP is not only a programme for educational transformation but helps social transformation as well.





Integrating the disabled

With an aim to place children with disabilities on par with other children, DPEP has chalked out a concrete programme. Under this initiative, to provide for the integrated education of the disabled children, DPEP has been funding interventions for the integrated education of primary school going children with integrable and mild to moderate disabilities.

Early detection: Early detection of disabilities amongst pre-school and school readiness programmes have already started under DPEP. In areas covered by similar programmes, DPEP wil provide support for this purpose.

In-service teacher training: The development of skills and competencies for early detection of disabilities, functional assessment, use of aids and appliances, implementation of individualized education plans and monitoring of progress in all primary school teachers will be done through in-service teacher training programmes. This training is recursive at block and cluster level and integrated with the ongoing in-service teacher training schedules and all training modules at SCERT, DIET and BRC level include a suitable component on integrated education.

Resource support: This is to be achieved by:

- garnering resource support for integrated education at block/district level through arrangements with NGOs

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and other organisations having expertise in this field. Wherever necessary, DPEP will resource technical support with requisite personnel and equipment at block level in order to provide guidance and technical assistance to primary school teachers, the community, the parents and children of that area.

- strengthening of DIETs in the field of integrated education to facilitate development of suitable in-service training modules, providing training to master trainers and continuous resource support to BRCs and CRCs for integrated education.
- a Programme Officer for Integrated Education at the DPEP district project office.
- the setting up of an advisory state resource group for integrated education in DPEP with at least three experts in this field.
- an apex level resource group at the national level to provide guidance, technical and academic support to Integrated Education under DPEP.

Educational aids and appliances: This includes provision of essential rehabilitation and educational aids and appliances to primary school children, as per an approved list. Such items may be purchased through DPEP funds subject to first assessing available aids and appliances under existing schemes of the Department of Education, the Ministry of Welfare and others.

Keeping the educational goals firmly under perspective, DPEP is taking a determined and purposeful stand to successfully create an ambience for the integration of disabled children into the national educational mainstream.

Architectural designs: Consideration is to be given to the development of innovative designs for primary schools and removal of architectural barriers in existing schools to provide an enabling environment for children with disabilities.

Thus, keeping the educational goals firmly under perspective, DPEP is taking a determined and purposeful stand to successfully create an ambience for the integration of disabled children into the national educational mainstream.



Expanding pedagogical horizons

Quality improvements in education are at the core of DPEP. The programme links institutional materials and teacher training with school processes and classroom practices in an effort to integrate pedagogical necessities with broader educational concerns.

The programme has particularly emphasised improving the quality of teaching and making learning a joyful experience for students. This has meant a review, and in most cases, overhaul of the textbooks, development of new teacher guides and handbooks, and supplementary reading material alongwith self-learning workbooks for children. Most states have conducted workshops involving state and district-level personnel to evolve a common, internalised pedagogical understanding of the changes desired in the school environment, classroom processes, textbooks and related issues.

Textbook development commenced right in the first year of the Programme and states are at various levels in this activity. Most of the states have developed MLL-oriented activity-based textbooks. In most states, textbooks are being made for successive classes every year. One important element of activity in the area of textbook devel-

opment is the introduction of trialling; this ranges from large scale, full model, year long trialling as in Madhya Pradesh to trying out sample material over a short duration in Kerala. While a few states have been planning to introduce periodically released supplementary reading material there has been considerable work in all the states in the area of creating teaching learning material and low-cost learning aids. Much of this has happened at the district and sub-district level during training programmes and monthly meetings at the cluster level, especially in conjuction with the utilisation of the contingency grant of Rs. 500 per teacher for material.

What is being attempted is a little short of a renaissance, and a quiet one at that. Alongwith the change in textbooks and workbooks, all teachers in DPEP districts are being trained in the new pedagogy. In-service teacher training has rarely been undertaken on such a large scale. Further, this is not being conceived as a one-time exercise. Instead, the training programme is being followed up with regular and on-going academic support. For this, DPEP has set up Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs). BRCs and CRCs have been established and their personnel trained in all states. Arguably, the most significant intervention has been the initiation and consolidation of teacher support through decentralised sub-district level resource centres and resource persons. At BRCs and CRCs, the focus has shifted from lecture-demonstrations to an interactive, empowering approach.

Pedagogical Innovations

Improvement in the quality of primary education is at the core of DPEP. The key areas in which interventions have been planned and are being implemented are :

- fostering a clear pedagogic vision of an active, child-centred classroom.
- developing in-service teacher training which is participatory and experiential in nature and which addresses classroom issues.
- development of activity-oriented teaching-learning material including textbooks that would help in achieving MLLs.
- to support the pedagogical renewal processes, increasing stress is being laid on strengthening and capacity building of existing state and district-level academic support institutes like DIET and SCERT and setting up of sub-district structures like Block and Cluster Resource Centres to provide on-site support to teachers.

