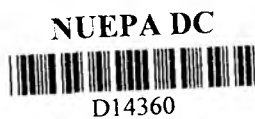


INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)

SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

(14th November – 2nd December 2002)



Aide Memoire

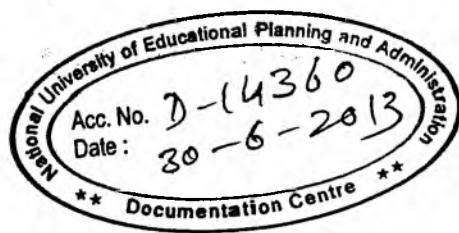


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- 1. Andhra Pradesh**
- 2. Bihar**
- 3. Gujarat**
- 4. Himachal Pradesh**
- 5. Jharkhand**
- 6. Karnataka**
- 7. Madhya Pradesh**
- 8. Rajasthan**
- 9. Tamil Nadu**
- 10. Uttar Pradesh**
- 11. West Bengal**

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Draft Aide Memoire

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Government of India (GoI) and the funding agencies review the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) through a Joint Review Mission (JRM) twice a year through teams that visit State offices and selected districts of the States participating in DPEP.
- 1.2. The 16th JRM (henceforth referred to as the Mission or the JRM) was led by the Department for International Development (DfID), Government of the United Kingdom, and took place between 14th November and 2nd December 2002. The Mission, building upon the findings of the earlier missions, and taking into account the current stage of programme implementation, defined four main areas for exploration and observation: **(i) Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity; (ii) Quality and Equity; (iii) Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation; (iv) Sustainability.** The Mission read recent research and study reports and other relevant documents, held consultations at national, state and district levels, and observed classroom and other processes to arrive at conclusions on how the programme is progressing. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Mission is given in Annex – II.
- 1.3 The Mission was aware that a large number of DPEP-I and DPEP-II programmes were completing their Project cycle by December 2002 and June 2003 respectively and that there was a need to carefully look at contributions towards achievement of programme objectives. This has implications for the remaining DPEP programmes, some of which will continue to be implemented up to 2007-2008, as also more significantly, for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the National Programme for Universal Elementary Education (UEE). An effort has therefore been made to take note of the wide - ranging efforts made in states that facilitated achievement of objectives, in the overview section.
- 1.4. The Mission, led by Amarjeet Sinha (DfID), consisted of 24 members representing the GoI, DfID (Government of UK), the World Bank (WB), the European Commission (EC), Unicef, and the Government of Netherlands (NL). Keith Hinchcliffe (WB) and Vimala Ramachandran (DfID) visited **Andhra Pradesh**; Harsha Aturupane (WB) and Vyasji (GoI) visited **Bihar**; Avtar Singh (GoI) and Jyotsna Jha (NL) visited **Gujarat**; Bharati Baveja (GoI) and Subir Shukla (EC) visited **Himachal Pradesh**; Aparna Sahay (GoI) and Prema Clarke (WB) visited

Jharkhand; Md. Miyan (GoI) and Sabina Bindra (EC) visited **Karnataka**; Ward Heneveld (WB) and Amarjeet Sinha (DfID) visited **Madhya Pradesh**; Deniz Saldhana (DfID), Susan Hirshberg, Ila Verma (UNICEF) and Madan Mohan (GoI) visited **Rajasthan**; Alan Penny (EC) and N.K. Jangira visited **Tamil Nadu**; Venita Kaul (WB) and Terry Alsop (EC) visited **Uttar Pradesh**; Roger Cunningham (DfID) and Pramila Menon (GoI) visited **West Bengal**.

2. Overview

2.1. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was designed to help achieve the objective of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) outlined within the policy framework of the revised National Policy on Education 1986, (as updated in 1992) and the Programme of Action, 1992. The purpose of DPEP is stated clearly in the Programme Guidelines¹⁽¹⁾:

2.2. *The Programme will develop and implement in the districts selected a replicable, sustainable and cost-effective programme:*

- (i) *to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5%*
- (ii) *to reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10%*
- (iii) *to raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured baseline levels and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies, by all primary school children*
- (iv) *to provide, according to national norms, access for all children, to primary education classes (I-V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education.*

The programme will also strengthen the capacity of national, state and district institutions and organisations in relation to planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

2.3. The programme was designed to decentralise decision making to the district and sub-district levels for more effective service delivery. The planning process of DPEP saw the management of change and improvement of the wider system as its canvas, even though this was not a stated objective of the Programme. It is remarkable that in many States DPEP has ended up in generating system wide changes in the management of education, much beyond just the Project level activities.

2.4. DPEP started in November 1994 in 42 districts in 7 states, and has since then expanded in a phased manner to 242 (273 bifurcated districts) in 18 states. While the

¹⁽¹⁾ Paragraph 1.1.7 of DPEP Guidelines.

Phase I and II districts have been involved in the programme for more than five years, 27 districts in Gujarat, Orissa and Rajasthan have completed just over a year. Different districts are therefore, at different stages of implementing DPEP. This diversity will be taken into consideration while reviewing the performance of States.

- 2.5. The District Primary Education Programme, has left an indelible mark on the primary education scenario in India – bringing issues of access, equity and quality of education centre stage. The size of the intervention can be gauged by the fact that 86,850 new schools and 83,500 Alternative Schools have been opened under DPEP. With 1 million teachers and 3 million community members trained under the programme, DPEP has really been large in its outreach. DPEP emphasized both opening of new primary schools as per norms, as also EGS like alternative strategies. With its criteria of low female literacy for selection of districts, equity was in – built in the programme's thinking. The programme itself has evolved and transformed over the years, responding to emerging challenges, on account of the policy thrust on decentralized management of education through Panchayati Raj Institutions, growing focus on elementary education as a fundamental right, and a consensus that there is a community demand for education even from the poorest households that needs to be met by a diversity of interventions. The generation of school and in recent years, household data, backed by action research, has facilitated a more data driven and evidence based approach to planning and implementation under DPEP.
- 2.6 It is difficult to comment on the progress under DPEP nationally as different States, at different stages of educational development at the time of programme initiation, have used it to varying degrees to transform the primary education scenario in their respective states. Some States like Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat saw an opportunity in DPEP by developing innovative institutional frameworks for effective teacher recruitment and deployment, decentralized planning and management, institutional development for quality, innovation to improve access and retention, and most of all, a vision to universalize primary education with community support. Some other States used DPEP institutions like BRCs, CRCs, PTAs, MTAs, VECs, both to improve peer group interaction of teachers and to improve community ownership. There were, however, a few States where the innovations of the DPEP were mainstreamed only to a limited extent. There are also States where basic learning conditions were not adequately created at school level, in terms of teacher availability and school facilities. Bihar illustrates the point about successful Project interventions not being enough as indicated by 63:1 Pupil Teacher Ratio, 1.5 million children out of school, over crowded classrooms with 62:1 class sizes, even after four years of dedicated Project implementation. The Mission strongly feels that changes in the larger education system had major implications for DPEP gains and that States that used DPEP as a harbinger of change and improvement of quality with concerted efforts to improve institutions, community ownership, school provisioning and over all management of the primary education system, made considerably more gains than those that implemented it as simply a Project without organic linkages with the mainstream and its challenges.

- 2.7. Innovative approaches to provisioning of teachers in regular schools and for expansion of access through Alternative Schooling/ Education Guarantee schools has improved access to meet the community demand for education. Bihar is now the only Project State that has not expanded EGS/ AS adequately to meet the learning needs of all children, with Jharkhand also having done so over the last six months. The focus on identification of disabled children and preparation for their mainstreaming, organization of bridge courses, especially in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Orissa, Assam and Rajasthan, have provided opportunities for out of school children that did not exist before on such a scale. Enrolment campaigns like School Chalo Abhiyan in Uttar Pradesh and Shiksha Aapke Dwaar campaign in Rajasthan have helped in getting more girls to schools, even though a lot more needs to be done in these States to ensure their successful completion. There has been an expansion of the primary schooling system that has led to the emergence of many small schools. While these small schools/ EGS/AS have succeeded in meeting the aspirations of homogeneous habitations and social groups, they also pose a challenge of quality and equity in largely multi – grade situations. Greater community enthusiasm for some of these new schooling facilities and a role for them in the selection of teachers, has helped in their emergence as alternatives more locally available. While this has led to greater community partnerships, ineffective devolution of powers and functions, especially with regard to the formal schools, limit the nature of community ownership, in spite of organizations like VECs, PTAs, MTAs, SMCs, PRIs, at school/ village level. This has implications for shared accountability for the school system as a whole as often these bodies have to limit their role to development of school facilities and use of school grants. There is evidence from States of these bodies, especially those representing the parents of children studying in the government/local body school, becoming more vibrant and taking a more active interest in the affairs of the school. There is, however, a need for far greater devolution for effective school autonomy and community ownership.
- 2.8 A major contribution of the programme has been in breaking the isolation and alienation of rural teachers through block and cluster level resource centres (BRC and CRC) and district level resource groups. These institutions have increased dialogue among teachers and promoted teacher led innovations. This has contributed to enhancing the self-esteem and confidence of teachers – especially in areas where the resource centres are actively involved in pedagogic support and in areas where peer learning and support have been effective. The large scale and timely availability of new textbooks developed in partnership with teachers in nearly all schools, development of teaching learning materials by teachers and their display, a few child friendly elements in schools, better maintenance of the school facilities using the VEC grant, have helped in making schools a little more attractive than in the past, in many States. This has contributed, in some measure to enhancement of teacher esteem as also to the community perception about the school.
- 2.9. While appreciating efforts to reach out to the hard to reach, both through the expansion of the primary school system and through EGS like alternative strategies, the improvement in learning outcomes in formal schools is still modest, and a lot

more needs to be done to meet the learning aspirations of the first generation learners, disabled children, children in difficult circumstances, girls, children belonging to minority community, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe social groups. Though under resourced from the perspective of teacher salaries, EGS and AS (including bridging strategies and accelerated learning programmes) appear to have addressed the learning needs of the out of school through engagement of local teachers. The Mission appreciates the efforts made in the last few years to improve the provisioning in EGS/ AS in terms of space, teaching learning materials and availability of Mid day Meals.

- 2.10 At this juncture there is a need to reflect on why the programme was not able to sufficiently empower and enable the formal schools to cater to the needs of out of school children – dropouts as well as never enrolled, in facilitating their successful completion of the primary cycle. While there is evidence of greater community interface with the formal school, there is also a concern that this partnership continues to be a limited one on account of a very gradual devolution of powers for school autonomy, leaving many factors that influence quality, largely centrally directed. While school level activities have increased, greater thrust for School level planning and implementation requires statutory changes that enable effective devolution and decentralization. Equally, there is also a need to reflect on not so encouraging learning outcomes of children – making quality a major equity issue.
- 2.11 In the last eight years, the very achievement of DPEP emerged its biggest challenge. More children from diverse backgrounds have come into schools thereby increasing the diversity within classrooms. Simultaneously there has also been an exponential increase in the number of small multigrade schools. There are many more first generation learners; children from disadvantaged groups and most importantly children with disability have found a place within mainstream schools. Enrolment of underage children in class one has turned the spotlight on the importance of early childhood care and education as an important adjunct to primary school. The challenges faced by teachers within such a diverse classroom situation have changed the texture of the debate on classroom processes and pedagogy. The situation therefore demands greater skill, capacity and greater preparedness to manage such a diverse situation. This issue is further complicated in the light of documented evidence on the increase in the number of multi-grade and multi-level situations and also increasing pupil teacher ratios in many states. Quality of education has emerged as the overarching equity issue. The fundamental question is whether first generation learners and those from very disadvantaged community are getting appropriate attention and care to surmount the barrier of social deprivation and illiteracy.
- 2.12 Notwithstanding notable progress made on the access front, there are regions and social groups where enrolment, regular attendance and completion remain a problem. This is particularly so for children of seasonal migrants, small tribal groups and specific urban deprived groups. In the last few years government and non-governmental efforts in several urban areas have highlighted the persistent problem of non-enrolment and high drop out.

- 2.13 The impact of DPEP, understandably, is not uniform. Given that this could be one of the last Joint Review Missions on this scale, it would be valuable to take on board the wider reforms for effective decentralized management of education, adequate provisioning of school infrastructure including teachers, and institutional development for the quality focus. The Mission is of the view that the enabling educational environment contributes to the effectiveness of project - based interventions. It is also important to take stock of strategies that have worked and therefore have the potential to be up - scaled and the areas of concerns. The lessons of the programme – both the positives and the not so successful ones – including the effectiveness of joint review missions and monitoring mechanisms could then feed into the next stage for UEE in the country as a whole. This is of particular importance in the light of diversity and unevenness that merits more context specific support as well as monitoring systems. A uniform monitoring / review mechanisms is not effective across all areas and is perhaps of lesser relevance today. The Mission notes that any changes to the existing review arrangements may require changes in legal agreements.

3. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

- 3.1 Most of the districts have reported substantial increase in enrolment in DPEP districts over the baseline figures reported at the time of the initiation of the programme. A majority of the districts in Andhra Pradesh (AP), Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh (HP), Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and West Bengal have Net Enrolment Rates (NER)/ Age-specific enrolment ratio in the range of 90-98 in 2001-02.² Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh also reported a huge decline in out-of-school population. The NERs remain in the range of 60-90 in the majority of districts in states that started with a relatively low base (Bihar and Jharkhand) indicating the presence of a large number of non-enrolled children. Bihar and Jharkhand have reported a decline in total enrolment in government schools (as per EMIS data). Jharkhand has opened a large number of EGS centres recently and some shift of enrolment from government primary schools to these centres could be one reason for this decline. Household data also indicate a substantial proportion of enrolment (7-10%) in private schools in the state. In Bihar, shift of children from well-to-do families to private schools as also the inability to provide habitation specific learning facility or additional school infrastructure in existing schools, is stipulated to be the reason. Karnataka has experienced a decline in class I enrolment mainly attributed to demographic changes. However, these need further probe so as to arrive at correct understanding.

² All districts (14) in UP for which NERs are reported for 2000-01 and 2001-02 in “Universal Access and Retention: Where do we stand (Yash Aggarwal; 2002) show an NER of 100 in both the years. This raises doubts about the reliability of data as certain information from the same sources do not match fully. For instance, some districts with a high SC population proportion shows that the proportion of SC girls to total SC enrolment is lower than 45% but the total NER is still 100. These inconsistencies need to be probed further and corrective measures taken. One of the means for probe could be seeing this information in the light of picture emerging from household surveys conducted for SSA planning. UP reported 74 % NER to the JRM team.

- .2 A majority of districts in all states have also reported an increase in the crude retention rates within the primary level. However, drop-out rates continue to be high up to Class III in UP, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. It appears that increased enrolment are being sustained more in states where enrolment drives are backed by more concrete programmes or/and systemic measures (AP, MP, Karnataka, Gujarat) in comparison to those where there is still a greater reliance on these drives (UP and Rajasthan). Repetition rates (based on EMIS reports) remain high in most states and this continues to be an area of concern. The repetition rates are very high (roughly between 15-35% of the total enrolment) in most DPEP districts in Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. West Bengal and Haryana present a mixed picture with this being high in certain districts but not so high in others. The rates are relatively low (2-15%) in the majority of districts in AP, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. However, repetition rates are high in individual districts even in these states. Though not strictly comparable, repetition rates as presented by cohort study undertaken in several states are much higher than those provided in the EMIS report (See state reports for UP & TN) and deserve attention.
- .3 Completion rates (completing the primary level successfully in five years) as per cohort studies/EMIS analysis present a varied picture across states (29–40% in Bihar, Jharkhand, UP and Andhra; 40-50% in Himachal; 57% in West Bengal, 62 % in MP, 67% in Karnataka). However, a good proportion of children complete the level in six years (e.g., 30-40% more complete the primary level in 6 years in Himachal). It is important to recognise that a large number of these children are first generation learners facing a variety of constraints and hence achieving a fairly high completion rates in even six years does not necessarily reflect negatively on the system. While emphasizing the thrust for successful completion, the Mission recommends a wider assessment of successful completion, in the context of the over all educational advancement in States that started at different levels at the time of DPEP initiation.
- .4 Repetition rates, though high for all classes, are almost universally higher for Classes I and II compared to Classes III, IV and V. The state reports suggest several reasons for high repetition. Enrolment of under-age children is considered to be one of the main reasons in a few states. A perusal of attendance registers in schools in certain states indicated that a good proportion of children in class I never attended the school or attended for only a few days. Inadequate attention to Classes I and II in terms of classroom organization, and absence of enabling environment for younger children also appears to be a main reason. Field investigations also indicated a higher retention pattern in the areas where greater attention has been given to early childhood education and the ECE facilities have been integrated with school in terms of timings and approach. On account of incentives iike MDM and the absence of ECCE arrangements for the under 6 in many villages, these children end up joining the school earlier than their age. There is a need to plan for them as the scenario is unlikely to change in the absence of a rapid expansion of a separate ECCE programme. Management of underage children has implications for teacher posts as also for their training. The innovation of Assam, to establish a Class Zero in schools

for under age children, may be explored in schools where large and diverse Class – I children make learning difficult. High repetition is also on account of the over age children for whom more residential bridge courses may provide better opportunities for improved learning.

- 3.5 At higher level (classes III – V), irregular attendance coupled with a high rate of failure in examinations is often considered a major reason for repetition and eventual drop-out. West Bengal cohort study presents a close link between the rate of attendance and transition from one class to the other. Although almost all states have reported an improvement in attendance, very few states have initiated a systematic monitoring of attendance. A system of attendance monitoring is in place in AP. HP had initiated the practice but discontinued it on the ground that there had been a significant improvement. The state report has highlighted the need for resuming the practice.

Enrolment, Retention and Completion Levels for Girls, SC/ ST children and children with other disadvantages

- 3.6 There has been a general improvement in enrolment proportion of girls and the rate of growth in enrolment has been higher for girls than boys. The differences between the enrolment rates for boys and girls have reduced to less than five percent points in the majority of phase I and II districts, the difference continues to be higher than five percent points in a few of them. According to the EMIS data, the proportion of girls to total enrolment varies between 45 and 50% in all DPEP states except Bihar (43%). The cohort studies also indicate that the level of difference between boys and girls in the completion rates is not very high in most states. However, a consecutive decline in the proportion of girls in total enrolment after grade II is a matter of concern. The proportion of girls declines substantially from one grade to the other, especially at terminal stages of primary (between grade IV and V) and upper primary levels (between grade VII and VIII) reflecting a lower grade-wise transition rates for girls than for boys. No significant difference between boys and girls in completion rates has been reported in most states.
- 3.7 The proportion of SC and ST children to total enrolment has also moved up in most districts where the population is present in a sizable number. According to EMIS data, the proportion of SC enrolment is in general close to their population proportion in most districts. Despite substantial improvement in enrolment in ST children, their share in enrolment is lower than their population proportion in many districts with tribal population. Also, out-of-school data generated through household surveys clearly indicate that an overwhelming majority belongs to SC, ST, OBC and Minority communities, their proportion varying from district to district and from one state to the other.
- 3.8 A perusal of repetition and completion rates across social groups reveals that there are differences in rates of retention/successful completion for SC, ST children (Bihar, Jharkhand, MP, WB) and children from minority community in UP, compared to over

all completion rates. The Mission recommends further analysis of completion data to ascertain the categories of children whose completion needs to be emphasized.

- 3.9 All states have made initiatives to identify children with disabilities, classify them according to disabilities and integrate them in the schools by providing various support services including orientation of parents, provision of aids and appliances, training of teachers, making the school-environment friendly for them and providing resource teachers at the district level. Although the exact strategy and implementation varies in some measure from one state to the other, the progress made in the area in terms of number of children integrated (nearly 70% of the identified 0.81 million already in school) or in terms of the range of activities has been impressive. However, apart from the fact that the interventions are not yet applicable to the entire project area in many states, a common concern emerging across states is regarding further training of teachers and individualised support to children so that their special needs are taken care of.
- 3.10 It is obvious from the reports and field visits that as the DPEP implementation progressed, the states stated identifying children who were harder to reach. The focus also shifted from general (girls, SC and ST) to specific (SC and ST girls, migratory groups, minority groups, specific blocks/clusters with low enrolment or high drop-outs, special community groups traditionally opposed to girls education, urban deprived children, working children, etc.). This has been facilitated by greater availability of data through diverse sources and disaggregated analysis of the same. The EMIS system has evolved over the years making it more comprehensive and relevant for disaggregated analysis and use. The nature of and the extent to which Household based data collection and use is institutionalised varies in different states. AP and MP were the first two states to use household based data collection on a large scale covering the entire population in the initial phase of the programme itself. The exercise helped these two states in understanding the complete picture on enrolment in public and private schools, nature of out-of-school children, strategising for the same and monitoring the progress. Under SSA, all the states have conducted household surveys and are in the different stages of processing and analysis of these data. Availability and use of information has also played a role in putting accountability mechanisms in place at least to some extent. While Village Education Registers giving details of enrolled and non-enrolled children can now be found with the school committees/VECs in most places, a number of other information such as examination results, repetition rates, etc. are also available at village and block levels in certain states (especially, MP).

Multiple Strategies to reach / integrate children from disadvantaged groups / areas / backgrounds

- 3.1 One of the objectives of DPEP was to provide, according to national norms, access for all children, to primary education classes (I – V), i.e., primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non formal education. Wherever, new schools had to be opened as per norms, they were established. In other habitations, a number

of alternative schooling strategies were adopted by states but the nature, coverage and focus of these interventions varied from state to state. Broadly, these strategies can be categorised under two types:

a. States that already had a good spread of schools and expanded formal system for provisioning using alternative schooling (AS) strategies for mainstreaming the drop-outs and reaching the more difficult groups (AP, Karnataka, Gujarat). These states have organised short-term (3-6 months) bridge courses on a large scale for helping children attain age-specific competencies and mainstreamed them in formal schools. This includes courses for them who are migrating for work for about 3-6 months, common in certain areas of Gujarat and AP. Gujarat has also organised longer duration (30 months) back-to-school programme on a large scale to complete the primary cycle for 9+ children. AP and Gujarat have also started issuing certificates to migrating children so that they can enroll in their place of migration. These strategies have helped these states in mainstreaming a large number of children as evident from the upsurge in enrolment. However, the need for additional support to these children in schools after mainstreaming emerges as a concern as they form the most vulnerable group in terms of potential drop-outs. Considering the large number of dropped out, non enrolled, or recently enrolled 9-14 age children in States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, the Mission recommends greater emphasis on residential bridge courses, especially for girls, in order to meet the learning needs of these children.

b. States which had a large number of uncovered habitations and opted to expand the system through alternative means in shape of Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS in MP) or other such variants like Shishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK – West Bengal) and Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas (RJP – Rajasthan). Recently, Jharkhand has opened a large number of EGS centres to cover all school-less habitations with at least 15 out-of-school children in 6-14 years age-group. UP has also adopted EGC schemes albeit in a different form. While the in-built mechanism of 'guarantee' in MP's EGS programme binds state to provide the facility within stipulated time-frame of approval (based on fulfilling the eligibility criteria) of demand from Gram-Panchayats, the decision to open particular number of EGS centres in a particular district has been a centralised decision in UP. Nevertheless, a large number of centres opened in remote, distant areas have succeeded in providing access to hitherto deprived groups. The Mission recommends greater attention to universal access, either through strengthening existing schools or by providing for habitation specific new schools as per norms, EGS/AS schooling in a time bound way in States like Bihar and Jharkhand. The Mission welcomes recent steps taken to provide adequate and equivalent teaching learning materials, teacher development opportunities, hot cooked meals, teacher and school grants, and thrust for school facilities for EGS/AS like facilities in many States. The MoU in WB between DPEP and Panchayati Raj for resource support to SSKs is also a welcome step. The mission would urge states to constantly improve provisioning in such Alternate Schooling facilities in order to meet the concern for equity.

- 3.2. Opening of new schools and EGS has led to unprecedented surge in enrolment especially in enrolment of children from SC and ST communities, as they were the main inhabitants of remote habitations without schools. The comparison of these centres with formal schools present a varied picture across states. For instance, while in MP, parity exists between a formal school and an EGS school on most indicators (teacher qualification and training days, physical infrastructure and environment, midday meals, availability of textbooks and materials, autonomy and accountability mechanisms) except teachers' salary, in West Bengal, significant differences exist not only in teachers' salaries but also in terms of basic infrastructure, classroom environment and access to technical support for planning and pedagogy. The SSK is opened and controlled by the Panchayati Raj department and not the Education department, which could be one reason for such vast differences. In most other states, though the same curricula and textbooks are in practice, and teachers' qualifications are equivalent, the differences exist in terms of physical infrastructure and teachers' salaries. The Mission recommends consistent thrust for teacher development, deployment and support at par with formal schools in all such alternative strategies.

3.3 *Challenges and Steps Ahead*

- Greater emphasis on “Hardest to reach” children both outside and inside the school. Brings the issue of appropriate strategy for bringing them to school and also for addressing the issue of greater diversity within school/classroom. An emphasis on the fact that equity demands differential attention to more needy and not “equal attention to all”.
- Enrolment drive mode versus focused campaign, relationship building and systemic measures.
- Awareness of capacity to deal with dynamic nature of challenges – from enrolment alone to enrolment + attendance monitoring, from retention alone to retention and completion, from completion alone to completion with high level of learning and so on. However, not losing sight of the fact that a large number remain out of school even in those states that have high NERs and these are not always a shift but also expansion of challenges in many cases.
- Monitoring indicators (all – outcome indicators like repetition, completion, learning level as well as process indicators like greater attention to more deprived social groups) guided towards equity and focuses towards the children from the most disadvantaged situations. Focus on accountability mechanisms for school and the school system building upon the theme of equity.

4. Quality and Equity

- 4.1 Universalising elementary education requires attention to *quality* no less than to *opportunity*. Nationally there is some agreement on the ideal focus and character of improving teaching and learning, although realizing this in practice remains a challenge. The Review Team took the following as its working definition of quality:

Quality is creating the necessary elements in the learning environment that will lead to improvement in the learner's knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- 4.2 The quality of education requires enabling conditions at each structural level, including a coherent vision, provision of resources, definition of accountable roles and responsibilities. Developing a *collective* responsibility between the key stakeholders, specifically school staff, community and the support system (e.g. CRC-BRC personnel, supervisors, and district as well as state level structures) is therefore critical.
- 4.3. The Mission recognized that DPEP has enabled states some shift from an earlier dependence on national institutions with regard to elements influencing quality (curriculum reform, textbook renewal, teacher training and improvements in classroom practice). States should now explore strategies to help districts and sub-district structures acquire similar confidence and self-dependence in critical areas. The impact has been uneven in terms of basic learning conditions at the school level – whether reflected in teacher shortages, school facilities, contact hours, school calendar, learning materials, learner support, teacher support and development, etc.

The classroom

- 4.4. Overall, the Mission observed that classrooms are increasingly becoming more friendly, attractive and interactive in nature. One indication of this was that in several states corporal punishment is becoming rare in DPEP schools. Across the states, efforts underway to introduce and further activity-based learning, the use of learning friendly teaching learning materials and textbooks, as well as using Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), although the shift to formative evaluation is yet to be conceptualized. There is greater rapport between teachers and children, with children displaying confidence, and eagerness to learn and participate in classroom activities.
- 4.5. The programme is therefore poised for the next level of pedagogical reform, which might benefit from considering the following:
- It was acknowledged by most state teams that not all of the training inputs provided are being translated into classroom practice, The Mission recommends an analysis of the totality of the inputs provided to date and an assessment of their impact on learning outcomes and improvements in the learning environment. There is a need to articulate the indicators of quality

and the means of assessing teaching and learning performance in order to develop a holistic vision on quality in primary education.

- There is a rather mechanistic use of new activities, typically for explanation or demonstration purposes (especially in mathematics), and less for 'joy' or keeping children 'engaged'. There is a need to emphasise higher order activities and learning experiences that pose intellectual challenges requiring children to construct their own understanding. Similarly, while individual and whole class activities are common, group work requiring children to think and work together need to become more common.
- Multi grade teaching practices have received attention in recent years. However, the tendency has been to emphasise the mechanics of multi-grade teaching (e.g. grouping, or learning ladders instead of focus on the *advantages* that multigrade might provide, and on looking at curriculum, textbooks, materials, evaluation and organization practices holistically from this perspective).
- Greater attention is needed for disadvantaged children in the classrooms, especially those with disabilities as well as those mainstreamed through bridge courses. For example, in the special area project where the Azim Premji Foundation is supporting DPEP in Karnataka, through the provision of an extra teacher, the mission team found recently 'mainstreamed' children seated at the back of the classroom, and ignored. The needs of first generation learners too require greater attention.
- Language issues require attention. While the difference between home and school language is visibly an issue, for several groups of disadvantaged children this is more specifically so. Some states identify this as a major barrier, resulting in low achievement scores for children. In fact, though, all states might seek ways of benefiting from this diversity. Lack of bridge and supplementary material is a critical factor in this regard.
- Looking upon ECE and Classes I-II as a continuum would contribute greatly to enhancing learning in early years. This appears to be a critical requirement given the higher repetition rates in later classes (due to a poor foundation), and that the greatest drop out occurs at Class-II.
- Some of the experimental school improvement programmes in different states have been scaled up. The Mission is concerned that there has been insufficient evaluation of the success of these experiments along diverse parameters.
- To ensure the sustainability of the reforms, the next generation should be more bottom up. Steps must be taken to enhance ownership, encourage flexibility, and local specificity.

School and classroom organization

- 4.6. Most states report the favourable impact of DPEP pedagogical interventions on the overall classroom climate in terms of a more friendly and interactive environment.(HP,Gujarat,UP,TN). However, the impact on actual classroom practice seems very limited. Practice is still dominated by the teacher and remains more or less traditional. One of the reasons cited for this is the continuance in most states of large classes and multigrade situations that do not lend themselves easily to more active and cooperative learning opportunities and child centered practices. The mission therefore recommends more focused attention in future pedagogical interventions on school and classroom organisation and management, so as to optimize use of learning time for individual children. This would include particular attention to helping teachers develop skills related to the management of space, increasing learning time, curriculum, resources and the process of children's learning in a variety of classroom situations. This could be developed more effectively in 'hands on' training situations with 'real' classes in schools. This would also require more attention for opportunities for peer group learning by children.
- 4.7 The mission also observed lower priority being given to Classes I and II in most states with respect to teacher deployment and class size, which was more implicit in the pattern of teacher distribution, particularly in multigrade situations. Some states (Gujarat,UP,AP) report the practice of combining Classes I and II as one unit, especially when using para teachers. With the trend of larger numbers in the early classes, and the need for younger children to receive individual attention, and the priority in these grades of ensuring the acquisition of basic skills related to the 3 R's, schools need to be given greater flexibility in the use of teachers.
- 4.8. Ineffective management of children's learning time is a critical barrier to improving the quality of classroom processes in several states. On the whole planning for a better classroom and the organization of resources and time to optimize learning within the context of differential needs within a classroom and school is an aspect that is only now beginning to receive attention and the mission recommends that this indeed be an aspect of greater emphasis in the period ahead.

Teaching Learning Materials

- 4.9. The Mission appreciates that DPEP has been able to ensure the availability of textbooks for children. On the whole, new textbooks developed under DPEP are child- and learning-friendly. Supplementary material and libraries are also beginning to be visible in the programme, though a focus on their effective use is still required.
- 4.10 An impressive amount of TLM has been created by the teachers, and is also being used by children, particularly in the teaching of mathematics. The Pedagogy Evaluation studies too have appreciated the provision of grant for teachers. While there is enthusiasm and energy involved in this, there is concern that TLM is becoming synonymous with activity. Confusion between means and ends is visible,

especially among teachers and sub-district personnel. Much of the TLM seen served the purposes of explanation (as against being worked upon for reflection and thinking) and enhancing association (i.e. focusing on the 'what' rather than the 'why'). An examination of the time and resources required vis-à-vis the actual utility in terms of promoting real learning might reveal that some of the material is not really low-cost. There is a strong need to emphasise the use of naturally and locally available material. At the same time, identification of simpler materials might encourage the teacher to create materials for multiple usage.

Equity: the hard to reach

- 4.1.1. Most state reports indicate greater attention to quality in the alternative schools and EGS, albeit in varying degrees. Two concerns emerge: there is comparatively less evidence of good practices in the formal system (HP, UP), and the impermanent nature of para teachers' appointments and its implications for quality (AP).
- 4.1.2. The presence of children who have usually been outside the school system is now increasingly visible in the programme. Children with disabilities, working children and others are enrolling in greater number. This has resulted both in larger class sizes, as well as greater diversity within the classroom. Skills for handling this diversity need to be developed.

Achievement and evaluation

- 4.1.3. Most states report improvements in learning achievement levels as evident in MAS, particularly in Class I (AP, Bihar, Haryana, Gujarat, UP, Karnataka). But overall achievement levels are still very modest. Test results from terminal evaluation in various states indicate that performance of children, especially in higher classes, remain an area of concern. The percentage of children passing primary grades with more than 60% marks remains very small, while that of children scoring less than 40% marks is inordinately high. This has implications for their ability to perform in later stages of education. The response in some states has been to use these data to identify hard spots of learning but further work on developing strategies and provisions for remedial teaching is still required.
- 4.1.4. MP provides an interesting example. The mission found that class 5 board examination results are available from the school to the district and state levels, and people at all levels in the system are aware of them. The state level data shows that 92% of the 9.48 lakh class 5 children appeared in the board examination in 2001-02. Of these, 68% passed in the exam, with 34% scoring above 60%. The data for EGS in the same year reveals that 90% of the 1.07 lakh class 5 children appeared in the examination, with 72% passing, and 38% scoring above 60%. Results also indicate success in improving the participation and learning of SC/ST children over the years, even though there is much more to do before most primary school children learn at the level of mastery.

- 4.15 Some system of CCE is evident in almost all states, with states following a competency-based system of quarterly half yearly and annual examinations. Progress of children is now being reported to parents but remedial teaching and formative approach to assessment is still not evident.
- 4.16 There is a need to match CCE to the reality of the classrooms, while also examining it to see if it is indeed continuous. Evaluation in general tends to be treated more as an end in itself, and is not linked to taking pedagogical decision that would determine classroom processes. In some states, evaluation continues to remain traditional. At the same time, the impact of the public examination tends to inhibit the efforts to bring about evaluation reform.

Addressing teachers needs, development and support

- 4.17 Acknowledging that the role of the teacher is key to the success of any educational intervention, all states have made considerable investments in training of teachers and development of teacher support structures in the form of BRC's and CRCs. Some states have also moved beyond the project mandate and undertaken policy initiatives to address issues of teacher absenteeism and deployment. However, the mission notes a need for a more cohesive and strategic plan for teacher development, support and empowerment which should enable teachers to develop in totality the necessary knowledge, skills, attitude and motivation to translate the state's pedagogical vision into practice in the classrooms. The mission also emphasises the need for a positive and empowering interventions in this regard (MP) that will motivate and not demoralize the teaching force. In this context, recent initiatives by some states in involving the VECs and other community organisations in 'supervising' teacher attendance closely may be improved upon by moving from a policing approach to one of collective responsibility, incentives and support. The Mission notes in this context the thrust in the revised Teacher Education Guidelines on development of perspective plans and urges that these reflect this holistic and cohesive approach.
- 4.18. A possible reason for the classrooms not showing significant change in practice may also be the inadequate comfort level of the teachers with regard to new methods introduced to them through brief in service training and which challenge their 'tried and tested' traditional practices. The setting up of the BRC sand CRCs to provide follow up and support to the teachers has between a significant step in this direction but the capacity of these structures to meet the on site needs requires further attention. Some good practices in this context are seen (eg. Roster training in UP) Similarly, needs based training is beginning to emerge, with the focus is often being on 'hard spots'. The Mission team cautions, however, that isolated 'hard spots' are an outcome of generic difficulties and it might not always be useful to address them in isolation.
- 4.19 The need for an overall cohesive strategic plan for teacher development that should form an overall input in the vision of primary education practice is becoming increasingly critical. Nonetheless, the Mission is pleased to note that the new Teacher

Education Scheme advocates the development of perspective plans in this regard, but urges that these be closely linked to a clearly articulated vision of primary education.

- 4.20 The Mission team is concerned, too, regarding the potential ‘overload’ on the teacher, who has taken DPEP seriously but is now likely to find herself undertaking a diverse range of tasks originating in the programme itself. An analysis of tasks presently expected of the teacher and how they might be streamlined would help optimize teacher time.

Monitoring

- 4.21 Detailed monitoring systems are now beginning to be visible in the programme, with school grading, monitoring of attendance, child grading etc. now being implemented. However the differential learning and support requirements emerging from these are not emphasized sufficiently. There is a need to develop a clear set of practical quality indicators in order to promote and enhance a more collective and accountable responsibility for quality. The Mission suggests that the in-class participation and achievement of children from the most disadvantaged groups be taken as a key indicator of equity and quality.
- 4.22 While assessment of teacher performance is still to evolve, there is also concern about the ability of the CRCs and BRCs to go beyond diagnostic documentation and responding to emerging contingencies towards actually implementing a pro-active, phased indicator-drive quality improvement agenda. In fact, there is a need for a whole school quality thrust, with greater cluster- and school-level autonomy for improvement.

Recommendations

- 4.23 The review team recommends four areas that should receive greater attention as part of the thrust to improve educational quality:
- Feedback from teachers and learners regarding the effectiveness of the various inputs made through DPEP could inform further developments, especially SSA. The vision and conceptualization of the new pedagogy needs to be refined and strengthened, in terms of an *approach* rather than a set of discrete activities and TLM. The transaction between the teacher and the child, leading to learning, needs greater exploration.
 - The need to develop indicators of pedagogical process and its impact on learning, in addition to those already established for input and output. Currently ways of linking input, outcome and process to establish a clear understanding of impact is too inferential.

- There is a need to develop an overall, cohesive, strategic plan for teacher development so as to ensure that each training input explicitly supports the overall vision of primary education practice.
- The relationship between trainer and trainee needs to shift, especially where the most able teachers are concerned, from one of dependence and subservience to one of partnership. The role of the State and district institutions should be to enable teachers to learn from each other, and for those in receipt of training not to perceive themselves as recipients of knowledge dispensed from above. This also has implications with regards respective roles and responsibilities, and the structures created for teacher development.

5. Institutional Development

- 5.1 The Mission saw institutional development as a process of improving collective responsibility of the community, teachers, teacher educators, and teacher administrators in a manner that school level quality is influenced effectively. While taking note of some positive developments, the Mission would like to re-emphasise the critical importance of a network of institutions for quality – CRC, BRC, DIET – at the district, block and cluster levels. This has serious implications for teacher development and support in order that all children learn at levels of mastery and systems of continuous and comprehensive evaluation are established in a manner that assessment of pupil progress leads to appropriate support as per need, for all children.
- 5.2 There is a need for robust institutions for the community and for teacher development, support and management that are collectively in a position to take responsibility for quality in schools. The responsibility for quality has to be a shared one as quality is multifaceted and is a product of a large number of interventions by institutions and individuals. Institutions provide essential frameworks for individuals to participate meaningfully in the affairs of the school and in improving the human resource available to schools. DPEP has sought to strengthen educational institutions at user, sub-district, district and state level, and to create functional links between them.
- 5.3 *School, VECs/SMCs and Community.* The mission noted increased focus through DPEP on school level interventions building on earlier initiatives, particularly VEC formation, in the context of the National Policy of Education and decentralization in the light of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendment. DPEP provided space for teachers and VECs/SMCs/PTAs for initiating thinking about improving school and classroom process through school and TLM grants. The VECs/SMCs/SDMCs/PTAs have evolved into statutory institutions with legislative backup in a few States like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Karnataka. With experience of working with Panchayati Raj Institutions, there has also been a realization in states like Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka to have stake holder groups like PTAs/SDMCs

in order to influence community's interest in the school, along side the PRI institution of VEC that could facilitate convergent resource mobilization for the school in a decentralized framework.

- 5.4 There is a growing stress in many States on the involvement of user groups, the parents, through representation in these committees and in PTAs and MTAs. They are actively involved in household surveys, preparation of village register, micro-planning and school mapping, boosting enrolment and retention, monitoring student and teacher attendance, supervision of community construction and in mobilization of resources. In some states they are also involved in preparing school development plans and monitoring of school quality including student performance, though on a limited scale. It has created a demand for educational provision. In order to sustain the enthusiasm of these committees at the school, there is a need to widen the scope of this partnership to cover the wider framework of a collective responsibility for quality at the school level. The Mission urges States to carry out institutional reforms to make the school level the collective responsibility for quality more effective. This would require an assessment of current arrangements for teacher deployment, development, support and management; system for sustainable development and maintenance of school facilities; timely availability of teaching learning materials as per need; and most importantly, a thrust on effective devolution for school autonomy and institutional development.
- 5.5 DPEP has generated useful school and household data that has made habitation based and school specific planning a possibility.
- 5.6 *CRC and BRCs.* These institutions conceived as providing a forum for teacher interaction and a locus for academic support. States reports regular meeting of teachers at Clusters and a growing perception of CRCs emerging as a forum of teacher led discussions. While such interactions are useful in improving coordination and support for teachers, their role of academic support may require more State and context specific analysis and understanding. While there are examples of CRCs providing in-school professional support to teachers and some transfer of learning during in-service training at BRC level to classroom practice, there is a need to understand the role of these institutions within the overall framework for quality in State specific contexts.
- 5.7 BRCs and CRCs were expected to have full time coordinators. Different states have followed different arrangements. Some states have independent coordinators (for example, UP, Karnataka, Rajasthan), some states assigned these functions to the school head of the CRC and Block Education Officer (for example in Bihar and Jharkhand) and others located subject experts in BRC for school visits (for example, in Kerala, Tamil Nadu). Selection procedure for CRC and BRC coordinators also vary across states. Most of the states select them on the basis of seniority alone while Karnataka has started by testing them on subject mastery. Some states selected them through workshops to assess their interpersonal skills and attitude to learners (Jharkhand and Haryana) while others select through interviews.

