

Bringing Girls Centre Stage

Strategies & Interventions for Girls' Education in DPEP



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D10481

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DOC, No..... D-10461
Date..... 19-01-2000

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November, 1999

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1

AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Primary Education: National Perspective

The Constitution of India directs the State to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years. The State is further empowered to practice positive discrimination in favour of economically and educationally weaker groups. Article 15 (3) of the Constitution empowers the State to make special provisions for women and children. This has enabled the State to draw up special policies and programmes to benefit women and girls.

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

The subsequent Programme of Action (POA), 1992 clearly spells out :

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

- The rural girls are doubly disadvantaged by non availability of educational facilities and by the work they have to do related with fuel, fodder, water, sibling care and paid and unpaid work. Coordinated efforts, albeit with other Departments/Ministries, need to be made to provide the necessary support services to enhance their participation and performance. Provision of support services and child care facilities should be seen as a necessary and integral adjunct of UEE.
- An important constraining factor for female education is the lack of women teachers in rural areas. The Revised Policy Formulations postulate that at least 50 percent of teachers recruited in future would be women. Therefore special efforts would be made to recruit women teachers and to augment teacher-training facilities for women so that adequate number of qualified women teachers are available in different subjects, including Mathematics and Science.

The total enrolment at the primary stage during the period 1950-51 to 1996-97 increased by 5.75 times. For girls, the increase has been nine times. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) at the primary stage in the country has risen from 42.6 % in 1950-51 to 89.7 % in 1997-98. The GER for girls has shown an increase from 24.8 % to 81.2 % . Girls' enrolment has grown at the primary stage from 5.4 million in 1950-51 to 47.5 million in 1997-98 (provisional figures), and this rate of growth of enrolment of girls has been higher than that of boys.¹ The rate of dropouts has also shown a consistent decline from 65 % in 1960-61 to 39.6 % in 1997-98. In the case of girls it presently stands at 41.3% against 70.9% in 1960-61.²

Despite these encouraging trends, gender disparities still persist. The national enrolment figure for girls (43.6%) has not been achieved across the States.³ There are pockets with alarmingly low enrolment of girls in most States. And although GERs in the country as a whole and in most of its states have shown steady improvement, the ratio is considerably lower in Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh. In addition to these States the GER for girls is also low in Goa, Orissa, Tripura, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Chandigarh.

This has been the reason for the continued need for special focus on girls' enrolment especially in select districts. There is ample evidence to show that girls remain educationally backward as compared to boys despite the fact that both are from similar

¹ *Selected Educational Statistics*, Government of India, 1997-98 (As on 30th September 1997) Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education), Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Division, New Delhi, 1999

² *Annual Report*, 1998-99, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 1999.

³ *Selected Educational Statistics*, Government of India, 1997-98 (As on 30th September 1997) Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education), Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Division, New Delhi, 1999

socio-economic backgrounds. A girl suffers the consequences of her gender. In recognition of this, special focus on girls' education has become an imperative for Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE).

Another disturbing factor has been the low participation of girls belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in primary education. The GERs for SC and ST girls in certain states are given below:

Table I.1: GER for SC and ST Girls (States with GER<80%)

| State | SC Girls (%) | State | ST Girls (%) |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Arunachal Pradesh | 28.13 | Bihar | 65.35 |
| Bihar | 55.42 | Himachal Pradesh | 75.66 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 81.89 | Madhya Pradesh | 67.08 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 68.85 | Manipur | 76.91 |
| Manipur | 79.43 | Meghalaya | 78.52 |
| Mizoram | 50.5 | Orissa | 62.41 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 58.24 | Rajasthan | 65.86 |
| Delhi | 44.26 | Tamil Nadu | 78.88 |
| | | Tripura | 74.62 |
| | | Andaman & Nicobar | 59.5 |
| | | Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 77.09 |

Source : Selected Educational Statistics, Government of India, 1997-98 (As on 30th September 1997) Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education), Planning, Monitoring and Statistics Division, New Delhi, 1999

This data clearly indicates the need to specially target girls belonging to disadvantaged groups if the goal of UPE is to be achieved.

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

Emergence and Thrust on Girls' Education

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) emerged in 1994 as a response to various challenges in the primary education sector. DPEP adopts a holistic approach and seeks to universalise access, retention and improve learning achievement and reduce disparities among social groups.

DPEP's thrust on girls' education is clear from the fact that it:

- targets educationally backward districts with female literacy below the national average (DPEP Guidelines, p.4)
- focuses coverage in the primary stage, with stress on education for girls and for socially disadvantaged groups (DPEP Guidelines, p.4)

The programme covers 176 districts spread over 15 States and of these 160 districts have female literacy rates below the national female literacy rate. Another 60 such districts in four States are in the pipeline.

Objectives of DPEP

DPEP supports replicable, sustainable and cost effective programme development and implementation in order to:

- reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement between gender and social groups to less than five per cent
- reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10 per cent
- raise average achievement levels by at least 25 per cent over measured baseline levels by ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40 per cent achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children
- provide access for all children to primary schooling or its equivalent non-formal education

The objectives clearly bring out the programme intent to increase the coverage of girls and improve their academic achievements and also reduce gender disparities in respect of enrolment, retention and learning achievements. When these are related to actual numbers, the magnitude of the task at hand become apparent.

This document seeks to highlight some of the diverse strategies which have been evolved under DPEP to address the various factors affecting the education of girls in low female literacy districts and their impact.

2

EMERGING TRENDS

Since the implementation of DPEP, visible changes/improvements are seen in respect of girls' enrolment, repeaters rate, proportion of female teachers and so on. The EMIS has captured many of the details, which, on analysis, have provided insights into the changed situation. Various studies have also pointed out/highlighted the improvements in various respects.

Apart from this, there is clear evidence of active community involvement in the pursuit for girls' education. The concern for their education is gradually beginning to occupy a place of importance in the lives of people.

Enrolment of girls

Enrolment is one of the areas in which positive results have emerged insofar as girls are concerned. Table II.1 tries to present the enrolment rates of girls in the DPEP states over a period of three years.

Table II.1 : Proportion of Girls' Enrolment to Total Enrolment (%)

| State | DPEP I | | | DPEP II – Expansion Districts | | | DPEP II | | | Total | | |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 |
| Assam | +7% | +8% | +8% | | +7% | +8% | | | | +7% | +7% | +8% |
| Andhra Pradesh | | | | | | | +7% | +7% | +7% | | | |
| Bihar * | | | | | | | | | | | +0% | +2% |
| Gujarat | | | | | | | +1% | +2% | +3% | | | |
| Haryana | +6% | +7% | +7% | | +8% | +7% | | | | +6% | +7% | +7% |
| Himachal Pradesh | | | | | | | +7% | +8% | +9% | | | |
| Karnataka | +7% | +7% | +8% | | +9% | +8% | | | | +7% | +9% | +8% |
| Kerala | +9% | +9% | +9% | | +9% | +9% | | | | +9% | +9% | +9% |
| Madhya Pradesh | +3% | +4% | +5% | | +4% | +4% | | | | +3% | +4% | +5% |
| Maharashtra | +8% | +8% | +8% | +7% | +7% | +8% | | | | +8% | +8% | +8% |
| Orissa | | | | | | | +5% | +6% | +6% | | | |
| Tamil Nadu | +8% | +8% | +9% | +9% | +9% | +9% | | | | +8% | +8% | +9% |
| Uttar Pradesh | | | | | | | | +3% | +1% | | | |
| West Bengal | | | | | | | +8% | +8% | +8% | | | |

* Being a DPEP III state, the proportions are given in the column for total

Source : EMIS 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99

The table clearly brings out that :

- the proportion of girls' enrolment in the total enrolment in the DPEP I districts has either remained the same, as in Kerala, or has steadily increased over the three years
- in the expansion districts of the DPEP I states the proportion of girls' enrolment has remained constant over the period of reporting in Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. There has been an increase in Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The decline in Haryana and Karnataka is a matter of concern.
- in the DPEP II states and Bihar, there has been an increase in most states and in others, the same level of enrolment has prevailed during the years being reported. On analysis girls' enrolment persists to be considerably low (below 45%) in Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and needs to be worked at with concerted efforts.

An attempt has been made to roughly estimate the gap in girls' enrolment on the basis of the sex ratio (as per 1991 census) in the DPEP states. This exercise serves the limited purpose of indicating the overall state-wide gap and cannot be considered a perfect planning tool.

Table II.2 : Gap in Girls' Enrolment on the Basis of Sex Ratio (1991)

| State | Sex Ratio 1991 | % Female as per Sex Ratio 1991 | % Girls Enrolment 1998-99 | Gap (% points) |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Assam | 975 | 49% | 48% | 1 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 975 | 49% | 47% | 2 |
| Bihar | 959 | 49% | 42% | 7 |
| Gujarat | 928 | 48% | 43% | 5 |
| Haryana | 879 | 47% | 47% | 0 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 951 | 49% | 49% | 0 |
| Karnataka | 960 | 49% | 48% | 1 |
| Kerala | 958 | 49% | 49% | 0 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 952 | 49% | 45% | 4 |
| Maharashtra | 946 | 47% | 48% | 1 |
| Orissa | 966 | 49% | 46% | 3 |
| Tamil Nadu | 948 | 49% | 49% | 0 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 928 | 48% | 41% | 7 |
| West Bengal | 967 | 49% | 48% | 1 |

The gaps in girls' enrolment are highest in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

Taking into account children's enrolment in government recognised and unrecognised schools universal enrolment in certain villages has been reported from the states. In the case of Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, a planned and systematic approach to the issue of

enrolment. has led to success even in extremely difficult pockets. In Gujarat, universal enrolment has been achieved in the 218 villages being covered under the 'special focus village' programme. Similarly, in 65% of the gram panchayats covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach in Uttar Pradesh it has been possible to achieve universal enrolment. It has also been possible to achieve universal enrolment in the 'not so difficult' pockets as an outcome of the regular DPEP activities.

Index of Gender Equity

To examine the extent of inequities in enrolment and retention, the Index of Gender Equity (IGE) has been calculated as follows :

$$\text{IGE} = 100 \times \frac{\text{Share of girls in enrolment (I-IV)}}{\text{Share of girls in population (6-10/11 years)}}$$

The above ratio adjusts the share of girls' enrolment in relation to sex ratio for each district. A value of 100 for the index reflects a complete absence of gender inequities. IGE reflects the level of inequities and does not reflect anything about the achievement of universal access or retention. This is based on EMIS data, which captures information about recognized schools. A complete picture of girls' participation in primary education would be available when IGE is read in conjunction with GER/NER.

The trend analysis of the Phase I and II districts conducted in 1999⁴ indicates that girls' participation has improved considerably and the Index of Gender Equity (IGE) is more than 95 for 23 of the 42 districts which is the project goal. In 18 other districts it is between 85 and 95. This is an improvement over the previous year's position when the IGE was more than 95 in 21 districts and between 85 and 95 in 16 districts.

Table II.3 : IGE for the Phase I and Phase II districts

| IGE Phase I | Number of districts | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1995-96 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 |
| < 75 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 75-85 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| 85-95 | 21 | 19 | 16 | 18 |
| > 95 | 15 | 18 | 21 | 23 |
| Total districts | 42 | 42 | 42 | 42 |
| IGE Phase II | | | 1997-98 | 1998-99 |
| < 75 | | | 2 | 1 |
| 75-85 | | | 12 | 7 |
| 85-95 | | | 30 | 32 |
| > 95 | | | 31 | 35 |
| Total districts | | | 75 | 75 |

⁴ Yash Aggarwal, *Access and Retention : The Impact of DPEP, National Overview*, NIEPA, New Delhi, 1999

The IGE shows that the number of Phase I districts with near absence of gender inequities has increased from 15 in 1995-96 to 23 in 1998-99. The district of Sidhi in Madhya Pradesh recorded the lowest value of 82.2 of IGE. Significantly, the district has a large concentration of SC and ST population (about 42 per cent).

As per the table in Phase II districts:

- there has been an all round improvement in girls' participation. Their share has increased from 43.8 percent in 1997-98 to 44.6 per cent in 1998-99 on the basis of the data for 75 districts
- the rate of change varies from district to district. There is no district for which the share of girls' enrolment has declined by more than 1 per cent
- the IGE has shown considerable improvement between 1997-98 and 1998-99. The number of districts with IGE > 95 has increased from 31 in 1997-98 to 35 in 1998-99. These districts already indicate the near absence of gender inequities. Similarly there has been a decline in the number of districts with low IGE

The only district, for which IGE is less than 75 is Paschim Champaran (Bihar). Another seven districts for which the IGE is low are: Sitamarhi and Darbhanga in Bihar; Banaskantha in Gujarat; Shivpuri and Sidhi in Madhya Pradesh and Moradabad and Sidharthnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

The absence of inequities does not mean that the participation and achievement rates for girl students have reached the desired level. In fact there may be certain situations where the participation rates for both boys and girls are low. In such cases too, gender inequity may be nearly absent.

Improvement in repeaters rate

It is a common feature in the schools to have children repeating classes though a 'no detention' policy is in place in almost all the states. This phenomenon can be attributed primarily to poor attendance or enrolment of under aged children. The share of girls in the total repeaters is given in the table below.

Table II.4 : Share of girls in total Repeaters

| State | DPEP I | | | DPEP II – Expansion Districts | | | DPEP II | | | Total | | |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1996 -97 | 1997- 98 | 1998 -99 | 1996 -97 | 1997 -98 | 1998 -99 | 1996 -97 | 1997 -98 | 1998 -99 | 1996 -97 | 1997 -98 | 1998 -99 |
| Assam | 46% | 48% | 48% | | 47% | 48% | | | | 46% | 48% | 48% |
| Andhra Pradesh | | | | | | | 48% | 51% | 46% | | | |
| Bihar | | | | | | | | | | | 42% | 44% |
| Gujarat | | | | | | | 41% | 42% | 44% | | | |
| Haryana | 43% | 44% | 45% | | 47% | 48% | | | | 43% | 44% | 45% |
| Himachal Pradesh | | | | | | | 44% | 47% | 47% | | | |
| Karnataka | 47% | 47% | 46% | | 48% | 48% | | | | 47% | 48% | 47% |
| Kerala | 42% | 43% | 42% | | 41% | 42% | | | | 42% | 42% | 42% |
| Madhya Pradesh | 44% | 45% | 45% | | 44% | 42% | | | | 44% | 45% | 44% |
| Maharashtra | 49% | 48% | 48% | 47% | 47% | 49% | | | | 48% | 48% | 48% |
| Orissa | | | | | | | 47% | 48% | 50% | | | |
| Tamil Nadu | 48% | 47% | 46% | 47% | 46% | 46% | | | | 48% | 47% | 46% |
| Uttar Pradesh | | | | | | | | 39% | 41% | | | |
| West Bengal | | | | | | | 48% | 49% | 49% | | | |

Source : EMIS 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99

The above table clearly brings out the fact that girls comprise the smaller segment of the total number of repeaters.

For further analysis Tables II.1, II.2 and II.4 have been looked at in conjunction. Such analysis has reveals the proportion of girl repeaters is lesser than the proportion of girls enrolled. For example, in Kerala, as per the sex ratio (Refer table II.2) 49 % of the population is female. Of the total children enrolled 49% are girls (in all the three years under report). Of the total repeaters, only 42 per cent are girls. While this may appear to be a positive indicator of girls' retention in school, it also points out the need to examine this phenomenon along with the drop out rates, because lesser proportion of repeaters does not necessarily imply lesser proportion of drop outs.

Internal Efficiency and cohort drop-out rates in Phase I districts

The *coefficient of efficiency* (CE) at 80 has been considered satisfactory. In 1997, in 24 out of the 40 districts, the *coefficient of efficiency* in the case of girls is almost the same as that of boys, the difference between the two being less than 3 points. In 11 districts, this coefficient for girls is less than that of boys by more than 3 points, whereas it is just opposite the case of 5 districts.

Only in 13 out of 40 districts, *cohort drop-out rate* (CDR) of girls is greater than that of boys by more than 5 percentage points. In 25 districts, the gender disparity in CDR is less

than 5 percentage points, and in two districts, CDR of boys exceeds that of girls by more than 5 percentage points.

Comparing the gender disparity in CDR of 1996 with that of 1997, it is found that it has either remained at the same level or has reduced in most of the districts. On the whole, the number of districts in which CDR of boys differs from that of girls by less than 5 percentage points has been almost the same in both the years, 1996 and 1997.⁵

Achieving UPE requires children to be able to complete the cycle of primary education in the stipulated 4 or 5 years. Using the cohort flow method, the proportion of children completing primary education in five years was calculated by undertaking a survey of about 23,000 class I cohort of students 1993-94. The survey covered nine blocks in three districts of Tamil Nadu. It was found that only about 52 per cent of the cohort of children beginning in class I in 1993-94 were able to complete primary education in the period of five years i.e. in the 1997-98 academic session. Large inter-block variations were observed. Gender differences were, however, marginal. It is clearly that nearly half of the children either repeated in one or more grades or dropped out before completing the primary education cycle. This ratio is considerably lower than the ideal value of 100 per cent. A similar analysis for other states showed much lower completion rates. "

Girls' Achievement in Phase II districts

In order to assess the level of success in realising the DPEP objectives after three years of programme implementation, the Mid - term Learning Assessment Survey (MAS) for the Phase II districts has been conducted by NCERT in 1999. The learning achievements in language and mathematics have been studied for Classes I, III and IV.

The results suggest that the DPEP goal of reducing the achievement gaps between boys and girls has been attained in 11 of the 13 districts with respect to both language and mathematics for Class I. The districts where the gender gap exceeds 5 per cent in either of the subjects are Rayagada and Kalahandi in Orissa and Vizianagaram in Andhra Pradesh. It may be mentioned that in 6 out of 13 districts the achievement in language proficiency and in one out of 13 districts in mathematics was in favour of girls.

With respect to Class III all the districts in Gujarat show a reduction in the gender gap to <5 per cent in the levels of achievement in both the subjects. The gains have been in favour of girls for language in Banaskantha and for mathematics in Dangs and Panchmahal.

⁵ *Internal efficiency & Cohort drop-out rates at primary level of education in phase 1 DPEP districts for 1996 & 1997*, Research, Evaluation & Studies unit TSG for DPEP, November 1999.

⁶ Yash Aggarwal, *Access and Retention : The Impact of DPEP, National Overview*, NIEPA, New Delhi, 1999

Gender wise differences in language achievement in Class IV were found to be far below the 5 per cent level in all the 10 districts of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. These differences in achievement found favour with girls in two districts in Andhra Pradesh and in three districts in Orissa. In mathematics, the achievement differences between girls and boys were found to be less than 5 per cent in four out of five districts in Andhra Pradesh and all the five districts in Orissa. The differences have found favour with girls in one district of Andhra Pradesh and three districts of Orissa. Warangal district is not too far away from the set target.⁷

While the reduction in gender gaps has been encouraging, the overall achievement levels probably need to show significant improvement.