The regularly held teacher *sammelans*, exposure trips to other districts and states, interaction with non-governmental organisations and attitudinal trainings ensure the teachers' continued interest in upgrading their skills. The training programmes lay emphasis on MLLs, activity-based child-centred teaching methods, content areas and creation and use of teaching-learning materials. Other aspects that are increasingly being made a part of teacher training are gender sensitisation, special issues in education of tribal children and other disadvantaged groups and community involvement.

Further, the training programmes have moved away from the earlier 'one-way' lecture-dominated training methods towards approaches where the

Teaching-learning Materials

In Madhya Pradesh, the strategy adopted under DPEP for developing teaching-learning materials is one of multiple package trialling on a selective scale so as to create opportunities for trying out different learning packages with innovative methodologies as well as tapping the potential of developing contexual materials; the material supports the basic vision of an activity-oriented child-centred pedagogy.

The curriculum and textbook renewal process in Kerala has been very innovative. It has enlisted the support of many teachers, parents, child psychologists, social activists etc. The new textbooks are proving to be very useful in supporting a teaching-learning process that stresses learning rather than teaching, problem solving and creativity among children.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS & TEACHERS AT ELEMENTARY STAGE

(Figures in thousands)

	Number of Schools		Number of Teachers			
Year	*1990-91*	*1994-95*	*1990-91 Total*	*% of female 1990-91*	*1994-95 Total*	*% of female 1994-95*
Primary	560	581	1616	29.3	1714	31.1
Upper Primary	151	164	1073	33.2	1122	34.8
Elementary	711	745	2689	30.8	2836	32.5

Source: Government of India, Department of Education, MDR Report on Education for All 1990-95

emphasis is on creating learning experiences for them which are themselves a manifestation of the classroom practices being advocated. Practical classroom issues of multi-grade, multi-level and multi-lingual structures are beginning to be addressed. The trainers have also realised the need for their exposure to and understanding of the grassroots situation to be able to meaningfully support teachers. The training programmes are focusing on the transaction of the newly developed materials in classroom situations. In many states, the process of introducing supplementary reading materials has started.

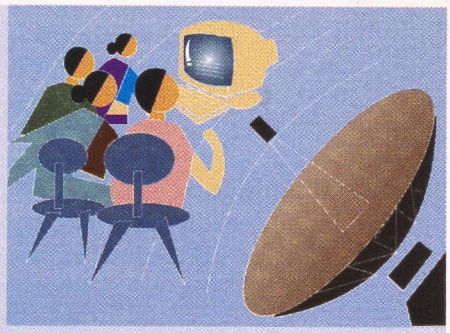
Teacher Training

A complete shift has been observed in the role of resource persons conducting training programmes. The emphasis is on understanding of classroom processes and the school situation.

The academic support mechanism of Block Resource Centre and Cluster Resource Centre has also ensured that training is not divorced from reality and teachers are assisted in practising the issues that are discussed in the training programmes.

The teachers are motivated to inculcate and develop gender and local sensitive approach and curricula. Their contributions towards developing strategies for multi-grade schools are beginning to be appreciated. It is generally apparent that the teacher plays a major role in implementing the policies and schemes formulated to achieve a breakthrough in the qualitative improvement of education. Concerted efforts have been taken in the area of distance education for teachers. Teaching being the largest and still growing profession in India, the attention paid to working conditions of teachers has borne fruit in recent years. Upgrading the quality of the teaching staff, bringing about improvement in their working conditions and undertaking special steps towards motivation will no doubt contribute towards quality EFA.





Strengthening training through distance learning

To support the in-service teacher and other training activities currently being carried out by the different states under the DPEP, the Distance Education Project (DEP) has been identified as a major area of intervention under the programme. The DEP aims at the strengthening of ongoing training programmes of primary education personnel by using distance learning inputs and materials. This will help in enlarging coverage and improving the effectiveness of the teacher learning process in the primary schools.

The programme aims at designing and delivering materials, both print and other media, to address the cultural and curricular diversity of the participating states where DPEP operates.

The programme will provide technical support and help build capacity among institutions and people at national, state, district and sub-district levels in designing, developing, producing and delivering distance learning inputs and materials for training the primary education personnel, assist in reducing transmission loss by suitable distance educational learning interventions thereby increasing consistency and quality of training efforts and develop materials and organise

training inputs for selected district level personnel.

The DEP is anchored by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) as the lead agency in close collaboration with NCERT by providing expertise to all DPEP States in order to help them strengthen their training efforts through harnessing distance learning inputs and materials.

