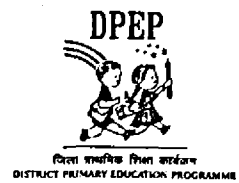


TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

A study of the planning
process in DPEP

based on

Case Studies from the States of Gujarat,
Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra,
Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.



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INTRODUCTION

Background

The DPEP lays emphasis on preparation of need based plans in a decentralised manner through participatory approach with district as a 'unit' of planning. Based on the needs of districts, the state component plans are also prepared in a similar manner. The main objective of the DPEP is universalisation of primary education which requires preparation of a holistic plan that lays equal emphasis on universal access, equity, capacity building of stakeholders and improvement in achievement level of learners. A systematic understanding about linkage and interdependence in all these aspects is required to formulate strategies for effective interventions. Improvement in the quality of education is essential to solve the problems of dropout, irregular attendance and low achievement of children. It has been realised that these objectives can only be achieved through preparation of need based and realistic plans, the planning process for which has to be participatory, involving not only planners but also teachers, parents, panchayat members and other concerned persons. The nature of plan that emerges there upon largely depends on the process of planning adopted by the states as well as the districts.

Though guidelines for DPEP have been prepared at the national level, the states have a great deal of flexibility and autonomy to decide about the planning process. There exists sufficient scope for delineating suitable strategies and activities in the plans. The thrust areas of plans can vary from one district to another within a state because of local and context specific needs. That is why, within a state, one may find that the districts with high concentration of tribal population can prepare their Annual Work Plan with special emphasis on tribal education while the other districts can lay emphasis on the education of migratory children if migration appears to be their problem.

In DPEP, 'Perspective Plans' are prepared for the entire project period of five to seven years, which involves delineating project goals and major strategies to achieve these goals. The sustainability as well as phasing out of the project activities are important considerations while preparing these plans. The Annual Work Plans are prepared keeping the perspective plans in view, but the districts AWP&Bs may deviate from initial perspective plans if the need arises. The necessary data and information must support the strategies designed. This has necessitated creation of authentic database in each state. Most of the states have strengthened their EMIS and conducted house to house survey and micro planning for creation of authentic database, though as per information given in AWP&Bs of the current year, use of this data for planning is still limited in some states. Due to the growing emphasis on micro planning, it has been realised that, the 'unit' for planning may be changed gradually from district to sub district level and further to 'habitation' and 'school levels'. Visualising this need, several training programmes on micro planning have been conducted at the national level emphasising on preparation of "Village Education Plans" and "School Development Plans".

The DPEP being a time bound project with limited financial resources prioritisation of needs becomes an important aspect in planning. Prioritisation of needs helps districts to decide the thrust areas and to formulate strategies and activities accordingly. This in turn

helps in preparing a realistic budget. The states have also been suggested to establish coordination and convergence with other concerned departments and developmental programmes for proper utilisation of funds in a cost-effective way.

It has been envisaged that capacity building of project functionaries is essential to prepare a realistic plan, because they have no previous experience of preparing such educational plans. Therefore, financial provision for establishing SIEMAT with trained and qualified faculty at the state level has been made in the DPEP. The SIEMAT can help the states not only in preparation of plans but also to improve planning process by conducting trainings and workshops on different aspects of planning for capacity building of project functionaries. Provisions have also been made to improve infrastructure facilities of DIETs, which help the districts in preparation of plans. It has been visualized that involvement of these institutions would make planning process more participatory and sustainable. In addition, provisions exist for evolving a decentralised and flexible project management structure for smooth functioning of the programme.

Considering the importance of decentralised process in preparation of a need based and context specific plan, this study has been undertaken to review the planning process, prevalent in different states. An attempt has been made to discuss various issues, relevant for educational planning and management. It should help to understand the problems and constraints the states are facing in developing a decentralised planning process. An effort has been made to assess the extent to which the present planning process has helped the states in improving the quality of AWP&B and its effective implementation. Emphasis has been given to explain the measures that the states have planned to undertake for strengthening planning process in the coming years. It is expected that this study will help in identifying further interventions needed for improving planning process at the national as well as state level.

Objectives

The main objectives of this study are :

- ⇒ To make an assessment of the process of educational planning prevalent in the DPEP states,
- ⇒ To elicit evidence of local specific planning in the AWP&B documents of the district,
- ⇒ To assess whether the states, districts have proposed any activity for capacity building of its project functionaries for planning or not.

Approach

Out of fifteen, seven DPEP states have been selected for the purpose of this study. To study the planning process, the *project functionaries at the state, district and sub district levels have been consulted*. This has provided an important insight into the perception of different functionaries about the planning process. The extent to which all these functionaries get involved in the planning process has been assessed by undertaking elaborate discussions with them. A better reflection about the educational situation and its implications on planning has been explored through *school visits*. To understand the impact of planning process on the quality of plan, the AWP&Bs of one/ two- districts from each selected state have been reviewed. A checklist has also been prepared for interaction with the various field functionaries.

- These state visits included:
 - ⇒ Interaction with the functionaries at the SPO & DPO,
 - ⇒ Visits to BRC and CRC/ CLRC (in case of West Bengal),
 - ⇒ Visits to schools ,
 - a) for interaction with teachers and VEC members, and
 - b) to observe the classroom situation and physical environment of the schools.
- The Annual Work Plans of the districts have been reviewed with a particular focus on database, linkages of strategies and activities with data, the linkage between activities and budget and also to assess how far these budgets are realistic.
- Assessment of planning process has been done on the basis of observations made at the time of state visits and reviewing the section on 'planning process' of AWP&Bs. Analysis of planning process have been made mainly in the following areas:
 - ⇒ whether planning teams exist at different levels or not?
 - ⇒ whether forums have been created and used to discuss the specific problems of districts, blocks or habitations or not?
 - ⇒ extent to which the data have been utilised in planning the strategies;
 - ⇒ the thrust areas of plans and how these thrust areas have been identified;
 - ⇒ the plan of the state to strengthen and sustain the decentralised planning process in the coming years.

The subsequent chapters present a detailed analysis of planning process of the seven states namely : Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra (Phase I), West Bengal, Gujarat Himachal Pradesh (Phase II) and Uttar Pradesh (Phase III). For the purpose of this study, Bangalore (Rural) and Mysore districts of Karnataka, Cuddalore and Thiruvannamalai of Tamil Nadu, Jalna and Parbhani of Maharashtra, Banaskantha of Gujarat, South 24 Parganas of West Bengal, Sirmour and Nahan of Himachal Pradesh and Ghaziabad of Uttar Pradesh have been visited. These states have been selected after appraisal of AWP&Bs of these districts for the year of 2000-01. It has been noticed at the time of appraisal of AWP&Bs, that majority of the Phase-I states have been able to develop more decentralised planning process (Annexure-I) in comparison to the Phase II states and Phase III states like Uttar Pradesh. However, the states have been selected on random basis from all the four regions of India.

Based on the findings of state specific studies, a comparative analysis of various aspects related to planning process has been given in the last section.

PLANNING PROCESS IN MAHARASHTRA

INTRODUCTION

In Maharashtra, DPEP was launched in the year 1994-95 in five revenue districts under Phase-I viz. Aurangabad, Latur, Nanded, Osmanabad and Parbhani. Later on the programme was expanded to cover four more districts viz. Beed, Dhule, Gadchiroli and Jalna in the year 1997-98. Presently, the programme runs in a total of nine districts and majority of them (seven districts) are located in *Marathwada Region* which has been relatively backward in education as well as socio-economic conditions. The present study is based on field visits of two districts namely Parbhani (Phase-I) and Jalna (Phase-I expansion). The rationale behind identification of districts is to give equal representation to both phases. The Parbhani district (Phase-I) has a total population of 21.14 lakhs (Census 1991). It has been divided into seven blocks (BRCs) 154 cluster (CRCs) and 1654 revenue villages (VECs). The NER of the district is 96.18 per cent (EMIS 1999-2000). Comparatively Jalna district is smaller in population which is 13.62 lakhs (Census 1991). It consists of eight BRCs, 109 CRCs and 779 VECs. The NER is 89.60 percent (EMIS 1999-2000). The review of secondary sources of data shows that, throughout the period of its operation the programme has been facilitating all the prerequisite conditions for making the plans realistic and more pragmatic. Persistent efforts have been made to decentralise the planning process at all levels. In this context planning teams have been constituted. Almost, all members of the teams have been oriented through meetings and workshops. The districts have undertaken extensive data collection exercises through 'micro planning' and 'EMIS information'. The findings are being utilised while preparing district AWP&Bs. The districts have evolved an adequate and reliable system where consultations take place at all levels viz. DPO, BRO, CRO and VEO. There have been convergence of programmes that are available in other government and non government departments. Finally, the plan documents (AWP&Bs) are structured as per guidelines enshrined in DPEP manuals.

The study has been based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data is based on discussions and interviews with DPEP functionaries in SPO, districts, blocks, clusters, schools and villages. Several available texts like AWP&Bs, EMIS reports, plan documents available at BRCs and CRCs, registers and agenda books at VECs have been used as secondary sources. In Parbhani district field visits have been undertaken to two BROs (Kalamunri and Jintur) one CRC (Digras) and two VECs (Parva and Nageshwarbari). Similarly, in Jalna district visits have been made to two BRCs (Mantha and Ambad), two CRCs (Kendoli and Mantha) and one VEC, (Math Pipalgaon).

MAJOR FINDINGS

This part of the study seeks to analyse the processes involved in formulation of district plans with specific examples of Jalna and Parbhani districts. In this context all the prerequisite steps and processes that have been undertaken for consolidation of district plans would be highlighted. These are formation of planning teams, process of decentralization and consultation at the levels of block, cluster and village, usage of data (microplanning

and EMIS information), convergence of services, monitoring and supervision and review of district plan documents (AWP&Bs).

Formation of Planning Teams

- The first step for preparing district plan is initiated at SPO. The SPO has a separate planning team of nine to 12 members. They are SPD, unit heads, secretary, school education department, deputy secretary (primary education) faculties of MIEPA and few district education officers and district project officers. The SPO initiates planning process for preparation of AWP&Bs in the month of December by convening a general meeting where all members of the team as well as all DPOs participate. They decide major issues and future course of action in planning and management intervention. The meeting at SPO is followed by meetings at DPOs.
- Planning teams have been formed even at district, block and cluster levels. The number of members in district level team range between seven to ten persons. They are mostly district level functionaries. Some important members of the district planning team are District Project Coordinator, District Project Officer, ADEIS, Unit Heads, DIET faculties and one or two BRCs. The Jalna district has a seven member planning team while there are nine members in planning team of Parbhani district.
- The block level planning teams have five to seven members. This include two block coordinators (one academic + one Administrative), BEO, BDO, resource teachers and one or two experienced CRC coordinators.
- The cluster level planning team constitutes of cluster coordinator, CPS headmasters (in each cluster there is one centre primary school known as CPS) and one or two VEC chairpersons.
- ☞ There are no full time posts of planning coordinators in SPO and in DPOs who could consolidate and monitor the planning activities on regular basis throughout the year.
- ☞ In absence of planning coordinator on regular basis, the entire process of planning seems to be a seasonal exercise, which begins in the month of December and lasts till the end of March every year.

Capacity Building Activities

- At SPO level, few members of the planning team and selected members of the district planning teams have been oriented in planning process in NIEPA, New Delhi and in NSDART, Mussoorie respectively. During the period of May 1999 to October, 1999, 35 officers from the state were sent to NSDART for training in 'formulation of AWP&B'. Besides, some functionaries have been trained in 'micro planning and school mapping' in NIEPA during August 9-11, 1999.
- It has been noticed that at the district level, all functionaries involved in planning process have been oriented through various meetings and workshops organised at SPO, DPOs, BRCs and CRCs levels.
- In Parbhani district, three members of district planning team had been trained at SPO level planning workshops. In turn, those functionaries cascaded orientations to all 14 BRCs (seven academic + seven administrative) and 154 cluster heads. The similar situation has been observed in Jalna district also where all 16 block coordinators (eight academic + eight admin.) and 109 cluster heads have been trained in process of formulation of AWP&Bs and micro- planning exercises.

- It is evident from AWP&Bs, that in Parbhani district majority of activities proposed for improvement of planning and management in previous year (1999-2000) have been completed. The district organised 165 meetings and 1540 *Gattsammelans* (meeting of teachers and VECs) before initiating process of AWP&B formulation. The Jalna district had proposed only one activity on micro planning . However, it could not be finished due to administrative inconvenience.
- In both districts, all CPS headmasters and one member from each VEC have been oriented in planning process at cluster as well as at block level workshops and meetings respectively.

Process of Decentralization and Consultation

The study finds that the process of formulating district plan has been decentralised upto the block, cluster and village levels. At each stage, educational needs are identified, consolidated and scrutinized on priority basis. All the discussions and minutes of the meetings are recorded in a book named as 'Meeting Book'. The plan documents and books have been available at all the centres covered under tour visits. The districts have evolved systems where consultations take place at every stage by convening monthly meetings and scheduled workshops. The systems facilitate smooth flow of information at both directions viz. DPO to VEC and vice-versa.

Process of Decentralization and Consultation



- *Village Education Committee* : In Maharashtra, it is known as VEO. It is the lowest structural unit of DPEP planning process. It constitutes of seven to nine members

with one of the village panchayat members as chairman and local primary school headmaster as secretary. The VEC is the ignition point of planning process. Monthly meetings of the VEC members as well as MTAs and PTAs are held in first week of every month where all education related problems are discussed. The meetings are occasionally attended by the concerned cluster heads. All the agendas, resolutions and minutes are documented in registers. The identified needs are further sent to cluster coordinators on monthly basis. As part of micro planning exercise, at VEO, proper village registers are maintained, where detailed information about all children (0-14 years) are recorded. The village registers are updated on yearly basis. Thus all villages have householdwise information on total number of children in the given age group. For instance, the visit of Parva VEC in Parbhani district and verification of village register shows that, it has 218 children in 6-11 years age group and all of them are school going. Here, the VEC is very active and a strong sense of community ownership has been developed. However, the similar sense of community ownership has not been noticed in other villages during the course of visit. For instance, in Nageshwari village, VEC members are not very active, since most of them are agricultural labourers and they migrate to neighbouring areas in search of livelihoods. Hence, the Socio-economic backwardness of the villages are directly linked with strength and weaknesses of VEC members and their decisions.

Cluster Resource Centre : It is known as CRO. All village level needs and issues are identified, discussed and consolidated in the CROs after having proper discussion with its members as well as with communities. Besides holding the monthly meetings, the CROs conduct cluster level workshops in first week of January at cluster headquarter for preparation of AWP&Bs. The participants are one member from each VEO, one headmaster from each primary school within the cluster and one or two primary school teachers. After having proper consultation, the educational activities are prioritised and documented in form of 'Cluster Plans' and submitted to the concerned BRCs. The cluster plan also mentions strategies with financial requirements and budgeting. In both districts, the copies of cluster plans with full illustrations are available in all the centres.

Block Resource Centre : It is commonly known as BRO. Block level meetings are held at block headquarters in 3rd or 4th week in the month of December every year. All cluster heads, centre school headmasters and expert teachers participate in these meetings. All the cluster heads and headmasters are briefed to identify the emerging issues in educational planning. They are assigned to identify needs with proper consultation with schools and communities. Moreover, their task is to update micro planning exercises and EMIS data sources, so that the actual number of 'non-enrolled children' and 'dropout children' can be quantified with exact figures. Further, the identified needs are prioritized and the 'Block Plans' are prepared and submitted to DPOs. The block plans are comprehensive and well documented. They are like miniatures of district AWP&Bs. As stated by Block Co-ordinators of Jintur (Parbhani district) and Mantha (Jalna district), nearly 80 percent of the proposed demands are approved by District Planning Teams. It shows the seriousness and accuracy of planning exercises undertaken at BRO.

District Project Office : It is known as DRO where planning process is initiated by holding first meeting in the month of December after the state level meeting. In the

first district meeting the agendas are to identify thrust areas from the block plans and to prioritise the activities. The main participants in the meeting are district project officer, deputy project officer, BEOs, ADEIS, DIET faculties, BRC co-ordinators, unit heads, finance officers and some subject experts. The district committee scrutinizes block plans and consolidates the needs as well as the strategies of each intervention with budgetary estimates and unit costs. Thus the draft plan of district AWP&B is prepared and submitted to State Appraisal Team at SPO.

- ☞ The absence of district project coordinator and project officer on full time basis delays the process of formulation and executions of plans. Since Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad and Education Officer (Primary) are ex-office District Project Coordinator and District Project Officer respectively. They are occupied with many other responsibilities. The Deputy Project Officer looks after all the DPEP activities but he does not have decision making power in financial and administrative matters.
- ☞ The study finds that the AWP&B needs to reflect clearly all the block level needs and the proposed strategies to address them. Since, sometimes the thrust areas of a block differ from the thrust areas identified at district level. It creates confusion while sanctioning budgets.

Utilisation of Data

- For identification of location specific needs the districts mainly rely on two sources of education indicators viz. micro planning exercises and EMIS data. The microplanning exercise provides detailed household wise information about number of total children and number of enrolled and out of school children in the village. While EMIS data provide valuable information on physical infrastructure, number of teachers, pupil teacher ratio (PTR) and net enrolment ratio (NER). Both of the sources of information have been completed and computerised and findings are readily available. These sources of data are updated on annual basis.
- The micro planning exercises were conducted in year 1999-1998 (December, 1998 to January, 1999). According to its findings, Parbhani district has a total 2.43 lakhs children in 6-11 years age group and out of it 27.38 thousands are non enrolled and 16.89 thousands are dropouts. In Jalna, number of total children (6-11 years) are 1.13 lakhs out of it 23.56 thousands children are out of schools and 6.76 thousands are dropouts.
- The EMIS data show that (1998-99) Jalna district needs 1901 additional classrooms, 597 schools do not have toilet facilities and 277 schools are without drinking water facilities. Similar information is available for Parbhani district where 9 schools are without buildings and 792 schools are without drinking water facilities. The NER of the district is 96.18 percent. Both the data sources are available at all levels viz. block, cluster, school and village.
- The districts have established linkages between emerging needs (by data sources) and the strategies adopted to address them. It has been reported that, to meet educational requirements, Parbhani district has opened 72 new primary schools, 28 contract schools (ALS) and 247 prena centres (NFEs). It has proposed for rooms for nine buildingless schools, drinking water for 348 schools and toilets for 386 schools. In

Jalna district, to cover around 30,000 out of school children (Microplanning data 1998-99), the district has opened 110 new primary schools, 59 contract schools (ALS) and 191 prena centres (NFE classes). In 2000-2001 AWP&B, the district has proposed for 200 more NFE centres, 21 new contract schools. Similar strategies have been observed in other interventions also.

Convergence

- The Districts have established linkages with several other departments and functionaries for convergence of services like DIET, JRY, LDF, DRDA, SWD, Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporations, STB, Panchayati Raj Institutions, ICDS, Health Department and others.
- In Jalna district, 591 school rooms have been constructed in convergence with JRY, out of total target of 1901. In Jintur Block, 15 classrooms have been constructed from JRY alone. In Parva centre school, water facilities, electrification and boundary walls have been provided by local communities. In Parbhani district the Municipal Corporation and Zilla Parishad have come forward in extensive way for rescuing child workers involved in slaughter houses, children of sex workers, scavengers and leprosy patients by opening 16 alternative schools for them. The similar instances have been seen in other blocks and clusters.

Monitoring and Supervision

- The districts have very poor mechanism for monitoring and supervision of the programme activities. As Deputy Project Officer, (Jalna district) states that he does not have any schedule for supervision of the programmes. Similarly, in Parbhani district, it has been stated by functionaries at DPO that the district officers supervise the programmes whenever they are on visit for BRCs and CRCs for other purposes. They do not have specific schedule for supervision of programmes. The similar situations are observable in BRCs and CRCs levels also.
- The districts do not have sufficient manpower as well as infrastructures to execute this intervention. For instance, both districts have single vehicle each. For almost half of the working days the vehicle remains in district collectorate and even if the vehicle is in DPO, only Deputy Project Officer and Civil Works Unit uses it.
- The BRCs too, do not have provisions of any conveyance and additional funds for monitoring and supervision. They do not have vehicles so that supervision would be easier. Through discussions, it has been observed that, if they get loan facilities for purchasing two wheelers and an small budget for POL, it would make their works easier in this effort.

Review of AWP&Bs (2000-01)

- The review of AWP&Bs (2000-01) of both Parbhani and Jalna districts shows that the situations observed in the field have been reflected in plan documents. The process of documentation of plan has been based on needs and aspirations of communities. All the meetings and seminars listed in the plan documents have been testified in the

fields. The consolidated reports on micro-planning exercises and EMIS data are available in DPOs. These data sources give feedback while documenting AWP&Bs. There have been efforts to accommodate the block specific needs and strategies to address them. For instance, in Jalna district AWP&B (2000-01), there have been proposal to construct classrooms for 50 schools in Ghansawargi block and also to start 20 new multigrade schools for each block. Moreover, following the Government's decision of making English subject compulsory from class 1 and class 2nd, the district has proposed SMART_PT for 2926 teachers and 296 resource persons. Similar situations have been observed in Parbhani district also. The plans have been documented as per DPEP manual. All the information required under tables A,B,C,D,E have been furnished. The overviews of previous year progress have also been mentioned. Each intervention has separate budgeting with proper unit costs.