Female Teachers

Girls' participation in primary education is said to be influenced by the presence of female teachers in schools. Parental and community views expressed during the gender and social assessment studies, corroborated this view. Parents feel a greater sense of security with a female teacher in the schools. In this context it is important to look at the representation of female teachers in the states.

Table II.5 : Proportion of Female Teachers

| State | DPEP I | | | DPEP II – Expansion Districts | | | DPEP II | | | Total | | |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 |
| Assam * | 22% | 22% | 25% | | 24% | 28% | | | | 22% | 23% | 26% |
| Andhra Pradesh | | | | | 36% | 34% | 27% | 28% | 32% | | | |
| Bihar | | | | | | | | | | | 21% | 22% |
| Gujarat | | | | | | | 35% | 34% | 34% | | | |
| Haryana | 46% | 45% | 42% | | 43% | 45% | | | | 46% | 45% | 43% |
| Himachal Pradesh | | | | | | | 31% | 32% | 33% | | | |
| Karnataka | 39% | 41% | 43% | | 40% | 43% | | | | 39% | 39% | 43% |
| Kerala | 60% | 61% | 61% | | | 74% | | | | 60% | 61% | 67% |
| Madhya Pradesh | 22% | 23% | 26% | | 22% | 26% | | | | 22% | 23% | 25% |
| Maharashtra | 25% | 27% | 28% | 24% | 27% | 27% | | | | 25% | 27% | 27% |
| Orissa | | | | | | | 18% | 21% | 23% | | | |
| Tamil Nadu | 42% | 47% | 47% | 51% | 53% | 56% | | | | 45% | 49% | 49% |
| Uttar Pradesh | | | | | | | | 25% | 26% | | | |
| West Bengal** | | | | | | | 15% | 15% | 17% | | | |

* For DPEP I, data for Karbi Anglong district has been taken into account

** Based on data from Coochbehar, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas

Source : CMIS 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99

⁷ *Students' Achievement under MAS, Appraisal in Phase -II States*, DPEP Core Resource Group, NCERT New Delhi October 1999

It is evident from the table that the proportion of female teachers in the DPEP districts has been rather low and continues to be so over the three years being reported. The growth rate of female teachers has not been significant. The representation of female teachers stands at 33% or more in Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The other states the proportion of female teachers is as low as 17 % in West Bengal, 22% in Bihar, 23% in Orissa, 25 % in Madhya Pradesh, 26% in Assam and Uttar Pradesh and 27 % in Maharashtra.

It has been a difficult task to get more women into the teaching force as women are neither available in the interior areas nor are they willing to accept postings in such areas because of housing and security problems and poor commuting facilities.

Now that the community based para teachers are being posted in increasing numbers the proportion of female teachers in the total teaching positions should improve.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has provided reservation of 30% posts of teachers for women in recognition of the fact that the presence of women teachers would have a positive impact on girls' participation. Despite this, the representation of female teachers has been low in the state. The probable reasons for the shortfalls in recruiting women are :

- *lack of awareness about the government policy*
- *reluctance of the community to allow women to work*
- *non availability of educated girls in rural areas due to low educational status of females.*

Responding to this situation, it is proposed to introduce certain measures that may encourage recruitment of women as teachers. The initiatives proposed include:

- *organisation of information camps*
- *motivation of girls and women to take up teaching jobs*
- *close monitoring of recruitment status.*

Source : State Component Plan 1999-2000

In this context, it would be interesting to take a look at the number of female teachers appointed by DPEP and their proportion in the total number of teachers appointed.

Table II.5 : Proportion of female teachers appointed by DPEP

| State | Total teachers appointed | No. of female teachers appointed | Proportion of female teachers (%) |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | 18 | 8 | 44% (1998-99) |
| Karnataka | 1014 | 507 | 50% (1997-98) |
| Madhya Pradesh | 1867 | 106 | 30% (1997-98) |
| Tamil Nadu | 1026 | 605 | 59% (1997-98) |

As per the information available, there is an increase in the proportion of female teachers with respect to the teachers appointed under DPEP in Haryana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In Madhya Pradesh the increase is marginal with respect to the overall representation of female teachers in the state (27%), including DPEP districts. Some of the other states have either not furnished the information or have not yet recruited regular teachers in the formal schools and have tried to overcome teacher shortage by providing para teachers.

Uttar Pradesh, another state with proportionately low representation of female teachers in the primary level has a 50% reservation policy for women candidates at the pre-service training institutions. This should have assured a higher representation of women teachers as the state recruits teachers from among those with pre-service training.

As compared to the formal schools, there are larger numbers of female teachers in place in the alternative schooling centres. This is often guided by the prevailing state policy in this respect. For example, in Bihar the instructors of the *Apna* and *Angana Vidyalayas* are all women and so is the case in the *Shishu Shiksha Kendras* of West Bengal. Gujarat has recently introduced the policy to give overriding preference to women for the teachers' position in the alternative schooling centres. Similarly, Uttar Pradesh has also ensured increased representation of women teachers in the alternative schooling centres. According to the norm in Madhya Pradesh, if there is need for two teachers in the EGS schools, one of them is a woman. Further, one of the two teachers in the alternative schooling centres in the state is a woman. In Assam, nearly 50 per cent of the teachers in the AS centres are women.

Table II.6 : Proportion of Female teachers in Alternative Schools

| State | Total teachers appointed | No. of female teachers appointed | Proportion of female teachers (%) |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bihar | 1220 | 1220 | 100% |
| Karnataka | 403 | 42 | 10% |
| Tamil Nadu | 1332 | 570 | 43% |
| Uttar Pradesh | 962 | 296 | 31% |

Impacting in difficult areas

Despite the improvements made since the inception of the programme, there are areas where problems persist. These have impeded the pace of improvement. Planners and administrators have been focussing attention on such issues to appropriately address them. A few examples of such initiatives are cited in Chapter V under the head Micro Initiatives for Girls' Education.

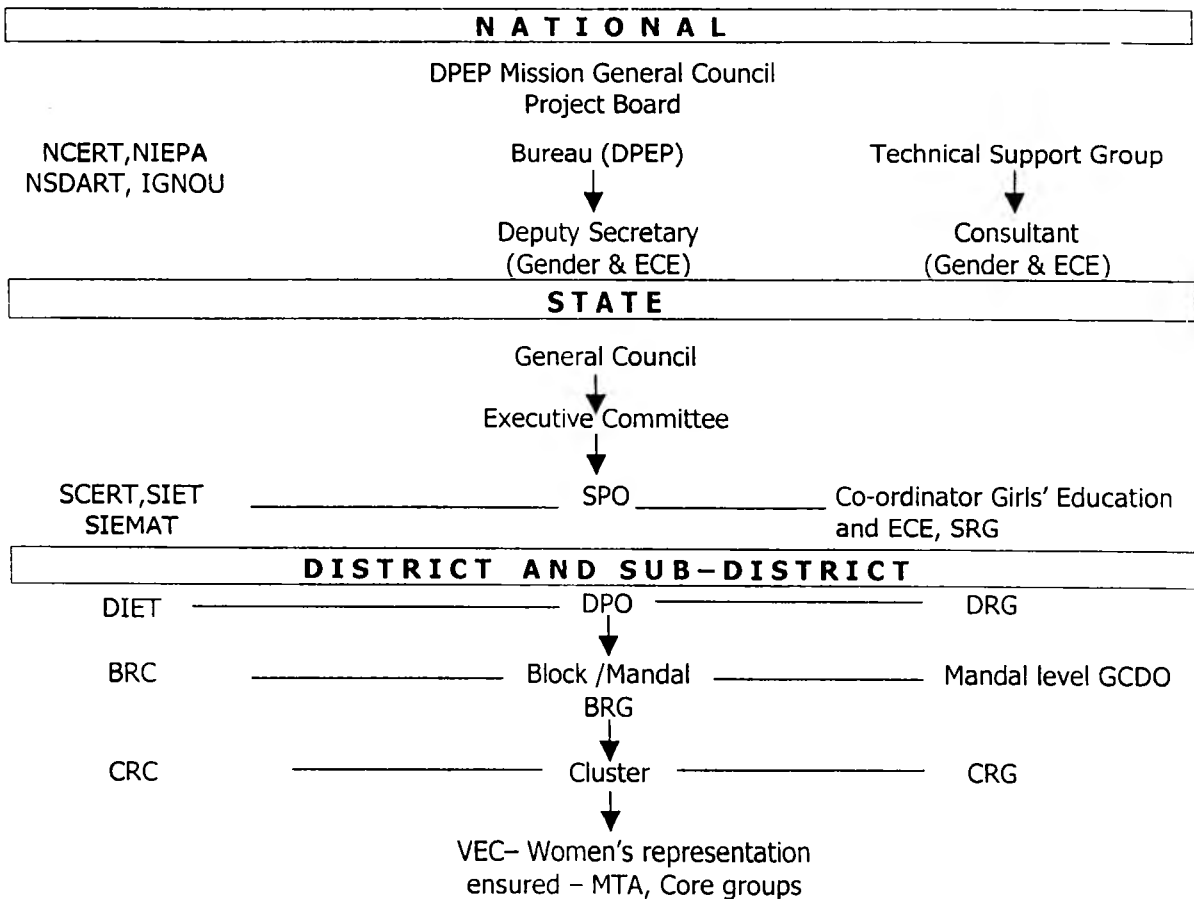
3

FACILITATING STRUCTURES & PROCESSES

Structures in Place

The special focus on girls that was built into DPEP design, is reflected in its management structure. Diagram III.1 below explains the programme's organisational structure across National, State, District and Sub-district levels.

Diagram III.1: Organisational Structures



National level support

On programmatic issues, the area and nature of support provided by the National level structure to the States has been as follows:

- Appraisal of the Perspective plans and Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWP & B) that are prepared at the district level through participatory processes involving district and sub-district functionaries and community members for ensuring the gender focus.
- Enriching the training provided to district planning teams through intermittent review of the modules and other training details.
- Facilitating the process of capacity building for gender focused planning and highlighting the gaps and priorities for action/interventions.
- Facilitating cross sharing among States and providing expert inputs through National level meetings with Gender Co-ordinators that are organised every six months. These meetings usually focus on thematic issues. So far themes such as role of Gender Co-ordinators, Integrating Gender Concerns in the process of pedagogical renewal, community mobilisation, planning and strategising, analysis of EMIS data from the gender perspective, gender sensitisation through story telling.
- Meetings of State Education Secretaries and SPDs provide a forum for raising critical issues and cross state sharing and problem solving.
- Pursues policy changes required to facilitate programme implementation in the states. One of the most critical is that of convergence with Integrated Child Development Scheme of the Department of Women and Child Development.
- Providing guidance and resource support by visiting states to help formulate strategies, support the implementation process, conduct workshops, development of modules, materials etc.

State, District and Sub-district level structures

These structures relating to gender at the State, district and sub-district levels vary considerably across States as each State has responded to its own felt needs.

State level

At the State level the key figure in strategising for girls' education and implementation of activities is the Co-ordinator for Girls' Education at the State Project Office. There are some variances in the number of persons available at the State level for Girls' Education in the different DPEP States. State resource groups and SCERTs in some States are also playing an active role.

Role being played by the Co-ordinators for Girls' Education/ECE

They play the role of a catalyst and resource person in capacity building efforts, designing strategies to promote gender equality in DPEP through integration of the gender perspective in training and sensitisation programmes, planning, monitoring, conduct of

impact studies, etc. They access external resources and sources of information for wider dissemination and also undertake follow up and monitoring activities through regular field visits, holding review meetings, briefing sessions, conduct of micro studies, evolving gender focused checklists, etc. In their day to day functioning, they work in close association with the functionaries of other functional areas.

Major functions of Gender Co-ordinators

1. *Identify low female literacy areas and ascertain the causes of low literacy rates in specific areas of the district*
2. *Preparation, execution and review of action plan for ECE and girls' education and ensure women's awareness and empowerment*
3. *Planning at the block, district and state level to achieve the goal of gender equality and plan execution, review and evaluation of progress in terms of the plan prepared*
4. *Set up ECE centres in non-ICDS areas and in areas having low female literacy rates*
5. *Organise field level women's conventions, awareness camps in select areas*
6. *Form Mothers' Groups, Mother Teacher Groups and also Self Help Groups in various places of districts*
7. *Organise Meena campaigns in areas where female literacy rate is very low*
8. *Organise Mahila melas, Balika Surabhi Manch, Mahila Pragati Manch and spread the message of girls' education in different Melas like the Jonbil Mela in Morigaon district*
9. *Create an academic environment and promote regular attendance of girls in school through special enrolment drive for girls*
10. *Train up VEC women on health, nutrition, academic issues in order to develop organisational skills and ensure their effective involvement*

District level

At the district level most States have a Coordinator for Girls' Education, who often also have charge of ECE. The DIETs, DRGs/DLRGs are playing a very supportive role in both programme planning and implementation. In fact, responsibilities have sometimes been fixed at the DIET level and there are faculty members who hold charge of Girls' Education and ECE.

Sub-district structures

At the sub-district level, the functionaries at the SPO and DPO usually work through the Village Education Committees (VEC), Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), Mother Teacher Associations (MTA), Mothers' Groups and women motivator groups at the village level. In specific instances, as in Uttar Pradesh, Core Groups have also been

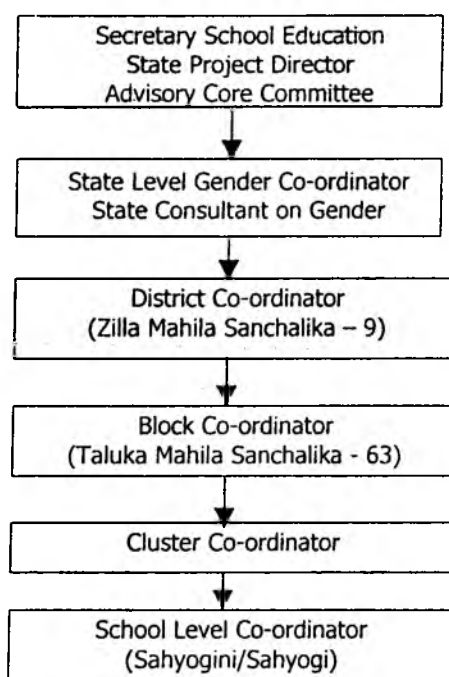
constituted in the villages covered by the Model Cluster Approach for Improving Girls' Participation in Primary Education.

Some special features in the structure of different States

Maharashtra has adopted a model called the Mahila Prabodhan Programme, which provides for a continued link of functionaries from the state level through to the school. There are state, district, block and cluster level co-ordinators supported by a Sahayogini in each school. Sahayoginis are specially trained teachers who co-ordinate all activities related to girls' education at the school/village level.

The SRG works as a 'think tank' who are involved in the conceptualisation, formulation and implementation of various programmes. The SRG also takes initiatives in designing, evaluating and producing the training material. The District Resource Group (DRG) formed at district level plays a similar role at the district level. The expertise in the DRG is utilised for monitoring and implementation in various activities in the field.

Diagram III.2 : MPP Management Structure



the major areas of activities envisaged under MPP are

- Environment building which entails awareness generation and community mobilisation through Mahila Melawa, Kishori Melawa, Mata – Palak Sangh (Mothers' Association)
- Training of teachers, administrators and programme/ other functionaries
- Developing necessary guidelines for ensuring gender bias free approach in the curriculum, textbooks, pedagogical issues and classroom transactions
- Monitoring access and retention with a focus on girls' education
- Development of media material, documentation, etc.

In Maharashtra the female teacher from the Centre School at the CRC has been assigned the responsibility of coordinating with the village and block on

matters relating to girls' education. Every school has a Sahayogini – a teacher who has been trained and oriented on gender issues.

She collects information at her level and passes it on to the CRC which in turn is sent up to the Block and District.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, additional personnel, Sahayoginis, have been positioned in one block in each district. The idea is to use the Mahila Samakhya (MS) strategy for DPEP purposes without creating the infrastructural support. MS provides the resource support and shares the responsibility of training the Sahayoginis in the formation of women's groups, their mobilisation and empowerment.

The Sahayogini operates as a vital link between the District and sub-block level. She will present her report of progress, action taken problems and success achieved at the VEC/*Gram Sabha* and also at the monthly cluster meetings. Her report is also presented at the monthly block level review meetings to ensure flow of necessary technical support.

Along similar lines, **Andhra Pradesh** has a Mandal Girl Child Development Officer at the Mandal Resource Centre, which is the only sub-district body in the state.

During the micro-planning exercise conducted in **Kerala**, some remote inaccessible habitations were identified from where children had never been enrolled in school. This prompted project functionaries to initiate a programme of volunteers. There were essentially two types of volunteers, girl-volunteers for specific communities from which there was a reluctance to send girls to school and tribal volunteers for the tribal pockets. The volunteers who belonged to these habitations worked with the community to persuade parents to send children to school. Their subsequent enrolment in multi-grade centres was closely monitored by the volunteers to ensure regular attendance.

Assam has evolved a very different support mechanism for reinforcing its human resource position. The state has been working through resource persons and volunteers, who go through a rigorous selection and orientation process. Once they are prepared for their specific tasks, they fan out in the villages to work with the community on issues of primary education for girls. DPEP invests in their training and bears expenses of their travel, daily allowance and honorarium. In return they work as an extended unit of the programme without being a formal part of its organisational structure. This arrangement has made it possible to work among the community with greater intensity and in a more focused manner which would not have otherwise been possible.

Orissa has the Shikhya Sahayika at the village level in the select villages/schools for universalisation of primary education, to provide the much needed additional thrust on girls' education to narrow the disparity levels. It is hoped that by the end of the project,

significant improvements will be made and the need for continuing with these alternative arrangements will no longer be necessary.

Most of the states adopting the cluster or village/school development approach have constituted core groups either at the cluster or village level. Members of the core group are trained and expected to pursue individual cases as well as larger primary education issues in the context of their cluster or village, as the case may be.

Building Resource Base in Gender and ECE (*State & District Resource groups*)

To draw upon the resources available within the State in the process of programme planning, implementation and monitoring, Resource Groups have been constituted at different levels. Most States have resource groups at the State and District level. Sometimes States have opted to have a common SRG for girls' education and ECE.

State Resource groups and district resource groups for gender have been constituted in:

- Assam
- Gujarat
- Haryana
- Kerala (*in selected districts*)
- Madhya Pradesh
- Maharashtra
- Orissa
- Tamil Nadu
- Uttar Pradesh
- West Bengal

Composition:

The Gender Resource Group usually has members from NGOs, universities, Schools of Social Work, other educational institutions, Government departments and agencies and individuals who have had experience of working on issues of girls' education, ECE and on issues in related areas. Representatives from UNICEF and similar agencies are members of the SRG in states where these agencies have a base.