The programme was formally launched on 26th February, 1997 through a Teleconference on Distance Education Programme organised by IGNOU. This was done to

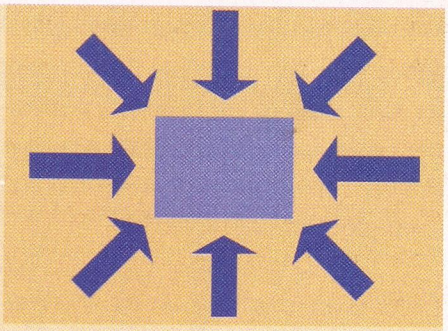
- introduce the programme to the State and district level functionaries ;
- provide for interaction between DPEP functionaries and experts in Distance Learning and teacher training through the distance mode ;
- get views/reactions and feedback regarding Distance Education Programme from state and district level personnel;
- demonstrate the use of media as a mode of communication.

This was followed by two Technical Workshops held at Mumbai and Delhi which has helped to take stock of current status of teacher training efforts in the various states and to develop an understanding where DEP interventions can be effective.

The DEP aims at the strengthening of on-going training programmes in primary education personnel by using distance learning inputs and materials. This will help in enlarging coverage and improving the effectiveness of the teacher learning process

As of now, groundwork is being done in the states and by the nodal agencies for an expeditious take off of the component. Steps have been initiated in various planning meetings to crystallise state specific requirements of the distance education component. Other activities include need assessment surveys, compiling a directory/inventory of available distance learning materials nation-wide, training workshops for development of modules and script writing, materials development, etc.





Convergence of services

A central concern of the Programme of Action (PoA) of 1992 is the convergence of services such as primary education, health, ECCE, etc. With the expansion of DPEP, the out-reach to other governmental and non-governmental agencies became inevitable. It also became necessary to promote convergence wherever such services exist rather than replicate them.

The emphasis on convergence has ensured establishment of linkages with existing *ashram* schools, primary health centres, other village-based and local area development schemes. In addition, convergence with projects of the Central and State Governments in the field, is slowly but surely being institutionalised.

At one level, convergence is being attempted amongst the various DPEP components and processes. An example is the convergence of issues such as institutional development, capacity building, curriculum development, teacher training and subject specialisation wise resource group. Another significant aspect is the involvement of VECs in the setting-up, facilitation and supervision of NFE centres.

At another level, DPEP is initiating efforts to effect convergence with services provided by other departments. One such effort has been to link the ICDS and the primary school. Likewise, it facilitates diagnosis of learning disabilities through medical check-up of students and better linkages between PHCs and the schools. Activi-

ties and processes such as convergence with Tribal Welfare Department for education of girl children, convergence in civil works and *Jawahar Rozgar Yojana* (JRY) are promoted and supported through DPEP.

There is an emphasis on the involvement of older children in health care and education of younger children through child-to-child activities, including making of toys, participating in creative activities for mental stimulation, promoting healthy habits, cleanliness and nutritional awareness. These activities are taken up in primary schools, health centres, NFE centres, *bal bhavans*, voluntary agencies and community centres and also through home-based activities by involving mother/other family adults for children's development.

Besides these, networking with Government as well as Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) has been one of the strengths of DPEP. NGOs have emerged as important actors in the area of social development in the country. These institutions are important stakeholders in social development programmes and their participation is crucial. They are also a repository of knowledge of grassroots realities because of their proximity to the people and expertise. Building on the experience gained in previous projects, DPEP is drawing upon the resources and skills of the voluntary sector to strengthen programme implementation.

Aiming for Synergy

The state governments are taking the following steps to ensure effective convergence:

- coordination of timings between primary schools and *anganwadi/balwadi* centres;
- primary school buildings to be used for *anganwadi/balwadi* activities wherever possible;
- primary school teachers to visit *anganwadi/balwadi* centres to ensure better enrolment at primary school level;
- organisations such as the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to be identified to draw up pre-school materials and curriculum in local languages and locally acceptable techniques which could be used in ECCE activities;
- personnel imparting early childhood education to be trained specifically in ECCE component by SCERT and other organisations;

In the last two years, DPEP has reached out and assimilated expertise from several academic and management institutions. The DPEP Mission, the apex body of DPEP, includes NGO representatives. This ensures that the

overall direction to the project is influenced by the experience of non-State agencies. There is a mandatory provision for the representation and participation of NGOs in all state, district and sub-district level decision-making bodies, viz., General Council, Executive Committee, District Implementation Committees and VECs.

All DPEP national-level workshops, training programmes and interactions include resource persons from NGOs and academic resource institutions. This provides state-level representatives with an opportunity to learn and also chalk out plans for a long-term association. NGOs are represented in all state-level functional area resource groups, which play a major role in directing, advising and shaping implementation designs and strategies.