Summary

From the foregoing discussion it is apparent that the concept of decentralised planning is percolating upto grassroot level. The village/ habitation specific needs are identified and consolidated at cluster, block and district levels by evolving systematic process of consultation through monthly meetings, seminars and workshops. Planning teams have been formed at every stage. Majority of team members have been oriented in methods and techniques of plan preparation by organising workshops and meetings at SPO and DPO, which are further cascaded to BRCs, CRCs and even at the levels of VECs and center primary schools. The districts also lay emphasis on preparation of 'cluster plans' and 'block plans' with assistance of trained team members. Besides, planning process rely on use of two major data sources viz. 'micro planning exercises' and 'EMIS information'. The micro planning exercises have been completed throughout the districts. It provides actual figures of total number of children in 0-14 age groups, their enrolment ratio, dropout rate as well as reasons for their non-enrolment and dropouts. The EMIS data have provided valuable inputs concerning status of physical infrastructures, PTR and GER. Efforts have been made to achieve goals by convergence of services with other departments like DIET, JRY, LDF, DRDA, Zilla Parishad, STB, Panchayati Raj Institutions, ICDS and Health Department. The plan documents (AWP&Bs) are prepared as per the AWP&B manual.

The study arrives at the conclusion that, the planning process under DPEP districts of Maharashtra has several positive aspects, as well as there are some issues that need to be investigated further. These are as follows:

Positive Aspects

- Planning Process is decentralised upto village level.
- A planning team exists at every stage.
- All team members are oriented in planning process through workshops, seminars and meetings.
- Micro planning exercise has been completed and is being utilized.

- Both data sources viz. Micro planning exercise and EMIS data are updated on annual basis.
- Majority of functionaries working in DPEP are not transferred before the stipulated time of four years and even if they are transferred, they are posted in DPEP districts.
- The practices of consolidation of 'block plan' and 'cluster plan' are well prevalent with realistic strategies.
- Strategies to cover vulnerable children, viz. Children of sex workers, leprosy patients, scavengers and children working in slaughter houses have been quite effective.

Emerging Issues

- The mechanism of monitoring and supervision is very poor and erratic.
- The absence of district project coordinator and district project officer on full time basis, often delays the process.
- Sometimes thrust areas at district differ from that of blocks which create confusion while formulating overall strategies.
- Being a Phase-I district, this is the final year of the programme in Parbhani district and the issue of sustaining the programme beyond DPEP is a major concern.

PLANNING PROCESS IN TAMIL NADU

INTRODUCTION

There has been a considerable improvement in the planning process of DPEP Tamil Nadu. In the years 1994-95 and 1995-96, State Planning Team prepared the plan and budget on behalf of districts. In 1996-97, District Planning Teams got involved in planning exercise. In December 1998 first manual of AWP&B preparation was given to the State and based on the manual the District Planning Teams started preparing plan independently from 1998-99 onwards. In 1999-2000, the District Planning Teams of phase-I districts prepared entire plan and budget with little support from State Planning Team. Now the State is concentrating on capacity building of planning teams of phase-II districts, in a similar manner. DPEP Tamil Nadu is receiving full cooperation from the Department of Elementary Education in every way. Officials from the Elementary Education Department (EED) are included in District Planning Teams (DPT) and they also help DPEP officials in monitoring and supervising the programme.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Formation of State Planning Team and District Planning Team

At State Project office (SPO), a planning wing, consisting of Finance Officer and three consultants, is responsible for plan preparation under the guidance of Joint Director and Financial Adviser. The officers, involved in planning have received training from NSDART, Mussoorie. The Planning Wing at SPO helps the districts to prepare their plans, by conducting workshop and providing on the spot' guidance to enhance the capacity of DPT and Block Planning Team (BPT) which are responsible for preparation of Annual Work Plan.

At the district level, a fourteen members planning team, headed by District Project Coordinator has been formed. In most of the districts, the District Elementary Officer (DEO) are in charge of District Project Officer (DPO). Since they also share the responsibilities of Department of Elementary Education, the Additional District Project Co-ordinators (ADPC) are mainly responsible for planning. The DPCs and ADPCs are responsible for implementation of activities, review of the progress, school visit and all sort of administrative work. They are assisted by programme Coordinators. Apart from DPC, ADPC, two BRC supervisors, Financial Advisory Officer, two head masters (one from middle school and an other from primary school), one teacher educator, Additional Education Officer (AEO), one DIET faculty member and one teacher constitute this planning team. No VLC members and NGOs are involved at the District Level Planning. However, representatives of NGOs and VLC members are involved for the formulation of school level and Block level plan.

At Block Level, a team consisting two AEOs, two BRC supervisors and three teachers educators, is mainly responsible for collection of information from schools and

monitoring of schools. They are also responsible for identification of issues, relevant in their respective blocks.

Collection of Data

Process of planning in Tamil Nadu is basically decentralised and participative in approach. To identify needs and prioritising thrust areas and also to formulate activities data have been collected by the following ways and mean through different meetings and workshops;

- (i) Household survey
- (ii) School Development Plans
- (iii) Cluster Development Plan
- (iv) Block Level Plans
- (v) EMIS data
- (vi) Monthly CRC meetings
- (vii) VLC and PTA meetings
- (viii) Monthly review meetings of AEEOs, AAEEOs and BRC supervisor at District Headquarters by Joint Directors and Deputy Director.
- (ix) Monthly review meetings of DPCs and ADPCs at State Project Office by State Project Director.
- (x) Visit to Schools, AS centres, CRCs and BRCs made by different officials of SPO – Forum consolidation.
- (xi) JRM recommendations.

The above data constitute a lot to assess the status of the districts with respect to key indicators like Gross Access Rate, Gross Enrolment Rate, Drop-Out Rate, Repetition Rate etc. From these key indicators the concerns and thrust area are identified and the focus points to plan are finalized. Local specific needs are assigned greater importance while preparing the Annual Plan and making budget allotment.

Capacity Building of Planning Team

DPEP, Tamil Nadu has undertaken several steps for capacity building of planning team for the preparation of AWP&B 1999-2000.

- a) Workshop
 - 1st meeting with State Planning Team in Vellupuram – 6 members including 1 AEO, 1 BRC Supervisor, 1 CRC coordinator attended this meeting.
 - 2nd Meeting was conducted in Pudukottai District. Appraisal Team members were present in the meeting alongwith state and district planning teams and Joint Director.
 - 3rd meeting was held in Thiruvannamalai. The budgeting and costing was the main topic of discussion. Two members from district planning team attended this meeting.
 - In the 4th meeting drafts of AWP&B were finalised.

b) Training

The following training were conducted for the preparation of Annual Plan;

- (i) One day training conducted three times for Head Masters.
- (ii) One day training twice to CRC coordinators to prepare cluster level plans and also for analysis of collected data.
- (iii) One day training once to BRC personnel, AEOs, CRC coordinators, selected HMs at district level.
- (iv) One day training to CRCs and BRCs.

Planning Process

It has been mentioned earlier that teams are existing at the state, district and block levels with the well-defined roles and responsibilities. More emphasis has been given on preparation of block, as well as cluster and school plans.

- Apart from the district level planning team the BRC personnel are also involved in certain planning exercises. A meeting is conducted at the BRC in every month. The BRC supervisors, AEOs, teacher educators, CRC Coordinators, Assistant CRC Coordinators and 10-11 teachers attend this meeting. They discuss about :
 - Habitations in which the new schools can be opened
 - Training needs of the teachers
 - New methods for TLM development
 - Special training for teaching English for Class III - Vth.

Then the concerned persons are consulted for necessary action. As for example, head masters and Block Education Officer, Block Panchayat Officer meet BDOs if any repair is required in the schools. The DPEP, Tamil Nadu does not fund for repair and provision of drinking water and electricity. District Elementary Education Officer takes care of appointment and deployment of teachers. For opening of schools, the Block Panchayat Officer is consulted. For doing all these, the BRC functionaries assess the needs and prepare the *Block level plans* accordingly.

- Since 1998, DPEP Tamil Nadu is making efforts to decentralise the process of planning by initiating *cluster level plan*. The concept of cluster plan got introduced in late 1998, when it was realised that, the educational needs vary not only across the districts and the blocks but also across the clusters. After conducting house to house survey in 1996-97, the information was collated at the school level. Based on this information, the School Development Plans were prepared. The cluster plans (C.P.) are prepared on the basis of school development plans (SDPs). Since the concept of such micro planning was new, the state had to conduct orientation programmes at an extensive scale before preparation of SDP and CP. Modules were also prepared for training on school development plan and cluster plan.

- The CRC coordinators are responsible for collecting information from the schools, and of preparing cluster plan. The BRC supervisors and teacher educators help the CRC coordinators in preparing these plans according to the format, developed by the state planning wing. Last year, seven clusters from seven selected blocks, from each of the seven DPEP districts, have been selected and cluster plans have been prepared. Apart from these clusters, plans have been prepared for seven clusters from each of the seven block of Pudukottai district (expansion district). For each school, the school catchment area has been decided. The habitations from where children come in a particular school are considered as catchment area of that school. The steps for preparing the cluster plan, are as follows :
 - In November 1998, the coordinators of selected clusters (14) attended a training programme in Vellupuram district for preparation of cluster plans. In that training programme the participants were trained in collection of information from schools and community in a prescribed format which can be used for preparation of cluster plan. The concept of catchment area was explained. The CRC coordinators were asked to collect information from the catchment area.
 - Cluster Coordinators from Ist and 2nd phase districts attended the workshop in Puddukottai district in December, 1998.
 - The information collected from 14 clusters was discussed and guidance was provided on methodology of classifying the information and identification of problems based on this exercise.
 - Census of catchment area of the school was conducted in May, 1999
 - The data on total enrolled children and total number of children in 5-10 age group and 11-14 age group, total number of drop out children and number of children going to AS, number of working children in 5-10 age group etc. were collected in a format. This format has been developed to collect information for cluster plan.
 - Awareness campaign was conducted after completion of house to house survey in Ist week of June, 1999. The non enrolled children, identified during the census were enrolled in the schools after this awareness campaign. The parents of the children who still remained non-enrolled were contacted subsequently.
 - In June, 1999 all the 14 cluster coordinators presented the findings of the surveys in a workshop which was conducted in Puddukottai district. A manual has been prepared on the basis of discussion in this workshop.
 - After finalisation of manual, one representative from the State planning wing went to these clusters to discuss with the cluster coordinators and headmasters of the schools of those clusters. They jointly prepared the draft of cluster plan.
 - In August, 1999 the same representative from the State Planning Wing along with cluster coordinators prepared the draft of cluster plan again in July they discussed those plans with the coordinators of their respective clusters. The documents of cluster plans were finalised after some additions and alterations. At the time of the first meeting in July, it was noticed that some drop out and non-enrolled children were not included in the list. So, cluster coordinators were asked to verify the data, collected earlier.
 - It has been reported that the State Project Office, Tamil Nadu are making efforts to evolve suitable strategies for capacity building of DPEP functionaries who are responsible for preparation of cluster level plan as well as AWP&B in forthcoming

year. It has been reported that efforts are being made to incorporate the findings of the block plans and cluster plans in AWP&B. It has been reported that this year further stress has been given on capacity building of cluster coordinators to prepare cluster plans. Plans will be prepared for all the clusters of two selected blocks from each district. Based on these cluster plans, block plans will be prepared. These plans will be the basis for next year's AWP&B preparation. The state has already conducted cohort study and test for assessing achievement levels of 5th standard students of government schools. Schools will be ranked on the basis of the results of these two activities. It has been proposed that after ranking of schools, thirty schools with low level of performance will be identified in each block. More intense plans will be prepared for these thirty low performing schools. Block Education Officers will be responsible for preparation and execution of these plans.

- Apart from preparing block and cluster plans, initiatives have been taken to involve community for implementing DPEP activities. Their involvement in planning yet to be achieved. It has been found that Villupuram and Cuddalore districts have received tremendous response from community. Many instances of community supports (in form of cash and kind) are available particularly in former district.
 - In Sankarapuram block people have donated land, worth Rs. 5 lakh to the school.
 - In Kharawarchi village people have helped in construction of school building.
 - In Kanakkankapam village people are fully co-operating the headmaster for improvement of the school. This school has been selected as model school.
 - In Kapiyam village the VLC donated money for construction of boundary wall.
 - In Chennasalam block near Salem Steel Factory, the VLC has donated for boundary wall, gate and signboard of school.
 - Community response and cooperation is exceptionally well in the Sangeetha Mangalam village in Kanai block. In this village a donor system has been developed. Each of 35 donors has donated Rs. 1,000/- and this amount has been deposited in the bank. The interest will be utilised by the school. The villagers have donated the land also. The headmaster has received the best teacher award and he is considered as one of the good administrator of school within the whole district.

Convergence

The districts have worked out proper convergence Plan with various Departments. Some of the Departments with which convergence has been worked out are as follows;

- (i) Welfare Department – Scholarships for SC/STs, free books, free dress etc.
- (ii) Health Department – Training to IED teachers.
- (iii) Social Welfare Department – Mid Day Meal.
- (iv) DRDA - Construction of Drinking Water facilities, Toilet, Boundary Wall etc.
- (v) TINIF – Nutritious food to children in shapes of balls made of rice.

Review of AWP&B

Based on the information collected and experience through training and workshops the plans are prepared according to the structure given in the manual. In the plan there is detail write-up explaining the strategies and activities of each functional area. A chapter on progress overview is given. The activities are budgeted in the prescribed format of tables i.e. A,B,C,D and E. Due to increasing emphasis on utilisation of block and cluster plans, specific issues for some blocks could be included in the plan.

EMERGING ISSUES

- All the members of the district planning team are to be involved in the AWP&B preparation.
- Presently only a few members of district planning team participate in the planning exercise. Although activities are planned on the basis of consultation with all the members of planning team and coordinators of different functional areas but the budgeting is done by one/two persons. Activities for capacity building of all the team members for handling the budgetary allocation needs to be undertaken.
- There has been a realisation that without community participation it is difficult to achieve the DPEP activities. In spite of this realisation, VEC as well as community representatives are not involved in planning. State needs to develop a mechanism for involving VEC in planning process.
- Emphasis needs to be given on use of forums to discuss the findings of the plans developed in the schools, clusters and blocks to strengthen decentralised planning process.
- Experiences gained from the Phase-I districts need to be shared with expansion districts for improvement in planning process in these districts.

PLANNING PROCESS IN KARNATAKA

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of DPEP in the state, Karnataka has been able to achieve a great degree of participatory and decentralised planning process for implementation of DPEP in all the districts. This is reflected particularly in the district plan documents of current year. A study of two districts namely, Bangalore (Rural) and Mysore shows, that within the scope for flexibility / innovations provided in DPEP guidelines, these districts have been able to develop a decentralised process of planning for Annual Work Plan & Budget. The State project team is in agreement with the view that for the AWP&B to be practical and realistic, the participatory and consultative approach is necessary. It is also instrumental in :

- (i) getting a feedback on the performance in the project activities in the previous year.
- (ii) involving the NGOs, VECs, parents and local communities in all the educational activities in the district and
- (iii) decentralisation of the planning process helping in identifying the specific needs of the districts.

Another notable feature of planning process in Karnataka is that of convergence with the other departments of Govt., for plan formulation and its implementation.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Formation of Planning Teams

In both Bangalore(Rural) and Mysore districts, planning teams have been formed both at the district and block levels. The members are the elected representatives of districts, Taluk and village level. Selected educationists, VEC members, NGOs, representatives of Teacher Association and DPEP functionaries are also included in these teams. At least one formal workshop and several briefings about DPEP activities / guidelines have been conducted for all these members before plan formulation.

At district level District Implementation Committee has already been constituted under the chairmanship of Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla panchayat. There are 19 members in the committee including district level officers, NGOs, Educationists and others. The responsibility of this committee is to decide about the programmes to be conducted and to supervise the activities of the project. The DIC lays down the procedures of procurement and a sub-committee is constituted to open tenders and to inspect the materials. Another responsibility of the committee is to ascertain the viability of new schools proposed under DPEP.

To involve local people and to decentralise the planning process BRGs at the block level and DRG at the District level were constituted. The responsibility of these groups is to identify the educational needs and to suggest the activities to address the identified needs. The prepared activities of these groups are discussed at the district level and depending upon their reliability these are included in the plan. The principal of DIET, heads the district level group and the other members are BEO, BRC, CRC, NGO etc. The block level group is headed by the BEO who is assisted by BRC, CRC, VEC and NGO.

In Mysore district, the members insisted on visiting the villages/schools to know the ground realities, before taking up any formulation of draft plan. District specific issues were separately taken up with the Divisional Commissioner. Zilla Panchayat and Taluk Panchayat members were also included in these meetings and discussions.

Collection of data

Data for the purpose of plan formulation is collected formally from block activities registers maintained in DPC's office and informally, through interactive processes between village community members and official functionaries. The EMIS data are revised on a six monthly basis and are used for working out realistic targets and costs in the workplan. The DPCs office conceded that district profiles available in DEOs office have limited use and the EMIS data is the reliable source for planning purpose. House to house survey data have been collected in all the blocks to identify the needs. These are further elaborated in the monthly CRC, VLC and PTA meetings. Monthly review meetings at district and State level help in the data collected and its usage in plan formulation albeit in draft form which is later firmed up at the time of Annual Workplan formulation. The continuous process of data/information collection helps in avoiding duplication and facilitates incorporation of local specific needs in the District Plan. Thus the overall process of data collection is a means of monitoring the ongoing programme as well as provides input for subsequent workplan. In Bangalore and Mysore district, data collected so far have been utilised for deciding the strategies and also prioritising them. The organising of Kalajatha (awareness campaigns), Chinnar Mela and Nali Kali (joy full learning) are based on data collected and analysed for these activities.

Capacity Building

The capacity building process in the two districts of Karnataka shows that most of the exercises are being carried out at district as well as field levels. This is in tune with its approach towards decentralised planning. While two major training programmes have been conducted at State level and at NSDART, Mussoorie respectively for the specific purpose of AWP&B formulation. It is at block and at village level that major intervention in capacity building for planning is taking place. The VEC members are trained by BRC / CRC. Headmasters are trained by DIET/BRC. Microplanning training is conducted through specially trained resource persons and teachers. Other trainings include education administration training and EMIS training. In form of workshop also,

major interventions are taking place at field level. In the period immediately preceding drafting of annual plan two to three workshops are conducted at district and State level.

Planning Process

Till last year, the district planning team, consisting DPC, ADPCs, BRCs, some selected CRCs and NGO persons was responsible for preparation of AWP&B. This year, the planning process has been changed significantly and block planning teams have been formed. A two-day training for the members of these teams has been conducted at state level. Each functionary in SPO is responsible for at least one district. They visit the districts and provide guidance to the district and block planning teams for preparing plans. In the block planning team, BRCC, BEO, one inspector, one DIET personnel, one/two BRC resource persons, one/two CRCs and NGO representatives are involved. This team goes to the cluster to hold discussions with teachers, VEC members for identifying the needs of the particular cluster or villages and schools within that cluster. This team also analyses the EMIS data. Thus, teachers, headmasters and other grassroot level functionaries are involved in planning exercise and Block Annual Work Plans are prepared in consultation with them.

In Karnataka some new districts have come up and consequently the district boundaries have undergone changes. Most of the districts are prioritising their needs and some new financial as well as non-financial activities are being planned. Till last year, the microplanning data were not used for AWP&B preparation. This year, a significant change is expected as far as planning process is concerned. Now there is a chance for more participation and consultation as a block planning team has been formed in each block of DPEP districts which can delineate strategies and prepare block plans in consultation with other grassroot level functionaries i.e. CRCCs, teachers and community. Districts as well as Planning Teams may use the microplanning and house to house survey data while preparing the AWP&B of forthcoming year.

Convergence

Certain degree of convergence with other departments / agencies and NGOs has been achieved in these two districts both in process planning and implementation of the programme. Noticeable is the convergence with pre-primary education, inclusive education, Anganwari centres, health checkup and medical assistance. It was suggested during the course of this study that the possibilities of convergence with Department of Rural Development might also be explored.

Review of AWP&B

It appears from the review of AWP&B of Bangalore (Rural) and Mysore district that improvement in planning process has significant impact on quality of the plans of these districts. The district plans have elaborate descriptions on process of planning and data analysis. The plans have been prepared after consultations with the people at various levels. Some of the specific needs have been identified. For example, on basis of

findings of microplanning conducted in 15 villages of Chandpatna, Taluka of Bangalore rural district, one village has been identified for opening of AS centre. Another proposal has been made in AWP&B is to depute one Urdu CRC coordinator in each taluk as per the exercise done by the BEOs and BRCs. Many other instances of such block and district specific activities are found in the AWP&B of Bangalore Rural. Rationale of conducting the activities has been well explained in the plan. All the proposed activities have been included in financial tables.