District Resource Groups (DRG) are usually chaired by the District Collector or Chief

Executive Officer, as the case may be. Members are drawn from among Government Departments, NGOs and women's groups, members of district level elected bodies and individuals who have evinced interest and involvement in girls' education and ECE.

Introductory training/orientation is provided to SRG and DRG members to enable them to function effectively.

Karnataka has consciously not constituted resource groups. It has tapped resources as and when the need has arisen and has established linkages with relevant agencies, institutions and individuals.

State Resource groups and district resource groups for ECE have been constituted in:

- Andhra Pradesh (*In selected districts*)
- Assam
- Gujarat
- Haryana (*Only DRG*)
- Kerala (*Only SRG*)
- Orissa

Role and functioning of Resource Groups

The Resource Groups provide assistance for:

- *Planning and conceptualising the strategies and interventions*
- *Implementation*
- *Monitoring, supervision*
- *Research and evaluation*
- *Interventions to address area specific problems*
- *Development of training modules and material*
- *Training Master Trainers and DRG members*
- *Drawing up time bound calendar of activities*
- *Carrying out specific field based assignments*

The DRGs are more closely involved with the process of implementation. Members usually devote more time to the programme and undertake field based assignments/ tasks. Future course of action and ways of tackling specific problems are also part of the agenda at the monthly meetings.

Some States have constituted resource groups at the block and cluster levels. Gujarat is a case in point. It has constituted BRGs and CRGs in all the DPEP districts. These bodies have recently been trained on operationalising the strategy of focused interventions in select villages.

Gender focus for community level structures

States, have formulated their own mechanisms of planning, implementation, supervision, monitoring, reporting and documentation. Within this larger framework, measures to step up women's participation have been taken up at different levels.

Representation of women in VECs

VECs have emerged as the single most important structure at the community level for primary education under DPEP. To ensure greater participation of women at the grassroots level, most States have provided for a fixed number of VEC members to be women. States having a reservation policy for women in the Village Education Committees are guided by the State's Panchayati Raj Act. The table below provides an overview of the state wise reservation policy on women in the VECs.

Table III.2: Representation of Women in Village Education Committees

| State | Proportion of Women's Representation |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | ▪ 50% members of statutory School Committee members are women |
| 2. Assam | ▪ 3 out of 13 to 17 VEC members are women |
| 3. Bihar | ▪ One third of the members of VECs are women ▪ (5-7 members out of 15 to 21 members are women) |
| 4. Gujarat | ▪ Two out of 9 VECs are women |
| 5. Haryana | ▪ 50% members of VECs are women |
| 6. Himachal Pradesh | ▪ 33% members of VECs are women ▪ One third of the total number of members are women |
| 7. Karnataka | ▪ Minimum one third of the total number of members are women |
| 8. Kerala | ▪ All MTA Presidents of the concerned Gram Panchayat are members of the VEC |
| 9. Madhya Pradesh | ▪ One third of the members of VECs are women. ▪ In SMCs 50% are women (for AS & EGS) ▪ Three out of 17 VEC members are women |
| 10. Maharashtra | ▪ Representation of women/ Mahila Organisation |
| 11. Orissa | ▪ One out of eight members of VEC is a woman |
| 12. Tamil Nadu | ▪ 30% of the members of VEC are women ▪ Two out of 16 members are women |
| 13. Uttar Pradesh | ▪ Two out of 7 positions are occupied by women |
| 14. West Bengal | ▪ Four out of 14 VEC members are women |

It is also possible that more women are members of VECs as some of the listed ex-officio members could be women.

Sometimes, the representation of women is lower than the reservation provided for. For example, though there is a provision of 50% reservation of membership for women in the VECs of Haryana, in actual terms women's representation stands approximately between 35 to 40 percent. Assam provides for a 30% reservation of women in the VECs. After a Government order increasing the number of VEC members, the representation of women slid to below 30% as the total number of members increased and the number of women in the VECs continued to be three.

The study conducted on community participation during the in depth Review Mission in 1997, revealed that the participation of women VEC members has been rather low.

Addressing this situation, Sahayoginis in Maharashtra have been trying to encourage the women VEC members to participate actively in the functioning of VECs and also take active part in the process of decision making. Haryana, by ensuring the involvement of women in the Village Construction Committee has been able to actually get women to take part in construction related activities. In Assam, apart from the general VEC

training, special trainings have been organised for women VEC members, as they were wanting in their participation in the activities of the VEC.

Role of VEC in girls' education:

The VECs have been paying special attention to enhance girls' participation in primary education. VECs in some of the DPEP States have taken up the following activities in pursuit of girls' education.

Gujarat

Initiated parental counseling and awareness generation for girls' education

Haryana

Motivate and encourage the parents for girls' education and the role of women in society

Karnataka

Involved in the conduct of micro-planning, VEC melas and Chinnara Melas, Kalajatha, opening NFE centres and appointing NFE Instructors and enrolment of drop out children

Maharashtra

Women VEC members participate in Kishori and Mahila Melawas. In the monthly meetings of the schools the VEC members are requested to pay special attention to the problems of girls in the reviews and report the shortcomings if any.

Madhya Pradesh

Ensure girls' enrolment and regular attendance and formation of Mahila Samooh.

Orissa

Pursue enrolment of girl children, open ECE and AS Centres and promote girls' education by creating awareness in local markets, melas, jatra etc.

Other community based organisations working for girls' education

Many of the States have constituted Mother Teacher Associations and other grassroots women's groups, viz., Mata Samities (Bihar), Mothers' Group (Assam), Women Motivator Group (Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh), Mata Palak Sangh and Mahila Mandals (Maharashtra). They are performing varied roles and responsibilities and are involved with different aspects of the programme. These groups, in partnership with VECs, have been instrumental in institutionalising the operational linkages between the school and the community and also taking on the responsibility of pursuing girls' education at the village level.

Guidelines for formation of these groups are often issue by the SPO to facilitate the DPOs in the process of forming the different group.

Table III.3 : Status of Mother Teacher Associations

| State | Details of Presence of MTAs | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | District Coverage | No of MTAs Constituted | Other Women's Group Constituted |
| 1. Assam | 8 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers' Groups • Self Help Groups |
| 2. Gujarat | 3 | 5687 | |
| 3. Haryana | 3 | 3516 (Total) | |
| 4. Himachal Pradesh | 3 | in all schools | |
| 5. Kerala | | All schools | |
| 6. Maharashtra * | 9 | 12593 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women Motivator Groups • Mata Palak Sangh • Mahila Mandal |
| 7. Orissa | 8 | 11,529 | |
| 8. Uttar Pradesh | | 481 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster Core Teams (29) • Women Motivator Groups (59) |

* The number of schools is slightly more than the number of MTAs

In Himachal Pradesh the involvement of women in the support systems for the schools through the interventions of the MTAs has been significant. Women are able to spend more time on childrens' education as compared to the men who keep busy with outdoor activities.

The MTA in Chadotar village, Taluka Palanpur, district Banaskantha has been actively involved in the regular activities of MTAs and have been attending the monthly meetings regularly. It's high level of motivation and commitment has resulted in a visible difference in the educational environment in the village. Villagers are not only conscious about educating their children but are convinced that children must be educated. Today, it is a village with 100% enrolment and retention.

States have developed special training modules for the members of MTAs and other grassroots women's groups. Module development workshops have been organised in Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh.

In the case of Gujarat BRCCs and CRCCs were trained by SPO and GCERT functionaries who undertook the actual training of VEC, MTA, PTA members. A common integrated training module has been developed for the VEC, MTA and PTA members. The training focussed on gender sensitisation, importance of girls' education, their role in enrolment and retention, identification of children to be covered under AS. All members have been given a two days training.

A workshop on Formulation, Scope, Activities of MTAs was organised in mid 1999 to concretise the conceptual framework of MTAs in Maharashtra. It was visualised that the

MTA and VEC members would interact and discuss various educational issues. As the school was the nerve centre of activity, interactions between MTA members and school teachers also took place while these activities were going on.

In Orissa, task specific orientation has been given to the MTAs so that they can begin associating with the programme.

Role and Responsibility of MTAs

MTAs have been assisting in the management of ECE centres and sometimes AS centres. Before the School Management Committees came into being, Mothers' Associations were solely responsible for running the ECE centres set up by DPEP Andhra Pradesh. The variety of activities undertaken by the MTAs in the different states include:

- Help in conducting survey for identification of children to be enrolled in the school
- Participate in Enrolment Drive and help to enrol all the children in the 6-11 years age group
- Create awareness about girls' education and take care of irregular girls
- Counseling of parents whose children are not going to school – especially girls
- Help creation of supportive environment in the village so that children are attracted to school
- Active members of MTAs are informed about school activities so that they can disseminate the information to society at large
- Take part in the extra-curricular activities of the school
- Members of Women Motivator groups manage and co-ordinate the innovative scheme 'Life skills' (Pre-vocational training) targeted at adolescent girls who are enrolled in the NFE Centres.
- Mahila Mandals set up under the Mahila Prabodhan Programme provide an open forum for rural women to meet, form groups and initiate activities such as day care centres to promote girls' education
- Solve problems related to irregular attendance
- Encourage flexible school timings, if it is likely to impact on the level of girls' participation in primary education
- Check whether children receive textbooks in time
- Work towards eradication of caste and gender based discrimination in school

Pausegaon in Nanded district in Maharashtra had reported universal enrolment. For regular attendance the MTA has made it a practice to visit the homes of those children who are not present during the school prayer. Immediate action of this kind has certainly impacted on the families and attendance of children is beginning to show improvements. If this is sustained the retention rates are likely to improve.

Issues for the future

Although efforts are being made to streamline the reporting and feedback mechanism in a manner that all the bodies set up by the programme function as a part of a whole and not in isolation.

MTA of Bargarh district has set up a fund from public contributions, which is used for carrying out minor repairs in the school building

Evidence of this is visible first at the village level where the VEC, Village Panchayat MTA, PTA, Core Team, Women's Motivator Groups, etc. are operational. Common membership and participation in each other's meetings and activities are the key processes that bind these groups together and enable them to work for the common goal.

Mata Samities have been constituted in Bihar to run the Angna and Apna Vidyalayas –overall management and monitoring responsibilities. The Mata Samitis are vested with financial powers and operate their own bank accounts. They identify and appoint the instructors and are involved in the purchase of materials required by the centres. These samitis are also responsible for running the DPEP started ECE Centres.

The next critical step is to be able to link these bodies with the CRC and BRC, which are working closely with the schools and

teachers. Gujarat and Orissa have tried to ensure the linkage right from the stage of strategy formulation.

CRC Co-ordinators in Gujarat often attend the monthly meetings of MTAs, particularly in those villages where there are specific problems of girls. Other states having realised the importance of building linkages have begun working in this direction. As a case in point, Uttar Pradesh has developed a list of discussion points to be used at the monthly meetings of VECs with the NPRC Co-ordinator. This is expected to bring into focus some of the social factors coming in the way of primary education and also provide the community's feedback on schools. Action on these issues could be initiated by the cluster level Co-ordinator (with support from the block) or jointly by the NPRC Co-ordinator and the VEC.

4

THE STARTING POINT

The Basis

The need for special attention to disadvantaged groups of children for realising the goals of UPE has been highlighted by different studies. Girls, especially girls from particular social groups such as SCs, STs, minorities, OBCs, face a double disadvantage when it comes to primary education. Disparities in the enrolment, retention and achievement levels of girls and boys have been significant.

The Gender and Social Assessment Studies conducted in Phase I and II districts, have identified and elaborated upon the reasons for poor participation of girls in primary education.

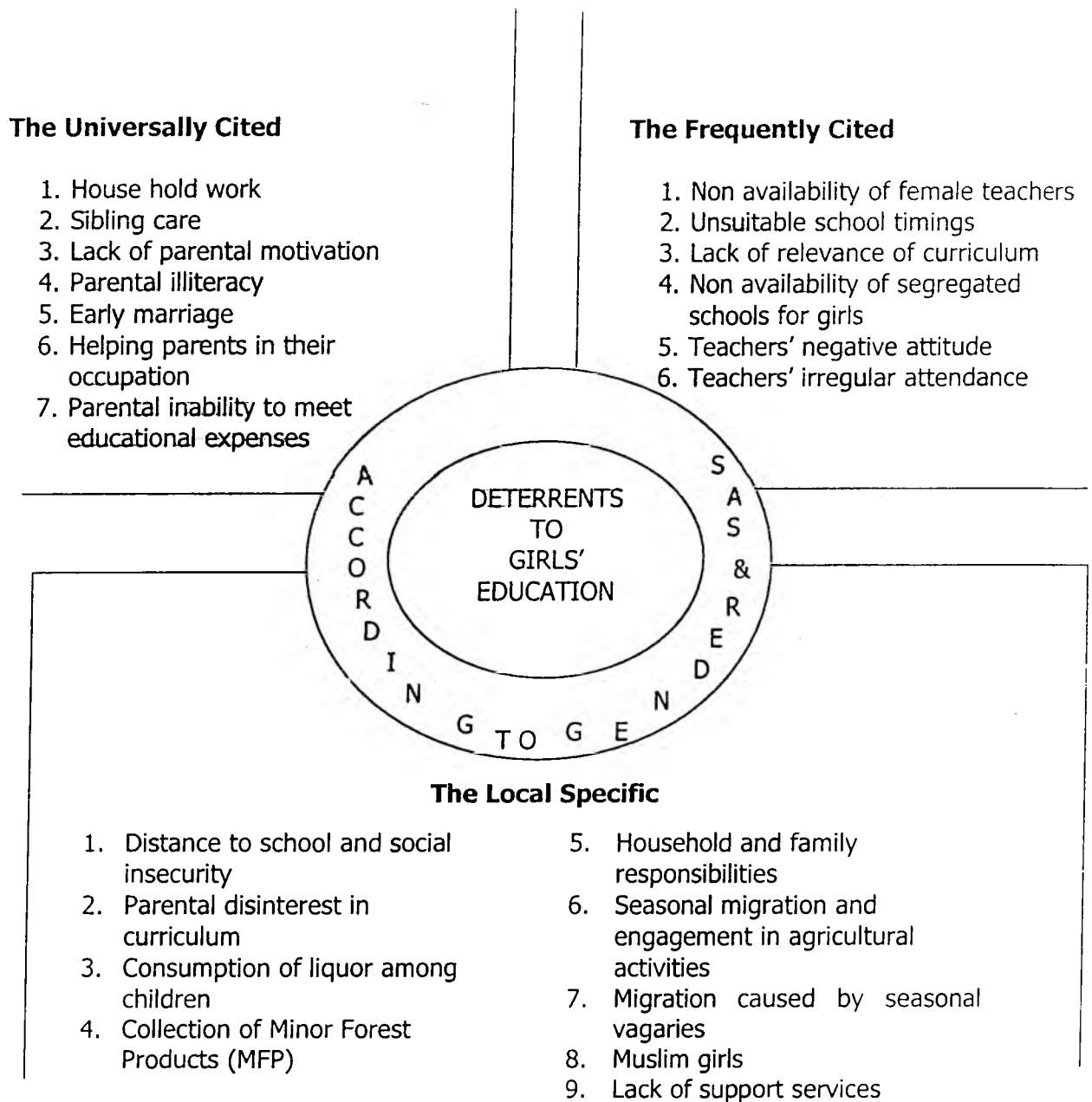
Deep rooted socio-cultural and traditional practices have contributed in reinforcing and perpetuating gender bias which adversely impact on girls' education. These deterrents are rooted both in their homes and society. Most of the studies reveal that girls' education is not a priority for their families. Early marriage seems to be a major deterrent to a girl's education. Educating girls is commonly perceived as unnecessary mainly on account of the role they have been assigned in running the house (which often has economic implications for the family) and also because they will eventually leave their parental homes after marriage where their skills in household chores will hold them in better stead.

Lack of parental motivation stemming from their own illiteracy and ignorance and also a dissatisfaction with the existing schools and the way they function is yet one more factor that keeps girls out of school. Girls who reach schools are likely to face non-supportive environment in the classroom and schools as these are mere extensions of their own social moorings, serviced and managed by those who are a part of the very social order to which they belong.

All these factors are more pronounced among the SCs, STs and other deprived sections, which together tend to have even more serious implications on the education of girls. Thus the lowest participation of girls is from these population sections.

The diagram given below seeks to summarize the findings of different assessments of girls' education:

Diagram IV .1 Deterrents to Girls' Education



Some factors seem to cut across districts and social groups while there are some which are more state specific. Another category of reasons is applicable only in certain districts and among certain social groups.

Wage labour continues to be a significant inhibiting factor for girls' education.

Specific income generating activities in which girls are engaged:

- *In the project districts of Maharashtra SC/ST children migrate during particular seasons and are involved in sugar cane cutting*
- *Pig rearing, weaving, brewing of rice beer in some parts of project districts of Assam*
- *In the Sundarban area of West Bengal, children from economically backward groups stay out of school as they are engaged in collection of prawn seeds (eggs)*
- *Girls in Murshidabad district of West Bengal are engaged as paid labour in brick factories and bidi rolling. Bidi rolling has kept many girls out of school in other project areas as well*
- *Girls' involvement in rope making, embroidery, glass bangles, brassware and carpet industry in certain pockets of Uttar Pradesh*
- *Children have been engaged in gem cutting, match industry, lungi production, brick kilns, stone quarries, bidi rolling in Pudukkottai, Ramanathanpuram, Perambalur and Thiruvalluvar districts of Tamil Nadu*
- *In Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu children's engagement in the eucalyptus plantation by the Social Forestry Department*
- *Involvement of children in the illegal transfer of goods to neighboring countries has been a specific problem in the border districts of Coochbehar and Murshidabad in West Bengal*
- *Over and above the varied forms of income generating activities in which children are involved, many of them are working as agricultural and daily wage labour.*

Distance to School and Social Insecurity

- *A sense of insecurity was expressed in Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh. The physical barriers like forest, rugged terrain, streams and rivers were obstructions to school going girls, particularly if the school is far away from their villages. This is a specific constraint faced by girls in Kullu, Chamba and Sirmour districts of Himachal Pradesh.*
- *In the tribal dominated areas of Idduki and Palakkad districts in Kerala distance to schools pose a problem for the girls.*
- *The Urali community, again in Kerala, has its children working in the forest, which coupled with the distance to school has kept them out of school.*

In Assam the non-availability of female teachers, unsuitable school timings, lack of relevant curriculum, negative attitude of teachers and work in the tea gardens in Karbi Anglong district and some others emerged as the major reasons.

In Orissa reasons cited, include non availability of female teachers, unsuitable school timings, lack of relevant curriculum, negative attitude of teachers, teachers' irregular attendance and wage labour were most frequently cited. Collection of Minor Forest Products by Children in the forest areas of Kalahandi, Bolangir, Dhenkhal, Gajapati and Rayagada were also important.