These efforts are being followed in all the states and districts. In many districts, the NGOs are running alternative schooling centres and early education centres. Madhya Pradesh is one such state where NGOs have provided resource support for Alternative Schooling and *Shishu Shikshan Kendras* programmes. In Maharashtra, an NGO has been involved for the first time in training VECs in cost-effective and alternative methods of constructing water pumps and toilets. NGOs belonging to Tamil Nadu are being involved in the actual running of NFE and ECE centres. Working in small areas, NGOs are able to deliver quality results at a relatively low cost.

Networking with Government as well as Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) has been one of the strengths of DPEP. Building on the experience gained in previous projects, DPEP is drawing upon the resources and skills of the non-governmental sector to strengthen programme implementation.



Institutional development and capacity building

Even as DPEP expands from seven states to fourteen and is proposing extension to additional districts in a phased manner, the pressure on and expectations of the Programme from the management structure has necessitated building and strengthening new institutions both within and outside the system. The management system has also geared itself towards involving a wide range of important players in the programme and strengthening new and existing institutions, promoting decentralisation and community participation. Besides establishing some new structures, the District Primary Education Programme has created and strengthened institutional capacity at all levels.

Capacity building and management in DPEP focuses on the following:

- Developing a network of technical resource support institutions having expertise in planning and management;
- Creating and strengthening of state level institutional capacity for educational planning and management. For this purpose, State Institutes of Educational Management and Training (SIEMTs) are set up and the existing institutions such as SCERT, IIMs, Institutes of Public Administration are networked for support;

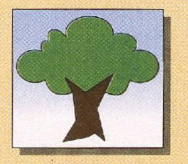
- Development of district and sub-district level programme support institutions, such as DIET, BRC and CRC;
- Developing research and development agenda related to educational planning and management;
- Developing and implementing capacity building programmes for VECs, and other Panchayat Raj bodies.

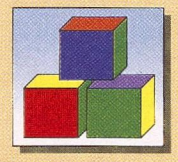
The District Primary Education Programme endeavours to develop a system and network of resource institutions/mechanisms at all levels from national to sub-block level. Such a system is necessary to ensure sustenance and continuity of the processes and programmes initiated by DPEP.

A dynamic strategy has been articulated and practised in order to ensure effective management of the Programme with necessary flexibility. As a first step, key areas such as appraisal, supervision and planning are being decentralised with the active support of Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie. The key components of DPEP management strategy are networking, institutional development and capacity building, developing subject specialisation wise resource groups, and intra and inter-sectoral convergence.

The project is steadily building a base for technical support to enrich the programme by creating a network of appropriate institutions and also using the experience and expertise available within the country to the maximum. The initial network of DPEP comprising mainly of TSG, NIEPA and NCERT has expanded further to include institutions like LBSNAA, IGNOU, IIMs, ICSSR Institutions and Universities, etc.

DPEP Institutional Resource network





NCERT RIE SCERT DIET Social Sciences and Research Organisations	NIEPA SIEMT IIMs LBSNAA IGNOU Universities	BRC CRC VEC/PTA/MTC/SMC Primary Schools

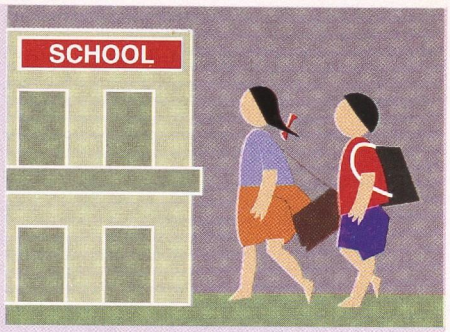
In addition to the on-going efforts on capacity building of the resource institutions into SCERT, DIET, SRG, BRC and CRC, the need for exclusive and extensive efforts for developing capacities outside the regular structures was felt. Towards this end, four critical areas where capacities need to be strengthened have been identified:

- Planning and Management,
- Improvement of Pedagogy and Teacher Training,
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Research, and
- Institutional Development

The objective of this initiative is to create a pool of about 250 persons across DPEP states in the above areas, who can in turn act as Master Trainers and provide necessary technical support required by the enlarged DPEP in the years to come. The emphasis is to identify state based institutions who will then be trained by the National Level Training Institutions in these skill areas. To further augment the capacities of the National Training Institutions, twinning arrangements with acclaimed institutions abroad is also envisaged.

The current focus of DPEP is on institutionalising various processes followed within the programme, strengthening networks and evolving intra and inter-sectoral coordination.