EMERGING ISSUES

The planning process in the two districts viz. of Bangalore and Mysore, was found to be both consultative and participatory and decentralised to the extent possible within the DPEP activities and plan formulation guidelines. In fact it was established during this study that nearly 2/3rd of plan components are of prescribed kind and the district concerned can only decide the implementation aspect in terms of location, units etc. It is only in the areas of classroom improvement, pedagogy etc. that innovation is possible and incorporated in the district plan. However, the district teams agreed that flexibility of DPEP allows them to overcome local specific problems through careful and innovative planning which is based on ground realities.

Use of microplanning for AWP&B formulation needs to be stressed in coming years. The sub-district level functionaries need to be encouraged to implement their own plans. Remaining issues, emerging from these plans need to be discussed by the district level officials and they need to prepare a separate Plan of Action to address these issues.

PLANNING PROCESS IN WEST BENGAL

INTRODUCTION

DPEP was launched in five districts of West Bengal namely Cooch Behar, Bankura, Birbhum, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas during Phase II in 1997. The project was expanded in Maldah, North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur, Purulia and Jalpaiguri in 1999. At the State level, concerted efforts have been made to improve planning process in the DPEP districts during the last one year and efforts are being made to integrate this planning process in non-DPEP districts also. A separate cell involving the Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Director of Education have been formed. As a result of proper co-ordination between DPEP and Education Department number of initiatives undertaken in DPEP, have been adopted in non-DPEP districts also. For example, the 6-day teacher-training module, which has been developed for DPEP is being used in all the non-DPEP districts. Similarly, house to house survey has been conducted in non-DPEP districts with financial assistance from DPEP. In addition, the State Education Department has decided to provide funds for educational programme in 110 blocks inhabited by minority groups.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Committees Involved in Planning

In non-DPEP districts, planning teams have been formed to prepare Perspective Plans for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Apart from district level functionaries, professionals from outside have also been involved in plan preparation exercise. Contrary to this, DPEP districts lack strong planning teams. This has affected the planning process adversely. The teams, which were formed earlier, could not function properly and have not contributed much for the improvement of planning process. Their participation in preparation of AWP&B has been relatively poor. Some committees like, DLCC, DPIC, BLCC etc. have been formed but these committees are mainly playing advisory role. In the prevailing circumstances, formation of a core planning team at district level has been considered crucial to establish a proper coordination among all the existing committees. In order to ensure decentralised and participatory planning process, capacity building of new members of district planning team is essential.

The detailed functioning of these committees are mentioned below:

State Level

- In the State Project Office (SPO) of the DPEP, West Bengal, a planning team exists which is responsible for preparation of AWP&B. They also help districts in preparing their annual work plans. This team is headed by the Deputy State Project Director. All the project functionaries at the SPO prepare plan for their concerned area. There is no SIEMAT in West Bengal to help SPO in planing as well as in capacity building of

project functionaries. A State Resource Group needs to be developed which can help the SPO team in planning.

District and Sub-District Level

- After initiation of DPEP, a number of committees were constituted at the district and sub-district levels in the DPEP districts of West Bengal. These committees were authorised for ultimate decision making at the district level. These include District Level Co-Ordination Committee (DLCC), District Core Committee (DCC) and District Planning Team (DPT) at the district level and Block Level Co-ordination Committee (BLCC), Municipal Co-ordination Committee (MLCC) at the sub-district level. A Government Order (GO) has been issued on 26.7.1999 which directed to set up either new committees or to modify the existing committees, defining their roles and responsibilities. On the basis of this GO a District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) of 32 members (earlier 25 members were in this committee), District Project Implementation Committee (DPIC) of 22 members and District Pedagogy and Training Committee (DPTC) of 11 members were constituted at the district level. At the sub-district level, Block Level Co-ordination Committee (BLCC) of 21 members and Municipality Level Co-ordination Committee (MLCC) of 14 members have been formed. After this GO, significant changes have been made in the composition of committees, responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of DPEP programme. It has been mentioned in the GO that DLCC will meet once in three months while the DPIC and BLCC/MLCC will meet every month. The DPTC will meet as frequently as required.
- The main reason for restructuring of these committees has been to achieve the convergence with other concerned departments and agencies like PRI, Primary Education Council, District Administration Authority etc. The members of these departments are now involved in each committee, DLCC, DPIC, DPTC, etc. and efforts are being made to establish a strong linkages. For example, Sabhadhipati of Zilla Parishad is the Chairman of DLCC and one representative of this Sabhadhipati is member of DPIC. District Magistrate is the Vice Chairman of DLCC and he is the Chairman of DPIC also. Similarly, Chairman of DPSC, SIs and DIs are involved in all the three committees of DLCC, DPIC and DPTC. Some of the members of DPIC and DLCC are also involved in BLCC. All the SIs are involved in BLCC and two of these SIs are involved in DPIC and DLCC. The BLCC and MLCC are accountable to DLCC. Subsequently, one district level planning team will be formed to work under DPIC.
- Earlier, the district level planning team was formed in which District Planning Officer (DPLO), District Project Officer, the principal and lecturers of PTTIs were involved. The DPSC Chairman was the head of planning team. In the DPO, 11 persons were included in this planning team and the District Magistrate was the Chairperson of this team. At present, the composition of planning team has been changed and DPIC has been formed. In this committee, DM is the chairperson and DPSC Chairman is vice chairperson. Instead of a 11 member committee, a 22 member committee has been formed. The prime responsibilities of this committee are establishing coordination with other departments, monitoring, day-to-day management and ensuring

convergence. Its members are also responsible for preparation of AWP&B and to place it before DLCC for approval. The state is planning to form a district level planning committee separately, which will work under DPIC.

- The composition of the Block Level Coordination Committee (BLCC) has also been changed slightly. Two/three officers have been added in the team of BLCC. Block level plan will be prepared by this committee and Sub Inspectors of primary schools (two S.Is in each Block are the members of this committee). These SIs are also the co-ordinators of Circle Level Resource Centres (CLRC).

Circle Level Resource Centre (CLRC)

- The sub inspectors (SIs) of schools are co-ordinators of CLRC. They are called Circle Project Coordinator (CPC). Two CPCs are posted in each block. Each sub division (block) constitutes two CLRCs.
- In the CLRC, apart from SIs, three more Resource Teachers and one additional clerk are being recruited to support SIs.
- Due to establishment of CLRCs with a team including SIs, Resource Teachers and appointment of clerks and peons, a significant improvement is noticeable in planning and implementation of DPEP activities at the grassroot level. Frequent interaction with teachers and VEC members helped CPCs to understand the specific problems of schools as well as the teachers working within their cluster. These frequent meetings also facilitated interaction among teachers to share their experiences and opinions. Since these centers are located adjacent to the block headquarters, a better co-ordination with block administration and panchayat functionaries has been established.
- Due to lack of proper interaction and sharing of DPO functionaries with CPCs, often circle specific issues do not get included in the plans. CPCs and Resource Teachers are not directly involved in planning exercises. They are neither consulted before preparation of AWP&B nor are informed about the approved AWP&B. It has been observed that they have the potential to prepare a need based plan at the circle level as they are quite familiar with the problems and needs of their clusters.

Village Education Committee (VEC)

Village Education Committee consisting 17-20 members have been constituted in each Gram Sansad area of the Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat member, residing in the concerned Gram Sansad area is the chairperson and the nominated teacher of the primary school is the secretary of the VEC. DLCC is responsible to form VEC on the basis of recommendations, made by Panchyat Samiti. The VEC is responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of DPEP activities at village level. The VEC gets fund from DPEP for Civil Work in the primary school. Apart from this, VEC gets grants of Rs.2,000 per year, for development of school in their respective village/habitation. VEC meetings are conducted regularly, and recently the state has decided to conduct noon sessions at CLRC in which VEC members will interact with Co-ordinators and Resource Teachers of CLRCs.

Preceding discussion suggests that various committees with definite roles and responsibilities have been formed at different levels. Formation of these committees at various levels has definitely facilitated the implementation of various DPEP activities but participation of all these committees in planning and decision making is yet to be fully achieved. Attention needs to be paid on capacity building of project functionaries and other concerned persons to get them involved in planning process. It has been observed that, the SPO and DPO both are making efforts to develop a rigorous planning process.

Planning process

Initiatives taken at State level

This year the state has planned a series of activities to improve the planning process in DPEP districts. These are mentioned below:

- Besides state and district levels, a planning team will be formed at circle level,
- Micro planning teams will be involved in planning process and a workshop will be conducted for them,
- A workshop will be conducted for VEC members to clarify their roles and responsibilities in planning,
- School based planning will be started in all the DPEP districts and micro planning will be started in expansion districts. House to house survey has already been conducted in all the DPEP and non-DPEP districts. Information collected from the survey is being compiled and consolidated. It is expected that this information will be used in the next year AWP&B of DPEP districts.
- In order to ensure participation of grass root level functionaries in planning process, capacity building of newly appointed resource teachers (RT) and coordinators of circle level resource centre (CPC) has been considered as an important step. A district level workshop will be conducted to orient them in DPEP planning process and techniques. Their roles and responsibilities in planning will be discussed in more detail in this workshop.
- A group of Key Resource Persons (KRP) will be formed in which five persons will be involved from each district. A state level planning workshop will be conducted for KRPs in first week of November, 2000. Planning book prepared by the SPO will be given to all the KRPs to prepare a plan of their district. The content of this planning book has already been finalised.
- Based on these plans, a draft plan will be prepared by December, 2000.
- It has been decided to conduct noon sessions to consult VEC members and afternoon sessions to consult teachers at circle level. The minutes of these sessions will be used to prepare plans.
- School mapping and Library mapping will be completed which have been undertaken as a sub-activity of link library programme. In each district map, the existing schools and libraries are being spotted. On the basis of this exercise, the existing libraries will be linked with surrounding schools.
- To assess the actual requirement of these centres in the districts, mapping of Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK) and Anganwari Centres (ICDS centres) will also be done in the similar manner

- These exercises will be used to plan for infrastructure development at the time of preparation of AWP&B of 2001-02.
- After the December workshop, mentioned earlier, plans will be prepared at CLRC level and it will be submitted to DPO in January 2001.
- District planning teams will conduct workshop for CPCs and RTs and on the basis of their proposals the draft plans of the districts will be prepared by the end of February, 2001.
- In March, SPO will conduct workshop to finalise the AWP&B of districts and state component plans.

Interaction with Deputy SPD, who is the coordinator and incharge of planning at the state level, reveal that efforts are being made to make planning process more decentralised and participatory. For this purpose, emphasis is being given on capacity building of SPO and DPO functionaries.

Initiatives taken at district level : Case of South 24 Parganas

While at the state level, activities have been planned in a systematic manner to improve planning process, interaction with functionaries at the DPO reveals that the planning process is still at a rudimentary stage. In their opinion, earlier the DPEP functionaries of existing districts could not prepare the AWP&B independently due to lack of training. District specific needs could not be identified in absence of authentic data and information. Till last year, planning team had not been formed and mainly DPC and Additional DPC used to prepare the AWP&Bs which were finalised at SPO. No block specific activity could be budgeted in the AWP&Bs of the earlier years. This year (2000-01), the AWP&B has been prepared more systematically because of efforts of the DPO personnel. They have followed a consultative and participatory planning process in following manners:

- House to house survey data and DISE reports have been consulted for identifying the needs of the district and thrust area of planning. An effort has been made to establish linkages in information, strategies and activities proposed in AWP&B for 2000-01.
- Since December 1999, the SPO has taken many initiatives for capacity building of the district level functionaries. Inspired by a regional workshop conducted by MHRD and Ed.CIL in January, a state level workshop was organized in March to discuss about AWP&B of 2000-01.
- Meanwhile, the DPC has issued a letter on 25th February, 2000 to the Chairpersons of BLCC asking them to facilitate VECs to prepare a budget at village level and to send consolidated budget of the block after consideration and prioritisation of needs of each VEC. The information was sought against some of the issues e.g. admission of out of school children, capacity building of VEC members, promotion of school environment and emphasis on special focus group (SFG) such as girls and disabled children. Unfortunately, only two BLCCs responded and plans of two CLRCs were sent to the DPO. In the opinion of DPC, this process was started little late last year. This year, this issue has been taken up on priority bases. The plan is that the DPO functionaries will discuss the modality of preparation of consolidated plans with

BLCC members in the last week of November. Workshops also will be conducted for VEC members and BLCC members for this purpose.

- Interaction with DPO personnel reveals that the DPO is going to make special effort for ensuring participation of all the concerned functionaries in planning process as well as in implementation of DPEP activities. The main thrust area of AWP&B of this year has been improvement of quality of existing schools and community mobilisation. The number of VEC, proposal for this district is 4324, out of which 3244 have been formed and training has been completed for 16849 members from 2407 committees (7 from each VEC). For orientation of VECs, module has been developed and trainings have been conducted in cascade mode. District Resource Persons (DRP) were trained who subsequently trained Block Resource Persons (BRP). After this, Gram Panchayat (GP) level trainings were conducted for VEC members. These GPs also monitor the activities of VECs in their respective constituencies.
- In 'noon' session meetings, VECs are expected to be informed about the techniques of need identification, formulation of need based strategies and budgeting of activities. It would probably be helpful for them to prepare a complete Village Education Plan for the forthcoming (2001-02) AWP&B. Two formats have already been prepared at the state level to collect important information about habitations/villages and schools as well.
- Recently, house to house survey has been conducted in the existing districts including South 24 Parganas. These are now being consolidated at the village level and CLRC level. The report of this survey will be sent to the BLCC based on which strategies will be decided. Along with house to house survey report, DISE data also will be consulted to prepare the AWP&B.
- Recently, another sub committee Block Pedagogy and Training Committee (BPTC) under BLCC with specific roles and responsibilities has been proposed to be set up in South 24 Parganas. Earlier, there were some problems because the members of BLCC were not briefed about the training imparted to Teachers' and VEC members. The panchayat members and community used to react if teachers remained absent from the school to attend DPEP training. It is expected that, with intervention of this committee, the community can be made aware about the new pedagogic interventions and activities of teachers in the school. The sub-committee will be informed in advance about all the training and workshops going to be organised for teachers and VEC members. This sub committee will include :
 - President of Shiksha Sthayee Samiti
 - SIs of schools.
 - Joint BDO, if Joint BDO is not appointed then BDO.
 - Social Education Officer
 - Principal of Primary Teachers Training Institute (PTTI)
 - Resource Teachers (They will be invited but they will not have any voting right to pass resolutions).
 - Two teachers, nominated by chairman of DLCC.

- The district office has planned to publish a bi-monthly bulletin describing progress of DPEP. This bulletin will be circulated to MLCC, DPTC, DLCC and DPIC so that all the members of these committees can be informed about the day to day activities and progress of DPEP. It is expected that this bulletin will provide updated information on progress of DPEP.
- Apart from these activities, DPC has decided to prepare a *consolidated plan at block level* considering all possible convergence with other departments.

The DPC informed that block plans would be prepared considering all kind of possibilities of convergence. Already some DPEP activities are being implemented in convergence with Rural Development Department, BMS, District Library office Panchayat and District administration. The issues related to convergence are discussed in DLCC and BLCC meetings, which are attended by the members from the concerned departments also.

Convergence

- The total number of primary schools in South-24 parganas is 3783. Out of these, 798 schools are located in urban areas. The total number of booths in the district is 4324 and there are many booths with more than one primary school. About 1400 booths are still without any primary school. It has been decided that in convergence with the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchis (SSKs) will be opened in some of these booths. Following provisions have been made in the DPEP to support Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi.
 - ➔ To provide free textbooks to SSK children.
 - ➔ Rs. 5000/- one time establishment grant for SSK.
 - ➔ Rs. 150/- per shiksha sahyogini/ as TLM grant every year.
 - ➔ Financial assistance upto Rs. 50,000 for construction of rooms for SSKs.
- Training of female panchayat members also will be conducted in this year by the DPEP. Efforts are being made to ensure involvement of panchayats in DPEP activities because Panchayat has a very strong presence in socio-political and economic aspects of rural life in West Bengal.
- For house to house survey, the surveyors have been selected from Gram Panchayat as suggested by the Panchayat Pradhan. The surveyors are to be guided by the supervisors who are appointed for each Gram Panchayat.
- Interaction with district level functionaries at DPO and the Panchayat Pradhans and BDO, reveals that convergence with Panchayat, District Administration and Rural Development Department is now a matter of serious concern not only at the state level but at the district level also. The CPCs of Falta, Bajbaj and Baraipur were appreciative of the involvement of the BDOs and Pradhans in DPEP. They reported that the District Magistrate and ADMs are also extending full cooperation. The CLRC coordinators are providing information to the BDOs and Pradhans about DPEP activities and are taking feedback from them also. The DPC is making special effort to establish coordination with district administration and panchayat functionaries for smooth functioning of the programme.
- NGOs and Health Departments are involved in organising screening camps for IED and health check up of children.

- District Library Officer has been involved in link library programme under which library mapping and school mapping exercises have been undertaken. Resource teachers, education cell, circle project coordinators are involved in these exercises. 155 libraries exist in the South 24 parganas district. The schools will be linked with these libraries. In addition to it a set of 71 books have been distributed in the schools under school library programme.

Fund Management for Convergence

- D.M. has final authority of allocating funds, available from different sources, other than DPEP. Zilla Parishad decides about how much fund will be allocated from PMRGY, BMS, DAP, BDP etc. District Project Officer (DPEP), ADM, Chairman of District Primary School Council (DPSC) are together responsible for planning of activities and they decide about the amount of budget required for carrying out those activities. Then Zilla Parishad Sabhadhipati appraises this plan and recommends it to the D.M. The D.M. has final authority to approve and execute this plan.
- At Circle level, Circle Project co-ordinator (CPC) and Block Development Officer (BDO) are responsible for fund management.
- The fund for construction work of schools goes to VECs directly but the panchayat functionaries and CPCs prepare separate lists of schools, which require fund for construction work. Based on these lists, schools are identified for construction works.

Role of Circle level functionaries in Planning

- The discussion with Coordinators of Cluster Resource Centres (CLRCs) reveals that they have not been involved directly in planning process and have not planned any specific activity for their clusters. They have been playing the role of implementor and that too when they are asked by the DPO personnel. Similarly, resource teachers are also not involved in planning process. Though they are better aware of the problems of different schools within their respective area, they are not consulted while preparing AWP&B of the district. They have little contribution in planning. These resource teachers have been appointed very recently. They have started visiting schools to provide academic support and guidance to the teachers. In their opinion, VEC and the teachers should decide the topic of discussion in noon and afternoon sessions respectively. At the time of discussion with the teachers, they also agreed to this proposal. Ideally, the teachers, VEC members, CPCs and resource teachers together can decide the topic of discussion as these forums have been created mainly for identification of local problems and also for better networking.
- According to CPCs and RTs, a large number of schools need major repair. The amount, provided from DPEP does not suffice for repair and renovation of these schools. In these schools teachers are not being able to teach children using the new teaching methods. Only a few schools (five or six good schools are existing within the respective area of each resource teacher), are reported in relatively better conditions where teachers can apply new pedagogical techniques. It has been suggested that the schools with better physical facilities can be identified to initiate some of the new pedagogic interventions. These schools can be developed as model schools. In other schools priority might be on the improvement of infrastructure facilities as teaching learning quality is directly linked with the physical environment

of school. Resource Teachers can prepare separate plan for each school on the basis of its specific needs. The CPC of Bajbaj reported that recently all the ward committees have been instructed to prepare a list of schools, which require major or minor repair.

- CPCs and resource teachers stated that enrolment and retention is not an issue. Some of the major constraints schools face are overcrowded classrooms and shortage of teachers (Annexure II). There are many schools in each circle where only four/ five teachers are posted to teach 600-700 students. The total number of students after enrolment drive has gone up considerably and within one year the increase in number of students has been 20% approximately. At present, the PTR in this circle level has become 1:89. The most significant problems in these circles are :
 - ⇒ A large number of school buildings are in dilapidated condition.
 - ⇒ There is not enough place to accommodate all the children who have been enrolled during the new academic session.
 - ⇒ The classrooms are unclean and dark. During rainy season, some parts of classrooms in many schools cannot be used.
 - ⇒ Textbooks are not supplied in time. Proper facilities for storage and transportation of text books are not adequately available at the district level. After construction of CLRC building storage of textbooks has been possible to some extents.
 - ⇒ Toilets are not available in most of the schools. For example, in Falta circle CPC has reported that not a single school can be found with a toilet and the schools are lacking proper sanitation and drainage facilities.
 - ⇒ A large number of booths are still without any school. For example, in Falta II circle, there are 25 such booths.
 - ⇒ Very high PTR though a large number of teachers have been appointed recently the number is still inadequate as per the requirement.
- Despite the above mentioned problems some schools are functioning well. For example, in Bajbaj the building of *Uttari Kalipurtala* pre primary school is in bad shape and adequate space is not available for classroom organization but teachers are practicing activity based teaching and preparing new TLMs in innovative ways using teachers grants. Efforts of these teachers need to be appreciated and their experience might be shared with other teachers in the afternoon session.

