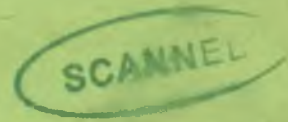




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UTT-M

making a difference



Primary Education for girls in Uttar Pradesh

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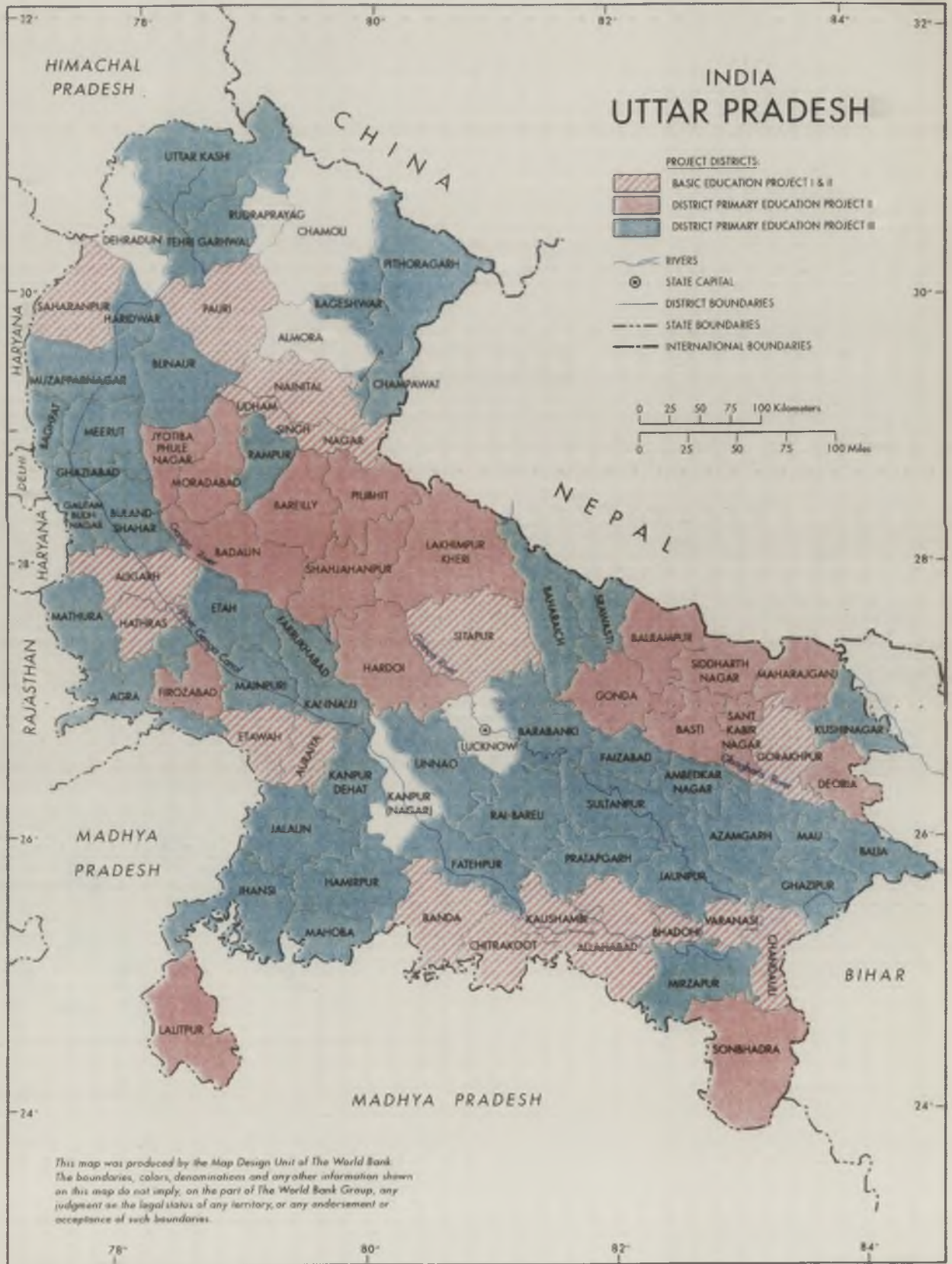
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**Bettering the lot of girls :
a national commitment**

Bettering the lot of girls : a national commitment

Acknowledging the difference an educated populace can make to national growth and development, the Constitution of India is committed to providing education for children in the 6-14 age group. The Constitution directs the State to provide free and compulsory education to all children in this age group.

The Fundamental Rights seek to safeguard the citizens against any kind of discrimination and denial of opportunities on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. The Constitutional intent to provide education across the board to all children is reinforced by the empowerment of the State to make a positive discrimination in favour of women and children. This provision has enabled the State to adopt appropriate measures that are deemed necessary to redress the adverse circumstances of women and children.

The subsequent Five Year Plans have endorsed the spirit of the Constitution in regard to girls' education and articulated various approaches. Educational perspectives and strategies changed over time to bridge the existing gender disparities. The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) and the consequent Programme of Action which includes education for Women's Equality, in a radical move, positions education as an instrument to bring about change in the status of women. "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralise the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women.....This will be an act of faith and social engineering.....The removal of

women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services setting time targets and effective monitoring." (Chapter IV, page 6, Paragraph 4.2 and 4.3; NPE-1986, Government of India)

The NPE recognised that large numbers of girls have no access to education. Their participation in education is thwarted by several socio-economic factors and not by lack of educational infrastructure alone. The Programme of Action clearly spells out the need for a national will to implement programmes and put in place institutional mechanisms to ensure that gender sensitivity is reflected in the implementation of educational programmes across the board. As individual commitment cannot achieve this, it is imperative that it be made incumbent on all actors; agencies and institutions to ensure that girls/women have their rightful share in all education programmes and activities.

Globally too, there has been a change in the thinking about elementary education. The Jomtien Conference of 1990 was a landmark. There was recognition that investment in human resources results in rich social and economic dividends, and that this is one of the ways to address complex issues of population growth, maternal and child health, mortality and morbidity issues and labour productivity. It is in this context that at Jomtien, the World Declaration on Education for all, to which India is a signatory, affirmed its commitment to universalisation of primary education. The Conference further reiterated that education is a fundamental right of all men and women; that education ensures social, economic and cultural progress, and that it is a key to personal and social improvement.





The primary education scenario in Uttar Pradesh

The primary education scenario in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh remains one of the least developed states in the country on account of its large population, low productivity levels and per capita income.

Literacy and General Educational Scenario in the State

The literacy rate in UP stands at 41.6% in 1991 against the national rate of 52.2%. Male and female literacy rates in UP are 55.7% and 25.3% compared to the all India rates of 64.1% and 39.3%, respectively. There are districts where the literacy rate of SC women dips to a low of seven percent. Enrolment figures show substantial urban-rural disparities, as also gender and social group based differences. It is estimated that 56% of the school entrants drop out before completing Class VIII. The gender wise break up of drop outs is 52% for boys and 65% for

girls; in the case of SC/ST children it is 53.5% and 71.3% respectively. (Directorate Basic Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh, 1999)

The GER in Uttar Pradesh has recorded an increase of 14.9 percentage points from 1996-97 to 1999-2000 and this is primarily on account of the impressive growth of girls' GER from 80.4% in 1996-97 to 98.7% in 1999-2000 (Directorate of Basic Education, UP, 1999). The overall GER in the State stands at 100.4% (1999-2000). For boys it is 105.3% and for girls 98.7% (1999-2000). Yet again the improvement has been appreciably high for girls at 24.6 percentage points when compared to the 1996-97 GER for girls.

Majority of the estimated 17.4 lakh children who were 'out of school' in 1996-97, were girls and SC/ST children.

What the Social Assessment Studies have to say

- Low enrolment has been reported in the case of minorities, SCs, STs, OBCs, and girls in varying degrees in Badaun, Bareilly, Basti, Firozabad, Gonda, Maharajganj, Moradabad, Siddhartha Nagar and Sonebhadra districts.
- Low demand for education among certain sections of the population has been cited as a reason for low enrolment. Lack of awareness about education is the single main reason for such a situation. Some sections of the population tend to view education as a meaningless exercise as it does not guarantee employment.
- This is further accentuated by an absence of communication and cooperation between the teacher and the parent. The districts that have specifically pointed out this problem are Badaun, Basti, Hardoi, Lakhimpur Kheri, Maharajganj, and Pilibhit.
- The prevalence of a low level of academic achievement among Muslim children has been indicated. It has also been cited that Muslims, especially girls, prefer the *madarassa*, a centre for religious education, as a consequence of social factors. This has been pointed out in Badaun, Hardoi and Pilibhit
- Gender discrimination has resulted in the low enrolment and retention of girls. Educated girls are perceived as liabilities at the time of marriage. In several places child marriage deprive the girl child of education. The districts where such problems are pronounced are Basti, Deoria, Hardoi, Lakhimpur Kheri, Lalitpur, Moradabad and Pilibhit.