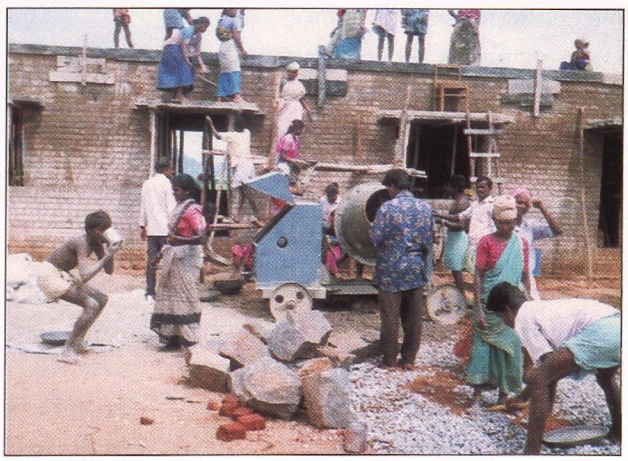
The focus is now on institutionalising various processes followed within District Primary Education Programme, strengthening networks and evolving intra and inter-sectoral coordination.



Civil works

One of the most important component of District Primary Education Programme is civil works. The programme finances strengthening of physical infrastructure for primary education. There is a ceiling of 24 per cent of the total project costs for the construction programme in DPEP. This had led to the prioritization of construction needs and ensured that only additional requirements, over and above the normal state government sponsored or Operation Blackboard funded construction activities, are promoted by DPEP. It has also paved the way for a convergence of funds for civil constructions with other government programmes like *Jawahar Rozgar Yojana* (JRY) and area development programmes.

The construction supported by DPEP are new school buildings, additional classrooms, buildings for existing schools without any buildings, repair works, provision of drinking water, toilet facilities and also developing infrastructure for Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Cluster Resource



Centres (CRCs), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMTs). The emphasis is on developing designs to suit pedagogical needs and cost effective methods of construction. Community involvement in construction is another area of focus. An Innovation Fund has been made available to all DPEP states to develop new pedagogically-sensitive school construction designs.

On the whole there has been considerable improvement in the implementation of civil works. All the states now have clearly identified their implementation agencies, construction manuals are ready and procurement processes and actual construction are underway. Supervision arrangements are in place. Initial bottlenecks and constraints related to procurement and procedural aspects delayed the quick take off of the civil works programme, but these have been identified and addressed to a large extent. Monitoring has become much more rigorous.

The qualitative aspect of civil works is being addressed by all the DPEP I states. Independent evaluations of civil works is being encouraged in all states. Design renewal is being seriously considered by all DPEP states as they expand under Phase II and they are striving towards making civil works more cost-effective.

Community Involvement in Civil Works

Enthusiastic response has been elicited from people in many of the states with regard to civil works. The community members, in particular the VECs, have been in the forefront raising voluntary contributions from the people and motivating the parents to send their children to school. Popular participation of this kind is bound to make community ownership of the Programme strong by enhancing its effectiveness and ensuring sustainability.

Haryana, Assam, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh have implemented large community based civil works programme.

Andhra Pradesh is implementing their civil works through Village Education Committees (VECs). All buildings except for BRCs' are being constructed through community participation. In Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are being involved in supervising of civil works and initiating design renewal.



Research and evaluation

DPEP is a continuously evolving process for quality of primary education in India. Since the pre-project stage, a number of research studies have been initiated to gain valuable insights into the nature of interventions that are underway. The perception-based understanding of research-based strategies for effective programme implementation has been the guiding spirit in the District Primary Education Programme. The Programme has also been instrumental in creating a conducive environment for intensifying research in elementary education.

Research in the field of primary education has now become a priority for most organisations having concern for human development. Even organisations which had never focused their work in this field such as management institutes and social sciences institutes have all joined the DPEP family and have participated in a number of research and evaluation projects.

Research is no more compartmentalised in narrow subject disciplines under DPEP. A pragmatic, multi-disciplinary approach has overcome the specialisation barriers and has forced most individuals to adopt a multi-disciplinary frame of reference in their subject of study. Evaluations, on the other hand, have been concurrent and continuous for planning interventions. All strategic interventions that have been interwoven in the Programme so far have used the findings of the studies commissioned/

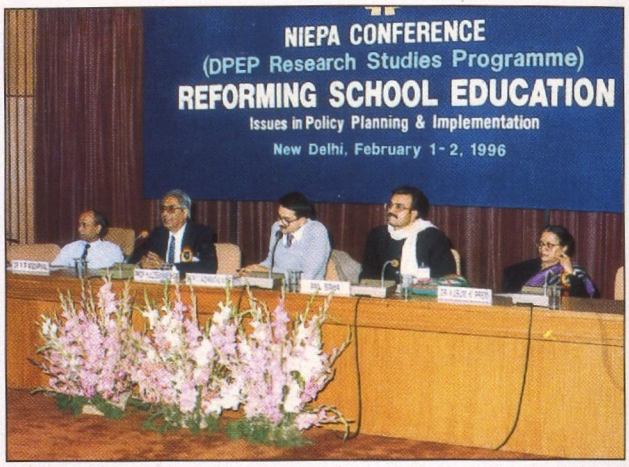
conducted under the programme. The Technical Support Group (TSG) and the NCERT are responsible for conducting/commissioning of research and evaluation studies.