- 5.8 The relationship of these institutions with DIETs, SCERT, SIEMAT is also critical, and there needs to be clear role definition and determination of responsibilities. Changes in Education Acts to acknowledge the role of these institutions and expectations from them, also need to be spelt out. In order to draw lesson for the ongoing DPEP projects and SSA, it will be useful to look at the findings of the ongoing pedagogy study regarding CIRC and BRC in State specific contexts, with a view to further action.
- 5.9 **DIETs and DRGs.** While institutional development of DIETs was not a stated programme objective, states are trying to develop DIETs as institutions of excellence and recent efforts of the GoI to enter into MoUs with States is a positive step. At the start of DPEP, DIETs were not functioning very effectively in many states, and a number of state specific initiatives have been taken for improving DIETs during the course of implementing DPEP, particularly in Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. District Resource Groups were therefore formed to train master trainers and to provide guidelines for developing materials for special focus groups and preparing training modules. DIET's involvement has increased in most of the states over the DPEP project period, except in West Bengal where DIETs are yet to be established. Staffing in some states is still an issue and selection of personnel with appropriate competencies is still critical in most of the states. The proposed revision of the teacher education scheme as also the continuance of 100 % GoI support for these institutions in the Tenth Plan are also likely to contribute towards a more effective academic leadership at the district level. Considering the importance of such academic leadership for sustainable improvement of quality in schools both from the perspective of teacher development and preparation of region specific learning materials, institutional development of DIETs is critical to the entire programme.
- 5.10 **SCERTs, SIEMAT and SRGs.** There is diversity in the capacity and level of involvement of SCERTs in DPEP implementation. This has implications for institutionalization of successful interventions and support for quality inputs. SIEMAT has been conceptualized as independent autonomous institution in Uttar Pradesh, as an institution under government umbrella in Maharashtra, Haryana, Assam and Orissa, and a unit of planning and management in the SPO or SCERT in other states. Except in Uttar Pradesh where the GOUP has formally taken the responsibility of staff salary, staffing is partial. There is no institutional development plan. Only a few states are providing training in planning and management to staff at district and block level. The states need to develop institutional development plans for both SCERTs and SIEMATs with appropriate staffing and sustainability plans.

high in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan. The average TPR is also a crude indicator. Teacher deployment scenario presents discouraging learning condition if vacancy and TPR is viewed for individual schools. EMIS indicates about one third of schools constituting single teacher schools in more than half of the project districts. Teacher rationalization which was stressed in the 14th JRM is in progress in most of the states, but it is constrained by pressure groups on the system. States will have to find a way to complete the process for better utilization of the existing resources and recruit the required number of teachers according to state norms.

- 6.7 Staffing of district project offices, and block and cluster resource centers is still an issue in several states (Rajasthan, Haryana, Assam). Quality of the personnel raises the issue of policy and selection in several states (Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Uttaranchal). States may review the policy and selection process for improving the quality of these personnel.

Physical Targets and Financial Expenditures

Physical targets

- 6.8 Over 90 percent of the works on infrastructure in DPEP is complete. In DPEP the completion ranges from 60-80 percent except in Maharashtra, Chattisgarh, Assam, West Bengal, The progress is substantial in other projects as well. The reason for Himachal not completing BRCs is due to difficulty in securing appropriate sites and indicates that they will not undertake the work not yet started. Half of the repair work is yet to be completed in Assam, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Work is complete or are in progress on 1,38,600 (84%) classrooms out of 1,65,100 classrooms creating 55,44,000 student places. In addition 15,302 CIRCs will add another 61,000 student places besides housing monthly meetings of teachers. Moreover 46,500 toilets and 31,000 drinking water facilities have been created. The Mission acknowledges the contribution made by civil works initiatives in improving school facilities. The success of DPEP whole school approach to civil works development can be gauged by the fact that most States have decided to continue these processes beyond the Project period.

Expenditures

- 6.9 Cumulative expenditure up to September 2002 is 76% of the revised EFC approved cost of Rs 12.58 billion for DPEP. In DPEP II, the cumulative expenditure is 78% of the approved project cost. For West Bengal it is 69% for phase I and 22% for phase II. There is lag of over 20 months in expenditure and disbursement in Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand. Although expenditure in DPEP in several states is over 90%, the apprehension is that overall the project will not be able to fully utilize the revised allocation due to low utilization in some states specified above. In DPEP II, the probability of shortfall in expenditure seems higher since major civil works are over. Disbursements will be still lower. EEB and the funding agencies jointly review expenditures in these projects monthly and work with states for internal adjustments.

implementation, and an inevitable spectrum of prospects emerges. While the issue of sustainability at the start of the Project was conceived largely in financial terms, the implementation experience of DPEP has shown sustainability to be a broader issue. Those states who have from the outset taken firm ownership of DPEP, and have integrated it as part of mainstream structure and process and perceived it less as a “project” give a greater sense of confidence than those where it has remained very much as a separate “project”. Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh stands out in this respect, where DPEP has become less visible as an entity and enmeshed within the mainstream. The approaching completion of DPEP should be seen more in terms of a milestone within the emerging and broader agenda of universalising elementary education rather than as an end point. The overall conclusion is that it has provided, and continues to provide, a firm basis of experience and capability on which further reforms will grow, notwithstanding that concerns remain and warrant attention in the remaining time available in DPEP. The key issue is how well will the gains be protected and nurtured in the expanded SSA agenda? The mission examined sustainability under three broad, albeit inter-related, headings of policy, resources and capacity.

Policy

- 7.2 Two broad areas emerged from the state reports in connection with the policy environment for sustaining the reform process begun under DPEP: articulation with SSA, and extension beyond geographical limits of DPEP.
- 7.3 The development of the national programme to achieve universalisation of elementary education – Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) clearly provides the broad framework through which states will sustain progress. A positive picture emerges from the state reports with regard to the integration of DPEP into this broader framework. In the majority of cases the DPEP State Project Office is taking on responsibility for planning and implementation of SSA. In some instances, in response to the 15th JRM recommendation, states have undertaken some clear thinking on sustainability, and developed sustainability and transition plans as part for their planning for SSA. In a number of states (Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka) a clear vision for universalisation clearly transcends the project mode of DPEP, where processes and structures are well embedded into the wider system. In almost all cases there emerges clear evidence of the impact of DPEP on thinking, planning and implementation under the emerging SSA programme.
- 7.4 One clear indicator of the mainstreaming of DPEP gains is the extension of DPEP initiatives beyond the districts specifically targeted. This clearly points to a high level of ownership and perceived value of interventions, backed by a commitment of state resources. Six states report this extension that involves a range of initiatives: the establishment of resource groups (AP), establishment of CRCs (Gujarat), provision of textbooks (Himachal) and learning improvement programmes (W Bengal).

Resources

- 7.5 DPEP has enjoyed an appropriate level of resources being applied to the various elements of the programme: to capacity building at all levels through training and outreach programmes, including community mobilisation, teaching and learning resources, and in particular allocations to ensure enhanced participation of special focus groups (girls, the disabled, and disadvantaged groups). The sustainability of efforts for these special groups can only be assured if they are fully encompassed in the each states respective plans for SSA. To ensure appropriate levels of resources are applied to these special groups, states will have to workout allocations based on central share under SSA norms and proportions of their own contributions where necessary if overall allocations are able to sustain these issues that improve equity. In only two states (Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka) has some degree of confidence been expressed in the capacity for this to happen, and in the former some progress is reported with regard to longer term sector financing.

Capacity

- 7.6 Financial resources are part of the equation. The retention, development and application of human resources within an effective institutional framework are of equal importance if financial investment is to be maximised. Strategies to further build the capacities developed under the project in non-DPEP districts is a major issue. Several issue emerge from the state reports.
- 7.7 The indications for the continued influence of the several key structures established and developed under DPEP are good. A number of states report positively on the continuing roles of the SCERT, SIEMAT, DIET, BRC, and CRC beyond the life of DPEP. Despite some specific concerns (Bihar, for example, notes the omission of the role of SIEMAT in the sustainability plan, despite its impact in DPEP), there is a sense of confidence regarding the continuation of physical and organisational structures as a basis for sustainability, that will now assume similar roles in the implementation of SSA. Of equal importance are the effect linkages between the various levels, and in particular the capacity for the system to sustain and develop a demand-driven approach through which they continue to respond to the felt needs of the end-users - teachers, schools and communities – charged with educating India's children.
- 7.8 A major impact of DPEP has been the formation and development of Village Education Committees that are now very much a part of the educational landscape. The VECs, as well as Mother Teacher Associations, have enabled a far greater degree of community involvement in education at grassroots level and they will continue to play key roles. The continuation of the effectiveness of these groups will also depend on further skill enhancement so they are able to meet the changing demands of SSA.

- 7.9 Integral to the continuation of these structures is the human resource within them. At the simplest level, most states report positively on the prospects for the continuation of key posts beyond DPEP, though some voice concerns regarding certain categories of staff, principally at the administrative support level. This has a consequence for the effectiveness of technical staff, who may become disproportionately consumed with administrative work, raised particularly in Andhra Pradesh in relation to the Teacher Centres. There are also some concerns raised of future capacity to retain certain staff on deputation (Gujarat) with fears that such resource may be lost. The Mission recommends the need for quick decision regarding key personnel, specially in areas like EMIS, so that continuity of DPEP gains are assured.
- 7.10 DPEP has had some effect in changing working practices at various levels of the system, from changing approaches to pedagogy at the school level, to more demand responsive interventions regarding the production of teaching learning materials, training and school supervision and support. These cultural changes, whilst in instances are impressive, remain tenuous in many places and areas, and need to be further nurtured and developed before DPEP can claim to have permanently changed things for the better.
- 7.11 Almost all reports make reference for the need to sustain the professional development of staff at all levels. Skills gaps emerge with respect to the wider remit of SSA, and some concerns expressed as to how these will be met. A start has been made under DPEP, but these achievements should not be seen as an end point; if the full impact of DPEP reforms are to be extended under SSA then sustained attention needs to be paid to the continued professional development of the “treasure of manpower” (Karnataka). This should apply equally at all levels of the system, in particular at the village level .
- 7.12 The achievement of UEE is dependent upon the collaboration of various departments. This is particularly relevant to reaching special groups where joint working with other departments is necessary. Mechanisms for improved convergence between Education Departments and, inter alia, Social Welfare, are noted in several reports (Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh) as is the need for further progress (West Bengal). The impression gained from many of the state reports is that inter-departmental convergence is recognised as important, is variable in its effectiveness, and needs to be based more around a shared vision and outcomes (W Bengal) as much as processes.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 The overarching issue emerging from this JRM as well as other studies and commentary of education, is the need to focus on quality with equity, with a view to improving learning outcomes across the increasing numbers and diversity of children attending primary school in India. The mission proposes that each state develop a holistic vision of quality with equity, framed within the constitutional commitment to

elementary education as a fundamental right. As preliminary step to achieving this renewed vision of quality with equity, the mission proposes three inter-related steps under this common theme.

- 82 The mission recommends a thrust on defining and meeting basic learning conditions in all States in order to provide equity not only in terms of access but of learning opportunities. Through this should be established some common benchmarks of basic learning conditions, and strategies subsequently developed at state level and below for meeting them. This would encompass, inter alia, issues of availability and effective deployment of adequate numbers of trained and motivated teachers, basic school facilities, as well as timely and sufficient availability of teaching learning materials. Considering large - scale enrolment of under age children, early childhood care and education needs in schools also needs to be addressed. Within this needs to be established at state and central level a clear monitoring framework of such benchmarks that covers the full range of schools.
- 83 There is growing a need to provide for the diverse learning needs of all children. DPEP has been successful in identifying the out of school children and mainstreaming a large number of them into the schooling process. Many of these are first generation learners, children with disability, children from under privileged social groups, girls from the minority community, children from tribal households, and the SC community. Differentiated approaches to these diverse needs need to be developed as part of the pedagogic renewal process being undertaken through CRCs, BRCs, DIETs and SCERTs.
- 84 The mission recommends a concerted effort at state level to develop a collective responsibility for quality and equity, linking thrusts on teacher development and support at cluster, block, district and state levels, and provision of diversity of learning opportunities through residential and other bridge courses for the out of school children. This should take account of institutions, structures, functions and processes in State specific contexts in a manner that decentralized management of education allows schools and communities to determine context specific interventions for quality, in partnership with cluster, block, district and state level institutions. Initiatives to understand the range of institutional reforms required to make the collective responsibility for quality a reality, needs to be undertaken over the next few months.
- 85 While the Joint Review Mission has emerged as a useful mechanism for reviewing progress against programme objectives, there is perhaps a need to review the time frame for such an intensive exercise, as well as its efficacy as a supervision process. The Mission recommends an annual review with a longer field visit component, with provision for additional field visits during the year to deepen understanding of issues, processes and progress.

ABREVIATIONS

ABA	Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari
AB	Activity Based teaching
ACR	Actual Completion Rate
ADI	Assistant District Inspector (of Schools)
ADPO	Additional District Project Officer
ADO	Assistant Education Officer
AI	Alternative Innovation Education
ALS	Alternative Learning School
APEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
AS	Alternative Schooling
ATI	Administrative Training Institute
AV	Audio-visual
AV	Anganwadi
AH	Anganwadi Helper
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan & Budget
AS	Anganwadi Supervisor
AW	Anganwadi Worker
BAG	Block Action Group
BA	Baseline Assessment Study
BDO	Block Development Officer
BO	Block Education Officer
BE	Basic Education Project
BLC	Block Level Coordination Committee
BLR	Block Level Resource Co-ordinator
BMS	Bihar Management Information System
BPO	Block Primary Education Officer
BR	Block Resource Centre
BRC	Block Resources Centre Co-ordinator
BRF	Block Resources Centre Functionary
BG	Block Resource Group
BS	Basic Shiksha Adhikari
BSP	Bihar Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad
BSBPC	Bihar State Text Book Publishing Corporation
BT	Basic Training Centre
CA	Cluster Academic Co-ordinator
CAG	Cluster Action Group
CB	Capacity Building
CO	Community Based Organisation
CBs	Computer Based Tutorials
CC	Continuous Comprehensive Assessment
CD	Child Data Indicator
CEI	Centre for Education Management
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLC	Cluster Level Resource Centre
CLG	Cluster Level Resource Group
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre Co-ordinator
CRF	Cluster Resource Centre Functionaries

CR4	Completion Rate in 4 Years of Primary Education
CR5	Completion Rate in 5 Years of Primary Education
CRF	Completion Rate in five Years
CRG	Cluster Resource Group
CTE	College for Teacher Education
DAG	District Action Group
DDO	District Development Officer
DEEO	District Elementary Education Officer
DEO	Distance Education Officer
DEP	Distance Education Programme
DFID	Department for International Development
DI	District Inspector
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DIS	District Inspector of School
DISE	District Information System for Education
DLO	District Level Officer
DLRG	District Level Resource Group
DOT	Design of Training
DPC	District Project Co-ordinator
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DPI	Directorate of Public Instruction
DPO	District Project Office
DPSC	District Primary School Council
DPU	District Project Unit
DRG	District Resource Group
DRU	District Resource Unit
DSERT	Department of State Education Research Technology
DTERT	Department of Teacher Education Research and Training
EC	European Commission
ECCE	Early Child Care and Education
ECE	Early Child Education
ECR	Ever Completion Rate
EE	Elementary Education
EEB	Elementary Education Bureau
EFC	Education Finance Committee
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EMT	Education Management and Training
ET	Education Technology
EVS	Environmental Studies
FAS	Final Assessment Study
FMIS	Financial Management Information System
FMS	Financial Management System
GCERT	Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GIEMAT	Gujarat Institution of Education Management and Training
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOAP	Government of Andhra Pradesh
GOA	Government of Assam
GOB	Government of Bihar

GG	Government of Gujarat
GI	Government of India
GO	Government of Jharkhand
GR	Government of Rajasthan
GUP	Government of Uttar Pradesh
GWB	Government of West Bengal
GP	Gram Panchayat
GR	Gram Panchayat Samiti
GBE	Gujarat Text Book Board
GWE	Girijana Vidya Vikasa Kendram
ICIS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ID/	International Development Agency
IDF	Institutional development Plan
IEL	Integrated Education for the Disabled
IEC	Integrated Education for the Disabled Children
IGE	Index of Gender Equity
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIE	Indian Institute of Education
IIM	Indian Institute of Management
INST	In-service Teacher Training
IPMS	Integrated Project Management Information System
IPM	Integrated Project Monitoring System
IRM	Internal Review Mission
ISE	Index of Social Equity
JRM	Joint Review Mission
JRY	Jawahar Rozgar Yojana
KRP	Key Resource Person
LH	Listening Handicapped
LJP	Lok Jumbish Project
LP	Lower Primary
LSA	Lok Sampark Abhiyan
LSS	Lower Secondary Scholarship
MA	Mid-term Assessment Survey
MC	Most Backward Castes
MCA	Model Cluster Development Approach
MD	Managing Director
MEC	Mandal Education Officer
MGC's	Multi Grade Learning Centres
MGT	Multi-Grade Teaching
MH	Mentally Handicapped
MHD	Ministry of Human Resources Development
MIEA	Maharashtra Instituted of Educational Planning and Management
MIS	Management Information System
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MLT	Multi Level Teaching
MPS	Maharashtra Prathmik Shiksha Parishad
MRC	Mandal Resources Centres
MRG	Mandal Resource Group
MRP	Mandal Resource Person
MS	Mahila Samakhya
MSA	Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan

MSCERT	Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training
MSP	Mahila Samakhya Project
MT	Master Trainer
MTA	Mother Teacher Association
NCB	National Competitive Bidding
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCLP	National Child Labour Project
NCTE	National Council of Teacher Education
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non Government Organization
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPRC	Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centre
NPS	New Primary School
NSDART	National Society for Development Administration Research and Training
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Castes
OPEPA	Orissa Primary Education Project Authority
PEC	Panchayat Education Committee
PEEP	Panchayat level Elementary Education Plan
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PMU	Programme Monitoring Unit
PRA	Participatory Rural Assessment
PRD	Panchayati Raj Department
PRDD	Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Department
PRI	Panchayati Raj Instruction
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PTTI	Primary Teacher Training Institute
PWD	Public Works Department
QMT	Quality Management Team
RCI	Rehabilitation Council of India
RCPE	Rajasthan Council of Primary Education
RES	Research and Evaluation Studies
RGJJP	Rajiv Gandhi-Swaran Jayanti Pathshala
RGSM	Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha Mission
RPM	Reflection-cum-Planning Meetings
RSTB	Rajasthan State Textbook Board
RT	Resource Teacher
SAG	State Action Group
SAMIS	Student Attendance Management Information System
SARG	State Academic Resource Group
SC	Scheduled Castes
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SCR	Student Classroom Ratio
SDI	School Deputy Inspector
SDMC	School Development and Monitoring Committee
SEC	School Education Committee
SEEM	State Elementary Education Mission

INDIA

DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Sixteenth Joint Review Mission
(14th November – 2nd December 2002)

Terms of Reference

Introduction

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was designed to help achieve the objective of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) outlined within the policy framework of the revised National Policy on Education 1986 (as updated in 1992) and the Programme of Action, 1992. The purpose of DPEP is stated clearly in the Programme Guidelines^[1]:

The Programme will develop and implement in the districts selected a replicable, sustainable and cost-effective programme:

- (i) to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5%*
- (ii) to reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10%*
- (iii) to raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured baseline levels and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies, by all primary school children*
- (iv) to provide, according to national norms, access for all children, to primary education classes (I-V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education.*

The programme will also strengthen the capacity of national, state and district institutions and organisations in relation to planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

The programme was designed to decentralise decision making to the district and sub-district level for more effective service delivery. With an integrated approach to primary education development, the programme aims to bring about system-wide reforms in primary education and achieve the goal of UEE.

^[1] Paragraph 1.1.7 of DPEP Guidelines.

DPEP started in November 1994 in 42 districts in 7 states, and has since then expanded in a phased manner to 242 (272 bifurcated districts) in 18 states. While the Phase I and II districts have been involved in the programme for more than five years, 23 districts in Gujarat, Orissa and Rajasthan have completed just over a year. Different districts are therefore, at different stages of implementing DPEP. This diversity will be taken into consideration while reviewing the performance of States.

The programme is managed at the national level by the Elementary Education Bureau, at the state level by the State Project Office and at the district level by District Project Office. DPEP is monitored twice a year by a Joint Review Mission (JRM), which is led, in rotation, by the Government of India (GOI), the World Bank (WB), the European Commission (EC) and the UK Department For International Development (DFID). The purpose of the JRM is to provide the programme managers at all levels and funding agencies with information and reassurance that the programme is being carried out in accordance with the DPEP guidelines.

Mission Objectives

The Mission builds upon the findings of the previous Mission in defining four areas for exploration and observation. These are (a) Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity; (b) Quality and Equity; (c) Institutional capacity and Progress in Programme Implementation; and (d) Sustainability. The Mission will use the documents provided, make consultations at the national level and utilise the state visits to arrive at conclusions on the current status of the programme with regard to the overall objectives of the programme and particularly with reference to the mission objectives.

It would be recalled that the DPEP projects are at different stages of implementation in the various States. DPEP I and II are nearing completion, and the present Mission would also be a mid-term review for the State of Rajasthan. The Mission will accordingly review State and Project specific performance, taking into account the progress recorded in the earlier JRMs as also the stage of implementation of the specific Project.

Specifically, the objectives of the Mission are as follows:

1. *Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity*

- Review enrolment, retention, repetition, achievement and completion data to evaluate the extent to which the programme has been able to accomplish the targets outlined at the commencement of the programme.
- Assess the impact of the programme on girls, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe, and children with disabilities with reference to enrolment, retention, repetition, achievement and completion.

- Assess the progress toward the development objectives (enrolment, retention, repetition, achievement and completion) with special emphasis on providing education to children from the hardest to reach groups - urban deprived children, working children and migrant communities.
- Assess interventions focussed on improving the quality of education where multiple strategies have been adopted to enhance access – like EGS / AS, bridge and condensed courses, para-teachers – with special focus on enrolment, completion, learning levels and mainstreaming.
- Assess the overall impact of DPEP in bridging equity gaps – between different social groups and within each social group by gender – with special emphasis on the effectiveness of DPEP in providing education to children in special focus groups and the hardest to reach groups.

2. *Quality and Equity*

- Assess the quality of education provided to special focus groups - especially where multiple strategies have been adopted to enhance access – like EGS / AS, bridge and condensed courses, para-teachers in regular primary schools – with special focus on learning outcomes and successful completion of the primary cycle.
- Assess specific initiatives relating to equity issues in small schools and in remote habitations in terms of teacher deployment, school facilities, supply of textbooks and resource availability.
- Examine system in place for monitoring learning and completion both in-class and at the block and district level.
- Review new initiatives and progress on ongoing initiatives to improve quality of primary schooling with respect to management and deployment of teachers, teacher development, development of textbooks and other materials, teaching and learning in multigrade and multi level situations, teaching learning process and teacher and pupil attendance.
- Assess the systems put in place by the States to monitor comprehensively the implementation of quality interventions.
- Examine the contribution of VEC and other grass root level structures in overall school quality and school-community linkages and the progress regarding the use of Village Education and Retention Registers in schools.

3 *Institutional capacity and progress of Programme Implementation*

- Assess the system's progress and efficiency in collecting, compiling, analyzing and utilizing data especially with reference to special focus groups.
- Examine the extent to which planning and management capacity has improved in DPEP I and II at the state level, and the plans to improve capacity at this level in the states where the program commenced more recently. Assess the extent to which the States are using research and reflection to inform the planning process.
- Assess the capacity building of personnel at the district and sub-district levels and the extent to which the Programme has been successful in decentralising the process of decision-making.
- Review the extent and effectiveness of the institutional strengthening with regard to DIETs, BRCs, CRCs, SCERT and SIEMAT.
- Assess efforts to develop an enabling environment for the achievement of DPEP objectives in terms of suitable policies for the recruitment and deployment of adequate teachers; provision of school facilities; effective decentralisation; and putting in place an accountable community owned school system.
- Examine the physical and financial progress made; and the extent to which progress is being measured against project outputs (objectives of the particular input) and outcomes (development objectives).

4. *Sustainability*

- Assess the efforts made to sustain institutions, processes, structures and systems initiated at different levels in DPEP beyond the project period, particularly in projects nearing closure, eg., DPEP I and II.
- Examine strategies to ensure smooth transition to post-project period and time-bound plan based on sustainability study to consolidate DPEP gains and sustain the change processes.
- Review the long-term support for DPEP reforms including issues of convergence.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Andhra Pradesh State Report
(17 - 23 November 2002)

1. Introduction

1.1 On behalf of the Sixteenth Joint Review Mission of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Vimila Ramachandran (DFID) and Keith Hinchliffe (WB) visited Andhra Pradesh from 17th – 23rd November 2002 to review the progress of the programme.

1.2 In Hyderabad, the Mission team met with the State Project Director and other members of the State Project Office (SPO) and staff from SCERT. The Assistant Project Coordinators from six districts gave briefings on recent activities in their districts. The Mission Team also visited Warangal district and interacted with the District Collector, District Level Officers and functionaries, including the entire team of the District Project Office, as well as of the DIET. The Team spent time in several villages visiting Mandal Resource Centres (MRCs) and a Teacher Centre (TC), and schools including two Alternative School and two Residential Bridge Course Centres. A final wrap-up was chaired by the State Project Director. The Team wishes to thank all the State and District representatives for the transparent and extensive discussions on key aspects of programme planning and implementation, and acknowledge the warm and generous hospitality extended throughout the visit.

2. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

2.1 Over the past two years in particular, the focus in the state has shifted from measuring gross and net enrolment rates in primary and upper primary stages to enumerating the actual number of 5-15 year olds out of school, and the school attendance rates. This is a major step and has made the drive for universalization much more concrete. This approach forces the administration to provide more directly for the specific needs of each (increasingly hard to reach) child. The result has been the growth of back to school programs, a set of differently managed alternative schools and bridge courses of various types. The past two missions have commented very favourably on these programs which are being carried out with a great deal of commitment and initiative, and with considerable success, including in educational achievement. The team corroborates these assessments and notes the large planned expansion of residential schools for girls under DRP from December. The most recent state wide enrolment drive – the Chaduvula Paduga (CP) – was implemented in early August and was a major operation undertaken by all district administrations. The total number of 5-15 year olds in the state is estimated to be 15.66 million. Prior to the CP, 1.04 million were out of school. The current number

is estimated at 565,000 which is 3.6 percent of the age group. Universalization has been achieved in almost 4000 Gram Panchayats. The current situation can be compared to that in 1999/2000 (National Sample Survey). Then, 14 percent of 6-10 year olds and 33 percent of 11-13 year olds were reported to be out of school.

- 2.2 The individual characteristics (eg. age, gender, caste, mandal, size of habitation) of those currently still out of school following the CP are not readily available at the state level (though they are available at habitation and mandal level) but it is likely that most are in the three large urban centres, very small habitations and from the tribal population. This latter group has always recorded the lowest participation levels. Efforts to provide and encourage schooling among this population requires a convergence of activities among several departments. This is often difficult and always time consuming. The experiences in several districts which were presented to the mission eg. in Munchingput mandal in Visakhapatnam where an existing NGO has been contracted, are reassuring. The large urban centres also pose a problem and the mission was pleased to learn of the planned new initiatives in this area. Overall, in terms of enrolment, DPEP is being very successful.
- 2.3 From enrolment (and re-enrolment) to completion is the next stage. For some time, more of the out of school children have been dropouts rather than never enrolled. The cohort studies which were pioneered by the state office recorded a primary completion rate in five years in the same school of only 31 percent, and a maximum rate of 62 percent if all repeaters eventually finish the course. However, the situation appears to be improving. Information presented for Chittoor district suggests that the dropout rate reduced from 36 percent for the cohort entering class 1 in '95/96 to 19 percent for that entering in '97/98. The efforts over the past two years to encourage dropouts to return will be pushing up the completion rates further. However, the attendance monitoring system continues to suggest significant levels of non-attendance/dropout (around 14 percent). It is appropriate here to acknowledge the innovative work which has been done over the past two years by the EMIS unit and which is planned for the coming year. If the new on-line data gathering system to be initiated proves effective (eg. in constantly updating the information in the Family Survey and in attendance monitoring) it will be a powerful decision-making tool.
- 2.4 Increasingly the focus of monitoring will need to shift from measuring the number of out of school children to measuring the numbers not completing the primary and full elementary cycles. Over the past five years, enrolments in both class V and VII have been increasing by an average of only just over 5 percent a year. Class V enrolment in 2000/01 was only 63 percent of class 1 in that year. Class VII enrolment was 77 percent of class V enrolment two years before. A significant number of new upper primary classes have begun in the past year but with the higher levels of primary cycle graduates, the expansion will need to continue.
- 2.5 On a short district field visit, and one where political violence curtailed visits to the more remote areas where the 'hardest to reach children' live, and consequently where the non-regular schools and school teachers / vidya volunteers (VV) / instructors are, it is difficult

for the mission to assess whether all children in public schools are receiving a similar education. In the same way that out of school children are now identified by their characteristics, some analysis of the personal and social characteristics of those who reach class V and class VII (and consequently those who do not) might be a useful next step for the EMIS team to undertake.

- 2.6 The mission also noted several variations across districts both in terms of inputs (eg. in pupil:teacher ratios even after including in the VV's) and outcomes (eg. in both the growth rates of class V and class VII enrolments and the levels and changes in learning achievement). More comparative analysis of inter-district experiences might generate some general lessons.
- 2.7 Finally, another effect of the change in the focus from enrolments to out of school children, and an emphasis on each child, is the capture (in local data) of information on all types of school, including unrecognised ones. In the district visited by the mission, 30 percent of enrolments in both grade I and V are in private unaided schools. The Guidelines for SSA allow for a greater incorporation of recognised private schools into the programme than do those for DPEP. Because of this, and the extent of their coverage, more understanding of the dynamics of this set of schools may be useful. For instance, a subset might be persuaded to administer the learning achievement tests for class IV.

3. Quality and Equity

Andhra Pradesh is making considerable progress in ensuring access. The challenge now is simultaneously to improve learning outcomes and enhance the ability of children to read and write with comprehension, analyse and communicate. Quality remains an important equity issue in the state.

3.1 *Quality Triangle and Learning Outcome:*

3.1.1 The results of the mid term learning assessment (MAS) have recently been released. Compared to the base line assessments there appears to have been some improvement in each district, though overall the results remain quite low. In language tests, the average district mark increased from 50 to 56 percent for class IV, and in mathematics it increased from 40 to 46 percent. The range across districts was large: 46 – 64 percent for language and 35 – 57 percent for mathematics. Similarly there were very wide variations within districts. Overall, there was little difference between boys and girls but the marks of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe children were systematically lower than those of other children in 10 out of 14 districts. Across districts Chitoor and Prakasam were the highest achievers and Anantapur and Mahububnagar the lowest. In preparation for SSA, NCERT has recently conducted assessment tests for classes 3, 4 and 5. The results are not yet available.

- 3.1.2 Continuous assessments have been introduced through a schedule of assignments, unit tests, quarterly and half-yearly examinations and final examinations. Teachers now prepare the question papers in the teacher centres (TCs) and the use of privately published papers has been discontinued. Schools are also being graded on the basis of attendance, retention and learning outcomes. However, it is not clear how these gradings are being used in practice by district level functionaries to develop strategies (for teacher training / academic support etc.) to improve learning outcomes. Visits to a residential bridge course (and to one run by Mahila Samakhya Project) in Warangal District revealed a high level of motivation among teachers and great enthusiasm among children. Learning outcomes appear to be good with almost 2/3rd of children scoring over 60% in terminal examinations (class 7). The average across the district was said to be around 48 percent. The atmosphere in each camp was vibrant and the children were confident, bright and articulate.
- 3.1.3 During discussions, project officers and teachers said that a large proportion of children in formal schools complete class 55 with below average reading/writing and numeracy skills. Given that a significant proportion of children in government schools are first generation learners, longer contact hours with teachers and greater exposure to the written word through story books could indeed make a big difference – as demonstrated in the evaluations of the mobile library programme underway in selected Mandals of Chittoor, Srikakulam and Nalgonda. The Learning Guarantee Scheme initiated in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy is another interesting initiative where an effort has been made to enhance commitment of teachers and develop attitudinal change. Inputs in the form of additional learning material (including supplementary material for self-learning in multi-grade situations) and greater interaction of MRPs and DRPs with teachers with a view to encourage self-analysis and develop problem-solving abilities are indeed welcome. It is premature to make an assessment of the impact of this programme on the ground, but the potential benefits and possibilities of replication are large. Similarly, a program to link DIET lecturers to schools in specific mandals over several months to provide continuous support has good potential.
- 3.1.4 Introduction of activity frames and activity-based learning in Kurnool merits special mention. The objective is to provide learning situations that not only enable the children to grasp concepts but also help promote self-learning and exploration. This innovative programme, underway in all mandals, involves a great deal of effort on the part of the teachers and teacher educators of the district to prepare activity frames, adapt them for each level and generate test papers that are in keeping with the pedagogy. Again, it is premature to make an assessment of impact on learning outcomes and development of cognitive and critical abilities in children. Systematic process documentation of this effort will be valuable.
- 3.1.5 The project has stimulated a range of innovations to improve quality – including, the library programme of Chittoor, science exhibitions in Warangal, production of supplementary reading material in Nalgonda, activity frame based

teaching/learning in Kurnool, radio lessons for distance learning through “*Vindam Nerchukudam*” in Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada Districts to name a few. What these innovations reveal is that overall quality improvement can be achieved only if all the three inputs of the quality triangle converge, i.e., community support to ensure regular attendance and motivating children to learn; teacher support / development to improve the skills and motivation of teachers and providing a vibrant learning environment. The beautiful schools, learning frames and activity based learning of Kurnool, the mobile libraries of Chittoor, the teacher-community pact of the learning guarantee scheme in Nalgonda, and the community mobilisation programs in tribal Vishakapatnam – are all needed in order to support and reinforce each other. *While these individual innovations are important and have promise, cross-fertilisation between them is as important as inter-district learning and up scaling effective strategies.*

3.2 Factors that impede effective learning:

3.21 Among the factors that could influence learning outcomes (especially of children from very poor families) is the time available for reading and revision before and after school. Engaging with the community – especially through the SECs / VECs on what and how much children are learning was mentioned in discussions as an important factor contributing to greater awareness about quality issues. Parents and community leaders met by the team are concerned about the reading / writing and arithmetic skills learnt by children. Regularity of the teacher alone does not ensure learning; what she/he does in the class, the time devoted to active teaching / learning and the motivation of the teacher to reach out to children is equally of importance. Similarly, what children do before and after school – reading stories and revising lessons – was also flagged as an important variable. Comparing the learning outcomes of children in residential programmes with day scholars, it was observed that providing an overall learning environment appeared to be one of the factors contributing to good learning outcomes.

3.22 In this context it would be valuable to explore the work burden (household, cattle and agricultural work at home) of children who are enrolled in schools and the particular circumstances of children of seasonal migrants (especially in drought years like the current one). This could enhance understanding of factors that impede learning in and out of school – especially of first generation learners and children from very poor households. This might be of particular importance in tribal areas where children are engaged in the collection of minor forest produce and go into the forest with their parents – leading to irregular attendance. Similar analysis would also be valuable for urban deprived groups where children support their parents in a large number of occupations – especially where they are engaged in the putting-out system (beedi rolling, rag picking, loading/unloading, collecting waste coal etc.)

3.23. On a different issue, the SCERT study of the impact of inservice teacher training concluded (among other things) that teachers are neglecting the fast learners. This

reinforces the view of the previous mission that the diversity of learning in the classroom needs to be addressed more and that additional supplementary materials for slow and fast learners could usefully be developed.

3.3 *Tribal areas:*

3.3.1 Irregular attendance and lower learning outcomes have been reported in most Tribal areas. Officials and teachers met by the team acknowledged that this is a major challenge and has been flagged as a priority area. Collaborative projects with NGOs – for example in two mandals in Vishakapatnam are showing promise with respect to enrolment and reducing drop out rates. Up scaling such efforts is dependent on the availability of grassroots NGOs in remote and sensitive tribal areas. Bilingual materials have been produced and distributed to schools and Teacher Centres in one mandal in Srikakulam and in Warangal, three mandals in Vishakapatnam and two mandals in Adilabad. Interactions with the Mahila Samanatha (GOI scheme of Mahila Samakhya) team working in remote tribal mandals of Warangal, Adilabad and Nizamabad revealed that teacher absenteeism and irregular school functioning is a major issue and that notwithstanding the commendable efforts of DPEP to post Vidya Volunteers in “defunct” or dysfunctional schools, quality is worrisome and learning is limited. Equally, as seen from the report presented on Vishakapatnam, only 250 of 361 small habitations have schools. Language barriers (children speak a dialect of tribal Oriya) and teachers’ lack of familiarity with social customs have also been flagged as important issues.

3.3.2. There is a great demand for residential schools (including residential bridge courses, Mahila Shikshan Kendra, Mahila Pranganam). This is evident in the increase in the number of DPEP and ITDP residential bridge courses in tribal areas in order to meet the growing demand of out-of-school children. Small, and at times dysfunctional, multi grade schools in remote habitations may not be able to provide quality education – especially from grade 3 upwards where the subject knowledge of teachers / Vidya Volunteers is of great importance. It may be worthwhile to explore the possibility of strengthening schools in mandal headquarters and making provisions for transporting children from class 3 onwards. Large and well functioning schools with one teacher for each grade, good PTRs and other educational, library and recreation facilities could contribute towards providing good quality education to children in remote and sensitive tribal habitations. Such schools might have lower unit costs than residential schools and cater to a larger number of children.

3.4 *Para teachers / Vidya Volunteers:*

3.4.1 Despite the tenuous fiscal position of the state, it is noteworthy that the Government has sustained the Vidya Volunteers initiative to augment teacher availability in formal schools thereby improving teacher-pupil ratio. There are 51,244 Vidya Volunteers working in the state, out of which 8733 are working in

old and new primary schools of DPEP districts. Training and capacity building of Vidya Volunteers is done through a 14 day induction course followed by two quarterly sessions of 5 days each. Given that Vidya Volunteers are appointed for 10 months with no guarantee of continuation, it was reported that they feel insecure. The Government is also hesitant to invest in sustained training and capacity building since it is not clear that each volunteer teacher will continue. While this sense of insecurity may contribute to greater regularity of attendance, imparting quality education remains problematic. Equally, given that an increased amount of the time of MRPs has been taken up in attendance monitoring and other access related issues, they are not able to provide much sustained support to the VVs. This is of concern given that many VVs are posted in remote habitations and work in small schools that were dysfunctional. Additional ways to support the VVs and their instructors in the alternative schools, will have significant benefits, and limit the scepticism towards education felt by many families of first generation learners.

3.5 *Bringing quality centrestage:*

3.5.1 Having addressed access through *Chaduvula Panduga*, Andhra Pradesh is now planning to actively engage with quality issues as a priority. A cursory review of the SSA plan for Warangal District reveals that quality has been given a central place in the overall UEE strategy. Sustained investment in quality inputs, especially in schools that cater to disadvantaged sections of society could make a difference. This is of particular importance in the light of growing evidence of parents shifting children to private schools. Recent case studies (Warangal District done and Nizamabad underway) in DPEP districts reveal that parents opt for private schools because there is an impression that they teach English, have one teacher for each class, have better teacher-pupil ratio and maintain greater discipline – despite poor infrastructure and less qualified teachers! As the more powerful social classes send their children to the private schools, societal pressure on government schools decreases. With around 30 percent of children now attending private schools, the majority of children in government schools are from poor families. The biggest challenge is to ensure that they receive a schooling of good quality.

4. Institutional Capacity and Programme Implementation

4.1. *institutional capacity*

4.1.1. The collection and compilation of educational data in Andhra Pradesh has improved and been extended significantly in the past two years at all levels. Data collected now covers up to class X and includes all types of schools. In the state project office, detailed tables covering a wide range of information can be made available rapidly and are being utilised for many reporting purposes (including a key set of indicators which is monitored by the Chief Minister) and for the preparation of the state's SSA plan. The team would like to make one comment

on the normal presentation of data. In general enrolments etc. are disaggregated by gender and by community (SC, ST, minorities and so on). Often lacking is a gender differentiation within communities. This can be important. In some states, for instance, it has been seen that among SC children the girls do better while among ST children the boys do better.

- 4.1.2. The mission also reviewed district and mandal plans. These are again impressive documents which are strongly data based. In addition, while it is not possible for the mission to provide a definite judgement there is evidence that the latter have been discussed by members of the community. So far, data has been used for informational purposes. There is, however, the possibility to go further. For instance, it would be possible to investigate the causes of differences in outcomes between districts, and between mandals within districts. A simple graphing of the MAS results against pupil:teacher ratios across districts shows a very strong correlation and can be completed in minutes. Beyond data collection, the project has initiated some interesting and useful studies over the past two years including the social assessments, the cohort studies and the SCERT study on the impact of teacher training. Some of these have become institutionalised at the district level eg. the cohort studies, but more might be done. In many states, the achievement studies have been completed and then largely disregarded (perhaps because they tend to be undertaken outside of the Department). In Andhra Pradesh, the results of the MAS for DPEP II have just been released. There are wide differences between levels of achievement, and changes in these since the BAS, across the districts. Two sets of activities could be pursued; an analysis of these differences at state level with the Assistant Project Coordinators and a disaggregation of the results to provide materials to be used at the Teacher Centres.
- 4.1.3. The emphasis placed on habitation and mandal education plans is indicative of the desire to decentralise the planning and management of the system. The specific district activities described by six APCs, and the examples of community initiatives seen by the mission, also indicate that innovation is encouraged. On the other hand, there still appears to be quite a strong measure of district level control on lower level activities. For instance, both the agenda and the timings in TC meetings are perhaps overly determined for a system which has now been existing for many years. With respect to the TCs in general, the mission was pleased to hear of the current discussions among state and district offices to further increase their effectiveness in both encouraging teacher development and as a forum to transmitting pressing issues to higher levels of the bureaucracy
- 4.1.4. Previous missions have commented on the willingness of the state government in recent years to support the overall elementary education system through the recruitment of large numbers of teachers and, when required, of Vidya Volunteers. This is in spite of a virtual freeze on new appointments in the rest of the public service. In addition, the transfer/counselling system for teachers has been a major attempt to rationalize their deployment. The team is also aware of the recent/ongoing attempts to locate teachers closer to the schools. Problems still

remain and there are variations in PTRs across and within districts, and issues of teacher attendance. The learning guarantee schemes being experimented with are intended to motivate teachers. In the medium term, it is probably through the strengthening of the school committees and of other community groups, that change will come.