Deterrents / Impediments to Girls' Education

A better and deeper understanding of the factors that inhibit girls' access to primary education has been made available through research and baseline studies. The reasons for non-enrolment and dropout of girls are complex. They range from infrastructural issues such as non-availability of schools within habitations, lack of women teachers, economic compulsions, education not believed to offset the opportunity cost of wage earning, to powerful and strong cultural attitudes and taboos. There is a tendency to overplay the supply side inadequacies while a luke warm or near absent demand for girls' education may be the overriding factor for low participation of girls in primary education. A conviction has to be generated amongst parents and within the community. Attitudes and mindsets need to change.

The implications of women's low status are

manifold and in poorer households, the burden of poverty shifts to women and girls who often work to keep sons and brothers at school and get a meagre share of the family's food and have limited access to, health and educational resources. Since fetching water, fodder and fuel, doing domestic chores and taking care of children and livestock, are seen as women's exclusive responsibility, girls, especially in rural areas, are often denied the opportunity to participate in education.

Poor retention of girls is attributed to two main factors. The first is the tendency of parents to withdraw them from school on attainment of the pre puberty stage (say 9+ years) as they become capable of fulfilling certain domestic needs (sustenance activities and sibling care). The second is the school environment itself, which neither encourages girls nor is able to bring out the best in them. During the seasons for harvest, marriages, festivals, village fairs etc., girls' attendance at school suffer a setback as

What other studies reveal

- The gender gap is significantly larger among scheduled castes and in rural areas. For the average girl child the privation of poverty are significantly aggravated by value systems, norms and social mores. The gender gap has imposed severe limitations both on the development of women in general and the extent of their participation in developmental activities. The self image that society creates for the girl child in one of worthlessness, servitude and dependence.

Source : *Atlas of South Asian Children and Women*, UNICEF, 1996

- It also seems that girls' attendance is more regular and other factors like teacher absenteeism have a greater adverse impact on girls than on boys. There is also a gap between the learning achievement of girls and boys. A boy's education is generally viewed as a possibility of increasing the earnings and status of the family. The value of daughter's education is gauged in terms of her marriage prospects. However, marriage of an educated girl carries its own practical difficulties and benefits of her education in any case is seen as going to her husband's family. Therefore, the desire or motivation to send girls to school and to ensure their completion is circumscribed by high economic costs 'unfriendly' school environment and social sanctions.

Source : Pant, Niranjana, *Status of Girl Child and Women in India*, 1995

- Gender bias exists in classroom behaviour of teachers, students, and in learning materials. Shortage of female teachers also results in the absence of role models for girl students and textual materials reinforce stereo typed female roles.

Source : *A Study on Participation of Girls in Classroom Interactions*, UPEFAPB, 1996

they are kept back at home. In the absence of any mechanism to address their needs owing to these periods of absenteeism, their achievement suffers. Thus begins the cycle of teachers' neglect in the classroom, leading to disinterest and demotivation, to eventually result in their leaving school.

Added to these are natural barriers often acute in particular reasons. Distance to school, lonely paths leading to school, forests, streams/ rivers, undulated terrain that have to be crossed on the way to school are some common examples of natural barriers. Seasonal vagaries of floods further aggravate the situation.

The variations in the situation of girls across

Caste and gender related studies

- Many blocks of the state have female SC literacy rates below 5% and in general habitations have been encountered where there is not a single literate SC women, in the case of SC girls, traditional pattern of discrimination are the main factor for keeping them out of school. Studies have reported that SC girls enter school at a higher age level than others and, parents, are reluctant to retain their girls in mixed schools or those not having female teachers.

Source : UP DESCO *The disadvantages suffered by SC/ST children in seeking enrolment to and coming up in primary schools*, UPEFAPB 1996'

- Blatant forms of caste based discrimination have by and large disappeared from schools. However, more subtle forms of discrimination have been reported such as discrimination in the location of schools, attitudes of teachers, verbal and physical abuse by fellow students, denial of self worth on account of their sex, clothing etc. which communicate a district message of social inferiority.

Source : Nambissam, Geetha B, *The Social Context of Learning and Schooling of Dalits and Tribal Children*, UNDP, 1995."

districts, blocks and clusters are pointers to the need to focus on area specific problems and issues. These variations need to be taken into account while planning strategies to address the issue of girls' education. While generic strategies applicable to all girls in the district are important, there would have to be certain specific strategies to counter the diverse acute situations faced by girls in certain pockets to enable them to join school.

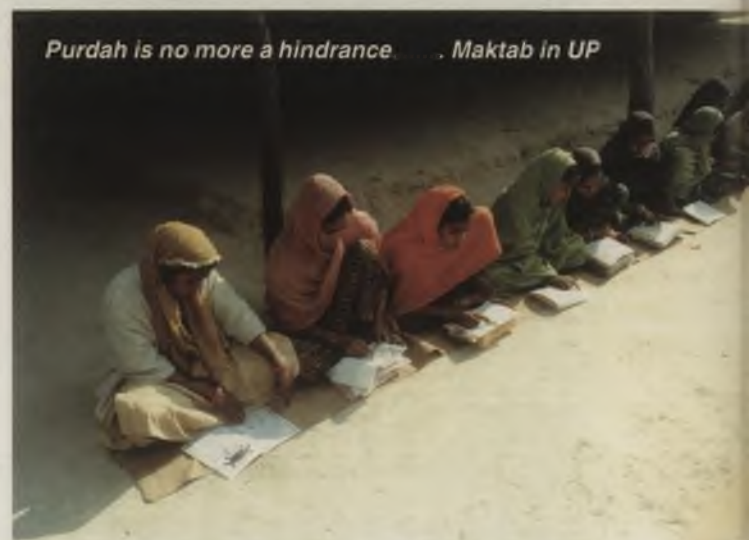
Minorities and girls

- Among the more affluent sections of Muslims the need for mainstream education, in addition to religious instruction, is well-recognised in the case of boys, but it is not so for girls. Muslims girls, by and large, are denied the opportunity of formal schooling for reasons imposed by tradition, such as the 'purdah' system which demands their seclusion.

Source : Khan J.M., *Education among Muslims*, 1993

- A recent study relating to muslim students in primary schools revealed that repetition rates are higher among boys than girls, and where as drop out rates of boys was high in class I and II, among girls the number of drop outs increased in class IV and V.

Source : *A Study of Repetition and Dropout among Minority Students*, UPEFAPB, 1996





Programmes for primary education reform

Programmes for primary education reform

With a view to augment efforts towards improving the basic education scenario in the State, the Government of Uttar Pradesh undertook the UP Basic Education Project (UPBEP) in 17 districts, in October 1993 and later the District Primary Education Programme II (DPEP-II) covering 22 districts, since September 1997. By expanding to another 38 districts under UP DPEP - III almost the entire state has been brought within the ambit of accelerated primary education projects.

The UP BEP is a State sector initiative of the Government of Uttar Pradesh while DPEP is a centrally sponsored scheme of the Government of India.

The overwhelming focus of the UP BEP is universal enrolment and completion of basic education (defined as Classes I-VIII) and

improvement of its quality. Capacity building is the core of the project strategy. Strengthening of the state, district and community institutions is seen as the key to the achievement of long term goals. Decentralisation of educational planning and management is an important aspect of the programme.

Strengthening the existing state education machinery, attempting to reinforce the system and make it responsive to needs and expeditiously minimise gaps in various aspects of primary education within a stipulated time period, are priorities for DPEP. Not only this, it also strives to build an alert and pro-active community with a better understanding of issues in primary education and having greater conviction about educating their children, particularly girls.