Parental disinterest in Curriculum

Parents in some districts of Haryana, Kerala, expansion districts of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Tamil Nadu have expressed disinterest in the curriculum in its present form. They would like the curriculum to focus on income generating activities in a way that would prepare girls for undertaking the same.

Seasonal Migration and Engagement in Agricultural Activities

When families migrate to other parts of the district/state or to other states in search of employment, the girls usually accompany them to take care of household work and younger siblings. This is common in parts of Maharashtra where families migrate to work in sugar factories and Dangs district of Gujarat where migration to sugar cane growing areas takes place. Migration in search of wage labour as rickshaw pullers, agricultural labour, at construction sites, stone quarries, brick kilns, and so on, is a common feature in parts of Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Reasons cited in Madhya Pradesh other than the universally cited ones include non availability of female teachers, lack of relevant curriculum, negative attitude of teachers, teachers' irregular attendance and wage labour. Among the tribals of Guna, Morena and Khargone districts, of Madhya Pradesh there is

strong resistance to sending girls to co-educational schools. Children in Surguja district of Madhya Pradesh in the 10 to 15 years age group are in the habit of consuming alcohol during the day.

Seasonal Migration and Engagement in Agricultural Activities in tribal districts also has an adverse impact. According to the Gender Studies 80 to 90 percent of female learners engage in income generating activities/household work in Datia, Dewas, Damoh districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Migration caused by seasonal vagaries

- *Families have to shift to dry land during the monsoon in the char (riverine) areas of Assam, flood prone areas of West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, etc.*
- *During winter months families in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh are compelled to migrate along with their cattle to warmer pastures*
- *It is common for girls to absent school during specific seasons – particularly harvest - festivals and fairs. This has been pointed out in many of the states*

Muslim Girls

- *The purdah system which seeks to keep girls/women in seclusion*
- *Early marriage*
- *Parents do not see any need for formal education and are comfortable sending them to institutions for religious education*

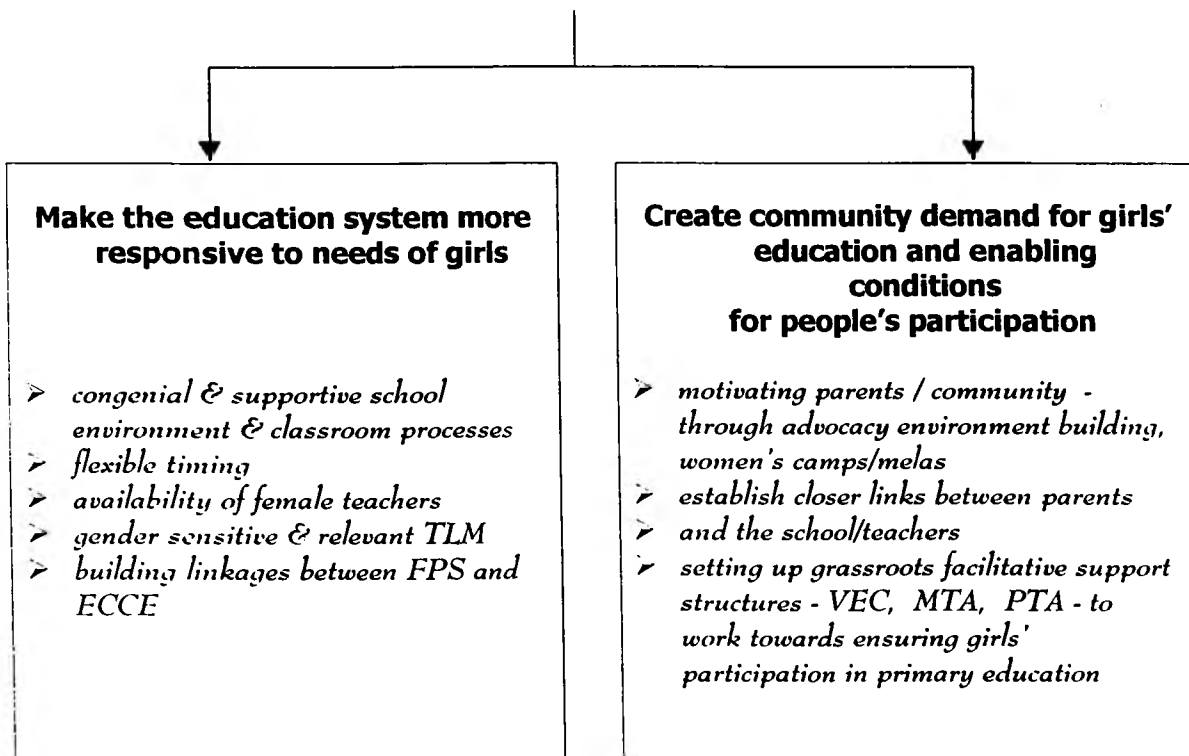
Lack of Support Services

The numbers of support services like Anganwadi and Balwadi are inadequate to cater to the number of children in the 3 to 6 years age group. Moreover, they fail to support girls' education as the timings are not co-ordinated with school timings.

While formulating the perspective plans, the host of reasons brought out by the various studies form the basis for strategies and interventions. Accordingly, strategies and interventions targeted at the larger issues of creating a sensitive school system and creating a demand for girls' education at the community level find a place in the perspective plans. The subsequent Annual Work Plan and Budgets have provided the opportunity to design strategies and interventions that are more focused and responsive to field situations.

DPEP's gender strategy can be broadly explained in the diagram below.

Diagram IV.2 DPEP's GENDER STRATEGY



The programme has therefore had to work at two levels in pursuance of this strategy.

The Generic which



seeks to integrate the gender perspective in the activities of various functional areas such as community mobilisation, alternative schooling, special focus groups (Tribal, IED, SC Minorities, etc.), teacher training, textbooks, VEC training, civil works, researchetc

The Specific which



Targets the resistant and disadvantaged groups, often dispersed in remote and difficult areas. This has entailed

- intensive and innovative efforts at micro level for future upscaling
- structural reinforcement at sub district level to retain focus on girls' education
- mobilisation of village women/women's groups to pursue issues of girls' education

Thus, interventions for girls' education have either been linked and integrated or unlinked and independent with separate physical and financial targets against which their progress has been monitored.

Strategies for Change

A wide range of strategies and interventions have been experimented with in the DPEP states to create a gender sensitive environment to facilitate better participation of girls at the primary level. These strategies and interventions have targeted both the 'demand' and 'supply' side issues. Efforts are on to elicit a proactive role of the community in the entire process of primary education by involving them in school activities and enabling them to monitor the functioning of schools and learning of the children.

Today there are examples of community taking keen interest in the teaching-learning process of schools, apart from contributing towards the improvement of school structure and availability of basic teaching aids, etc. A sense of pride in the school and educational status of the village is beginning to take root in many places. Much of this has been possible through the persistent efforts of the programme functionaries and many who have

volunteered to join the crusade. The demands on the school system are growing and pressures are on to improve the Teacher Pupil Radio (TPR), teacher availability, availability of requisite teaching aids, timely reach of the benefits to eligible children, etc. With the heightened awareness and involvement of the community the system has become more accountable to the community. The mounting pressure is showing signs of improvement in the 'supply' aspect of primary education to gradually match the expectations of stakeholders.

Further, the DPEP gender strategy has drawn upon the experience of the Mahila Samakhya programme, a women's education and empowerment programme. Mahila Samakhya has demonstrated that empowering poor women results in a clear articulated demand for educational opportunities for themselves and their children, especially girls.

The MS interface with DPEP has taken several different structural forms.

- *In Bihar, MS was an integral component of the Bihar Education Project and continues to be so under DPEP. MS here has adopted some of the structural features of the MS national scheme. A senior consultant at the state level, district core teams at the district level, grassroot level workers, sahayoginis, for every cluster of 10 villages focus on the Mahila Samakhya strategy. Programmatically, MS objectives and non-negotiables inform the MS interventions. This structural integration has meant a wider coverage for MS as well as quickly up scaling of MS learning within DPEP.*
- *In States such as Assam and Madhya Pradesh DPEP has funded and set up autonomous Mahila Samakhya Societies along the lines of the National Mahila Samakhya Scheme*
- *In States like Karnataka, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh where autonomous Mahila Samakhya Societies were already in place prior to DPEP, the modalities of MS-DPEP interface/convergence, are now in the process of being concretised. MS in all three states has tried to select DPEP districts for its expansion to facilitate such synergy. In Karnataka, for instance, MS and DPEP expansion into Bellary district, at the same time, resulted in a mutual involvement of each other in the micro-planning process.*

With this overview, we now take a look at the concrete steps taken in the programme to improve upon the enrolment, retention and achievement of girls.

5

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP

Initiatives in DPEP for Girls' Education

This section highlights the initiatives taken in different programmatic areas to tackle the problems indicated earlier.

Training for Gender

Gender sensitisation of key players, those who matter in the context of primary education, in the 'demand' and 'supply' aspects has been uniformly taken up by the states. The states have undertaken to build capacities of teachers, BRC and CRC Co-ordinators, Educational Administrators, DIET lecturers, project personnel and VEC members.

The general apathetic attitude towards educating girls that runs across the community and school system has necessitated such a step. Though states are aware that one-time short trainings may not be the best way of changing attitudes, it is believed that they would at least serve the purpose of introducing certain basic issues which may trigger off the process of change among some at the individual level.

The trainings have been pitched at different levels of priority. There are differences in the way the process of sensitisation has been designed and tackled and also the stage in the programme at which the various categories of functionaries have been introduced to gender concerns. The intensity with which the subject is addressed has also been varied.

The key elements of these trainings have been the

- development of gender modules and training material
- development of support material, handbooks provided to the trainees
- training duration
- training cascade

Gender sensitisation of teachers and those providing academic support

Most States have sought to integrate gender issues in the general training package developed for each group of trainees. The process for developing the gender content of the training modules has been varied. The approach in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat,

Karnataka, Orissa and West Bengal has been to have had it developed by a group of persons having expertise and experience in the subject. The training modules thus developed are then given a place in the larger training programme.

In Gujarat separate modules for Master Trainers (MTs) and teachers have been developed in Gujarati and English. This module is an integral part of the regular teacher training module. The same content has been incorporated in the training module for *Vidya Sahayaks* (VS), who are para teachers appointed by the Government of Gujarat. The district Officers in charge for Girls' Education, train the MTs at the district level who conduct the actual training of teachers and VS. The scope for Officers in charge for Girls' Education to interact directly with the teachers and VS during their training has been built into the training process.

Kusuma, the gender training module developed by Mahila Samakhya Karnataka for teachers attached to their non formal centres, is being used by DPEP Karnataka for their AS teachers.

Motivated by the training one of the Master Trainers in Panchmahal district of Gujarat has worked towards 100% enrolment of girls in his village.

Andhra Pradesh and Orissa also went through a detailed process of module development for teachers, BRC and CRC Co-ordinators. Handbooks were also developed alongside. Efforts are on to integrate the gender modules in the general training module. In all likelihood the modules in their condensed version will be transacted.

A specially constituted Core Group in West Bengal has developed a gender module for training and orientation of primary teachers. The UNESCO publication 'From Girl Child to Person'⁸ has been suitably modified and adapted to the local situation so that it is in consonance with the social and cultural environment of the state. This module will be field tested on 35 teachers in a three days workshop after which the module will be finalised and printed.

The objectives of the module is to help teachers

- *understand the various dimensions of inequality between sexes in the Indian context*
- *understand and analyse their own biases and perceptions about gender roles in view of the changing requirements of a democratic, just, egalitarian, technological society*
- *develop and plan practical interventions in curriculum and develop a sense of self-respect in girls so that they grow up to be persons in their own right.*

A condensed version of this three days module is proposed to be used for teachers as a part of the larger teacher training programme, while all teachers in the blocks selected for intensive work to universalise girls'

⁸ Usha Nayar, *From Girl Child to Person*, Resource Materials for Teachers and Hand Teachers of Primary Schools in India, UNESCO, New Delhi Office, 1995

enrolment and retention will be taken through the unabridged version of the gender module.

In the 10 days teacher training programme Tarang I, in Haryana, a day and a half have been earmarked for issues such as women's status, gender bias, life cycle of women, importance of primary education for girls. A session on understanding mental resistance in this respect has also been provided for.

Similar components have been built into the teacher training programme in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Very recently DPEP Haryana had organised a tele-conferencing on girls' education and through this reached out to almost a thousand teachers, CRC and BRC Co-ordinators, DIET faculty, DPEP personnel, Anganwadi Workers, social workers, parents, Mahila Mandal Pradhans and so on.

Enrolment has shown considerable improvement in Haryana and it is possible to attribute such improvements to various community level interventions, viz., Maa-Beti Melas, Mahila Sashakti Karan Saptah, etc. As retention of girls, is still an issue the State is grappling with, the focus of the tele-conferencing was on improving girls' retention in primary education.

With this end in view efforts were made to generate awareness about the grassroots situations and issues of girls' education and also providing the viewers/participants insights into the ways of working for the betterment of girls participation in primary education. To facilitate this, the handbook, Mujhe Padna Hai, has tried to bring out the prevailing situation of girls' participation in primary education through usage of EMIS data and cohort studies in select schools. Causes for low levels of participation and incidence of high dropout were elicited from parents, teachers and community members and beamed during the On Air sessions.

- In Tamil Nadu, gender concerns have been built into the general training programmes for teachers, CRC and BRC Co-ordinators and Educational Administrators.
- The package being used in Himachal Pradesh focuses on gender sensitisation, prevalent gender bias and retention of girls. The teacher training package, SMART-PT, developed and transacted by the SCERT has incorporated a module on gender sensitisation.
- In Uttar Pradesh the training responsibility has been taken up largely by the SIEMAT. It has developed gender sensitisation packages for different categories of functionaries and conducts regular trainings.

To support and reinforce the training inputs, states have also developed handbooks for the different categories of persons being trained:

Gujarat has paid emphasis on this and has provided handbooks to teachers, BRC and CRC Co-ordinators, Education Administrators, DIET lecturers, project personnel etc. The NCERT document 'Women's Empowerment and Equality through Curriculum' has

been adapted and translated into Gujarati and provided to all schools, CKCCs, BRCCs, DIETs, DPOs and the GCERT.

A handbook for Sahayogini training has been developed in Maharashtra. Sahayoginis are selected from among the existing female teachers and are trained specifically on issues of girls' education.

One session of the seven days training programme for BRC Co-ordinators in Orissa has been devoted to gender concerns. A handbook on gender was developed and distributed to the BRC Co-ordinators.

In building a gender perspective in education through sensitisation of teachers, DPEP Karnataka has included issues such as :

- *What is gender ?*
- *What is women's status ?*
- *How is women's status assessed ?*
- *Institutional analysis*
- *Women's movement and development*
- *What is empowerment ?*
- *Education and empowerment*

Karnataka has also developed print and audio visual gender focused material for teachers. These include

Chigura : Resource book for teachers
Manthana : Resource book for Trainers of Teachers

Seven module film entitled "Before we begin the lesson....." along with three days training designed for teachers.

The time spent on gender issues has been varied. The subject has usually been transacted over one or two sessions or at most in one day. Gujarat has on the contrary spent three days on the gender training of CRC and BRC Co-ordinations, Educational Administrators and DIET faculty.

Deviations from the usual trend are seen in certain cases.

Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are planning to provide special training to teachers in the clusters and blocks in which intensive efforts at universalisation of girls' participation in primary education have been undertaken. Similar views are under consideration in

Gujarat. "A Study on Participation of Girls in Classroom Interactions" carried out in Uttar Pradesh is a pointer to the non-supportive environment prevailing in the classrooms. Taking a cue from the study findings it is possible to plan and design effective training packages for teachers.

Gender Sensitisation of Project Personnel

Gender training of project personnel has been completed in most states. State and district level co-ordinators, and the DPCs/ ADPCs have been covered. The SPO has either organised this directly with the help of resource persons or through specialist agencies/institutions. For example, Madhya Pradesh in the very early stages of programme implementation had sent a group of project functionaries to SNDT University for gender training.

A Conceptual Workshop on Integrating Gender Concerns in DPEP was organised by DPEP Gujarat, in September, 1997. The participants at the workshop included State and district project office functionaries, State and district gender resource group members, DIET lecturers, BRC and CRC co-ordinators, teachers and one Anganwadi worker.

In this workshop the participants were given a lot of group work to do. A very rigorous work schedule was followed during the entire workshop. To provide breaks between sessions, various games were played and cultural activities performed by the participants.

The objectives of the workshop were to

- facilitate concept building
- chalk out processes to be followed in programme implementation
- plan strategies for training/gender sensitisation
- develop framework for gender sensitisation modules
- form resource groups for specific tasks and learning to work with them
- acquire hands on experience of micro planning and development of gender sensitive awareness material
- work out time plans for activities given in the AWPB 1997-98

Subsequently, project personnel in Gujarat have undergone three days gender training and have been provided handbooks at the training.

Gender sensitisation of State and district level project functionaries in Himachal Pradesh, has not only contributed in improving girls' enrolment, but has encouraged female teachers to take up the challenging positions of BRC and CRC co-ordinators.

⁹ A Study on Participation of Girls in Classroom Interactions, The Integrated Management Group, Lucknow, for the Uttar Pradesh Education for All Project, Lucknow

The SRG, Gender, of DPEP West Bengal has decided that a gender sensitisation programme for project personnel needs to be organised. A separate training module is under preparation by the Women's Studies Centre in Calcutta University.

Along with the BRC and CRC co-ordinators district level officers in charge of different functional areas and the ADPC, DIET Principals, DIET Lecturers in Gujarat also received gender training. The Officers in Charge of MIS, Tribal, Teacher Training, Media, of the SPO also participated in the training programme.

Sahayoginis from Madhya Pradesh have undergone 5 days training.

Three days training of personnel on gender has been carried out in all the nine districts of Maharashtra. Topics such as girls' education, gender equity, health, hygiene, nutrition, women's empowerment, women's policy, superstitions, communication skills, schemes to promote girls' education, village mapping, methods and approaches for campaigning and community mobilisation, dramatics, self awareness, roles and responsibilities of the functionaries were covered. Special training has also been organised for the Sahayoginis, who are female teachers in schools, to prepare them for their role as co-ordinators for girls' education at their level.

Review/renewal process of Textbooks – Elimination of Gender Bias

States have adopted different means of eliminating gender bias in textbooks. In some States steps have been taken to sensitise textbook writers and illustrators on the ways of eliminating gender bias in textbooks as a preparatory measure or as a part of the textbook development process. On finalisation of the manuscript the same is subjected to review by experts who are usually drawn from the State Resource Group for gender. In states such as Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, State/District Co-ordinators for Girls' Education have been actively involved with the process of textbook development as members of the Resource Group set up for the purpose. In the case of Uttar Pradesh the Mahila Samakhya programme has provided resource support throughout the process of textbook development. Representatives of other women's groups were also involved in the process in Himachal Pradesh. Women teachers in Himachal Pradesh have actively participated in the workshop for curriculum development for Classes I to III.