4.2 Programme implementation

- 4.2.1. Total project cost for DPEP I, including contingencies is Rs 241 crore. Expenditure to date is Rs 177 crore (73 percent). Expenditure this year is a quarter of that planned. Of the remaining funds, the move to the 33.3% ceiling for civil works allows for an additional Rs 27 crore for this item. These works have already been identified. Officially the project ends in four months, March 2003, though an extension for a further year has been requested. This will be needed if the original EFC allocation is to be used. Expenditures on both training and TL materials remain well below those originally planned.
- 4.2.2 Total project cost for DPEP II, including contingencies is Rs 726 crores. Expenditure to date is Rs 434 crores (60 percent). The project ends in another 16 months (March 2004). Expenditure this year is so far only 12 percent of that planned for the year. Unlike the case in DPEP I, the raising of the civil works ceiling will not allow for much additional expenditure on this item (around Rs 6 crore) since the programme 'overspent' earlier. Almost Rs 300 crores remain for the non civil works items. In the past 3.5 years, expenditure on these items has been around Rs 200 crores. The rate of expenditure would have to increase fourfold if all of the funds available are to be used.
- 4.2.3 So far this year, the project has received Rs 25 crores from GOI for DPEP I (AWPB of Rs 104 crores). DPEP II has received Rs 45 crores (AWPB of Rs 222 crores), of which Rs 20 crores was used for reimbursement of borrowings taken from other programmes in the previous year. In most districts, the project is operating again through borrowing from other programmes, and large procurement programmes for the DIETs and MRCs are being held up. Each of the last two missions has recommended that the state formulate expenditure plans for the remaining period of the project, and the size of this year's AWPB suggests this has been done. ***However, problems in the flow of funds are having serious effects on programme implementation.***
- 4.2.4. In addition to the under-expenditure in DPEP II, there have been significant exchange rate changes since the start of both projects. The team recommends that representatives of the state government, MHRD and DEA discuss and determine the financial framework for the remaining period of the projects.

5. Sustainability

5.1 DPEP to SSA:

- 5.1.1 Decentralised planning from village and mandal upwards has led to the generation of SSA plans that have taken on board most of the initiatives of DPEP – strategies to improve access through community mobilisation and provision of schools where they are needed, continuation of Mandal Resource Persons and Teachers Centres (a legacy of APPEP), District Resource Groups / Persons and most importantly the upward and downward communication and supervision structures created under DPEP. Most of these strategies have already been introduced in non-DPEP districts. One of the important features of Andhra Pradesh is the commitment evident at all levels to make UEE a reality. A concerted effort to address child labour issues and bring all children into the education ambit is indeed commendable. This has been positively commented upon by past Joint Review Missions.
- 5.1.2 Without repeating the observations made with respect to sustainability in the last two missions, the team would like to record that continuity of district level personnel, especially in key positions, is noteworthy. There are three types of personnel: people working on deputation (for example from SCERT to DPEP state office), people working on contract basis (IED specialists, Gender coordinators) and in-service personnel. Indications are that those on deputation and in-service personnel will continue to work after DPEP. Specialists in the IED unit are likely to be continued though this is contingent on the SSA plans being approved by GOI after appraisal. Vidya Volunteers under DPEP are likely to continue in SSA, however continuity of people cannot be assured given that they are on 10 month contracts. Given the tenuous nature of the appointment, volunteers invariably leave when they find more stable opportunities. Similarly, continued employment of instructors working in Alternative Schools (RBC, NRBC) is contingent on whether such short-term bridges courses will be required in the long-term. These are essentially time-bound bridging strategies.
- 5.1.3 In terms of the sustainability of DPEP processes, it would be reasonable to assume that given the Government's commitment to UEE, the work done with respect to gender issues, children with disability and special focus groups will continue. There is recognition in the state that UEE would become a reality only if sustained efforts are made to reach out to the hard to reach groups. Convergence of ITDA educational initiatives for tribal children, Social Welfare hostels and residential schools for SC children, NCLP for child labour and educational interventions planned under DPIIP (District Poverty Initiative Programme) would contribute towards greater sustainability of DPEP's initiatives and innovations.

5.1.3. Teachers Centres are now functioning regularly and continue to be a useful platform for teacher-to-teacher learning and support. The importance of this forum has been acknowledged not only for capacity building, but also to break the sense of isolation experienced by teachers working in small habitations / remote areas. However, the full potential of these centres is yet to be realised. This was flagged as an important area of concern in the 15th JRM and remains so, especially in the light of the fact that MRPs spend more time in administrative and community mobilisation related tasks and are therefore devoting less energy, time and creativity to academic support for teachers.

5.2 *Early Childhood Care and pre-school education:*

5.2.1 Given the tenuous fiscal situation in the state, the upward expenditure trend with respect to early childhood education (ECE), may be difficult. The state government has issued an order to open ECE centres in non-ICDS habitations, upgrade ICDS centres by synchronising timings with primary schools, locate ICDS centres near primary schools, supply pre-school play material, jointly monitor and provide additional honorarium. District SSA plans now include continuation of ECE centres in non-ICDS areas (many of them are slowly being converted into ICDS centres) and additional honorarium of Rs 200 to Aanganwadi Workers (AWW) and Rs 100 to Aanganwadi Helpers to ensure the centre timings are coterminous with primary school timings. However, given that GOI will limit their future funding of such interventions to the 'innovation fund' of R 15 lakhs per district, the state may need to find other sources of funding in order to sustain these activities. The value of pre-school / early childhood care centres has been demonstrated, not only in bringing down the number of under-age children in class one, but in preparing children for schooling. Pre-school education training to the AAW has filled the much-needed gap in the ICDS programme. Sustaining this may prove problematic if it is not supported by GOI.

5.3 *Replication and upscaling DPEP innovations:*

5.3.1 DPEP has been the home for many interesting innovations (as discussed in section 2). It will be a challenge to sustain the space and opportunity for continued innovations, especially in a resource-tight situation. More importantly, taking some of the successful innovations to scale is contingent upon assessing the impact and identifying generic principles that could be replicated across the state. The secret of most successful innovations is the coming together of a highly motivated / creative team, administrative support and availability of resources. Andhra Pradesh has a vast pool of talent in the field of education – both within and outside the government (M V Foundation, Rishi Valley to name a few). Andhra Pradesh also has a long history of project based educational intervention (APPEP (1986-1992) and DPEP (1994 onwards)). It remains to be seen if SSA – as it unfolds – will provide a renewed impetus not only for innovations but for the replication of successful models and taking them to scale. This would be trialing.

6 Next Steps

Three *next steps* were recommended by the 15th JRM. The first, was to prepare additional printed materials for slow learners and for maths, sciences and social studies in grades IV and V. Not much progress has occurred other than the additional materials for class II which are responding to the no repetition policy. The second, was to re-examine the objectives and modalities of the Teaching Centres. The mission found that this re-examination has recently begun. The third recommendation was to prepare two year plans of expenditure to the end of the project (s). Work along these lines has been undertaken but the delayed financial releases from GOI are slowing activities and expenditures.

6.1 *The team suggests:*

- 6.1.1. The school assessments, the end of year tests up to class VII and the SCERT study of the impact of teacher training all suggest that there is a wide range of attainment within classes. There is a need to address this situation through the development of materials, inservice training and the meetings at the Teacher Centres.
- 6.1.2. The development of DISE, the updating of the School/Household Survey and the emphasis on habitation planning has resulted planning in the state becoming highly data based. A useful addition to the general set of data at state level would be a gender disaggregation of social group. More generally, the data could be used for greater analysis including of differences in outcomes between and within districts, and the characteristics of class V and VII completers (and non completers), and achievement in private schools. Other examples are given in the earlier sections. The team suggests that a program of such work be developed for the coming six months.
- 6.1.3. Although there is not yet a detailed breakdown of the current characteristics of out of school children following the Chaduvula Panduga, it is likely that many are from tribal communities. Similarly, the average level of achievement of these children in the mid term learning assessment was below that of other groups. The team suggests that a comprehensive program for universalising elementary education for the tribal population, including language issues, be developed, together with other concerned agencies of Government.
- 6.1.4. Review the roles and responsibilities of the Gender Coordinators who are primarily involved in enrolment related mobilisation, and reposition them in the light of the emerging challenges with respect to retention, transition, completion and learning outcomes. The GCDOs need to engage further with women teachers, VV's and Lower Female Literacy Head Masters on the one hand and with the Mothers Groups (especially those linked to ECE/ICDS Centres who have a

significant role to play in taking the gender and equity debate from access to quality), on the other.

- 6.1.5. Given the under-expenditure in DPEP II against the EFC allocations, and the exchange rate changes since the start of both projects, representatives of the state, MHRD and DEA might usefully meet to consider the financial framework for the implementation of the final year and a half of the project.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Bihar State Report
(November 17-23, 2002)

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The sixteenth joint review mission (JRM) of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), consisting of Vyas Ji (GOI) and Harsha Aturupane (World Bank), visited Bihar between November 17-23, 2002. The central objectives of the mission were to assess progress towards:
- achievement of programme objectives related to enrolment, retention, completion and equity in primary education;
 - quality and equity in primary education available to various social groups;
 - institutional capacity and progress implementation;
 - sustainability of programme investments and activities.
- 1.2. The team met with the Chief Minister, Primary Education Minister and Primary Education Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister, Finance Secretary, Government of Bihar, Director Primary Education, State Project Director and staff of the State Level Office (*Bihar Shiksha Pariyojana Parishad*), District Level Coordinators and staff from the Vaishali, Purnea and Sitamarhi districts, Director and core staff of SCERT, Director and staff of SIEMAT, Director and staff of SIET, and Managing Director and staff of the Bihar State Textbook Publishing Corporation. The team visited Vaishali district and held discussions with the District Programme Coordinator and members of the District Level Office, the District Magistrate, District Superintendent of Education and other education functionaries, staff in DIETs, elected representatives of Panchayats, headmasters and teachers. The team visited primary schools in Vaishali district, including schools in some of the most remote rural areas, BRC's, CRC's, Alternative Schools and ECE centers. Discussions were held with headmasters, teachers, BRC staff, CRC staff, AS instructors, Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti members, Mother's committees, ECE staff and other community members and students.
- 1.3. The team would like to thank the State and District and local community representatives for the many productive meetings and discussions held and for their generous hospitality. The team would also like to acknowledge the readiness of State and District representatives to share information and data on all aspects of the Programme. The team owes a special debt of gratitude to the officials of the

State Level Office and the Vaishali District Level Office for their efficient organization and cooperation, and gracious hospitality.

- 1.4. The project made slow progress in Bihar during the early years of implementation. As a result, disbursement rates are still low in the final year of the project. The mission understands that GOB has requested a two year project extension, and the project has developed a draft expenditure plan for the extended period. However, GOI has not yet officially forwarded this request yet to the World Bank. There are several reasons for the slow pace of implementation. Bihar is one of the most under-developed regions of India, with the lowest level of literacy in the entire country. Hence, capacity building and institutional development had to commence from a weak base, and required intensive and time-consuming investment efforts and processes. Implementation support from the state wavered in the early years, with legal difficulties which hindered the appointment of staff to the state and district offices. The shortage of staff in these offices hampered implementation. Teacher appointments, designed as a central part of the project, with salaries paid by DPEP during the project life, were delayed due to the complexity of the teacher appointment process. In the face of these constraints the state and district level offices have performed excellently, displaying strong commitment to the project's development objectives and working in close collaboration with local communities and public institutions to lay a foundation for universal primary education in Bihar.

2. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

- 2.1 Progress has been made, with excellent leadership from the state level office, strong and concerted actions from the district level offices and enthusiastic partnership from local communities, towards building capacity and developing institutions to expand primary education. Several important actions and measures have been implemented to increase enrolment and retention, and improve completion. These include: (i) renovating and refurbishing existing classrooms to increase student capacity; (ii) constructing new classrooms in schools suffering a shortage of classroom space; (iii) constructing sanitary facilities, particularly to enhance school enrolment and attendance by girls; (iv) increasing drinking water facilities; (v) introducing child-friendly elements in schools, such as swings and slides in playgrounds, and colourful and informative posters and drawings on classroom walls; (vi) introducing nutritious mid-day meals for school going children; (vii) producing and distributing good quality textbooks with large text and attractive pictures; (viii) providing grants of 500 rupees per year to teachers to produce teaching-learning material; (ix) delivering in-service teacher training courses to teachers to refresh knowledge, introduce modern, child-centered teaching methods and enhance subject content mastery; and (x) using audio-visual media, such as cassettes and videos, to deliver teacher training and sensitize households and local communities to the importance of education.

on the dynamics of grade 1 enrolment. The information from these two studies will be useful for future planning and management.

- 2.6. Within the overall picture of regional variations in attainment, there are also areas of progress in equity. For instance, in the Purnea district, the index of gender equity has shown a trend improvement from 72% in 1997-98 to 80% in 2001-02. Similarly, the index of social equity for SC children increased from 108% to 116% between 1997-98 and 2001-02, and the index of social equity for ST children rose from 32% to 140% during the same period. In the Sitamarhi district the index of gender equity increased from 83% in 1998-99 to 90% in 2001-02, while the index of social equity for SC children improved from 94% to 98% over the same period.
- 2.7. On balance, DPEP objectives to provide access to primary education or its equivalent non-formal education system to all children in the relevant age group and to reduce primary school drop out rates below 10% are unlikely to be met by project closure in September 2003. DPEP3 itself cannot be blamed for this, as the project faced severe exogenous bottlenecks which have constrained implementation to less than one-third of planned investment expenditures. The actual impact of the investments that have taken place, along with the good organizational arrangements set in place by the State and District Level Offices, and the active institutional linkages with local communities, appears to be just sufficient to arrest any serious deterioration in primary education attainment, and to commence laying a foundation for system-wide improvement. However, longer-term support from DPEP appears to be needed, beyond the current project closing date of September 2003, to establish this foundation soundly and build upon it.

3. Quality and Equity

- 3.1. Several investments have been made to improve primary education quality. These include the creation of cluster and block resource centers to function as education quality enhancement resource pools at decentralized levels, teacher training, the introduction of attractive child friendly textbooks, and the provision of teaching learning material. These investments appear to have had some impact on improving learning. The baseline achievement survey showed mean scores, in grade 1 mathematics, of 49% for all children, 53% for boys and 45% for girls. The mid-term assessment showed that these scores had increased to 64% for all students, 67% for boys and 61% for girls. Class four mathematics scores also showed an improvement, albeit small, commencing at 36% for all children (37% for boys and 36% for girls) and rising to 43% for all students (42% boys and 43% girls) at the time of the mid-term assessment. Language tests at grades 1 and 4 show a similar pattern, with improvements in both tests, but a larger improvement in grade 1.

- 3.2 The introduction of child friendly textbooks through DPEP, with colored diagrams and pictures, large, attractive, easy to-read text, and the use of local context and content in subject matter, are intended to play an important role in promoting education quality and learning. The mission observed that the production of such textbooks is well under way, with books already being distributed to ensure that all schools will receive their supplies prior to the start of the next school year. This is an encouraging improvement over the previous year, where procurement problems prevented timely distribution of textbooks before the school year.
- 3.3 The SLO has initiated and implemented a quality monitoring format, designed to be used by the CRCC's to assess school performance and address school needs. This is an innovative aspect of quality assessment and performance monitoring in Bihar.
- 3.4 Teacher training has focused on a number of activities, such as: (i) lesson planning and preparation; (ii) multi-grade teaching; (iii) assessing child learning; (iv) using quality inputs in classroom interactions; (v) child-centered, activity based teaching learning processes; and (vi) methods of teaching children of widely varying ability. The CRC's and BRC's appear to be extensively and intensively used, with teachers meeting to discuss problems, share experiences, participate in refresher and knowledge upgrading courses, and improve their skills and competencies. SCERT and SIEMAT have worked in close collaboration with the state level office to produce teacher training material and deliver training programs. Mission observations suggested that actual class room teaching appears to be mainly traditional and teacher centered. Some of the difficulties in adopting child-centered, activity based learning, however, stem from large class sizes and over-crowded class rooms which prevents cluster seating of children, and the shortage of teachers which limits the extent of attention available to individual children.
35. Teaching learning material is also available in class rooms, and many teachers have been trained to use such quality inputs. The actual use of such material, and their impact on learning, does not appear to have been rigorously assessed yet. Mission observations suggest these material are used in teaching and learning. However, their utility in class room situations are likely to be somewhat limited, due to the over-crowding of classes and the difficulties encountered by teachers, especially older teachers, in adopting child-centered, activity based learning approaches. However, if class sizes and pupil teacher ratios decrease over time the utility of quality inputs is likely to improve substantially in the future.
35. Bihar experiences several constraints in providing good quality primary education. Classrooms are crowded, under-lighted and barely furnished, resulting in a poor learning environment. Average class sizes are about 62:1, with variation across districts ranging from 45:1 in Bhojpur to 76:1 in Darbhanga. The mission observed classes as large as 85 children in rooms designed for about 35 students.

The children are tightly packed together with hardly any freedom of movement, and sit and study on the ground, with poor floor level lighting.

- 3.7. Teacher shortages are acute in the Bihar DPEP districts. Pupil teacher ratios are high, having increased from 55:1 in 1998-99 to 63:1 in 2001-02. The range of pupil teacher ratios across the districts varies from 54:1 in Munger to 71:1 in Rohtas. Large pupil teacher ratios on this scale suggests that the supply of the key input into the education process, school teachers, is severely limited and acts as a critical constraint to the quality of education. At present, there are about 24,000 primary teacher vacancies in DPEP districts and around 35,000 vacancies overall in Bihar. The shortage of teachers over the past four years, although teacher appointments were an integral component of the project, has been the single most important constraint to the delivery of good quality primary education in Bihar.
- 3.8. On balance, the quality of education available is modest, and likely to be among the lower levels in India. DPEP investments have begun to lay a base for quality education. However, the weak initial conditions in Bihar and the moderate progress of the project means that there is considerably more work to be done to ensure good quality primary education. The availability of quality primary schooling is especially constrained in the under-privileged areas of Bihar, implying that the poor are disadvantaged in terms of both access and quality of education. Long-term support from GOI, the state government and development partners is required to improve education quality and ensure parity with more advanced states in India.

4. Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation.

4.1 Data Collection, Analysis and use.

- 4.1.1. Educational statistics is collected in the State using various methods such as EMIS, Bal Panji (Children register at the school level) and House Hold Survey. The EMIS data is collected by head teacher with active participation of the VEC/Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS) members. The VEC/VSS members are also involved in the collection of data for the school level children register (Bal Panji) and its updation. One round of House Hold Survey has also been completed in which members of PRI/VEC/VSS were actively involved. The data so collected are analysed and shared at different levels and used for planning interventions for improving access, enrolment, retention and completion. One of the examples of the data use shared with the Mission was that the State had pin-pointed the habitations with no school facilities by the analysis of the data generated by House Hold Survey and micro-planning, and, planned interventions to scale up access. The Mission was informed that new primary schools proposed under DPEP have been opened up using the data collected through various methods. The data has further been used to

cover out-of-school children of hardest-to-reach categories with AS modalities. This was evidenced when in the district visited, the Mission interacted with the girl children of Dom Community, an extremely marginalised dalit community, enrolled in AS Centre (known as Angana Vidyalaya), Goraul.

4.1.2. The State conducts annual learner's evaluation with the active involvement of school teachers and CRCCs. The evaluation focusses on both the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of the pedagogical issues. The Mission was informed that this endeavour is integrally linked to the ongoing constant and comprehensive evaluation in the classrooms and assists the State to track the achievement of students intermittently before the achievement level is finally assessed through MAS/TAS stage finally. The Mission was informed that successive learners evaluation have revealed an upward trend in the achievement levels which was confirmed by MAS later on. The learners evaluation is being used as a diagnostic tool to address the quality issues in the classrooms as well as for the improvement of the capacity of the teachers. The data is shared at BRC/CRC/District/State levels for planning intervention including identification of teachers for content-based training. At the end of evaluation, the students are given a report card containing their achievements. The Mission came across the displays of the school level achievement data at BRCs/CRCs in the district visited and was impressed that the data is used by the BRCs/CRCs and schools to plan quality interventions in the class room transactions. *The Mission recommends that the data be also shared with VEC/VSS and BRC/CRC/School/VEC be further encouraged to use the data continuously to address the quality concerns of the teachers and students.*

4.1.3. The State has developed a mechanism to capture data on school attendance whereby data is collected through teachers and VEC/VSS on quarterly basis and analyzed using an in-house software named SAMIS. The data is used by project, school and community to monitor the attendance of students and plan effective interventions to address drop out issues. *The Mission recommends regular use of SAMIS by the State to monitor student attendance by the school and community with a view to upscale stakeholder participation for retention and completion of school education.*

5 Planning and Management Capacity.

51 The State has developed a well-defined planning and management capacity from the State to the school level. The SPO level has a well developed and nurtured planning and management mechanism. The AWP&B of the districts are appraised at the SPO through State Appraisal Team comprising of the members drawn from SCERT, SIEMAT, Universities, DIETs and State level resource institutions.

Monthly Reflection-cum-Planning Meetings (RPMs) are conducted regularly at SPO level to monitor and review the programme implementation. The State has also put in place an Internal Supervision Mission which periodically visits the districts to monitor and provide on-site support to the district teams in the programme implementation. In addition, a Mission Task Force (MTF) constituted at the SPO level and comprising of the state programme personnel meets periodically to review the progress and chalk out plans accordingly. The State has also established a SIEMAT to provide academic support for augmentation of the planning and management capacity at the State, District and sub-district levels. The SIEMAT addresses the training needs of mainstream educational administrators for planning and management and also conducts various studies, seminars and researches. The State has developed training modules for the BRCCs, CRCCs and BRC Resource Persons with the active support of SCERT in the related field of planning and management. The Mission interacted with the SIEMAT and SCERT faculty who inspite of severe constraints of staffing demonstrated their keenness and capacity to conduct training and research in the field of planning and management. *The Mission recommends that the accumulated capacity of SPO, DPOs, SIEMAT and SCERT in planning and management should be used by the GOB in the ongoing programme of SSA even after completion of DPEP.*

- 5.2. **At the district level, the DIETs still continue to be weak mainly on account of understaffing. In the district visited, the Mission was apprised that the DIET has very little role to play in DPEP due to acute shortage of staff. However, despite weak DIETs, there is a silver lining in the existence of a well motivated and professional district teams at the DPOs which with the active support of mainstream educational system have demonstrated their capacity to address the planning and management issues. Also, recently, GOB has made efforts to place 7-9 lecturers in each DIET. At the DPO level, there is a mechanism of District Task Force (DTF) headed by DM/DDCs and comprising of the district level functionaries of education, PHED, Health, Mass Education, Rural Development and Social Welfare Departments. The DTF meets periodically to review the programme implementation and plan further. Apart, BRCs, CRCs and VEC/VSS with well-defined roles and accountabilities for management and planning are in place at sub-district levels. The State has promulgated a VSS Act “ for ensuring the participation of people in the management, improvement, administration, supervision and control of all schools by constituting a Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti”. Under the Act, school level education committees have been constituted and assigned well-defined statutory powers for planning and management of school level interventions.**
- 5.3. **The decision making at different levels with respect to school management and allocation and use of resources has been decentralized. The VEC/VSS have been empowered to take decisions for use of the school grant depending on the requirement of the schools All Civil Works are being executed by the VEC/VSS with technical and financial support extended by the project functionaries. The**

teachers have also been empowered to use the TLM grant for preparation of TLMs in the way they consider necessary. The Mission was informed that VEC/VSS have contributed resources for improvement of the school facilities at a substantial number of schools in every district.

6 Institutionalization of the above in the mainstream.

- 5.1. The Mission noted that mainstream educational management has recognized the processes developed under DPEP and seems eager to institutionalize the same. The EMIS data has been used by the GOB for rationalization and redeployment of teaching capacities across the DPEP districts. The accumulated experiences of DPEP has been also used in conducting House Hold Surveys in non-DPEP districts as a part of ongoing SSA programme. The 40 manuscripts of textbooks developed under DPEP have been adopted by GOB as core textbooks for the whole State. The encouraging experiences of community participation in the educational processes in the DPEP districts have been the key driver culminating into legislation of Bihar State VSS Act. This Act has institutionalized the community participation processes developed and implemented under DPEP and granted statutory status to the VECs with well-defined duties and powers. The Mission was informed that GOB has agreed to replicate the BRC, CRC and Civil Works processes in the non-DPEP districts as part of SSA interventions. The cost effective construction technologies (CECT) adopted under DPEP for Civil Works and the processes of community participation in execution of those Civil Works have also been endorsed by GOB under SSA. A notable example of institutionalization of the planning and management capacity developed under DPEP was evident in the decisions taken by District Administrations of Purnea, Sitamarhi and West Champaran to entrust to the DPOs the construction of school buildings through community construction process under Boarder Development Programme.
- 5.2. GOB has initiated some major changes in the State policy on education. Apart from VSS Act, GOB has decided to appoint 47,000 para teachers (called Panchayat Shiksha Mitras or PSMs) for the whole of the State including DPEP districts through the PRIs. These PSMs will be appointed by the Panchayats on contract basis for a fixed term. The Mission was informed that the State Cabinet has approved the proposal and actual appointment will start very soon. The GOB has envisioned that PSMs will augment the existing teaching capacities in the Govt. Primary Schools and the PTR will be reduced with a view to facilitate effective learning processes in the schools. The Mission was informed that after the recent Panchayat elections in the State, the district elementary education has been placed under the control and supervision of PRIs making the school system more accountable to the community. Though it will be too early to make a comment on the efficacy of the Panchayats in improvement of school education in Bihar, but it can be said in no uncertain terms that GOB has envisioned, and rightly so, the accountability of the school system and processes to the community.

- 6.3. There are certain areas of concern requiring immediate attention of GOB. The Mission was informed that in the visited district of Vaishali, out of 5324 sanctioned teaching posts, 4626 teachers were in position and 698 posts are vacant. The paucity of teachers have affected PTR adversely which has increased from 53.90 in 1999-2000 to 66.71 in 2001-02 in the Vaishali district alone. Similarly, in the Sitamarhi, 4851 teachers were stated to be in position against 6630 sanctioned posts leaving a vacancy of 1779, i.e. 28.83%. This vacancy has impacted the PTR so adversely that it has increased from 60.37 in the year 1998 to 68.48 in the year 2001. In all the DPEP districts taken together, the vacant teacher posts are 24063, i.e. 29% of the sanctioned posts, pushing the PTR to 63. The Mission was informed that GOB has envisaged to fill up all the vacant posts with the PSMs pending recruitment of regular teachers. *The Mission observed that paucity of teachers have constrained the teaching-learning environment in the classrooms despite the commendable efforts under DPEP and recommends that GOB should take effective steps to fill up the vacant teaching posts expeditiously.* The Mission is aware of the fact that the project has initiated pedagogical improvement processes in the schools despite GOB not addressing teaching capacity issues to the required extent.
- 6.4 The State has developed a vision to establish a linkage between SCERT, DIETs, BRCs, CRCs and Schools. This linkage is being replicated in the ongoing SSA programme also. It has further been envisaged to link BRCs and CRCs with the mainstream educational system by putting Block level educational authorities as BRCCs.
- 6.5. The Mission was informed that convergence with other concerned departments have been ensured by making DMs as the Chairpersons of Executive Committee of the district level project offices, and also of the DTF. The convergence was very much evident in the schools of the district visited as the Mission observed construction of classrooms under various schemes of GOB in the district of Vaishali. The Mission was further informed that drinking water and sanitation facilities in the schools are being created by PHED as a part of the convergence strategy. The responsibility given to PRIs regarding elementary education, drinking water and rural development at the district level has further strengthened the scheme of convergence which the Mission considers a welcome development in the State.
- 6.6 In terms of strategies for systemic turn around, the State has focussed on two main strategies. Firstly, participation and empowerment of the community in the realm of elementary education. The Mission observed a deep sense of keenness in the community to improve the school level processes in the district of Vaishali. The State authorities informed the Mission that the VSS Act has, inter alia, enjoined upon the following powers on the VSS with a view to provide effective voice to the community in the management of school system:-

“To make general supervision and superintendence in respect of the works of the school and (shall be) competent to adopt measures for improvement and for sending report to the Superior Officers.

To get all children fit to be admitted to school residing in the feeder areas of the school enrolled into the school cent percent and render all necessary assistance to the teachers in the preparation of Student’s Roll (Bal Panji).

To make the necessary decisions in respect of the Mid-Day Meal Programme and supervision of the distribution of foodgrains/meals.

To decide the opening & closing time of the school and give prior information to BEEO, REO and DSE, but in no case it shall be less than the prescribed period (hours).

To take such other decisions, which it considers necessary to promote Elementary Education in the Village. ”

The second strategy is the empowerment of the teachers. The district and state teams confirmed to the Mission that “teacher first” or “centrality of teachers” has been the key driver to the school level interventions since the pre-DPEP period which has further been strengthened and consolidated under DPEP. The GOB has decided to consolidate this strategy further under SSA.

7 Physical and Financial.

71. Against the EFC cost of Rs. 435.35 crores, the cumulative expenditure as on 30.9.2002 has been reported as Rs. 186.07 crores. The Mission was informed that one of the main reasons for comparatively low level of expenditure has been delayed and non-appointment of adequate teachers for the new schools proposed under DPEP. It was proposed to open 2845 Schools for the undivided State of Bihar with effect from 1.4.99 with an annual teacher salary outlay of about Rs. 45 crore for 5690 teachers. However, when the new state of Jharkhand was carved out in November, 2000, the annual teacher salary outlay for the 3566 teachers of the 1783 new schools remaining with the State of Bihar was Rs. 28 crore. However, against the salary allocation of about Rs. 121.66 crore upto 30.9.2002, the actual expenditure has been in the tune of Rs. 9.20 crore only because of delayed and inadequate number of teacher appointments in the new schools. Thus, it was not possible to spend an amount of about Rs. 112 crore on teacher salary alone. Another important reason for low expenditure has been the emphasis of the State more on the quality issues rather than the quantity in the context of the accumulated experience of BEP, a programme of UPE preceding DPEP. The Mission was informed that a proposal has been sent by GOB to GOI for extension of the project by two years beyond the end of the project, i.e., 30th September, 2003. The State shared with the Mission the restructured plan for the extended period and reasons cited in the proposal for extension. *In the context of the rationale furnished by the State for the proposed extension, the WB would be interested to receive an official version of the proposal. The mission explained to the GOB that the WB would be able to consider a project extension only when the state has complied fully with the legal covenants of the project by filling teacher vacancies.*

Another reason cited by the SPO in relation to the low level of expenditure has been delayed and inadequate releases of GOI share. The status of releases of GOI share has been reported here as under:-

Table - I

RELEASE OF FUND BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THEIR SHARE IN CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE AS ON 30-09-2002							
YEAR	AWP&B	OPENING BALANCE	RECEIPT DURING THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL RESOURCES	CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE	% OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST FUND RELEASE	Rs in Lacs
							UNSPENT BALANCE
			G.O.I.	G.O.I.	G.O.I.	G.O.I.	G.O.I.
1997-1998	3198.00	0.00	2717.95	2717.95	280.93	10%	2437.02
1998-1999	10235.751	2437.02	1094.00	3531.02	3709.68	105%	-178.66
1999-2000	13433.75	-178.66	4000.00	3821.34	4387.18	115%	-565.84
2000-2001	13666.191	-565.84	2800.00	2234.16	3604.87	161%	-1370.71
2001-2002	10484.79	-1370.71	5770.00	4399.29	4874.01	111%	-474.72
2002-2003	13249.32	-474.72	4400.00	3925.28	1693.54	43%	2231.74

7.2. The above table shows that between FY 1998-99 to 2001-02, the percentage of expenditure against the amount released by GOI has been more than 100%. However, in the FY 2002-03, the GOI has released an amount of Rs. 44 crore so far. *The Mission recommends that GOI may visit the issues raised by the State regarding delayed and inadequate fund flow and ensure that no such problem occurs during the remaining period of the project.*

In terms of counterpart funding GOB has so far released Rs. 4821.67 lakhs against the GOI release of Rs, 20781.95 lakhs which works out to be more than 23%, i.e., considerably more than the required 15% state share. The status of amount released by GOI, GOB and reimbursed by UNICEF has been reported here as under: -

Table - II

RELEASE OF FUND BY FUNDING AGENCIES AND THEIR SHARE IN CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE													
AS ON 30-09-2002												Rupees lakhs	
YEAR	AWP &B	TOTAL RESOURCES			CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE			% OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST FUND RELEASE			UNSPENT BALANCE		
		G.O.I	G.O.B	UNI-CEF	G.O.I	G.O.B	UNI-CEF	G.O.I	G.O.B	UNI-CEF	G.O.I	G.O.B	UNI-CEF
1997-1998	3198	2718	480	0	281	54	23	10%	11%	0%	2437	426.35	-23.40
1998-1999	10236	3531	426	291	3710	715	341	105%	168%	117%	-178.7	-288.48	-49.63
1999-2000	13434	3821	2559	212	4387	835	344	115%	33%	162%	-565.8	1723.6	-132
2000-2001	13666	2234	1724	410	3605	667	176	161%	39%	43%	-1371	1056.30	233.77
2001-2002	10489	4399	1762	370	4874	893	187	111%	51%	51%	-474.7	869.08	182.97
2002-2003	13249	3925	1669	56	1694	311	94	43%	19%	168%	2231.7	1358.4	38.06
TOTAL					18550	3475	1166						

From the table above, it is evident that as on 30th September, 2002, the State has more than Rs. 35 crore for the programme implementation. *The Mission recommends that the State should upscale expenditure and programme implementation during the days ahead.*

8 Sustainability

81. The State has prepared the following matrix regarding sustainability of various interventions under DPEP after the project closure:-

Table - III

S.No.	Component	Physical Number	Component Report
1	Salary of Additional Teachers	3566	Posts of these teachers will continue under SSA after project period
2	Project Office Expenditure	12	SPO and 11 DPOs will continue under SSA after project period
3	BRCs	151	All these BRCs will continue under SSA after project period
4	CRCs	1895	All these CRCs will continue under SSA after project period

5.	School Improvement Grant @ Rs. 2000/- per school	24747	This will continue under SSA after project period
6.	TLM Grant @ Rs. 500/- per teacher	53,498	This will continue under SSA after project period
7.	EGS/AS Centers	2975	There is no EGS under DPEP. As centers will phase out by the end of project period
	Total		As above

- 7.2. However, the sustainability matrix seem to have been worked out in the immediate context of ongoing SSA interventions. The Mission considers that the sustainability issue does not concern only structures, but sustainability of the processes developed and strengthened under DPEP are of equal importance. The more important issue is the institutionalization of the structures and processes created and developed under DPEP for upfront pedagogical enhancement. *In this connection, the Mission endorses the recommendation made by the 15th JRM that a sustainability report in holistic terms be prepared by GOB and shared with the next JRM.*
- 7.3. The sustainability matrix shared with the Mission does not reveal the future plans regarding SIEMAT. The Mission is aware that inspite of the paucity of staff, SIEMAT has done commendable job in the area of training, research & module development, and, demonstrated its utility as a state level academic institution for educational planning and management. The accumulated experience of the SIEMAT should be further strengthened and consolidated to develop it as an apex state level institution for enhancement of planning & management capacities in elementary education beyond the project period. *The Mission recommends that sustainability issue of SIEMAT should be seriously examined and included by GOB in the proposed sustainability report.*
- 7.4. In the context, of the sustainability of the processes developed under DPEP, the 15th JRM had expressed concern regarding sustainable use of the human capacities developed under DPEP. This Mission has noted the commitment, professionalism and capacities of the project functionaries working at the SPO/DPO levels during the field visits and interactive sessions, and, commends their contribution despite severe systemic and infrastructural constraints. In this background, this Mission endorses the concern of the 15th JRM that non-use of the capacities of the project functionaries in SSA would undoubtedly amount to a significant loss to the system and break in continuity. *The Mission, therefore, recommends that GOB needs to consider the continuity of the existing project staff and use of their accumulated experiences in the SSA after the project period.*
- 7.5. The Mission has been informed that the SIS for implementation of DPEP, i.e., the BSPP, has also been entrusted with the planning and management of SSA interventions. *The Mission endorses this decision of GOB and recommends that*

the good practices & processes developed and consolidated under DPEP should be continued in SSA as well.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. The actions agreed at the 15th JRM have been completed or are in progress: (i) About 2,440 teachers have been appointed to the schools opened under DPEP; (ii) GOB has prepared an initial sustainability report and shared it with the JRM; (iii) The mid-term review studies of teacher training have been completed; (iv) The module for training teachers in planning and class room management has been prepared; and (v) GOI has held the meeting with WB staff, Education Secretary, GOB, State project director and UNICEF to discuss urgent issues related to project extension.
- 8.2. The large number of teacher vacancies, about 24,000 in the DPEP districts, remains a major constraint on implementation and the full achievement of development objectives. The World Bank communicated to the State that the lack of progress on appointing teachers meant that various options would have to be considered concerning the project, including possible suspension. The State organised a high level meeting with the Chief Minister, who gave an assurance that the teacher recruitment process would commence immediately and be completed over the next 3-4 months. The State also understood that the appointment of teachers constitutes a necessary condition for the WB to process an extension proposal. The mission recommends that GOI closely monitors the outcome of this meeting with the Chief Minister.
- 8.3. Meanwhile, the state level office needs to re-estimate the expenditure requirements, in rupees (and GOI in XDR), for a project extension by two years, as requested. The state office needs technical assistance for this purpose, and project funds could be used to make such assistance available. The revised calculations should be furnished to the World Bank, through GOI, by December 31, 2002. Mission discussions also suggest that, even if the project were to be eventually extended by two years, all unused funds cannot be utilized and there would need to be a partial cancellation. GOI should notify the amount for cancellation to the WB by December 31, 2002.
- 8.4. If the project were to be extended, the State should also examine the impact of salary differentials between regular and contract staff on staff employment, retention and performance to the State level and District level offices.
- 8.5. A rigorous study of primary school enrolment, attendance and completion linked to household welfare, socio-economic background, home education process factors and school variables, and covering state and private schools, would be useful to identify the exact movement of children into and through the primary education system. The project, if extended, should undertake such a study as a priority.

- 8.6. The state should undertake a full sustainability study, and based on the conclusions and findings of the study produce a clear sustainability plan before the next JRM.
- 8.7. The future status and organisation of SIEMAT needs to be decided urgently by the State, and action taken to establish it on a sustainable basis.
- 8.8. Project extension itself would be desirable for several reasons: (i) the level of need in Bihar, which has the lowest literacy level and one of the most under-developed education systems in India; (ii) the excellent performance of the DPEP state and district level offices, in the context of severe external constraints and staffing shortages; and (iii) the strong performance of the project in integrating and coordinating government and community level activities to promote primary education attainment and achievement; and (iv) the potential and synergy created by project investments, which offer a foundation for good quality universal primary education in Bihar.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Gujarat State Report
(17 – 23 November, 2002)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 16th JRM was represented in Gujarat by Jyotsna Jha (Netherlands Embassy) and Avtar Singh (Government of India). As per the agreed Terms of Reference of the Mission, there were four focal areas: (i) Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity, (ii) Quality and Equity, (iii) Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation, and (iv) Sustainability.
- 1.2 The JRM team held detailed discussions with the state Education secretary, DPEP state level officials, GCERT Directors and other faculty members, and officials from the Textbook Bureau before and after their district visit. The team also benefited from extensive discussions held with Mr. J.P. Gupta, the SPD, who accompanied the Mission during its district visit. The team visited Dangs district between November 18th and 20th. Dangs is one of the three districts covered under DPEP-II in the state. It is a small, single block, tribal district (about 94% population being tribal) located far from the state capital. The Mission visited 8 schools (primary + upper primary) of which two were also the Cluster Resource Centres. In addition, the mission also visited two ICDS centres and one Back-to-school programme centre. One of the schools had one girls hostel being run by the District Panchyat Samiti attached to it. The Mission held discussions with the VEC, PTA and MTA members in all the villages it covered. The Mission also visited the only BRC existing in the district and met the district collector and District Development Officer as well. The teams from the other two DPEP-II districts, Panchmahals and Banaskantha, also made their presentations and discussions were held on various issues. Discussions regarding progress of the implementation in the six new (DPEP-IV) districts were held with the state DPEP team.
- 1.3 The Mission acknowledges and appreciates assistance and hospitality received from Shri Varesh Sinha (secretary of Education, Government of Gujarat), Shri J. P. Gupta (State Project Director, DPEP) and all his associates including Mr. Vyas who accompanied the team to the district, Shri M. M. Patel, (DPEO/DPC, Dangs) and his associates including BRC and CRC coordinators, the Dangs DIET Principal and her associates, the teachers and members of the village community bodies. The support received from the district teams of the other two districts, GCERT and the Textbook Board is also acknowledged.

2. Action taken on the last JRM's Recommendations

- 2.1 The state provided an Action Taken Report on the recommendations of the last JRM. Discussions were also held with the state and district teams regarding the

steps initiated. In response to the Mission's suggestion of developing a social marketing strategy by involving NGOs in developing two way linkages between school and community, the state feels that the involvement of NGOs is not feasible on a system-wide scale in view of very limited NGO presence in rural areas. Instead, they view PRIs and other community bodies as the main link between the school and community. The state government has now decided to make VECs a statutory body. Certain initiatives have been taken by districts to see school and children as a medium of transformation of health & hygiene practices. For instance, Dangs has decided to use the school health programme in a big way to create awareness about preventive health care and leprosy prevention (high incidence in the district).