Positive Aspects

- Before initiation of DPEP, Education Department functionaries were hardly familiar with planning and budgeting exercise. Now, planning process in DPEP districts has thrown a new challenge and a number of officers are being trained to prepare plan according to the specificity of districts.
- In the DPEP districts, house to house survey has been completed and presently the data is being compiled and consolidated at village and circle level. The state has also decided to conduct house to house survey in non-DPEP districts. On the basis of house to house survey results, District level Co-ordination Committee is expected to decide the number of new schools or Sisu-Siksha Karmasuchis to be opened and the District Planning Committee is supposed to prepare area specific plan. Though, house to house survey will provide authentic data base for next year's plan (AWP&B), state

needs to evolve a mechanism to use these data for identifying and prioritising the needs of the districts.

- According to the recent report from the state, 4511 SSKs have been opened in the DPEP districts including South 24 Parganas and 1,760,95 students are enrolled in these centres. The panchayat functionaries have played a very significant role in opening of SSKs as well as enrolling children.
- In West Bengal, DPEP has significant impact on non-DPEP districts as far as construction of school, formation of VEC, opening of Alternative Schools (which are called Sisu-Siksha Karmasuchis) and conducting house to house survey are concerned. These activities are going on in the non-DPEP districts too.
- Construction of CLRC building has made it possible to conduct some of the trainings and meetings regularly at the circle level. Appointment of resource teachers has facilitated continuous monitoring and support to the teachers on regular basis. Burden of administrative work of CPCs has been reduced due to appointment of clerks and peons in CLRCs. At present, it appears that CPCs are in a position to devote more time for monitoring and supervision and to plan future programmes.

Review of AWP&B (2000-01)

A consultative and decentralised planning process has been documented in the AWP&B of all the existing districts including South 24 Parganas. All the educational data and information on physical infrastructure have been included in the plan. Many activities have been proposed according to the needs of the districts. For example, need for involving CPC and RTs in planning process has been realised at the district level. This activity has been budgeted in the AWP&B of the district. Separate budget has been proposed for conducting some essential planning activities i.e. organisation of workshops on consultative process of planning at district as well as at the cluster level. It suggests that if a consultative and decentralised process is followed, the AWP&B becomes more context specific and realistic. It has been mentioned in the plan documents (2000-01) of Jalpaiguri (district expansion district) that various meetings are conducted at the district Project office. This year, a proper plan for improvement of planning process has been included in the AWP&B. Some essential activities have also been budgeted for this purpose.

EMERGING ISSUES

- The Circle Project Coordinators and the Resource Teachers may be involved in the planning exercise, because they collect information about the schools which is used in AWP&B. Though SPO and DPO have taken initiatives to introduce a rigorous planning process at each level, the planning has not been decentralised beyond district level.
- Though the formation of different committees has facilitated the involvement of people from various institutions, particularly the panchayat functionaries and government officials working in the departments other than DPEP, their involvement in planning has been insignificant. At present, efforts are being made to involve these functionaries in planning process by conducting regular meetings at the districts and sub-district levels.

- The plans are supposed to be prepared by a planning team. Planning team with coordinator needs to be formed at district and sub district level. SPO has already proposed for formation of planning teams at circle level in addition to district and state level. This planning team should be capable of delineating strategies on the basis of needs and prioritising the activities. Capacity building of these planning teams will be one of the most important tasks in the immediate future.
- Problem regarding authenticity of data is acute until the result of house to house survey becomes available. In case of South 24 Parganas, only one circle has completed the compilation of house to house survey data. Many discrepancies have been found in the consolidated data, primarily because of inadequate thrust on training for data collection and its consolidation. Only one-day training was conducted for surveyors, supervisors and compilers. Proper training input would be required to avoid these discrepancies. The survey format prepared at the state level appeared to be complicated for the surveyors who collected the data.
- There is no system of monitoring activities of teachers at present. In the year 1975, the management committee of primary school was abolished and one 'Attendance Committee' was formed whose sole responsibility was to keep record of punctuality of teachers in the schools. There was no one to look after the maintenance of school buildings. It might be one of the reasons that a large number of school buildings are in dilapidated condition. In 1981, the Attendance Committee also was abolished and there is no legal body at present to monitor the activities of teachers and the condition of school buildings.
- Monitoring and supervision of DPEP activities is crucial. All the district level functionaries need to interact frequently with grassroot level functionaries and keep a stock of progress in their respective areas.
- The teachers, headmasters and CLRC co-ordinators (SIs) may be trained to prepare and implement a School Improvement Plan (SIP) which can help them to improve the environment of school as well as quality of education.
- It is required to orient/re-orient teachers, Resource Teachers, VECs, CPC/SIs on the issues of plan preparation and its execution. For example, VEC members are now familiar with their roles and responsibilities. They may be encouraged to review the educational situation in their schools and prepare a plan of action accordingly.
- Considerable variations have been observed during school visit to Falta, Bajbaj and Baruipur circles of South 24 Pargana district. For example, some of the schools lack adequate facilities and classrooms while other schools have shortage of teachers. Many schools were seen facing both kinds of constraints i.e. poor infrastructure, less number of classrooms and adverse PTR. In Falta circle, CPC has informed that the teachers are reluctant to go to those schools which are located in remote villages. Some of the schools are likely to become single teacher school in this circle very soon because some head masters and senior teachers would be retiring very soon. Decisions for deployment and appointment of new teachers need to be taken at the earliest possible to avoid drop out of children at large scale.
- These observations suggest that attention needs to be paid to prepare schoolwise improvement plan considering varying needs and specific problems of these schools.
 - Efforts can be made to assess the needs of individual school with the help of teachers of those schools.

- Profiles of each school can be prepared to identify the needs and school based plans can be prepared and implemented.
- A proper assessment of requirement of repair and construction of school building etc. should be made and considered during preparation of AWP&B. The fund may be accessed from other departments through convergence. For example, funds for construction work can be made available from other sources i.e. BMS fund panchayat funds, EAS funds, M.P./ M.L.A. quota etc.
- After an assessment of school specific needs and the possibility of funds availability, circle level plans can be prepared. These plans can be utilised to prepare a need based district plan.
- The schools should be categorised on the basis infrastructure facilities. The teachers of schools having proper infrastructure may be encouraged to use new pedagogical techniques with the help of TLM. In rest of the schools, provisions to improve infrastructural facilities should be made on priority basis. It is necessary to plan for organising need based training of the teachers, which implies imparting training on new pedagogical practices to those teachers who come from such schools where physical facilities are better and there are some scopes of initiating activity based and child centred teaching learning methods. In a meeting, teachers from many schools reported that they were not in position to apply their teaching skills which they have acquired during different trainings. This results in wastage of resources and time without any positive impact on classroom situation. Need based training may be the best answer to solve this problem.
- Discussions with different project functionaries at the SPO, DPO and sub district levels reveal that special efforts are being made to prepare need based plan in a systematic way. Various activities have been initiated to insure participation of all the stakeholders. Commendable effort has been made for involving panchayat functionaries and district administrations while initiatives to motivate grassroot level functionaries including VEC members and teachers have been taken through holding noon and afternoon sessions in CLRCs. It is expected that a need based and workable Annual Work Plan will be prepared in forthcoming years by initiating all these activities like holding afternoon and non session involving BPC, BLCC and ward committee members. Preparation of school specific plans appears to be most essential to improve the environment as well as learning level of the children in the school.

PLANNING PROCESS IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

INTRODUCTION

In Himachal Pradesh DPEP is operational in four districts, Sirmour Nahan, Kullu, Chamba, Lahaul and Spiti since 1996. As per the state norms, the formal schools with two classrooms are opened within 1.5 k.m. distance of each village and three teachers are provided if the total number of students in school is UPTO 59. One more teacher is provided for every addition of 40 students. As a result of this, Himachal Pradesh is near achieving the universal access and Pupil Teacher Ratio in many schools are found to be low.

In spite of the provisions made in the state norms, some of the schools have been found with single teacher and single classroom particularly in remote areas. After implementation of DPEP, 808 buildings have been proposed to be constructed for notified schools and it is expected that the problem of single room schools will be solved after implementation of *Saraswati Bal Vidya Yojna*, which provides funds for construction of an additional room. An effort is also being made to solve the problem of single teacher school by recruiting para teachers under *Vidya Upasak Scheme*. In many schools contract teachers are working and many of them are highly qualified and trained. Presently, the main thrust of planning has been on the improvement of quality of primary education as the state has more or less overcome the problem of access. More emphasis is being given on teacher's training, preparation of textbooks, school readiness of small children and community mobilisation to improve the classroom situation. Most of the grassroot level functionaries i.e. BRC, CRC and VEC members feel that now the time has come for the teachers and community to work together. Though enrolling children particularly girls is not a serious problem, improvement of learning level of these children is a matter of concern. In Himachal Pradesh one of the most positive aspects of community mobilisation is found in actively functioning Mothers Teacher Association (MTA). This has a significant impact on status of retention and attendance of children in the schools. MTA meetings are being organised in each block on regular basis. Training of MTA has been considered as an important strategy to get them more involved in DPEP programme. It has been observed that some of the need based activities have been implemented because of the regular interaction between state and district level project functionaries and the grassroot level functionaries, particularly teachers. Officials from the Elementary Education Department are cooperating with DPEP functionaries to execute the programme.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Planning Teams at State, district and sub-district level

It has been observed that, the planning process could not be decentralised to the desired extent due to absence of proper planning teams. Though consultation with the coordinators of DPO, BRC and CRC was held at the SPO before initiating the process of plan preparation for 2000-2001 but no planning team is existing even at the state level.

The state level functionaries get partially involved in planning exercise. Budgeting of activities is done mainly by accountant and SPD himself. Though planning team has not been formed at the state level, establishment of SIEMAT has helped the state improve the quality of state component plan of 2000-01. An appraisal team has been formed at the state level to appraise the state and district plans. Though the planning teams are yet to be formed with clearly defined rules and responsibilities, coordination with mainstream education department has been made at the state level. This is a positive aspect as far as planning is concerned.

Due to presence of Mission Director at the state level, it has been possible for DPEP to establish a linkage with the education department, SCERT. Similarly, at the district level coordination has been achieved between DIET and District Project Office (DPO). The District Collector and ADMs are taking interests in implementation of project activities in all the DPEP districts.

Planning Process

The planning process at the state as well as at the district level is not adequately participatory. It has been observed that no project functionary has been given the responsibility of planning at the SPO and DPO level. State Project Director and District Project Coordinators (DPC) are mainly responsible for planning. This year, the state component plan has been prepared in more participatory manner as compared to earlier years. All the functionaries working for different functional areas have been consulted before preparation of AWP&B, but they did not participate in budgeting the activities in their respective areas. *At the district level* DPC and DIET members are responsible for preparation of AWP&B. In Sirmour district DPO functionaries informed that the AWP&B of 2000-01 was prepared mainly by DPC. Accountant at district office and one or two DIET functionaries were involved while finalising the AWP&B of 2000-01. Other functionaries have only planned the activities for their respective functional area but have not budgeted it. Accountants who are not familiar with the activities, planned by functional area in-charge have prepared budgets. As a result of this, many activities, considered important by functional area in-charge, were not included in the AWP&B. Moreover, the financial proposal was not given according to the functional area. This has created problem for functional area in-charge to understand the budget for their concerned areas.

At the sub-district level, BRCCs, BEOs, CRCCs and CHTs are responsible for executing DPEP activities. For each village, VEC has been constituted which is involved in construction work, fund raising through mobilising community and monitoring the enrolment and retention of children in school. BRCCs and BEOs look after implementation of activities at block level with the help of centre head teachers and coordinators of Cluster Resource Centres. It has been observed that proper coordination has been developed between BRCs and BEOs as well as between CRCs and CHTs. Recently, a Cluster Resource Group has been formed in which experienced, qualified and trained primary school teachers, NGO activists and high school teachers are being involved. This resource group will be responsible for providing necessary support to the

teachers. This group may be involved in planning process in future. Their skills will be utilised to conduct various training programmes as per the academic needs of teachers.

Initiatives of SPO to improve planning process

This year the state has taken some fresh initiatives to improve the planning process and the quality of plans. Following are the initiatives taken by the state :

- Capacity building of the project functionaries at the state, district and sub-district level is being taken seriously. Preparation of annual work plan is a new concept not only for the district but also for the state functionaries. It used to be considered as a budgeting exercise only till the time of preparation of AWP&B of previous year (1999-2000). Since January, 1999 different project functionaries have attended various training programmes conducted by NIEPA and NSDART. It has been observed that some of the functionaries in SPO did not receive any training for preparation of AWP&B. In absence of training for budgeting, though they can identify the activities in their concerned areas they cannot prepare budget. Recently, a state level training has been conducted on micro planning and AWP&B preparation. In this workshop all the functionaries working at the SPO and some selected functionaries from DPOs have been trained.
- Another major constrain for planning is absence of authentic data. Initially the project functionaries did not know the sources of various educational data. It was also difficult to identify issues on the basis of existing data. Now the data on DISE formats are being collected and computerised properly. The state has also revised the earlier DISE formats. A separate format has been included to collect the data on 'out of school' children which was not in the original format. It is expected that the data collected on DISE formats will help in identifying need based strategies and activities in the forthcoming year.
- One of the reasons for the non-involvement of officials in DPEP activities is lack of clear understanding about their roles and responsibilities. It has been realised that capacity building of these functionaries is necessary for smooth functioning of the programme. SIEMAT has already initiated training for BPEO and CHTs on school management and administration including indicators of education development.
- The state has planned to initiate the preparation of Village Education Plan and School Education Plan in all the DPEP districts. Formats have been prepared for it. These plans will be integrated with the AWP&B. All CRCs and CHTs have been instructed to update the Village Education Register every year through the village education committees (VECs) in the VEC meetings.
- It has been visualised that for improvement in quality of education, the attitude of teachers and CHTs needs to be changed. Though CRC coordinators have been appointed and trained, it is required to involve CHTs in monitoring and school support also. SIEMAT has proposed to conduct a training for CHTs to make them aware about monitoring and planning issues. Subsequently, it is expected that CHTs and CRCCs will start working as a team.
- Efforts are being made to make DIET functionaries aware about the field reality. It has been planned that BRC will meet DIET faculties every month. The BRC will

have to identify the training needs of the teachers. In Kullu district, the monthly meetings of BRC, CRC and DIET have been started. In the DIET, Sirmour a separate cell for DPEP has been formed. The suitable resource persons for different training will be identified in these meetings.

- It has been realised that monitoring and supervision from SPO as well as DPO level should be further strengthened. Now all the functionaries will be asked to prepare a plan for field visit in advance and their observations will be taken into account for preparation of action plans.

Gaps Identified

- Since the main thrust of planning is improvement in quality of teaching in the school, teacher-training programmes are being completed on priority basis. 95% teachers in Sirmour district have received ten-day training in addition to three-day training for TLM in 1998. Two-day training on school readiness, four day training on activity based teaching and four day training on mathematics have been conducted in 1999. In spite of all these training, no significant change is visible in teaching learning process in the classrooms. During visit to the schools in three different blocks of Sirmour district, it has been observed that teachers are still practicing the traditional method of teaching though all of them have received above-mentioned trainings. Not a single teacher was found as well as using activity based teaching methods as well as using TLM.
- Though the quality improvement is main thrust area of planning, the Teacher Training Incharges (TTIs) at the state and district levels did not receive any training on planning for pedagogic improvement.
- In the district plan, no emphasis is given to address the block specific issues. For instance, in Sirmour district, Shilai and Bakras blocks are considered problematic. These two blocks are located in remote and inaccessible areas but no specific activities have been planned for them. All the interventions are uniformly planned and implemented across the blocks. Non involvement of all the functionaries in planning process and absence of planning teams with trained members, may be responsible for this problem. A planning team involving some of the grass root level functionaries as well as district level functionaries, needs to be formed to identify the specific needs of backward blocks and pockets within a district. This team should be capable of deciding strategies and activities and preparing realistic budget for those activities.
- Lack of understanding of the concepts and techniques of planning discourages people from involving themselves in planning exercise at the district and sub-district levels. Most of the activities are being carried out without prior-preparation. No effort has been made to assess the rationale of activities, which are planned. Follow up is also not done to see the extent to which these activities are being implemented. Proper monitoring system is yet to be developed at the state, district and sub-district levels.
- Capacity building of sub-district level functionaries on planning, monitoring and implementation is required to facilitate their better participation.

Review of AWP&B

In Himachal Pradesh, it has been observed that preparation of district plans has been a responsibility of the DPC. Involvement of other functionaries and grassroots level workers in planning process is yet to be achieved. In the AWP&B of Sirmour and Nahan nothing has been mentioned about planning teams and no specific workshop has been conducted before AWP&B preparation. In spite of putting less emphasis on participatory process of planning a few block specific activities have been proposed because these were identified during the regular meetings and interaction with grass root level functionaries. Examples of these need-based activities can be mentioned here:

- ⇒ 3 days workshop in two blocks on multigrade teaching.
- ⇒ 7 days training of teachers on use of TLM and play way method.
- ⇒ Opening of Alternative Schools for drop out children.
- ⇒ Training on mathematics teaching.

Priorities and major concerns related to other issues have been mentioned in the plan. One major drawback has come out after reviewing the AWP&B is that the specific problems of blocks are not reflected in the plan. Blockwise data on enrolment and dropout are given but these data has not been used for deciding strategies. For example, the number of dropout children is comparatively high in Sataun, Bakras and Dadahu blocks but no specific activity has been planned for these blocks. No other data except enrolment and dropout is given in the plan document. Data on out of school children and unserved habitations and total habitations have not been given. The number of school varies considerably from block to block. It is lowest in Surla and highest in Sarahan block. But it is not possible to assess the actual requirement of these blocks, since other necessary information like number of unserved habitations and total number of habitations existing in the blocks are not given. Total number of children in 6-11 age group is also not given. So, it is difficult to assess the situation of access in the district. It is not possible to understand, whether the district is still having some pockets with unserved habitations and out of school children, because no house to house survey has been undertaken after 1997. In 1997 an extensive house to house survey of school age children was conducted which led to mobilisation campaign for enrolments in the schools. About 15000 out of school children were identified and got enrolled in the school.

EMERGING ISSUES

- Planning teams need to be constituted at the state, district and sub district levels. Preparation of plans for each block is required because educational situation varies considerably across the blocks.
- Along with stress on block specificity, it is required to put emphasis on the preparation of school specific plans to improve the quality of learning. Visits in schools have revealed that need of schools vary considerably (Annexure-II). An initiative for preparation of school plans has been undertaken in Banikhet block of Chamba district. This work may be expanded in other districts also after a proper

assessment. CRC coordinators of Banikhet block have reported that the schools have witnessed a significant improvement after implementation of the school plans, which they prepared in consultation with the teachers and VEC members. Similar effort can be made in other schools also.

- Capacity building of project functionaries in planning is urgently required. It will be worthwhile to train all the functional area experts, so that they can plan and prepare budget the activities in their related areas. The training need to be participatory and based on practical experience.
- The plan needs to be prepared in a participatory manner. The state may conduct workshops at the state and district levels for finalisation of plans. Planning teams need to be formed and trained not only for planning but also for appraisal as well.
- Strengthening the capacity of SIEMAT and DIET functionaries as well as District Education Officers, Block Education Officers etc. is required for proper integration and convergence. It may help to expedite the programme execution because lack of coordination between regular education department and DPEP functionaries is a major constraint for carrying out DPEP activities in time.
- Finally it can be said that, being a phase II state, Himachal Pradesh is still in the process of building mechanisms and structures for establishment of decentralised planning process. Though the state has made remarkable progress in providing universal access to primary education but quality improvement in the schools remains a major concern. A proper assessment of the existing situation is urgently required through house to house survey and micro level planning. Subsequently, action plans are to be prepared and implemented to solve the problems, which are specific to a block, village and habitation. It is necessary to pay attention on the problematic blocks like Bakras and Shiloda of Sirmour, Tissa and Pangi of Chamba and Udaipur block of Lahaul & Spiti. The state may consider following steps for this purpose:
 - formation of proper planning teams at different levels,
 - training of team members,
 - conducting micro planning for identifying needs,
 - formulation of issue based strategies particularly for community mobilisation and gender sensitisation and implementation of these on pilot basis,
 - strengthening the linkages of DPEP with mainstream education department as well as district administration for better planning and implementation of DPEP,
 - strengthening monitoring and supervision system at SPO and DPO levels and regular visits to the schools and villages particularly those which are still considered as problematic,
 - organising consultation meetings at various levels may be helpful in identifying proper need based strategies before preparation of AWP&Bs of the next year.