The aims and objectives of the national research and evaluation programme in the DPEP have evolved from a continuous needs assessment. The present focus is :

- to improve educational research and evaluation capacity at national and state levels.
- to conduct or commission systematic research studies in primary education and evaluations for the programme.
- to disseminate the results of research, studies and evaluation periodically.
- to organise international conferences and study tours.
- to provide technical support to state level institutes and persons to build their capacity in research and evaluation.
- to buildup areas of learning from research findings for purposes of insights into DPEP interventions.

The following are some of the activities that have been initiated/undertaken at the national level :

- Finalisation of tests in Mathematics and Language for Classes I, III and IV for use in future learners' achievement surveys.



- Study of Institutional Development-State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs).
- A pilot study on classroom processes in the DPEP schools.
- Overview of research on the girl child.
- A status paper on NFE.
- Action research programmes.
- Support to states in guidance, capacity building and dissemination.
- Research support guidelines.

Research and evaluation are increasingly playing a critical role in defining the direction and scale of interventions. Most of the states have identified areas in which they would require additional information in order to plan meaningful interventions and are prioritising research requirements for networking and capacity building.



Management information system

An effective and efficient Management Information System plays a key role in the success of any project. DPEP is being monitored closely through a computerised information system to track the progress of project interventions, as well as effective utilisation of funds.

To meet the requirements of the Programme, two software packages have been developed. These are known as the Project Management Information System (PMIS) and the Educational Management Information System (EMIS). PMIS and EMIS monitor programme inputs and educational indicators respectively. Information on expected outcomes and financial disbursements also helps planners and implementors analyse programme impact and effectiveness.

PMIS essentially serves as a progress monitoring tool. The software tracks the progress of delivery of project inputs and fund movement. It monitors trends in key project areas. Quarterly progress reports are generated.

Both the PMIS and EMIS are operational in the states under DPEP. State and district MIS units are equipped with required hardware-software and trained manpower. In Assam, databases on the VEC, its composition

Objectives of PMIS and EMIS

The main objectives of PMIS are :

- to track the progress of delivery of project inputs;
- to monitor the fund movement;
- to monitor the physical progress of the project activities;
- to provide project performance indicators which help the project authorities to take corrective steps for smooth implementation of the project.

EMIS is a comprehensive software package for monitoring educational indicators. The main objectives of EMIS are :

- to develop a framework for collection of educational statistics from recognised institutions imparting primary education;
- to create a school level computerized database at the district level;
- to provide access to school level database to educational planners, administrators and researchers at district, state and national level;
- to provide information on key educational indicators to monitor the progress of primary education at the district/state and national level.



and schools covered by it, have been created. These also include BRC/CRC details. In the state of Madhya Pradesh, the Integrated Management Information System is designed to assist in the details of day-to-day project management including expenditure forecasting.

A number of interventions are being planned to enhance the effectiveness of the Management Information System such as improving the quality of data and information and making information available on-line and training programmes for better use of the information generated and its analysis for planning purposes.

An effective and efficient Management Information System plays a key role in the success of any project. The District Primary Education Programme is one among the first social sector projects in the country that is being monitored closely through a computerised information system.



Supervision and monitoring

What perhaps sets DPEP apart from the earlier attempts at UEE is close scrutiny of its performance and premium on accountability at all levels.

DPEP provides for regular Supervision Missions to each of the States to assess progress in the context of project goals and identify areas where technical assistance is required to improve interventions. Information on the progress of the implementation of the Programme components is gathered and analysed on a continuous basis and with steady periodicity. This ensures targeting technical support and capacity building efforts in key areas, and enables states and districts to make mid-course corrections.

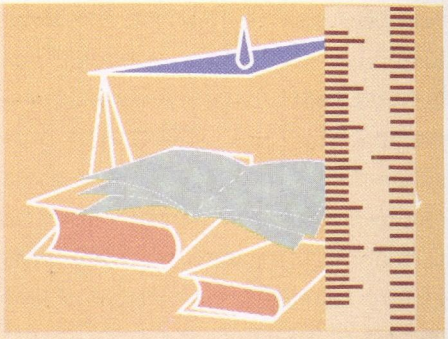
The DPEP Supervision design is a new and unique arrangement in development cooperation in that the Government of India and the funding agencies jointly conduct half-yearly visits to project states and district to assess progress in implementation. In addition, especially for the newer states and districts joining the DPEP, quarterly visits are organised by the Government of India. Independent persons and eminent experts are engaged in this review process.

Five Joint Supervision Missions (JSMs)

have been mounted till date. The feedback provided by this exercise has been both useful and relevant for programme implementation and provided useful insights for mid-course changes and better planning. The District Primary Education Programme plans to qualitatively improve the process of Supervision by organising a national workshop once a year on thematic areas, which will provide a platform for interstate sharing of experiences.