2.2 The Mission had suggested an evaluation of DPEP implementation and management capacities at the state level in view of sustainability of DPEP gains, its expansion to more districts and initiation of SSA. The Mission had also suggested setting up of a Task Force to provide professional guidance on management related matters. Although no formal evaluation was carried out, the state realised the need to expand the state office and a plan for the same has already been accepted by the state government. The state has also taken a decision to establish a SIEMAT (to be known as GIEMAT) under SSA to provide professional inputs for strengthening management structures and processes. This is being discussed in greater detail at a later stage in this report.

2.3 In response to the Mission's suggestion of undertaking participatory evaluation studies to promote reflective practices at all levels, the state has initiated a number of evaluation studies. These are mainly impact evaluation studies relating to DPEP interventions including use of TLM grants, teacher training, use of School Grants, role and functioning of BRCs and CRCs, etc. Although most of these studies are being conducted with support of DPEP personnel in the field, a conscious development of design to include reflective practices in the field could further add to their role in creating an awareness about the need for such practices.

3. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

3.1 *Enrolment, Retention and Participation position*

3.1.1. Available information on enrolment clearly indicates substantial improvement in GERs and NERs in the three DPEP-II districts. DISE based data shows the NERs to be in the range of 89 to 98 during 2001-02 (which was in the range of 62-85 during 1997-98) in these three districts. For the first time, household surveys have also been conducted in all the districts of the state for preparation of SSA plans. Although detailed analysis of these data are yet to be undertaken in these three districts, the preliminary patterns for 6-14 years confirm the high NERs for 6-14 years, this being in the range of 90 to 93 for both boys and girls in Dangs and Panchmahals (the data for Banaskantha district was not available). Further analysis of household data for different age-groups (6-

10 & 11-14 years as well as single year) will show a clearer picture and help in removing the anomalies seen in the NER calculations based on population projections (NER being higher than 100 in Dangs).

- 3.1.2 Notable improvement can be seen in retention rates which are now in the range of 90-95% in the three districts. The ratio of girls' enrolment to total enrolment has also improved. The districts have tried to calculate completion rate by looking at enrolment of children in class five in the current year as a proportion of enrolment in class I five years ago. There has been an improvement in completion rates seen in this manner. However, it would be more meaningful to look at completion rates from the perspective of those who have successfully completed the level, i.e., class five in the case of primary schooling.
- 3.1.3. There are a number of issues that deserve concern in view of the goal of ensuring universal participation of children in primary schooling. These relate to (i) high repetition rates seen in all three districts, (ii) low participation of children from more disadvantaged groups (e.g. tribal girls and SC girls) and (iii) irregular attendance. These three issues are interlinked and need to be addressed holistically. Repetition rates continue to be high with the proportion of repeaters being 18% in Panchmahals, 21% in Banasknatha and 30% in Dangs. The proportion of repeaters is the highest in class I (23 to 36%). Household data indicate that drop-outs constitute about 70% of total out-of-school children in Dangs and Panchmahals and high repetition rates could be one reason for this. The study commissioned by the DPEP to look into the reasons for high repetition rates is expected to throw light on this issue.
- 3.1.4. In terms of participation of children from the identified disadvantaged groups in schooling the DISE data shows that though the share of SC and ST enrolment to total enrolment is somewhat close to their share in total population in the three districts, the share of girls in total SC and ST enrolment is much below 50%, especially in Banasknatha and Panchmahals. Irregular attendance of children appears to be a major problem in all districts leading to high repetition and eventual drop-out. Attendance patterns suggest that some children remain absent for continuous long periods whereas a few more are irregular in most months. Long absence from school is primarily due to seasonal migration of the entire family for livelihood whereas the usual regularity is usually traced to engagement in household and other chores. During particular agricultural seasons and months a larger proportion of children remain absent due to their engagement in agricultural and forest collection activities. It also appeared to be common for a certain proportion of children entering class I to remain absent entirely after the first few days/weeks/months. The proportion of such children varies from place to place but the phenomenon exists in most places. This reflects the need for efforts to sustain efforts beyond enrolment drives and may call for very different strategies than those required for initial enrolment.

3.1.5. The proportion of repeaters is much less (below 10% except Bhavnagar where it is 11.5%) in the six new DPEP districts. It appears that the issues related with participation of children in schooling is more localised in certain groups and areas (blocks) in these districts and the overall situation is better than that existed at the time of the launch of DPEP-II in the three districts.

3.2. *Strategies to Enhance Participation*

3.2.1. The state has adopted multiple strategies to tackle the issue of enrolment and participation. A perusal of strategies and their impact shows that there existed an understanding and appreciation of difference in the nature of non-participation in different areas. While in Banaskantha the issue of non-participation of children, especially girls from certain social groups such as Vadi, Rabari, Muslim Nayak Samaj and Rajputs was recognised as a major issue, in Dangs and Panchmahals, the incidence of high individual as well as family migration was acting as a major constraint. Special campaign programmes were designed and executed for influencing the specific social groups with a special emphasis on involving their own religious/social leaders. These leaders command significant respect and influence in their own communities and the special campaigns helped in getting girls from such communities enrolled.

3.2.2. **Most of the family migration takes place between October-March and Bridge courses are being conducted during vacation months (April-June) for the children who had migrated with their parents. These courses are followed by an examination and the successful candidates are promoted to the next class. This has significantly contributed in containing the drop-out rate. In addition, the state has also been running large number of bridge courses and back-to-school programmes to help drop-out children complete the age-specific grades and enrol in the formal school as well as to help older children complete primary schooling through alternative systems. In 18 access-less habitations the alternative schooling centres have been converted to regular schools. About 50000 children have been covered under AS centres (including back to school) by mid 2002 of which about 30000 have been mainstreamed. In addition, more than 25000 children were covered by bridge course of which about 18000 completed their examinations successfully. The share of girls is higher than boys in Alternative schools.**

3.2.3. Efforts have been made to identify and integrate disabled children in the regular schools if the level of disability is low and in special schools if the level is high. Teachers were given training for identification of children followed by the exercise of identification. All identified children underwent the process of medical examination. About 8000 children with less than 40% disabilities are being provided aids and appliances from the DPEP while those having higher level of disabilities will be provided aids

through the IEDC scheme of Government of India. With an aim to create awareness and acceptance of such children in schools, the parent of one such child has been nominated as a member in the VEC. Village level meetings were organised, posters distributed and Parents Council formed to create awareness. Teachers are being imparted training to deal with such children in a more sensitive manner. It would be important in future to translate these activities into a comprehensive policy in this regard so that children who are enrolled are retained in the school and new children with such disabilities get attracted to school.

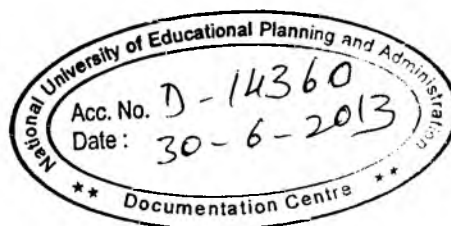
4 Quality and Equity

41. *Learning Conditions and School Functioning*

- 4.1.1. The state is relatively better placed in terms of ensuring basic learning conditions in schools. Availability of schools has been ensured in almost all habitations including the sparsely populated and thinly distributed areas of Dangs. The PTR in the three districts is 1:42 and inter district variations are not large. The ratio of single teacher schools was between 10 to 13% in Banaskantha and Panchmahals, this being only 1.4% in Dangs as per 2001-02 DISE figures. According to this data, the proportion of female teachers is also low with this being about one-third in Panchmahals and Dangs and only one-fifth in Banaskantha. However, the situation is better now as almost all single teacher schools have been converted into two teacher schools and a good proportion of the newly appointed teachers are women. The state is not in position to appoint any new teacher at present as all probable candidates with mandatory two-year pre-service training qualification have been already absorbed. The state has increased the number of seats in the pre-service primary teacher training colleges in order to have more candidates available for employment in future.
- 4.1.2. The incidence of teacher absenteeism does not appear to be a major issue in the state. During the district visit the Mission observed that a good number of women teachers placed in remote schools were actually living there by hiring a room in the village/ close to village. In many cases two female teachers placed in neighbouring villages were staying together. These teachers have developed good relationship with local community leading to greater mutual trust with positive impact on school functioning. The state is planning to build a few residential complexes for teachers in remote areas on an experimental basis to promote this practice of living there itself rather than commuting from elsewhere.
- 4.1.3. Student classroom ratio varies between 1: 30 to 1:50 in three districts. Almost all schools have either pucca or partially pucca buildings and an overwhelming majority are in good condition. The state had undertaken repairs of school buildings in a major way under DPEP and this has resulted into ensuring a favourable position in terms of physical

infrastructure. A number of construction activities have also been initiated in schools with support from funds coming from other sources.

- 4.1.4. The state has the policy of providing cooked midday meal in primary schools to all children up to class VII. Financial provisions exist for a local cook and helper. The quality of these meals appeared to be good and teachers as well as community considered this as essential for ensuring regular participation. The community expressed their concern over the fact that the provision is stopped at times due to non-availability of one or the other ingredient leading to adverse impact on attendance.
- 4.1.5. The state also has the policy of providing free textbooks to all children up to class VII. All children could be observed having textbooks. The distribution of textbooks is also in general in time. In addition the state government provides free uniform to all girls and SC/ST students. The provision is linked to attendance and promotion to the next class. A provision of Attendance scholarship also exists for these children. The DISE report suggests that uniform and attendance schemes cover about 50 to 80% students in three districts.
- 4.1.6. The issue of having a set of indicators to define Basic learning Condition (e.g. every schools will have at least two teachers, a PTR not higher than 1:40, a student classroom ratio of 1:40, sufficient library books and other materials for students and teachers, a defined level of total attendance and one for each child, defined process indicators for classroom and other processes, etc.) with an additional set to define the Desirable Learning Condition (e.g. drinking water facilities, toilets, sports materials, advanced process indicators, etc.) in every school was discussed with the state DPEP team. They appeared to be open about the idea and are of the opinion that such definition would help in improved targeting and monitoring, and also in establishing greater accountability.
- 4.1.7. The issue of learning conditions is also important for alternative schools. However, in Gujarat, the alternative schooling models are perceived as either a measure (3 month bridge course) to mainstream the children in formal schools or an alternative to formal schooling only in the short run (30 month back to school programmes). These are not perceived or designed as alternatives to formal schools in the long term. Nevertheless, the Back to school AS centres are well placed in terms of PTR, as it never goes beyond 1:20. Midday meals and free textbooks schemes are also operational in these centres. In addition they also receive exercise books and other learning materials. The state is now thinking of extending the provision of monthly TLM grant also to these centres. They are not provided with physical infrastructure as the centres are not long-term alternatives.



4.2. Classroom Organisation and Processes

- 4.2.1. Despite a favourable PTR existing in the districts and the inter-school deployment not being particularly skewed against remote schools, multigrade teaching situation exists in the vast majority of schools. The number of teachers is lower than the number of grades in most cases. The usual practice to address this situation is to deploy one teacher for classes I and II, one for III and IV and one for class V in three teacher-schools. In case there are only two teachers, classes I, II and III are combined. Combining classes I and II is common even in four teacher-schools. The prevalence of this practice reflects a common understanding among teachers as well as teacher-support personnel at CRC/ BRC/ DIET/ GCERT that this is the only option for classroom organisation in a multigrade situation. Handling two classes together necessarily involves use of certain self-learning techniques and tasks for children. The fact that higher classes children (classes IV and V) are more capable of using self-learning devices and materials because of their age and having developed reading and writing skills does not seem to have gained much realisation among teachers and support personnel. The extent of diversity is also higher in classes I and II (due to admission of multiple age-group children coming from different social and economic groups, coming together for the first time in an organised situation) which makes teaching at that level more challenging. High incidence of irregularity and repetition at these levels add to the challenge. It may be worth considering reorganising teacher deployment to different classes within a school.
- 4.2.2. An enabling teacher-child relationship was visible during the school visits. Teachers appeared to be knowing all their students by name. An effort to involve girls actively in the classroom processes could also be seen. The state and district offices, GCERT and the DIETs have developed and produced a number of materials to encourage classroom practices of the nature that promote participation of all children. However, the fact that irregular students coming from poorer/socially disadvantaged families deserve greater attention and efforts to ensure equity in learning needs to be reinforced through a variety of means including classroom monitoring and children's performance indicators. A message that the learning level of the child coming from the most disadvantaged background is the biggest challenge need to be communicated.
- 4.2.3. Activity-based textbooks developed with support of DPEP have been introduced in classes I, II and III bringing a visible change in the approach. Teachers' editions of these textbooks have a number of instructions about activities that could be carried out and teachers acknowledged this to have guided them in classroom transactions. All teachers teaching particular classes have also received training in the use of new textbooks. Separate workbooks have also been provided for all subjects and students were observed making use of these workbooks actively.

- 4.2.4. The state has given a lot of emphasis on development of Teaching learning materials (TLM) so that textbooks do not remain the only tool for teaching and learning. Teachers have received training in development of TLM and specific activities are also organised to encourage preparation of TLM by teachers. Use of local materials (e.g., bamboo in case of Dangs) in preparation of TLM has also increased over the years. Some teachers could be observed making use of the TLMs in the classroom as well. Nevertheless, there is a need to have more learning materials for students. The nature of TLMs should be such that students get to do some activities and learn concepts faster. In the process it should also facilitate better multigrade practices by releasing teachers for direct interactions with other grades. Some TLMs could be developed at no or very low cost if teachers are aware of the basic concepts that need to be transacted and the activities that could facilitate that transaction. Exchange of materials developed for AS teachers and formal school teachers should also be encouraged.
- 4.2.5. All schools have been provided a number of children's books as part of the library but in most cases, these are not freely accessible to children. It is important to perceive these library books and other children's magazines being supplied by the Textbook Bureau as one form of TLM. Higher classes children could also be given projects building around lessons given in the textbooks.
- 4.2.6. The state is planning to use Information Technology in education a big way in future. It has already made a budget provision for facilitating video conferencing facilities to all districts. It plans to provide computers and uplinking facilities eventually to all CRCs. Development of CDs has also been initiated. In this context, it may be important to recognise the potential of the medium and use it accordingly rather than just changing the mode. For instance, while digitising the textbooks, the options for viewing all related lessons and exercises, refer to linked competencies in lower and higher classes as also in other subjects could be included. If developed and used properly in combination of other means, IT based education has the potential of providing cost-effective solutions in the long run.

4.3 *Students' Evaluation and Learning Achievement*

- 4.3.1. The state follows a pattern of having quarterly examination in each class, the last one being the final examination. In classes I and II, the examinations are oral and promotion is based on 80% attendance. In classes III and above, promotion is based on the quarterly as well final examinations. While the first quarterly test is oral, the second is activity based and the third is written. It would be worth considering a mix of all three in all tests (varying the level of complexity) and include individual as well as group activities in the tests. The GCERT has developed progress report cards for all the classes taking different competencies and desirable development levels (cognitive as well as non-cognitive aspects)

into account. However, it has not yet been put to practice. An in-built system of continuous evaluation without creating much pressure for teachers could also help in improving the students' progress. The recently concluded national study could be seen and further consultation with other states (e.g. Kerala) could be held to improve the system of student evaluation.

- 4.3.2. The number of students taking examinations being less than the enrolment is identified by the districts as an issue. One reason is irregularity as the students remaining absent on examination days are those who also remain irregular. The discontinuation of midday meal during the examination period (as this is the rule) is also perceived by teachers as one of the reasons. The phenomenon needs to be explored and understood further to arrive at suitable solutions.
- 4.3.3. The state has conducted BAS and MAS and has also initiated TAS in the three districts. The data collection is already over for TAS and the analysis is being undertaken currently. In addition, the GCERT in association with the Department of Education, Bhavnagar university, has undertaken state wide achievement tests (Gujarat Achievement Test – GAP) with assistance of DIET faculties and CRC coordinators. While the class I achievements were higher in MAS in comparison to BAS, these were lower for class III (the state feels it was due to difference in tests and the Gujarat syllabus). The GAP undertaken in 1998-99 and 2000-01 shows an **improvement in achievements in all classes (conducted for classes III and above) except class IV**. In class IV, it shows a decline in percentage of students securing at least 35% marks as well as in those securing 75% or above marks. This is ascribed to the fact that no training and support inputs were provided to teachers teaching class IV. It may be desirable to analyse it further and understand the reasons. The difference between MAS and GAP also need to be analysed and understood to design further interventions.
- 4.3.4. It may be worthwhile to mention here that the school visits and interaction with children have led to a positive impression about children's basic learning levels. The students in classes three and above could read, write and solve simple mathematical problems in almost all schools covered during the visit. However, as mentioned earlier, children sitting at the back received less attention and they were also the ones who showed less confidence/ competency level.

44 *Teacher training, Support and Monitoring*

- 4.4.1. A system of teachers' in-service training, support and monitoring is in place in shape of institutions like DIET, BRC and CRCs, and mechanisms such as monthly meeting of teachers at CRC, monthly meeting of CRC/BRC coordinators at DIETs, periodic training programmes on newly introduced textbooks and hard spots identified through interaction,

achievement tests and other feedback processes. All teachers have received training in teaching method, TLM preparation and textbooks use of particular classes. During 2001-02, 50 to 70 percent teachers received in-service training in the three districts. Weekly CRC meetings are organised for different classes so that teachers teaching the same class could interact with each other. This way every teacher meets at least once a month with others teaching the same class. In addition, an annual conference of teachers is organised at the district level where all teachers congregate. Regular visits of CRC coordinators to schools serves as a feedback mechanism to DIETS. Cluster Resource Group (CRG) and Block Resource Groups (BRG) consisting of teachers have been formed. The members of these groups act as resource persons for training programmes in addition to the DIET faculties.

4.4.2. In case of organising CRC meetings, one of the practices being followed in Dangs is worth mentioning here. In the district, all schools present in a cluster including aided and private ones are considered part of the cluster for the purpose of this meeting. **This has helped the teachers in exchanging their experiences and enhancing their learning.** It has particularly helped government primary schools in the area of English teaching. Although the number of private schools is very small in the district, these schools have long experience of teaching English and their inputs, wherever available, has helped government teachers. This initiative does not have any financial implication and it did not start on any directive from above. It is entirely an initiative of teachers belonging to that area.

4.4.3. Bal-mitras and all other teachers teaching in various models of Alternative Schooling also receive regular in-service training. An initial 60 day training is followed up by 15 day training after every six months making it a total of 90 days. An Academy for training of Bal-mitras has been established for their residential training. The state followed a policy of having a supervisor for every 20 AS teachers which has now been replaced by integrating them with the CRCs.

4.5 *Community Involvement in School functioning and Quality Improvement*

4.5.1. Active community interest and involvement in school functioning was visible during district visit. The VECs exist for all the revenue villages with the elected Gram Panchyat Sarpanch being its president. A good number of VEC members have also received training. PTAs and MTAs exist for all schools. While the VEC meets once in three months, PTAs and MTAs meet every month. Apart from participating actively in enrolment drives, their cooperation has been significant in arranging contributions in cash and kind for school building and other infrastructural facilities. The Gujarat government has started an incentive scheme for girls named Vidya Lakshmi under which 1000 girls admitted in primary school from Talukas with less than 20% literacy rates get a bond from the state. In DPEP districts, community were mobilised to add to this fund so

as to provide this bond to all girls being admitted and they have succeeded in collecting sizeable amounts of money for the purpose. Considering that the attendance is a major challenge, a shift from ensuring *enrolment of all* to *enrolment plus attendance of all* will help. These bodies are yet to demonstrate initiative in calling meetings (rather than only attending meetings) and demanding quality performance from school.

4.5.2. Community cooperation in continuing uninterrupted midday meal is another area which has not been explored so far. However, the state with support of DPEP is exploring the feasibility of handing over the management of midday meal to VECs through a pilot project in 100 schools in Banaskantha district. If the experiment is successful, the practice is likely to be adopted in entire state.

5. Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation

5.1 Data Collection, Analysis and Use

5.1.1. DISE has so far been the main source of quantitative data. Inclusion of all aided and unaided private schools in DISE has made it more comprehensive. The districts as well as states are analysing DISE data effectively for various purposes of planning and prioritising. Information is being effectively used for identifying the areas that need greater focus (geographical as well as others such as participation of particular group) by districts. Teacher related information is being used for teacher deployment and demand for additional teachers. The information pertaining to school infrastructure is being used for allocating funds even for other schemes and departments. With initiation of SSA, household based surveys and its annual updation is also going to be a regular exercise. The achievement data collected from different sources are being analysed by the GCERT. The evidences of disaggregated analysis of these at the district level are not evident.

5.1.2. The data pertaining to special groups such as girls, SC/ ST students, migratory groups, etc. is in general available at districts and state. The information which is not available through DISE is collected through other means such as specially commissioned studies. The state had conducted detailed surveys relating to migration patterns before designing alternative schooling strategies. The institutionlisation of the household survey as an annual exercise would help in providing a complete picture if seen with DISE. These also exists scope for further disaggregated analysis of DISE for the most disadvantaged groups on one hand and for indicators such as completion rates on the other.

5.2 *Planning and Management Capacities*

- 5.2.1. Planning capacities appeared to exist at different levels in the state. In DPEP II districts, annual planning exercise is undertaken at the district level by gathering feedback from different sources, including analysis of EMIS data and the feedback mechanism of CRCs. In the new districts, village mapping has been taken on an intensive scale and the process has already been completed in about 83% villages of the six DPEP – IV districts. The last JRM has elaborated on the nature of these micro plans highlighting the positive aspects and expressing the concerns. Block level analysis existing in the district plans has also been commented upon by the last JRM. These observations remain valid even now.
- 5.2.2. This Mission could also find evidences of planning mechanisms existing at different levels. Definite mechanisms exist for developing annual plans at district offices as well as academic institutions such as DIETs and GCERT. CRCs draw up detailed six-monthly plans with support of DIETs on one hand and the district project office on the other. The academic support institutions have been undertaking a number of research and evaluations studies as well in order to feed to planning and management. All DIETs have initiated a number of Action research projects with support of teachers and CRC coordinators. Irrespective of the varying quality of these research exercises, the process has contributed in building capacities and generating interests in the identified areas at lower levels.
- 5.2.3. Gujarat is one of the very few states where the DIETs are developing their own teacher-training modules and organising a number of other activities including publishing a number of teacher support materials. GCERT is an autonomous body and recruitment is direct in DIETS as well as GCERT. However, a number of senior faculty positions are vacant in these organisations due to delay in formulation of recruitment rules and their approval by the government. Since these institutions are engaged with both pre-service training and in-service academic support activities, it is important to take this on a priority basis.
- 5.2.4. Although planning mechanisms are in place, the capacity to analyse, understand and interpret qualitative and quantitative data as emerging from various sources in a holistic manner is weak at almost all levels. There is generally a tendency to view all the sources in isolation of the other. This applies to management offices as well as academic support institutions. Presence of fragmented understanding at different levels comes in the way of development of suitable solutions. Lack of an institution to provide professional support in the area of educational management could also be a limiting factor. The state is now establishing a GIEMAT, initially as a cell in the state office and then as a separate institute, with adequate professional capacities to strengthen management structures, processes and practices. The state EC has approved the formation of the cell and the role of the organisation has been carefully

drafted to avoid any duplication of efforts with the GCERT or other existing institutions. It is important that the state develops this organisation in such a manner that it evolves as a highly professional institution.

- 5.2.5. The space for financial decisions at school level is limited to the use of School and TLM grants. The state has issued a list of a range of activities which could be carried out using the School grant. The VECs have taken their decisions regarding actual use of the school grant while following these instructions. Similarly, the state has also issued a list of materials that could be purchased and the activities that could be carried out using the TLM grants. The teachers are free to use the grant within these guidelines. They have been encouraged to make their own decisions.

53 *Institutionalisation of Mechanisms and Processes*

- 5.3.1. The state has taken a number of measures to institutionalise the processes and mechanisms evolved through DPEP at a systemic level. Some of the examples include the extension of the CRC concept to all districts and conversion of VEC into a statutory body. The state had initiated a number of progressive policies even before DPEP implementation. Appointment of Vidya Sahayaks as teachers in probation with an in-built mechanism to make them regular is one such example. This aspect has also been elaborated upon by the last JRM.
- 5.3.2. The state has enhanced the basic academic qualification required for admission to pre-service courses from class X to XII. The GCERT has revised the Pre-service training course for primary teachers building upon the experiences gained from DPEP. Since the state has a policy of appointing only trained teachers, this measure would help in having a pool of teachers who are already trained in activity centred teaching in primary classes.
- 5.3.3. A number of impact evaluation studies have been commissioned by the state. It is important that the evaluations are designed to include participation from the project personnel and help in building reflective exercises. This would mean that the studies do not remain only an evaluation but also add to capacities of project personnel. At the same time it is also important to maintain the quality of these evaluations by having mechanisms for close monitoring of the studies while they are being conducted. The Terms of Reference and design of such exercises would need further detailing and planning so that these are in line with the objectives of the study. For instance, the recently concluded study on TLM is based entirely on teachers' response and provides a quantitative analysis of the results. It would have given greater insight if classroom observations were also included in addition to teachers' interview. Similarly, some of the interpretations do not take account of the other related factors. For instance, the fact that the proportion of tribal

population is varying in the three districts needs to be taken into account while making a comment on related aspects. A close monitoring mechanism involving project personnel will help in correcting these limitations.

- 5.3.4. The state has implemented its civil works activities under DPEP through Village Civil Works Committee (VCWC). The VCWC has also started undertaking other activities now. For instance, in Dangs district, the VCWC constructed 90 additional classrooms using funds from 9th Finance Commission within a record two-month period. The body is capable of undertaking construction work on its own due to the experience gained and capacities strengthened under DPEP. This was amply evident during earthquake when DPEP undertook and completed the mammoth task of reconstructing 42000 classrooms through VCWC. The quality of these buildings has been certified by the apex bodies in the field. The state government has decided to make VCWC also a statutory body.
- 5.3.5. The state has actively accessed technical resources existing in different institutions such as universities, research institutions and IIM. It has built effective partnership in the process. It has also successfully converged with other departments such as Rural Development (by accessing their funds for infrastructural development), Health (by tapping their resources for detection of disability), Social Welfare (by accessing provisions for aids and appliances for disabled children) and Women and Child Welfare (by providing training to their personnel and involving them in Project implementation activities).

5.4. *Progress of programme Implementation in DPEP II districts*

- 5.4.1. Progress of plan implementation in the three DPEP II districts is satisfactory. They have largely succeeded in meeting their physical targets in construction, teacher appointment, distribution and use of grants, opening of alternative schooling centres and organising bridge courses. The EFC costs were revised recently to increase it from Rs.95.67 crores to Rs.134.56 crores. The state already spent more than 78% of this revised amount. The state has so far spent about one third of this year's approved budget and is geared to meet the target by June 2003.

5.5 *Progress of programme Implementation in DPEP IV districts*

- 5.5.1. Progress of programme implementation, though much faster than the initial phase of DPEP II (because of the experience gained there) was slower than the expected pace. This is attributed to two factors, one was the earthquake and engagement of the entire machinery to deal with the disaster, and the other was delay in appointments of BRC and CRC coordinators. However, the personnel are now in place and a number of activities have picked up. With institutions in place and the distribution of

TLM/School grant being in the pipeline, the rate of expenditure is likely to pick up soon.

5.5.2. Recruitment and induction training of 70 BRCCs and 800 (out of total 1000 to be recruited) CRCCs is already over. 5090 VECs and 8615 PTAs and MTAs have been formed and oriented. A visioning workshop was held at state level involving district project offices and DIET principals followed by such exercises at district and sub-district levels. Substantial progress has been made in the Alternative schooling area also in the shape of training and orientation. 1942 out of a total of 2017 primary schools were upgraded to include class V Teacher training activities are being initiated through different means including distance modes. The experiences of the earlier districts are used extensively in implementing almost all components. At the same time, the specific contexts are being given adequate attention especially in case of developing materials to support education of tribal and other disadvantaged children.

5.6. *Flow of Funds*

5.6.1. Flow of funds from GOI to state or from state to district is not an issue in Gujarat. The state government has provided its full share to the DPEP Society.

5. **Sustainability**

5.1. The state has demonstrated clarity regarding sustainability of DPEP interventions either in terms of continuation of structures, processes and activities in the existing districts or in terms of extending the experiences to other districts. The fact that concepts like the CRC structure was already extended to non-DPEP districts bears testimony to this. Also, Gujarat is the only state which has initiated DPEP in three districts out of its own resources. While three of the phase IV districts are being supported by the Netherlands government, the remaining three are being implemented with the state government funds. This also demonstrates their seriousness about replicating the gains.

5.2 The presence of SSA is also playing a major role in facilitating sustainability of DPEP gains. The state is already implementing SSA in all districts. The Mission was informed that starting from July 2003, a number of existing structures and activities will get its financial support from SSA in the three DPEP II districts. The state is of the view that the SSA will take up all activities and expenditure at BRCs and CRCs while the state government will take the liabilities of teachers salaries and maintenance of construction activities undertaken. The elements of school grants, TLM grant and teacher training will get covered by the SSA. There are certain difficulties associated with norms and the state is trying to sort these out with support of GOI. The state will be taking the liability of all the teachers appointed under DPEP and also of the maintenance of buildings/rooms constructed under the programme once the project comes to an end.

6.3 The presence of a clear policy in regard to appointment and deployment of teachers, initiatives regarding making VECs and VCWC as statutory bodies, an autonomous GCERT and DIETs with a policy of direct recruitment, the initiation of GIEMAT and continuity of the Society structure as the implementing body will provide the institutional support in ensuring sustainability. The DPEP Society will be expanded to implement SSA and a decision has already been taken to this effect. All efforts are being made to retain the already trained personnel either in the same district or in any other district, as all are now coming under SSA. In this case also, the state is looking for mechanisms to ensure that the experiences of DPEP personnel who had come from other departments on deputation are not lost. There is some constraint in continuing them under SSA because of specific norms which need to be clarified with the GOI.

6.4 The state is committed to retain and refine the processes and mechanisms initiated and found useful under DPEP. Institutionalisation of PTAs and MTAs as well as community related processes is expected to go a long way in ensuring continued community support and involvement. In future, the PRIS may be given a larger role in school management. Institutionalisation of alternative schooling exercises to ensure participation of children in schooling is also a stated objective. The state also expects to gain further insights from impact evaluation studies on this count.

7. Next Steps

7.1 The state is now in a position to expand the agenda from universal enrolment alone to include regular attendance and universal retention. This would call for a reflection and reformation of strategies, interventions, monitoring indicators and mechanisms. This is going to be a bigger challenge and the project should try to take this up in a very planned and focussed manner.

7.2 The state could now take the lead in defining Basic and Desirable Learning Conditions to be ensured in every school. Once defined, this would provide a goal and also the monitoring indicator for gauging the progress. This would also help in making the government more accountable and in demanding greater accountability from community as well. The development of these norms should be a well-thought-out exercise and could be initiated through a workshop and followed up later through extensive consultations.

7.3. The children who are now out of school or who remain irregular in school come from the most deprived families/social groups and pose a big challenge. Non-standardised solutions are required to ensure their participation. In order to ensure that they are enrolled, retained and they complete the levels, special efforts will be needed within and outside the classroom. Development of monitoring indicators to review all interventions and practices from the angle of ensuring their participation and learning could help in this regard.

7.4. A holistic perspective of an activity based classroom in a multigrade situation could be developed and the use of different materials including textbooks, library books, other TLM, etc. could be fitted in that to achieve the vision. This would

further improve the effectiveness of classroom processes. Teacher training and support activities seemed to have become more 'routinised' rather than 'reflective' and need a change in view of the observations made elsewhere in the report about classroom processes. Evaluation processes also deserve further refinement to make it more comprehensive and student friendly. In order to bring in greater accountability, the practice of sharing progress report cards with community in a general meeting held periodically could also be initiated.

- 7.5. Capacities for reflective practices need to be strengthened at all levels so that information coming from a variety of sources could be processed, analysed and reflected upon locally from the perspective of challenges and goals already set. A focus on diaggregated analysis and understanding will also help in appreciating and integrating the issue of diversity.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Himachal Pradesh State Report
(17-23 November 2002)

1 Introduction

On behalf of the Sixteenth Joint Review Mission of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Prof. Bharati Baveja (GOI) and Mr Subir Shukla (EC) visited Himachal Pradesh from 17-23 November, 2002. During its visit to the district of Sirmour, the Mission team interacted with children of schools, teachers, parents and community leaders as represented in the MTAs and VECs. Meetings were held with CRC and BRC staff, DIET faculty members, DPO staff of the district and the Deputy Commissioner, Sirmour. The team also met with all the DPCs, DIET principals and some of the programme officers of all districts included in DPEP. At the state level the Mission had discussions with the Director and staff of the SCERT, prominent academicians and researchers who have been supporting the programme, SRG members, the programme officers, the SPD, the Mission Director, the Secretary Education and the Minister for Primary Education. For their transparent and detailed sharing of information and issues, as well as the hospitality and numerous courtesies extended to the team, the Mission is grateful to all the state, district and sub-district representatives.

11 Action taken on 14th JRM recommendations

1.1.1 The 14th JRM had recommended focusing attention on the remaining out of school children, particularly disabled and migratory children. There has since been considerable progress in this regard with the state implementing IED on a wide scale (as detailed later), while also opening mobile and camp schools for migratory children, as well as ALS centres, resulting in near total provision of access for the remaining out of school children.

1.1.2 With the continued filling up of the vacancies through hiring of Gram Vidya Upasaks, the situation regarding teacher rationalisation has improved. Multi-grade teaching remains an issue. While teacher training programmes have sought to address this, an intensive multi-grade pilot project has now been undertaken with the active involvement and initiative of teachers.

- 1.1.3 Analysis and utilisation of data now appears to be stronger at state and district levels, especially for purposes of planning and taking decisions regarding interventions. There are indications, too, that EMIS data is beginning to be used at the block level. The state team acknowledges that this process would require more time before available information is effectively used at all levels.
- 1.1.4 SIEMAT and DIETs have been involved with various activities undertaken by the SPO, with some of them acting as hubs for tasks such as textbook development. The SCERT too is involved in textbook development and evaluation activities. However, the fact that this apex body essentially comprises of staff drawn from the higher secondary school cadre continues to pose barriers in the effective convergence of this institution with DPEP.
- 1.1.5 A reappropriation of the approved funds has been undertaken in light of the remaining project period, based on priority requirements and absorption capacity.

2. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

2.1 Information Available

- 2.1.1 A significant amount of information is now available to the state along key indicators of enrolment, retention, completion, attendance and achievement. Apart from a well-functioning EMIS, household data has been collected and is backed by detailed school profiles. While the BAS and the MAS have been completed, TAS is already underway in the state, being conducted by an external professional agency. In addition, university, SIEMAT, DIET and NGO members have been involved in the conduct of studies related to enrolment and dropout, cohort analysis and repetition rates. Internal review missions have also been organised by the state to visit blocks / districts of concern, in order to analyse progress and suggest improvement measures. The Mission team commends the state and district teams for the detailed and excellent documentation made available.

2.2 Enrolment

- 2.2.1 A survey of out of school children in 1996-97 revealed 16998 children being out of school, of which 5787 were boys and 10211 were girls. Most of these children have now been brought into schools. Enrolment within the DPEP districts increased from 161511 in 96-97 to 187052 in 99-2000 (the greatest increase having taken place in Sirmour, followed by Chamba), and subsequently declined to 181960 in 2001-02. The causes for

this decline are attributed to reduction in population growth, as well as the outflow of children to private schools. Year-wise percentage of girls' enrolment to total enrolment has steadily increased from 46.81 in 96-97 to 49.05 in 2001-02, though it has declined in Kullu from 49.79 in 99-2000 to 49.63 in 2001-02.

- 2.2.2 The basic strategy in Himachal Pradesh has been in terms of increasing access to formal primary schools rather than using alternative measures. At present there are 2959 schools in the four DPEP districts, of which 808 are new schools opened by DPEP, while 80 new schools have been established by the state. There has been all round praise for school construction activities undertaken by DPEP, and this remains with the community as a critical contribution of the programme. Following the appointment of different categories of para teachers to service the harder to reach areas, around 10 percent of the schools now have a PTR greater than 1:40, with around 40% having a PTR of less than 1:20.
- 2.2.3 Community mobilisation for demand creation has been undertaken through campaigns, gatherings and meetings, and the use of print media. The constitution of VECs and in particular of the MTAs has resulted in near total enrolment and markedly improved attendance. Some improvement in retention is also discerned, with the state team attributing it to greater involvement of mothers. In interaction with several MTAs, the Mission team witnessed their great enthusiasm. These groups have contributed actively to the development of infrastructure (through cash, kind, as well a labour). Typically, new schools ran in community donated rent-free building till the construction of the building. On occasion they have even appointed temporary teachers on their own expense to meet shortages created by unavailability of teachers, or their deployment in other tasks. Clearly, there is an extraordinary degree of enthusiastic support for DPEP efforts in this regard at the grassroots level and augurs well for the future. At the same time, though, now that the immediate agenda of obtaining infrastructure and functioning schools has been attained, and there is near total enrolment, there is a need to channel community support into areas related to quality improvement.

23 *Repetition and completion*

- 2.3.1 An effort to analyse the causes of critical difficulties is visible through studies undertaken to examine repetition rates and completion rates. Cohort studies undertaken by the SIEMAT in selected blocks in Kullu and Sirmour districts indicate that less than half the children become primary graduates in five years, with this rate being a little higher for girls. Around 30-40% children take 6 years to complete primary school, with the remaining needing 7 or 8 years. In the case of ST children, though, the completion rate in five years stands at 100 percent, while for SC children

2.7 *ALS, mobile schools and para teachers*

- 2.7.1 Alternative schools in DPEP-HP have been designed to address the needs of 6-9-year-old children living in difficult to reach geographical locations. Of the 175 such schools notified, 75 have been approved and 48 actually opened. In Chamba, problems related to the selection of instructors have held back the opening of these schools. Instructors have been appointed through an objective selection process. A majority of them have also been provided training as an initial step.
- 2.7.2. Six mobile schools have also been opened in Sirmour district, involving an instructor who moves with the migrating groups.
- 2.7.3. Different categories of para teachers (VU, GVU, VTs and contract teachers, numbering 3125 across the state) have been appointed and are provided different kinds of training programmes due to their differing backgrounds. After four years of service (in yearly in-service training of around a month for each year), these teachers would be assessed and absorbed against regular vacancies on having achieved desired competency levels.
- 2.7.4 **Given the recent commencement of these initiatives it is too early to comment on their quality. It is intended to use BPEOs and CRCs-BRCs for purposes of monitoring the quality and effectiveness of these measures. However, there is at present no clear monitoring and academic support plan, and the initiative would benefit from the development and implementation of such a plan.**

2.8 *Inclusion of children with disabilities*

- 2.8.1. The Mission team was heartened to observe the increasing presence of children with disabilities in a large number of classrooms. This is indeed a major step forward towards the inclusion this group of children, and has been supported through the formation of committees at various levels, development of special TLM, provision of free education for children with disabilities up to university level. Around 6000 children with disabilities have been enrolled, with 170 remaining out of school, for whom a home-based programme is under preparation. Most of the teachers have been oriented on integrated education for disabled children. An effort has also been made to increase the resource base of personnel who can provide technical inputs.
- 2.8.2 Identification of disability is done through a two-step process, commencing with the identification by teachers through home visits or in school or gatherings convened at the school. Teachers have been provided

a three-day training in the use of the screening tools made available to them by SPO. In the second stage, these short-listed children are brought over to a Disability Identification Camp to be examined by qualified medical practitioners. In such a camp that coincided with the visit of the Mission Team, 8 of the 42 children short-listed by the teachers were identified as normal by the doctor. Profiles indicating the degree of disability in different areas had been prepared, in order to ascertain qualification for obtaining aids and appliances, as well as the preparation of IEPs. During cluster visits, the Mission team was shown IEPs that had been developed for the 32 children with disabilities who had been enrolled. Along with 128 resource centres in the four districts, 128 resource teachers are in place and undertake school visits.

- 2.8.3 While these measures have contributed greatly to the enrolment of this neglected group, their presence in the classrooms visited was not backed by sufficient pedagogical strategies being applied by the teacher to enable optimal learning for them. Occasionally, sensitivity towards them, too, was lacking. Though clearly wanting to support such a child, teachers were often at a loss. Information is also not available as regards the degree to which the IEPs are being successfully followed.

3 Quality and equity

3.1 School and classroom

- 3.1.1 A sea-change has been brought about in the physical and the psycho-social environment of the class. The schools visited, as well as those displayed in the various photographs and documents made available to the Mission team from the various districts, were distinguished by a clean, colourful and attractive atmosphere. There was rapport between teachers and children, with the children displaying confidence, and eagerness to learn and participate in classroom activities. TLM was available in plenty, with various registers and documents being maintained, thus providing a considerable data-base.
- 3.1.2. On the whole, teachers have begun to utilise activities and a child-friendly approach. However, most of the activities are typically used as explanation / demonstration purposes (especially in mathematics), and occasionally for 'joy' or for keeping children 'engaged' as well. Higher order activities, or activities posing intellectual challenges requiring children to construct their own understanding have not yet begun to take place. In language teaching, the tendency is to emphasise the more mechanistic aspects rather than the reflective / imaginative ones. In the teaching of English, the use of the translation mode was visible, with teachers not really being equipped to teach the language.

- 3.1.3. While individual and whole class activities might be seen, group work requiring children to think/work together, too, are not really in practice.
- 3.1.4. Teacher training advocates specific grade combinations in the multi-grade context as being more effective. However, the Mission was informed that these are not necessarily observed by teachers, with division of grades taking place for reasons other than the academic / pedagogical.

3.2. *TLM*

- 3.2.1 An impressive amount of TLM has been created by the teachers, and is also being used by children, particularly in the teaching of mathematics. While the Mission team appreciates the enthusiasm and energy involved in this, there is concern at the danger of TLM becoming synonymous with activity. A confusion between means and ends is visible, especially among teachers and sub-district personnel, for whom no demonstration class is complete without the use of TLM crafted out of chart paper / cardboard. Much of the TLM seen (in schools and in TLM rooms in CRCs, BRCs and the DIET) served the purposes of explanation (as against being worked upon for reflection and thinking) and enhancing association (i.e. focusing on the 'what' rather than the 'why'). An examination of the time and resources required vis-à-vis the actual utility in terms of promoting real learning might reveal that some of the material is not really low-cost. There is a strong need to emphasise the use of naturally and locally available material that can serve diverse purposes in the classroom. At the same time, identification of simpler material that would require less effort on the part of the teacher to create but lend itself to multiple usage, would enhance teacher efficacy.