The state's commitment towards improving girls' educational status is manifest in its policy statements

1. Free education for all girls up to graduation.
2. The State Government has facilitated women and girls to appear for the Class V and VIII examination, which are the ends of the primary and 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.
3. The Shiksha Mitra scheme adopted, will enable the deployment of para-teachers in formal schools, who will cater to single teacher schools or schools which need additional teachers to bring the TPR to 40:1. The scheme envisages minimum recruitment of 50% women. This initiative is expected to improve the availability of female teachers in rural schools. It is envisaged that between the regular and para-teacher deployed at a school there will be at least one lady teacher.
4. 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 in 1999. The Mission covers both the primary and upper primary levels of education.
5. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has since 1999 delegated the management of Basic Education to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in a concerted effort to decentralize, establish local accountability and encourage local elected bodies to manage and execute basic education programmes.

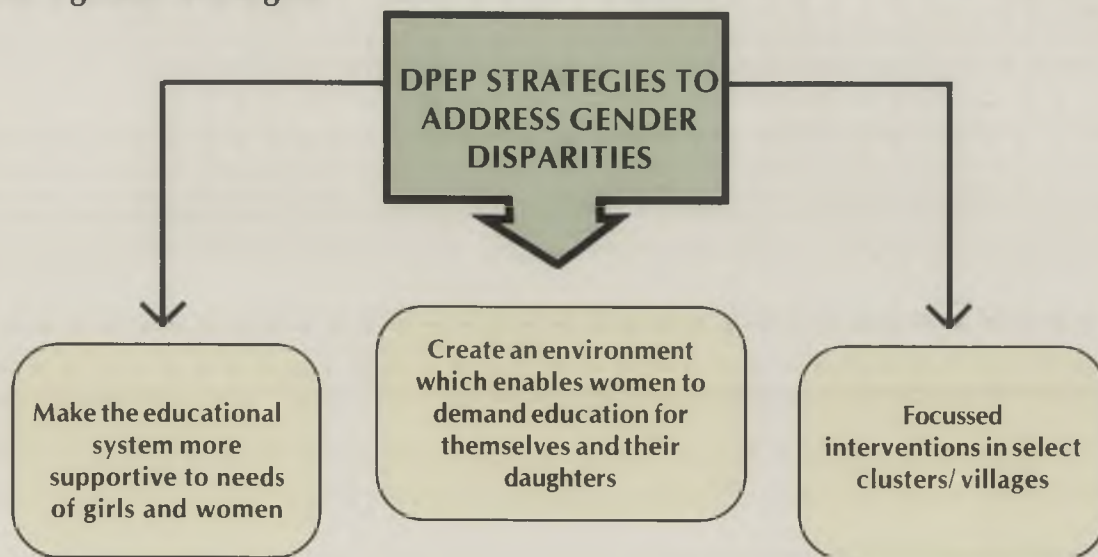
These programmes differ from each other insofar as their thrust on the stage of education is concerned. The UP BEP is concerned with upper primary education as much as with primary education, whereas DPEP is concerned only up to the primary level. Programmatic differences are marginal though infrastructure development received greater emphasis in the former as compared to the latter.

The question of girls' education has been central to both UP BEP and DPEP in Uttar Pradesh. The need to emphasise on strategies and interventions for girls' education by addressing gender concerns at all levels of programme implementation has been recognised as critical by these programmes. With the backing of a supportive State policy, efforts have been simultaneously directed at the community and the school system to create a favourable environment for girls' education.

UP BEP's gender strategies

- Emphasis on creating a girl friendly school environment through awareness building activities
- Gender sensitisation of stakeholders leading to attitudinal change using a module developed through an interactive process
- Development of materials stressing the importance of educating women and girls
- Development of teachers' training module to help them reduce gender biased practices in classrooms
- Setting up/strengthening of ECE and alternative schooling centres as support services for enrolment and retention of girls
- Mahila Samakhya programme to mobilize women's collectives for education
- Double shift schools for upper primary level, with one shift for girls
- Pilot project on work experience in upper primary schools as a retention strategy for girls.

DPEP's gender strategies



DPEP's equity focus is apparent from the fact that the programme targets educationally backward districts with female literacy below the national average. DPEP's gender strategy seeks to address the following :

1. Make the educational system more responsive and supportive to the needs of girls.

This entails congenial and supportive school environment and teaching learning processes, availability of female teacher,

gender sensitive and relevant teaching learning materials, established linkages between formal primary school and Early Childhood Care and Education, provision for flexible timings, etc.

2. Create community demand for girl's education and enabling conditions that encourage people's participation for girls' education

This requires motivating parents/community

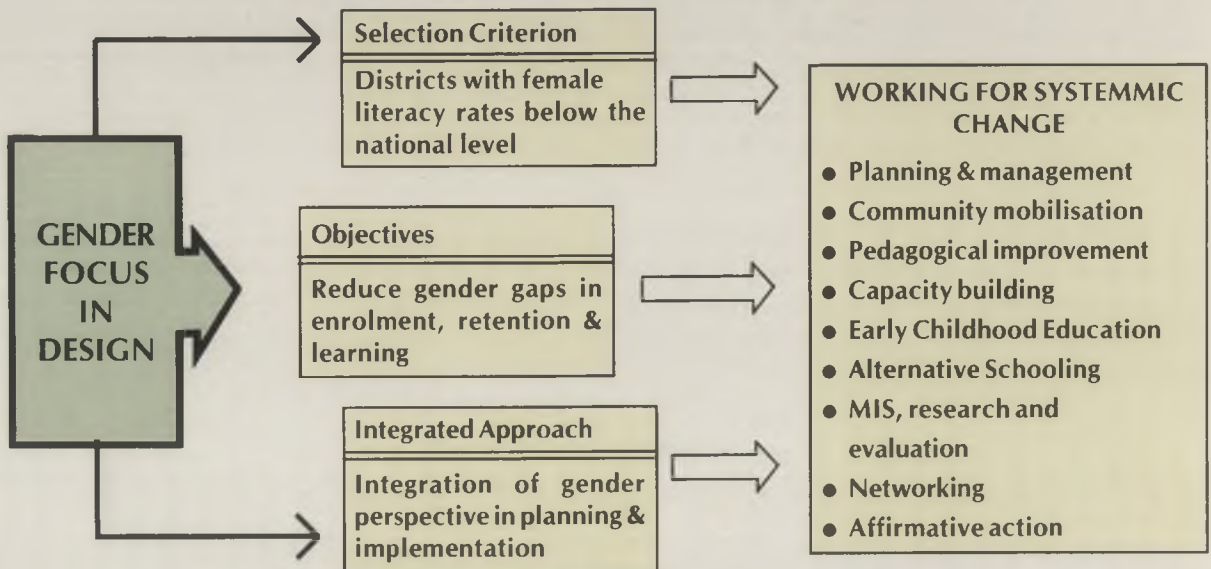
through campaigns, environment building efforts, women's camps/melas, etc. establishing closer links between parents/ mothers and the school/teachers, setting up facilitative structures at the grassroots, enabling them to demand education for themselves and their daughters.

The Mahila Samakhya Programme (MS) has been supported by both the UP BEP and DPEP as an integral part of their gender strategy. MS pursues an educational agenda focusing on awareness raising, critical analysis, skill building

and the mobilisation of women for education. Other than initiating direct educational interventions, efforts at motivating parents to send their daughters to school and exerting pressure on school authorities to cater to the needs of girls are the high points of the programme's interventions for girls' education. The Mahila Samakhya Programme has actively influenced the gender perspective in UP BEP, assisted in strategy formulation and has also facilitated its translation into action.



The gender focus of DPEP is explained in the diagram below :





Initiatives for change

Initiatives for change

(i) Working with the community on girls' education

Community involvement is crucial for achieving UPE and retaining it in the long run. In the light of this, creating opportunities for the community to be active partners in bringing about changes in the primary education scenario has emerged to be an imperative. Both UP BEP and DPEP have been facilitating this through carefully designed mobilization strategies that are envisaged to lead to active community participation and involvement of grassroot structures such as the village education committee (VEC) etc. The Village Education Committee (VEC) is the grassroots level body which plays a pivotal role in enlisting community participation for education and bringing the community and schools closer to establish an interactive and effective school management system. This body is expected to assume leadership, to inspire and influence community thinking and guide their decisions in favour of educating their children, particularly girls. Not only this, the VECs are envisaged to motivate the spirit of community ownership of schools and the education system to the extent of mobilising community resources for school improvement.

There is provision for at least three women members in the VEC,

one elected member of the Gram Panchayat, one nominated SC woman and one nominated mother. Other than the reserved membership, it is possible that more women are members of a VEC if any other member belonging to the other categories is a woman.