This unique aspect makes District Primary Education Programme an efficiently supervised and monitored programme in the social sector of the country.

What perhaps sets DPEP apart from the earlier attempts at UEE is the effort towards developing systematic planning and accountability at all levels. Well defined activities and goals are specified in a time-bound manner with clearcut responsibilities assigned to specific implementation agencies.



Appraisal

All the five to seven year perspective plans prepared by the districts and states and the process of project planning goes through a rigorous appraisal cycle. Appraisal in DPEP is both a quantitative and qualitative exercise and has been interwoven in the process of planning. It supports the planning inputs as much as it assesses the capacity of the state/district to implement the programme. State and district plans of each new DPEP state are appraised by the DPEP Bureau with the assistance of its Technical Support Group. Each state receives appraisal missions thrice during the cycle : at the initiation of project preparation, at the stage of first cut of district plans and on finalisation of plans after completion.

The appraisal objectives are to:

- Assess the process of planning.
- Identify and prioritise issues and problems.
- Examine activities in terms of institutional capability, scheduling and phasing.
- Assess strategies in terms of social feasibility, technical feasibility, financial feasibility and managerial feasibility.
- Assist the districts and states in refining their plans through capacity planning.

Within the programme, the appraisal process is viewed as critical to project success of pre-project studies and other related documentation.

DPEP is one of the few programmes

of this size that attempts decentralised planning in a participatory manner. Thus, the process is wider in range than the usual project appraisal.

During appraisal the capacity of a state to finance its share and to sustain the recurrent costs of the programme is assessed. The assessment process takes into consideration the justification for launching the programme in a specific state, the technical feasibility of achieving project objectives through outlined strategies and interventions, the cost effectiveness of the various proposals and the social and institutional capacity to ensure project objectives are met in the specified time frame.

During the first six months of 1997 as many as 75 district plans from nine states were appraised by professional experts. Truly, national capacities for appraising social sector projects have emerged from the process. More significantly however, the appraisal process has introduced an element of efficiency and premium on quality in project preparations, which in the long run ensures high degree of readiness to launch and sustain steady implementation.

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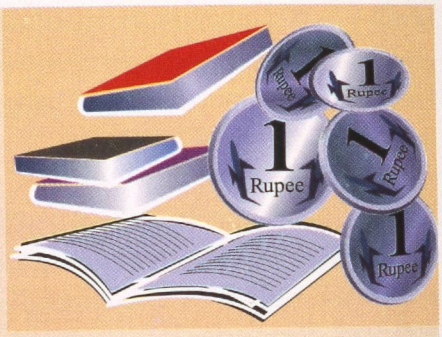
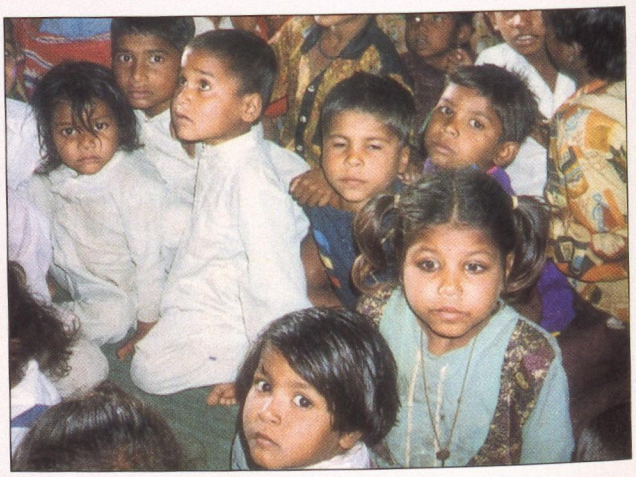


The financing of DPEP

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) is a centrally sponsored scheme whereby districts develop proposals for improvement in primary education. Once these proposals are appraised and approved, the Government of India provides eighty-five per cent and the concerned State Government provides the remaining fifteen per cent of financial requirements.

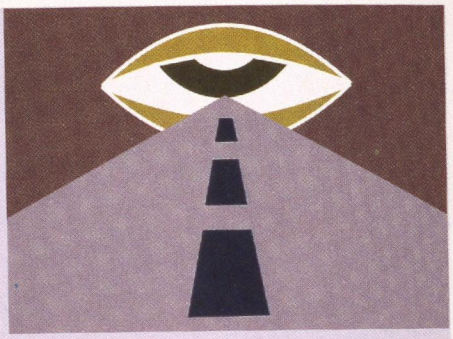
Under this process, districts draw up plans on the basis of DPEP guidelines, informed by pre-project studies, and participatory planning process. The District Primary Education Programme is a national 'homegrown' programme. The Programme has generated a great deal of international interest and support. The Programme has therefore attracted financial support from multiple sources, both from multilateral financial agencies, the United Nations System as well as bilateral funding agencies.