3.3. *Curriculum, textbooks and support activities*

- 3.3.1 Curriculum for classes 1- 5 has been developed with active participation of teachers, teacher educators, community leaders and subject experts. Based on this new contextual curriculum, an initiative for textbook renewal has also been undertaken. Integrated textbooks have been prepared for classes 1 and 2 after field trials, while subject books are under preparation for class 3. Teachers guides for the new books are under preparation, as is supplementary reading material for classes 3 – 5, and self-instructional material (SIM) to address teacher needs. There is also an attempt to provide space to differently challenged children in the curriculum both in terms of content and its transaction.
- 3.3.2 Library books are present in most classes, and there is evidence that children do have access to them. State level orientation has been held regarding selection of appropriate books, while teachers have been oriented in the effective use of library books. However, in terms of their

actual utilisation, teachers have not really begun using them effectively as actual TLM.

- 3.3.3 Effective use is being made of distance education mode through radio programmes to support teacher development, especially towards the use of new textbooks. Similarly, identification of learning gaps, follow up of MAS, an examination of tools used to assess learning achievement, are activities undertaken to support improved pedagogical and evaluation practices.
- 3.3.4 Well over a hundred action researches have been completed at various levels, related to educational problems, gender issues and biases, classroom practices as well as materials. While the selection of topics is usually of relevance and implications are also often suggested, there is insufficient evidence as regards the *use* of these studies towards better planning and implementation.
- 3.3.5. A pilot project on multi-grade teaching is underway in 5 schools of each DPEP district. The teams comprise of active teachers, who were provided exposure at the national level. The focus of the project is on classes 1 and 2, with material development as well as its field testing being underway at present. The effort is to individualise learning, thus addressing multi-grade as well as multi-level requirements. Attention is being paid to the needs of the special focus groups. The experience gained from this project, which the Mission team finds highly commendable, is intended to be made part of the teacher training in SSA.

3.4 *Use of time and planning*

- 3.4.1. A major step forward is the introduction of planning, and the Mission team welcomes this as a long term means for enabling and sustaining the gains of DPEP. The household survey data and the school profiles are required to be backed by an overall plan to address key requirements. On qualitative aspects, though, planning is often found to be very general in nature. Not all the required steps might be understood or identified (e.g. for an objective such as ‘improving achievement levels of children’). Often the steps identified, too, are not really broken down into a sequenced set of tasks and activities that would lead to the desired end.
- 3.4.2. Similarly, lesson plans, too, have begun to be prepared by teachers. While the state team does not advocate a fixed formula for organisation of time, given the different contexts such as mono- and multi-grade, inputs have been provided to teachers as regards management of time and space in accordance with their context. However, it was observed in the schools visited that teachers tend to continue thinking in terms of topics and issues rather than possible learning tasks, their sequence and required duration in

order to optimise learning. Such planning is, at present, fairly difficult for teachers and other functionaries and, along with evaluation and classroom management, the state team might consider continuing the focus on better planning.

- 3.4.3. The Mission team is concerned, too, regarding the potential 'overload' on the teacher, who has responded to DPEP efforts but is now likely to find herself undertaking a diverse range of tasks from collecting information to preparing materials to addressing the needs of the disabled. An analysis of tasks presently expected of the teacher and how they might be streamlined would help optimise teacher time.

3.5. *Evaluation*

- 3.5.1 An effort to introduce continuous, comprehensive evaluation has been initiated at the state level. This has been designed to examine scholastic as well as co-scholastic aspects, using different tools and techniques that have been developed and shared with teachers. It is also expected that pupil progress would be shared with parents. In practice, though, it is more periodic rather than CCE that may be observed to be taking place.

- 3.5.2. Also, an examination of the documents, registers, question papers, school visits and an interaction with the resource persons during a workshop on evaluation organised by the DIET reveals that evaluation is understood more as an assessment process rather than one aimed at *improving* learning among children or of judging the viability of the objectives set vis-à-vis the abilities of children, and the suitability of the teaching-learning process, as well as the reliability and validity of the tools of **assessment themselves**. While the desirability of formative evaluation has been expressed at the state level, its translation into practice is not yet sufficiently stressed.

3.6. *Status on achievement*

- 3.6.1. An examination of the achievement data (given in absolute numbers rather than percentages) in the school profiles reveals that in most schools well over half the students in classes 3-5 achieve less than 40% marks in the periodic assessment undertaken in Hindi, while for Mathematics this is at an alarming 70% +. Performance in environmental studies is relatively better. Poor performance in Hindi is attributed by the programme teams to the school and home language divide, as this affects the 'purity' of children's pronunciation in Hindi, and also its subsequent impact on their written spellings.

- 3.6.2. The fact that students performing poorly in language and mathematics are able to do better in Environmental Studies requires examination.

3.6.3. While MAS looks at achievement data disaggregated according to gender and social group, this is not the case with the achievement scores recorded in the school profile or the assessment registers in school. However, it would appear that children from more disadvantaged groups are performing very poorly.

3.7. *Community Involvement*

3.7.1. The formation of VECs and MTAs has led to a remarkable shift in the relationship of the community with the school. While people have come forward to support the school in terms of continued infrastructure development, children's attendance and performance have clearly become a concern of the parents, particular mothers, who are visibly and regularly interacting with teachers in this regard. The Mission team regards this as a major achievement of DPEP-HP, and the teachers met too report many positive developments resulting from this involvement.

3.7.2. The next logical step would be to enable the involvement of the community in quality issues, as well as in terms of supporting children's learning through sharing their cultural and experiential resources. In many instances, too, now that the initial requirements in terms of infrastructure have been nearly achieved, there is possibility of an 'agenda vacuum', which now needs to be focused upon in order to ensure sustainability of gains achieved.

3.8. *Teacher Training*

3.8.1. Different rounds of in-service teacher training have been held to provide teachers inputs related to pedagogical improvement. Apart from the activity-based pedagogy and TLM, emphasis has been laid on multi-grade teaching, CCE and the new textbooks. An integrated training programme to be held in three phases has now been launched and is expected to be completed by June 2003. While there have been visible changes at the classroom level, it is acknowledged by the state team that a majority of the inputs do not translate into classroom practices. There is, however, no systematic data or analysis available in this regard which would help evolve appropriate strategies for enhancing the impact of inputs being provided.

3.9. *CRCs and BRCs*

3.9.1. These critical structures are in place and functional in the programme. At the cluster level, the CRC undertakes follow up visits to schools, demonstration lessons, monthly meetings and allied activities. While there is evidence of the regular functioning of these structures, the Mission is

concerned that the programme may not be utilising these structures optimally. Monthly meetings are organised in a manner that results in a teacher attending a meeting once in three months or so, which is grossly insufficient. The Mission team suggests that this be revised to enable a teacher to participate on a monthly basis.

- 3.9.2 A greater concern however is related to the fact that the school observation format does not really capture *issues* related to quality improvement, nor does it include information on what is expected of teachers after training programmes. Thus there is insufficient information on the exact status of improvement in the classroom process. A system is also needed where in data from the CRCs is consolidated and analysed across schools to address general trends as well as specific problems. Similarly, there is need for consolidation of data from the various clusters at the block / district levels and its analysis in order to take decisions regarding inputs required.
- 3.9.3. At present CRCs tend to be response driven rather than agenda/indicator driven. The Mission opines that the programme would be better positioned to effect pedagogical improvement by using a phased and evolving set of quality indicators towards which the schools – supported by CRCs and BRCs – might work. Monitoring would be needed along these indicators with corrective action being taken accordingly.
- 3.9.4. Coordination issues between CHTs and CRCCs, and BPEOs and BRCCs did pose barriers in bringing about quality improvement. However, a consistent effort has been in place to bridge these gaps, including an orientation of various functionaries in educational management. The results are now beginning to show in terms of better utilisation of resources and smoother functioning.

4. Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation

4.1 DIETs and SCERT

- 4.1.1. While these institutions have been active in DPEP, cadre related issues continue to hamper greater professionalisation of these institutions. Drawn from the elementary or the secondary school staff cadre, these institutions often do not have long-term staff, with most members likely to be repatriated to the school system after 5 years' placement. This affects the degree of commitment that staff might have to the agenda of these institutions, while also raising the issue of whether the state would consider it worth investing in the development of staff that is not likely to remain in the institutions. In SSA, DIETs have been made the nodal agency at the district level. The SPO has utilised opportunities to provide exposure to DIET faculty members, as and when available. The Mission

urges the state to take a view on the issue of a separate cadre as well as the long-term capacity building of the SCERT and DIETs in order to ensure sustained quality improvement.

42. *SIEMAT*

4.2.1. SIEMAT has been established as a wing of the SPO, with 6 faculty members. Apart from providing training to various functionaries in management and research, SIEMAT has been involved in preparation of simplified guidelines on financial matters for use of BPEOs and CHTs, as well as the development of SSA AWP and perspective plans. The Sustainability / Transition Plan developed by the state indicates that SIEMAT will be sustained and strengthened under SSA and afterwards.

43. *Expenditure*

4.3.1. The total cost of Rs 129.28 crore has been revised to 125.36 crore in view of the expenditure pattern. There being greater unspent balances in the state component and in Lahaul & Spiti, these have been reappropriated to other districts. This amount is expected to be utilized for civil works, in keeping with the raised ceiling, particularly for repair and maintenance, and incorporation of child-friendly elements. The state is emphasizing maximum expenditure on this component.

4.3.2. Expenditure as on 30.09.02 stood at 79.61% of the revised EFC, with the state expecting to reach 95% by the project end. This is an area of concern for the state government as well, which desires that the money be utilised fully. The main cause of this under-spend is related to the training sub-head where there has been insufficient expenditure.

4.3.3. Spending on civil works too is relatively lower, the main shortfall being in the construction of BRCs. The Mission was informed that this is due to problems related to sites and site-specific designs. In the case of Lahaul and Spiti, the difficulty posed by the short working season is compounded by the unwillingness of contractors to undertake work in the district. Consequently, the state has permitted the PWD to undertake construction. In Chamba, the delay is due to the non-availability of land. The Mission urges the state to continue with its efforts to resolve these difficulties in order to ensure that construction is completed before project-end. The state assured the Mission team that all pending civil works would be completed.

5. *Sustainability*

51 This is an issue clearly being reflected upon in the state. Much of what DPEP has attained and worked upon has been found fit to be sustained, with the GoHP

committing to sustaining structures such as BRCs, CRCs and AS centres developed under DPEP. Textbooks developed under DPEP will be introduced in non-DPEP districts as well, where CRCs and BRCs would also be established. SCERT, SIEMAT and DIETS would be strengthened.

- 5.2. While no formal assessment of DPEP experiences has been undertaken, interaction with the SRG and the state team reveal an understanding of factors that have played an enabling or inhibiting role. The Mission would urge the state to facilitate a reflective exercise with key personnel and SRG members in order to enhance potential for success in forthcoming efforts.
- 5.3. A strategic vision on the operationalisation of SSA and DPEP has been developed by the state. SSA perspective plans have been developed and submitted to GoI. A detailed sustainability / transition plan including modalities for ensuring post project sustainability has been prepared by the state. This plan looks at sustainability of institutions, programmes, interventions and manpower. Management related issues, including the transfer of DPEP assets, have been spelt out. The background and rationale for each proposal have been clearly stated and it is evident that **learning from DPEP** has been incorporated in several proposals. A major concern revealed in the document is that of preserving the capabilities developed but ensuring that academic / technical personnel that have been invested in are retained **within the system**. Discussions also brought out the **thinking on how appropriate 'DPEP practices and work culture'** might be institutionalised in the larger structure. This would be aided by process documentation, which has already been initiated by the state team in order to promote institutional memory.
- 5.4. There is awareness, too, that the energies generated by the project among teachers, **community and children need to be sustained**. The Mission commends the preparedness that the state has already achieved in term of sustainability as well as transition to SSA. At the same time, the team urges that an assessment be undertaken of longer-term needs with regard to sustaining the change process already initiated, leading to **strategies designed to facilitate ongoing improvement**.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Given the poor completion rates and high repetition rates coexisting with low achievement indicators, there is a clear need to focus on quality issues, including further analysis of data on achievement, available from various sources. Identification and implementation of strategies for enhancing completion and reducing repetition requires urgent attention.
- 6.2. Further concretisation of the activity-based pedagogy is needed, with a view to moving on to higher order activities, involving greater cognitive challenge and requiring children to construct their own understanding. A more judicious use of

TLM needs to be ensured. Inputs are needed with regard to evaluation, classroom organisation and planning as well.

- 6.3. Monitoring by CRCs and BRCs needs to incorporate information on quality related issues, as well as its analysis and consolidation at cluster, block and district levels. There is a need to move from predominantly response-based action to process and outcome indicator-based planning for pedagogical improvement. This applies specifically to BRCs, CRCs and schools.
- 6.4. It is critical to sustain energies generated by the programme. In the case of the community, the next logical step would be to enable their involvement in quality issues, as well as in terms of supporting children's learning through sharing their cultural and experiential resources.
- 6.5. The Mission urges the state to take a view on the issue the long-term capacity building and professional development of the SCERT and DIETs in order to ensure sustained quality improvement, especially in view of the present pattern of staffing these institutions with transitory staff.
- 6.6. The Mission would urge the state to facilitate a reflective exercise on DPEP experiences with key personnel and SRG members in order to enhance potential for success in forthcoming efforts. Also, the team urges that an assessment be undertaken of longer-term needs (of personnel and institutions) with regard to sustaining the change process already initiated, leading to strategies designed to facilitate ongoing improvement.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Jharkhand State Report
(17-23 November 2002)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The sixteenth joint review mission (JRM), consisting of Aparna Sahay (GOI) and Prema Clarke (WB), visited Jharkhand from 17th to 23rd November 2002 to assess progress made in implementing the District Primary Education Project (DPEP III) since the fifteenth JRM. An initial briefing meeting was held at the State Project Office where the JRM team met the State Project Director and staff. During the district visit to Ranchi, the team interacted with the Deputy Commissioner, the District Superintendent of Education and DPEP District Level Staff. Visits were made to regular primary schools, Education Guarantee Schools (EGS), Mahila Samakya (MS), Block Resource Centers (BRCs), Cluster Resource Centers (CRCs), Village Education Committees (VECs) and the Ranchi District Institute of Education (DIET). The JRM observed the activities taking place in these institutions such as the recently developed induction training for EGS teachers, quality focused training for members of the VECs and training for Integrated Education for the Disabled (IED), MS and Early Childhood Education (ECE). The mission met with the Chief Secretary, the Secretary of Education and several senior Government of Jharkhand (GOJ) officials. The team also interacted with district project staff from all the DPEP project districts.
- 1.2 The mission commends the SLO and the DLOs for compiling relevant and significant information that could inform the JRM. The mission thanks the SLO officials and the DLO officials from Ranchi for organizing the visit to the district and enabling the team to observe significant programs and interact with the beneficiaries of the project. The JRM is grateful for the effective arrangements and hospitality extended to the team. Thanks are also due to the state and district officials, teachers, students and community members for sharing their perceptions and participating in the mission.
- 1.3. The JRM would like to take note of the significant progress made in the implementation of the project over the last six months. The mission commends project staff for their initiative and commitment to the timely completion of project activities and the achievement of the projects' development objectives.

2. Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

- 2.1 *Enrolment:* When all the DPEP districts are taken together the enrolment in project districts in regular primary schools has declined over the past year by about 93000 students as the table below indicates. However, if enrolment in individual districts is considered, Dumka and Chatra show an increase of 5% and 4% respectively since

2000-01. The range of decrease in the other districts is between 7% (Hazaribagh) to 17% (West Singhbhum).

<i>Class</i>	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	20001-2002
I	423,751	368,570	433,580	419,465
II	273,489	254,558	256,375	252,847
III	228,954	228,507	224,517	197,896
IV	177,912	193,548	197,696	169,537
V	151,856	156,275	173,722	152,245
Total	1,255,962	1,201,458	1,285,890	1,191,990

- 2.2. While enrolment in regular primary schools has declined, the 2925 EGS schools accounts for the enrolment of 1,36,590 students over the last six months. Taking enrolment in regular primary schools and EGS schools together (1,328,580) there is an increase in enrolment of 42690 students since 2000-2001. The Household Survey completed by the state and analysed by a few districts suggests that the private schools account for about 6 to 10% of the share of primary school enrolment. Therefore, the increased enrolment in EGS schools and private schools could account for the decline in enrolment in regular primary schools. The GER calculated by Ranchi district reiterates this possibility - on the basis of EMIS data the GER is 63% and Household data (with EGS and private school) 91%.
- 2.3. **Girls enrolment:** The share of girls in school has increased from 45% in 2000-01 to 46% in 2001-02. A similar picture to overall enrolment emerges with regards to the actual enrolment for girls. Girls enrolment in 2001-02 shows a decline of about 37000 students, however, if EGS students are accounted for the decline is not evident. For example, in Ranchi district, while enrolment of girls in regular primary school is 120148 when EGS is included it becomes 139206 showing an increase of about 2612 students since 2000-01. When private school enrolment is included the enrolment becomes 147494, with a GER of 89%.
- 2.4. **SC and ST enrolment:** While a steady increase in the percentage of Schedule Caste (SC) boys enrolling in regular primary schools is evident since 1998-99 (75014 to 83655), a cause for concern is the decline in the SC girls' enrolment since 2001-02 (60021 to about 52000). Schedule Tribe (ST) enrolment in regular primary schools has hovered around 24000 for boys and 18000 for girls over the project period. The JRM urges the completion of the analysis of household data in order to confirm these trends for all students and for girls, SC and ST.
- 2.5. **Out of school children:** The DPEP in Jharkhand has made concerted efforts over the last six month to target unserved habitations and out-of-school populations. For example a recent study in one block in Hazaribagh compares micro-planning 2000 data and the 2002 HH survey and estimates a decrease in out-of-school students by about 40%. The main strategy to address unserved habitations, which number 4908, is to provide EGS centres. Over the last six month 2219 EGS centres have been established. Since these

centres have just been established records of student performance was unavailable. Most districts have undertaken detailed analysis of out-of-school children. For example in Ranchi, there were 20079 girls and 15152 boys out of school of which STs constituted the highest proportion (20%), followed by OBCs (15%) and SC (10%). Apart from the ongoing initiatives such as MS and ECE centers, a state resource group has been formed on tribal issues, which will be responsible for producing bridge course materials and sensitising teachers to tribal issues. In addition, programs are to be organized for slum children in urban pockets in project districts. The mission suggests that these at-risk children could also be covered under social security and incentive schemes available to students in regular primary schools.

- 2.6. *Repetition, transition and completion:* The average repetition rate across grades has remained 12% over the project period and the completion rate for all students is 32%, girls, 31%, ST, 30% and SC, 27% indicating the continued high dropout. Both the repetition and completion rates indicate the critical need to improve the quality of education provided. Transitions rates were provided by the districts. Transition in Ranchi suggest that transition in the higher grades are better than in the lower grades - 58% in Grade I to II and 80% in Grade IV to V. The transition in Dumka for SC and ST students from Grade I to II has improved about 20 percentage points and for Grade IV to V 15 percentage points. Repetition, transition and completion requires continued analysis and sustained attention by district and state teams.
- 2.7. *Achievement:* Two districts (Ranchi and Hazaribagh) provided the JRM data on student performance on annual examinations for three years. For Ranchi, except in Grade II there is an increase of about three percentage points in the average performance of students in mathematics and language, the increase is higher in Environmental studies. Grade II shows a slight decrease. The information was presented according to quintiles for Hazaribagh. If the number of students in the lowest 30% quintile is considered, while there is improvement over the three years, about 50% of the students in Grades III, IV and V and about 25% of Grade I and II fall in this bracket. The results suggest the need for continued attention being given to students in the higher grades.

3. Quality and Equity

- 3.1 *Teacher recruitment:* A critical shortage of an adequate number of teachers in classrooms has effected education in project districts. In July of this year the GOJ advertised 9223 regular teachers posts for immediate recruitment of which 4810 posts were in DPEP districts. GOJ received 94000 applications for these positions and the selections for the new teacher posts are in progress. Teachers will be in place in classrooms early next year. Out of the 27496 sanctioned teachers posts in project districts, 83% of the sanctioned posts are filled. With the additional employment of 4810 posts 100% of the sanctioned posts in project districts will be filled. In addition, in order to ensure a PTR of 40 students about 2000 community teachers are being hired by the project. Additional enrolment in project districts resulting in large class sizes have also encouraged communities to

support additional teachers. For instance, in Hazaribagh, communities are supporting 500 extra teachers at lower salaries.

- 3.2 *Teacher deployment:* Teacher deployment has been addressed in project districts in conjunction with the issue of teacher attendance. Teachers are now posted close to their residential locations in order to reduce teacher absenteeism. In addition, few districts such as Ranchi and Chatra have included notifications in local newspapers requesting parents or concerned individuals to inform authorities if teachers are not attending schools regularly and instructing students. The mission suggests that more powers should be given to the VECs, so that they become effective instruments in monitoring teacher attendance, and also become inseparable part of PRI system once these bodies are in place after the elections. In some districts such as Chatra, the VECs are required to confirm teacher attendance in order to sanction teachers' salaries, which have improved teacher attendance.
- 3.3 *Textbooks:* The DPEP in Jharkhand is putting in place a comprehensive plan for quality improvement. This plan, in addition to new initiatives, redesigns effectively ongoing quality interventions in the project. In addition, this plan introduces a system of monitoring quality that will allow project staff to evaluate impact at the school level. With regards to textbooks, due to insufficient stock, the project's decision to procure textbooks published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) at the district level from private suppliers was not successful in spite of a 10% advance. GOJ will now acquire the required number of textbooks directly from the NCERT. Though the supply of textbooks to classrooms was delayed, all the students in the classrooms visited by the JRM were reusing old textbooks.
- 3.4 *School quality:* The EGS classrooms observed by the mission were of a reasonable size and students were involved and lively. Primary schools contained well-kept gardens and appeared to be organized and functioning well. Students had been appointed to different tasks such as keeping the school clean, making sure there was sufficient water etc. DPEP, since the last JRM has introduced several innovations in project districts to improve the quality of education provided and thus improve retention. The mission is supportive of these innovations and considers them significant for improving student learning. One is the use of worksheets in the lower grades. Teachers have been trained to conceptualise and produce worksheets for students to complete and each student will have a folder containing their own worksheets. The team observed the motivated use of these worksheets by students in very impoverished EGS centres. The provision of adequate writing material for students in the higher grades could be explored. The second innovation is the introduction of science experimentation one day in a week. The mission observed these workshops being conducted with groups of students absorbed with doing various experiments. The mission suggests that these science workshops be used as opportunities to also develop students' abilities to write. Other interventions include the introduction of libraries in schools and exposure visits for students.
- 3.5 *Teacher training:* The mission observes the usefulness of making teacher training need based in addition to providing some systematic training in subject content areas such as

the new module in mathematics that introduces teachers to conceptual learning in mathematics and a module in English language instruction. In addition, newly created induction training for EGS teachers are also in place. Pre-tests and post-tests before and after the module are administered to the students. Such tests could be made a requirement for all subject content teacher training. The JRM would like to point out that the continuous support to teachers provided by the Cluster Resource Centre requires considerable attention. The mission underscores the critical need for a full time cluster resource coordinator as is to be the policy in SSA districts. It was conveyed to the mission that full-time coordinators would be in place by the end of the year. A systematic record of the professional support given to each teacher both on the job and in the cluster is an important prerequisite for improvement in this area. Similarly, the Block Resource Centres require more attention and capacity building to become nodal points for the planning and management of quality improvement.

- 3.6. *Quality monitoring:* The question of whether quality education is being provided systematically at the classroom level in regular primary schools and in EGS centres across the district is an area that needs to be focused upon. The mission was informed that on the basis of quality monitoring workshops that have been held recently, a tool for monitoring quality at the classroom and school level has been attempted and is being field tested in districts and fine tuned. The tool will capture basic data four times a year on whether basic infrastructure such as blackboards, notebooks, textbooks, records maintenance, coverage of the curriculum, innovative instruction and teacher support is taking place in classrooms.
- 3.7. *Community involvement:* A state level Coordinator for community development has been appointed. Considerable work has been done on community mobilization in terms of materials development and programs. Since the VEC involvement with construction activities is nearly over, the project officials have conceptualised a five day training module for members to be more involved with the quality aspects of education. VECs members are now receiving this training. The mission observes that VECs are particularly active in EGS schools and hopes that the above training will further develop the involvement of the community in quality education in regular primary schools. In order to ensure that issues relating to teacher absenteeism, recorded by the VECs, are addressed by block and district level authorities, the project has decided to maintain a calendar of VEC meetings. CRC coordinators would attend these meetings and since the schedule of meetings are available, the block and district officials would attend some of these meetings unannounced. VEC involvement is also being developed through the establishment of Panchayat Education Committees (PECs), which comprise of a group of VECs. In Hazaribagh district, 128 PECs have been constituted by taking two members from each of the VECs under the panchayat area. This is a pro-active step, which would help ensure sustainability of academic processes and institutions even when the elected PRIs are in place. The Panchayat elections are due to take place in February and the mission understood that the VECs would continue to be in place after this elections and would interface with PRI institutions.

- 3.8. *Early Childhood Education:* State ECE Coordinators are in place and resource groups have been constituted. Mother Committees are imparted training and they help in the selection of *Didis*, supervision and monitoring and sometimes running the ECE centre. In all 506 ECE Centres are running with active support of the community wherein material for play-kits, space etc are arranged by the Mata samitis. *Didis* are given 10 day training, which is facilitated by Mahila Samakhya. ECE centres have definitely contributed to forward linkage with primary education along with relieving older children from sibling care. Reflection meetings of ECE Coordinators and mothers are held regularly every month. Nevertheless, considering equity and retention issues, the state could explore the possibility of setting up such centres for each primary school/EGS.
- 3.9. *Children with disabilities:* Considerable efforts are being made in the project to bring education for children with disabilities centre stage as one of the special focus groups. EMIS, and Household data is collected on children with special needs and the specific disability identified. As such, incidence of disability is high and attention is also being to given children with learning disabilities as well as physical disabilities. State level core group as well as coordinators at state and district level are in place to plan, manage and monitor interventions. Special trainings were imparted by the NGO “Deepshikha” in Ranchi to the concerned functionaries. All the ongoing teacher training programmes cover the IED component. 3-day training module of CRCC in IED has been finalized and resource persons in each district have been selected and oriented. During the visit of Mission to IED training in DIET, RATU , successful trial of such training was witnessed. The mission notes the convergence with Welfare Department of the State Government for the distribution of aids along with provision of scholarship to disabled children. At present 8354 children are part of IED. 25128 teachers were given orientation and 216 teachers are specially trained in IED.

4. Institutional capacity and Progress of Program implementation

- 4.1. *Data:* The project is now collecting and compiling data relating to special focus groups through EMIS and Household surveys. The HH data analysed by some of the districts has provided rich and detailed data on the 6-11 school population. Disaggregated information by gender of SCs, STs, OBCs and others is now available through the HH. In order to analyse and utilise the HH Surveys further planning and management, computer and software support is required especially at the state level. It is also critical to integrate information on regular primary schools with the information on the EGS, private and minority schools in order to gain a complete understanding of the progress toward the development objectives. Since the state does not yet have nodal academic support institutions, the mission would also urge project officials to use academic expertise available across the country to analyse this data.
- 4.2. *Staffing:* State project office is functional in terms of implementation of project activities as there is full time State Project Director. Out of 12 key positions 9 persons are in place. Remaining 3 vacancies should be filled up expeditiously. State Resource Groups on different programs have also been formed and so are the mission task forces, which meet

at regular intervals every month. Reflection cum Planning meetings are held monthly to review progress of the districts. Executive Committee meetings(5) are held to resolve major policy issues. At the district level, all 6 DPOs are functional with 121 key positions filled. The mission conveyed the importance of filling up the remaining 36 positions expeditiously. An interim measure to assist DPOs involves the authorization by the District Commissioner to use available staff in the district for this purpose.

- 4.3. *Capacity building*: Capacity building was provided to state officials at Mussourie and refresher training given to all the DLOs at NIEPA on the preparation of Annual Work Plans and Budgets with special emphasis on data analysis and interpretation. Project staff conveyed to the mission the usefulness of the capacity building trainings conducted at both Mussourie and in the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration. It is critical that the skills acquired in these training programs be developed further. The newly recruited financial officers at the state level have also been trained. Exposure visits and study tours for state and districts staff in their relevant subject areas would be an effective way to increase capacity. The mission is pleased to the development of research capacities at the district level evident in the presentation of several useful studies to the JRM team. It will be important for the project to further develop these research skills. In addition, the mission team suggests that the state level undertake two independent evaluations of project implementation on significant issues that require further illumination.
- 4.4. *SCERT and SIEMAT*: GOJ has decided not to establish a SCERT and SIEMAT at this time. While this decision was acceptable the mission indicated the importance of setting up some form of academic and policy support for the education department. It would be important for GOJ to conceptualise some form of alternative arrangement for this purpose. Expertise of existing institutions like XLRI, a pioneering institution in the field of management could be utilized by the project for support in educational research, and staff capacity building in planning and management. Another suggestion was the setting up of a core group made up of significant educators from across the country that would analyse and advise GOJ in matters pertaining to the sector.
- 4.5. *DIETs*: There are 5 Primary Teacher Training Colleges and 4 DIETs (upgraded from PTECs) in DPEP. The JRM feels that strengthening of these institutions should be given highest priority. Presently the DIETs are understaffed with only skeletal staff. Training programs are conducted with the help of resource persons drawn from DLOs or from the teaching community at large, which is detrimental to both the DLO as well as school effectiveness. In addition, this arrangement may not be sustainable in the long run as it stretches the capacity of functionaries beyond their defined roles. In order to effect quality in education by way of in service teacher trainings, DIETs should be established in each of the DPEP districts and operationalised with appropriate staff, equipment and infra-structure..
- 4.6. *BRCs*: In the 53 BRCs of the DPEP, there is no regular staff. In addition to the Block Education Officer who also functions as BRC coordinator, three resource persons are identified from amongst the schoolteachers and are oriented to their role as a facilitator,

developer and catalyst in their area, for a year. As the Project works in mission mode, the existing BRC coordinators perform their roles with earnestness. However, sustainable arrangements should be made for the system to run smoothly in the long run. Also, selecting new BRC resource persons each year and orienting them could prove to be taxing and the team suggests that the state explore other possible arrangements.

- 4.7 *Implementation progress:* The implementation progress made by the project in Jharkhand shows considerable improvement. The pace of the civil works program is now stepped up. The mission encourages the project to first construct EGS sheds/EGS school buildings in remote locations where EGS are functioning well with large enrolments.
- 4.8 *Financial Progress:* Rs. 215 crores is the EFC sanctioned cost for the program. Rs. 78 crores of the total project cost has been expended so far and an additional Rs. 42 crores is to be spent within this financial year. Of the Rs. 61 crores the approved budget for the year 2002-2003, GOI has so far released Rs. 26 crores. The expenditure as of October 31, 2002 is Rs. 14 crores. A considerable amount of expenditure will now be incurred for the purchasing of textbooks (Rs. 14 crores) and the accelerated pace of civil works in the coming dry season. The state has sanctioned Rs. 7.2 crores for the project as its entire counterpart share. The discussions held with district officials indicate that the outcomes of project expenditure are becoming important dimensions of the project planning and management. The legal agreements of the project has been finalized The state requests that since the legal agreements indicate a multi-state project arrangement, any defaults made by either state should not effect project funding to the functioning state. The audited statement of accounts for the year ending 2001-02 has been submitted.

5. Sustainability

- 5.1. *Convergence:* During field visits convergence with UNICEF through SWASTH programme and with PHED was visible. SWATH has constructed low cost toilet complexes for girls and boys separately in 40 primary and middle Schools, whereas PHED is involved in installing hand pumps in schools on a priority basis. Students of the residential schools run by the Welfare Department are given text books from the Project, in addition, teaching learning material is also provided to these schools. The state government is contemplating the provision of cooked meal distribution to students under Mid-day meal programme through DPEP in project districts. Effective and sustainable inter-linkages could be forged with the PRIs, Departments of Health, ICDS, Nutrition and the Welfare Department, DRDAs, and so on to address issues of quality and equity. Coverage of students in EGS/AS/Jagjagi centres, as well as disabled children under incentives/scholarship schemes could be possible through convergence with Social Welfare/Tribal Welfare Departments. The state government through its Vision-2010 has also drawn comprehensive convergence plans for a) involvement of villagers and parents through PRIs; and b) the improvement of school infra-structure with the active participation of the private sector and with other departments, agencies and programmes.

5.2. *Panchayati raj institutions*: Appropriate preparedness is essential on the part of DPEP Jharkhand in the wake of forthcoming Panchayati Raj elections. Since primary education would come under the jurisdiction of the PRIs, strategies could be considered in advance, especially those relating to the role of VECs, recruitment of EGS teachers and ECE staff. Primary teachers recruitment, deployment and transfer policies along with issues of absenteeism shall be governed by PRIs, advocacy measures must be in place to ensure that initiatives, processes and gains made in the project are sustained and become part of mainstream education.

5.3. *SSA* : The SSA plans for the state are in the process of being finalized. The implementation of SSA would involve the continued implementation of most of the DPEP interventions. At present DPEP staff is involved in SSA and the processes initiated under the project are clearly visible. However, it must be ensured that the progress of project activities are not adversely affected due to additional burden placed on the DPEP staff.

6. **Next Steps**

- ❑ Completion of the recruitment of district level staff and the initiation of a capacity building program of the CRC and BRC.
- ❑ Putting in place a quality monitoring system.
- ❑ Commissioning two research studies relevant to the project and continuing to develop the research capacities of state and district level officials.
- ❑ Completing the analysis of the Household Survey data and integrating this information with EMIS data.
- ❑ Continuing with interventions in a targeted manner planned for improving enrolment, retention, attendance and completion in project districts.

This report is based on the observations of the Mission team and may be subject to amendment after return to Delhi

Follow-up on recommendation of the 15th JRM

Recommendations	Status and Progress
Completing the formalities required for fresh legal documents for the state	Completed
Filling up the vacancies of teachers and SPO and DPO staff	Teacher posts and SPO posts filled. Hiring of DPO staff in progress
Ensuring timely and regular availability of textbooks	Completed
Drawing plans for opening of schools especially in unserved habitations and meeting the educational needs of identified out of school children	Completed
Taking concrete action on establishing and strengthening project implementation structures and resource support organizations like – SCERT, SIEMAT, DIETs	The state has decided not to establish SCERT and SIEMAT and will be exploring alternative arrangements. DIET strengthening in progress.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Karnataka State Report
(17-23 November 2002)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The 16th Joint Review Mission team comprising of Dr. Mohammad Miyan (GOI) and Sabina Bindra (EC) visited Karnataka between 17th and 23rd November 2002 to review the progress in the implementation of the District Primary Education Programme. The team visited Gulbarga district and interacted with students, teachers, school, cluster, block, district and DIET personnel as well as members of School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMC). The team also interacted with the DPI NEK, DyPCs, and APCs from seven North Eastern districts. At Bangalore the team met with Commissioner PI, Principal Secretary Education, SPD, SPO personnel, Director DSERT and representatives from DPEP Mysore, Bangalore rural, Dharwad, Belgaum and Kolar.
- 1.2 The Mission report addresses specifically the issues that were identified for review by the 16th JRM. These are (i) Enrolment, retention, completion and equity, (ii) Quality and equity, (iii) Institutional capacity and progress of programme implementation, and (iv) Sustainability. The Mission report was discussed with the Government of Karnataka (GOK) chaired by the Education Secretary. The team members would like to record their thanks for the warm hospitality and co-operation offered to them throughout their visit.
- 1.3 *Action taken on the recommendation of the 14th JRM.*
- a) To enhance demand side, linkages are established with other departments including PRIs and NGOs have been associated. GoK has given priority to pre-primary coverage through ICDS and the State is not running pre-primary centres. However, under SSA sufficient focus is being given to strengthen pre-primary education.
- (b) While attendance of mainstreamed children from the Bridge Course Centres is being monitored regularly by the CRC, BRC and Educational Co-ordinators, their learning is monitored by the DIET faculty. Further, they are provided with remedial teaching in North-East Karnataka districts and are being extended to other districts under SSA. (c) EMIS analysis workshops are conducted at the district level and the data is extensively used in developing perspective plans and AWP & Bs under DPEP and also under SSA. (d) Civil works are being monitored closely to accelerate the process of completion and handing over of the completed works. A report on the status will be provided before the 16th JRM. (e) Issues flagged in the Sector Paper on Education are being tackled through developing Project Proposals. (f) The State SSA society has been established and is working. The plans under SSA for the DPEP districts are processed through the SSA society. The issues concerning the sustainability plan are under the consideration of the GoK.

2 Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

2.1 Available information, its use and Data issues

- 2.1.1. The 16th JRM team observed an overall progress towards achievement of programme goals in DPEP I and II districts in Karnataka. There has been rise in enrolment in DPEP I districts from a total of 1,050,062 students in 1995-96 to a total of 1,136,207 students in 2001-2002 an increase of 7.58%. Similarly there is rise in enrolment in DPEP II districts from 2,103,171 in 1997-98 to 2,234,497 in 2001-2002 an increase of 5.87%. However there was a decrease in enrolment by 26,228 in DPEP I and 15,817 in DPEP II districts over the last year. The NER at present is 97 (boys) and 96 (girls) for DPEP I and 99 (boys) and 98 (girls) for DPEP II. The house to house survey data was used for the calculation of NER for the year 2001-02. (Projected population data was used previously). The gender gap in enrolment for All, SC and ST indicates that the gap has narrowed down to less than 4%.. Gulbarga shows an increase of 26.23% in enrolment when compared to the base year. Inputs like bridge course, hot-cooked mid-day meals are attributed to have contributed to this increase. The Gender variation at present in Gulbarga district is 4.41%. The gender variation is higher in ST category 8.1% with that for SC being 5.42%. The Gender gap in Raichur district is 5.55 as against 5.58 in 2000-01. The gender variation among the SC is reduced to 6.3 from 7.16 during 2000-01.
- 2.1.2 The total enrolment in standard I in DPEP I districts continue to show a declining trend, as has been reported by CAG and reduction in crude birth rate being cited as the main reason. While overall class I enrolment in DPEP Phase I districts decreased by 1.6%, there is an increase of 1.6% in class I enrolment in DPEP Phase II districts. Districts such as Belgaum, Mandya, Bangalore rural and Dharwad show a decrease in enrolment varying from 1% (Mysore) to 6 % (Mandya). The other districts show an increase in enrolment varying from 1.3% (Raichur) to 15% (Gulbarga). The state is planning to conduct a detailed study in Gulbarga to find the reasons for this phenomenal change. The IIM study has recommended expanding the scope of the proposed study on declining enrolments in class I, to examination of demographic changes across a range of situations to isolate the impact of declining or stabilising birth rates on class I enrolment and on future teacher deployment.
- 2.1.3. The repetition rates in DPEP I have been reduced to 4.1% for class I to IV and it is 3.4% in DPEP II. The class wise repetition rates does not show much variation except in class II and class IV of DPEP II districts (2.7 and 4). For the first time information about the long absentees and readmission were collected through the EMIS during 2001-02. As per the reports generated in EMIS the repeaters on account of long absentees is around 7%, which is even for all the classes. The present standard wise repetition rates for both DPEP I and II show only marginal gender differences. The repetition rates are reflecting attendance patterns as Karnataka has a policy of automatic promotion dependent on 75% attendance in standards I and II.

- 2.1.4. The SPO had undertaken a cohort study on dropout and completion rates in 2000-2001, which was recorded by the 14th JRM. An EMIS analysis workshop was conducted in September 2002 attended by DyPCs. They have been asked to identify 20 least performing schools (where completion rate was below 40%), identify the reasons for such low results and plan remedial interventions accordingly. The SPO is now planning to conduct another cohort study in the year 2002-2003 and conduct detailed comparison of the two cohorts.
- 2.1.5. According to the IIM Study (External evaluation in DPEP I) there has been an upward shift in attendance rate from 1994-95 to 2000-01. But the completion rate still continues to be low. In order to improve attendance which has implications on learning achievement a programme called Baa Marali Shalege has been introduced from November this year. A list of constantly irregular children is prepared from the attendance register. Every Monday between 9-10 am the teacher along with the SDMC members and some students go to the houses of these children and persuade the parents to send them to school. According to the initial figures trickling in, around sixty eight thousand children have been brought back to school within three Mondays. The mission also interacted with some children who had come back to school. The teachers will have to ensure that these children get more attention in classroom and also through remedial teaching so that they do not dropout again.
- 2.1.6. The Terminal Assessments Study (TAS) was conducted in DPEP I districts and the findings in all districts have shown better performances for classes I and II in Maths and Language except Raichur. Gap between the performance of boys and girls is minimum in class I and in II language. Similarly the performance of class III and IV students improved in Language except in Raichur, although the performance in Maths has not been substantial. TAS has also been conducted in the second phase DPEP districts and very preliminary analysis of the data presented to the JRM indicates that all seven districts have shown improvement in classes I and II. For classes III and IV Gulbarga and Mysore have not shown improvement especially in reading comprehension. It would be useful for the state to analyse the reason for low performance and to perhaps conduct contextual assessment studies at the state level to get a better picture.

2.2. *Strategies to reach out and mainstream out of school children*

- 2.2.1. A second round of house-to-house survey was carried out in February 2002 covering children from 3-14 years (identifying potential entrants for Anganwari centres). It also covered the urban pockets using digitised maps from the census department for out of school children as well children with special needs. NGOs working in slums were also used to train teachers in collecting data. As per the findings 6.14 lakh children in the age group 6-14 were out of school across the state, with 4.2 lakh in DPEP districts, 64% of them in the 7 NEK districts. This survey gathered information on reasons for children out of schools covering nine parameters. The officials at the habitation, clusters and the schools have been provided the information on the number of children in their area that are in school by type, out of school castewise and genderwise, which will help them to plan specific strategies and

set their targets. The list is also displayed at the gramsabha. As mentioned by the 14th JRM a special Directorate for Education has been set in the North Eastern districts of Karnataka (NEK) where education and other socio-economic indicators are very poor. 50.54 % of the states out of school children are in these districts according to the HH survey.