Large scale capacity building of VEC members has been undertaken in both UP BEP and DPEP with a view to equip and activate them for community participation. A three day training package is used for their training. The training programme aims at enriching the VEC on aspects such as enrolment, retention, supervision, construction and

Community ownership of primary education

- *The villagers of Rampur in Jakhaura block in Lalitpur district had been concerned about the fact that there was no primary school in their village. While some children joined the school in the neighbouring village, many remained out of school either as drop outs or as non-starters. Not willing to let things be as they are, a few motivated villagers mooted the idea of constructing a school building with community contributions. This proposal was followed by the decision to construct a six roomed school building. Some of the villagers made monetary contributions and others put in their time and labour. After the school building was ready, it was donated/handed over to the Government, with a request to run the school. Now Rampur, not only has a school, but is able to serve children in unserved villages in the neighbourhood. The villagers regularly monitor the school, classroom environment and teachers' attendance*
- *A section of the villagers in Thanwara village in Jakhaura block of Lalitpur district, pointed out the need for desks and ceiling fans in the classrooms of the village school. In their opinion, such infrastructural facilities were imperative for a congenial learning environment in the school. The teachers expressed their helplessness in the matter. The issue came to the notice of the Head Teacher, Shri Nayak, who raised the issue at a general meeting in the village. He expressed the need for community contributions. The villagers responded to his appeal by providing desks and fans in all the four classrooms. One of the affluent villagers, donated school uniforms to the children of weaker sections and six wheelchairs to physically challenged children.*

maintenance of school buildings, social mobilisation for girls' education, micro planning, school mapping, developing a village education plan, etc. Resource Groups, for training the VECs have been constituted at the block level, which include local NGOs, grassroot workers and cluster level education officials. The training of VEC members is organised at the village level with the dual purpose of capacity building as well as building an overall environment for primary education.

Both in UPBEP and DPEP the VEC members are involved with community mobilisation activities. They have been carrying out a whole gamut of activities under micro planning such as household surveys, listing out-of-school children and intervening with such parents to send their children, especially daughters, to school. In a cluster based strategy model, the VECs are playing a crucial role of coordinating all girl child centered interventions under the project. The VECs are also responsible for the management of non formal/alternative schooling centres which are run in their villages for dropouts and never enrolled children, especially girls. They select the venue, recruit the teachers, make payment of honoraria, distribute teaching-learning materials and carry out supervision of the centres.

The school in Dandoori village of Ramia Behar block, in Lakhimpur Kheri district, remained closed for want of a teacher. The villagers had been voicing their displeasure about this. Despite repeated requests, by the Pradhan, to reopen the school, it remained closed. As the Pradhan was eager to achieve 100% enrolment of girl children, she took the initiative and selected a female teacher for the school, at a village meeting. The school now functions regularly and the children no longer have to go to the neighbouring village for their education.

Women's participation at the grassroots has been further ensured through the formation of Mother Teacher Associations (MTA) in schools. Majority of the MTAs in place, are located in schools covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach. The MTAs are helped in defining their role and are oriented towards their *responsibilities vis a vis* the Model Cluster Development Approach.

The role of MTAs that has emerged through

several rounds of discussions is as follows :

- community mobilisation for enrolment and retention
- work towards bringing the school closer to the community
- 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
- follow up house to house survey data for new enrolment and sustained retention
- check whether children receive textbooks in time
- work towards eradication of caste and gender based discrimination in school
- assist in organising school functions

Self discovery

The Pradhan of Kaphara Nyaya Panchayat, in Deoria district, rarely went out of her home to attend any programme. But, her curiosity was roused when she heard of the Maa-beti Mela that was going to be held in her village. She attended the mela and came back totally inspired and resolved to take upon herself the responsibility of bringing girls of her gram sabha to school. Exposure to the mela made her realise the power and responsibility bestowed upon her by dint of being the Pradhan. "Henceforth", she said, "no one can use me as a rubber stamp. I will raise questions and take up the cause of education".

Different means of generating community awareness and interest in primary education and also create a supportive environment for girls' education have been adopted in DPEP. Local folk forms have been tailored to communicate

School Chalo Campaign



messages on education including that of girls' education. *Kala Jathas* (cultural troupes), *Nukad Nataks* (street plays), *School Chalo Abhiyan*, *Mabedi Melas* (Mother-daughter fairs) are organised in villages with similar objectives.

Community mobilisation for girls' education

- Participative processes enabling local communities to play active role in promoting enrolment and retention of girls and in school management.
- Mobilisation of women's groups, convergence with Mahila Samakhya
- Institutionalisation process through VECs, MTAs, PTAs and Women Motivator Groups (WVG)
- Representation of women ensured in VECs
- Orientation and training-sensitisation to girls' needs and development of a gender aware perspective

IMPACT

Community awareness-highly supportive environment.

Increase in number of girls enrolled

Community ownership in management of ECCE, AS centres and school construction

VECs taking leadership position in girls' education, raising local contributions.

Women's groups are articulating new needs and raising pertinent questions.

Meena campaigns

The Meena campaign, a special intervention to develop community commitment for girls' education has been initiated under DPEP. It uses the audio-visual material on Meena developed



Meena campaign on women's day

by UNICEF. Meena campaigns are being organised with the objective of sensitising the community on issues related to girls' education so that a supportive environment for girls' education is created at the community level. For the purpose specific episodes of the Meena video cassettes are used.

Prior to launching the campaign, project staff and field workers are acquainted with the video films and the effective use of the selected episodes of the Meena audio video material to carry forward the message of girls' education. Alongside, certain discussion points have been evolved so that the audience is engaged in meaningful discussions before and after having viewed the films.

The pre-screening discussion was designed to understand people's views on educating girls. In the course of discussions at this stage, viewers would speak of the work girls have to do and how it becomes difficult to spare them for school. There are obvious strains of bias in their views about educating boys *vis a vis* girls. This is often justified by them in terms of the dominant role girls have to play in the household and in looking after their siblings.

Interestingly, the post screening discussions bring out the viewers' appreciation of Meena as she is portrayed in the film. Some of them even expressed a desire to get their daughters to study like Meena. By the end of the show many from the audience are converts and are heard talking of their intention to educate their daughters.

This communication tool for girls' education has been used at VEC trainings, meetings of Mother Teacher Associations and in other awareness and motivation campaigns. Within a year of initiating these campaigns, 357 village shows had been organised in chosen clusters.



Women entering Meena in their hearts

Meena paves the way

Strong resistance to girls' education was faced in one of the hamlets in a village (Bhikhupur) in Maharajganj district covered by the Model Cluster Development Approach. Girls' attendance was persistently low even after the mobilisation efforts initiated by DPEP. In fact, many of the activities proposed under the approach got diluted because of community disinterest. At one of the VEC meetings it was decided to organise a Meena campaign. Necessary arrangements were made and the date and venue of the show were widely publicised. As a reminder, two days prior to the show, further publicity drives were undertaken.

The initial response was very disheartening. Viewers present along with the programme personnel made efforts to draw in more people for the show. After a delay of an hour or so, pre-screening discussions were held to elicit community views on girls' education. As anticipated very negative views were presented and education of girls appeared to be a non-issue for the viewers.

After noting the points that emerged, the film was screened. Soon the audience began commenting on Meena's role. Once the film was over, discussions were initiated on the importance of girls' education in the light of the film they saw. There was a visible softening of attitudes, and even the most rigid ones like Ramlal began talking differently. They did find it difficult to admit that girls also need to be educated. There were others who clearly expressed their desire to see their daughters become like Meena.

Two weeks later, the Head Teacher enthusiastically talked of changes in the people's attitude towards girls' education. The VEC Chairperson also reported the discernible desire of villagers to educate their daughters. Seeing the eventual breakthrough, the district DPEP Gender Co-ordinator suggested that a proposal for setting up an Alternative Schooling Centre be made.

On the way out of the village, the Gender Co-ordinator happened to meet Ramlal, who thanked her for screening the Meena films. Both his daughters have since been enrolled in the village school. He, in fact, was returning from the market after buying school uniforms for them.

Maa Beti Melas & Women's Parliament

It has been considered useful to organise women on the issue of girls' education and two direct interventions, viz., organisation of *Maa Beti melas* and Women's Parliament, have been tried out. Around 222 *Maa Beti Melas* and *Women's Parliaments* have been organised over a period of one year since these initiatives were implemented for the first time.