In Karnataka all textbooks of Classes I to IV in Language, Mathematics and Environment Studies in Kannada, Urdu, Marathi and Tamil medium have been reviewed for elimination of gender bias. A gender resource person, identified by the DSERT, was associated with the Textbook Committee.

Checklists have been prepared for textbook writers and illustrators as a means of eliminating gender bias in the textbooks. These have either been discussed with them at

some length in workshops or have been provided to them as guidelines. Examples of checklists developed are cited below :

Table V.1 Checklist : Assam

| Gender Balance | |
|--|---|
| What to Avoid | What to Include |
| 1. Usage of examples of negative female characters even from the epics or any renowned literary works that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show women in secondary roles as subordinates to males • uphold female characters like Sita as ideal women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal distribution of male and female centered lessons • Appropriate presentation of the positive aspects of both great and ordinary women • Presentation of women's successful contributions |
| Presentation of Content | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting women as weak, fragile, stupid, etc. • Establishing the identity of women only as someone's mother, sister, daughter or wife. • Usage of statements such as "father went to the market and brought a pencil for the son and a hair clip for the daughter" in mathematics • Usage of statements expressions such as "good boys go to school" on the assumption that only boys should go to school or are interested in studying | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage of similar adjectives for man and women to the extent possible • Showing men and women/boys and girls doing similar activities/tasks in mathematical exercises • Introduction/identifying women on the merit of their achievements and character rather than as somebody's mother, sister |
| Design and Illustrations | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcing the stereo typed image in keeping with the conventional images showing women engaged in cooking, washing and other household chores like. • Inclusion of women in supportive roles to men or to merely give a completeness to the overall picturisation or illustration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal distribution of male and female centred illustrations • Presenting women as, progressive, capable, hard working individuals e.g. instead of presenting women in a stereotypical roles, they may be shown as doctors, police, teachers, pilot, scientists etc. |

Uttar Pradesh

1. Use gender neutral examples.
2. Reference to women in the context of success stories, brave deeds, great personalities.
3. Ensure scope for equal opportunity for participatory learning activities.
4. Build a perspective of gender equality in lessons
5. Provide examples which help to enhance self esteem of girls.
6. Avoid artificial division of human attributes, e.g.

- Capable/incapable of taking decisions
- Authoritative/non-authoritative
- Emotional/sensitive/rational
- Dependent/independent
- Coward/brave
- Income generating activities/household activities
- Brave boy/tender girl fascinated by dolls and necklace

7. Do not discriminate between boys and girls while expressing their emotions.

Gujarat

- Boys and girls should receive equal mention in textbooks – in the text and in illustrations
- Instead of having the conventional illustrations of a man ironing clothes, a boy watering the plants, a boy climbing a tree, illustrations of girls doing similar things should be included in the textbooks
- The cover of a book should give equal importance to both boys and girls
- Avoid the usage of such words or sentences that could hurt the sentiments of girl children
- **Progressive examples of women in professions should be given, e.g. women can be tailors, men and women can both sell milk etc.**
- Avoid associating gender stereo typical ideas and reinforcing them e.g., the gifts or presents given to boys and girls - a car for a boy child, a doll or toy utensils for a girl child.
- Avoid using gender stereo typed examples of work distribution to boys and girls and the games they play. For example A girl child should be shown doing hard work, the boy and girl child should be shown playing together in the playground, girls playing Kabbadi, boys and girls playing langdi together, etc.

With particular reference to mathematics

- the name of the girl child be used in the examples, exercises and problems. Similar importance be given to girls in examples like accounts, purchasing commodities in market and their name should be used.

The West Bengal Board of Primary Education, the statutory body responsible for textbook development, has taken up the task of renewing the textbooks of primary classes (from Class I to IV). The manuscripts of the revised version of textbooks – Bengali, Mathematics of Class I - are ready and will be scrutinised by an expert committee. The SRG gender has been provided copies of the revised manuscripts to examine them for elimination of gender bias, if any.

Making Girls' Education a Community Agenda

The growing realisation that 'demand' for primary education is a crucial factor for attainment of UPE, had led to the large scale effort to work in partnership with the community. Since community/social factors and parental disinclination have been major factors for girls not going to school, DPEP has evolved different methods to involve communities for promoting girls' education.

The most important method of community mobilisation in DPEP is the Village Education Committee (VEC). Chapter III mentions the efforts towards bringing girls education to the forefront through the membership and sensitisation of VECs. In addition there are many examples of such mobilisation and awareness creation initiatives, with a clear focus on the education of girls, carried out by the states.

Maa – beti melas – Haryana, UP, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh

DPEP States have been organising different versions of Maa-beti melas. It is a coming together of mothers and daughters on issues of girls' education. On the day of the mela, women along with their daughters assemble in large numbers and participate in a number of activities. Also, they are exposed to new ideas through media interventions. Apart from the overall intent of using the occasion to create a supportive environment for girls' education, the immediate goal has been to enrol as many girls as possible.

In Haryana the 'Maa-Beti-Melas' have attempted to :

1. bring the mother of the girls in the fold of efforts at Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE)
2. sensitise mothers towards the importance of girls' education
3. increase enrolment of girls with emphasis on retention.

The *Maa - beti Melas* are held in a cluster school or a centrally located school in the cluster where women can reach without any difficulty. The *mela* lasts through the day. Widespread efforts are made to mobilise for women's participation in the *mela*. Teachers play a pivotal role in the process.

The head of the cluster holds meetings of the cluster teachers and contributes significantly towards the organisation of the *mela*. The involvement of other departments is also sought.

'Prabhat Pheries' are organised as an awareness creation measure. Other steps include slogan writing on walls at prominent places, distribution of pamphlets and posters in the villages, door to door contact with the mothers and extending invitations to them to attend the *mela*. Use of loudspeakers, television and radio are made to publicise the *melas*. Films and talks on girls education are held on T.V. and Radio.

At the mela

- pictures and photographs of women of national/state repute are displayed at strategic places and a teacher explains (to the girls and their mothers) the important role played by these great women in different fields.
- Cluster teachers put up on display a variety of products made by women at home during their free time. Prizes are given for the best items by way of encouragement and incentive to the women.
- talks on preparation of nutritious food with the help of Krishi Vigyan Kendras are arranged
- talks are given on legal issues to inform women of their rights and equip them to fight atrocities and injustice
- races, painting competitions, *Bhajans*, *geets*, recitation of poems, short dramas, skits and the like are held.
- sweets, snacks, fruit and tea etc. are also made available
- short duration films are screened to inculcate women's conviction about the need for girls' education.

In the evening, the day's proceedings close, under the chairpersonship of some important local lady, with a prize distribution function.

Other effective community based interventions for girls' education undertaken by the States for the generation of awareness include the Meena campaign in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat; the *Mahila Kishori Melavas* in Maharashtra; the *Muniya Beti Padhat Jaye* campaign in Bihar and the *Mahila Sashaktikaran Saptah* in Haryana.

Machi Sammelan : Gujarat

Different social groups in Gujarat have traditionally kept their girls out of school. DPEP Gujarat has identified some of the social groups who have traditionally resisted girls' education and strategised for bringing them into school. *Sammelans* had been organised amongst the various groups which have successfully created a general awareness about girls' right to be educated.

A *Rabari Sammelan* was organised in Banaskantha district in which the community leaders took the charge of convincing the gathering at the *sammelan* about the importance and benefits of getting girls educated. In fact, during the *sammelan* itself, the community leaders announced the proposal for setting up of the Hostels for girls at Radhanpur. Today 465 girls and 340 boys are enrolled in these hostels (7).

A similar *sammelan* among the Rajputs was organised in Vav, banaskantha. This is yet another community that does not encourage girls' education. The main objective of the *sammelan* was to boost the enrolment and retention of girls in schools. In the 18 villages covered, the attendance of 263 children was found to be irregular. Following the

sammelan it has been possible to ensure regular attendance of 148 children-78 girls and 70 boys.

As a further follow up of the *sammelan*, it has been possible to re-enroll 805 children who had dropped out of school. During 1998-99, 2455 girls and 1695 boys have been re-enrolled in school across Banaskantha district.

To tackle the extreme backwardness among the tribals in Panchmahal district, a tribal *sammelan* was held in the interior areas of Dhanpur taluka which happens to be the most remote part of the district. As an outcome of this effort an AS Centre has been set up in Dahod. It has also been possible to enroll 1000 girls in the formal schools.

Mahila Sangam Programme at Dangs : Gujarat

Mahila Sangam girls have also succeeded in enrolling girls through prevention of their migration. Educated girls who are able to interact in the local language are identified and oriented for awareness generation on girls' education. They establish contacts with the community.

They have also assisted teachers in multi-grade situations in the formal schools. Most importantly, they have been able to pursue the enrolment of girls, ensure regular attendance, prevent migration, etc. Seeing their effectiveness, a formal scheme has been worked out. The scheme has made the efforts of these girls remunerative and incentives have been provided for the different activities they pursue such as house visits, assisting teacher in school, as "Tegadar" and AS Instructor.

As a result of their efforts it has been possible to

- regularize 69 children in school
- prevent the migration of 91 children

Mahila Sarpanches Sarmellan

The *Mahila Sarpanch Sarmellans* were organised in all the *talukas* of Panchmahal district to sensitize them on issues of girls' education. The self awareness and gender awareness activities were carried out during these *sarmellans*. The *mahila sarpanches* were so impressed with the ideas discussed at the *sammelan* that they were motivated to undertake the gender activities whole heartedly.

Initiatives by the Community

Gujarat

- Literate girls of Dangs initiated the community mobilisation and awareness activities in their villages after orientation on DPEP and girls' education
- The girls' residential school is being built by the Rabari community at Radhanpur in Banaskantha district
- Identification of girls for AS centres.

Haryana

- Door to door campaign by women members of the Panchayat for girls' education.

Karnataka

- In Bellary district at one NFE centre, when there is a power breakdown, children go from house to house to collect a lamp to light up the NFE centre for evening studies/activities.

Madhya Pradesh

- Community involvement in Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan, Shiksha Panchayat initiated formation of Mahila Samoohs.

A participatory motivational campaign, the Lok Sampark Abhiyan (LSA) was initiated in the districts of Madhya Pradesh in June 1996. The Lok Sampark Abhiyan covered 55,295 villages and contacted 61,03,143 households and 1,01,65,837 children.

The specific objectives of Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan were :

1. Sensitising the society towards literacy of adult women and education of girl child.
2. Environment building for large scale participation of parents, specially mothers, teachers, opinion leaders, community leaders and the community.
3. Identifying non school going girl children and ensuring 100% enrolment and retention
4. Increasing adult women's participation in the literacy classes.

It was designed with two ends in view. While it sought to assess the current status of schooling facilities for primary education and to survey 'in-school' children at the household-level, through combined teams of panchayat functionaries, teachers and volunteers, it also mobilised the community to demand education for itself. The

demand thus created spelt out an urgency for the State government to immediately increase the educational outreach and particularly target the tribal habitation pattern.

The data of LSA 96 was updated to ensure continuous monitoring of year-wise data and facilitate to measures the progress in terms of programme indicators.

On close observation and analysis of data updated during *Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan*, it was found that the girls belonging to SC/ST and backward classes were the largest proportion of the 'out of school girls' specially among the dropouts. Keeping this in mind, the MSA-II was conducted from 15 June – 20 August 1998. In this process, the data on enrolment, dropouts, out of school children were collected through door-to door surveys.

**Main objectives of the second round
Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan were to ensure:**

1. *educational facility for all children in age 6-11 years*
2. *to bring the 'out of school children' unenrolled and dropouts to school*
3. *cent per cent enrolment of SC, ST girls in school*
4. *regular attendance of children in school.*

Holding of Cluster level *Shiksha Panchayats* was among the other main activities conducted during MSA. *bal sabhas, bal melas, school chalo abhiyan* etc. were organised at the cluster level. At the cluster level, reports were read out on the achievement made in enrolling SC,ST girls in school. These cluster reports were then compiled at block, district and the state level.

Final data indicated that during this MSA, 16.20 lakhs out of school children were additionally enrolled in schools out of which 7.58 lakh were girls. This was possible because of DPEP interventions *viz.* New Primary School, AS, Education Guarantee Scheme, *Ashram Shalas*, etc. *Madarassa* schools, another DPEP innovation, has also helped girls from the minority community to enroll in the mainstream primary education system. The analysis of MSA data revealed that the remaining out of school girls mainly belong to the SC and ST groups.

Incentives to Girls by the State and DPEP

Incentives are being provided to various categories of children to encourage the participation of eligible children in primary education. The beneficiary groups that qualify for receipt of incentives include girls, SC/ST children, children of backward and disadvantaged groups and minorities etc. The State Governments provide a variety of incentives that include textbooks, uniforms, stationary, scholarships (including attendance scholarships), bus passes, insurance against accident, etc. Free Primary education to girls is provided by states such as Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh.

With respect to provision of incentives DPEP tries to meet some of the unmet gaps. The programme guidelines allow for provision of educational incentives. Consequently, states providing incentives under DPEP are doing so in the form of textbooks, notebooks, stationary and other educational material.

The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (mid day meal scheme) of the Government of India is an incentive available to all children in primary schools across the DPEP states.

Table V.2 : Incentives Provided to Girls

| State | Incentives Provided to Girls | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| | By the State | By DPEP |
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free textbooks to all children studying up to Class X • Scholarships to all SC/ST students in classes III, IV and V. • Merit and attendance scholarships and cash awards provided to socially and economically backward students in school • Writing material to all students in Classes III, IV and V. • All SC, ST students in Classes I and II are provided school uniforms and toiletries • Free board and lodging to all SC, ST students studying in government residential schools | |
| 2. Assam | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free education for girls up to Class XII • Free textbooks to all students of Classes I to VII • Free uniforms to SC, ST girls and girls from ten garden tribes • Attendance scholarship of Rs. 60.00 per month to selected SC and ST students on the basis of their attendance • Special scholarship of Rs. 240.00 per annum to SC, ST girls • Junior Basic scholarships awarded on the basis of annual scholarship examinations. Students of Class IV are eligible to appear in the examination. A monthly amount of Rs. 15.00 for a period of 3 years is provided to the selected children | |
| 3. Bihar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students enrolled at the primary level are provided textbooks at a subsidised rate of 50% • Free uniform to SC/ST girls in primary classes • Scholarships to SC/ST students • Attendance scholarship of Rs. 1.00 per day to students from below poverty line families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free textbooks to all girls and SC/ST students in the primary level |

| State | Incentives Provided to Girls | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| | By the State | By DPEP |
| 4. Gujarat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free uniform to socially and economically backward students in primary classes Monthly scholarship of Rs.100.00 to SC/ST girls in Classes I to IV Monthly scholarship of Rs.75.00 and Rs.175.00 to socially and economically backward students studying in non-residential and residential schools respectively Students from 12 extremely backward classes receive attendance allowance (boys Rs.350.00 and girls Rs.500.00) subject to 70% attendance Children of scavengers studying in Classes I to X are entitled to receive monthly scholarship (varying denominations according to class and residential /non residential schools) for ten months and an ad hoc grant of Rs.500.00 annum | |
| 5. Haryana | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free uniforms to SC girls – Rs.100.00 for two uniforms to those girls studying in Classes I and II and Rs.75.00 for one uniform to those girls studying in Classes III to V. Girls belonging to weaker sections and studying in Classes I to V are given Rs.75.00 per year Monthly attendance prize of Rs.10.00 for SC girls with 70% attendance and whose parents' annual income does not exceed Rs.10,000.00. Special attendance allowance of Rs.1.00 per day to children of nomadic tribes for attending school Free textbooks to all SC children and those belonging to weaker sections under the Book Bank Scheme. Rs.10.00 is provided annually to SC children and those belonging to weaker sections under the free stationery scheme Children of scavengers studying in primary classes receive a monthly scholarship of Rs.25.00 for ten months and an ad hoc grant of Rs.500.00 per annum Monthly stipend of Rs.10.00 to every student belonging to denotified tribes in Classes I to V. Free textbook to all girl students in Classes I to III in DPEP schools | |
| 6. Himachal Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Textbook to all SC/ST/OBC and IRDP category boys and girls and all girls in DPEP districts Free school uniforms to girls in Classes I to V in tribal areas Free writing material to girls in Classes I to V in tribal areas Free writing material to poor boys and girls in non-tribal areas Lahaul & Spiti pattern Scholarship to all boys and girls in Classes I to V in tribal areas @ Rs.8.00 for 12 months and Rs.30.00 as Education Grant Girls' attendance scholarship @ Rs.2.00 per month for 10 months IRDP scholarship to students in Classes I to V belonging to these families @ 150.00 per annum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks to non SC/ST girls (general) |

| State | Incentives Provided to Girls | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| | By the State | By DPEP |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship to all SC students in Classes I to V at Rs. 8.00 per month for 12 months Scholarship for welfare of Backward Class Scheme @ Rs.30.00 per annum to all students in Classes I to V Sainik scholarship to students who are wards of ex-servicemen @ Rs. 5.00 per month for 12 months and Rs.15.00 as Education Grant | |
| 7. Karnataka | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks under the scheme Postakalaya to all children in Classes I to V One set of free uniform to all students in Classes I to V Under the Akshaya Ahara scheme processed food at 1 kg per child per month subject to 8 months in the year to all children in Classes I to V in government primary schools in urban areas and all areas of 52 non EAS blocks One free School Bag to all SC/ST girls in Classes V to VII studying in government primary schools | |
| 8. Kerala | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks and note books to all children in class I Group Personal Accident Insurance scheme for school children of Government and private aided schools in Classes I to X. Compensation of Rs.10,000.00 offered either on death due to any accident or for permanent disability like loss of legs, both hands, feet etc. Compensation is offered for other injuries also. Reimbursement of medical expenses subject to limit of Rs.500.00 per student for any one accident per year. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks and note books to SC/ST children and girls in classes II to IV. |
| 9. Madhya Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks to SC/ST students in Classes I to II Book bank scheme for SC/ST children in Classes III to V Under the Group Insurance scheme insurance cover is offered to all children up to Rs.10,000.00 per child against accident or any disaster. Parents have to contribute Rs.0.60 per year. Children from Classes I to XII are covered by this scheme Monthly scholarship of Rs.15.00 to all SC/ST girls in Classes III to V Free uniform to all SC/ST children from Classes I – V. | |

| State | Incentives Provided to Girls | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| | By the State | By DPEP |
| 10. Maharashtra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free education to girls up to Class XII Free textbooks to SC/ST/VJNT students in Classes I to V One set free uniform and writing material to SC/ST students up to class IV worth Rs.100.00 Free travelling facility in state transport facility for going to school for girls in rural areas studying in Classes V to X. The Ahilyabai Holkar free Travel for Girls scheme is applicable where upper primary/secondary education is not available in the village where the girl resides Attendance Allowance to girls from BPL families in Classes I to IV @ Rs.1.00 per day in tribal sub plan area. All girls from BPL families belonging to SC/ST/ VJNT communities in Classes I to IV in non tribal areas and day scholar girls from BPL families studying in Ashram Schools are eligible. A maximum of Rs. 220.00 per year is paid to parents/guardians of these girls. 75% attendance is the eligibility criterion for receipt of attendance allowance | |
| 11. Orissa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free reading and writing materials are provided to all SC/ST students in the primary level One pair of garments under the free uniform scheme per child per annum provided to all SC and ST students in the primary level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks |
| 12. Tamil Nadu | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks under the Education Department is implemented through the Tamil Nadu Text Books Corporation are provided to all students of primary level (Classes I to VIII) Under the Social Welfare and Nutrition Meal Programme Department, there is another scheme for supplying free textbooks and notebooks for the children of widows. From 1996-97 onwards, this scheme is extended to all children of poor widows and the cash limit for it is Rs.600.00 The department of BC and MBC Welfare provides books and slates free of cost to the boys and girls studying in the Kallar Reclamation Schools. Children studying in standards I to VII who are beneficiaries under Nutritious Meal Programme are supplied one set of free uniforms every year | |
| 13. Uttar Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free education for all children from primary level right through to Class XII SC/ST and minority children receive a monthly scholarship of Rs. 25.00. Scholarships are also awarded to poor children and those belonging to backward communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free textbooks to all girls and SC/ST children in all primary schools of DPEP districts. |
| 14. West Bengal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All textbooks are supplied free of cost to all students of all recognised primary schools School uniform is provided to all SC and ST girls and 25% of the girls of economically backward families in the primary level | |

Other interventions

In the context of girls DPEP states have not satisfied themselves by just providing incentives to girls. They have tried to motivate the institution/agents of change by giving special awards to schools and VECs for highest enrolment or retention of girls. Instead of just motivating girls with incentives, these states seek to motivate the schools and community to exert additional effort to draw more girls into the schooling system. In Bihar block level awards to schools have been provided for on the basis of girls' enrolment and retention.