- 2.2.2 As was reported by the 14th mission the state has posited Chinnara Angala (Bridge Courses) as the major programme to bring children back to school. So far three rounds of the courses have been conducted since 2000. The Chinnara Angala has one regular teacher and one volunteer teacher selected by the SDMC, for every 20 out-of-school children over the period of two months. The teacher is not being compensated for working during the vacations but is allowed compensatory leave. The volunteer is paid Rs.1000 per month. Both receive training for 15days. After a week in the course a pre-test is conducted to assign levels to the children. An integrated workbook for children covering the competency level of I to IV for Mathematics, Language and EVS is being used. Retention of these mainstreamed children is the greatest challenge. The mission observed that the children who had been mainstreamed after passing through the bridge courses were mostly seated at the back in the classroom. Most of their class work had not been corrected by the teacher and wherever checked the mistakes had not been pointed out. This was happening in schools where Azim Premji Foundation (APF) has provided trained volunteer teacher for remedial teaching and to support the mainstreamed children.
- 2.2.3 Reaching the hardest to reach groups of children still continues to pose a challenge despite various efforts by the state. These groups are well identified across the states as working children, children of migrating parents, children with special needs and children of poor parents not interested in sending their children to school for various reasons. The mission sensed that the project personnel were aware of the difficulties in involved in getting these children to school and were planning special programmes for the same. Very small habitation based strategies will be required to get the last child back to school and the state should be prepared to commit both financial and resource commitment for the same.
- 2.2.4 The draft vision document on IED states that every disabled child will be in school and receive appropriate form of education. This document will form the basis of policy for inclusive education to be implemented during SSA. Based on the success of Magadi block experience as mentioned in earlier JRM report, a trained resource teacher is being provided for three clusters in DPEP districts with support material. Out of the 400 teachers to be trained 219 teachers have been trained. 45 day training for 25 key resource persons was conducted in Gulbarga. The implementation of the planned activities within IED need to be accelerated as there is a definite slowing down after the initial pioneering efforts.
- 2.2.5 As reported by 14th JRM textbooks had been produced in the language used by the Soliga tribe through a series of workshops for classes I and II. The state has just finalised a workshop, which prepared III grade textbooks. The mission observed a considerable number of Lambani tandas (habitations) across

Gulbarga district. While visiting a small Lambani school the teacher pointed out that she was having difficulty in teaching language as the students did not understand her. The Lambanis are also found in other parts of the state, earlier migrating tribes they are settling down. It would be useful if a textbook similar to that of the Soliga language is developed for them.

23. *System responsiveness and Linkages*

- 2.3.1. Although a large number of inputs went into improving the quality of school, by and large, the feeling is that there has been no common vision and that these interventions were piecemeal, not contributing to a holistic educational development. As per the recommendation of one of the nine sector studies it is being envisaged that a whole school development and improvement plan is to be prepared at the school level. A three day training module is being developed for the Head teacher, one teacher and SDMC chairperson per school. The plan would look at school development in its entirety assessing and planning for the infrastructure, academic and resource support, as well as capacity needs of the school.
- 2.3.2. A three day workshop is being organised in DSERT in December involving education administration, educationists, teachers, resource persons to take stock of textbooks, TLM, teaching learning processes and evaluation evolved during DPEP and to review what needs to be continued and in what form. This would result in a culmination of various initiatives into a complete and comprehensive pedagogic framework for the state.
- 2.3.3. There is a clear realisation among the state, district and sub-district personnel that the effect of various interventions is not percolating down to the grassroots to the optimum extent and the monitoring of the inputs is the weakest link. Although training and other inputs have been provided at all levels the impact is not felt in the classroom processes.
- 2.3.4. The concept of SDMC as 'the nodal agency' for education development in the village is being promoted. Besides monitoring teacher attendance, teacher casual leave, use of teacher grants and school improvement grants is also being monitored by the SDMC. They participate in surprise visits to schools. The SDMCs are also encouraged to monitor the quality aspects.

3 **Quality and Equity**

3. *Basic conditions for quality*

- 3.1.1. The norm of one room for one class and one teacher for one class has not been reached in the state. Multi grade situation exists in most of the classes and this is more so in the seven NEK districts with the PTR being 46 (state average is 36). The SCR is 43 for DPEP districts and 59 for the 7 NEK districts. Although it can be very uneven within districts most of the schools visited had more than 80 children in classrooms. In Bangalore rural one would find more than 20% of the schools having less than 20 children per classroom. Many of

the schools visited had no boundary walls, drinking water facility or functioning toilets.

3.2. *School and classroom*

- 3.2.1 In most of the schools that the team visited the classrooms were overcrowded. In some classes the teacher had managed to make the children sit in groups and was struggling to teach. Most of the schools visited had multi-grade situations with classes I and II sitting together. The teacher informed the Mission team that she was focussing more on grade one as this is when foundation is laid. The mission could not find any activity plan or diary maintained by the teacher. In one of the schools visited the teachers had made the slow-learners sit at the back as she thought they would not be able to answer the questions asked by the mission.
- 3.2.2 The mission also visited the Nali Kali classrooms where multilevel teaching was taking place. Groups were formed according to ability, there was movement from one group to the other, and progress of the child was assessed with the help of the cards. The students were enthusiastic, peer group interaction was taking place and teacher was letting the children handle learning themselves. The teacher was very enthusiastic and able. She suggested that the training of NK should focus more on practical aspects. It was observed that the children are provided with some written work as the parents insist that they be given homework. As per the UNICEF study work-books are also being prepared. It would be useful to provide additional reading material for these classes and develop school libraries.
- 3.2.3 The state has issued instructions to identify children who have not attained satisfactory learning levels, for 'remedial teaching' for two hours a week outside teaching hours. In the NEK districts the teachers are keeping apart two hours a week within the school hours to conduct these remedial classes for the children based on the progress cards. There is no systematic tracking being conducted to ensure that the children are making real progress.
- 3.2.4 According to IIM External Evaluation focus has shifted to TLM preparation by the teachers themselves instead of buying readymade ones. The mission observed that, though TLMs had been prepared painstakingly by the teachers they had only demonstration value, there was no thinking regarding developing multi use TLMs. In some classes the children were observed using cards, sticks and stones but the understanding of the use of TLM for going beyond the demonstration effect has to be inculcated in the teacher.
- 3.2.5 As mentioned by the 14th JRM, Karnataka has introduced Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation system in which the teacher assesses the competency achieved by the child class wise, subject wise and lesson wise and keeps detailed records of each child's progress. The filling up of the progress card is essentially not process oriented but mechanical. The teachers pointed out difficulty in filling up some of the competencies. The process has added to their work burden especially with children who continue to be low achievers. Teacher is not aware of the potential of the card to improve her own teaching

strategy as was also pointed out by the Pupil evaluation study conducted by TSG, Edcil. These progress cards are shared with parents four times a year during a daylong programme Samudaayadatta Shaale (Community Ownership of schools). The teacher indicates merely if the child has achieved this competency or not. This is a very positive move towards information sharing with parents and community and if used well for drawing attention to the need to support holistic child development.

- 3.2.6 The teachers have not looked at the progress cards as mechanisms for their own self- reflection in teaching. In Karnataka CCE is conducted along with the formal examinations where grading is done according to percentage of marks obtained. Existence of these two systems in some cases according to the Pupil evaluation study can produce different results wherein a child might have completed all competencies but she will still be getting C or D grading. The teachers and officials at the field stated that parents were demanding marks along with the transfer certificates especially when they migrate to nearby states. There is a need to clearly define the purpose of evaluation, generate discussion across the system and build consensus on how the children should be assessed, making the evaluation process more commensurate with the changes in the pedagogy and classroom transactions. At the same time the support being given to teacher would need to facilitate the process of evaluation rather than checking if the cards are being filled by the teacher.

3.3. *Community Context and its links to quality and equity*

- 3.3.1 In 2001 the existing VECs were abolished and SDMCs comprising of members with children in that school, thereby having a stake hold in the affairs of the school, were formed by an executive act. 1/3rd of the members are women in the nine-member committee, which is elected for 3 years. A member of gram panchayat from the area is co-opted to the committee. The state envisages a very dynamic role for the SDMCs in terms of the development of the school. The strategy is to develop a sense of ownership of the school by the community. A module has been prepared for training SDMC members informing them about their role, responsibilities and rights. Focus is on quality improvement, linkages between head master and SDMC their facilitative role in school improvement. All BEOs, DDPIs, resource persons and education administrators at all levels are also involved in this orientation. The SDMCs have already played a significant role in drives for bringing out of children back to school, preventing dropout, teacher absenteeism, contributing towards construction, repair, whitewashing etc. in the schools, supervising the distribution of cooked meals. Now the focus is to strengthen their capacity in planning for overall school development. The state is also planning to prepare a small booklet, which would be an easy guide for their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.3.2 The cooked mid-day meal is being provided only in 7 NEK districts with full support from the gram sabha. A cook and helper are appointed and paid through the gram sabha. Kitchens for cooking the food are being constructed by the gram sabha. The members of gram sabha as well as the SDMC make frequent checks of the availability and use of rations, gas cylinders, and

quality of food being given. The mission found that in many places firewood was being used although sealed gas cylinders were there. In some cases the classrooms have become storerooms for ration there by further squeezing the already small spaces. Water facility is being provided through education department. The gram sabha is also awarding scholarships to outstanding students.

- 3.3.3 In the schools visited village education registers maintained attendance of the members present the minutes of the meetings of SDMCs and decisions taken on issues of infrastructure, midday meals, garden maintenance, out of school children, drop out, spending of school grants, teacher attendance, organisation of school annual day.

3.4 *Teacher support and development*

- 3.4.1 Karnataka has undertaken massive teacher recruitment and redeployment activities. Teachers are now to be recruited at the taluk level. The 7 north-eastern districts will have an additional 5797 new teachers. In addition, analysis of EMIS data led to the identification of 4867 teachers who were surplus in their schools and were transferred to areas of teacher shortage. 2663 of these teachers are being placed in the 7 north-eastern districts where the PTR is high. The state PTR is 1:36, and the seven north-eastern DPEP districts have a PTR of 1:46 it is 1:39 for DPEP districts. The fact that standard V has now been added to the primary cycle a provision of third teacher has been made. But all schools have not been provided with the same as yet. Subject wise teachers are being deployed this year.

3.5 *Teacher training*

- 3.5.1 Chaithanya training module developed on the DPEP model emphasising teaching content is being implemented. In addition DPEP Karnataka is providing recurrent training of teachers for content enrichment through teleconferencing and radio programmes. The mission witnessed Chaithanya II training going on for teachers from 5-7 grades. Teachers are mainly trained at the BRC level. A training package for multigrade teaching has been developed in a workshop. Training package for induction of new teachers has been developed and master trainers have been trained in Bangalore and Gulbarga. 8,900 newly recruited teachers have been successfully trained.
- 3.5.2 The Professional Development Programme aiming to introduce appraisal of all teachers emphasizing mastery of teaching content has unfortunately not taken off due to continuous resistance from the teacher unions. The results are to be used to plan to fill gaps in teachers' content and conceptual understanding. It would be perhaps useful to orient the unions about the real objective of the assessment, as this could be a powerful tool to assess capacity building needs.
- 3.5.3 As mentioned by the 14th JRM the CRCCS and BRCCs have been provided with formats to assess whether the activity based teaching methods are being practiced. The CRC is expected to visit each school at least once a month. The monthly meetings are used to review activities and plan for the coming month

and to share ideas and prepare TLMs. Each BRC RP is also acts as the nodal officer for 1 or 2 clusters and also interacts with the SDMC and teachers of the schools in that cluster. Although a lot of information is being generated at various levels proper analysis and feedback mechanism is missing. The IIM external evaluation reported that CRC coordinators school visit was irregular and this was also observed by the mission. Not only were the visits irregular, but the CRCCs have not been keeping records of experience-sharing meetings. IIM study has also cited that there is an overemphasis on supervision during BRC staff visit to CRC. The mission suggests, that state should review the capacities of the CRCs, the most important link in the programme and empower them through orientation and training.

4 Institutional Capacity and Progress of Programme Implementation

- 4.1 EMIS data are generated at the habitation level and so are the household survey data. The last household survey was conducted in February 2002 in which out of school children were identified. Based on the findings of the survey, the Chinnara Angala Programmes have been planned. The School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) has the responsibility of organising these programmes in their respective areas. For each group of 20 children, one teacher and a volunteer are appointed for a period of 60 days. This planning and execution of the programme is mainly carried out by the SDMC. Thus, the utilization of survey data at the grass-root level is quite evident. MIS units at the district and the state level are functional and the personnel are in position. Software to monitor the physical and financial progress (PFMS) and to monitor the progress of civil works has been developed in-house. This software has been utilized in preparation of AWP&B for the year 2002-03. Development of another software, EMIS-GIS, for the Geographical Information System is in progress.
- 4.2 Data collection for the EMIS 2002-03 is in progress. As a capacity building measure, a 2-day workshop was organised to develop a report on "Progress Towards UPE – A Trend Analysis". PMIS report for the 1st quarter of 2002-03 has been generated. Software for the generation of PMIS reports has also been taken up by the state. The data generated is extensively used in developing AWP&B and also for redeployment of teachers.
- 4.3 Cohort study was undertaken and its results are fed to the DPO, BRCs and CRCs for taking remedial measures for enhancing the retention and completion rates by mobilizing the community especially with reference to special focus groups and hard to reach groups. As reported the overall completion rate is 67.5% but the 14th JRM arrived at a consensus figure of 77.5 %. The completion rate is defined as the percentage of children successfully completing first 4 classes in 4 years. It does not take into account those who are dropped out or retained. The state is planning to conduct cohort study this year also.
- 4.4 The initiative on improving least performing schools initiated in Raichur district has now been extended to Kolar district. These schools are selected on the basis of educational indicators. Such schools are given priority in development programmes. The schools selected in Raichur district have shown some improvements. The Mission

suggests that proper documentation may be taken up by the state so that the benefit could reach to other parts of the state and the country too.

- 4.5 The mission observed that the process of development of AWP&B in the State is now very much participatory. The deputy project coordinators, assistant project coordinators and computer programmers are trained in participatory mode of preparation of work plan and budget. The DRG trains the BRG, which then develops a block specific plan. Block plans and budgets are then placed before the district resource groups where they are discussed in detail and plan for the district is evolved. District Implementation Committee members are also involved in the process. District plans are brought to the state where they are discussed and finalised. The process ensures democratisation and encourages participation. This also leads to developing capacities at different levels.
- 4.6 BRCCs have been oriented in their role. BRPs from DPEP I were also trained to orient the newly appointed teachers in DPEP II districts. These resource persons were also involved in developing a school observation tool used during the school visits by the new faculty. BRCs have also been equipped with the expertise to impart training using Chaitanya package. Chaitanya package is now of seven days which also includes Nali Kali methodology and content upgradation.
- 4.7 As reported by the 14th JRM, Karnataka has taken a decision to strengthen the DSERT. The restructuring plan was prepared in 1999 and was submitted to the GOK. Instead of establishing an independent SIEMAT, the plan has proposed that a team specialising in Planning and Management should be recruited and a Planning & Management Wing be added to the DSERT. Thirty-four posts have been created and salary costs related to the recruitment of the staff belonging to the Planning and Management budgeted under DPEP II. Of these posts, the Mission was informed that 12 posts are exclusively earmarked for the Planning and Management Wing. The Cadre and Recruitment Rules have now been finalized and published in the State Gazette. Costs of the new staff will be met out of the state budget. The new building is now complete. It is hoped that the DSERT will now play its assigned role effectively.
- 4.8 The contribution of DIETs in in-service education is presumed to be quite significant if one goes by role assigned to the DIET. It has to act as a nodal agency at the district level for the elementary education sector. The performance of the DIETs as district-level resource institutes for elementary education varies a lot across the state. The Xth Plan working Group recommended the continuance of DIETs as centrally sponsored scheme. The role of DIETs is also envisaged as key institutions for universalisation of elementary education in the district. The DIETs have appointed some faculty members as nodal officers for DPEP. The participation of DIETs in developing the induction package for teachers, development of materials and as a resource centre is at present lacking. The mission feels that steps may be taken for the increased role of DIETs, particularly in capacity building.
- 4.9 The linkages between the CRC with the school on one and the BRC on the other is very important. It is therefore imperative that the most suitable persons are appointed as CRCs coordinators. The North East Regional Educational Development Directorate has developed a new method of selecting the coordinators on experimental basis

through a test, which comprises written and oral examination. In a recent exercise 1025 teachers volunteered for the post, of which 841 actually took the test. The selection of CRC coordinators was made based on their performance. The test also helped the department to assess the capacities of its teachers and identify further training needs. It is interesting to note that to ensure transparency the teachers were also part of the evaluation process. The mission encourages the State machinery to review the performance at the CRC level and implement the procedure of selection through out the state, including assessment for qualities such as initiative, perseverance and the like.

- 4.10 The School Development and Monitoring Committee have replaced the erstwhile Village Education Committee. The committee is democratically elected by the body of parents of the students in the school. However there are instances where the local MLA has insisted on nominating the Committee. For the committee members to perform their role effectively, training in their responsibilities and powers and skill in handling day to day business becomes essential. The state has planned to organise and conduct training programmes for them, all preparations for which have been made. One of the first training programme organised on November 20, 2002 at Afzalpur block which was witnessed by the mission.
- 4.11 The mission had an opportunity to observe the training programme in operation and interacted with the participants. The SDMC members also articulated their vision of school development which may be summarised as follows: teacher should be (i) punctual (ii) competent in subject (iii) read regularly (iv) undergo training programmes periodically (v) make proper use of TLM (vi) come prepared to the class (vii) pay individual attention to weak students (viii) capable of filling the report card correctly (ix) teacher to pupil ratio should be maintained at reasonable level (x) there should be one more teacher at the LPS as class v is added (xi) school compound wall and a play ground (xii) free bus pass to children of special focus groups. The members on their part thought that they should (xiii) regularly monitor the teacher attendance (xiv) help in bringing the children back to school (xv) maintain cordial relation with the teachers (xvi) have an opportunity to interact with block and district level officials to discuss their problems. Attitude of teachers towards as regards the functions of SDMCs need to be changed also. This articulated vision, if earnestly translated into action, will lead to betterment of the school environment.
- 4.12 Karnataka state has been in the forefront in using the technology effectively for wider dissemination of the training programmes. Keli-Kali- a radio programme, is the first of its kind designed by the State DPEP in collaboration with DEP-DPEP (IGNOU). The programme consisting of 60 episodes and based on the Class III syllabus was broadcast during 2000-01. In the following year the radio programme was extended to class IV and during the current session the radio programme for class V was also launched on Aug 5, 2002. The radio programme covers 32 educational districts; 49,640 schools and about 50 lakh children. A study to gauge the effectiveness of the programme was commissioned and tentative results show that the programme is useful, both for teachers and students. Radio programme for Urdu teacher was launched on 23.11.02. Sixty thousand letters received by the AIR, Bangalore about the programme is in itself a testimony of the popularity of the programme. The state has also been using teleconferencing quite frequently to reach larger number and in the remotest areas of the state. Karnataka is the first state to have used internet

facility, besides telephone and fax, for communication during the teleconference. The mission urges upon the State to document the process of developing radio programmes and monitoring of the radio broadcast.

- 4.13 The DPEP I and II will run up to June 2003. The total project cost as approved by the EFC with 3% price contingency for DPEP –I is Rs.21480.180 lakhs of which Rs.7982 lakhs is an additional outlay approved by EFC in its meeting on 17.8.2001. For phase II, the total cost of the project is Rs. 28016.201 lakhs. The total expenditure up to October 2002 (31.10.2002) is Rs.19409.600 lakhs for phase I and Rs. 25953.130 lakhs for phase II. The allocation for the year 2002-2003 (up to 30.06.2003) is Rs.3307.981 & Rs.4147.000 for the DPEP-I and DPEP- II respectively and the respective expenditure during 2002-03 up to 31.10.2002 are Rs. 1237.509 and 2295.313. The position of the fund release during this year i.e. 2002-03 (as on 31.10.2002)is as follows: Phase I – Rs. 1670.600 lakhs ; Phase II – Rs. 2969.000 lakhs. During the discussion it was found that the fund flow from the GOI was not smooth till last year. Because of which the progress of certain initiatives remained quite slow to the extent that non-conduct of CRCs meeting was also attributed to non availability of funds. This year, funds were received regularly; the SPO expressed satisfaction.
- 4.14 As regards the construction work the slow progress is attributed to the non availability of funds till last year. The state could not utilise the increased ceiling on construction work. The Mission was informed that the DPEP-I civil works are almost through **except for some residual work, school buildings, additional classrooms and CRCs that are nearing completion. DSERT building is complete. Four prototype school buildings, using cost-effective technology are completed from the innovative funds. In case of 3 toilets and 3 drinking water facilities the work was not started. The financial progress in respect of civil works for Phase-I (as on 30.9.2002) is as under: total project outlay –Rs. 2945.46 lakhs; expenditure-Rs. 2915.461 lakhs. In DPEP –II, Out of total target units of 1635 work on 1227 units was complete (as on 31.7.2002) .Work in 367 units is in progress . The mission was informed that these units would be complete by the end of December 2002. The work in 41 units: BRCs-2, CRCs-15, new school building-22 and, additional classrooms-2 has not started. CAG report points out slow progress in civil works but the progress now appears to be quite satisfactory. Out of total outlay of Rs. Rs. 5658.800 lakhs for Phase II, the state has spent Rs.4015.239 lakhs (as on 30.9.2002). The mission was further informed that the works which have not been started due to dispute will not be taken up at all and others will be completed by March 2003.**

5 Sustainability

- 5.1 Sustainability plans have been drawn and submitted to the GOK for continuation of several district and sub district posts beyond the project period and also to sustain the programmes in DPEP I districts. In terms of financial requirements, it amounts to Rs. 2450.24 lakhs, which can be absorbed by the State under plan expenditure.
- 5.2 The institutional structures created by DPEP like BRC, CRC etc., efforts in bringing out the community ownership through various community mobilisation programmes, text books reforms and various training modules must be sustained through SSA.

- 533 Involvement of Government institutions and NGOs in addressing the issues of quality and bridging the gaps in gender and social equity is one of the important strategies adopted and DPEP has been successful in that. These efforts also must be sustained through SSA.
- 544 The pedagogical innovations will sustain as the teams of teachers and the resource persons would continue to serve the system. Programmes like Chinnara Angala Summer Bridge Course and Back to School will continue getting the support of the SDMC at the grass root level. SDMC's role in bringing teacher accountability will go a long way in creating an environment conducive to learning.
- 555 As has been made out that capacities and capabilities built during the DPEP project will, by and large, be utilized in SSA, the treasure of manpower created will perhaps, not be lost. It is also to be noted that many of the DPEP interventions have been taken up in non DPEP districts also. New textbooks are in the use in all districts. Cluster and Block level resource groups have been formed taking teachers on deputation basis. Chaitanya package I and II are being implemented through out the state.
- 566 The mission is given to understand that DPEP and SSA will now be vested with the Project Director but the accounts will be maintained separately till the grant from DPEP would be available. Thereafter the DPEP society will merge into the SSA. This ensures not only the continuity of the traditions of the DPEP but also effective handling of the SSA programmes in future.

6 Next Steps

61. The Mission commends the efforts made by DPEP Karnataka and GOK to bring out-of-school children into schools and to ensure that they complete five years of schooling. The challenge now is to bring in the hardest to reach groups which is proving to be most difficult task, as they are spread in small pockets. More rigorous follow-up of the ones enrolled and specific strategies for bringing the last child to school need to be planned.
- 62 The mission commends the state's efforts in mainstreaming a large number of out of school children through bridge courses. Although the teachers have been oriented to give these children more support in the classroom as well as through remedial teaching, the mission observed this has not been effective. There is therefore a need to ensure that the teachers are given proper training and the monitoring of this process be made more facilitative and effective.
- 63 The plans have been developed at the habitation level after rigorous need assessment exercises. However, due to the needs of centralisation the specificity often gets lost. This point was also made by the external evaluation study by IIM. The state may want to deliberate upon ways that could ensure that the focus on the habitation plans is not lost. This also has implications for planning for hardest to reach groups.
- 64 The Mission acknowledges DPEP Karnataka's efforts to improve the quality of student learning and achievements. The rigorous monitoring and follow up of the inputs have been missing link, which has prevented actual transformation in the classroom

transactions. The capacities of district and sub-district institutions responsible for the same need to be further strengthened.

- 6.5 A number of national evaluation studies have been conducted covering various components of DPEP interventions and their impact for the DPEP I states. The Mission would like to recommend to the states to conduct review workshops for these studies in order to assess the implications for the state. It would be useful for the state to analyse the reasons for low performance in the TAS and to perhaps conduct contextual assessment studies at the state level to get a better picture.
- 6.6 Although a sustainability plan has been developed the decisions regarding continuation of the present administrative and academic structures and personnel have not been finalised. The state project office may pursue the issue with mainstream institutions so that there is clarity on the transition process.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Madhya Pradesh State Report
(17-23 November, 2002)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the 16th Joint Review Mission of the District Primary Education Programme, Ward Heneveld (World Bank) and Amarjeet Sinha (DFID, Government of UK) visited Madhya Pradesh from 17th to the 23rd of November 2002. The review started with a very useful presentation by the Director of the Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha Mission and her colleagues from the State Education Centre and on the direction of the state's work in the future, based on the evidence from data, research, and field experience. While the presentation focussed on the policy initiatives and institutional reforms brought about in the State in the course of implementing the District Primary Education Programme, it also brought out Madhya Pradesh's strong political commitment to universal elementary education of satisfactory quality through the decentralised management of education by Panchayati Raj Institutions and user groups like the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA). A few District Project Coordinators (DPC) shared some of the innovative ways in which greater thrust on the learning needs of each and every child was being given. At a time when 17 DPEP-I districts and 16 DPEP-II districts are completing their Project cycle by December 2002 and June 2003 respectively, a lot of emphasis in the presentation was on how the initiatives that have been successful under DPEP are being effectively institutionalised and mainstreamed. The JRM team noted how successful the State team has been at learning from experience in adapting DPEP interventions to the state context and takes special note of the evidence that this approach will continue past the Programme's completion in the state.
- 1.2 The Team visited Mandsaur district where it had the benefit of the District Magistrate constantly accompanying the team during the field visits, an indication of the priority for UEE in Madhya Pradesh. The Team had an opportunity to observe 5 Primary Schools and 3 EGS Schools and to see and interact with staff of the Jan Shiksha Kendras (Cluster Resource Centres), Block Resource Centres (BRC), the District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) and the District Project Office. In the field the team interacted with members of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA), Village Education Committees (VEC), elected representatives of the local administration (Panchayati Raj Institutions – PRI), Mahila Sanghas of Mahila Samakhya, Padhna Badhna Groups, Self Help Groups of women, Assistant Teachers and Head Masters of Schools, Shiksha Karmi in regular schools and Gurujis of EGS Schools. The team also interacted with CEO, DEEO, BEEOs to understand the active linkage that formal structures have with the DPEP programme. The Collector in Mandsaur also informed the team of some of the very innovative and effective district specific initiatives that include: monitoring development activities across sectors through regular group bus tours of Blocks by District officials; a district program that sponsors adoption of girls by donors to provide school uniforms, school bags and stationary to girl students; the surveying of how social distance is manifested among children and ways of changing the situation; and a campaign for women's empowerment called 'Tejaswini'. Along the way, in both Bhopal and Mandsaur, the Team also had the advantage of looking

learning should provide approaches that can be scaled up over time to allow more attention to the C and D graders who need additional teacher support. Some of these are reported on in the next section on quality and equity.

3. Quality and Equity

3.1 Madhya Pradesh has adopted a diversity of strategies to meet the learning needs of children. First, innovative decisions have been taken to provide access to children in unserved habitations, including adequate number of teachers by providing for locally selected contract teachers (Shiksha Karmis) in regular schools. Second, by situating the primary education system within the overall framework of Panchayati Raj and decentralisation, DPEP has gained from synergies with the larger government system. Third, policy decisions have all facilitated the quest for quality with equity by promoting community participation and involvement of PRIs and PTAs, by entrusting pedagogical supervision to Cluster Academic Coordinators and Block Academic Coordinators working closely with the mainstream education functionaries, and by creating mechanisms that link the various interventions and structures for basic education and literacy (EGS schools, LSAs and VERs, Shiksha Karmis and Gurujis, etc.) These efforts have substantially increased the presence and quality of basic learning conditions in terms of school infrastructure, teacher motivation and development, availability of teaching learning materials, focus on learning needs of children from special focus groups, and most of all, a social norm that children should be in school and learning. Overall, the politically-supported rights-based perspective behind EGS, the efforts to provide minimum learning conditions in all schools, and a greater role for the community have created an enabling environment for primary education that is producing the increases in school participation and student learning that the state is reporting. While these strides are remarkable compared to the state of primary education in Madhya Pradesh till the early 1990s, more demands are being generated for basic learning conditions – teachers, learning materials, facilities, community participation -- given the larger and more regular participation of children in schools.

3.2 **Teachers:** The Mission was impressed with the state's progress in establishing regular teacher attendance (largely through overseeing by villagers, as was observed in Mandsaur District) and by helping teachers change their practices in response to reflection on students' learning needs. However, in the District visited, the Team noted that the EGS Gurujis and Shiksha Karmis in formal schools tend to be more vibrant and teacher-focussed than the Assistant Teachers who were observed. SPO and District Education staff corroborated this impression as being a statewide concern, and the similar student achievement outcomes between EGS and regular schools were noted. While recognising that helping experienced teachers to improve their performance is a significant challenge in all education systems, the JRM team encourages the state to continue and sharpen its efforts to improve the motivation and accountability of all elementary school teachers. Besides making teachers accountable to local communities through the PTA, other service-related improvements are underway. The state has issued an order that frees teachers from too many non-academic tasks. In the District visited, the District Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has held teacher grievance camps in every Block and these have been found to be very useful. The State may also like to explore how the Teacher Unions could collaborate with Government in work on quality issues as often their directions to teachers are taken very seriously by the teaching community. Efforts to document successful teaching practices of outstanding teachers and preparation of case studies around them for wider circulation to schools could also be explored (as has been done in Gujarat).

- 3.3** Teacher Development – Supervision and In-service Training: Besides working to change classroom practice, the state has also emphasized the link between classroom practice and student learning, and teacher development activities are taking this into account. They are evolving from being prescribed to becoming based on the identification of hard spots of learning. In Mandasaur District, the JRM Team observed that Cluster Academic Coordinators had analysed the “hard spots” in learning, and efforts to attend to these needs was evident in the meetings at the CAC level as also the sharing by CACs at the BRC level. Further work in this area is, however, required. First, teachers still seem fairly formalistic in making the relation between examination results and what they do in the classroom. This will change with practice. Second, the identification of “hard spots” depends on item analyses from the examination results, but the test construction for language seems to be particularly weak in identifying and testing particular linguistic skills since the exam is mostly questions of word recognition. If language exams were designed to test a range of skills, as is done in mathematics, then analysis of the “hard spots” could lead to a broader range of remedial activities which would be particularly helpful in the early grades. Work in this direction has already been initiated at the SPO level. That the efforts made in linking classroom practice to student outcomes has proceeded to this stage testifies to the success of Madhya Pradesh in evolving its approach to teacher development, and this progress may provide an example for other states.
- 3.4** Teacher development and support for quality and equity in Madhya Pradesh has gone beyond the pursuit of synergies among of school-level supervision, monthly teacher meetings and in-service orientation in-service courses as originally envisioned under DPEP. In addition, Madhya Pradesh has reserved all the seats for D.ED by the distance mode for Gurujis and Shiksha Karmis who have only had a short induction training. Also, DIET Lecturers have been made the Block Academic Coordinators and there is a system of Thursday meetings from the Cluster to the State level. Still, teacher efforts to overcome “hard spots” and to improve their teaching methods may require some more partnerships besides just the CAC and DIET involvement.
- 3.5** One District, Datia, has also started a school supervision system that has been running for 8 months. In a presentation by Datia’s District Project Coordinator, the JRM Team observed the detailed school visit formats and rating scales that are being used by 59 senior District educators, including secondary school headmasters, to report monthly on about half of the 949 schools in the Datia District. School reports from sample schools show how teacher and student attendance, the use of teaching aids, and coverage of the syllabus have improved when teachers in a school know that these indicators will be checked regularly and their school graded in comparison with other schools. The Team was most impressed with this initiative and suggested to the SPO that it assess, improve on, and perhaps disseminate this approach to supervision when one year of implementation has been completed.
- 3.6** Teaching/Learning Materials: In most schools, particularly EGS schools, the students in the District visited seemed to have a full set of textbooks, and the schools have a large number of low cost teaching materials, many of them often used to enliven the walls of the classroom. However, with respect to textbooks, some students who were not in target groups lacked books, providing the teachers with a challenge in using the books with the whole class. The SPD informed the Team that from this year all students in all elementary schools will receive free textbooks. As to other materials, the class room environment in a number of EGS schools, most of the Shiksha Karmi classrooms and a few Assistant Teacher facilitated classrooms in formal schools indicated that teachers are comfortably using them to implement the activity-based and child-centred pedagogic vision initiated under DPEP. The Team noted that Shiksha Karmis and Gurujis tend to be more comfortable with and to

make better use of the new teaching learning materials than the Assistant Teachers are able to do. The state is aware of this difference, and it may be expected that work will continue to bring all teachers along in implementing a more child-centred pedagogy that uses the materials effectively.

- 3.7 Madhya Pradesh may also be recognised for its introduction of new learning opportunities for children, notably the introduction and observed active use of school libraries and computers. The Team noted the presence of a School Library in schools and there was evidence of regular circulation and reading opportunities for children in some of the schools. The libraries support the new textbooks which lend themselves to improving reading and writing skills of children, but the JRM Team sensed that there is a need to emphasise these skills more in the teacher development programmes. Areas that could be better promoted to enhance language learning include more written work in exercise books and workbooks, more reading loudly in class from a variety of materials, and, given the kind of Hindi spoken in the Malwa region, the introduction of more locally generated bridging resource materials in Class I and Class II. The visiting Team noted that, since an environment for local response to learning needs is emerging, the state should expect in time to see more evidence of teacher-led innovation in classroom processes, and the space for this innovation may be more actively encouraged.
- 3.8 The state is to be commended for its introduction of computers into Upper Primary Schools where JSKs (CRCs) are located, especially since the approach has been to help children become familiar with computers through interaction with attractive software derived from the school curriculum. The popularity of this Headstart programme among children was striking in the one school in which the Team observed students using the computers. The 18 prepared CDs are colourful and interactive, and they reinforce the learning from the textbooks and other teaching learning materials. It also seems wise that the state has chosen to train and empower existing teachers to use the computers and oversee the students use of them. The organization of the Headstart programme at the JSKs with a learning corner for children to read while waiting provides an obvious enjoyable alternative for the students who await their turn on the computer. The Team encourages the state to study the effectiveness of this program and to expand it beyond the pilot phase as lessons learned and resources suggest will be successful. Other states may also wish to learn from this program.
- 3.9 Early Childhood Education (ECE): With GOI's decision to universalise ICDS, Madhya Pradesh's accomplishments in ECE under DPEP will transfer to ICDS. Models of convergence are being experimented with and will continue to be adapted so that the ECE component in ICDS centres is effective. As far as possible, the state intends to use the DPEP ECE model, including a trained teacher, to supplement the ICDS centres hours and activities. The JRM Team encourages the state to ensure that in the future the education component of ICDS receives the attention to that ECE has received with DPEP.
- 3.10 Integrated Education for the Disabled (IED): The JRM Team took note of the efforts made for identification of disabled children and their mainstreaming. Over 1.5 lakh teachers, Gurujis, and Shiksha Karmis in 40% of the DPEP blocks have received one day's training to be aware of the learning needs of disabled children; 33,000 children in 96 DPEP blocks have been assessed for disabilities; and partnerships with other Government programmes and with NGOs have been established, especially to provide aids and appliances.
- 3.11 Civil Works: The school has tried to reach out to the out-of-school children, and this can be seen in the improvement of available school infrastructure provided by the civil works programme under DPEP. The community has stepped in meaningfully in many places to

add to the resources provided by the State in putting up activity centres in school premises. Even though only a few months is left for DPEP to come to an end, the State may like to explore the possibility of establishing low cost child friendly elements like swings and see-saws in schools (Orissa has done it on a large scale very successfully). The balance of unutilised money in DPEP I and DPEP II may even be provided before the end of the projects as an incentive to the better performing PTAs for acquiring sports goods for children.

3.1.2) **Community Participation:** Madhya Pradesh's understanding of how to engage community organizations in the development of elementary education has evolved. Based on experience with Village Education Committees (VEC) and their relationship to the Gram Panchayat under the DPEP model, the state committed to adding school-level user groups, the Parents' Teacher Associations, to this mix in the last round of institutional reforms. As EGS schools have been established in habitations of the villages, these PTAs seem to be taking ownership for "their school." This has helped in stronger community linkages for quality improvement at the school level, particularly since the PTA now watches and reports on teacher attendance and receives information on student performance through the system of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation of pupils. The Team's field visit also indicated that the pursuit of literacy through Padma Badhna Sanghas, the establishment of women's Self-Help Groups, and the intensive processes of community organization building like in the Mahila Samakhya Programme and campaigns for women's empowerment provide synergistic support for the primary education programmes. The Team notes that the DPEP's establishment of small and EGS schools within habitations has particularly encouraged participation of tribals and dalit children because often these are the inhabitants of the habitations that have been excluded heretofore from the village school. Also, such schools encourage a new level of social assertion as the community realises that the school is their very own, particularly when they are able to select a local person as the teacher. The Team noted at a few of the sites visited that this ownership has stimulated the community to put up boundary fences and/or to add playground equipment with their own resources.

4. Institutional Capacity and progress of Programme implementation

4.1 **Institutional Capacity :** The JRM Team commends the RGS Mission team for creating the institutional structures to support education reform through an evolutionary learning-by-doing approach. Institutional capacity building has been sought on the operating principle that there should be a single body at State, District and Block level looking at administrative as well as academic matters. DPEP structures have been incorporated into the resulting structures at all levels. Starting with limited experience and in the first DPEP districts, the state has been able to institutionalise management information systems and structures and their use state wide, using the DPEP inputs to support innovation and dissemination. Particularly noteworthy is the development of local capacity as reported elsewhere in this report.

4.2 With respect to information systems, Madhya Pradesh was unique among the DPEP states in introducing a household survey as early as 1996, as part of the Lok Sampark Abhiyan. Use of data has been greatly enhanced by these surveys that attempted to ascertain the nature of the missing gaps, and this initiative has evolved into the regular keeping and updating of information on each village's child in the Village Education Register. At the same time the persistence of MP with its own IPMS data system alongside the standardised national EMIS format allowed the state to have school-wise data on children in all schools, both the traditional system as well as the EGS schools. This consonance between population data in the VERs and school data from the IPMS at the village level has allowed the state to make

progress in stimulating local analysis and use of information. The Village Education Registers and their annual updating with greater community partnership has also facilitated the state leadership's encouragement that each community should be able to track the progress of all 3-14 year old children in pursuit of the state's mission to achieve Universal Elementary Education (UEE). The support for developing capacities in PTAs for collecting and analysing data should be continued to further deepen local transparency, reliability, and use of information on each village's children.

- 4.3 The JRM team found evidence that VECs/ PTAs are in fact discussing the findings of VERs to identify the gaps in the educational needs of children, and most of the villagers and teachers with whom the Team talked were aware of student achievement information. The Team is of the opinion that the VER data's availability and use locally has helped stimulate a move beyond access and participation information to a concern for student learning. The A, B, C, D rating of students by subject and the reports of these outcomes in report cards seems to be an emerging source of discussion and reflection at the school and community level. In addition, some Village Education Plans have been developed as one page notes on the basis of the Registers and student performance. The CAC and BRC play an instrumental role in the analytic and planning process, though computerisation of the data continues to take place at the district level, and the consciousness about norms in terms of what all a school should have seems to be growing among these cadres. The state is encouraged to continue support for the local processes of analysis, reflection, and action and to pursue in detail the definition of sustainable minimum learning conditions that all schools, EGS and regular, should have. This development is completely in line with the People's Education Act on monitoring quality through mandatory reports to the PTA, the Block and district Panchayat, and the Vidhan Sabha, and it should contribute to more of a public debate around the quality of schools and the performance of children
- 4.4 At the District level, the state has sought to integrate the activities of the District Education Office, the District DPEP Office, and the DIET in support of the reform of elementary education. The DPEP District Project Officer reports to the District Education Officer, DPEP staff are part of the DPO; and the DIET faculty members serve as Block Resource Coordinators. These connections have reduced the DPEP's separation from mainstream activities, encouraging all to contribute to the state's mission of educating all the children through Class VIII. A recent institutional reform in DIETs that draws from lessons learnt in the course of implementing DPEP is the reorganization of DIET departments around specific subject needs rather than around themes. This may have implications for future relations among district-level institutions. Also, at least in the District visited, the Team felt that the consolidation of points of view and cooperation between Block Education Officers and Block Resource Coordinators has not yet gelled as the state would like, and the new DPO there corroborated this impression based on the stronger linkages in the district he had just transferred from. It may be that an assessment of the effectiveness of current relationships in districts and below could be useful to more firmly consolidating linkages and functions that the state is committed to continuing after DPEP ends. The state may wish to consider carrying out such an assessment. The team also felt that many of the institutional reforms, especially for involving the mainstream of DEEOS and BEOs could be even more effective if specially designed programmes on management of education using principles of management like delegation, motivation, accountability, transparency, procurement procedures, etc. by specialised management experts with knowledge of education systems are provided to them. Karnataka has experimented with training modules in this area that have been developed in partnership with the Azim Premji Foundation.