These have tried to bring together mothers of out of school girls along with their daughters and expose them to a variety of issues related to education of girls as well as activities that are undertaken in the school and also what the children in school do. A fair is arranged with the help of the teachers and VEC members. The actual fair is preceded by a host of preparatory activities. Mobilising the target women to attend the fair is one of the main tasks. Organising different activities and preparing the school children for the same have to be taken up ahead of the *meela*. Motivational rallies are organised with the help of teachers and school going children to inspire out of

school children to join school.

These *melas* are organised with the objectives of :

1. creating awareness about the importance of girls' education, for which purpose relevant material is widely disseminated
2. educating mothers about the necessity and significance of girls' education
3. putting in place a functional relationship between the teachers and parents
4. drawing the attention of teachers towards the problems faced by girls



5. holding discussions on gender concerns and trying to elicit people's attitudes towards their daughters and sons. Efforts are, thus, made to sensitise them and make them realise how their negative disposition prevents their daughters from coming out of their shells
6. holding discussions on the present education system and appealing to those present to participate in making it more effective and responsive to expressed needs

It is believed that such exercises would lead to creation of the conducive environment in the school for girls and give due recognition to mothers as guardians. It is expected that mothers would begin to take greater interest in school affairs and would be willing to come out of their homes for the cause of their daughters education. With the coming together of the community and school through this effort, the VEC is also motivated to take on the responsibility of girls' education in their villages.

As a part of the *melas*, Women's Parliaments are held, which is an innovation to enable and empower women. In a true democratic spirit, the underlying objective of this innovation is to provide women a platform to fearlessly express their problems. It also helps women develop an understanding of how the government actually works.

To get the Women's Parliament working, the women parliamentarians are selected and oriented to the objectives of the Women's Parliament and the principles on which it is expected to function. The next step has been for the parliamentarians to elect the leader of the house – the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister then appoints her Council of Ministers and allocates portfolios to them according to their interest and capabilities. Apart from the Prime Minister and her Council of Ministers, there is the District Magistrate, teacher and Gram Pradhan.

Once this process is over, the house begins functioning. The women present start asking questions to the Prime Minister and her team of ministers. Initially the Prime Minister shows signs of nervousness but as she gets into the mould of the Prime Minister she begins responding confidently. The common issues that find their way into the Women's parliament are

education, health, village infrastructure, problem of safe drinking water and alcoholism among the men of the village.

Usually the Education and Health Ministers appear to be the busiest with most of the questions addressed to them. The women make demands to the Education Minister for setting up schools in unserved habitations, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities and rationalisation of teacher deployment. Women also raise issues related to girls' education. When women start talking about the health problems faced by them and their families, the Health Minister often has to admit the inefficiency of her ministry.

During the session someone from the VEC or WMG records the proceedings based on which a memorandum is prepared on behalf of the house. The Council of Ministers along with the members of the WMG vow to resolve the problems identified and decide on the appropriate action to be taken. They are accountable for the issues raised in the next session of the Parliament that is held after a month or so.

Experiences so far have ratified the effectiveness of this innovation as a workable means of resolving local issues and exerting requisite pressure on the system to qualitatively improve the educational scenario:



Yes, Madam Prime Minister

Rahul Karmakar
Sandila (Hardoi), July 11

THE PRIME Minister's is a tough job. Shameem Bano realised that a month back, Munni Devi feels it today. But they know it has to be done, for their daughters in

villages around this block headquarters in Hardoi district has a 'prime minister' — only women, preferably mothers, are eligible — whenever an emergency demands a parliamentary session. Her tenure lasts until the next session, held variably within 15-45 days.

The Mahila Sansad (Parliament) is something rural women in Hardoi and at least 18 districts of the State look forward to. It provides them an outdoor platform to put up the issues they wouldn't have discussed indoors earlier: alcoholism among the males, general health, village infrastructure and education for all.

Former 'prime minister' Shameem Bano of Narayanpur village had weathered the complaints of the womenfolk last time. It's now the turn of Munni Devi of Meetou village to address their problems. And, she does so with the help of 'education minister' Mithilesh and 'health minister' Sunita Devi.

The Mahila Sansad is an important part of Maasays Sarita Singh, district co-ordi-

The Bottomline

Former 'prime minister' Shameem Bano of Narayanpur village had weathered the complaints of the womenfolk last time. It's now the turn of Munni Devi to address their problems.

nator, Girls' Education. "The women used to be circumspect about it; they seem to have got into the groove now."

The idea of Maa-Beti Mela for mothers and daughters was conceived under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). Organised at Nyay Panchayat and village level, its aim is to promote girls' education in rural areas.

The women who participate in melas make it a point to discuss every issue affecting their daily lives. The focus, however, is on education for their children, particularly their daughters.

The change of attitude is apparent even among the menfolk, who were earlier averse to

community participation of their bett "None of my four daughters went to school. I have ensured that my granddaughter is educated," says 78-year-old Pyare Lal of Kheda village.

Same is the case with Akbar Ali of Tard village. He had fought with the relatives to prevent his grand-daughter being married off at 14. Rukhsana is now the 50 girls studying at the Maktab run by Ma Idris Warsi who took nine years to "awaken our people".

The UP Education For All Project Director, Ms Vrinda Sarup, says the increasing role of panchayats is the reason behind the attitudinal change in villages. "Whatever success DPEP has recorded is attributable to villagers involvement. The Village Education Committee (VEC) plays a significant role in micro-planning, from teacher control, requirement of students, to motivation and infrastructure," she says.

Agrees Hari Prasad, the VEC president and Pradhan of Narayanpur Gram Sabha. "We survey the schooling pattern, the ratio of boys and girls in schools, the drop-out rate as well as the population," he says.

The VEC, he adds, relies a lot on feedback from the womenfolk. Feedback — and suggestions — relayed from the 'maas' and the 'betis' by the rural Hardoi's prime ministers.

Hindustan Times, Lucknow 12.7.99

Some villages in Uttar Pradesh have developed a new education programme for girl children. Due to the effort of the 'women's parliament', reports Sujay Gupta, drop-out rates in schools have fallen



LEARNING TO LEARN: Non-formal education meets with success in Uttar Pradesh villages

parliament) is in session at every Maa-Beti mela and each session has a new prime minister. In a new cabinet, if Shameem Bano of Narayanpur village listened to problems of womenfolk in the last session, Munni Devi of Meetou village, does so this time. She is ably assisted by education minister Mithilesh Kumar and 'health minister' Sunita Devi. At hand is the problem of the cholera epidemic. After discussing the problem, the parliament decides to stage a play where characters speak of the problems of cholera and the need to create a hygienic environment. The play ends with the prime minister asking mothers to send their daughters to school so that they are aware of the need for cleanliness and hygiene.

How does all this connect with education, one may well ask? Sarita Singh, the district coordinator for the education of girls of the DPEP programme in Hardoi says, "When women are discussed, women realise the importance of awareness and knowledge. Many mothers who were hesitant in sending their daughters to school overcome their fears. Statistics show that the number of schooling children have gone up and the drop-out rate has gone down with these project interventions."

In fact, it is the non-formal component of the DPEP programme that has actually worked. And the age-old problems with government run formal basic schools still remain. For instance, in the Shardaolia block in Hardoi, records in one of the 'well run' schools show that of the 175 students, the numbers in classes three, four and five were progressively lower than the first two classes thereby indicating a steady drop-out rate.

The Alternate Education Centre (AEC) at Tilola Khurd village, off the main road was however a study in contrast. A small, ramshackled hut passed off as a classroom. However, the lack of infrastructure was more than made up by the spirit of the teachers and the students. 'Jesh-pathi', a dalit woman who has herself studied upto class five decided to take time off her household work and teach. Deshpathi's husband too did not mind the family giving up one of their rooms for the school.

Said Dinesh Sharma an official working in the DPEP office to set in Lucknow, "The AECs have been a big success. There are no problems and there is no syllabus. The idea is to get parents to send their children to a school in their own villages. Students are content the same as in a formal school but without the pressure of tests. Many children then leave these schools more confident to take on the more formal system of education."

Interestingly, most of the students for these AECs are identified and selected during the Maa-Beti melas, where newly motivated mothers are encouraged to send their children to school. The girls take in lessons and supplies in an AEC. And their own school parents take them to school.



Silence! The sansad is in session

A session is in progress in the Samad Kheda village in rural Hardoi, a dusty district in central Uttar Pradesh. And for a change there are no protests or walkouts. Prime minister, Shameem Bano is holding centre stage today during "zero" hour and the agenda is that the number of girls dropping out of school is on the rise.