From this year incentives in kind have been proposed to be given to 3 schools with highest enrolment of girls in the selected blocks in West Bengal. Gujarat has also made similar provisions. Uttar Pradesh has proposed awards to VECs for similar achievements.

Flexible timings introduced for girls

Seeking to provide an additional boost to girls' education, states have taken into account the school timing and their amenability to the daily routine of children, especially girls. In the first place the timing of the Alternative Schools have been determined by the convenience of the target children to ensure regularity of attendance. Not only this, the concept of flexible timing is gradually being accepted in the formal primary schools as well

This has successfully impacted on the attendance of those girls who are not able to be in school for the full day. To be able to attend to other commitments they are allowed to come in late in the morning or leave early. Teachers are beginning to realise the value of such flexibility. As a strategy, this approach has been formalised in the schools covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach in Uttar Pradesh.

Seed crossing (cotton and some varieties of flowers) disrupt the regular attendance of girls during particular seasons in Sonkhed, Maharashtra. The MTA members in this village are campaigning with families to refrain from sending girls for seed crossing so that they are not absent from school. Wherever their efforts have failed, they have worked it out with the teachers to relieve these girls an hour or two early and also ensure that subjects such as mathematics, language and EVS are taught in the morning when girls are in school.

Working through Women's Collectives

Drawing on the commitment and strength of well motivated women's groups has been a characteristic feature of the programme in Assam. Since the very early stages of implementation, women's awareness camps were held as a precursor to forming them into groups. This was followed by efforts to organising the women VEC members, again through special training programmes. Presently, village women and existing women's groups are being trained and oriented by specially empowered volunteers, on issues closely

related to their lives with a focus on girls' education. Consequently, these women, are getting more and more concerned with educational issues though they continue to pursue income generation and micro credit activities, sanitation, etc.

Back in 1996 the first convention for women members of VECs was organised in district Morigaon of Assam. A group of 30 women were brought together from different VECs in a cluster. At that stage the curriculum that was drafted for the convention was somewhat preliminary in nature and has evolved since then. The first experience at the convention very clearly brought out certain facts, *viz.*, that the women were eager to participate in the regular functioning of the VEC, particularly in the civil works related activities, and also work with the school and the community for improving the participation levels of children in primary education. The first experience being encouraging, resulted in further fine tuning the strategy and developing a more focused and relevant curriculum.

Presently, conventions for women members of VECs are being organised in selected clusters (say 4/5 per district). The thrust of these conventions are on :

- role definition as women members of VECs
- how they may develop their agenda for action

Initially the conventions were organised with in house support but it was soon realised that this work did not receive the attention it required because of responsibilities that were more urgent or placed higher in the order of priorities.

Thus evolved the arrangement of engaging Resource Persons (RP) for undertaking this village level intervention. A major shift had also been affected in the target women being covered. Now the focus is on village women along with VEC women members.

Once the RPs are selected, they are oriented for the task and are then sent on village visits. They meet the village women and try to elicit some of the key issues of the village through discussions with them. Having got some insights into the issues, the RPs propose a formal meeting to discuss the identified issues with an intent to address them locally.

Some of the outcomes of such efforts have been in the area of :

- providing low cost toilets using locally available material.
- pursuing cases of children engaged as domestic help and being them to school.

- *A Women's Organisation in Mayangia Cluster in Kapili Block was already in existence. Three VEC members happen to be members of this women's organisation. On receiving a request from this group DPEP Assam supported the organisation of a awareness building convention by providing resource persons. This minimal input has yielded very promising results. The women got together and campaigned against the sale of liquor in three shops and the men have been motivated to ply rickshaws as an alternative means of livelihood. At present, no liquor is on sale. Eight Self Help Groups have been formed out of which seven have collected money. The women also conducted a sanitation campaign, developed the approach road to the school and "nam ghar" (place of workshop/ religious discourse).*

The most significant outcome has been the formation of Mother's Groups, which visit the school thrice in a month. They check the attendance and try to prevent children from dropping out of school by visiting the homes of vulnerable children and talking to their mothers.

- *In Ahom Khagaria village in the same block women have formed the "DPEP Mahila Samiti" after the convention was held. They chose to call it the "DPEP Mahila Samiti" on two counts – one that they got their basic orientation from DPEP and the other that they want the name of the programme to stay on even after the project is over. Here also, school visits are made in the entire cluster. Self Help Groups have been formed and the women now seek DPEP assistance/guidance for utilisation of the money raised.*
- *A Mothers' Group has been formed in a village in Jajori Nishanta Cluster, Block Bhurbandha. Since a year and a half the five teachers attached to the village primary school were very irregular in their attendance. The Mothers' Group, that came into being much later, decided to look into the issue. To start with, they meet the Head Teacher and tried to impress upon him that all of them must come to school at 10.00 a.m. every day and remain there during the school hours. The Head Teacher did not take the women very seriously. After this, one day the women went to the school and the teacher sought to leave the school around noon which had been their practice, the women prevented them from leaving the school. They said they will not complain about the irregularity of the teachers but they themselves will change them. Things have since changed and the teachers have been attending school regularly.*

Alternative Schooling and Girls

The factors which inhibit girls joining formal primary schools have led to a special focus on girls in the AS models developed under DPEP. The success of these strategies is evident from the fact that girls have benefited by the presence of the Alternative Schools initiated by DPEP. Around 42% - 66% of the children covered by the alternative schooling interventions are girls. The following table gives the proportion of girls enrolled (cumulative) under the various models of AS being run by the States.

Table V.3 : Share of Girls' Enrolment in AS Centres

| State | Girls' Enrolment in AS Centres |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | Not available |
| 2. Assam | Out of 1,17,018 students enrolled in AS centres 50,452 are girls (42%) |
| 3. Bihar | Not available |
| 4. Gujarat | Out of 6558 students enrolled in AS centres 3457 are girls (53%) |
| 5. Haryana | Out of 5269 students enrolled in AS centres 3452 are girls (66%) |
| 6. Karnataka | Out of 7042 children enrolled in AS centres of DPEP – I districts 3721 (53%) are girls |
| 7. Kerala | Out of 1103 students enrolled in AS centres 474 are girls (43%) |
| 8. Madhya Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of 1,89,210 students enrolled in AS centres 89,721 are girls (47.4%) • Out of 8,48,800 students enrolled in EGS centres 3,79,706 are girls (45%) |
| 9. Maharashtra | Not available |
| 10. Tamil Nadu | Out of the total of 32,715 children, 17,298 children are girls, i.e. 53% |
| 11. Uttar Pradesh | Out of 31,861 children enrolled in AS centres 15,186 are girls (48%) |
| 12. West Bengal | Not available |

In Madhya Pradesh, the results of children, both boys and girls, in the AS centres who appeared in the examination up to Class III, hold a lot of promise. The table below illustrates this.

Table V.4 : Success rate of children in AS centres of Madhya Pradesh (up to Class III)

| Category of Children | No. Appeared in Examination | No. Passed in Examination | % passed of total appeared |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Boys | 908 | 730 | 51% |
| Girls | 535 | 470 | 33% |
| Total | 1443 | 1200 | 83% |

As per the above table

- 37% of the children appearing in the examination are girls
- Out of the total number of children appearing in examinations, girls comprise 33% of the children to have cleared the examination
- 88% of the girls who took the examination have passed as compared to 80% of the boys
- of the total number of children who passed the examination 39% are girls

All that girls need is the opportunity and a supportive environment to see them through primary schooling.

Special Alternative Schools Targeting Girls

Among the AS models started by DPEP, states have experimented with AS models designed exclusively for girls. Each of the models in place has been designed to address local circumstances and issues.

In setting up these centres, states have been governed by community demands and evident need. These interventions lay emphasis on details such as the location of the centre, choice of the instructor, the curriculum, course content and include specific activities to involve the community.

These include the *Angana Vidyalayas* in Bihar for the 9+ girls and the *Prcher Pathshalas* in Uttar Pradesh. Using places of religious learning have proved to be immensely beneficial for girls (Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh). In a few States (Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh) residential schools and hostels have been provided for girls in tribal areas to overcome the access problem and encourage girls to join mainstream education.

Angana Vidyalaya (Bihar)

Modelled along the lines of the *Jagjagi* centres initiated by the Mahila Samakhya programme under the Bihar Education Project (BEP), The *Angana Vidyalayas* in Bihar target out of school adolescent girls. They aim to motivate adolescent girls in rural areas to enroll and go through schooling up to Class V. The facts that the curriculum imparts life skills along with the regular primary education content, the instructors of the *Angana Vidyalayas* are women and that the management of these centres rest with the *Mata Samitis* (mothers' groups), makes this an unique intervention.

580 *Angana Vidyalayas* are operational in the 17 DPEP districts covering more than 10,000 girls. A minimum of 15 girls is the basic requirement for setting up an *Angana Vidyalaya*.

Eligible villages where AS centres can be opened are identified through a participative process involving the Block Education Officer, the BEP activists and teachers. The AS centres have been opened in areas where there is a majority population of SC, ST, OBC and other marginalised groups. The selected villages usually do not have formal schooling facilities.

This is followed by a survey through which a rough estimate of the number of potential learners is prepared. The *Preraks* and *Utpreraks* are the community based contact persons who mobilise the community. They use this opportunity to explain the norms of alternative schooling to the mothers.

Once the learners of the centre are identified, a meeting is held with their mothers. The entire proceeding is recorded along with the names of the mothers who have non-school going children. They are then formed into a group - the *Mata Samiti*. In case a village has a VEC, the women members of the VEC are also made members of the *Mata Samiti*. There is no stipulated number of members.

The *Mata Samiti* is thereafter organised and assigned the task of identifying suitable women to work as teachers on the basis of the selection criteria laid down. The *Mata Samitis* appoint the instructor and are also responsible for disbursement of their honorarium. The district office of DPEP transfers funds to the bank account of the *Samiti* to meet the expenses of running the *Angana Vidyalayas*. The *Mata Samiti* is responsible for procuring requisite material for the centre (black board, chalk, mats etc.). *Mata Samitis* prepare the list of materials required by the AS centre in their village, within the given budget which is Rs.1850.00 in the first year and Rs 500.00 in the subsequent years. The functioning of the *Angana Vidyalaya* is monitored by the *Mata Samiti* members.

By entrusting the responsibility of running the AS centres to the *Mata Samitis* community involvement in the enrolment and retention of the children is ensured. It is also an empowering process for the women members themselves as they take all decisions regarding the education of their children.

The teacher of the *Angana Vidyalayas* are referred to as *Saheli* (friend). The minimum qualification for a *Saheli* is Class VIII. Priority is given to those who are from the same community as that of the children. The *Saheli* is paid an honorarium of Rs. 400.00 per month.

The teacher undergoes as 30-days *foundation* training which seeks to upgrade basic competence in language and mathematics. Along with this the content and method based *Jagjagi* training is also followed. The focus areas are health, hygiene, family life education, social awareness, legal aid and similar subjects. Their training module has been developed in a manner that it facilitates the teacher to transact the course content specifically for the older girls.

Recurrent training over 3 days is provided to the teachers in each of the following quarters. Additionally, the teachers also receive 10 days refresher training each year. The trainings are residential. Master trainers for the teachers training have been trained with support from Mahila Samakhya.

Special textbooks (*Khel-Khel Mein Hisab, Hanste - Khele Sekhein, Hamare Aaspas*) used in the *Angana Vidyalayas* have been developed with support from SCERT and the NFE Resource Centre of the Directorate of Mass Education. Additional teaching-learning material has been developed with the support of Mahila Samakhya. There are plans to provide translated versions of the material in Urdu, Bangla, Oriya and tribal dialects, in order to reach children speaking different mother tongues.

Prehar Pathshala (Uttar Pradesh)

Prehar Pathshala is a strategy in Uttar Pradesh for those 9+ girls who are non-starters or may have dropped out of school. Though boys have also been enrolled in the *Prehar*

Pathshalas, the emphasis has been to provide primary education to girls. The curriculum is transacted under flexible conditions that allows the children to learn at their own pace without feeling threatened. The centre is operational for 4 hours during the day time.

It is possible to start a *Prehar Pathshala* in a village if 15 girls in the age group of 9-14 years are willing to attend it.

The unique feature of the *Prehar Pathshala* is the built in provision for training in certain local crafts along with the primary school curriculum. This is seen as a means of attracting the girls to the centre as well keeping the craft alive. The common crafts taught include embroidery and stitching, basket weaving, etc. Two and a half hours of the day are spent teaching the primary school curriculum while the remaining one and a half hours is devoted to teaching the local crafts.

Bal Shala (Uttar Pradesh)

The *Bal Shala* targets pre-schoolers along with their older siblings upto 11 years. While the 3-6 year olds are imparted the school readiness package, the older set of children receive primary education. Through this approach of combining children of two age sets, the problems of non-enrolment and drop out faced by girls, is being addressed.

Gujarat has initiated similar centres on a pilot basis in Dangs (5) and Panchmahals (15). Each centre has one AS Instructor and one ECE worker so that the needs of both groups of children can be met to satisfaction. These centres have been operationalised in places where there is no Anganwadi Centre. The underlying philosophy is to enable the older girls enrolled in the AS centre to bring their younger Siblings who would be taken care of in the attached ECE Centre. This intervention is seen as a means of assuring effective primary schooling for girls.

Moktabs (Assam)

In Assam, *Moktabs* are being used as alternative centres of learning for muslim girls. *Moktabs* are community initiated and sustained centres for religious education that are attended by girls and boys alike. Many a muslim girls who go to the *Moktab* is not enrolled in school.

To bring such girls under the fold of primary education, the *Jonabs (Maulavis)* having a background of formal education were approached for running the Alternative Schooling centres on a voluntary basis. This was preceded by , advocacy campaigns held in the selected villages with the support of district level religious leaders.

DPEP Assam provided necessary material support for running the centres and teaching-learning material. The *Jonabs* were trained for effective transaction of the curriculum.

There are 170 such centres functioning in the DPEP I districts and their evaluation carried out by NSDART¹⁰ has revealed that

- the enrolment of girls has been proportionality higher in all the three districts
- retention rate of girls has been higher (calculated in two CRCs in Darrang district)
- learner achievement has been encouraging and same levels of achievement have been found among girls and boys. The overall performance has been better in language as compared to mathematics.

Strengthening Madarssas and Moktabs

Attempts have been made to strengthen Moktabs and Madarassas in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The strategy aims at providing primary education to children belonging to the muslim community in surroundings and conditions acceptable to them.

An experimental project for muslim girls has been taken up in collaboration with the local *madarassa* management in Jaora block of Ratlam district in Madhya Pradesh. *Madarassas* are being provided with teaching learning material (TLM), training and contingency for teacher aids, by DPEP. Based on the experiment in Jaora, strengthening of *madarassas* has been taken up as a strategy to ensure the participation of muslim girls.

In Uttar Pradesh children who are already coming to the *moktabs/madarassas* for 2 to 3 hours for religious education are given formal education over an additional three hours. To facilitate this, the *maulavis* undergo training similar to that of other AS instructors. They use the formal school textbooks to teach the children. The teacher-pupil ratio is 1:25. All the material provided to AS centres are made available for the children in the *moktabs/madarassas*.

Special Alternative Schooling Centres For Girls (Gujarat)

Special AS centres in Gujarat aim to reach the 9+ years girls who have never enrolled in or dropped out of school and those who are preoccupied with household work or some form of seasonal work in Banaskantha and Panchmahal. As reported there are 23 and 14 such centres in Banaskantha and Panchmahal respectively. 268 girls are enrolled in the 14 centres in Panchmahal. In the back to school programme in Dang district, 488 girls have been weaned away from migration out of a total 812 children.

¹⁰ Evaluation of Alternative Schooling through Moktabs in Assam, NSDART, Mussourie, March 1999

Supportive Policy Orientation for Girls in AS

Gujarat

1. First preference will be given to women in the selection of AS teachers.
2. As a part of the back to school programme, a circular has been issued to teachers to adopt two out of school girls who are essentially drop outs. The teachers would be expected to work on these girls and their families and ensure their enrolment and retention

Maharashtra

1. The state norms for starting Prerana Centres (Alternative Schooling Centres) requires the availability of at least 22 poor, out of school children in the age group of 8-11 years. However, in the case of girls, there is a provision to start these centres with a minimum of 10 girls who are out of school.

Uttar Pradesh

1. The State Government has facilitated women and girls to appear for the Class V examination, which is the end of the primary cycle and Class VIII examination, which is the end of the upper primary cycle, so as to give them recognised certification upon successful completion of the examination and the possibility of continuing in the educational mainstream.
2. It is proposed to have at least one female teacher in every school – either the regular teacher or the para teacher. It is further proposed that every second para teacher in a school will be a woman.
3. A concrete step taken by the Government of Uttar Pradesh in the direction of providing equal educational opportunities to girls (6-14 years) is the launching of the Balika Shiksha Mission. The Mission covers both the primary and upper primary levels of education. The Mission's objectives are to:
 - provide educational access to all boys and girls in all unserved areas according to state norms
 - ensure 100% enrolment of girls (6-11 years) at primary level
 - ensure achievement of girls' (age group 11-14) enrolment from 40% to 70% within the next three years at the upper primary level
 - ensure community participation to encourage girls' education.