- 4.5 At the state level, the RGS Mission has incorporated all aspects of the development of elementary education, drawing on the DPEP model and resources for initiation and experimentation with new approaches. Even though DPEP allocations constituted only 7 % of the total expenditure on primary education in Madhya Pradesh, the State has used DPEP to push the reform agenda and learnt from the lessons of implementation. The regular meetings of not only the Executive Committee of the State level Society but also the General Council under the Chief Minister reflects the priority that DPEP has received at the political level. The State level Shiksha Mission has emerged as a vibrant institution that takes upon itself the role of directing change and reform in the larger education system. Under this leadership, the activities of the Mission's Academic Team and SCERT have been integrated; and the functions attributed to State Institutes of Management and Training (SIEMAT) in the DPEP design have been incorporated into the Mission structure. The state may wish to consider in more detail the longer-term implications of the current structure in terms of the state's capacity for research, policy-making, and planning for education, including providing linkages with other institutions that prepare teachers, train managers, and manage private education institutions.
- 4.6 The Mission was impressed with the convergence that has been sought with various agencies for co-ordinated planning of various strategies, to add on to the DPEP efforts and resources. Convergence with the Tribal Welfare Department in the running of Ashramshalas for tribal girls, with the 10th and 11th Finance Commission and other agencies for civil works and Headstart, with Mahila Samakhya and the literacy mission, with ALIMCO for providing aids and appliances to disabled children, and with the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation for establishment of libraries, are some illustrations of these efforts. This has improved the effectiveness of interventions.
- 4.7 *DPEP Implementation:* The expenditure under the DPEP I (that comes to an end on 31 December 2002) and DPEP II (closing 30 June 2003) is satisfactory and the State is confident of making full use of the resources made available to it, within the time available or seeking reimbursement. The EFC approved cost of DPEP I for 19 districts (including a few that are now in Chhatisgarh) was Rs. 733 crores. It was Rs. 461 crores for DPEP II. The extra resources available under DPEP on account of exchange rate fluctuations are being used to expand the network of the Headstart programme at JSK level. The State has consistently met its commitment of providing the 15 % share. Annual reports and Utilization Certificates up to 2000-2001 have already been sent to GoI. The State has maintained its expenditure in real terms at the 1995-96 level, one of the conditionality for DPEP financing.

5. Sustainability

- 5.1 The presentation made by the State Mission Team to the JRM Team included the emphatic message that any concerns about sustainability are unfounded as the State is committed to universalising elementary education and would continue the work supported by DPEP even after DPEP ends. Equally emphatic was the Mission Directors assertion that the progress that has been made, in outcomes as well as processes and structures, would not have been possible without DPEP. The implementation of DPEP has been a dynamic process where the State has revisited its own priorities from time to time and tried to evolve more effective mechanisms for attaining quality. The design and processes of DPEP have allowed this state and local adaptation to occur. The involvement of user groups like Parent Teacher Associations along side the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the affairs of the school as well as the changing character of teacher training packages from being pre-determined to being more need based are clear indications of the State willingness and success in developing

effective sustainable systems. The State takes rightful pride in the work that has been done, though those involved realize that there is a large agenda of consolidation of changes in primary education and vertical extension to Upper Primary. Informally, the JRM Team was informed that Annual Plans under SSA have already been approved for the DPEP as well as non-DPEP districts. From the presentation at the State level, it appeared financial resources was not the main problem for sustainability. However, some of the staff on contract that the Team met expressed limited apprehensions about their futures, but they seemed confident that they will be continued if their work was satisfactory, especially since resources were available under the SSA to support the continuation of the work they are doing.

- 5.2 Based on its visit, the JRM Team is convinced that DPEP has been instrumental in preparing the ground for universal elementary education of satisfactory quality in Madhya Pradesh, a National Policy resolve currently being operationalised under the SSA. One sign is the demand for girls' education at the Upper Primary level which was made wherever the team visited during the field visit. It is a sure sign of the growing numbers of girls completing primary level and of the consciousness that education up to elementary level is necessary for all children. The thrust on planning for the 3-14 age children on the basis of Village Education registers provides the system to track the progress of all children (as opposed to that of only those who come to school). There is evidence of preparation of Village Education Plans on the basis of habitation-based information. The efforts to develop synergies among various organisations of the Education Department, including the literacy programmes, also augurs well for sustainability of processes and institutions. This would, however, require more support for capacity building in order that every functionary internalises the objectives of UEE and works for its achievement. The Team noted that the institutional reforms to integrate SCERT and DIETs and to further deepen the pedagogic renewal skills of block and cluster resource persons in pursuit of the objectives of the mission continue. In the next phase they will still require active support and nurturing for them to be effective. With greater emphasis on the learning needs of every child and on developing teacher support on the basis of specific needs, intellectual leadership and implementation skills among the DIETs, local education officers, and teachers will need continuing emphasis.
- 5.3 Sustainability is ultimately to be seen in the effectiveness of policy, availability of resources and building of capacity. In Madhya Pradesh, the broad contours of a policy appear in place, even though there is a need to look into the policy of different emoluments to contract teachers in schools and EGS as it would be important for sustaining motivation. About resources, the timing of the SSA as also the State commitments to UEE appear to be sufficient to meet the needs for reform, but the long-term financial requirements to sustain all the innovations made so far, particularly with respect to inevitable need to increase the emoluments to para-teachers, probably merit more careful consideration. The JRM Team encourages the state to undertake a review and re-calculation of long-term financial requirements under alternative possible scenarios for sustaining the changes it has made and taking into account the resources committed by GOI under SSA.
- 5.4 Capacity building is the area where the focus continues to need to be if the changes already instituted are to be institutionalised beyond the initial level that they have so far achieved. This is particularly important for those changes that depend on changes in attitudes, as in how much trustful decentralization is allowed and in how teachers interact with children and the communities they serve. Since the last few years have been devoted to systemic changes and institutional reforms, a lot of the Project energies have already led to long-term permanent structural and procedural changes in the education system and in public perceptions of the value of state-supported education. The state has made serious efforts to

replicate what is good and to learn from mistakes, moving beyond the DPEP project mode to encompass the whole state's education policies and activities. One area that the RGS Mission team posited to the JRM Team as needing more attention now in the pursuit of universalization is the learning needs of the tribal girls, and the state will put a priority on this group.

5.5 The State seems reasonably confident of making the transition from DPEP to SSA within its well-articulated State vision of Elementary Education. The DPEP project structure, a part of the State Education Centre, is already engaged in the work on SSA and there do not appear to be significant problems of transition from DPEP funding to SSA funding.

6. Next Steps

6.1 Since the Teacher-Student ratio is not yet 1:40, the state should continue to add and deploy teachers to achieve this level of teacher provision, drawing upon SSA resources and state funding as appropriate. Such provisioning will facilitate a greater thrust on learning needs of children.

6.2 Continued emphasis should be placed on strengthening the supervision and support to schools and teachers, especially to improve students' skills, through the following: (a) new activities with BACs and CACs that will build their interpersonal skills and confidence as supporters of teachers; (b) special activities focussed on helping Assistant Teachers apply student-centred teaching methods; (c) further use of local action research as a tool to stimulate teacher-led innovations; (d) more academic monitoring of school performance, both during the year (a la Datia District's model) and for annual planning; and (d) additional training and development for improvement of management at school, cluster, block, district, and state levels.

6.3 In order to successfully pursue the activities outlined under no. 2 above, the state needs, as a matter of urgency, to staff fully all DIETs staff according to the revised staffing pattern.

6.4 The SPO should initiate steps to ensure that the new state Public Education Act's (Jan Shiksha Adhinyam) implementation makes full use of the structures, processes, and materials created under DPEP to ensure that the Act's goals are implemented successfully.

6.5 The DPEP activities that have been initiated to be completed before the end of DPEP I and DPEP II should be monitored carefully to ensure that maximum use is made of Programme funds before the closing dates.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Rajasthan State Report
(17-23 November 2002)

1. Introduction

1.1 A mission comprised of Susan Hirschberg (World Bank), Madan Mohan (GOI nominee) Denzil Saldanha (DFID nominee), and Ila Verma (UNICEF) visited Rajasthan from 16-24 November, 2002. The team met with the Minister, Secretary Education, Special Finance Secretary, the State Project Office functionaries and District Project Coordinators (DPC) from all 19 Rajasthan DPEP districts. The team split up to visit two districts: Sriganganagar (Phase I) and Hanumangarh (Phase II) where we met with District Project Office staff, elected officials from the Panchayat Institutions at all levels, District Collector office officials, civic leaders and members of civil society, School Management Committee (SMC) members, Block Resource Center Facilitators (BRCF), Cluster Resource Center Facilitators (CRCFF), teachers, parateachers and students. The team is grateful for the courtesy extended and thank all for their concerted efforts in addressing the strengths and obstacles faced by the Rajasthan DPEP program.

1.2 Since the last mission, DPEP in Rajasthan has witnessed considerable fluctuation and change. The SPD, Secretary and Minister of Education all changed, the state placed a ban on hiring parateachers and delayed putting key project staff, BRCFs and CRCFs in place as promised to the 14th and 15th JRMs. Furthermore, the state's 15 percent share of project financing was not released. All this led to further delays in implementation. An interim World Bank mission went to Jaipur to address some of the implementation issues from September 24-27, which was reinforced by a visit of the GOI Secretary and Joint Secretary Elementary Education on November 11. Subsequent to these visits, there has been a lift on the parateacher ban, orders have been sent for hiring project staff and releasing the state's share, and the position of Secretary of Secondary Education has assumed joint responsibility for elementary education, as well. The mission believes the latter will help facilitate improvements in elementary education administration and management.

1.3 While the mission commends the break in the recent deadlock of program implementation, it notes that these changes have still not been implemented, and were only ordered after a high level GOI visit right before the JRM. To make sure program implementation continues to pick up and remains more consistent, the team recommends that Rajasthan be put in Special Watch status.

1.4 This mission was intended to be the Mid Term Review (MTR) of Phase I. However, due to the changes in management and delays in contracting of the MTR studies, the interim mission agreed to extend the date to March 31, 2003. Four out of five studies have been contracted and should be finalized by December 15 as agreed with the interim mission, but the Mid Term Assessment Study is just beginning. The mission emphasized that it must be completed and the report submitted to IDA through the GOI by March 31. SIERT might require assistance from NCERT to meet this deadline.

2. Enrollment, Retention, Completion And Equity

2.1 Access and enrollment have steadily improved as Rajasthan continued its Shiksha Apke Dwar (Education at your Door) campaign from July through September, which resulted in a decrease in out-of-school children from more than 10 lakhs to 1.4 lakhs. Continued monitoring at the end of October revealed only a slight dip in the number of enrolled. Field visits confirmed the increases in enrollment where data is maintained at the school, cluster, block and district level – particularly in class 1. However, both teams also noted high levels of absenteeism in numerous schools, which implies that there are many irregularly attending children who may be potential drop outs.

2.2 The Shiksha Apke Dwaar campaign identified 10.50 lakhs out of school children in hard to reach areas, out of which 9.16 lakhs, or 87.25 percent, were enrolled by November 2002. The GER for boys is 131.30 and 122.37 for girls for the current academic year 2002-03. There has been an increase of 9.37 percent in boys and 14.85 percent in girls enrollment at the primary level over the previous year across DPEP districts, with an increase in total enrollment of 11.8 percent. Shiksha Apke Dwaar, combined with the EMIS, has assisted in strengthening the enrollment data. The Teacher to Pupil Ratio (TPR) in Phase I districts for primary schools was 53.31 and 39.95 for upper primary schools. However, the TPR for the Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas is often higher than formal government schools which could have a negative impact on the quality of teaching. The higher TPR across the state is a result of the rise in enrollments combined with the vacant positions of teachers.

2.3 One anomaly in the enrollment data is the gender equity index. On the one hand, the majority of students have been enrolled through the Shiksha Apke Dwaar. However, the gender equity index reveals that only one district has attained the goal of reducing the gender gap to less than five percent. In other districts the gender gap is in the range between 7 to 19 percent. Data also reveal that ST children, particularly girls, have not seen the participation improvements that other groups have. This data should be updated with the household information from Shiksha Apke Dwaar to be analyzed properly, then specific strategies, in addition to the existing Bridge Courses and alternative schools, to address targeting issues should be developed.

- 2.4 Although the SMCs have been quite effective in enrollment drives, the next step of ensuring that the children enrolled do not leave the system needs special attention. This brings the issue of retention and attendance in clear focus. The JRM found a steep drop in class 2 enrollment, usually half of the enrollment in class 1, and subsequent drops in classes 3,4 and 5 in most of the schools it visited. As such, transition rates are quite low (it should be noted, however, that the figures do not include repetition which appears to be high). The JRM found no effective efforts being made by the state to address the issue of low transitions, particularly regarding the class 1 issue, also raised by the 15th JRM. The state must closely monitor repetition and transition rates so as to ensure quality improvement. The reliability of data on enrollment of girls is questionable as it compares positively with that of boys' enrollment in the state.
- 2.5 The DISE system is not yet fully established in the state. Phase I has collected and processed the data for the years 2000-2001 and 2001-02. Phase II is still collecting and entering the data manually, but has been delayed because of a procurement problem with the software. The mission was assured this would be taken care of by January 2003. The household data available from Shiksha Aapke Dwaar is being used to track enrollments. A clear understanding of what data is to be collected, analyze and its use is weak in both Phase I and Phase II districts.
- 2.6 Presently, the major interventions for difficult to reach, marginalized and poor groups have been through Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas, Alternative Schools, Shiksha Mitra Kendras, Bridge Courses and the recently begun pilot of Mobile Schools which targets migrant and urban slum children. The mission commends the state for initiating this innovation, which could prove to provide cost-effective solutions in reaching these vulnerable groups. There is a high degree of seasonal migration in this region which has been heightened by the last three years of drought. According to DPEP officials, this has had an impact on the incidence of dropouts and the prevalence of the non-enrolled.
- 2.7 Across the 19 DPEP districts, 3557 alternative and community schools have been established with enrollments of 113,488 students of which 44,042 are boys and 69,446 are girls.

3. **Quality And Equity**

- 3.1 Quality efforts have been difficult to implement and monitor due to the continued staffing shortage both in project posts and for teachers/parateachers. At present, there are 3386 regular teacher vacancies in primary schools, 6553 in primary sections of upper primary schools, and 442 parateachers required for Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas and Alternative Schools in DPEP districts. In the project, despite the promises to previous JRMs, there are still 14 vacancies at the SPO, 90 in DPOs including eight DPCs and other professional staff, 50 percent of BRCFs have not been deployed and 187 CRCFs are required. Furthermore, there is a four year limit for staff on deputation from other departments, which means that many

critical and experienced staff in the SPO and Phase I districts are under pressure to go back to their parent department. The Minister and Secretary assured the mission that the bans were lifted and orders given for all teacher and project posts, and all would be in position by December 31, 2002. At the wrap-up, the Secretary of Education also informed the mission that orders to retain 19 staff who had reached the four year limit were issued to allow them to remain with DPEP.

- 3.2 It was noted that recruitment for CRC level and below would be conducted by the districts, but that BRCFs and above are hired by the SPD. The mission believes that DPCs should have some input in the decision of BRC recruitment since they will be working for the district and would need to understand the Block level culture and dynamics. The team was assured that district officials will be part of the final decision on BRCs in their districts.
- 3.3 CRCs are still a weak point in project implementation. First, as mentioned above, **twenty posts in Phase I and 167 posts in Phase II have not been filled.** Clusters were rationalized again as suggested by the 14th JRM, but some CRCFs still have between 15 to 20 schools. Furthermore, the absence of BRCFs has made it difficult to train them properly in their roles and functions, and the DPCs expressed difficulties in monitoring the quality of their work. Field observations noted **conceptual problem in many CRCFs' understanding of the pedagogy promoted under DPEP, and great variance in their skills and abilities.** The mission suggests that they receive more and better training in the pedagogy, and that additional people with skills in mobilization be appointed locally to assist the CRCFs so that they are able to focus on academic support.
- 3.4 The 14th and 15th JRMs recommended that the program shift from the focus on access and civil works to quality, yet there has been less progress than hoped for. First, as commented above, are the severe staffing deficiencies. Second, there have been many delays in procurement of the quality inputs such the workbooks, ECE kits and libraries. The interim mission had requested the SPD to settle the library procurement issue with the courts, but this has not been done. The mission suggests that more authority for procuring ECE kits and libraries (with the permission of the court) be decentralized to the CRCs, teachers and SMCs. A timetable for procuring the workbooks for timely distribution has been agreed by the mission, the SPD and SIERT (attached).
- 3.5 As described in the last two state reports, two rounds of training of nine days and six days respectively have been prepared and conducted for Phases I and II. Eighty-two percent of teachers in Phase I districts and 45 percent in Phase II have received the first round of training. Of the approximately 78,000 teachers across the program, only 13,000 have received the second round. These are being conducted during the upcoming winter holiday. the first round is an induction to DPEP, and the second round on subject matter. The impression of the two modules are that they focus more on introducing DPEP components and use of

TLM instead of probing methodology and building transaction skills. As a result, there is less evidence of the impact on teacher behavior change in the classroom than hoped where the teachers were still focused on group recitation with little interaction among students. The preliminary findings of the Classroom Processes Study confirm this impression. Furthermore, it notes little use of teaching aids, few opportunities for students to express themselves or their views, only 35 percent of teachers utilizing the new pedagogy, and only 6 percent of teachers providing individualized student attention. The next round of training should focus on development of competency-based teaching as the new curriculum is introduced instead of the current practice of teaching to text. SIERT would play an active part in developing future modules.

- 3.6 Alternative Schools, Shiksha Mitras, Bridge Courses and Madrassas have been established in Phase I and to a lesser extent in Phase II. The textbooks and curriculum are the same as in Formal Government Primary Schools. The mission noted that in some cases the parateachers' qualifications were equal to or higher than regular teachers, and that the quality of teaching and learning outcomes appears to be more or less the same. SIERT noted that in some alternative schools, the teaching may even be better.
- 3.7 Across the board, monitoring of achievement is largely through quarterly evaluations of the traditional type. Training efforts for administrators, teachers, trainers, and CRCF meetings might give more attention to enhancing competencies, effective use of TLM and systems of ongoing assessment.
- 3.8 DPCs, in a visioning exercise facilitated by the mission team, highlighted the need for better coordination between the existing administrative system in primary education (i.e.: DEEO, BEEOs, DIETs, etc.) and DPEP, particularly as related to quality inputs and processes. Another point they made regarded the impact of community mobilization efforts. DPCs suggested that the large Melas have succeeded in raising awareness about enrollment and do not necessarily need to continue. They suggested instead that the SMCs require more training and support to expand and deepen their role in assisting school improvement outside their responsibility for construction and use of the Rs. 2000 school facility grant.
- 3.9 School Facility Grants have been distributed to 90 percent of schools in both Phases I and II. With respect to TLM grants, 85 percent have been distributed in Phase I, but only 42 percent have reached teachers in Phase II. The interim mission urged, and this mission re-emphasizes, the SPO provide all teachers and parateachers with this facility.
- 3.10 The state intends to gradually upgrade the skills through correspondence courses and convert the existing parateachers in Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas to regular teachers in the formal elementary education system. At present, there are approximately 11,000 parateachers who have the requisite skills and qualifications. If upgraded, they will be transferred to existing posts in

government schools. The mission supports the state policy of using parateachers as an entry point for the government system. However, it would urge the GOR to consider shifting the RGSJP parateachers to the formal system in the context of a longer term, comprehensive teacher deployment policy. Such a policy might consider salary scales and other increments, career development, ensuring accountability and revamping the posting and transfer system. Furthermore, the state might consider the impact of rotating experienced teachers out of the Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas and replacing them with inexperienced teachers would have on these schools.

4. Institutional Capacity Building And Program Implementation

- 4.1 *Institutional Capacity Building:* There is still a 30 percent vacancy rate in project posts, in addition to vacancies in the nodal agencies such as SIERT and the DIETs, which has prevented building of capacity to manage and plan for the education system in Rajasthan. The proposed Center for Educational Management (CEM) was to have hired professional staff and develop an institutional plan in 2001, but this has not been accomplished. The mission stresses that the project cannot finance the construction of the CEM at the Education Complex until staff have been in place for at least a year, and the institution plan is agreed with the GOI and IDA. The mission suggests that the state hire the personnel and house them in the SPO until the plan can be agreed and implemented.
- 4.2 The mission discussed with SIERT its requirements for improving their professional and technical capacity. A revised institutional development plan for academic and professional development is expected to be included in the revised plan for Phase I.
- 4.3 DIETs are still outside the DPEP structure with little involvement in its implementation. The Minister and Secretary suggested that the DIETs will be strengthened in order to train the incoming BRCs and conduct all training across the state, which could make DPEP interventions more sustainable. The Secretary also stated that the state has made a decision to provide DIETs to the two districts (Hannumangarh and Sawaimadhopur) which have not had one since they were bifurcated.
- 4.4 *Program Implementation:* The interim mission in September noted slow-downs in implementation during the transition of SPD and Secretaries. Since the week before the current mission, three major decisions have been made by the state which should improve progress towards DPEP objectives: (i) orders for the release of the state's share totaling Rs. 19 Crores; (ii) lifting the ban on hiring parateachers; and (iii) pending deployment of personnel to all project posts at the state and district level. The Minister and Secretary assured the mission that these teacher, parateacher and project staff posts would all be filled by December 31,

2002. This will be a necessary and, *inter alia*, minimal condition in order to take Phase I out of “Problem Project” status.

- 4.5 The vacancies across the program have greatly inhibited implementation and, equally important, effective monitoring. The mission observed that most staff in the SPO and DPOs have multiple charges and subject areas. Also, more files are being passed up to the Minister for clearance even after the AWPB has been agreed at the Governing Council meeting under the Minister’s chairmanship. Finally, there appears to be less decision making on the part of the State Project Officers. All this is compounding the delays already experienced. DPEP was specifically designed to avoid this problem by empowering the SPD and the SPO staff with autonomy and accountability in their respective areas of expertise. There are also shortcomings of the existing staff either due to lack of counterparts, or requirements for additional training. In particular, finance/procurement issues and MIS staff at the state and district levels require more training and/or reorientation. Most accounts and MIS staff in the districts are new, and their lack of knowledge about project and IDA procedures has resulted in legal problems or delays. The mission suggests that intensive training of relevant state and district personnel with GOI and IDA Financial Management and Procurement experts be undertaken by January 2003 at the latest.
- 4.6 District Project Coordinators highlighted difficulties in coordinating with district officials who change frequently, notably the District Collectors’ offices and Zilla Parashard Presidents. The mission suggested, and the Secretary of Education agreed, that his office would conduct meetings every six months to improve their understanding of DPEP, garner their support and coordinate efforts.
- 4.7 The interim mission and this JRM noted the fact that the SPD is requiring DPO accountants to make financial requests once or twice a month. The result is the district accounting personnel are unable to adequately pay attention to the Financial Management Information System. The mission has suggested that the RCPE release funds to the districts quarterly as in other states to alleviate some of the burden on districts. The Secretary of Education agreed that IDA would assess progress on the FMIS and adapt the current system as required.
- 4.8 Official disbursements are still lagging by 18 months, or SDR 40 million, in Phase I. The SPD informed the mission that this year’s expenditure has increased from Rs. 10 Crores in August to Rs. 34 Crores at present. Full staffing and December training programs will assist in meeting targets. The mission also suggests that greater attention be paid to procurement and distribution of quality inputs such as workbooks, ECE kits and libraries to improve learning and boost expenditure. This expenditure gap must be addressed in the MTR district and state restructuring plan.
- 4.9 Expenditure for Phase II is relatively on target, and with the upcoming hiring of staff and plans for training, should remain steady. Phase I, however, has

expended SDR 40 million less than anticipated at this point in the project. The SPO and districts are revising the PIP and project annual plans to be more focused and based on realistic expenditure targets. It was agreed that additional effort in the quality components could potentially be financed by the savings, but that some cancellation of funds – perhaps around US \$20 million – could be expected. The revised plans would be finalized and sent to IDA through the GOI by mid February 2003. This will likely involve some restructuring of the project, in which case the Elementary Education Bureau would need to appraise the plan in time for the MTR to be conducted in March.

5. Sustainability

- 5.1 The state's sustainability plan is not yet due. However, the GOR must pay attention, as agreed prior to project approval, to assuming specific liabilities which are now funded by DPEP whether or not they will be covered under SSA. These include parateachers, BRCs, CRCs, etc. Indications are that the state has not considered the future of these posts. On the contrary, many of the DPEP staff and structures such as BRCs and CRCs have yet to take root. Discussions with the Secretary and SPO staff indicated that the state will rely heavily on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) to continue many of the DPEP interventions.
- 5.2 Thus, sustainability is directly linked to the state's expectations of the SSA. To this extent, the state has prepared an Annual Plan for SSA for the year 2002-03 which has been submitted to the GOI. The total budget for the year 2002-03 for all 32 districts is estimated to be Rs. 21218 lakhs. The annual plan includes proposals for upgrading primary schools to the upper primary level. It also includes a state component for orientation workshops, development of modules, training programs, textbooks for SC/ST and minority children and management costs. The preparation of the longer term perspective plan for SSA is underway and should be ready by December 2002. The planning for SSA suggests that some thought has gone into sustainability of DPEP interventions and their incorporation within SSA.
- 5.3 Inter linkages and convergence of interventions across departments such as Rural Development, Social Welfare, PHED, etc., would contribute towards the sustainability of DPEP. Some initiatives have been taken at the state level, especially for drought relief, and for supplying toilets and hand pumps to schools. Observations at the district level, however, suggest that these have yet to be operationalized in a meaningful manner, and more could be done to inform DPCs and DEEOs of the resources available. Facilities like boundary walls for schools, toilets, drinking water and equipment for the disabled, for which there was a popularly felt need, could be acquired in a sustainable and cost effective manner in coordination with DPEP.

5.4 Next Steps

The mission would like to acknowledge that, despite the lack of staff and other identified obstacles, there is a high level of effort among the state and district officers. Additional staff and other external support in the form of technical assistance and consultancies should help Phase I regain momentum and Phase II reach its potential. In addition to the recommendations of the 15th JRM and the Interim Mission which have not yet been completed, the following next steps will be required to bring the state out of Special Watch status:

- Revitalize the State Resource Group to include well-known, high level educationists from Rajasthan and across India, and expand their role in deepening the conceptual understanding of the program and improving implementation. The group would analyze the training modules for teachers, training of trainers, CRCs, and SMCs. It would assist in developing and implementing programs to tackle the conceptual blocks throughout the system, oversee training at the district and subdistrict level, and ensure a clear understanding of the roles and accountabilities from the state level through to teachers and communities.
- Complete the staffing of the SPO and DPOs, and deploy all required parateachers and regular government school teachers.
- Finalize the revised district and state implementation plans, and present proposals for restructuring Phase I (including identifying savings and potential cancellations) to IDA through the GOI. The plans are expected to simplify and focus activities which would help progress towards meeting project objectives, i.e.: quality of teaching and learning, reaching the most vulnerable groups, and building capacity of the system to plan and manage education.
- Complete and submit all studies for the MTR. Include a dissemination plan for sharing with teachers, communities, CRCFs, BRCFs, district officials and state functionaries.
- Secretary of Education, as agreed, to hold a high level orientation with District Collectors and elected officials.
- Arrange a procurement and financial management training with the TSG and IDA officials for training new accounts staff at the district and state level.
- Resolve the pending court case regarding the procurement of library books, and decentralize the process for this and ECE kits to the CRC, school and SMC level.
- Complete the procurement of and distribution plans for the workbooks.

Actions Taken on the 14th JRM's Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Status and Progress
1	EMIS should be fully operational by March 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EMIS is fully operational in Phase-I districts. Data generated through DISE has already been submitted to GOI, after getting it compiled at NIEPA. As procurement of the RDBMS (ORACLE) is yet to be done for the SPO and Phase-II districts, data entry in Phase-II districts is pending, though the formats have already been collected duly filled. • EMIS activities for the academic year 2002-03 have already been scheduled. According to schedule updated formats have been given for printing. Data collection is scheduled in the month of December, 2002 & January 2003 together with data entry process.
2	Various mid term studies recommended in project documents should be completed	Four studies as desired in the project documents have been sponsored. The TOR have been sent to GOI for approval. Details of study completion is given in ATR of 15 th JRM.
3	Initial report on FMS working is to be submitted to next JRM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The software have been installed in the DPO's. Data feeding up to the March 2002 has been done in the Phase-I districts, though the reports generated through FMIS are under scrutiny. • The compilation of data at SPO is still pending due to RDBMS (Server) at SPO being in the process of procurement. • FMIS is yet to be implemented for Phase-II districts due to RDBMS being in the process of procurement.

Actions Taken on the 15th JRM's Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Status and Progress												
1.	Filling up of the Teachers vacancies and carry out of rationalized deployment of teachers according to state norms by July 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filling of the Teacher vacancies is in process. • Rationalization of the teacher vacancies has been done by October 2002. 												
2.	Filling up of the vacancies in SPO, DPO, BRC & CRC by 30 th June, 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOR authorized to fill-up all the vacancies to the RCPE by the end of December, 2002 as per Govt. Order No.F-1(7) Shiksha-1/EE/2002 dated 14.11.2002 • Deputation orders have been issued for 5 DPC, 18 BRCF, 7 APC selected earlier. 												
3.	Training teachers and para teachers and providing professional support to the teachers through cluster.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Training</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Targets</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Achievement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Indduction Training for PSST</td> <td style="text-align: center;">78108</td> <td style="text-align: center;">61599</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fooundational Training of f Para Teacher</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5893</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2543</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rajjiv Gandhi Paarateachers</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4802</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Training	Targets	Achievement	Indduction Training for PSST	78108	61599	Fooundational Training of f Para Teacher	5893	2543	Rajjiv Gandhi Paarateachers	5000	4802
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Rajjiv Gandhi Paarateachers	5000	4802												
4.	Completion of EMIS in Phase-I by May, 15 and Phase II by November, 2002.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □□ The EMIS is fully operational in Phase-I districts. As procurement of the RDBMS (ORACLE) is yet to be done for Phase-II districts, data entry in the DISE 2001 is pending, though the formats have already been collected duly filled. □□ EMIS activities for the academic year 2002-03 have already been scheduled. According to schedule updated formats have been given for printing. Data collection is scheduled in the month of December, 2002 & January 2003 together with data entry process. □□ After getting it compiled at SPO, EMIS reports can be presented in the last week of April, 2003. 												

5.	Generation of validated PMRs for all Phase-I districts by June 10 and building FMIS capacity in all Phase-II districts before next JRM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The software have been installed in the DPO's. Data feeding up to the March, 2002 has been done in the Phase-I districts though the reports generated through FMIS is under scrutiny. □ The compilation of data at SPO is still pending due to RDBMS (Server) at SPO being in the process of procurement. □ FMIS is yet to be implemented for Phase-II districts due to RDBMS being in the process of procurement.
6.	Commissioning and completion of the following studies as per schedule.	
6a.	Mid Term Achievement Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study is commissioned to SIERT, Udaipur • Draft report will be submitted by February 28 • Final report will be submitted by March 2003.
6b.	Classroom Observation Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study will be completed as per schedule by World View Foundation, Jaipur. • Draft report will be submitted by 15th November, 2002. • Final report will be submitted by March 15, 2003 after dissemination to the district level.
6c.	Retention Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study will be completed as per schedule by World View Foundation, Jaipur. • Draft report will be submitted by 15th November, 2002. • Final report will be submitted by March, 15, 2003 after dissemination to the district level.
6d.	Study of functioning of BRC/CRC/SMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study will be completed as per schedule by IDS, Jaipur. • Draft report will be submitted by December 31, 2002. • Final report will be submitted by January 31, 2003 after dissemination to the district level.
6e.	Study of use of TLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study is commissioned to the SIERT, Udaipur. • Draft report will be submitted by 15th January, 2003. • Final report will be submitted by 31st January, 2003.
7.	Revised Project Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of the revised plan has been prepared which will be discussed with the JRM. • Revised plan will be submitted to GOI by 15th December.

Timetable for Procurement of Workbooks

Action	Responsibility	Deadline
Clearance of Workbooks and Camera-ready Copy	SIERT	December 31, 2002
Preparation and Submission of Bidding Documents for Clearance by TSG and IDA	SPO/Finance	December 1, 2002
Clearance of Bidding Documents	TSG and IDAA	December 15, 2002
Float Tenders	SPO/Finance	December 20, 2002
Completion of Bid Evaluation	SPD	February 5, 2003
Clearance of Evaluation/Award of Bid	TSG/IDA	February 15, 2003
Printing of Workbooks	SPD/Successful Bidder	March 1, 2003
Workbooks completed and ready for distribution	SPD/ Successful Bidder	April 15, 2003

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Tamil Nadu State Report
(17-23 November 2002)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On behalf of the sixteenth Review Mission of the District Primary Education Programme, Alan Penny (European Commission) and N K Jaangira (World Bank) visited Tamil Nadu from November 17-23 November, 2002. The terms of reference were to review progress towards the achievement of programme objectives with regards to: (a) enrolment, retention, completion and equity; (b) quality and equity; (c) institutional capacity and programme implementation; and (d) sustainability.
- 1.2 The team met the Secretary of Education, the State Project Director and his team, the Director of Elementary Education, and the Director and Directorate of Teacher Education, Research and Training (DTERT). During the visit to Pudukkottai, discussions were held with the District Education Officers, IBRC supervisors and district educators, CRC co-ordinators, DIET faculty, school heads and teachers of four schools, and corresponding VEC members. Teaching was observed in eight classes ranging from grade one to five. An early childhood education centre was visited and discussions held with staff. A de-briefing was held with the Collector. Discussions were also held with seven district project office teams at Chennai. A wrap-up meeting was held on 23 November, 2002, under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Education.
- 1.3 The team wishes to thank all the State and District representatives for their frank and stimulating discussions on various aspects of the programme, and for the very warm hospitality extended.
- 1.4 The 14th JRM recommended the following actions: (a) strengthening community level structures for planning, supervision and mobilizing out of school children; (b) increasing the focus on multi-grade teaching in training programmes; (c) commissioning impact studies of DPEP strategies and interventions; (d) increasing the capacity of DIET faculty to support the elementary education system. Follow-up action was recommended.

Key developments:

- (a) Household surveys have been undertaken with the involvement of the VEC, and the information gathered on out of school children used to target families concerned.
- (b) Training in multi-grade teaching strategies remains a challenge. There is clearly more work to be done in this area.

(c) In addition to the studies commissioned on pedagogy and civil construction by the Elementary Education Bureau, the State Project Office has commissioned the following studies:

- (i) Learning Achievement in phase one districts (for phase two districts a similar study is in progress);
- (ii) Updating of the cohort study on completion rates, repetition and drop-outs;
- (iii) Study on repeaters;
- (iv) Survey of community resources and interventions of out-of-school children.

(d) The DIET is involved in specific activities determined by the SPO, but the DIET needs to consider being more pro-active in seeking out areas where staff development to make them more responsive to local needs might be undertaken.

2. Progress towards achievement of Programmes Objectives and outcome indicators

2.1 Enrolment, retention, completion and equity

Tamil Nadu has made good progress with regards to enrolment, retention, completion and equity. Steps taken to improve access have brought facilities within the reach of 98% of the population.

Regarding equity in the district of Pudukkottai the net enrolment ratio of girls is lower by 1% overall, whereas in some Blocks it is lower by 3%. In five of the six project districts NER enrolment of SCs and STs is marginally higher than that in the rest of TN. However, within Cuddalore the NER for SCs is lower by 3.48% and for STs by 4.77%. Completion rates for girls in three Blocks in Pudukkottai District is lower than for boys by 3%. There has also been a 3.3% decline in enrolment. Repetition rates remain persistently high especially in grade one, and have increased overall from 31.7% to 34% over the period of the cohort studies. In Ramanathapuram District there is a sharp decline in enrolment, and 2001/02, and in the case of grade one, this is almost 5.8%, whilst in grades 2, 3 and 4 it is around 4.4%.

The State has concerns about the quality of the primary data itself, and its collection, and is undertaking an independent 5% quality check.

Further, the data suggests that the State should review its targeting of SCs and STs in Cuddalore district especially, along with an overall review of its state wide academic support systems, policy on student promotions, and in-service training in order to reduce repetition.

IED has been extended to all 106 Blocks in project districts. 89% of the 16300 students identified have been enrolled in regular schools, and 1591 learning centres have been established in primary schools. 877 schools have been provided with ramps and handrails. Regular teachers have been provided with INSET to meet special needs in the classroom, although the effectiveness of the services provided needs to be evaluated.

One early childhood centre was visited. Training has been provided to the staff along with limited funding for teaching and learning materials.

2.2 *Quality and Equity*

Four primary schools were visited. In only one class in one of the four schools visited were the teacher-pupil ratios excessive. In grade one of that school there were 68 pupils with one teacher. In project schools, the state reports that the T-P ratio is within the range of 1:42 to 1:38 overall. If one disaggregates the data, however, and uses the data from the District Education Report Card, one finds that about 25% of schools have a T-P ratio of more than 1:50. Moreover, between 8% and 10% are single teacher schools. TN is in the process of rationalising teacher deployment to meet the accepted norm of 1 teacher to 40 pupils.

The overall impression gained from the school visits was that the learning environment of each was good. Buildings were well cared for, classrooms were clean, children and teachers well presented, and there was evidence of a range of teaching and learning materials. A brief review of the recently revised textbooks suggests that action has been taken to make these more attractive to children and teachers. Schools, students and teachers would benefit from the provision of more supplementary reading material. Learners will need to be encouraged to use this material more effectively.

VECs appear to play a key and constructive role in each school, and it was evident that great pride is being taken in their welfare. Records reveal regular VEC meetings, and the support communities are providing to the schools. This includes the provision of additional teachers and classrooms, and improvements to the school environment.

Eight lessons were observed. Teachers used teaching aids, but activities focused primarily on drills and practice. There remains a heavy emphasis on recall and recognition, albeit supported by the use of TLM. Together with textbooks, the issue remains how teachers and learners are using them. Regular monitoring of pedagogy to create improved quality in the teaching and learning situation needs to be implemented. Higher level cognitive skills like interpretation and application of knowledge and skills to new situations, and problem-solving, should be attempted and developed by teachers, and training programmes and support systems geared to this end. Having achieved good participation rates, it is even more important that improvements in the levels of learning be addressed.

Consideration might be given to introducing a system of school development planning in which school learning targets and outcomes, and the profiling of teacher and student learning needs become the core. To make a qualitative improvement in teaching and learning, specific activities might also include improved tracking and monitoring of teacher and student learning, with the outcomes feeding back into revised teaching and learning activities. A similar process might improve the focus of DIET activities. The credibility of the DIET, BRCs and CRCs would increase if they would create demonstration school sites in their immediate vicinity.

Regarding equity and the quality of provision, whilst data is limited, there is no evidence of inequity in the provision of textbooks and other TLM materials.

As indicated in section 2.1, systems for tracking and monitoring teaching and learning, and quality indicators are minimal.

2.3 *Institutional Capacity and progress of Programme Implementation*

The State vision and policy for education is consistent with recent developments under SSA. There is some evidence of convergence at the district level, especially between the departments of health and labour. A good example of this was seen when the review team visited an Early Childhood Education Centre. The team was informed of a child labour programme.

The DPEP programme has been implemented on time, civil works are virtually complete with the exception of repair work, as are the training programmes.

Central SPO capacity appears to be good. A sound understanding of data processing exists, and officers concerned exhibit a thorough knowledge of both the data and analytical processes required. Reports produced are easily accessible to the reader. It was reported that household survey data and EMIS data are being used together to inform strategic planning. However, it is unclear at present as to the processes by which this is actually undertaken at village and Block level.

In section 2.1 reservations were expressed about the quality of data being collected, especially at school and village level. A 5% check is being undertaken. At BRC, CRC, VRC and school level, there appears to be very limited use made of the data collected locally for local planning. Developing this capacity, together with a more sophisticated understanding of the data will enhance the use to which this data may be put.

It is acknowledged that capacity of school, village and Block level committees needs to be enhanced in order to encourage full local accountability to be exercised. Particularly at school level, training appears to be largely supply driven. The absence of school development plans, for example, is a symptom of this. Linkages between administrative and academic institutions are clear, but it is acknowledged that more opportunities should be created to encourage a higher level of community participation to address specific local needs. Training should not be seen to be generic, and is best when it is responsive to specific local demand.

No difficulty appears to have been experienced with the flow of funds. Utilization in DPEP II stands at 66%. A shortfall exists in the area of procurement of equipment, and training. The proposal is for the SPO to seek EEB's permission to re-allocate funding against alternative plans. The State has already provided its share to the Society, and there is a provision in the State budget for further releases to match additional releases from the EEB.

2.4 *Sustainability*

State plans are to subsume and replicate DPEP in all districts as part of SSA. It is acknowledged that on-going critical reflection is going to be necessary to assess what can and should be carried forward, and how the energies of DPEP might be harnessed to ensure sustainability. For example, an issue to be monitored concerns local capacity and capacity building modalities, and whether they will suffice going to scale, and what changes, if any, will be needed in the specific context of decentralisation.

Whereas under DPEP the integration of the elementary education department with the project is seen at the operational level of the BRC, the review team have been informed that it is the intention to place the VEC at the centre of school development. If this shift occurs and is operationalised, then capacity building at VEC and school level for the development of school plans, management and supervision will be critical. It may mean that some untied resources will have to be given to school communities to meet specific development requirements.

At present there is a division of responsibilities with administration being the responsibility of the Block level elementary education officers, and with academic programmes and support being the responsibility of the BRC supervisor and teacher educators. A four tiered committee structure (VEC, BEC, DEC and SEC) has been constituted to facilitate the horizontal and vertical linkages, and to ensure convergence. A core issue will be to consider how the flow of funds might be used to enhance performance at this level.

In order to create conditions necessary for sustainability under DPEP, the intention was to focus attention on improving quality in teaching and achievement levels on low performing schools (JRM 14). This will continue to require attention, especially ensuring that training and support requirements become more demand driven, and less generic.