Bano, a member of three sansads makes a suggestion, "If the girls do not want to go far from the village let them study in non-formal schools within the village."

Other parliament members agree. One of them Munni Devi agrees to donate one room of her hut to start the non-formal school for girls. Drop-outs and others who are sceptical of leaving the village, can also enrol.

The Mahila Sansad (Women's parliament) is something rural women in Hardoi and 21 other districts in UP can look forward to. The concept was envisaged and put to shape by the Basic Ed-

ucation department of the government under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). But unlike quintessential government schemes, ideas came from the panchayats and village levels and innovations were made by the village women themselves. Hence, 'governance' has come to acquire a new meaning. Here governance is carried out by the governed themselves.

The Mahila Sansad is held regularly. Village women decide the issue which needs immediate attention for instance, the spread of malaria, lack of doctors, repair of school buildings and so on.

The DPEP was launched in 1987 with the aim of spreading primary education at the grassroots level. Vrinda Sarup, the Director of the DPEP in UP said, "We have converged DPEP with other schemes meant for women and children and tried to develop an integrated programme which ensures minimum education." A total of Rs 587 crore has been

earmarked for DPEP in UP for the year ending upto the year 2000.

For each scheme in each district, 40 per cent of the cost are met from the project funds while 60 per cent comes from the rural development department as the schemes are run out mainly in villages.

Whenever something needs to be discussed in the villages covered by the DPEP districts, village education committees (VEC) in each panchayat organise a Maa-Beti (mother-daughter) mela. Here, mothers and daughters meet and discuss their problems concerning health, education and other things.

Even the behaviour of errant husbands is discussed. For instance, in Mito village in Hardoi, it was decided that a campaign would be launched against liquor. Soon all liquor shops in the village were closed and the men who protested were questioned by the women.

The Mahila Sansad (women's

The Telegraph, Calcutta 9.8.99



Enthusiasm Unlimited !

Khana baad ma baneyo (Cook the food later). . . . are abhi tum chakki peesti ho, jaldi chalo school mein ! (Oh ! you are still grinding the wheat ? Come quickly to the school) are calls given to the village women by Aangna (45 years) and Jaidevi (42 years) who are trying to collect the women for a meeting. Soon women begin trickling out of their homes to participate in the meeting. Enthusiasm of this kind, for education, was unknown among women of their age. Their motivation came mainly from the Maa-beti mela.

At the mela, a women's parliament was held under MCDA in Gram Sabha Tikradawoodpur of Nyaya Panchayat Begumganj in Hardoi district. At the women's parliament Aangna was appointed the District Magistrate and Jaidevi, the Gram Pradhan. During this role play, they began feeling a significant change within themselves. When fellow villagers address them as DM Sahib or Pradhanji, they not only feel good, but a sense of responsibility energises them. Their efforts have seen three girls, Shema, Resham and Babita, in school.

On one occasion, Aangna got to hear that men were blocking the way to the venue of a mela, to stop women from attending it. Aangna immediately rushed to the site of blockade, with her team of women, and reasoned out with the men that the mela was not a forum to oppose men.



(ii) The spirit of the collective : the UP Mahila Samakhya experience

Empowerment oriented strategies for women, with a clear focus on education was piloted first through programmes like Mahila Samakhya.

The Mahila Samakhya programme in Uttar Pradesh preceded both the UP BEP and DPEP. It is operational in 10 districts of U.P., viz., Tehri Garhwal, Saharanpur, Banda, Varanasi, Pauri, Allahabad, Sitapur, Auriya, Gorakhpur and Nainital. Of these, the last six are supported by funds from UP BEP. As such nine out of the 10 districts are coterminous with UP BEP. Under DPEP III the programme is to expand to another seven districts, viz., Jaunpur, Mathura, Mau, Muzaffarnagar, Pratapgarh, Tehri Garhwal, Uttar Kashi, bringing the total number of districts to 17.

Mahila Sanghas are the nodal point around which several activities are planned at the village level. These provide the space for women to meet, be together and reflect together. The *Sangha* is a forum where women can collectively analyse their situation with the benefit of shared experiences. Here women raise questions and speak fearlessly to articulate their needs through a collective forum.

Working through the women's collectives has meant acknowledgement of local ownership of the programme at the village level and women have clearly enunciated a demand for

educational opportunities for themselves and their daughters. Where women's *sanghas* have been formed there has been a perceptible difference in the attitude of women towards education and to their own place in society. In the process of taking control of their lives, women have begun appreciating the value of formal schooling for their children and themselves.

Education for equality

Apart from the mobilisation of women, the MS programme provides a range of educational opportunities for different age groups. In the Mahila Samakhya programme educational interventions, along with other interventions have evolved in close liaison with communities, particularly the *Mahila Sanghas* (women's collectives). These initiatives are *Bal Kendras* (Children's Centres for both boys and girls in the age group 6-14 years) *Kishori Kendras* (Centres for adolescent girls), Women's Literacy Centres, Camps and *Mahila Shikshan Kendras* (for women and girls) which provide a supportive environment to meet the educational needs of girls and women.

The MS vision and understanding of education is built on

- a respect for women's priorities for learning
- the creation of time and space for reflection and respect for individual uniqueness and variation.
- enabling the participation of *sanghas*

In Tehri, an ex-employee of Mahila Samakhya has been appointed as a jungle chowkidaar by the government. She holds charge of protecting the land surrounding three villages.

Source : New Challenges of the New Millenium, Annual Report 1998-99, Mahila Samakhya, Uttar Pradesh.

The women of ten sanghas in Banda district decided to approach the 'panchayats' of their areas for assistance in starting income generating activities. They attended the khuli baithaks (open meetings) of the gram sabhas. With their persistence and persuasive powers, they were able to arrange funds through a women's development scheme, DW CRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas). They were trained in various skills such as making grass partitions, basket weaving, candle making and tailoring. Post training, the women are working on the modalities of starting their income generating activities. The skills acquired in accounting as a part of the training in book keeping in connection with their savings activity, is proving very useful in the present context.

Source : New Challenges of the New Millenium, Annual Report 1998-99, Mahila

(women's collectives) in community and village level educational activities.

- setting up gender sensitive educational initiatives.
- creating an environment supportive of girls' and women's education.

In view of the large gender gap in the literacy levels of males and females in Uttar Pradesh, Mahila Samakhya initiatives in alternative learning, practices and processes have been significant.

Bal Kendras

When *sangha* women began realising the importance of educating their children, they expressed the need to provide the children space for education near their homes. The *Bal Kendras* were then conceptualised and set up. These *kendras* are operational in all the 10 districts and have provided a space for children, especially girls, who have not been able to access mainstream educational facilities.

The *Bal Kendras* evolved as preparatory centres for children to facilitate their entry into formal school. Even the school teachers accepted the idea because these children had school preparedness at the time of enrolling in the formal school.

The curriculum and pedagogy for the *Bal Kendras* is a living experience. While evolving the curriculum, the girl child was the main focus. Ways of enhancing the student's self esteem is woven into all aspects of teaching. Every 'skill in a child' is looked upon as a resource. Each district has developed its own curriculum/syllabus, keeping minimum levels of learning as the benchmark and adapted it to the local context.

The *Anudesika* (teacher at a *Bal Kendra*), with a minimum qualification of Class V, is selected by the *sangha*, either from among its own members or from the village. The *Anudesika's* training equips her to deal with multi grade teaching for the different levels of children in her group (ages 4 to 14). She is also able to transact sessions with each group as per well designed lesson plans. She maintains records of each child's academic competence and performance. She, along with the

functioning of the centre, is periodically assessed and monitored by the *Sahayoginis* (facilitator over every 10 villages) and the *sangha* women. *Anudesikas* meet every month to discuss and sort out problems they face.

The *Bal Kendras* at Varanasi came to be known as *Udan Khatolas* (flying chariot), in Tehri, *Buransh* (rhododendron flower) and in Saharanpur, *Hindola* (hurly burly). Subsequently, in the newer districts *Bal Kendras* have been established taking each district's needs into consideration while using the same curriculum.

The *Bal Kendras* which were operational since 1990 at Varanasi, Tehri and Saharanpur have set up alternative education centres for about 7500 children of whom 80% are girls. Subsequently, in the older districts, some centres could be closed down as the children have reached Class V competency and have mainstreamed into local primary schools. Over a period of 7-8 years 160 *Bal Kendras* have been operationalised in seven districts, of which Allahabad has 20, Auriya 3, Chitrakoot 15, Gorakhpur 3, Saharanpur 53 *Hindolas*, Varanasi 32 *Udankhatolas* and Tehri 34 *Buransh* centres. It is noticeable that in the UP BEP districts where MS is operational, the need of setting up *Bal Kendras* was on the decline because from the initial stages of implementation, campaigns to conscientise people to enrol children directly in schools, particularly girls, has been fairly successful.