In a nutshell, the state needs to follow a systematic planning process for better utilisation of opportunities provided by DPEP in order to achieve a success in the remaining two years.

PLANNING PROCESS IN GUJARAT

INTRODUCTION

The District Primary Education Programme has been launched in Gujarat in the year 1997-98 under Phase II districts. It covers three revenue districts viz. Banaskantha, Panchmahal and Dangs. In the year 1999-2000, the programme has been further expanded in six more districts viz. Kuchch, Sabarkantha, Sundernagar, Jamnagar, Junagarh and Bhavnagar. In the new districts programme activities are yet to start. Hence, the present study has identified one of the three old DPEP districts for conducting field visit i.e. Banaskantha. The district has a total population of 21.62 lakhs (Census 1991). It is divided into 11 blocks and 1374 revenue villages. Educationally, there exist big gaps between male and female and between upper castes and lower castes. The female literacy of the district is only 18 per cent which is lower than state average of 40.62 percent (Census 1991). The male literacy rate is 43.94 percent that too is quite lesser than state average of 63.03 percent. There are 2182 primary schools in the district with 7697 schoolteachers (excluding vidya sahaykas). Till date the programme has spent nearly 40 percent of the stipulated time scheduled for the entire project period. Several proposed activities are being implemented. The present study is an attempt to get insights of the planning process and the related activities undertaken so far.

The study has been based on both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data have been gathered through interviews and discussions with functionaries at the levels of SPO, DPO, BRCs, CRCs, and schools as well as few members of VECs, MTAs and PTAs in selected villages. As secondary sources, some readily available documents like AWP&B, registers at BRCs and CRCs and a few booklets have been consulted. The study visits have been made to three BRCs (Vadgaon, Deesa and Dhanera), two CRCs (Mumanvas and Motasoda) and three VECs, MTAs and PTAs (Andheria, Salimkot and Jalotra). The rationale behind identifying aforesaid blocks is to give proper representation to both better off as well as problematic blocks, so that the study would be free from sample biasedness. Considering the limitation of time, the stratified random sampling method has been used.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Formation of Planning Teams

- At SPO, there is no any formal and specific team to undertake planning activities. There is absence of full time post of planning coordinator that could supervise planning activities on regular basis. It has been stated that all unit heads and senior level authorities sit together and finalizes the plan. It seems that there is very little consultation and involvement of district functionaries in this process.
- It has been noticed that district AWP&Bs are finalised in SPO itself. The districts send the SPO the 'roughly compiled document' of unit wise expenditure details and a list of tentative requirements.

- There does not exist planning team at DPO and BRCs. At DPO, usually all the unit heads, finance officer and ADPC sit together and roughly consolidate unit wise activities undertaken so far with expenditure details and consolidate 'district plan' and send it to SPO for further revision and finalisation.

Capacity Building Activities

- At SPO, it has been stated that few members have been oriented in 'micro-planning exercises' and 'Preparation of AWP&B' in NIEPA, New Delhi and NSDART, Mussoorie respectively. However, trained functionaries have not cascaded their learning to officials at downward administrative structures. During the period of last one and half year state has not undertaken any major workshop on capacity building activities in planning process. Hence, the methods and techniques for preparation of AWP&B and microplanning exercises acquired by the resource persons at SPO have not been reached to district as well as block level functionaries. Even the documentary evidence (state component plan 1999-2000) shows that SPO has not organised any capacity building programme in planning and management intervention. In current year plan also (AWP&B 2000-01) no such activity has been proposed.
- At district level it has been observed that senior officials (unit heads) at DPO are new and unfamiliar with planning process. Almost all the former experienced officers have been transferred to new DPEP districts as per instruction of the SPO. The new functionaries have been unable to follow up the programme activities and future strategies. In absence of trained manpower as well as lack of capacity building, district functionaries are not in position to formulate district AWP&B at DPO, rather it has been finalised in SPO on behalf of the district.
- The plan document of the district (AWP&B, 1999-2000) shows that not a single activity has taken place for capacity building of the district functionaries in planning process. In current year plan (AWP&B 2000-01), only one activity for holding AWP&B workshop has been proposed (spill over plan). The district functionaries state that there is no further proposal for organising such workshop at district headquarters in absence of resource persons.
- In absence of capacity building activities, the functionaries working at grassroots are not being involved in planning process in participatory manner. The very concept of 'Planning Process' has been understood as merely an exercise to identify tentative needs in education. The more emphasis has been laid on identification of physical infrastructures in schools. As they have not been exposed to planning process, it becomes problematic for them even to identify these needs systematically and to facilitate other innovative schemes like community ownership, preparation of village education plan and school improvement plan.
- Discussions with BRCs (Vadgaon and Dhanera) suggest that VECs have not been formed in around 15 per cent of the total villages. For instance, in Vadgaon block, out of 79 villages, VECs have been constituted only in 65 villages. Even some posts of CRCs are remaining vacant. The detailed lists of status of VECs and CRCs have not been available at the concerned BRCs and even in DPO.

Decentralisation and Consultation

- Throughout the visit, it has been observed that the process of plan formulation remains confined at levels of SPO and DPO only. Very little effort has been made to decentralise the process at BRCs and CRCs. It has been reported that even the functionaries (officer incharges) who have been working for last three years have not been trained in formulation of AWP&B and micro planning exercises. They have been unable to explain core issues that exist in their areas. They could not provide the figures of total enrolled children against number of total children in the age group 6-11 years, drop out rates and information about other activities undertaken in DPEP.
- It has been reported that monthly meetings are held at DPO, BRCs and CRCs where the concerned functionaries participate on regular basis. However, holding such meetings have not been able to evolve any viable process of consultation where information can flow in both directions viz. top to bottom and bottom to top. As one of the BRCs (Vadgaon) states, at DPO level monthly meeting, the BRCs are only assigned to undertake activities that have been decided at DPO as well as the circulars sent by SPO are conveyed to them. They are not given opportunity to express their problems as well as constraints that exist in the fields. Thus, these meetings do not provide forums for exchanging information and sharing of experiences.
- At the level of VEC, the meetings of MTAs, PTAs and VEC members are convened mainly in the month of enrolment i.e. June and July every year. The next meeting is held at the interval of 2 to 3 months. The purpose of holding VEC meetings is to raise enrolment in schools. They do not discuss other issues like 'dropping out of children' and its underlying reasons, quality of learning and achievement rate of children in schools. It seems that the VECs are not very active in sorting out educational problems at local level. For instance, in Salimkot village, out of 312 children in 6-11 years 90 children are not going to school (mostly girls). Neither VEC members nor school teachers have been seen to be serious about the enrolment and regular attendance of those non-enrolled children. In many cases, it has been reported that during enrolment drive (June and July), all children of the villages in the specified age group are enrolled on registers in nearby schools, afterwards, the rate of dropout goes high. In such a situation the VECs and schoolteachers do not intervene for their regular attendance by mobilising their parents.
- At schools of the sampled villages, it has been observed that, there is no dearth of physical infrastructure, like availability number of teachers, classrooms, drinking water and toilet facilities. All the visited schools have sufficient number of rooms. The school head masters state that the enrolment rate of girls is low and overall attendance of children is going down. The teachers require training input in English and Mathematics. However, no strategy has been taken place at concerned BRCs and CRCs to address these problems. In Dhaka village, it has been noticed that despite availability of sufficient number of classrooms an additional room is being constructed without any requirement. While the other needs like having a science kit and training inputs to teachers have not been met so far. It shows the resources are not being put to optimal use to fulfil requirements in schools.

Utilisation of Data

- It has been reported that the planning process uses mainly two types of data sources viz. DISE reports and the Census 1991. The DISE report gives the total number of enrolled children (6-11 age group), availability of teachers in school and about physical infrastructure. While the census report provides the trend of total number of children in the age group 6-11 years by adding 3 per cent annual growth of population in successive years (Gujarat has 2.97 percent growth rate of population).
- The district has not conducted 'micro planning' and 'EMIS data' exercises. Although 'micro planning exercises' had been conducted in 30 villages on pilot basis in the year 1997-98. Since then, it has not been expanded further and even the major findings of the covered villages have not been disseminated.
- The house to house survey was conducted in the district in the year 1997-98 as a part of alternative schooling, intervention. The purpose was to find out exact number of 'out of school children' and also to analyse the underlying reasons. However, the functionaries at DPO as well as BRCs stated that, the method of collecting data and it's findings have been quite confusing and inaccurate. Moreover, the findings of the house to house survey has not been made available at any of the centre (field visit)
- While analysing the trend of a village where 'micro planning' has been conducted and a normal village where data has been captured by DISE report, there exists big gap both in enrolment rate and number of total children. For instance, the DISE report of Jalotra village (school) shows that all 264 children (6-11 years) are going to school, while in Andheria village (where microplanning has been conducted), there are 214 children (6-11 years) and 93 of them are not going to schools. Moreover, through micro- planning exercise, it has been possible to get detailed information about important issues that have been available at village level like in Andheria village, migration problem is very acute, majority of girls are not going to schools and the school require of lady teachers. While the same is not possible in the village where data have been captured by DISE.
- If the 'micro-planning exercise' is conducted throughout district there may be substantial gaps between the actual figures of enrolled and out of school children and the existing rate of enrolment claimed by the district.

Convergence

- It has been noticed that there has been limited use of convergence of available services in other departments. In district office, no figure about convergence of services undertaken so far, has been made available. Although, there are some instances of community contributions at selected villages. For example, in primary schools of Dhaka and Andheria Villages, small requirements like urinals compound walls and water facilities have been provided by the communities. Even at the levels of BRCs and CRCs, rate of convergence of services has not been available.

Monitoring and Supervision

- The programme has not evolved any systematic mechanism for monitoring and supervision of activities. As stated by functionaries at BRCs (Dhanera and Vadgaon) and CRC (Motasoda), the progress overviews and proposed activities are discussed only in monthly meetings. However, the civil work activities are directly monitored by DPO staff and also by occasional visits of SPO staff. In supervising programme activities, there is no involvement of communities, clusters as well as blocks. It has also been stated that sometimes the SPO staff visit district office, but the purpose is not to supervise the activities, rather to inaugurate the new activities at new centers and to convey messages and circular issued by State office.

Review of Plan Document (AWP&B 2000-01).

- The plan document does not mention about the processes that have been initiated to document AWP&B. There have been absence of identified needs and the rate of its achievement. Despite absence of skills of formulation of plans and conducting micro planning exercises among functionaries, the plan does not emphasis on capacity building exercises. The plan does not highlight the existing situation in education. The proposed strategies do not reflect the linkages of with requirements of the communities. The interventions do not contain proper write-ups. The information required in table A, B, C, D, have been made available but table E is missing. The activities do not cover achievement targets and phasing of the activities. The plan does not provide information regarding disbursement table.

EMERGING ISSUES

- The forgoing discussion delineates that, despite spending 3 years of the stipulated project period, the process of plan formulation has not been decentralised beyond district project office. It has not reached upto downward structures like BRCs, CRCs, schools and villages. There has been limited involvement of communities as well as functionaries at grassroots. The programme does not have planning teams even at the levels of SPO and DPO. Moreover, there are no full time posts of planning coordinators in the aforesaid offices. Most of the functionaries are untrained (Particularly in DPO) and unfamiliar with the planning process in DPEP. There has been little initiative to train them. Even the activities that had been budgeted in previous plans have not been completed. In absence of trained manpower, the district AWP&B is not consolidated at DPO .The SPO undertakes this exercise on behalf of DPO. Although, there hold monthly meetings at DPO, BRCs and CRCs for reviewing the activities, it does not contribute to the planning process. It has been noticed that some VECs, MTAs and PTAs have not been constituted and some cluster coordinators posts are still lying vacant.
- The district has not undertaken microplanning exercises and EMIS data collection activities. The planning process usages DISE reports and the Census 1991 as data sources. Even these sources are not fully utilized. In absence of proper use of data, it seems that the actual needs of the communities have not been identified so far.

- There has been no mechanism to monitor and supervise the ongoing activities. The convergence of inter-departmental services has been negligible except in some school where the communities meet small needs. The structure and documentation of district AWP&B has not been based as per guidelines of the manual.
- The study finds that to speed up `the process of planning and for making it need based, it is necessary to consider following points:
 - i) to formulate planning teams at the levels of state, district and block,
 - ii) to make provision for adequate number of capacity building activities for all functionaries at DPO, BRC, CRC and VEC,
 - iii) to emphasis the formation of sub-district level plans at BRCs and CRCs,
 - iv) to conduct micro planning exercises and EMIS data throughout the district so that actual needs would be identified.
 - v) to evolve a proper system for monitoring and supervision of programme activities,
 - vi) to explore the possibility of maximum utilisation of convergence of services at all level structures and
 - vii) to establish linkage between the identified needs and strategies.

PLANNING PROCESS IN UTTAR PRADESH

(A Case Study of Ghaziabad District)

INTRODUCTION

As Ghaziabad has been included in the DPEP – III phase, a study of the process that went into preparation of perspective plan for the district as well as the Annual Workplan for the first year is indicative of the experiences in planning drawn from BEP and DPEP-II phase in Uttar Pradesh. The concept of micro planning and door to door survey for purpose of collection of data has been by and large followed in the planning process of this district. The evidence of decentralisation is noticeable and the plan itself reflects the necessity for capacity building in this area as the programme progresses.

The perspective plan and the Annual workplan was prepared after door to door survey. Priority was given to the unserved rural areas for opening of new schools as well as alternative schooling centres on the basis of data / information generated in both rural and urban areas. As indicated earlier, due to previous experience from BEP and DPEP-II phase, convergence with other departments of the Government has been attempted in the district plan from the very beginning.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Formation of Planning Teams

The planning team for preparation of perspective plan of Ghaziabad district consisted of a Committee formed under the Chairmanship of District Magistrate. The other members of the team were Chief Development Officer, Basic Shiksha Adhikari, Principal of the DIET, Accounts Officer of Basic Shiksha Parishad, Educationists, public persons, Voluntary Organisations, Nehru Yuvak Kendra. At block level, Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari / Sub-Deputy Inspector / Nagar Shiksha Adhikari of all blocks and towns were included. An interface with the Panchayat Functionaries ensured that due consultation / input was taken from villages for purpose of plan formulation and local specific needs in terms of primary education have been included in the plan.

Collection of data

Before the commencement of plan preparation, a major door to door survey in the form of Bal Ganana was undertaken for identification of out of school children. Further classification in this survey was made on basis of special area needs e.g. dropouts, muslim inhabited areas (for the girl child), out of school children of urban slums etc. The district profiles were also used for this purpose. As the programme has just made a beginning, the EMIS data is not yet in place. The information / data thus derived from the survey has been used for prioritizing the strategies of the overall programme as well as annual plans. Enrolment and retention being the focus areas, the number of EGS and ALS

centres, Anganwaris, ECC centres and Maktab Madarsas have also been prioritized on the basis of the data collected.

Capacity Building

At present, preparation of the annual plan being the primary concern, most of the plan preparation has taken place at district and State level. However, during the field visit to the district and interface with block / village level functionaries, it was evident that the major inputs have been received from these levels. The decentralisation of planning process as envisaged in DPEP guidelines has made a fair beginning to this extent. Also the previous experiences of BEP and DPEP-II phase have helped in making the planning process decentralised to the extent possible at the beginning stage. While the district and state functionaries have been formally trained in this regard at SIEMAT and DIET, the training of block and Panchayat functionaries is still to be taken up. However, visioning workshops for teachers etc. have already been conducted.

Convergence

The most noticeable feature of district perspective plan and annual plan is that convergence with other sectors has been initiated right from the beginning. The plans have been drawn in convergence with programmes / schemes of District Education Office, Health Department, Labour Department, Department of Rural Development and Social Welfare Department. The district administration is also involved in this process. As a result, the activities of annual plan such as civil works, construction of new schools, drinking water and toilets are inclusive of / draw from the programmes and schemes of above mentioned agencies.

EMERGING ISSUES

The drawing up of perspective plan and the annual plan of Ghaziabad district was certainly conducted at the district and state level. However, the process that has gone into this exercise has been decentralised to the extent possible given the fact that the programme has just begun here. As mentioned already, the planning process has been both participatory and consultative in terms of inputs, the lack of capacity building at lower levels has resulted in the necessity of drawing up the plan at district and state level. However, the trends in this area reflects favourably towards already existing mechanisms of participation and consultation. The need therefore, in the coming years of the programme in this district is to strengthen the planning capacity of block and village functionaries. This has been taken into account in form of planning for capacity building and formation of VECs for purpose of both planning and monitoring the programme in the district.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

The preceding sections bring to the fore various aspects of decentralized planning process developed by seven selected states over the years. In this section, an attempt has been made to compare the planning process of these states. AWP&Bs of some selected districts have been referred to ascertain impact of planning process on the quality of plan.

It is evident from the studies that the planning process varies from state to state. In some states, formation of an effective planning team has been considered a pre-requisite for initiation of a decentralised planning process. For instance, in *Karnataka*, *Maharashtra* and *Tamil Nadu* separate team has been formed for AWP&B preparation. On the other hand different committees have been formed in *West Bengal* involving functionaries of panchayat who are responsible for planning. Cooperation of district administration in carrying out DPEP activities has also been observed in all these states. To address block specificity, several consultations and meetings are reported to have taken place at the sub district levels before plan preparation in all the Phase-I states. Some of these states have developed separate formats to get feedback from grassroots level functionaries i.e. VEC members, teachers and CRC coordinators. This shows that almost all the states have made concerted efforts to evolve a decentralized and participatory planning process. This has been possible due to the flexibility and autonomy the states have in deciding their planning process. A comparative analysis of various aspects related to planning process has been attempted in the subsequent paragraphs.

Planning Teams

Formation of planning teams at various levels is considered important to ensure a decentralised planning process. The study reveals that planning teams exist at different levels in Phase-I states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

In *Maharashtra*, separate teams at the state, district and sub-district levels have been formed. The team at the SPO consists of nine to twelve members while DPO teams have included seven to ten persons. Apart from project functionaries, some officials from Education Department are also included in state and district level teams. The block level teams consist of BEO, BDO, Resource Teachers, BRC Coordinators and some selected CRC coordinators. The team at the cluster level includes CRC coordinator, Headmasters of centre schools and VEC chairpersons. This suggests that in Maharashtra grassroots level functionaries have also been included in the planning teams at different levels.

Similarly, the planning teams have been formed at all level in *Tamil Nadu*. At the SPO, a planning wing consisting of Finance Officer and three consultants is responsible for plan preparation under the guidance of Joint Director and Financial Advisor. Planning Teams consisting fourteen members have been formed at the district level. The District Project Coordinator (DPC) who also shares the responsibilities of Department of Elementary Education, is the coordinator of this team. The responsibility of plan

preparation mainly lies with Additional District Project Coordinator (ADPCs). Since they are also responsible for monitoring overall functioning of DPEP in their districts, they are fully aware of the progress made in each functional area. The coordinator of each functional area also participate in the planning exercise. The grassroots level functionaries like, two BRC supervisors, two Headmasters, one teacher, one teacher educator are also part of this team. Other concerned persons like, Financial Advisor, AEO, DIET faculty members etc. are also included. VEC members and NGO representatives are not part of the district planning team though some VEC members are involved in preparatory exercises of school plans and block plans. The block level teams consist of two AEOs, two BRC supervisors and three teacher educators. They are responsible for identifying relevant issues in their respective blocks.

In *Karnataka*, planning teams exist at the district and block levels. Apart from DPEP functionaries, elected representatives of the districts, taluks and village level administration, prominent educationists, VEC members, NGO representatives, member of teacher association are also involved in planning exercise. The block level teams have been formed recently and members of these teams have been oriented with DPEP activities and planning process. The cluster level planning team is yet to be formed.

From the above discussion, it is evident that all the three Phase-I states have developed planning teams at the district and sub-district levels. Responsibilities of identification of needs of districts have been shared with grassroots functionaries. Now, these states are making efforts to train its project functionaries in various techniques of planning. It has been realised that due to lack of proper orientation and training, they are unable to participate effectively. However, interaction with grassroots level functionaries reveals that their role in planning process remains confined to the identification of specific educational needs. It is difficult for them to formulate appropriate strategies and activities to address the problems. Budget preparation appears to be a difficult task for them. More workshops and meetings need to be organized, for these functionaries to ensure their effective participation in planning exercise.

Formation of teams at various levels is also evident to some extent in the case of DPEP II states. The report on planning process in West Bengal suggests that the state has evolved a participatory process of planning by creating or restructuring various committees at the district and sub-districts levels. These committees are expected to play a crucial role in planning but presently they are functioning largely as advisory committees. Some of these committees consist of the members from some other departments. It is difficult for them to get actively involved in planning exercise, as they are preoccupied with the work in their respective departments. Moreover, lack of proper orientation prevents these members from actively participating in the process of AWP&B preparation. However, formation of these committees has made it possible for DPEP to establish coordination with other concerned departments. This has helped the state in working out a convergence plan for some of the DPEP activities. The state is planning to form a core planning team at the district level and to orient the members of the team in various aspects of planning techniques. It is mentionworthy that a separate committee (DPTC) has been formed to look after various pedagogic inputs provided by DPEP.