External Assistance tied-up for DPEP

Programme	Funding Agency	Amount	Period
DPEP Phase I Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu	World Bank	US $ 260 million (Rs. 806 crores)	1994-95 to 2001-02
DPEP Madhya Pradesh	European Community (EC)	ECU 150 million (Rs. 585 crores)	1994 to 1999
DPEP Phase II Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Orissa Expansion in DPEP States and UP	World Bank Netherlands (for Gujarat)	US $ 425 million (Rs. 1,480 crores) US $ 25.8 million (Rs. 90 crores)	1996-97 to 2001-02
DPEP Phase II Andhra Pradesh West Bengal	ODA (UK)	£ 42.5 million (Rs. 220 crores) £ 37.71 million (Rs. 207 crores)	1996 to 2003
DPEP Phase III Bihar	World Bank UNICEF (in pipeline)	US $ 152.4 million (Rs. 530 crores) US $ 10 million (Rs. 36 crores)	1997-98 to 2001-2002

1 crore=10 million.



Moving ahead with a broad vision

The loftiness of the objectives, the nature and intensity of the planning process, the integration of professional inputs, participatory planning and management, and the emphasis on capacity building have together rendered the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) an exciting idea not only in the country but all over the world.

Since its inception in 1994 to its current status, the Programme has consistently shown promising results. States are increasingly demanding further expansion of the Programme. DPEP has been appreciated within the country and is receiving international acclaim. Bilateral and multilateral agencies are extending financial support through grants and soft loans.

DPEP has broken new paths in international cooperation, in that it belongs to the new genre of developmental cooperation which emphasises sustainability, equity, local ownership and execution, and is supportive of national policies on education.

It would not be wrong to say that the District Primary Education Programme has emerged as the key strategy to universalise primary education and has shown the promise and potential to achieve this long cherished goal.

Abbreviations

APPEP	-	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
AWPB	-	Annual Work Plans and Budgets
BRC	-	Block Resource Centre
CRC	-	Cluster Resource Centre
DEP	-	Distance Education Project
DIET	-	District Institute of Education and Training
DPEP	-	District Primary Education Programme
EC	-	Executive Committee
ECCE	-	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	-	Early Childhood Education
EFA	-	Education for All
GC	-	General Council
GOI	-	Government of India
ICDS	-	Integrated Child Development Services
IDA	-	International Development Agency
IGNOU	-	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIM	-	Indian Institute of Management
JSM	-	Joint Supervision Mission
LBSNAA	-	Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration
MIS	-	Management of Information System
MLL	-	Minimum Levels of Learning
MTA	-	Mother Teacher Associations
NCERT	-	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NFE	-	Non Formal Education
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
NIEPA	-	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPE	-	National Policy on Education
ODA	-	Overseas Development Administration
PoA	-	Programme of Action
PHC	-	Primary Health Centre

PMIS	-	Project Management Information System
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Associations
SC	-	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	-	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SIEMT	-	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SRG	-	State Resource Group
ST	-	Scheduled Tribe
TLC	-	Total Literacy Campaign
TSG	-	Technical Support Group
UEE	-	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UPE	-	Universalisation of Primary Education
VEC	-	Village Education Committee

Glossary

Anganwadi	-	A village-level centre under Integrated Child Development Scheme
Balwadi	-	Early Childhood Care and Education Centre for children of 3-5 age group organised by voluntary agencies
Bal Bhavans	-	Recreational centre for children
Gram Panchayat	-	A village-level elected body responsible for local self-government
Mahila Samakhya	-	Women's empowerment
Mela	-	Exhibition/fair
Panchayat	-	Elected body responsible for local government of a village or a cluster of villages
Sammelans	-	Gathering/conference
Scheduled Caste *Scheduled Tribe*	-	Socially weaker sections of the society, particularly, identified for development
Shishu Shikshan Kendras	-	Centres of learning for children

निरोगी पुस्तकालय एवं सांस्कृतिक केंद्र
पुस्तक क्रं.

शहीद शंकर गुहा नियोगी पुस्तकालय एवं सांस्कृतिक केंद्र, भोपाल

तारीख -

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परि. सं. . . . . कूट सं. . . . . .

1. देय तारीख तक किताब न लौटाने पर नियमानुसार विलंब शुल्क देना होगा।
2. यदि किसी और को जरूरत न हो तो किताब दोबारा जारी की जा सकती है।
3. किताब पर कोई भी निशान लगाना या कुछ भी लिखना सख्त मना है। इस पर दंड का प्रावधान है।
4. किताब को गंदा करने, फाड़ने, खोने या देय तारीख के 30 दिन के अंदर न लौटाने पर उसकी जगह वही नई किताब या दुगुनी कीमत देनी होगी।

कृपया किताबों को साफ़–सुथरा रखने में मदद करें।

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