Kishori Kendras

Why Kishori Kendras ?

Despite their success in improving children's access to education the *Bal Kendras* were unable to cater to the learning demands and quest for information of pre-teenage girls who had earlier dropped out of elementary school after completing the primary classes. The needs of this age group triggered off the process of setting up *Kishori Kendras* in consultation with the *sangha* women, the community and the target girls.

The *Kishori Kendras* have encouraged girls to continue with Upper Primary Education by joining the *Kendra* (centre) as an interim arrangement they go through before joining the

formal system. The flexible timings and the presence of a local female teacher have contributed to girls enrolling in large numbers. The target girls and the operational details of the *Kishori Kendras* have varied from district to district.

Through the primers used for upgradation of reading and writing skills in the Bal Kendras, Kishori Kendras and Mahila Shikshan Kendras, basic issues of health, gender, violence, environment, are all raised and discussed. In the process the learners sharpen their conceptual understanding about the issues.

District Specific Features of the Kishori Sanghas

The nine *Kishori Kendras*, in Saharanpur, with around 10-15 girls in each, have been catering to Muslim girls and their attendance has been encouraging. The fact that 65 girls from these centres have completed their Class V examination in the local primary school is indeed heartening. Constant dialogue with the guardians of the girls by the *Sahayoginis* has helped overcome the barriers that had confined them to their homes.

In Gorakhpur district, too, MS has reached out to Muslim girls through this intervention. Some of the 23 centres in place, are meant exclusively for Muslim girls and the others cater to a mixed group. Each *kendra* has an average of 25-30 girls. In the recent years small workshops on health and hygiene have been organised for the teenage girls to upgrade their understanding of these issues and also make them aware of themselves. This has created a desire to know more about their environment and their lives within the community. These *kendras* are popular with the girls and the community, as there are no schools in the vicinity. To encourage girls to join schools, two literacy camps were organised where 54 girls participated.

A preliminary survey in Betalghat block in Nainital, revealed that though a number of girls had attended regular school, their achievement levels were low, and the drop out rate was high. Most schools in the area had a large number of students with very few teachers. Teacher

absenteeism on account of inhospitable and inaccessible terrain further aggravated teacher shortage. Therefore MS started four *Kishori Kendras*. Most of the girls enrolled want to improve their reading and writing skills and use these centres to facilitate entry into formal schools. The best example of the *sangha* women's commitment to education is seen in the willingness of a *sangha* to depute an *Anudeshika* to a government primary school and meet the expenses of her honorarium through collections from *sangha* members and the students.

The special feature of the *Kishori Kendras* in Sitapur and Auraiya is the attachment of libraries to these centres. There is an average of eight



libraries attached to them which complement the neo-literates' need for knowledge and information. The libraries also serve the purpose of enhancing the information and knowledge base of both the teacher and the taught. These also function as information centres for *sangha* women and the community. The community recognises the role played by the teen aged girls in bringing this inflow of information and knowledge to their otherwise closed worlds.

Kishori Sanghas

Kishori Sanghas have evolved out of the *kishori kendras* and the girls who used to be part of *sangha* meetings at some time are their members. It was felt that they needed a space for themselves and for their concerns and needs.

They are the collectives of adolescent girls mobilised around the issues of health, education, environment, legal literacy, vocational training and life skills.

"Today's girls are the hope of tomorrow" was the belief that initiated setting up Kishori Sanghas in Pauri Garhwal. They have set up 48 *Kishori Sanghas* and have girls in the 15-18 years age group attending them. These centres provide coaching and guidance to girls to complete their primary and high school examinations. In addition, girls are provided legal literacy, health information, training in vocational skills, etc. This is facilitated through the publication of a magazine for these girls called *Pallavi*.

Mahila Shikshan Kendra

One of the most successful educational initiatives of MS has been the *Mahila Shikshan Kendra* (MSK), a residential multi-disciplinary education centre for women and adolescent girls. The first MSK was started in Banda in 1995, with a group of 28 learners (women and girls) who attended the centres for six months. It was a novel experience for both the learner and the teacher in that the curriculum was designed and developed by both in a true spirit of partnership.

Presently there are six MSKs functioning in Uttar Pradesh – one each in Saharanpur and Varanasi and two each in Banda and Tehri. In Banda, the one in Karvi is catering to the demands and needs of women, and the other in Tindwari reaches out to teenage girls. The other two in Varanasi and Saharanpur cater both to women and adolescent girls, though each segment is covered in different sessions. In an effort to consolidate an ongoing initiative in Saharanpur, the initial three months were devoted to upgrading teacher competencies of *Anudesikas/Sahelis*. In the regular course, out of 31 girls enrolled at the Saharanpur MSK, 14 had studied at *Bal Kendras (Hindolas)* for three to four years, and wanted to complete the Class V examination. They viewed the MSK as a stepping stone to furthering their educational skills. In Varanasi, the first batch of 27 students studied to achieve competencies for the Class V examination. The second batch comprising twenty women with basic training in the preparation of herbal

medicine went through a one month long course to enhance their skills in herbal medicine. In Banda 60 girls have mainstreamed into the primary school after studying in the MSK.

Attending the course has also helped in delaying the age of marriage.

Kishoris (adolescent girls) in Gorakhpur are quite aware of their rights regarding the age of marriage. Daughters are actually beginning to challenge their parents' right to marry them off before attainment of age. Often, such questioning has been triggered off by different events at the community level and awareness about the high incidence of child marriages. In Niyamatpur village, the sangha women succeeded in stopping the wedding of a 13 year old girl.

Another significant outcome of the MSK experience has been that MS has been able to impact on policy, which recognised that learning at the MSK is adequate and that it makes the learners eligible to take the Class V and Class VIII State Board Examinations.

It has been a matter of great pride, for Banda, when one of the students who had studied in the MSK, received a certificate from the State education authorities upon successful completion of the 8th standard school board examination, stating that the institution from which she has passed out is the MS Mahila Shikshan Kendra. The MSK is now deemed to be a recognised centre of learning.

In Sitapur district, kishoris (adolescent girls) have voluntarily taken up almost the entire responsibility of designing and publishing the MS newspaper 'Dehriya'.

Women's voices

"My confidence has increased and I am able to talk to the SDM without fear". (Varanasi)

"I have learnt to look up and speak." Tabassum (Saharanpur)

"I feel a great sense of achievement when girls receive their certificates." Nagina (Saheli, Banda)

(iii) Improving infrastructure

Improved school facilities for girls at the primary level, is of critical importance in both attracting and retaining the girl child. Under the UP BEP-I and II as well as DPEP-II, efforts have been made to provide primary schooling within a radius of 1.5 km. in habitations having a population of 300. The project inputs are an additionality over and above the investments by the Government of Uttar Pradesh in providing primary schools in unserved habitations along with other infrastructural inputs which come from centrally sponsored initiatives such as Operation Black Board, Non-Formal Education and the Tenth Finance Commission.

Infrastructure Provided/Planned by Projects

Projects	No. of Primary Schools	No. of Upper Primary Schools	No. of Addl. Classrooms
UP BEP-I	4506	1687	3429
UP BEP-II	780	390	6833
DPEP-II	3627	-	4473
DPEP-III	6051	-	12,271

Source : UP Education For All Board.

The opening of new schools in school less habitations and major re-construction of dilapidated schools, has improved access to school for both boys and girls. The opening of

schools nearer their homes, is far more effective in enhancing girls' enrolment on two counts. On the one hand, it reduces the distance girls have to travel to reach school and on the other, parents feel more confident about sending their daughters to nearby schools rather than to those located far away.

Improving school infrastructure by providing drinking water facilities and toilets for girls, has impacted on retaining children, especially girls, in school. Initiatives of this nature have met parental and community expectations. The effort in UP BEP and DPEP towards accelerating the saturation of these facilities in primary schools is supplemented by several schemes of the State Government that are also setting-up drinking water facilities and toilets in the schools.

Improvement in School Facilities by Projects

Projects	Drinking Water	Toilets
UPBEP	5299	10,201
DPEP-II	6260	12,738
DPEP-III	5770	15,589

Source : UP Education For All Board.