Establishment of Circle Level Resource Centres has facilitated the process to create a proper school support as well as monitoring system. Creation of a team at the circle level including Resource Teachers (RTs), Circle Project Coordinator (CPC) and one/two support staffs has helped in carrying out programme activities at the grassroots level. However, involvement of this team in planning is yet to be materialised. A new initiative of the state in this direction, is organisation of noon and afternoon meeting sessions which has resulted in frequent interaction of CPCs with VEC members and teachers. This year, a group of Key Resource Persons will be formed. Five persons from each district will be included in this group. This group will be responsible for planning and their training will be conducted before preparation of next year's AWP&B.

While significant progress in terms of formation of various committees is evident in the case of West Bengal, the SPO in *Himachal Pradesh* is striving for creation of teams as well as for integration of DPEP with mainstream Education Department, particularly at the district level. A commendable achievement of the district level functionaries mainly of the DPC, Sirmour has been the establishment of coordination with senior officials of District Administration as well as with DIET faculty members. Their cooperation and involvement have facilitated the personnel at DPO to take several important policy decisions, particularly in the area of training and civil work construction. This year the state has decided to develop cluster level groups to conduct different training programmes at the cluster level. This group will consist of experienced teachers with special skills and expertise in their respective subjects. Subsequently, this resource group will be involved in planning exercises also.

In *Gujarat*, separate planning teams do not exist at any level including SPO. All the unit heads (incharge of functional areas) and senior officials sit together and finalize the plan with very little consultation with district functionaries. No special effort has been made to involve the functionaries from other concerned departments and institutions like DIET in planning exercises.

From the above discussion, it is clear that West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh have initiated a decentralised planning process while Gujarat is lagging behind. Gujarat needs to form planning teams at the state as well as at the district level. Efforts are also needed to make planning process decentralised and participatory by ensuring involvement of teachers, headmasters and other stakeholders from grassroots level like, VECs, MTAs and Panchayat members.

Though DPEP was launched in Uttar Pradesh much later, the state has some experience from Basic Education Project. The DPEP programme was expanded in Ghaziabad district only in 1999. The study reveals that due to previous experience of BEP and DPEP Phase-II, co-ordination with other departments of the government has been achieved in preparation of district perspective plan from the very beginning. Existence of a committee with responsibility of planning is evident in Ghaziabad district. This committee has been formed at the time of preparation of the 'perspective plan'. Officials from various departments are included in this committee.

Preceding discussion reveals that the states are making concerted efforts to establish teams at various levels. Making these teams functional is a major task before all of them. Earlier experience of states like West Bengal had been that the core planning teams were formed at the time of preparation of perspective plans, but it could not function for long. One of the reasons for this ineffectiveness was lack of capacity building of the members of the teams. Hence, it has been realised that the capacity building of the planning team members which include project functionaries as well as officials from other concerned departments is essential.

Capacity Building

It is imperative at this stage to review the extent to which various states have taken initiatives for capacity building of the project functionaries. In *Maharashtra* commendable effort has been made for imparting trainings to all the project functionaries working at various levels. Five members of the state planning team along with a few members of the district planning teams received trainings at the national level institutes like NIEPA and NSDART. Several workshops and meetings have been conducted for capacity building of the district level functionaries. Interaction with the district and sub-district level functionaries of Parbhani and Jalna districts reveals that all the BRC and CRC coordinators have received trainings in AWP&B preparation and in micro planning exercise. In both the districts, all the headmasters of centre primary schools and one member from each VEC have been oriented in DPEP planning. They have attended block level and cluster level workshops also. It suggests that there are conscious efforts to make all the project functionaries trained on various planning techniques to ensure their active participation for sustenance of decentralized and participatory planning process.

In *Tamil Nadu*, several steps have been undertaken to enhance the skills of planning teams for AWP&B preparation. It has been observed that in the initial years, involvement of District Planning Teams was confined to sharing of necessary information with the state planning team before AWP&B preparation. Based on first AWP&B manual, the district teams started preparing AWP&B independently from 1998 onwards. In 1999 and also in 2000, the District Planning Teams of Phase-I districts have prepared entire plan and budget with little support from the State Planning Team. It has been possible because firstly, they consulted Manual of AWP&B preparation which provided them proper guidance for preparation of need based plan and secondly, several workshops were conducted to discuss various issues before AWP&B preparation and draft plans were prepared by the district teams based on the recommendation made in workshops. It has been reported that before preparation of AWP&B of 2000-01, three workshops had been conducted for AEOs, BRC supervisors and CRC coordinators. The state level officials attended these workshops. In the fourth meeting, drafts of AWP&Bs, were finalized. In addition to these workshops, several trainings have been conducted for Headmasters, CRC coordinators and BRC supervisors in which preparation of cluster plan and methodology of data analysis have also been included as the topics of discussion. From these instances it is clear that Tamil Nadu also has worked on capacity building of project functionaries in a systematic way like Maharashtra.

In *Karnataka*, the state level functionaries have been trained at the NSDART for AWP&B preparation. A significant thrust has been given for capacity building of grassroot level functionaries. The VEC members are trained by BRC and CRC coordinators while Headmasters are trained by DIETs and BRC coordinators. Training on microplanning is being conducted through trained resource persons at the district as well as block level. Frequent visits of state and district level functionaries have resulted in better networking with the grassroot level functionaries. This has a significant implication for planning and management.

It has been observed that, similar attempts for capacity building of project functionaries have been made in Phase II states also. This year in *West Bengal*, main emphasis has been given on capacity building of district and sub district level functionaries. Workshops are planned to be conducted at the district level micro planning team, VECs, CPCs and Resource Teachers (RTs) to clarify their roles in planning. A group of Key Resource Persons (KRPs) is going to be formed in which five persons from each district will be included. A state level workshop will be conducted for these resource persons and a guidebook for planning will be given to them. In 'noon' and 'afternoon' meeting sessions, VEC members and teachers are expected to be informed about the techniques of need identification, formulation of need based strategies and even budgeting of these activities. This will help them to prepare a comprehensive Village Education Plan. It is a matter of concern, how the state is going to conduct so many trainings in sequenced manner during short period of time between November and February before the finalisation of AWP&B in March-April. A systematic time schedule for all these training needs to be prepared. Mechanism of incorporation of micro level plans like Village Education Plans and School based plans (prepared by VEC and teachers), circle plans (prepared by CPCs and RTs), and the district plans which will be prepared by key resource persons in AWP&Bs, needs to be decided before initiation of process of preparing AWP&Bs for the forthcoming year.

In *Himachal Pradesh*, it has been reported that regular meetings have been conducted to get the feedback at district level from BRC and CRC and at the block level from VECs and teachers. However, it seems that less thrust is being given on planning in such meetings because no workshop has been conducted so far to train the project functionaries at the district and sub district level. In initial years, some of the project functionaries of the SPO received training at SIEMAT, Allahabad and NSDART, Mussoorie. After receiving these trainings, the SPO functionaries have prepared the state component plan. To make district level functionaries better aware about planning process, a state level workshop has been conducted recently on preparation of AWP&B and institutional planning. It is likely to enhance capacity of project functionaries to prepare plan for each functional area. Workshops on the same issues have been proposed to be conducted at the district level also. Simultaneously, training on micro planning has been proposed for grassroot functionaries. Resource persons have already received training and now, they are likely to train the grassroot functionaries. The state has also planned to conduct training for CHT and BEO as their participation is being perceived as essential in making planning exercise participatory and decentralised. The state has also

initiated capacity building of CRC coordinators to plan for development of each school. The process has already started in Banikhet block of Chamba district. Moreover, the proposal is to expand this programme in other districts also. Another development that has taken place in the state is the establishment of SIEMAT which is helping the state in conducting various training programmes.

From the above discussion it is evident that both *West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh* have planned and initiated activities for capacity building of the project functionaries, working at various levels. An emphasis on training of grassroot level functionaries for their better participation in planning process has also been reported from both the states. It is expected that after completion of the trainings and workshops, these states may be able to ensure the participation of all project functionaries in plan preparation.

Contrary to the situation in West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh, *Gujarat* has not made any serious attempt for the capacity building of project functionaries, particularly of those working at the district and sub district level. Though some of the project functionaries received training in NSDART and NIEPA but these were not followed up by any other state level training to promote planning skills of other functionaries, including those working at the district and sub-district levels. For more than last one year no training programme on planning has been conducted. The state has no plan to conduct any such training and workshop this year also.

Moreover, all the functional area incharge at the DPO (Banaskantha) appear to be newly appointed and untrained. They have been found to be completely unaware of the strategies and activities undertaken so far as well as the rationale for undertaking these activities. Most of the experienced and trained functionaries have been transferred to the new DPEP districts. Capacity building of these newly appointed functionaries is urgently required. They need to be trained not only in their respective functional areas but also in intricacies of planning. The functionaries at the block and cluster level perceive planning as a seasonal exercise to identify tentative needs regarding physical infrastructures of the schools in particular. Their skill in microplanning has not been developed further as after conducting microplanning in 90 villages (30 from each DPEP district) the state did not expand this activity to other villages. All of this indicates that the capacity building of project functionaries has never been the thrust area of planning in Gujarat.

In *Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh* most of the planning exercises have taken place at the state and district levels. The project has just begun here. Previous experiences of BEP and DPEP phase II have helped in making the planning process decentralised to the extent possible considering that it is still in its beginning stage. Though the district level functionaries have been trained at SIEMAT Allahabad and DIET, the sub district level functionaries are yet to be trained. However, visioning workshops for teachers have already been conducted. There is a need to organise training for district and sub district level functionaries to sustain the participatory planning process, initiated at the time of preparation of perspective plan. Forums also need to be created for discussing various issues related to planning and implementation of the DPEP activities.

It is evident that all the DPEP I states have stressed on capacity building of various project functionaries and other concerned persons to ensure their effective participation in planning. Similar activities have been started for enhancing the capacity of project functionaries in districts where DPEP has been expanded. Plan for capacity building in Maharashtra seems to be rigorous and systematic. Major emphasis has been given on capacity building of grassroot functionaries. Similar interventions for capacity building have also been attempted by Phase II states like West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh. Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh (Phase III), has shown a good beginning in participatory planning. In contrary to the efforts made by all these above mentioned states, such serious attempt lacking in Gujarat for capacity building of the project functionaries for planning. The state needs to pay immediate attention on this issue.

Various steps for capacity building might have had an impact on the planning process of these states. A critical review of the planning process may help developing a proper understanding about the trend the states have followed to develop an effective process of AWP&B preparation in recent years.

Process of plan Preparation

In case of *Maharashtra*, it has been observed that a series of workshops and meetings were conducted before preparation of AWP&B to identify the needs and strategies. Meetings at the cluster level and Gatt Sammelans (meeting of VEC, MTA, PTA and school teachers) have been organised to identify the needs at the grassroot level. Based on house to house survey data and the out come of different meetings and workshops, prioritisation of needs and activities is done at the district level. A significant improvement in the planning process has been observed in states initiative of preparation of block plans and cluster. These plans are utilised for preparation of district plans. However, it has been observed that in the absence of proper coordination between block and the district level officials, prioritisation of needs becomes difficult. As a result of this some instances of mismatch between needs of block and district may be found in the AWP&B document. In this context, it can be suggested that the state needs to focus on block specificity while setting the priorities during plan preparation.

Tamil Nadu also has followed a systematic process of planning. Based on the information collected from schools and experience gained through training and workshops, plans are prepared on the lines of instructions given in AWP&B preparation manual. Last year, several workshops have been conducted before preparation of AWP&B. In the first meeting, the state planning team interacted with district and sub-district level functionaries, including AEOs, one BRC supervisor and one CRC coordinator. In the second meeting, appraisal team members and Joint Director from SPO interacted with the District Planning Team. The third meeting was oriented to discuss budgeting and costing. Two members from planning teams of each district attended this meeting. In the fourth meeting the drafts of AWP&Bs were finalised. It is obvious that all the district and sub district functionaries are still not involved in the planning exercises. Instead, a few selected functionaries are participating in planning exercise. The state

needs to look into this issue as involvement of all the project functionaries is required for participatory planning.

Most importantly, micro level planning has been undertaken seriously in *Tamil Nadu*. Though house to house survey has not been conducted in recent years, plans for some of the selected clusters have been prepared. It has been reported that these plans are being utilised while preparing AWP&B. This year further stress has been given on capacity building of cluster coordinators to prepare cluster plans. Plans will be prepared for all the clusters of two selected blocks from each district. Based on these cluster plans, block plans will be prepared which will be utilised for AWP&B preparation. The state has conducted cohort study and test for assessing achievement levels of 5th standard students of government school. Schools will be ranked on the basis of the results of these two activities. It has been proposed that thirty schools with low level of performance will be identified in each block. More intense plans will be prepared for these thirty low performing schools, Block Education Officers will be responsible for preparation and execution of these plans.

In *Karnataka*, data generated through house to house survey and EMIS are used for the identification of needs. These needs are verified in CRC, VLC and PTA meetings. It has been reported that activities such as *Kalajatha*, *Chinnar Mela* and *Nali Kali* are planned on the basis of information. In addition, minutes of monthly review meetings at district and state levels are also used at the time of formulation of AWP&B. Recently, attention has been paid on forming block planning teams and its capacity building. In the coming years, separate plans will be prepared for each block which will be incorporated into the AWP&Bs of the districts. It has been reported that before preparation of plans, the project functionaries of the DPO visit the villages and schools to identify specific needs. District specific issues are discussed in a separate meeting which is attended by Divisional Commissioner and members of Zilla Panchayat and Taluka Panchayat.

Similar emphasis on participatory planning process has been reported from *West Bengal* also. Before formulation of AWP&B, state and district level workshops have been conducted to identify and prioritise needs and strategies. Finalisation of plan and budget has been done at the state level. Two functionaries (incharge of functional areas) from the DPO finalised the plans in consultation with Deputy SPD at the SPO. Involvement of sub district level functionaries in planning process till last year was insignificant. This year, state has planned to follow more systematic and participatory process for preparation of AWP&B. It is worth mentioning here that this year the state has proposed conducting a workshop for Circle Project Coordinators (CPCs) and Resource Teachers who have important role in planning. A group of Key Resource Persons will be formed for planning and a state level workshop will be organised for them. Meetings will be conducted for VEC members and teachers to make them familiar with planning techniques. Feedback given by VEC members, teachers, resource teachers and CPCs will be taken into consideration while preparing AWP&Bs. This year, CPCs will be preparing plans for their circles while the KRPs will prepare plans for their respective districts. On the basis of these plans, AWP&Bs of the districts will be finalised. Apart from these, separate formats have been prepared to collect data for school as well as for preparation of village

education plans. It is obvious that while West Bengal has systematically planned to ensure participatory planning process, now state will also have to develop a mechanism to incorporate all these micro level plans in the AWP&Bs of the districts. The process may be started with preparation of village and school plans. Based on these circle plans need to be prepared by CPC and RTs which can be used by KRPs to prepare the district plans.

In *Himachal Pradesh* initiatives for improving process of plan preparation have been undertaken this year. A state level workshop for AWP&B preparation and micro planning has been conducted recently. Till last year, the state had faced a lot of difficulties in identifying specific needs due to non availability of authentic data. This year, the DISE format has been modified and a separate format has been included to collect information on out of school children. In addition, two more formats have been prepared to assess the needs of schools and villages as well. Training for Resource Persons on micro planning has been conducted at the district level. This year, there is a plan to organise capacity building of sub district level project functionaries in planning. A workshop at the district level. The SPO has a plan to involve SIEMAT and DIET functionaries at every stage of planning. It appears that the state has evolved a plan of action (POA) for improving process of planning in the coming year.

It has been mentioned earlier that in *Gujarat* the process of planning has not been decentralised to the desired extent. No attempt has been made towards formation of planning teams as well as capacity building of project functionaries. So far, the AWP&Bs have been prepared at the SPO with little consultation with DPO personnel. Although monthly review meetings are regularly conducted at DPO, BRC and CRC minutes of those meetings are not utilised for planning. The plans are mainly prepared on the basis of DISE reports. Since, DISE provides the information on schools, it may not be possible to identify habitation specific needs if only DISE data are utilised for planning. No other intervention except opening of alternative school has been made on the basis of house to house survey data, conducted in three DPEP districts. Interaction with the project functionaries at the district and state level reveals that so far, plan for improvement in the process of AWP&B preparation has not been prepared and not a single activity related to AWP&Bs preparation has been budgeted in AWP&B of 2000-01.

Though the DPEP programme has been implemented in Ghaziabad district recently, the district functionaries have shown keen interest for improvement in planning process. Workshops have been proposed for district and sub-district level functionaries before formulation of AWP&B. Major thrust has been given on convergence with other departments. Most importantly, this district has used house to house survey data for formulation of major strategies in the perspective plan. As the program has just begun, the EMIS is yet to be functional. It is expected that in coming years, a significant improvement in planning process will be possible when all the grassroot level functionaries i.e. CRC, BRC and VEC will be appointed. Capacity building of these functionaries will be taken up seriously for smooth functioning of programme as well as strengthening of decentralised planning process in the following years. The state level functionaries need to help the district in carrying out capacity building activities.

Utilisation of Data

It is clear that need based plans can not be prepared without sufficient and authentic database. Hence collection and utilisation of data have been considered the most important task in almost all the seven states. Effort made by the states in this respect are described in the subsequent paragraphs.

In *Maharashtra*, house to house survey has been conducted in 1999 in all the DPEP districts. This has been computerised and consolidated at the district level. EMIS data provide valuable information on physical infrastructure of schools, Pupil Teacher Ratio and Net Enrolment Ratio etc. It has been reported that this data has been utilised for preparation of AWP&B of 2000-01. On the basis of micro planning data important strategies have been formulated to cover children of sex workers, leprosy patients, scavengers and children working in slaughter houses. Some of the districts have proposed for conducting survey in urban pockets to identify the educational needs of the deprived children.

In *Tamil Nadu* data from various sources are available for planning. Necessary information is collected through school plans cluster plans while EMIS data are used to calculate Gross Access Rate, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Dropout Rate, Repetition Rate etc. These key indicators help in identifying, the thrust areas of planning.

In *Karnataka*, besides EMIS and microplanning data, 'Block Activity Registers', kept in DPCs office are also used for planning. These registers provide updated information about the activities carried out in the blocks. EMIS data, updated every six month, is the important data source for planning. The minutes of monthly review meetings, conducted at the district and state levels are also utilised for planning purpose.

Increasing emphasis on preparation of need based plans has been reported in DPEP phase II states also. In West Bengal consistent efforts have been made to collect important data through DISE formats. The state has also conducted house to house survey at large scale. The data are now being computerised. However, many discrepancies have been found while compilation of these data. Now the cross checking and correction of these data are continuing at the district level. It is expected that these data will be utilised for formulation of strategies and activities of AWP&Bs next year.

Although house to house survey has not been conducted at an extensive scale in Himachal Pradesh, improvement in EMIS has made available some essential data needed for planning. It has been reported that the EMIS formats have been modified at the state level and another format to collect information on out of school children and unserved habitations has been added. In addition, separate formats for preparing village education plan and school plan have been prepared. It is expected that the collection of all these data will be completed before preparation of AWP&B of the next year.

It may be pointed out that West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh both need to pay attention for developing suitable mechanisms for cross checking, compilation and consolidation of microplanning data for its effective use in planning. Moreover, states need to see the extent to which it is possible to formulate habitation specific strategies on the basis of findings of the house to house survey. For instance, a list of habitations having maximum number of out of school and drop out children, may be prepared for this purpose. It has been reported in *Bangalore Rural* district of *Karnataka* that this year all the BRC co-ordinators and BEOs have been instructed to formulate habitation specific strategies for at least 15 such habitations where 100% enrolment has been achieved. Similar kind of attempts may be useful for other states also.

In *Gujarat*, it has been reported that no other source of data except DISE are used for planning purpose. House to house survey has been conducted a few years back but the data collected has not been used so far. Visit to a village of *Banaskantha* district where micro-planning has been conducted earlier, revealed that 93 out of total 214 children in 6-14 years age are still not going to school. VECs in many villages are yet to be formed and some of the posts of CRCs are also found to be vacant. In absence of these functionaries no one is found responsible to look into such matter.

Ghaziabad district of *Uttar Pradesh* has made commendable efforts for preparation of need based plan. House to house survey was conducted before preparation of perspective plan of the district. Information derived from the survey has been used for prioritising strategies for Perspective plan as well as AWP&B. The number of EGS, AS centres, Anganwaris have been to be opened decided on the basis of these data. Intervention in Maktabas and Madarsas is also decided on the basis of this survey. The EMIS is yet to become functional. The district may now attempt at identifying the specific needs of block. Keeping in view the block specific needs, separate plan may be prepared for some blocks on pilot basis. These can be included in the next year's AWP&B. The district may also start identifying habitation specific needs on priority basis using the recent house to house survey data and these may also be incorporated in the AWP&B of the coming year.