Over and above these, many states have a separate state policy on women which also covers education.

Innovations

Pre Vocational Centres : Maharashtra

Life skill enrichment programmes for adolescent girls have been developed with the help of Vocational Training Department of Government of Maharashtra and SNDT Women's College, Pune, in the subject areas of Tailoring and cutting and Bakery and Food Preservation. This programme has been taken up for out of school girls in the age group 9 to 14 years, who are enrolled in the AS centres being run under DPEP.

Table V.5 : Genderwise Enrolment Immediately Preceding and Following the Introduction of LES

| District | Enrolment /Gender | Preceding | Following | Net Increase (Or Decrease) | Percentage |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|------------|
| Dharmapuri | Boys | 2285 | 2421 | 136 | 5.95 |
| | Girls | 1975 | 2112 | 137 | 6.93 |
| | Total | 4260 | 4533 | 273 | 6.41 |
| Cuddalore | Boys | 3240 | 3248 | 8 | 0.24 |
| | Girls | 2932 | 3133 | 201 | 6.85 |
| | Total | 6172 | 6381 | 209 | 3.39 |
| Thiruvannmalai | Boys | 3485 | 3320 | -165* | -4.73* |
| | Girls | 3064 | 3309 | 245 | 8.00 |
| | Total | 6549 | 6629 | 80 | 1.22 |
| Total | Boys | 9010 | 8989 | -21* | -0.23* |
| | Girls | 7971 | 8554 | 583 | 5.66 |
| | Total | 16981 | 17543 | 562 | 3.31 |

* Decrease

According to the table :

- there is a definite increase in the enrolment of girls in all the three districts – 6.93% in Dharmapuri, 6.85% in Cuddalore and 8.00% in Thiruvannamalai
- the percentage increase in girls' enrolment is consistently higher than the overall percentage increase in the respective districts, as also the aggregated percentage in all the districts put together
- the overall rise in the enrolment of girls has been 5.66% across the districts

The average number of absentees per month was worked out on the basis of the disaggregated data for boys and girls separately, for nine months beginning from January '98 upto October '98, excepting May '98. The percentages of the averages are with reference to the gross enrolment, as on 30.09.98

With respect to all the three types of absenteeism across the three districts, the percentages of girl absentees are consistently lesser than that of boys.

This therefore seems to suggest that LES is associated with observably lower levels of girl absentees than boy absentees. And, this obviously is a welcome association since, with continued implementation of LES the phenomenon of girl absenteeism could be sought to be progressively brought down to zero – level.

Table V.7 : Gender wise Distribution of Dropouts Preceding and Following Introduction of LES

| District | Gender | Preceding LES | Following LES | Remarks |
|----------|--------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| DPI | Boys | 117 | 79 | Decrease by 38 |
| | Girls | 84 | 51 | Decrease by 33 |
| CDL | Boys | 61 | 38 | Decrease by 23 |
| | Girls | 54 | 26 | Decrease by 28 |
| TVM | Boys | 94 | 92 | Decrease by 2 |
| | Girls | 72 | 95 | Decrease by 23 |

The gender wise distribution of grade repeaters is given in Table V.8

Table V.8 : Gender wise Distribution of Grade Repeaters in the Annual Examination

| District | Gender | Before LES | After LES | Remarks |
|----------|--------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| DPI | Boys | 152 | 162 | Increase by 10 |
| | Girls | 126 | 105 | Decrease by 21 |
| CDL | Boys | 229 | 256 | Increase by 27 |
| | Girls | 239 | 258 | Increase by 19 |
| TVM | Boys | 419 | 412 | Decrease by 7 |
| | Girls | 408 | 354 | Decrease by 54 |

The evaluation of this innovation has shown that it has led to

- increase in enrolment of girls
- decrease in absenteeism among girls
- decrease in the number of girls dropping out
- decrease in the number of girl grade repeaters

Micro Initiatives for Girls' Education

Micro Initiatives for girls' education have focused on the very difficult areas where the general interventions have not been able to make a significant impact. The effort has been to identify specific issues and the deterrents to girls education and to address them through mechanisms designed to monitor regular contact with the community and the schooling system to ensure effective linkages. It has provided the opportunity to plan for the overall educational development of villages.

Hence, the significance of zeroing in on select target groups in particular areas became an imperative. The criticality of identifying those girls who need immediate programmatic attention became a priority.

Identification was done on the basis of impressions from the field, past knowledge, available data and the EMIS data.

Though the situation of the school/village determines the local specific priorities, the general principle has been to give the initial thrust to enrolment, followed by retention and achievement.

The success of the approach critically hinges on the extent to which the community takes on the role of a facilitating force in the entire process while DPEP provides resource support.

Key functionaries were suitably trained. This included field visits which gave them the opportunity to work in real situations, interact with community members, school teachers, VEC members, etc. The hands-on field based training helped effective translation of ideas and concepts into action.

In pursuit of this approach different models have been evolved by Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Orissa is in the process of grounding its Model Village/School Approach on the assumption that the existing problem of girls' enrolment and retention, particularly the SC, OBC and ST girls, cannot be adequately addressed unless need based village specific plans are followed. With the help of EMIS data a listing of such backward schools villages has been made and five villages in every block is being covered under this approach to achieve UPE. The chronic educational backwardness of girls is attributable to a lack of understanding of the importance of girls' education which needs to be spread across these villages to influence the present attitude towards girls' education. This, it is hoped, will impact on the enrolment and retention of girls and eventually their achievement level. Thus to facilitate community response to girls' education, Orissa has proposed to engage two Shiksha Sevika (ladies) at the Block level, initially for one year.

Uttar Pradesh : Model Cluster Development Approach

Specific pockets and population sections in the DPEP districts of Uttar Pradesh showed very low female literacy rates, especially among SCs and minorities. This was a concern. To tackle the severity of the problem in these pockets, it was decided to work intensively in two clusters of eight to ten villages each in all the DPEP districts through the Model Cluster Development Approach. Efforts are made to provide all possible inputs, maintaining regular contact and closely monitoring the progress/impact using an operational mechanism specially designed for the purpose.

As a first step in this direction, guidelines were developed and shared with district level functionaries. This was followed by various preparatory activities such as sharing the concept with community, VEC training, forming Core Teams, orientation for PRA etc. A time bound action plan was worked out for implementation of activities at every stage.

Core Team members along with MTA and PTA members were trained. Their training essentially focused on sensitising them about the importance of educating girls and also preparing them to play a positive interventionist role at the village level. The Core Teams have been functioning as an important link between the community and all district level functionaries.

To build a momentum for girls' education in the villages, street plays, meetings with villagers, parents, guardians and others concerned, Maa-beti melas, women's parliament and Meena campaigns were organised. Through house-to-house surveys the educational status of the children in the villages became clear which also pointed out the possible course of action in each village. Village specific plans were then evolved.

Apart from setting up AS Centres and strengthening the Madarassas, flexible timings and escorts have been introduced to enable more children to attend school. The community is keeping close watch on the enrolment and attendance of children. Some models of Alternative Schooling have been started with the objective of preparing certain sections of the out of school children for enrolling in school. Special enrolment drives were organised to ensure that eligible children enter the school system. Consequently, there has not only been a spurt of enrolment in these villages but universal enrolment has been achieved in 05 per cent of the gram panchayats covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach. Some of the villages in these clusters.

In order to create a girl friendly environment in the school, special sensitisation programmes for teachers have been developed.

Along similar lines, Mahila Samoochs have been formed in some clusters of Madhya Pradesh to ensure girls' enrolment and continuous participation in schools. Members of the Mahila Samoochs also support the VEC and SMC to monitor attendance of teachers and students, ensure that attend school regularly teachers and also ensure that the children are learning. Reports are presented at the cluster meetings. The Mahila Samoochs also ensure that regular meetings of the VEC and SMCs are held.

Bringing the Child to the school : District Dhar, Madhya Pradesh

When the programme began in Dhar district 1.34 lakh children were enrolled in primary schools against a population of 1.73 lakh children in the primary school age group (September 30, 1994). The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was 75%. The district had set for itself a target of 120% GER to be achieved during the seven year project period.

Mass mobilisation movements and campaigns were organised throughout the district, such as *School Chalo Abhiyan*, *Pravesh Utsav* (Entry Festival), *Bal Melas*, *Kalajathas*, *Nukkad Nataks*, puppet shows and so on.

A massive exercise to bring non-school going children within the fold of school education was undertaken in the months of June to August 1996, under the *Lok Sampark Abhiyan* (Mass Contact Drive). This drive was repeated in June and July 1997. Building on the information base generated by the two rounds of the special mobilisation drives, mass campaigns were carried out to enroll out of school girls. These campaigns, *Mahila Shiksha Abhiyans*, were held from July to September 1997 and 1998.

Consequently, 66,000 additional children were enrolled in school in the three years, thereby registering an increase of 50% in the number of children enrolled. In the same period, the GER increased from 75% to 107%. The special focus on enrolment of girls brought 31,000 girls into formal schools which meant an increase of 58% in number of girls enrolled. In the same period, the GER for girls increased from 62% to 92%.¹¹

Radhanpur block : Gujarat

In Radhanpur block in erstwhile Banaskantha district, there are three settlements of the Vaghai community and another of their settlements is in adjoining Harij district. Occupationally they are snake charmers, magicians and jugglers. Traditionally girls of the community have never received education/been sent to school. Covering the three settlements of the Vaghais, a building less school was functional in tents. DPEP intervened with the community to discuss their willingness to send girls to school if a school building is constructed. As they responded positively, DPEP has constructed a two roomed school. Girls still did not come to school. Further discussions with the community revealed that there was a social pressure against girls' education from within the community. Apparently the group in Harij was resisting girls' education and DPEP would have to work on them which they have planned to do in collaboration with the district administration of Harij.¹²

¹¹ *From Access to Quality*, Rajiv Gandhi Prathamik Shiksha Mission, Dhar, M.P, August 20, 1998

¹² Based on report from field visit, July 1999

6

PROVIDING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Rationale for ECCE

In recognition of the National Policy on Education's (1986/1992) view of ECCE as a support programme for universalisation of elementary education and women's development, ECE is an essential component of DPEP.

Approach to ECCE

The programme's approach to ECCE is clearly spelt out in two paragraphs of the *DPEP Guidelines* which state:

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

In order to improve the quality of ECCE, DPEP would finance development of pre-school materials and training of functionaries in the ECCE centres set up under DPEP. It would also finance the training of ICDS Anganwadi/Balwadi workers in forging linkages with schools."¹³

In DPEP, ECE is seen as a vital input towards preparing children, particularly first generation learners, for primary school - school readiness and facilitating the participation of children, particularly girls, in primary school by relieving them of sibling care responsibilities.

The guiding principles have been to :

- to avoid duplication and support expansion of ECE in villages that are not covered by ICDS
- emphasise the pre-school aspect of ECCE and support development of pre-school material and training of functionaries and does not provide nutritional inputs.
- to strengthen ties between anganwadis and primary schools through training of ICDS workers and teachers

¹³ DPEP Guidelines, pp. 12-13

Status of ECCE in DPEP

DPEP's approach to ECE has been either to experiment with alternative models for providing ECE or strengthening ECE in the existing ICDS programme or with other departments in the State, in a convergence mode, through training and other inputs. So far DPEP states have set up 9572 new ECE centres and have taken up 49,645 anganwadi centres for strengthening the ECE component (this includes 4066 centres proposed to be covered in the Phase II districts of Haryana).

As the spread has been decided by the states, there are diverse coverage patterns to be seen. The state wise details in this regard are as given in the Table below :

Table VI.1 : Approach to ECCE in DPEP States

| State | Approach to ECE |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Anhara Pradesh</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Assam</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Bihar</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Gujarat</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Haryana</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Himachal Pradesh</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Karnataka</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS and Experiment with own ECE model</i> |
| <i>Kerala</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Maharashtra</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS and setting up ECE centres subsequently taken over either by ICDS or the Zila Parishad</i> |
| <i>Madhya Pradesh</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Orissa</i> | <i>Experiment with own ECE model and convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Tamil Nadu</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>Uttar Pradesh</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |
| <i>West Bengal</i> | <i>Convergence with ICDS</i> |

Table VI.2 : ECCE in DPEP States –Coverage

| State | New Centres | | | Convergence | | |
|------------------|-------------|--|-------------|-------------|---|---------------|
| | DPEP I | DPEP II | Total | DPEP I | DPEP II | Total |
| Andhra Pradesh | 1950 | 485 | 2435 | | | |
| Assam | 750 | 1470 | 2220 | 402 | 645 (100 covered in Karbi Anglong and the balance 545 proposed to be covered) | 1047 |
| Bihar (DPEP III) | | | 267 | | | 3849 |
| Gujarat | | 20 ECE cum AS centres in Banaskantha & Panchmahal District | 20 | | 6000 (includes Balwadis centres and privates centres) | 6000 |
| Haryana | | | | 3701 | 4066* | 7767 |
| Himachal Pradesh | | | | ✓ | | |
| Karnataka | 45 | | 45 | 743 | 1712 | 2455 |
| Kerala | | | | NA | | |
| Maharashtra | 203 | 342 | 545 | 8587 | 6852 | 15,439 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 4030** | | 4030 | | | |
| Orissa | | 10 * | 10 | | 2400 (300 AW centres per district) | 2400 |
| Tamil Nadu | | | | 7176 | 2461 | 9637 |
| Uttar Pradesh | | | | | 1051 | 1051 |
| Total | | | 9572 | | | 49,645 |

* Proposed coverage

** The state also runs 219 Jhoola Ghars which provide day care services.

ECE Models Started by DPEP

In the spirit of the programme guidelines, some states opted to set up ECE centres modeled to suit their respective contexts. Though founded on the basic principles of any ECE programme, there are variations in the financial inputs provided, the effort made to involve popular support, the materials/kits provided, the training provided.

These Centres in the DPEP I states have drawn children and the community alike. "They have been able to create a demand among the community for more centres

primarily on account of their visible impact on the children enrolled in them. The community members in general reported that the children are highly motivated. ¹⁴

Andhra Pradesh

Provision of ECE services was considered a major intervention in support of girls' education. It was seen as an effective means of including more girls in the primary schooling efforts as they would relieve girls from child care responsibilities and enable them to be in school. Consequently, ECE centres were set up by DPEP in habitations not covered by the ICDS programme which had low enrolment and high drop out of girls. Invariably this meant SC/ST dominated habitations, small and inaccessible hamlets and areas with prevalence of child labour and the problem of sibling care.

An alternative model was tried out with a view to avoid replication of the ICDS model. These centres target the 3 to 6 year olds, are attached to primary schools and their timings are synchronised with that of the primary school.

Centres were started on the basis of requests coming from the VECs along with a commitment to provide the shed for running the centre. Formation of Mothers' Associations followed. Joint bank accounts were opened in the names of the President of the Mothers' Association and the school head teacher. DPEP attached an ECE worker and Helper to each centre and provided financial support to establish the centre.

The ECE worker and Helper underwent training arranged by DPEP.

Assam

DPEP set up new ECE centres, *Mukulikas*, in non-ICDS blocks. Advocacy visits to selected blocks/ villages were conducted which involved NGOs, *Mahila Samiti* members and KRPs. The VECs identified suitable persons for the positions of supervisors, ECE workers, Malinis, Saha-malins and helpers whose selection was held at the district level by functionaries of the SPO/DPO and VEC members. Following their selection, the ECE Workers and Helper were trained along with whom the BRC co-ordinators also underwent training. Initially Rs.50,000.00 was provided to the VECs for construction of ECE centres attached to the primary schools with resource support from the community. The programme provided necessary material to the *Mukulikas* for operationalising them. Members of the local community and the workers also made some material themselves. The workers were in age group 20-30 years and were either matric or intermediate pass.

¹⁴ *Early Childhood Care and Education in DPEP I: An Assessment*, Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education, National Council of Educational Research and Training. p. 12, 1997

Bihar

Each *Mata Samiti* is provided a grant of Rs.8100.00 for making necessary purchases to set up the ECE centres. 220 ECE centres have been set up across the 17 programme districts on a pilot basis.

ECE centres are established by *Mata Samitis*, who select the ECE workers, provide the space for the centres and purchase equipment/materials, etc. for the centre. They also organise *Prabhat Pheries*, *Melas* and meetings at the centres.

Training the *Mata Samiti* members has been proposed with a view to enhance their understanding of ECE which is expected to make them effective in running the centres. A training module is going to be developed for the purpose. Training modules have been developed for ECE/AW workers, ECE programme personnel, ICDS Supervisors and AWTC Instructors.

The teams of are trained in monitoring of ECE. They work as ASRG and are given Rs.500.00 per month for monitoring 5-10 centres. A format has been devised for monitoring.

Gujarat

On an experimental basis ECE cum AS centres have been started in Banaskantha (5) and Panchmahal (15). There is one ECE instructor and one AS instructor attached to each of these centres. While the ECE instructor is on a monthly honorarium, the AS instructor receives Rs.50.00 per child enrolled. The minimum number of children expected to be enrolled is 20. If there are more than 60% girls enrolled, the instructor will get an additional Rs.10.00 per child.

A training module for the ECE/AW workers has been finalised with the help of GCERT and the Early Child Development Learning Resource centre (ECD-LRC), MS University, Baroda. Master Trainers have been trained by the ECD-LRC. The ECE workers have been trained and have begun functioning in the centres. The AS instructors are yet to be trained, which is proposed to be done along with the other AS instructors.

The same resource institution has developed a kit for pre-primary education which has been distributed to all the centres started.

Karnataka

In the initial stages of implementation DPEP in Karnataka had set up 45 Pre-primary Centres (PPC) attached to formal primary schools. These centres are fashioned along similar lines as the centres run by the Department of Education, Government of Karnataka. One trained nursery teacher and one helper are attached to these centres. The

teacher is paid as per the regular scale for teachers and the helpers are paid Rs.400 - per month. All the teachers and helpers are trained. Some outdoor equipments have been provided to the PPCs by the programme.

There has been no expansion in the number of centres – the 45 started are being sustained.

Madhya Pradesh

4030 Shishu Shiksha Kendras have been set up. The cost per centre works out to be Rs.8,200.00. Each centre has a teacher and a *Sahaika* who are paid Rs.400.00 and Rs.200.00 per month, respectively.