Details of the transition from DPEP to SSA are contained in the State's Prospective Plan (2001-2010). It is beyond the scope of this review to comment on this plan. Nonetheless, in seeking to sustain the gains from DPEP, and in creating an environment which will sustain SSA, the State may find it useful examining what the basis will be for allocating resources to elementary education and other levels of education, and to other non-education expenditures.

Sustainability of DPEP has depended upon the perceived value of DPEP, and in particular of developing TLMs to assist in providing improved teaching and learning. However, DPEP is not simply about TLM. It is about changed teaching and learning. The challenge remains translating training into practice in the absence of a clearly articulated vision for elementary education.

A key element of sustainability concerns the institutional arrangements to be developed further. The roles and functions of SIEMAT and its interface with SCERT need clarification. The need for an exclusive SIEMAT needs justification, as there are risks associated with setting up more independent institutions.

3. Next Steps

To sustain the momentum generated and ensure consolidation beyond the project period, the Mission suggests the follows:

- 3.1 *Sustaining the growth in access and retention depends on improving quality of provision.* Raising the cognitive levels of teaching and learning in the classroom is critical. In developing this capacity, it is crucial for teachers to begin to understand and improve the quality of classroom transactions. The child's contribution to the learning process should be encouraged.
- 3.2 *Improving the quality of data being collected, especially at school and village level.* This should be given priority. The quality of data needs to be checked, and modalities created in order to do so. So as to develop ownership of the data, at BRC, CRC, VRC and school level, the capacity to make use of it for local planning purposes needs to be developed. This will require a better understanding of the data than currently exists, and will enhance the use to which the data may be put.
- 3.3 *Identifying pockets of under-performance, and addressing specific needs:* Both insofar as this relates to specific groups and to specific geographical areas, specific needs based interventions should be designed and implemented. This will further ensure equity.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Uttar Pradesh State Report
(17 - 23 November 2002)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A team comprising Terry Allsop (EC) and Venita Kaul (World Bank) visited Uttar Pradesh from November 17-22, 2002 as a part of the Sixteenth Joint Review Mission of the District Primary Education Programme. The terms of reference of the mission included review of progress of implementation of the project in the state under both DPEPII and UPDPEPIII projects with special focus on the status of project outcomes and issues related to quality and equity, institutional capacity and sustainability. The mission also reviewed follow up of the recommendations of the 14th and 15th JRMs.
- 1.2 While in Uttar Pradesh the Mission met with the State Project Director and other members of the State Project Office (SPO), the directors and staff of the Department of Basic Education, SCERT, SIEMAT, SIET staff, representatives of the state teacher unions and representatives from Mahila Samakhya and ICDS. The mission visited a DPEPII project district, Sonbhadra, for a more detailed study from November 18-20. In the district the mission visited formal schools, EGS centers, alternative schools and ECCE centers and interacted with the community, teachers, instructors and children. The mission also visited the Sonbhadra DIET and interacted with the District Project Office (DPO) staff and the Basic Shiksha Adhikari who is also the District Coordinator and with the District Collector. In addition to Sonbhadra the mission met with the district officials of Jhansi and Fatehpur (DPEPIII districts) and Pilibhit and Maharajganj (DPEP II districts).
- 1.3 The draft report of the mission was shared with the Additional Chief Secretary and the Agriculture Production Commissioner and other senior officials of the GOUP on November 22.
- 1.4 The mission is very appreciative of the enthusiasm and energy demonstrated by the project staff at both the state and district levels in pursuit of their project goals, which certainly needs to be sustained as the DPEP projects are now nearing completion. The mission would also like to place on record its gratitude for the hospitality and cooperation it received from the project personnel, which greatly facilitated the work of the mission.

2. Action Taken on recommendations of the last mission (14th JRM for UP)

2.1 [An improvement in the staffing of DIETS, particularly at Principal and Senior Lecturer level should be effected at the earliest.]

This is an on-going issue. We are assured that the position across the state is steadily improving but that DIETs in outlying districts remain under-staffed. The position in Sonbhadra District suggests there is still some way to go. There, 18/48 posts remain unfilled, including those of Principal and vice-Principal. Only 6/17 academic posts have been filled. More positively, four high quality primary school teachers have been recruited in order to develop stronger links between the DIET and those primary schools with which it relates.

2.2 [A watching brief on the current school evaluation should be kept in order to ensure that is functioning effectively and that the rating system is reliable and efficient.]

See Section 4 for a discussion of this issue.

2.3 [The key research institutions involved in supporting policy and planning should take steps to enhance the technical quality and relevance of their research programs with a view to improving educational quality.]

SIEMAT Allahabad has produced a careful quality control structure as a response to this point. It involves a national research advisory committee, a review committee and a detailed process structure for quality assurance throughout the evolution of the research. It is too early to comment on its effectiveness, as all the existing studies were completed under the old approach. The advisory committee is composed entirely of eminent academic educational researchers. It would be helpful if each supported project were associated closely with an appropriate senior member of the SPO in order to ensure close linkages with project implementation.

SCERT is discussed elsewhere in this report [5.2.7]

3. Enrolments, Retention, Completion and Equity

3.1 Available information:

3.1.1 The state is making good progress in the collection and use of data on significant parameters related to the developmental objectives of the project. These include not only enrolment but also retention, repetition and completion. The data made available to the mission indicates a definite increase in total enrolment at primary level in DPEP districts from 39.76 lakh (1997-98) to 57.52 lakh (01-02-EMIS). Girls' enrolment has gone up from 15.59 lakh in 98-99 to 25.69 in 2001-02 indicating an increase in girls' participation from 39.2 %to 44.6%. With regard to other focus groups too, there is an improvement, with the enrolment of SC children increasing from 11.52 lakh to 16.71 lakh, which adds up to 29 percent of

the primary students. For UPDPEPII districts particularly, the current GER is reported to be overall 84% and for girls 86% (EMIS, 2001-02). The NER is overall 74 percent and for girls 76%. For SC children GER is estimated to be 96%. [n.b. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.]

- 3.12 A cohort study currently being undertaken in DPEPIII districts by SCERT, which is following the cohort of children in grade 1 in 1995-96, has generated a primary completion rate (within 5 years) of more than 30 percent in about 50 percent of the districts. Gender wise, for boys this has been estimated as averaging 29%, while for girls it is 30%. For the SC category this was estimated to be 33%, for OBC 27%, for general category 30% with the lowest for the Minority group at 23%. Correspondingly, the cohort study has also generated an overall Repetition rate of 17%, with the range being from 27% to 5 %. A majority of districts are in the 10-20% category. Gender and social groups however, do not indicate significant differences. While for boys the repetition rate is 16%, for girls it is 17%. Again, for SC students it is found to be 18%, for OBC it is 16%, for minority groups 16% and for general category, 16%. Data on achievement levels is expected to be available from the TAS, which is to be carried out by March 2003 for the DPEP II districts. For the DPEPIII districts, the MAS are expected to be completed by December 2003.
- 3.13 The significant increase in enrolment is further substantiated by the exceptionally large class sizes seen in the course of the mission's visit to schools in the district, particularly in grades 1 and 2. However, these visits also indicated a trend, evident in many schools where the records of the last three years were examined, of a steady decline in numbers from grade 2 onwards, which the mission would like to highlight as a matter of concern. This decline is also substantiated by a sample study conducted by SIEMAT in 2000-01 in five districts of DPEPII, which showed an overall 'dropout rate' as high as 33 %. The cohort study mentioned above also indicates the overall cohort drop out rate to be as high as 56%, with a range from 37 to 72 %, across districts. The drop out rate for boys is 58% while for girls it is lower at 55% with a range from 30 to as high as 80 percent (in two districts). With regard to the other categories, the drop out rate for SC children is 51%, for minorities it is 64% and for OBC it is 59%. The maximum dropout is seen after grade 1. However, since the studies have not traced the children subsequently to determine whether these were authentic dropouts or transfer cases the data does not give a clear picture. The mission therefore recommends that a comprehensive study be undertaken to assess the scale of the problem across the state in grades 1 and 2 and the factors responsible for it and prepare a strategy to address this issue. The mission would, in this context, like to endorse the strategy being considered by the SPD to (a) adopt a more comprehensive and area intensive approach at the grassroots level to provide context-specific interventions to address this problem of declining numbers, particularly in specific hard-to-reach groups such as handloom weavers, handicraft artisans, bidi workers, stone crushers and tribal communities; and (b) identify the six most backward districts on these indicators and work with them in a more focused manner. The mission would urge the state to develop and implement this strategy as a matter of priority.

3.2 Strategies to Reach Remote Locations:

- 3.2.1 The mission was very impressed by the extent of efforts made by district personnel to identify and reach communities in extremely remote locations with some provision for schooling. The state has set up multiple models of alternative schooling and EGS centers, adapting the model to the needs of the specific contexts. A visit to some of these centers, in some cases in isolated areas not even connected by any kind of road, provided evidence of the significant contribution made by the project to bring these children, who would have otherwise been left deprived, into the fold of education. Examples of such communities include, to name a few, the criminal belt in Jhansi, the Kol and Gond tribes and stone shredders in Sonbhadra, the child labour districts like Mizapur and Bulandshahar. By October 2002, 4161 alternative and EGS centers had been set up in DPEPII districts with an enrolment of 1,46605 children and 3451 centers in DPEPIII districts with an enrolment of 1,25191 children. Of these, 2100 centers have opened within the last six months. Interaction with children in these centers indicated that children were learning and the methods adopted were, possibly, more child friendly than those adopted in the formal schools. The instructor being local was certainly an advantage in cases where the children spoke their own dialect and needed help to make the transition to the school language. The decision to introduce the same textbooks as in the formal schools and provide a similar TLM grant to the instructor has evidently helped to improve the acceptability of these centers within the community as 'feeder schools' to the main school. However, the mission also visited a center set up on the Rishi Valley model, which was in an extremely isolated area and did not appear to be very effective, despite an earnest instructor. While recognizing that this may be a single, exceptional example, it does suggest that further thought be given to the support for isolated teachers working with an innovative and challenging methodology, albeit one designed to work in this kind of environment.
- 3.2.2 Visit to a Balshala, a model that also includes ECE, demonstrated the potential benefit of adding an ECE component to the other models of alternative centers and EGS centers. The SPO may like to consider incorporating the ECE component to the other alternative schooling and EGS models in places where there is no ICDS, so as to ensure the potential school entrants develop the necessary school readiness skills and the older girls get freed from sibling care responsibility to attend school.
- 3.2.3 DPEP appears to have made significant efforts to create gender sensitivity among personnel and the larger community at all levels and facilitate girls' participation in school. The mission had an opportunity to see many of these initiatives. The recent formation of an extremely vibrant *Meena Manch* (derived from the UNICEF supported Meena Series) of adolescent girls who will take up the cause of girls' empowerment and school participation, a *kala jatha* on gender equity which went down very well with the local rural community who were the audience, a women's motivators group (a group of illiterate but very articulate women) in a remote location who had fought for the alternative center that was

now successfully running there and were now demanding a school, and a mothers' group in a school again very aware of girls' rights. The project has also been following a model cluster development approach for girls' education for specific pockets and population sections, which showed very low female literacy. A recent evaluation of this approach indicated a marked change in community perceptions and particularly noted an improved participation of girls from the minority groups in schools. DPEP is also intervening through the Mahila Samakhya program in 5 blocks of 5 different districts in which, except for one district, the MS representatives reported 90% enrolment of girls.

3.24 The DPEP has, in convergence with the ICDS, focused on improvement of ECCE provision to the 3-6 year olds with the objective of (a) preparing younger children for school and (b) facilitating girls' participation in school by providing substitute sibling care provision. To meet both these objectives 6258 Anganwadis of the ICDS are now running in primary school premises and the timings of these centers have been synchronized in the DPEP districts with the school. DPEP provides additional honorarium of Rs 250 to the worker (AWW) and Rs.125 to the helper for the extended timings. It also provides 10 days training in ECCE and 3 days refresher to the AWWs and a one-off provision of Rs.6500 for purchase of play material. An evaluation report indicated a definite improvement in the environment and programme of ECCE in these centers. ICDS representatives with whom the mission interacted confirmed this. They also requested training of their supervisors and other workers in the non-project districts by the DPEP master trainers.

3.25 The state has updated its initiatives in Integrated Education for the Disabled to another 108 blocks, thus covering a total of 224 blocks in the DPEP districts. Through convergence, 859 disabled children were provided with aids and appliances. The mission witnessed the distribution in Sonbhadra District and was reassured that this would facilitate the participation of these children in schooling. The mission also had the opportunity to see some children with special needs in the classroom; more attention still needs to be given to the provision of appropriate learning conditions for these children.

4. Quality and Equity

4.1 The district personnel with whom the mission interacted were consistently of the view that while issues related to access has to a large extent been addressed at the primary stage, the challenge now is to reduce dropouts and improve quality. The mission is appreciative of the formative approach being followed in the programme in the state wherein all interventions are seen as evolving and dynamic in nature and subject to review and revision. Consequently, UPDPEP has been working on a school support and improvement initiative, which is gradually taking more effective shape, on a system of continuous and comprehensive classroom assessment, decentralization to and involvement of VECs, local government and community, participatory teacher training methods, and on site support and improved curriculum and materials. The decision to bring the alternative system also under the same umbrella in terms of specific academic

provisions and support is a positive step towards ensuring equity. The state government has taken a decision to provide free textbooks to all children to avoid any discrimination, which is a laudable decision. The TLM grant is made available to the teachers directly with their salaries. A study by SIEMAT has raised some concerns regarding optimal use of this grant. The classrooms visited by the mission did reflect some evidence of the use of the grant in the form of charts and aids displayed in the classrooms.

- 4.2 The state has, through the project introduced an on site support system and a school grading system for school improvement. This is implemented through the chain of decentralised resource institutions i.e. the DIET faculty as mentors, the Block Resource Centers and the Nyaya Panchayat resource centers at the cluster level. The support is in the shape of monthly cluster meetings of teachers, on site visits by coordinators and recurrent training at the block level. More recently the school grading system, which was being trialled, has been introduced, for which indicators covering all aspects, i.e. infrastructure, teacher attitude and performance and children's performance have been finalised. The grading is done against these indicators every month by the NPRC coordinator. The ABSA/administrative supervisor and BRC coordinator also see the grading. The grading should then be discussed with the school personnel and collective efforts made for school improvement. The state is also introducing a system of continuous and comprehensive assessment of children's performance for which teachers are being trained. The system involves monthly assessment and half yearly and final examinations and regular recording of children's performance. We noted that district officials expressed some anxieties about the flexibility of the system when used in multigrade and large classes. We hope that these will be considered as implementation proceeds.
- 4.3 The mission observed the impact of these interventions in the schools in terms of an improved and more interactive classroom climate, as compared to the pre-project baseline. The authoritarian teacher's image is a thing of the past and seems to have now given way to a friendlier teacher student relationship. Every child in the school was seen with textbooks (made available free from the state) which is a remarkable input. Children also looked neater and more active. In terms of actual classroom practice however there are continuing concerns. The class size in some cases was unmanageable with as many as 90-120 children to a class. This was more evident in grades 1 and 2 which actually require more individual guidance and time from the teacher so as to ensure they acquire the basic learning skills but are generally the neglected lot in schools. The classroom teaching still seems to be traditional whole class and teacher centered, though a little more participatory than previously. With confounding problems of large size in some cases or multi grade situations in others, this highlighted the need for further training and inputs to focus on organisation and management of classrooms and more effective management of children's learning time. What came through very clearly in the school visits was the crucial importance of the head teacher in school improvement. All the schools visited with 'A' grading had exceptional head teachers who had not only managed to improve the infrastructure of the school with community involvement but also dramatically raise enrolments and improve

performance of children in the school. Visits to these schools also highlighted the crucial link between quality of service provision and community participation and contribution. The mission strongly recommends that the headteachers training developed in SIEMAT be undertaken at the earliest and are pleased to note that there will be extensive use of video and print documentation of actual case studies of good headteachers which can serve as role models from within the system.

4.4 The mission observed the implementation of the school grading system in the schools visited which though appreciated as a significant initiative, also caused some concerns. A school which was consistently being rated A earlier was rated this month as C because of the two teachers in the school one had gone on medical leave and the other was managing single handedly. This factor was not taken into consideration while rating and nor was the rating discussed with the teacher for self-improvement. The mission would like to suggest that the system, which in itself is commendable, could be made more effective by allowing for flexibility to accommodate such situations and by disaggregating the different components in the grading system to derive a profile rather than a single grade, which may ensure that the teacher is not reprimanded for situations beyond her control. The SPD's suggestion to develop a school improvement index that takes into account the value added is endorsed by the mission. Discussion at the SPO suggested that the monthly grading of schools might be reduced to quarterly, as it seems very unlikely that, in general, significant changes in performance will be registered over the shorter period.

4.5 In terms of training and school support, the mission had the opportunity to witness excellent roster training at the NPRC level which involved observation and critiquing by the participating teachers of actual classroom teaching by master trainers and other teachers. The fact that this is done in rotation in all schools in the cluster is another feature to be commended. However, another workshop conducted in a BRC by the DIET was seen as only promoting traditional teacher centered methods in the classroom, which was disturbing. It also highlighted the need for capacity building and training of DIET faculty in the philosophy and practice of child-centered education which is being promoted by DPEP. It also highlighted the need for capacity building and training of DIET faculty in the philosophy and practice of child centered education which is being promoted by DPEP so as to ensure consistency in and reinforcement of messages to the teachers.

4.6 In UP in 1999 the GOUP delegated the management of Basic Education to PRIs and this enhanced the role of the VECs. The VEC is a sub committee of the panchayat for matters relating to education. The DPEP under both projects has invested in training of the VECs to enable them to discharge their statutory responsibilities more effectively. In an effort to improve accountability and quality of the school system, the VECs and other community based groups such as mother teacher associations, parent teacher associations are being involved through provision of funds for and involvement in civil works, payment of Rs. 2000 as school improvement grant, appointment and payment of para teachers,

- 5.2.5 The considerable potential of VECs to engage with and support their schools is clearly being harnessed in many of the schools the mission has studied. The fact that they are given significant resources [2,000 rupees per year] to manage is more than a symbolic action. The relationship between headteacher and VEC is central and we have seen mature examples of it working well. The role of VECs in monitoring attendance both of teachers and students, which is now subject to a GOUP order, is highly significant and appears to be a responsibility willingly accepted.
- 5.2.6 We were much encouraged by the contribution being made to DPEP planning by SIEMAT. Their institutional priorities seem well tuned to the priorities of SSA in pursuit of the goals of eight years of schooling for all children. They are a talented staff, with excellent resources. They stress, in discussion, their own capacity building needs within the institution. We feel it would be appropriate to encourage a response to these needs, first by a rigorous in-house training program which could be supported through carefully constructed links with external bodies, then by careful short-term placements in centers offering particular planning expertise. SIEMAT is already a partner institution with IIEP in Paris.
- 5.2.7 The scope of work and influence of SCERT is presently limited by its lack of comparable autonomy to that of SIEMAT. We understand that a proposal to grant autonomy to SCERT is under consideration by GOUP. We urge speedy action to take this forward. Teams of dedicated professionals competently carried through the two research studies which we reviewed - on completion and teaching/learning approaches. We recommend that their brief be made a wider one, especially so that they can take greater responsibility for the raising of the skills of the DIETs. We stress again the urgency for completion of the staffing complement of all DIETs.

5.3 **Financial matters**

- 5.3.1 SPO reported that the state government has released its share to the State Implementation Society (SIS) on time.

Since the beginning of DPEPII, up to October 2002, the total release of funds by the state government and GOI is Rs 583.35 crores, of which the state share is Rs 94.35 crores, or 16.17% of the total.

Since the beginning of DPEPIII, the total release is Rs 465.52 crores to October 2002, the state share being Rs 85.52 crores, or 18.37% of the total.

As mentioned in para 4-6, decentralization has played a role, including decentralized procurement in DPEP. This trend needs to be continued and further strengthened. The SPG asked that, in recognition of the surge in enrolments and the imminent closure of DPEPIII, the ceiling on civil works expenditure be relaxed for the remainder of the life of the project.

- 6.3 Quality leadership and vision will remain the key to success in SSA, supported by a strong cadre of managers of the different elements of the programme. There is some risk that these demands will draw out even more of the most senior professionals from the teaching service [there are already over 9,000 such people who have been recruited as BRC and NPRC coordinators and the number is unlikely to be reduced.], leaving the enterprise top-heavy. It cannot be too often stressed that the central role in the improvement of the quality of learning for all our children rests solely with the classroom teacher; without the provision of one teacher per class, without the teachers' understanding of the purposes of reform, and their commitment to implementation in their own classrooms, no significant changes will take place. Ultimately, the classroom is the locus for all effective educational change. The single overall responsibility of all those who manage the human and physical resource in schools is to provide the most favourable possible environment for teachers and their students to flourish.
- 6.4 The attractions of maintaining a project or programme mode of working are well understood. They include at least (i) the potential to maintain the atmosphere of a research and development activity that encourages initiative and experimentation, (ii) the potential for energetic personnel to find fulfilment in new areas of work whilst seeing relatively quick results from their investment of time and energy. There is an opposite scenario to each of these advantages, where the dynamic of change may be lost, most often as a result of unimaginative leadership. We are confident that these issues are well understood by the leadership of the SPO.

7. Next Steps

The mission has identified three areas for urgent attention:

- 7.1 The phenomenon of very high drop-out between grades 1/2 compared with grades 3/4/5 requires more detailed study followed by the development of appropriate remedial strategies.
- 7.2 In order to effect significant change in the practice and outcomes of whole schools and individual classrooms, especially in relation to the management of large classes and multigrade classrooms, there should be a shift in the focus of training programmes towards a whole-school approach to school improvement, emphasizing the role of the headteacher at all times.
- 7.3 In view of the mentoring role and their wider potential influence on the system of support for schools and teachers, it is again recommended that the staffing of DIETs be brought up to agreed levels. This should be accompanied by appropriate induction into their roles for new staff.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
SIXTEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION (JRM)

West Bengal State Report
(17 - 23 November 2002)

1 Introduction

- 1.1** DPEP is implemented in 10 districts of West Bengal, in 5 districts initially since 1997-98 and in five more districts since 2000-01. Pramila Menon (GoI) and Roger Cunningham (DFID) visited the state on behalf of the 16th JRM.
- 1.2** The objectives of the mission were to assess the following areas:
- ❑ Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity
 - ❑ Quality and equity
 - ❑ Institutional capacity and progress of Programme implementation
 - ❑ Sustainability
- 1.3** At the state level the team visited the State Project Office (SPO), the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (WBBPE) and the State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT). The team had extensive discussions with the State Project Director (SPD) and key officials within the SPO. Discussions were also held with the District Project Officers (DPO) from all 10 DPEP districts. The team met Principal Secretary Panchayat & Rural Development Department, Mission Director & Addl. Mission Director, SSK Mission and shared their impressions and concerns about SSKs. The team discussed with Principal Secretary and Minister-in-Charge
- 1.4** The team travelled to Birbhum, a first phase district and spent three days in discussions and field visits. At the district level, the team had discussions with the District Magistrate (DM), the District Project Officer (DPO) and project officials. The team visited three primary schools, two Sishu Siksha Kendras (SSK), and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) Centre, and three Circle Level Resource Centres (CLRC). The team interacted with Circle Project Coordinators (CPC), Resource Teachers (RT), teachers and Sahayikas (SSK teachers), parents, pupils, members of Village Education Committees (VEC), members of Mother Teacher Associations (MTA), as well as members of the Panchayat Raj Institutions.
- 1.5** The 15th JRM recommended a number of steps for future action including an assessment of current and planned infrastructure, strategies for reaching out-of-school children, and a number of quality enhancement measures including up-scaling the SLIP programme, extending support to the SSKs, strengthening CLRCs and training for VECs, as well as examining results of the external evaluations of achievement. The issue of release of funds was also raised.
- 1.6** The team would like to express sincere thanks to all state and district officials for their hospitality and co-operation. Special thanks are extended to the SPD and colleagues for facilitating the visit, and to the DM Birbhum whose interest in the mission and project are greatly appreciated.

2 Enrolment, Retention, Completion and Equity

2.1 *Enrolment and attendance*

- 2.1.1 There has been an upward trend in both GER and NER in Phase I districts, from 100% to 119% and 82% to 93% between 1989/99 and 2001/02 respectively. However it should be noted that the latter figures included the Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK) which were not included in the earlier data. There remain an estimated 401,236 out of school children in the ten districts covered by both phases of DPEP. There are district level plans to accommodate 243,476 of these children in Government Primary Schools, SSKs or Bridge Courses in the current school year. Attendance needs to be considered alongside basic enrolment data, and data from Phase I show an encouraging trend of improvement, with average attendance now between 60% and 70%. Examination of registers during field visits corroborated this, and also noted that habitual absenteeism was rare. Seasonal fluctuations were noted, particularly in tribal areas. These improved trends owe much to the impact of the VECs and MTAs who have focused on getting and keeping children in school.
- 2.2.2 Across the ten DPEP districts block level screening and assessment camps have identified nearly 35,000 children as disabled, of which 43% remain out of school on account of the severity of the disability and non availability of aids and appliances by different agencies. The mission noted during the field visit the significant attention being paid at CLRC level to children with disabilities, in particular the influence of peer groups on the participation of disabled children.
- 2.2.3. In view of severe financial crunch, the School Education Deptt. is finding difficult to establish new primary schools at present. The major strategy for increasing access at the primary level is through the SSKs. Thus the pattern of providing schooling for unserved habitations is through establishing SSKs. These alternative schools come under the Panchayat and Rural Development Department (P&RDD), who meet the salaries of the *Sahayikas* (teachers).

2.2 *Retention*

- 2.2.1 Phase I districts show significantly lower drop out rates (17.2%) than Phase II (33.8%). Besides repetition rates in Phase I districts is (29.9%) and Phase II (39.3%), both being relatively high. Though the drop out trend in Phase I is decreasing, repetition rates in four of the five Phase I districts show an increasing trend, as high as 25% in one district. This might point to retention being used as a strategy for addressing dropout. The main explanation for repetition is the under age enrolment of children. This issue needs to be addressed, and clearly strengthening provision for ICDS would help reduce the trend. Only one district can claim to implementing a policy of “non detention” (automatic promotion). Drop out rates for both SC and ST children in Phase I districts are significantly lower than in Phase II districts, but data

for Phase I show that a higher than average percentage of ST children drop out.

2. Completion

2.3.1 Phase I data show a higher rate (58.7%) of four-year completion of the primary cycle than Phase II (41%), with a further 13% completing in five years in both phases. The percentages of ST children completing in four years is markedly lower (46%) than the average, with SC rates only marginally less (54%). End of cycle performance data is available through DISE giving overall pass rates in connection with completion; data are available on progression to Class V (upper primary) which in DPEP districts show 64% transition. There is a clear need to move the discussion on completion from a basic numerical one accounting for years spent in school to one that embraces an element of attainment: the difference in effect between schooling and education.

3 Quality and Equity

3.1 There are numerous initiatives being developed to monitor and improve the quality of primary education through DPEP. At the state level the textbooks for Classes I to III have been renewed by the WBBPE, and those for Class IV are currently being developed. WBBPE has also developed multi-grade teaching modules.

3.2 At the district level the quality enhancement initiatives centre around the 327 Circle Level Resource Centres (CLRC) which have become the focal points for improvement in the teaching and learning process. Regular afternoon workshops are held focusing on difficult areas ("hard spots") and Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) development. The formation of District Resource Groups support the CLRCs in these efforts. Further support is extended through a programme of school visits by CLRC based Resource Teachers (RTs), under the aegis of the Circle Project Coordinators (CPCs). There is a welcome move away from formal inspection to more supportive supervision.

3.3 Perhaps the most significant intervention is the School-based Learning Improvement Programme (SLIP) and its successor the Integrated Learning Improvement Programme (ILIP). This is a multi-faceted programme involving the community, the school and the Circle Resource Centres (CLRC). Under SLIP/ILIP efforts have been made to further engage the community in the management, infrastructure, environment and the classroom. School improvement has become the subject of VEC meetings, and focus group discussions amongst mothers on providing support. Through this schools are introducing more learner centred pedagogy, with a greater range of classroom activities enabled through increased use of worksheets and other non-textbook Teaching and Learning Materials. Greater emphasis is being placed on Class I under SLIP/ILIP, with an overall objective of improving learning outcomes and progression. Over time this should contribute to reducing the high repetition rates in Class I.

- 3.4 The 15th JRM questioned the acceptance of SLIP at the state level. This mission has found that the state is committed to this intervention, which has already been extended to 3255 schools in 13 districts, including therefore three non-DPEP ones. Future plans at state level include extending ILIP interventions in tribal areas in collaboration with the Backward Classes Welfare Department. Further extension through liaison with P&RDD would significantly help raise quality in the SSKs.
- 3.5 An external evaluation of SLIP/ILIP is planned for December. An early study undertaken in Birbhum District shows higher levels of learner achievement in SLIP/ILIP schools. If the findings of this wider evaluation are similar, consideration should be given to incorporating ILIP in SSA plans. Overall external evaluations on learning achievement have been carried out through the WBBPE. These show improving trends in learning achievement in basic mathematics and language skills. In future these data may be disaggregated to monitor the impact of ILIP schools
- 3.6 Whilst the team's field visit was only able to make visits to a very limited number of SSKs and Primary Schools, what clearly emerged from these was a significant variation in the learning conditions. This was particularly evident in terms of basic infrastructure, classroom environment, access to technical support for planning and pedagogy. The school day in SSKs is notably shorter than that of GPSs. *Sahayikas* met had received significantly less opportunity for training than their GPS counterparts. The supervision and support available to SSKs through P&RDD is also far less than that available to GPS. In the schools visited, the profile of students in SSKs were found to be predominantly from SC and ST and other minorities due to their location. What emerges are two different systems of education.
- 3.7 There is a need to reach a consensus between the respective departments on what constitutes the basic minimum conditions for effective learning. This should cover, inter alia, basic infrastructure, amenities such as water and sanitation, contact hours, SCRs, PTRs, learning materials. Specifically the SED needs to identify the learning outcomes at all levels. Development of such a consensus would provide the basis for ensuring greater equity in terms of quality across the full range of schools.
- 3.8 The 15th JRM recommended that DPEP seek ways of "extending and strengthening support to SSKs". One problem is that SSKs come under P&RD but there has been progress on joint approaches to tackle issues. There has been some progress towards 'convergence' but as yet DPEP has not exerted much influence on the SSKs. Agreement has now been reached to incorporate the SSKs into mainstream DPEP activities and extend the levels of support to these schools that are presently enjoyed by GPSs as far as possible.
- 3.9 Discussions with *Sahiyikas* revealed two important issues relating to language. Firstly, the difficulty in placing *sahiyikas* who have competence in Tribal languages in SSKs where there are significant numbers of tribal children. Secondly is the issue of the ST children learning through the medium of Bengali. What emerges is a pattern of increased disadvantage in terms of access to learning. The data show that ST children learn less, repeat more and drop out more readily than others. There is an immediate need to address this problem.

- 3.10 This disadvantage is further compounded by a range of other social and economic factors affecting SC and ST children more than others. Direct (seasonal agricultural labour) and indirect (sibling care during seeding and harvest religious festivals for e.g). Whilst the team noted the tolerance of schools (both GPS and SSK) to children attending with younger siblings, there is a need to develop more systematic responses to addressing these issues if such children are to benefit fully from educational opportunity. This might include changing school terms to suit the agricultural cycle.

4 Institutional capacity and progress of programme implementation

4.1 Institutional capacity

- 4.1.1 There are some unique features to the overall institutional framework for DPEP in West Bengal. At the state level, there has been no major role for the SCERT. Several of the key functions of the SCERT (curriculum, materials development and teacher training) are undertaken by the WB Board of Primary Education (WBBPE). The liaison between WBBPE and the SCERT needs to be improved. The involvement of the WBBPE in DPEP activities has been mainly in the renewal of textbooks, development of training modules, training of KRPs & MRPs and package development of ILIP and macro intervention module.
- 4.1.2 The agreement to now establish DIETs in West Bengal will ensure that the academic support for the CLRCs is sustained beyond DPEP, from whence this support currently comes. GoWB has so far sanctioned 16 DIETS and 415 posts. Of them, five DIETs are due to become operational in May 2003, with 90 sanctioned posts. Whilst this is a positive development, how quickly they will become effective remains to be seen. Much depends on clarity of roles and functions, the quality of staff and how the DIETs integrate into the existing system.
- 4.1.3 There is also the issue of how the DIETS will themselves be supervised and supported at the state level. The mission is of the view that the present capacity of the SCERTs to undertake this role is inadequate. Some care needs to be taken in working out effective support, monitoring and supervision structures for the DIETs to ensure that they add value to the already good impact being made by CLRCs at the sub-district level.
- 4.1.4 The CLRCs have taken the leading role at sub-district level for pedagogic renewal through training and supportive supervision. Sub Inspectors of Schools have been designated CPC and are supported by teams of three RTs. The effective functioning and impact of CLRC relies on the capacity of the District Resource Group. Out of the total of 327 CLRC established under DPEP, 51 are presently without Coordinators. There are also reported vacancies of Resource Teachers which was noted in one CLRC visited. This obviously affects the functioning of these centres.

- 4.1.5 The effectiveness of the CLRC have been well recognised at district level and at state level where their creation has been extended to non-DPEP districts. The presence and effectiveness of these structures will have a major impact on the implementation of future reform, in particular under SSA.
- 4.1.6 One of the key strengths of DPEP has been the way in which it has involved communities in education. The formation of VECs under DPEP has not only broadened awareness but has also contributed significantly to improving access and attendance by involving communities more directly. VECs members clearly articulated their vision for school improvement, and it is encouraging to note that the agenda of VEC meetings is expanding to include issues of quality.
- 4.1.7 VECs will have to be further strengthened for them to be able to meaningfully participate in the pre-project phase of SSA which involves micro planning and school mapping. Under DPEP VECs have been crucial in collating village level data for the Village education registers, and increasing and sustaining broad participation in education. There is now an increased need for them to be able to use this data for habitation level planning. Composition of VECs is likely to change in the revised Guidelines due after the Panchayat elections. This will ensure a broader representation of members of the community than hitherto, including mothers from SSKs, ICDS and disabled. The design of further VEC training will need to address these needs.

4.2 *Programme implementation*

- 4.2.1 Fund flows and utilisation continue to be problematic. This is of particular consequence for Phase I where an extension beyond March 2004 needs now to be planned and requested if all funds available are to be utilised. The receipt of funds against the EFC is 69% in Phase I districts and 22% in Phase II districts. Against this 65% of the EFC cost has been expended in Phase I districts while 17% of the EFC cost has been expended in Phase II districts. Expenditure against funds received however is reported as 96% and 84% respectively. As with earlier JRMs, inadequate fund flow is proving a major cause of delay in programme implementation. The combination of slow disbursement and exchange rate fluctuation now mean that the funds remaining to Phase I are unlikely to be spent prior to project closure. The SPD and his team need to develop plans for the remaining use of funds and make an early request for extension if necessary in order to make appropriate use of resources and avoid any end of project rush or wastage. The Mission considers that Government of India may consider the State DPEP to allow the utilisation of the surplus fund towards the end of the programme in removing the school infrastructure gaps.
- 4.2.2 Firm proposals to now extend activities into the SSKs will now help this situation if fund flows improve. Likewise, reconsideration of raising the civil works ceiling from 24% to 33% will make a significant difference to expenditure. The persistent inadequate provision of basic infrastructure in primary schools – lack of classroom space resulting in continued overcrowding and high Pupil-Class Ratios, and the absence of water and

sanitation facilities which have a negative impact on attendance particularly in the case of girls still remain as major inhibitors to the quality of education and would be more adequately addressed through higher levels of funding. The report on infrastructure gaps proposed at the last JRM will soon be available, and should enable sound planning for such fund utilisation. Similarly the SPD has made a strong case for inclusion of the child-friendly environment element of DPEP to be considered under Pedagogy/Technical Consultancy funding as opposed to civil works. This again would have a significant impact on the quality dimension of DPEP.

- 4.2.3 The issue of convergence both within and between the various departments responsible to educating children up to the age of 14 remains a key factor that will impact effectiveness. The need for greater cohesion and collaboration around the expanded agenda of SSA means this now assumes even greater importance. Convergence has many facets, the most important of which is a shared vision and ownership of the problems faced and the development of mutually supportive strategies to achieve this vision. An MoU has already been signed between State Director DPEP and State Director, Sishu Shiksha Mission for better coordination. It needs to be more outcome focussed and to take place at all levels of the system. There are no major costs incurred in achieving this, but the overall benefits would be substantial. A simple example, evidenced during the teams field visits, would be improved sharing of ideas and expertise between SED and PRDD at district level with regard to basic infrastructure provision for SSKs. DPEP has done much good work on low cost and appropriate design of classrooms which could simply be shared more widely to prevent the construction of inappropriate classrooms by local communities who lack this basic understanding and experience.
- 4.2.4. This mission again reports of slow progress in filling key vacancies that negatively impact progress. There are a total of 9495 unfilled teaching posts (4325 in Phase I and 5170 in Phase II districts) representing a total of 11%. Given the key role that teachers play in the education process, the implications are obvious in terms of the impact on learning, as well as the missed opportunity for professional development made available through the project. As reported above, that 51 CPC posts remain vacant is also a major impediment on progress given the key role-played by CLRCs in DPEP implementation. However it has been reported that steps have already been taken by District Primary School Council to fill up the vacancy.

5 Sustainability

Both the 14th and 15th JRMs have addressed the issue of sustainability. This remains a key issue, particularly in the context of Phase I districts where DPEP will close in March 2004. Sustainability of gains will depend on the policy environment, available resources and capacity.

5.1 Policy

- 5.1.2 The state vision of Universal Elementary Education is articulated in state level plans under the national programme for SSA. The integration of DPEP into

the emerging SSA programme, and its extension and replication across non-DPEP districts are key concerns. A beginning has been made to view the future activities of DPEP in the light of the financial norms specified under SSA. Some of the special components of the DPEP (for example ECCE, gender) need to be continued in SSA as independent interventions.

- 5.1.3 There are clear indications that SSA builds on DPEP initiatives. At the state level, the DPEP office has already assumed a key role in the planning and implementation of SSA, utilising the significant capacity built up under the project. The information base developed under DPEP is already being used and expanded in support of SSA. At the district level the DPEP structures and institutions, particular the SPO and CLRC are assuming key responsibilities for SSA. SSA Committees draw heavily on DPEP personnel. There is a need to articulate clearly within the framework of SSA how the institutions, processes, structures and capacities established under DPEP will be continued.

5.2 *Resources*

- 5.2.1 Arguably the most critical element of sustainability is the continued flow of funds to continue DPEP initiatives. There is a perception at the state level that the financial norms provided under SSA restrict planning and implementation for certain components of DPEP. The SPD is confident that the existing DPEP management costs can be assumed within the norms of SSA, ensuring retention of key posts at state level. Already the SPO is assuming responsibility for SSA. The situation at district and sub district level is less certain, with the majority of key posts being on contract basis. Unless this is clearly addressed these posts may well disappear. The funds available through the norms of SSA for BRCs (CRLCs in the case of West Bengal) are less than those provided under DPEP. With the state unlikely to provide additional resources, there is a risk of having to scale back on activities.

5.3 *Capacity*

- 5.3.1 DPEP has clearly enhanced capacity to plan, manage and monitor primary education at all levels of the system. This has been achieved through extensive state and district level training, support and supervision. Continued development and training needs to take place to enhance this capacity and meet new challenges, principally SSA. An effective state level management team is in place, and district and sub district personnel and systems have been well developed. Systems of data collection have been well established and need to be continually expanded and extended in order to improve capacity for planning. Plans for the inclusion of data on SSKs will be of particular importance in developing a more holistic approach, and if issues of convergence can be improved, these capacities may be extended across other departments to achieve the vision of quality universal elementary education.
- 5.3.2 Whilst DPEP has done much to raise awareness of and broaden support for education at village level, through the creation of VECs, their role have been largely confined to areas of enrolment attendance and civil works. The role has not included the kind of habitation level planning required under SSA. In

addition SSA has a broader ambit than DPEP in that it embraces upper primary level. There needs to develop a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of VECs in this context, and appropriate training provided, under SSA or DPEP, to ensure that VECs remain engaged and empowered to influence educational provision.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 The state needs to rigorously address the issue of convergence through the development of an integrated vision and supporting strategies that make for a holistic approach linking departments and agents who share responsibility for equitable educational provision. This should breakdown existing barriers and provide the framework for greater sharing of the significant experience and expertise that has been gained under DPEP and other initiatives.
- 6.2 Key decisions need to be taken that fully integrate DPEP into the broader SSA agenda. This needs to include decisions regarding posts and responsibilities, post project trauma that dissipates gains is avoided. There would be some benefit in forming a Human Resource Management and Development Task Group to assess present status and future need and develop a coherent plan that maps the way forward. This should address, inter alia, the roles of key agencies such as WBBPE, SCERT and the DIETs.
- 6.3 A sustained focus on extending support to SSKs to narrow the gap in educational provision that is clearly evident. The next JRM should look closely into progress on prospective plans to support SSKs and effective operational linkages with PRDD. Specifically some further research, analysis and action plan should be developed around the issue of language.
- 6.4 An early decision needs to be reached to improve the flow and utilisation of funds, particularly in the case of Phase I. This should include consideration of issues raised in this JRM pertaining to the ceiling and use of civil works funds. Prior to the next JRM plans for utilisation of remaining resources should be drawn up and any time extension to DPEP Phase I signalled.
- 6.5 Emphasis should be placed on training and support at VEC level to build capacity for habitation level planning to enhance the progress of SSA. The next JRM should arrange for more detailed examination of the roles and effectiveness of VECs.

Sustained effort in Phase II that utilises the experience and expertise established in Phase I.
- 6.6 The next JRM should examine the external evaluation of ILIP as well as the extent and impact of the programme extension. In particular the mission should look at the impact in SSKs, assuming that plans for this extension proceed.
- 6.7 Vacant posts need to be filled up.