Convergence

After the detailed discussions about the process of plan preparation a few observations related to convergence need to be mentioned here as convergence is one of the most important aspects of planning and budgeting in DPEP. It has been observed that all the state have taken initiatives for achieving convergence with other departments in carrying out various DPEP activities. In *Maharashtra* funds are available from JRY, LDF, DRDA, SWD, Zilla Parishad, PRI and Municipal Corporation for Civil Works. Institutions like DIET and STB are involved for pedagogic improvement while ICDS and Health Departments are involved for ECCE and IED. In *Karnataka*, involvement of NGOs, officials from other departments have already been enlisted. The state may need to explore the possibility of convergence with the Department of Rural Development. Tamil Nadu has also worked out convergence plan with various other departments like Welfare Department, Health Department, Social Welfare Department, DRDA, TINIF etc. Funds

available from DRDA are being utilised for providing drinking water facilities, construction of toilets and boundary walls.

In *West Bengal* involvement of Panchayati Raj Department is quite significant. NGO activists and officials from Health Department are involved in IED programme. Funds from JRY, BMS, DAP, BDP etc. are being utilised for civil work activities. Zilla Parishad decides about the allocation of funds from all these sources. It has been widely observed that cooperation of District Administration has helped District Project Coordinators to carry out their work efficiently. In *Himachal Pradesh*, cooperation of DIET functionaries has proved particularly useful in completion of various tasks related to pedagogic improvement. Convergence with the new scheme 'Saraswati Bal Vidya Yojna' can help DPEP in diverting its fund provided for construction of additional class rooms, as the new scheme has a provision for construction of additional classroom in the entire state. Some efforts for convergence have also been observed in Gujarat where community has come forward to pool the resources for making various provisions in schools, such as, drinking water, repair and renovation, leveling of ground etc. The AWP&Bs of districts have also mentioned about convergence with JRY, DRDA for construction works and for providing drinking water facilities respectively. Convergence plan has been evident in Ghaziabad district right from the beginning. In addition to the officials from District Administration, functionaries from various other departments like, Social Welfare, Labour, Health and Rural Development are involved in DPEP.

In the foregoing section, the process of formulation of plans in all the seven states have been described at length. It is imperative at this stage to examine the extent to which the process of plan preparation has influenced the quality of AWP&Bs of these states. It is expected that with the more stress on decentralised and participatory process of planning, plans should be more realistic and need based.

Review of AWP&B

The review of AWP&B of the two districts Parbhani and Jalna of Maharashtra indicates that there is a significant improvement in quality of plan as the process of planning in these districts has been decentralised to a large extent. The participation of various functionaries has been ensured by building their capacities. Several workshops, training and meetings have been conducted before preparation of plan for discussing the planning issues. EMIS and house to house survey data have been used and included in the write up section of AWP&B. A clear linkage in data, strategies and activities are found in these plans. In both the districts, plans have been formulated according to the guidelines provided in the AWP&B manual.

The linkage in information, strategies and activities is properly established in the AWP&Bs of Thiruvannamalai, Cuddalore and Villupuram districts. Various meetings and workshops have been conducted for need identification and formulation of strategies before preparation of AWP&B of these districts. The plans have been found incorporated specific needs of blocks and of the deprived communities. These plans have also been prepared as per instructions given in AWP&B manual providing clear understanding

about progress, spill over and rationale behind formulation or dropping out of various strategies and activities.

Similar attempt to follow a consultative process has been reported from the two districts – Bangalore Rural and Mysore in Karnataka. Formation of planning teams and their effective involvement in planning process facilitated the districts to prepare need based AWP&B of 2000-01. The issues that emerged from trainings, VEC mela, GP meetings, VEC meetings etc. were discussed in greater details this year. As a consequence of this, certain block specific activities have been included and budgeted in the plans. Use of data and findings of research studies have made these plans more context specific.

A significant improvement has been observed in quality of AWP&Bs of South 24 Parganas and Jalpaiguri districts. It has been possible because of initiatives taken by the state to identify specific needs of the districts. AWP&Bs of both the district have explained planning process in detail and budgeted certain activities for capacity building of project functionaries in planning. Though the write up section of plan document has explained all the strategies planned this year and the progress of activities carried out last year, the financial tables have included budget only for proposed activities. From next year onwards plans need to be prepared as per instructions given in the AWP&B manual.

In *Himachal Pradesh* the AWP&B of *Sirmour Nahan* and *Lahaul & Spiti* districts have elaborated each activity in the write up section but it has not been supplemented with necessary data information. Proper linkage in data, strategies and activities is not there in these plans. Moreover, the financial tables were not given according to functional areas. Similar problems are found in the AWP&Bs of Gujarat. These plans have not mentioned the process of planning as well as the thrust areas of plan. It is difficult to understand the amount of budget proposed for the activities of each functional area. Since, the state has started the capacity building activities for its project functionaries, it is expected that from next year onwards a more realistic and need based AWP&B will be prepared.

EMERGING ISSUES

From the foregoing case studies it is established that planning process has an important role in improving quality of plan. It is also clear that planning process is languishing in states like Gujarat because serious thought has not been given for its improvement. Some crucial issues which have emerged from the study are :

- Barring Gujarat all other states are stressing on formation of planning teams at various levels. West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh are in process of forming planning team while planning teams are existing at state, district and even at the block levels in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra. Their effective functioning is now a prime concern before these states. Some states like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have made systematic efforts to build capacity of planning team members as well as project functionaries for their effective participation in planning. In West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh and Karantaka, though there has been some efforts for capacity building, more systematic effort is needed. Gujarat needs to give immediate attention

to constitution of planning teams as well as their capacity building. Training on microplanning also needs to be undertaken on priority basis.

- States which have started preparing sub district plan such as Block and Cluster Plans need to develop mechanism for better utilisation of these plans to address the specific problems of a block and cluster. Simultaneously house to house survey data need to be updated and utilised for identifying specific needs of habitations. For example, in Gujarat the problem of access is still continuing in some villages and pockets, though the state has formulated a variety of commendable strategies for providing schooling facilities to the deprived children. Absence of house to house survey data may be one of the reasons for not addressing access issue adequately.
- Planning for improvement in quality of schools needs to be emphasised in the coming years. Emphasis needs to be given on preparation and implementation of plan for each school involving teachers, VEC members, CRC and BRC coordinators. Many states have already prepared school plans. The states need to encourage CRCs and teachers to implement these plans.
- It is necessary to evolve a proper monitoring and support system for better networking with grassroot level functionaries. Frequent visits to the schools by district and state level functionaries provide an 'on site' support for effective planning and implementation at school level.
- Forums need to be created to discuss various issues including the state norms and policies, relevant for primary education. Holding of regular review meetings may serve this purpose. The minutes of review meetings can provide essential inputs for formulation of strategies. Involvement of project functionaries working at various levels in planning is expected to ensure better implementation of the programme.
- Finally, it can be said that preparation of need based plans can be possible if decentralised and participatory planning process is ensured.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PLANNING PROCESS IN DPEP STATES AND DISTRICTS, AS EXPLAINED IN AWP&B 2000-2001

Planning Process

HARYANA			KARNATAKA*	KERALA*	
S.C.	Hissar	Gurgaon	Gulbarga	Mallapuram	Idukki
<p>The plan preparation begins at VEC level and consolidation is done at the block and district levels by concerned advisory committees. Convergence with the various government and panchayat raj institutions has been mentioned.</p> <p>At district level, plan is scrutinised by a planning team comprising DPC, APCs and BRC coordinators.</p> <p>SCERT and SRGs are involved in plan formulation by holding a series of meetings and workshops.</p> <p>At SPO, a team has been constituted to appraise the district plans based on guidelines of DPEP.</p> <p>The state organised 19 meetings and workshops at SPO and DPOs to discuss the proposals of AWP&B on different interventions.</p> <p>Discussions held on pre-appraisals and appraisal techniques of plans with different heads and functionaries of various DPEP departments based in SCERT, SIEMAT and SPO.</p> <p>Appraisal team constituted at SPO, appraised all district plan and suggestions have been included.</p>	<p>The process of formulating AWP&B has been stated to be based on participatory method where there is adequate involvement of grassroot level workers at VECs to CRCs and BRCs. The process in detail is as follows:</p> <p>VEC : Local needs and aspirations are discussed and compiled by VEC members.</p> <p>CRC : Plan proposed by VEC is reviewed and com-plied by CRC coordinators.</p> <p>BRC : The CRC plans are received and discussed by Block Advisory Committees. After being approved by BAC, BRC plan is prepared.</p> <p>Dist. : All the BRC plans are consolidated by DIPU and discussed and appraised by District Advisory Committees.</p>	<p>The district plan has not taken up micro planning and school improvement plan. No house to house survey has been initiated or proposed. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of 'out of school children and the reasons for their non enrolment or dropout.</p> <p>Although it is stated that the district had adopted decentralised and participatory process while formulating the AWP&B with full involvement of VECs, CRCs and BRCs. However, no list of dates of meetings and consultations have been illustrated to substantiate the planning process. it is also not clear that in what capacity BRCs, CRCs and VECs were involved in formulating plan.</p>	<p>Meetings of all BRCs and CRC coordinators conducted convened for discussing AWP&B. A format was distributed among them for identifying further educational needs.</p> <p>The DPO held three meetings with CRCs at three separate places to get feedback from them on different DPEP activities.</p> <p>In April, a meeting of DRG was conducted followed by the BRG meetings that held at block level and their suggestions have been included in the plan.</p>	<p>Planning process has been given in detail. This includes :</p> <p>•Phase I :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for the District Resource Group, Block Resource Group, Panchayat Resource Group and School Support Group. <p>•Phase II :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -School level plan preparation. -Panchayat Education plan preparation. -Block Education plan preparation. -District level plan preparation. <p>-In this phase the emphasis was laid on the following elements :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •appraising and improving the draft plan document; •developing their own goals, target and action point at respective level; •Final plan document preparation. <p>The following programmes were conducted in connection with plan preparation at various levels :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •One day district level orientation held on 20/1/2000 of BRC Manjeri. The District panchayat standing committee Chairman inaugurated the programme. All the block level educational officers attended. • One day block level orientation was held at BRCs concerned in which all the VEC level functionaries attended. It includes VEC president, Secretaries, Panchayat education task force members, BLEC Chairman and convenors. •One day training for school support group was held at panchayat level. All the PTA/ MTA presidents, HMS and SRG convenors attended. School level plan preparation workshop was held in all primary schools. •Panchayat level plan preparation and block level consolidation were conducted. •District level two day workshop was held at DPO Mallapuram. •District Advisory Board (DAB) : The committee met three times i.e. on 6.5.99, 29.5.99 and 17.11.99. •District Implementation Committee (DIC) : DIC meeting was held thrice, i.e. on 2.6.99, 16.9.99 and 9.2.2000. •Block Advisory Committee (BAC) : BACs are in position in all the BRCS headed by the Block Panchayat President. The committee met on an average of 3 times during this year. 	<p>The district has followed a rigorous planning process. This includes:</p> <p>Phase-I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Formation of District Resource Groups -2 day training of this resource group -One day orientation to VEC members -Two day orientation to BRG <p>Phase-II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -School level plan preparation -VEC level plan preparation -BRC level plan preparation -District level plan preparation -DRG meeting for finalisation of draft plan

Planning Process

MAHRASHTRA*		TAMIL NADU			GUJARAT	
Latur	Jalna	S.C.	Dharmapuri	Pudukottai	S.C.	Dangs
<p>Planning process has been mentioned in the write-up of Planning and Management section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Needs of schools have been identified in a joint meeting of VEC members and school teachers. •Cluster co-ordinators and headmasters finalised these demands and consolidated at cluster level. •AT BRC, BEO and BRC personnel discussed with CRC co-ordinators and consolidated the demands at block level. •Final meeting was held at DPO in which BEOs, BRC co-ordinators and all the personnel of DRC were present and the AWP&B was prepared on the meeting. 	<p>Process of AWP&B preparation has been mentioned in detail. This includes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meeting at DRO was held in December, 1999. Block specific needs were discussed in this. •Workshop at BRO was conducted from 27-31 December, 1999 in which cluster coordinators and HMs were instructed to make proper demands for AWP&B and to identify out of school children from micro planning data. •Workshop at CRO – conducted in January, 2000 in which VEC members and primary school teachers were present. In these workshops, needs for different types of AS i.e. contract schools, sugar schools, prema centres, condensed urse, residential hostels etc. were discussed. •Cluster level demands were consolidated under the guidance of Cluster level Advisory Committee and referred to Block Advisory Committee. •These consolidated cluster level demands were reviewed by Block Advisory Committee and block level proposals were made and referred to DPO. •In the state level meeting, held on 27.1.2000 the BRO proposals (block level) were discussed. •A meeting was held at DPO to discuss the new schemes to be added in the plan. •In February (8-10 February, 2000) the plans were finally prepared and submitted on 11th February, 2000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •House hold survey has been conducted. •School development plans were prepared. •Cluster development plans were prepared •Block level plans were prepared. •EMIS data were collected. •Monthly CRC meetings were held. •VLC and PTA meetings were conducted. •Monthly review meetings of AEEOs, AEEOSs and BRC supervisors were conducted. •Monthly review meetings of DPC and ADPCs were held at state project office by SPD. •Visit to schools, AS centres, CRCs and BRCs made by different officials of SPO. •JRM recommendations were taken into account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DPO planning team and block supervisors were trained in Mussoorie. •An initial training was conducted for Headmasters for preparation of 2000-01 plan. •School development formats were given to collect the information on schools. •VLC/ PTA meeting was conducted to finalise the school level plans. •Special training for CRC was conducted. •The school plans were consolidated at CRC and then BRC level. •Two district level workshops were conducted to identify block specific issues. •Plans were finalised in the District level workshop in presence of SPO personnel. •Micro planning by Headmasters was conducted to know the village specific and school specific issues. •BRC staffs were trained to analyse the EMIS data. •Headmasters were trained to undertake micro planning, school mapping exercises. •A format was designed, printed and supplied. 	<p>The planning process, adopted for plan formulation has been mentioned in the plan. These are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •VLC meeting was conducted in April, 1999 to assess the improvement of infrastructure, community mobilisation etc. •Orientation course of VLC members has been conducted in March, 2000. •Meeting of CRC coordinators of 7 blocks in January, 2000 and need based teacher training has been planned. •Existing school development plans were updated and handed over to the BRCs by December 1999. •HM submitted DISE forms in September, 1999. •Cluster plans have been prepared by CRC coordinators and block plans were prepared and submitted in February, 2000. •DPC, ADPC, MDO and WDO and consultants attended the first meeting on plan preparation at Vellupuram in February, 2000. •DPO personnel discussed with BRC functionaries to finalise the plan on 21st and 22nd February. •2 day meeting on AWP&B was conducted in March. This was followed by another meeting in Perambur where SPO personnel joined. •The cluster level achievement test conducted in July, 1999 to identify the issues related to improvement of achievement level of children. •DIET faculty members were involved in each meeting. •NGOs have been involved in process of planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Planning cell was created in the GCERT at the time of DPEP II planning. Existing planning and management cell has been merged with SPO to carry out planning and management activities. •Micro planning has been conducted in 90 selected villages in three DPEP districts in 1998. •In selected pockets, village education plan and school improvement plan are under preparation. •The EMIS data have been used to identify the needs of the districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Convergence plan, process of plan, implementation schedules are not included in the plan.

Planning Process

ANDHRA PRADESH		HIMACHAL PRADESH		
S.C.	Chittoor	Warangal	S.C.	Chamba
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Planning teams has been formed at the state level constituting SPO personnel, NGO activist, SCERT faculty members, SRG members etc. Planning teams have been formed at district and mandal levels. Planning teams have visited schools and discussed with teachers, parents and children. •In February, sharing workshop have been conducted. •Mandal plans were reviewed by district planning teams and AWP&B was prepared in March, 2000. •Various studies and survey reports were used by district teams to identify gaps and formulate strategies. •State resource group and mandal resource group have been formed and the members of these groups have been trained also. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Micro planning was conducted in 1998-99. The data was updated through SMIS/EMIS and school profiles. •Planning teams have been formed at the district, mandal and even habitations level. •One workshop was held at TC level in which headmasters with essential educational data during 19th-24th February, 2000 at cluster levels planning formats were designed and given to each school in advance. •Mandal level plans were prepared and the consolidation of these plans was done at district level. •Feedback reports of JRM, Mid-Term Assessment Survey, School and Pupil Survey etc. utilised for the draft plan. •Resolution of mandal workshops helped preparing AWP&B. •Interactions with different people, i.e. teachers, vidya volunteers, DIET faculty members also helped to prepare AWP&B. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Planning Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Seminars were conducted at district and mandal level. •Previous experience of the project also have been conducted. •District level workshops and mandal level workshops were organised in December, 1999. In mandal level workshops many decisions were taken which have been mentioned in the plan P-81. •These suggestions were considered while preparing AWP&B, 2000-01. •School related data and teacher's opinions have been collected during school visits which have been incorporated in AWP&B. On the basis of suggestions of teachers, three training programmes have been undertaken in 2000-01. These are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◊Health Education ◊Multigrade teaching ◊SUPW. •The AWP&B also has considered base line assessment and mid term assessment survey, suggestions made 10th JRM team, findings of research studies also. •Two days meeting was conducted at state level to discuss planning strategies on 9th and 10th February, 2000 which has been followed by district level workshop on 17th and 18th February, 2000. •All the mandal planning teams prepared their plans and sharing workshops of those plans was conducted during 26th February to 1st March, 2000. •Finally AWP&B of district was prepared on the basis of these mandal plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The SPO has constituted a planning team comprising SPD, planning coordinator, Chairman, HPPES, and mission directors SCERT and SIEMAT. •In the year 1999-2000, the SPO envisaged capacity building of officers and staffs in planning and management. In view of it 72 functionaries were sent for-receiving trainings and participating in meetings and workshops organised at NRRC, Mussoorie and at NIEPA, New Delhi, respectively. •Prior to initiating preparation of AWP&B 2000-01, the SPO held 3 meetings with BRCCs and CRCCs, 4 different meetings with district planning teams, 3 meetings with pedagogy units at SPO and districts and 2 meetings with incharges of other units. •DPEP interventions in the state AWP&B have been based on the feedback from various sources such as recommendations of 9th and 10th JRMs, HP state recommendations, national and state level study on community mobilisation/ participation, mid term assessment survey, interactions of SPO with BRCCs and CRCCs, district planning teams, pedagogy units, DIETs and reflections from various workshops and EMIS data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A district level planning team was constituted comprising functionaries who received training in AWP&B. •In pre-plan formulation period, a two days training was imparted to each BRC at DPO and each CRC at cluster levels. •At each block, AWP&B has been formulated on the basis of demands/ needs specified by CRCS, CHTs, teachers, and VECs. Feedbacks were also received from Yuvak Mandals, Mahila Mandals and all the schools from the blocks. •All the AWP&Bs were formulated in blocks and received and consolidated at DPO by the district planning team. Moreover, the district plan also incorporated the suggestions it received from 9th and 10th JRM and by state level teams.

Planning Process

WEST BENGAL		UTTAR PRADESH*			BIHAR*	
S.C.	Cooch Behar	Malda	Gonda	Siddharth Nagar	Bhojpur	Sitamarhi
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Establishment of CLRC in last year helped decentralisation of planning process this year. •BLCC are functioning with the involvement of PRI and VEC. •Using the data collected from DISE and general information and maps from the VECs and schools, a school mapping programme was started at the CLRC, and a report was prepared by circle resource coordinator (CLRC). •Workshops were conducted to prepare AWP&B. ⇒Circle level workshop attended by teachers, literacy volunteers, panchayat functionaries. ⇒District level workshop. ⇒DRG members meeting under different functional area. •State level workshop has been conducted in March, 2000. •Follow up workshop has been conducted at SPO in April for finalisation of plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The plan document has mentioned the planning process which will be established in next year. Three block level workshops on planning and review of programme will be organised during 2000-01. The issues to be discussed in these workshops also have been mentioned in the plan. •It has been mentioned that one day planning workshops has been organised in each block to prepare the AWP&B of 2000-01 and the draft plans were placed for discussion. These plans were incorporated in the final plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DPEP Malda formed a team of 4 members for AWP&B preparation. •District field meetings of ALCC and DPIC were regularly held to identify the needs. •Circle level meeting of SIs, teachers and panchayat functionaries etc. was held to identify the issues to be incorporated in plans. •House to house survey (conducted in 1998) data, and findings of baseline survey (1999) have been used. •District level planning team reviewed CLRC proposal and prepared AWP&B finally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A district level, a planning team was constituted at DPO and few members of them were trained in DIET in planning and management. •At DPO, a meeting was organised to chalk out strategy for identifying educational needs of communities at grassroot level. For that purpose, a team was constituted in each block and Gram Panchayat. The team at Gram Panchayat was asked to identify the various educational needs related to access, retention and quality improvement in the concerned villages. •Several meetings were held at BRCs and GPs in the months of January and February, 2000 on planning and management. Plans were consolidated at blocks and finally compiled at district level. •Major sources used for preparation of AWP&B are NIC household survey form, village education register, DISE'98, EMIS and information given by SIEMAT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A district level 15 members core team was constituted representing DIET, DPO, BRCs NPRC coordinator, one primary teacher, one VEC member and one member from District Educational Planning Committee. •At blocks with minority's population, the district core team held several meetings and consultations for identifying educational needs. •The plan priorities are based on needs identified through micro planning, PRA-PLA workshops, EMIS and perspective plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Several meetings were organised to solve the problems in the implementation of programme. •DTF fortnightly and EC meeting every quarterly were conducted in which several decisions were taken. •A core planning team was formed consisting - DPC, DSE, BEO and programme personnel of DLO under the leadership of DOC. •Discussion took place on alternate day to prepare the plan. Following meetings were held : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒meeting with BEO, REO and DSE ⇒meeting with BEOs ⇒Meeting with CRCC ⇒Meeting with BRCC ⇒Meeting with VEC president and member ⇒Meeting with DRG ⇒Meeting with DTF ⇒Meeting with Zilla Karya Kami ⇒Meeting with RPM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The district plan is based on information derived from discussions and workshops with teachers, VEC animators, teacher's, organisations, district task force, Mahila Workers and other organisations. •From August, 1999 to January, 2000 the district organised 23 meetings and workshops at district to VEC levels for identifying major needs in primary education. •Micro planning exercise has been conducted in few villages and the final report is awaited. •It has been stated that, the district plan ensures the convergence with the existing mass education programme, ICDS and other services.