In the year 1998-99, 232 Jhoolaghars were started. Another 192 Jhoolaghar are to be opened by 1999-2000. The Jhoolaghar takes care of children in the age group 0-6 years and has its linkage with primary school in space and time. Jhoolaghar does not impart any formal education to children but takes care of the children during school hours of the linked primary school. Play way methodology is used to keep the children engaged and to educate them informally. Training of 47 members of DRG of 15 district has been given by the state resource group on the basis of Jhoolaghar training manual developed by SPO. The DRG organises training of Jhoolaghar functionaries at the block level.

Orissa

Orissa had proposed to start 10 ECE centres in each of the programme districts during 1999-2000. However, the decision has been changed and 10 centres will be set up only in Dhenkanal district on a pilot basis. The preparatory work is in progress.

Table VI. 3 Personnel Attached to ECE Centres Started by DPEP & their Honorarium

| State | ECE Worker | | ECE Helper | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | Number | Honorarium | Number | Honorarium |
| Andhra Pradesh | | | | |
| Assam* | One | 700.00 | One | 500.00 |
| Bihar | One | 500.00 | | |
| Gujarat | One | 600.00 | | |
| Karnataka ** | One Nursery trained teacher | As per regular scale for teacher | One | 400.00 |
| Maharashtra | One | 500.00 | - | - |
| Madhya Pradesh | One | 400.00 | One | 200.00 |
| Orissa | One | 400.00 | One | 200.00 |

* A Supervisor is provided for every 10 Mukulika Centres and is paid Rs 1500.00 per month

** Follows the pattern of the PPC run, by the Education Department, Government of Karnataka.

ECE through Convergence in DPEP

As evident from the Table, some DPEP states have focused on strengthening the ECE component of the ICDS and forging linkages between the Anganwadis and primary schools in a convergent mode. In the process, the central issues have been :

- synchronization of timings of Anganwadis with primary schools
- location of Anganwadis in or near primary schools
- provision of training and supply of materials for strengthening the quality of the ECE component of ICDS.

Bihar

Through a process of four state level workshops the training modules for Anganwadi workers/ECE workers/ECE trainers/ECE programme personnel, ICDS supervisors have been finalised. So far 3101 ICDS workers have been trained. ECE resource materials have been procured from Chetna in Ahmedabad and sent to the districts. Other ECE resource material such as "Khel Khel Mein Seekhien", "Aao Geet Gaayen", "Bujhauwal" and "Suno Kahani" have been developed in house.

There is a proposal to train the AW helpers in 1999-2000.

Gujarat

It is proposed to strengthen the ECE component of the existing Anganwadi centres through training and provision of teaching-learning kits. Nearly 7000 ECE workers, from ICDS, halwadi centres, privately run centres and centres being run by the municipalities/corporations have been trained. The kit developed for pre-primary education by the Early Child Development Learning Resource centre (ECD-LRC), MS University, Baroda has been distributed to all the centres whose workers have undergone training. A handbook has also been translated for supply to the Anganwadi Centres.

A monthly newsletter on ECE has been recently started for circulation among the fraternity.

Haryana

ECE has been routed through the existing Anganwadi Centers in Haryana. The major inputs have been in the areas of

- training key functionaries of the ICDS programe
- providing teaching learning material
- paying an honorarium to the Anganwadi worker for extending the timings of the Anganwadi centres.

The SCERT has been playing a key role in supporting the ECE programme in Haryana. It has been responsible for developing the training modules and training the master trainers from every DPEP district. Apart from this, the SCERT has adopted certain blocks where special training on material development has been carried out directly with the Anganwadi workers. The training of Anganwadi workers is taken up by the DPC. During 1996-97 Anganwadi workers and helpers received 5 days and 2 days training respectively. During 1998-99 only Anganwadi Workers were trained.

For extending the timings of the anganwadi centres to make them co-terminous with that of the school timings, it is proposed to pay an honorarium to the AW workers. To begin with, Rs. 200.00 per month is being paid to AW workers in 50 selected AWCs of Hissar district. The AWCs in the other DPEP I districts have been selected for payment of the honorarium.

Kerala

In Kerala the attempt has been to strengthen the existing Anganwadis, provide orientation and training to the AWWs, developing learning materials, providing TLM and toys, sensitising the women and mothers of the locality which may go a long way in capacity building of these institutions. A five-day training module for anganwadi workers has been developed.

DPEP Kerala is also helping in the preparation of a pre-primary curriculum for use across the state by the Government of Kerala.

Karnataka

DPEP Karnataka attempted to address the issue of synchronising the training of schools and AW centres on a pilot basis. In 136 AWs in each district by providing honorarium to the ICDS workers for extending the timing of the AW Centres. Interactions with community, teachers and others, indicate that this intervention has facilitated both girls and women by relieving them of the burden of child care for the duration of the school time. However, it has raised the question of meeting the nutritional needs of children as a result of the longer hours they spend in the Centre. Though this remains unresolved, the children have started bringing food from home, which may be an indication of parental approval of the extended timings or viewing the longer duration as a benefit.

Maharashtra

An annual district level exercise is carried out to ascertain the need for setting up ECE centres. ICDS and the Zila Parishad are the major players that meet the need that emerges while DPEP takes on the responsibility of starting ECE centres in those areas that are not covered by either of the two other agencies. The centres started by DPEP are subsequently taken over either by ICDS or the Zila Parishad.

With the support of MTAs in some places the children in the DPEP started ECE centres are being provided some nutrition with community support.

Orissa

In Orissa it is proposed to cover 300 anganwadi centres in every DPEP district during 1999-2000 with a view to strengthen the ECE component of these centres. In this respect, the training module has been developed and master trainers have been trained. A kit has been developed and is proposed to be distributed to about 50 per cent of the centres covered. This has been considered appropriate as this is the first year of implementation.

Uttar Pradesh

Following the experience in the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, efforts at convergence in DPEP have been tried out in close partnership with the Department of Women and Development. Anganwadi centres are jointly selected and the criterion for selection is their present proximity to the school or the feasibility of shifting them to the school premises or near the school. The selected anganwadi centres, the *Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSK)*, are being run in co-ordination with the main line department and the characteristic feature is synchronised timings of these centres with the formal primary schools.

Additional honorarium is provided to the AWW and the Helper for the extended timing of the AW Centre by DPEP. They are given an initial round of training followed by refresher trainings. Each SSK is given Rs 5000/- as non-recurrent costs and Rs 1000/- as recurring costs for equipment, teaching-learning materials, etc.

| State | ICDS Worker | ICDS Helper |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Honorarium | Honorarium |
| Assam | No payment | No payment |
| Gujarat | No payment | No payment |
| Haryana | 200.00 | |
| Karnataka | 300.00 | 250.00 |
| Orissa | 200.00 | 75.00 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 150.00 | 75.00 |

Table VI.4 Budgetary Patterns followed for ECE

| State | Items of Expenditure (Unit Cost) | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------|
| | One time grant | Annual Grant | TLM/Kit |
| Andhra Pradesh* | 3500.00 | 1000.00 | |
| Assam | 5000.00 | | |
| Chhatisgarh | | | 310.00 |
| Haryana | | | 500.00 |
| Karnataka ** | 5000.00 | | |
| Maharashtra *** | 1000.00 | | 500.00 |
| Orissa | | | 1600.00 |
| Tamil Nādu | | | 1000.00 |
| Uttar Pradesh**** | 5000.00 | 1000.00 | |

- * From the second year the annual grant of Rs 1000.00 is split into two components to meet both replenishment costs and material purchase
- ** A kit comprising material and equipment worth Rs.5000.00 is provided to the Anganwadi Centres
- *** One time grant is provided for play way material
- **** Rs.5000.00 is given to meet non-recurring costs and Rs.1000.00 to meet recurring costs of equipment, teaching learning material etc

Transition to Class I in formal schools

Gujarat

Enrolment in 1999-2000 has had children from the AWW Centres enrolling in large numbers. This is the outcome of convergence with ICDS which initially focused on enlisting the active involvement of the ICDS field functionaries. To create awareness about pre school education and school readiness, handouts on ECE, ICDS and the convergence between ICDS and DPEP have been developed and distributed among ICDS officials, BRCCs, CRCCs, DIET lecturers, etc. This widespread sensitisation has triggered off high enrolment of children from the AW Centres in the formal primary schools.

The study in Andhra Pradesh has shown similar results. Not only this, it has found that girls' participation in primary education has improved as a consequence of the ECE centres set up by DPEP.

Additional Features of the ECE Programme in DPEP

In Assam 1020 Mothers' Groups have been formed under the ECE programme. The activities being undertaken by these groups has been as follows :

- ensuring regular attendance of children in ECE Centres
- creating awareness for freeing the girl child from sibling care responsibilities

- forming groups to evolve Self Help Groups – these groups are already operational in some villages
- taking initiatives in developing kitchen gardens, fisheries, poultry farming, etc. on a organised scale

Community involvement is an integral element of the ECE programme in DPEP. Community based organisations such as the Village Education Committees, Mother Teacher Associations, Mothers' Groups, etc., have been closely involved in the entire process of establishment of the centres, running them and also in securing community support for early childhood education. This has resulted in some degree of community ownership, particularly in the case of the centres started by the programme. In a way this programme has provided a forum for the women in the village which has enabled them to discuss various issues pertaining to their lives and that of education of girls. Such coming together of women has often shaped into organised women's groups which are now assisting in regular monitoring, material development, providing nutritional support, organising events in the centre and so on. Apart from this, a certain focus on adolescent girls has also been generated and there are examples of specific interventions for this group of girls in some states.

Spin off from the women's awareness camp held at Bandla village in the char area of Kalaigaon block in Darrang District, Assam.

Most of the participants of the two-day women awareness camp were from disadvantaged groups. They are both socially and economically suppressed, whose socialisation has taught them to strictly abide by the given social norms.

The group discussion and the issues raised in the camp were successful in making them realise the exploitation and bias that exist in social customs such as early marriage, polygamy, illiteracy etc. Discussions revealed the economic dimensions that guide decisions of marriage and divorce. It is a economically viable proposition to go in for Nikah (Marriage) rather than incur heavy expenditure in the treatment of a sick wife. Compared to the bride price they have to pay by way of a saree the cost of maintaining a wife who remains chronically ill because of frequent pregnancies, is any day more. Hence polygamy is the obvious choice. Besides mothering his children the woman is also another pair of working hands.

The discussions of the two day camp were a big motivation for Ms. Rashima Khatun, Ms. Surya Van Nesa, Alia Khatun, Fatema Khatun and Fulesa Begum and their friends. They decided to form a group, to educate the illiterate women, to oppose the early marriage of girls, to earn to supplement family income.

Immediately after the camp was over, they formed a group of twelve women, the Mahila Unnayan Gote and took initiatives to educate the illiterate. Today they don't encourage early marriage rather they try to stop. It needs to be mentioned that jute plantation is abundant in that area. So they had learned to make jute products like gunny bags, table mats, wall hangings, magazine holders etc. At present they supply their products regularly to the District Mahila Samittee and thus earn regularly. In this process it is seen that there is a utilisation of their time and resource and most important of all, there is economic upliftment and motivation for education.

Convergence with DWCD : Some Issues

Many issues pertaining to the question of sustaining DPEP's efforts have been discussed with the Department of Women & Child Development at the national level and certain joint decisions have been taken by both the Departments. The Department of Women & Child Development has issued a D.O. letter No.4-3/96-NT dated 26.3.98 addressed to all State Secretaries of the Department of WCD/ Social Welfare/Education. This letter highlighted the following decisions that were jointly taken by the DWCD and the Department of Education.

1. Joint Planning, Mapping and Sharing of Resources
 - Location of the Centres
 - Timing of the Centres
2. Joint Community Mobilisation efforts
3. Fund Allocations
4. Joint training and monitoring

A letter issued by the Department of Women and Child Development, GOI, requested that a state level meeting of the Secretaries/Directors of WCD/Social Welfare and DPEP/Primary Education/Rural Development (for Panchayati Raj)/HRD be convened at the earliest, to finalise joint follow up action in the state, based on the above.

Follow up meetings have been held to review the progress and state specific experiences. Convergence has not always been possible in all the states. Convergence issues that persist and merit national level intervention are as follows :

- It is necessary to work towards creating an understanding on convergence between the ICDS and the DPEP at the National, State and District levels, and develop a clear operational framework, such that implementation is possible at the district and sub-district levels.
- Further ways of reaching smaller habitations, where the service is of utmost importance, may be considered. If there is an assurance of sustenance DPEP can start ECE Centres in some such needy pockets which do not otherwise conform to the norms of starting ICDS Centres.
- Make use of the department's Creche and Day Care Scheme to ensure child care support during school hours
- Address the concerns of adolescent girls by drawing upon the Adolescent Girls' Scheme of the DWCD

7

ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

This document has attempted to capture, in brief, the range of interventions that DPEP has experimented with.

DPEP districts, especially the Phase I districts, have come a long way since we started. But, progress across States, across districts, across schools has not been even. The varying situations in the States have often been responsible for this. There have been substantial gains in enrolment of girls, though their retention and achievement levels merit attention. The classroom processes need further scrutiny to find ways of ensuring 'girl friendly' learning environment in the schools and classrooms. Community commitment for girls' education has reached great heights in certain pockets. Community involvement in school processes need further impetus.

DPEP, through its innovative approach has been able to experiment and bring out the potential of the strategies and interventions tried out, to bring about the desired change.

Some very successful models experimented with by the States could be drawn upon and adapted across the programme states. Whatever has been possible to achieve, needs to be related to the effectiveness of certain strategies and interventions : These need to be consolidated and upscaled.

DPEP's belief in innovations and experimentation would continue to show the way in the future and provide solutions to the most difficult problems preventing universalisation of primary education of girls.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| APPEP | Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project |
| AS | Alternative Schooling |
| AWP&B | Annual Work Plan and Budget |
| BRC | Block Resource Centre |
| BEO | Block Education Officer |
| BEP | Basic Education Project |
| BGVS | Bharatiya Gyan Vigyan Samitee |
| BRC | Block Resource Centre |
| CRC | Cluster Resource Centre |
| CGI | Corrugated Galvanised Iron |
| DFID | Department for Internal Development |
| DISE | District Information System for Education |
| DLRG | District Level Resource Group |
| DPEP | District Primary Education Programme |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECE | Early Childhood Education |
| Ed.CIL | Educational Consultants India Limited |
| EGS | Education Guarantee Scheme |
| EIMS | Educational Management Information System |
| ERM | Evaluation Research and Monitoring |
| GER | Gross Enrolment Ratio |
| IED | Integrated Education of the Disabled |
| ISM | Internal Supervision Mission |
| JRY | Jawahar Rozgar Yojana |
| JRM | Joint Review Mission |
| JSM | Joint Supervision Mission |
| MEO | Mandal Education Officer |
| MRP | Mandal Resource Person |
| MLL | Minimum Levels of Learning |
| MTA | Mother Teacher Association |
| MS | Mahila Samakhya |
| NBT | National Book Trust |
| NCERT | National Council of Educational Research and Training |
| NFE | Non Formal Education |
| NIEPA | National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration |
| NSDART | National Society for Promotion of Development Administration, Research and Training |
| NPRC | Nyaya Panchyat Resource Centre |
| NGO | Non-government Organisation |
| PRA | Participatory Rural Appraisal |
| PRI | Panchyati Raj Institution |
| PTA | Parent-Teacher Association |
| RCC | Reinforced Concrete Cement |
| SC | Scheduled Caste |
| SMC | School Management Committee |
| SPO | State Project Office |

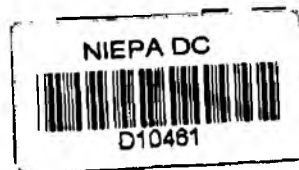
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|--------|--|
| SSG | School Support Group |
| ST | Scheduled Tribe |
| SCERT | State Council of Educational Research and Training |
| SRG | State Resource Group |
| TLM | Teaching Learning Material |
| UEE | Universalisation of Elementary Education |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UPBEP | Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project |
| VEC | Village Education Committee |
| WEC | Ward Education Committee |

GLOSSARY

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Aamaar Kendra <i>Anganwadi Centre</i></p> <p><i>Angana Vidyalaya</i></p> <p><i>Apna Vidyalaya</i> <i>Bal Shala</i> <i>Bhuva</i> <i>Bonda</i> <i>Chabutras</i></p> <p><i>Char areas</i> <i>Gol</i> <i>Gram Panchyat</i> <i>Grihasadass</i> <i>Guruji</i> <i>Hamara</i> <i>Janpad Panchayat</i> <i>Jila Panchayat</i> <i>Jonab</i> <i>Kala Jatha/ Kala Jatra</i> <i>Kendra</i> <i>Lok Sampark Abhiyan</i> <i>Ma Beti Mela</i> <i>Mahila Mela</i> <i>Mahila Mandal</i> <i>Mahila Samiti</i> <i>Maktab/Madarssa</i> <i>Mandal</i> <i>Mata Samitee</i> <i>Maulavi</i> <i>Mela</i> <i>Mysore Pak</i> <i>Nukkad Nataks</i> <i>Praveshotsav</i> <i>Prehar Patshala</i> <i>Prerna Centre</i> <i>Saheli</i> <i>Sarkari</i> <i>Sahayika</i></p> <p><i>Shala Sahayak</i> <i>Shishu Swayam Sevi School</i> <i>Shishu Shiksha Kendra</i> <i>Shikshak Melas</i> <i>Shiksha Ghar</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Our Centre</i> – AS centre in Assam - A village-level centre for the 0-6 years old under the Integrated Child Development Scheme - <i>School in the Courtyard</i> – AS Centre for adolescent girls in Bihar - <i>Our School</i> – AS centre in Bihar - AS centre in Uttar Pradesh - Religious leader of the Rabari community in Gujarat - Salted snack - Open air low level platforms typically around trees serving as a meeting spot in villages - Riverine areas (Assam) - Religious leader of the Thakur community in Gujarat - Village level body for local self government - House hold meetings of groups of women in Kerala - Teacher - Our - District level institution of local self government - District level body for local cell government - Muslim Religious Teacher - Performance by cultural troupe - Centre - Community Contact Programme - Mother daughter fair - Women's fair - Women's group - Women's group - Women's group - Centre of religious learning (Islam) - Sub-district administrative structure in Andhra Pradesh - Mothers' Group - Muslim religious teacher - Fair - A sweet originally from Mysore in Karnataka - Street plays - Festival of admission - Evening School – AS centre in Uttar Pradesh - AS centre in Maharashtra - <i>Friend</i> – the teacher in the Angana Vidyalaya in Bihar - Government - One who takes care of the pre-schools at the Bal Shalas, Uttar Pradesh - Instructor/teacher at the back to school centres in Gujarat - AS centre in Rajasthan - Children's Education Centre – AS centre in West Bengal - Teachers' Fairs - AS centre in Uttar Pradesh |
|--|---|

Sooji balls
Taluk leader
Thakur
Vade

- Sweet Snack
- Leaders of the Takur Community, Gujarat
- A community in Gujarat
- A salted snack



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