Planning Process

RAJASTHAN*									
Sirohi	Bhilwara	Sikar	Jhalawar	Tonk	Jhunjhunu	Kota	Sriganganagar	Alwar	Nagaur
<p>•The district plan has been decentralised and participatory. A district core team was constituted to ensure the formulation of micro level plan. The core team arranged eight meetings/ workshops at district headquarters as well as in different blocks where district and block functionaries, local bodies, NGOs and panchayat members participated. Findings of some important primary and secondary data like social assessment studies and baseline achievement studies were utilised.</p>	<p>•To make the process decentralised and area specific, the district convened 16 different meetings at the levels of district, blocks and villages. Besides, the district core team discussed at length with various cross sections of people and took their suggestions. The plan tried to integrate major findings of two studies conducted in the district viz. social assessment studies and baseline assessment survey.</p>	<p>•The formulation of AWP&B is based on information received through meetings and consultations with people from different sections of society. The district held 12 meetings at the level of district, block and villages. Major findings of the studies on social assessment and baseline assessment were utilised while formulating plan.</p>	<p>•During the period of preparing AWP&B, the district convened 10 meetings at various levels to discuss problems concerning primary education. The process of plan has also utilised the major findings of social assessment studies, baseline survey and convergence of services with other departments.</p>	<p>•The district convened 9 meetings at various levels where representatives of DPO, BRCs panchayat members, other local bodies and NGOs participated. The plan formulation utilised major findings of social assessment survey, baselfne survey and convergence of services.</p>	<p>•The formulation of AWP&B has involved different sections from people through process of participatory exercises at different levels. There held 9 different meetings in which school teachers, villagers, block officers and locally elected representatives participated for discussing various problems and constraints on primary education. The district also consulted minority communities by convening two different meetings for understanding their problems and also to incorporate their suggestions. These meetings identified several issues i.e. 80 unserved habitations with more than 250 inhabitants, problem of child labour and child marriage, high dropout rate, poor quality of education and problems of SC, ST girls and disabled children. •However, the plan fails to establish linkage between identified grey areas and the proposed activities.</p>	<p>•The formulation of AWP&B has been participatory. There held 21 workshops and meetings at different levels for discussing the existing problems pertaining to retention, access, enrolment and quality improvement. In these meetings members from villages, NGOs, local elected bodies teachers as well as functionaries of district and blocks participated. Moreover, the district plan also used/ findings of social assessment report while deciding plan priorities. •The plan is not documented as per DPEP guidelines mentioned in manual on AWP&B.</p>	<p>•The formulation of AWP&B has been based on information collected through meetings/ consultations with teachers, sarpanches, pradhans and consultants and functionaries of DPO, BRCs and CRCs. In this process 9 meetings were convened at different levels and a few with minority communities. However, the list of meetings and its objectives have not been provided.</p>	<p>•The plan has been stated to be based on area specific local requirements and demands of people living in diverse regional variations. In this process, there held 8 consultation meetings at village/ block level for identifying major problems in primary education. The district also conducted social assessment studies and its findings have been integrated with AWP&B. However, the district requires exact figures of total number of children in 6-11 years of age and their staffs enrolment and retention. For it conducting house to house survey and micro planning exercise are indispensable.</p>	<p>•The district plan has involved people from different sections of the society through meetings and consultations. Several meetings were convened at DPO, BRCs, CRCs where local bodies and villagers took participation. Moreover, findings of social assessment study (1998) and baseline assessment study (1998) have been integrated with formulation of AWP&B. Special emphasis has been laid on minority communities, where the literacy rate among girls children is quite less.</p>

Information on Planning is not available in the State Component Plan.

SCHOOL SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

SCHOOLS IN WEST BENGAL

Bajbaj (I) Circle

Jamalpur Government Primary School

- In Jamalpur one large room and verandah of the school has been constructed using funds provided by BDO. Last year one more teacher has been recruited and now three teachers are working in this school where the strength of student is nearly 400. While VEC grants have been used for small repair work, the teachers have reported that they have purchased materials to prepare TLM.
- Despite commendable efforts made by the teachers, it has been found that the school environment is quite disappointing. The school is situated along a local canal and it has caused damage to the main wall of the only class room of the school. Teachers and VEC members fear that unless the canal is partially filled up and an embankment is constructed, the wall of the school may collapse in near future. The Junior Engineer has already visited the school and given an estimate of the expenditure required for repair of wall and filling up of canal. VEC members have discussed this matter in VEC meetings and sent an application to BDO office for further action.
- Though one VEC member claimed that VEC meetings are held regularly but a teachers said that out of fifteen, only three or four members attend the meeting. Though the VEC meetings are conducted regularly, it has been found that the Village Education Register (VER) is not updated and no discussion takes place regarding the achievement of individual student. It has been reported that all the children in the village are enrolled in the school. However, VEC and teachers need to pay more attention on retention, regular attendance and improvement in achievement level of children. These issues may be discussed with the parents.

Millat Urdu Primary School

- The situation is just reverse in Millat Urdu Primary School. Here three teachers are teaching around 275 children. They are working towards improving the teaching learning process in the school. A laudable effort has been made to build up a child friendly class room using DPEP fund given for construction of additional classroom. In addition to DPEP fund, teachers too have made some financial contribution. Painting by a local young artist has made the classroom so attractive that the villagers consider the school as an important asset of village and praise the head master for his special effort in this regard. The wall paintings have been selected according to the curriculum of class I and II.
- The absenteeism of students particularly of girls also has been reduced. Teachers are hopeful that they will be able to devote more time on activity based teaching and TLM preparation now.

- It has been found that though there is a practice of weekly and monthly test to evaluate the day to day learning level of children, the teachers keep the record of marks obtained in Ist, 2nd terms and Annual Examination. The marks obtained in weekly and monthly tests however are not recorded or considered for further improvement of learning skill of children. Keeping pertinence of such assessments in view, they have been advised to include these in the records. It has also been suggested that the teachers need to maintain a diary to monitor the learning level of each student. On the basis of this diary, they may prepare plans for teaching different subjects in the class.

Falta II Circle

Purba Chanditala Govt. Primary school

This school is situated near a main road. The school witnesses the following problems:

- There is no proper link road connecting the school with the main road. During the rainy season, it becomes particularly difficult for children as well as teachers to reach the school as they have to cross a huge, swampy play-ground. To add to their trouble recently a part of the ceiling too collapsed. The teachers contributed Rs. 5,000 among themselves and got the ceiling temporarily repaired, but more fund is required for proper renovation other wise any day the ceiling may collapse again. Because of these problems some parents have already withdrawn their children from the school. Now these children have enrolled in a nearby private school. If the school does not get repaired soon more children may drop out in near future.
- Earlier, community was co-operative towards the school. They would help teachers in leveling of the grounds and other small repairs. But now their attitude has changed. Moreover, the people in the village are poor and they are reluctant to make any financial contribution towards the school. And the situation is such that the building cannot be renovated only through community involvement.
- VEC is not cooperating with the teachers. If four meetings are called, VEC members attend only one meeting. Most often Pradhan of VEC does not attend the meetings.
- All the three teachers are qualified and trained but it is difficult for them to practice activity based teaching using TLM due to lack of space in school. The school has only two rooms and those are also in dilapidated condition. Outdoor space too can be utilised only in winters.

Harindanga Primary School

- This school is considered one of the best primary schools in Falta. It is attached to the senior secondary school and is situated on a road side. Six teachers are posted in the school and the strength of the student is around 360. Being located in a suitable place (within 1 k.m. of Block Panchayat Office) the school does not face the problem of

absenteeism of teachers and students like other schools in Falta. The problems which were observed during the visit are as follows :

- In spite of being attached to the senior secondary school which has proper infrastructural facilities, this primary school is still facing some problems as far as physical facilities are concerned. The tiles and bamboos supporting the ceiling have been severely damaged as they are almost thirty years old. It is very much risky to conduct classes in these rooms as the ceiling may collapse any day. Fund collected from community has been utilised for construction of additional rooms for Class XI and XII, leaving the primary section in the cold.
- The only toilet of this huge school is used by senior section while the teachers and students of primary school face lots of difficulty without any toilet. To add to their woes the existing toilet facility is attached to the primary section and is in a very unhygienic condition.
- Teachers are experienced and trained but they are unable to apply their skills in classroom due to lack of space. The school has only three classrooms and a small office room. So, the teachers feel that more rooms can be constructed on the first floor if fund is available.
- The play ground is for the senior section, and the primary school children are allowed to play only as per the convenience of the senior section time table. This prevents teachers from carrying out play way method or to conduct games for the children of primary section. In the head master's opinion, the needs of primary school are overlooked because people at block panchayat and district level feel that since the primary school is attached to the senior secondary school it can have no infrastructural problem. As a result of this, no funds have been provided for construction or repair and renovation of existing class rooms. In spite of all these problems whenever possible the teachers use TLM for class rooms transaction. They are involved in Falta Learning Improvement Project (FLIP), a special training imparted to some selected teachers of selected schools in Falta under the guidance of Dr. A.K. Jalaluddin, Former Professor of NCERT. Teachers are optimistic about the future performance of the children and strongly feel that if problem of inadequate space is solved, they will be able to provide more qualitative inputs. In this hope they maintain good relation with the parents of children as well as the teachers of the senior section.
- A brief discussion with the mothers of the children of this primary school revealed that they are satisfied with its performance. They hope, the school will be able to provide better educational facilities in future so that the parents do not have to send their children to private schools.

Schools in Himachal Pradesh

In Himachal Pradesh three schools from Sarla block and one from Nahan block have been visited to assess the extent to which needs vary from school to school. All these schools have been found with low Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR). These schools are usually two-three room structures and almost all the teachers have been found practicing multi grade teaching. It should be mentioned here that none of the school is single teacher school.

Devka Govt. Primary School

This school is a road side school with two classrooms and one 'verandah'. The school has a big ground in front of it, which is used for playing games and activity based teaching.

- This school has adequate infrastructure facilities like blackboard, durry, patti etc. which have facilitated a conducive teaching learning atmosphere. Out of two teachers, one teaches classes V, III and I, while the other teaches class II and IV. In case one of them takes a leave, the other teacher has to manage all the classes.
- In one room class IV and II are accommodated while the other classroom has been occupied by class I children. The 'verandah' is being used by children of class V and III. During rainy season and winter it become difficult to organise the classes in verandah.
- It has been observed that teachers have divided the classes according to their own convenience rather than of learning level of children. One of the teachers of this school was found to be deputed to a school in Kemda village at the time of this visit.
- The teacher was found to be practicing the traditional methods of teaching. No group activity was observed. He expressed an urgent need for training of multigrade teaching.
- The teacher reported that they use TLM more frequently than earlier as they have already received training on use of TLM. They have also purchased a large number of TLM using teacher's grant but they can use these TLMs only if they get time. The teachers have demanded one additional room and additional teacher but there is little chance of increase in enrolment.
- Community participation remains confined to enrolment of the children in the school.
- The village Education Register has not been updated this year.
- The open space, attached to the school is used for class room transaction and sports or games very occasionally.

Jamuli govt. Primary school

This school is the centre school in the Surla block. It has one big room and a huge 'verandah' to accommodate children. The numerical strength of children in the school is around 60 and three teachers have been appointed here to teach these children.

- One additional room has been constructed which is utilized as Cluster Resource Centre. The school has been upgraded as middle school but no additional room has been constructed. Because of this the teachers of middle school have occupied the building where primary school used to run. Present school does not have provision for drinking water and because of lack of adequate space, teachers face problems in handling all the classes.
- During this visit, it was observed that two teachers were on leave. So the school was being run by Centre Head Teacher (CHT). The CHT was found practicing traditional methods of teaching. Proper attention on seating arrangement of the children seems

to be absent as all the children from I to V have been found seating together. For example the children from class I were seated in one row and the children from class V were seated in the next row. Moreover, the wall of the classroom was painted in blue instead of black and the CHT was found unaware of its purpose. It has been reported that all the children come to the school regularly. The school has adequate space outside to organise games and sports for children. It has been felt that the CHT needs special training in school management and modern teaching methods.

Jogiban Govt. Primary School

- This school is situated in the headquarter of Nahan block. The school is situated away from the main road. To reach the school a small 'nala' has to be crossed which becomes full of water during rainy season. The school has two rooms and one 'verandah' and a well maintained play ground with proper water facility. The school has toilet and electricity facilities too.
- Two teachers are appointed here and they make use of activity based teaching method using TLM. They have prepared varieties of TLM which have been attractively displayed in both classrooms.
- It has been reported that the children of this school take part in district level sports and games events. During the visit it has been observed that almost all the children are confident enough and are able to interact with the teachers freely. The girls seem to be fond of extra curricular activities like dance and music as they kept on singing till we left the school.
- It has been reported that community is considerably aware about the functioning of school. They have contributed towards installation of a hand pump to provide drinking water facility in the school. Children and teachers together have planted many trees for beautification of the school premises. This has been possible after availing the permanent source of water. Visit in such a school definitely makes one feel satisfied.

Kemda Govt. Primary School

- This is a building-less and denotified school which has been opened for the children, belonging to the Gujjar community, a migratory caste of Himachal Pradesh. The school needs a special mention as it has been opened for deprived children who could not even dream of education without this school. After implementation of DPEP in Sirmour district, a school was notified for this village. A teacher was posted to run the school. After three months, the school became denotified due to some extraneous reasons and interference of an influential person.
- It has been observed that around twenty five children are enrolled in the school. Initially, the main task of the teacher was to make children learn about cleanliness and personal hygiene. Now most of them come to the class after taking a bath. It is difficult for the children to follow 'Hindi' which is the medium of instruction in the class. All the teachers who come here on deputation, do not know the local language. Recruitment of a permanent teacher with some knowledge in local language is urgently required. It has been observed that some small children are also attending class though they are not enrolled in the school presently. These children will be enrolled in next academic session. In spite of this, with the help of BRC and CRC,

community has made a special effort to continue the school. A small piece of land has been donated to it. A local farmer has also given a room, which he constructed for his personal use. No other person in this village owns a permanent structure as they migrate to other villages during winter. They also reported that since last two years they are not taking their children with them while migrating to other villages. A few elderly persons look after these children so that they can continue their education.

- In spite of the tremendous interest shown by community as well as children, the school still remains denotified without a permanent teacher. Teachers come to this school on deputation and get replaced after every 15 days. This has affected the teaching learning process.
- The lady teacher who has been temporarily given the responsibility of teaching in this school (this teacher is posted in Devka primary school) was found very cooperative and responsible. The school is still continuing just because of the attempts made by BRC, CRC and the teachers who have been deputed here. Now the concerned district officials and the state level officials need to take action for notification of this school, which has provided invaluable educational opportunity to the children of the deprived community.

SCHOOLS IN MAHARASHTRA

District Parbhani

Centre Primary School, Parva

- The school has ten classrooms and each room has electricity facilities. The school possess sufficient number of furniture. The school covers upto 7th class.
- There are around 450 children and 11 teachers. The PTR is nearly 44.
- Total number of children in the age group 6-11 years are 240.
- A big gap exists between number of children in class 1 (72 children) and class VI (22 children).
- In nursery classes, books were displayed in classrooms for children.
- Almost all the teachers are trained.
- The school has very good relationships with VEC members.
- All 218 children (6-11 years) of the village are enrolled in school.
- Village community has fulfilled several needs of the school like construction of ceilings at school verandah, water facility, toilets, compound walls and music instruments.
- Both, school teachers and VEC members hold monthly meetings on regular basis.
- The micro planning exercise in the village had been undertaken by teachers.

Primary School, Nageshwarbari

- There are 262 children and five teachers.
- The school has four rooms with little furniture.
- It does not have a compound wall.
- The school is located just by the side of state high way and absence of compound wall makes the children vulnerable to accident.
- There is lack of facilities of drinking water and electricity.

- Moreover, there is an open unprotected well touching the left side of the school. It is highly dangerous.
- The teachers are not trained in English and Mathematics.
- The rate of absenteeism of children is high. Majority of the absentee children do not come to school because they have to work in their homes as well as in fields.
- The VEC members are not very active, as they are mostly agricultural labourers, and they migrate to neighboring areas in search of livelihoods.

SCHOOLS IN GUJARAT (DISTRICT BANASKANTHA)

Primary School, Salimkot

- The school compound has been well decorated. It has seven rooms and construction of one additional room is in process. All the rooms are provided with electricity facility, fans and adequate number of furniture.
- The telephone facility is also available here.
- Enrolment of girls has been comparatively poor.
- The VEC, MTA and PTA have been found to be quite active.
- There is requirement of Science kit.
- The teachers require special training on English and Mathematics.
- The school faces problem of drinking water.

Primary School, Village Andheria

- There are seven classrooms. All are provided with electricity facility, fans and furniture.
- The school has drinking water facility and toilets.
- There are four teachers and all of them are trained.
- It has around 200 children.
- The dropout rate is high.
- Enrolment of girls is very low.
- The VEC members are not very active.
- Microplanning exercise has been taken up by school teachers in this village.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Additional District Magistrate
AAEEO	Additional Assistant Elementary Education Officer
ADPC	Additional District Project Coordinator.
AEEO	Additional Elementary Education Officer
AEO	Additional Education Officer
ALS	Alternative Schooling
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan & Budgets
BDO	Block Development Officer
BEO	Block Education Officer
BEP	Basic Education Project
BLCC	Block Level Coordinator Committee
BMS	Basic Minimum Service
BPT	Block Planning Team
BPTC	Block Pedagogy and Training Committee
BRO	Block Resource Office
BRP	Block Resource Persons
CHT	Centre Head Teacher
CLRC	Circle Level Resource Centre
CPC	Circle Project Coordinator
CPS	Centre Primary School
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CRO	Cluster Resource Office
DCC	District Core Committee
DEE	Directorate of Elementary Education
DEO	District Elementary Officer
DEO	Deputy Education Officer.
DIET	District Institute of Educational Training
DISE	District Information System in Education
DLCC	District Level Coordinator Committee
DPC	District Project Coordinator
DPIC	District Project Implementation Committee
DPTC	District Pedagogy and Training Committee
DPO	District Planning Office
DPO	District Project Office
DPSC	District Primary School Council
DPT	District Planning Team
DPTC	District Pedagogy Training Committee
DRDA	District Rural Development Authority
DRO	District Resource Office
DRP	District Resource Persons
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
Ed.CIL	Educational Consultants India Limited
EED	Elementary Education Department
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme

EMIS	Educational Management Information System
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GO	Government Order
GP	Gram Panchayat
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
IED	Integrated Education for Disabled
JRY	Jawahar-Rojgar Yojna
KRP	Key Resource Persons
LDF	Local Development Fund
MDM	Mid Day Meal
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MLCC	Municipal Coordination Committee
MIEPA	Maharashtra Institute of Educational Planning & Administration
MTA	Mother Teachers Association
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Non Formal Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NSDART	National Society for Development in Administration Research and Training
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutes
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PTTI	Primary Teachers Training Institute
RT	Resource Teachers
SFG	Special Focus Group
SI	Sub Inspector
SIEMAT	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SMART	State Massive Teachers Training Programme
SPO	State Project Office
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSK	Shishu Shiksha Kendra
STB	State Text Book
SWD	Social Welfare Department
TLM	Teaching Learning Material
TSG	Technical Support Group
VEC	Village Education Committee
VEO	Village Education Office
VLC	Village Level Committee