Female Teachers

Common belief has it that the availability of women teachers has a direct correlation with girls'



participation in education as their presence helps overcome concerns of the girls' security in the school. Over the last five decades efforts have been made to recruit more female teachers. This has led to a substantial increase in the number of women teachers. However, they still comprise a relatively small proportion of the total number of teachers in position. Further, they are not evenly distributed across the schools and tend to concentrate in schools in urban and semi-urban areas. Thus, availability of women teachers in remote rural areas remains an issue.

Proportion of Female Teachers in Uttar Pradesh

Teachers in Place	1980-81		1990-91		1999-2000	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Female	44,040	18	57,037	21	85,153	26
Total	2,47,759	100	2,66,157	100	3,27,514	100

Source : Directorate of Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Representation of female teachers in UP BEP districts

Level	1994	1999	Increase in Percentage points
Primary	24%	28%	4
Upper Primary	16%	23%	7

Source : Directorate of Education, Government of UP

The proportion of female teachers in the DPEP II districts have been as given in the table below :

Representation of female teachers in DPEP districts (%)

1997-98	1998-99	Increase in Percentage points
25.17	27.20	2.03

Source : EMIS 1997-98 & 1998-99

The UPBEP has played a major role in augmenting the strength of teachers to meet the surge in enrolment. Following a wide variety of project interventions 27,827 posts of teachers have already been created under UP BEP

- 1. Representation of women teachers in the UP BEP districts at base level of the project (1990-91) was 18% and has now gone up to 28%.*
- 2. Though the number of women teachers is rather low at the primary level, there is a provision of 50% reservation for women in the pre-service teachers training institutes in the State – the Basic Training Centres (BTC)*
- 3. The Shiksha Mitra scheme adopted, is patterned on the successful model of Shiksha Karmis in Rajasthan. The Shiksha Mitra, who will be deployed in formal schools, will be a para teacher to cater to single teacher schools or schools which need additional teachers to bring the TPR to 40:1. The scheme envisages minimum recruitment of 50% women. This initiative is expected to improve the availability of female teachers in rural schools. It is envisaged that between the regular and para-teacher deployed at a school there will be at least one lady teacher.*

The representation of female teachers has remained low, but it is encouraging to see some increase in their proportion over a period of one year. Though the overall representation has been low in the project districts, there are districts such as district Pauri (48%), district Nainital (44%) with higher proportions of female teachers.

Though there is a 50% reservation for women in the pre service training institutes (Basic Training Centres) located in the DIET, their absorption into the system, evidently, remains low. This is attributable to the general

social climate that discourages women's participation in the public domain.

The proportion of female instructors in the State run NFE centres is 37.1%. In the DPEP - II districts, the different models of alternative schooling centres set up, have an instructor at each centre. Of the total 962 instructors in the alternative schooling centres, 235 are women. Women instructors, thus, comprise 24.4% of the total instructors in the AS centres, which is almost at par with the prevailing proportion of female teachers in the formal primary schools.

(iv) The model cluster development approach for improved participation of girls in primary education

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 (MCDA). 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 activities intensify in these villages, various needs and priorities begin unfolding. Consequent efforts are directed at responding to the needs that emerge by providing necessary support either directly through the project or by affecting convergence with other programmes.

Through this approach attempts are being made to improve girls' participation in primary education. In the initial phase the focus is on augmenting the levels of girls' access to primary education either by enrolling in the formal schools or by setting up alternative schooling centres. The next phase focuses on retention of the girls in school and their achievement levels. Every thrust area is worked upon in close association with the parents and the community. The programme triggers off the process and guides it for the community to take on and carry forward. Being a micro level initiative, what began as a concern for girls' participation levels in primary education, has transformed into a concern for every child in the selected villages.

Criteria for Selection of the Clusters

The identification criteria of the clusters are :

- low female literacy rate
- poor enrolment and retention of girls
- dominance of minority or SC/OBC population
- clusters having 10-12 villages
- presence of active VECs
- presence of some active women's groups or

motivated individuals

In the beginning, the initiative was piloted in two clusters of every district. In this way, 30 clusters and 225 *Gram Panchayats* were initially covered in the DPEP II districts. The positive experience in this phase has paved the way for upscaling the approach to additional clusters over the project period whereby 15 clusters in each district were taken up in 1999-2000. The criteria of selecting the expansion clusters has been slightly modified to ensure that elected women members get associated with the initiative. The strategy has been extended to the DPEP III districts as well.

Preparatory Activities

The actual implementation of the interventions is preceded by some preparatory activities. These are :

- identification of the cluster
- sharing the concept of the model cluster development approach with the district project team including the Block and Cluster Coordinators
- identification of a Core Team that will be directly involved in co-ordinating the activities in the cluster identified
- making village visits to establish contact with key persons and the VEC members
- orientation of the VEC members, teachers, key persons from the village, etc.
- organisation of village meetings
- special orientation for house to house survey and PRA for girls' education
- collation of the data from the house to house survey/PRA and development of village specific plans
- gender sensitisation of all the teachers from the primary schools in the villages being



covered under this approach

- gender sensitisation of the Cluster Coordinators to enable them to monitor classroom processes from the gender perspective
- development of gender aware material for use during enrolment drives etc. such as songs, slogans, scripts, etc.

Depending on the time of the year when the approach is introduced, a time plan is worked out for implementation of activities, according to the sequence of activities decided.

The Core Team

A cluster level Core Team is constituted. Members are drawn from women's and youth groups, apart from the Cluster Co-ordinator, the District Co-ordinator for Girls' Education. The District Project Officer also facilitates the Core Team in its day to functioning.

While constituting the Core Teams care is taken to

- get an assurance from these persons that they would be willing to devote time and be closely associated with the model cluster approach
- ensure that these persons belong to the cluster and are familiar with the area and its people

For more intensive interventions, Women Motivator Groups (WVG) have been set up in every village/habitation without a school. This group essentially works in tandem with the Core Team and tries to reach educational facilities to the children in their village/habitation. Often the Women Motivator Groups spearhead the cause of girls' education in their villages by organising supportive activities that eventually take the girls to neighbouring schools or to the AS centres. They function on the basis of task specific orientation and training. A formal training package has been developed to enhance their effectiveness in the field. This training package will take them through the conceptual framework of the MCDA, the existing status of the intervention, the concerns, future course of action

Initiatives by the Women Motivator Groups

- *As an initiative under the MCDA it was possible to set up a Prehar Pathshala with community support in village Kanjerpurva in district Hardoi. Initially the classes were held in an open space but with the onset of monsoon it became difficult to continue with the classes. Responding to this, the WVG convened a meeting with the VEC. At the meeting it was decided that donations would be collected from villagers for construction of a shelter. Today children are receiving education under that shelter.*
- *A primary school in Narakhar in Chatara Block of Sonbhadra district remained unnoticed till it came under the MCDA in 1997-98. At that time only 50 children were enrolled in the school. The data generated by the PRA exercise conducted by the VEC in 1998 was shared with the community on January 12, 1999. This sharing brought about an awareness about the seriousness of the situation as they were face to face with educational issues such as the number of out of school children in their village. Following the sharing of village data, the primary school teacher took the initiative of constituting the PTA and a Women Motivator Group at the same time obtaining a community consensus.*

They identified the households from where children were not going to school and persuaded parents to enroll the children. A marking on the door of those families who enrolled their children was made to indicate that this was a 'literate family'. This became a motivating factor and all families wanted the marking on their door. In September, 1999, all out of school children in the age group 6-11 years were enrolled in school. The number of children enrolled has risen from 50 to 160 and the village has achieved universal enrolment of all 6-11 year olds. Not only this, the WVG has successfully persuaded the educated but unemployed youth to voluntarily teach in the school, as the spurt in enrolment has resulted in the need for more teachers.



and their role therein.

After having completed the preparatory activities, conduct of mobilisation and enrolment drives is the major intervention carried out in the identified clusters.

Enrolment drives are conducted through :

- Padyatras, Prabhat Pheris
- Street plays
- Meetings
- House to house motivational and follow up visits
- Meena campaigns
- Maa-beti Melas
- Women's Parliament

The focus of these efforts are on :

- the prevalent situation of girls' education in the village and impresses upon the community to improve enrolment of girls in school
- the actual information forthcoming from the house to house survey to show what exactly remains to be done in the context of girls' education
- improving the school environment and the ingredients of school management
- involvement of community in school management and institutionalisation of closer interaction between the school and the community
- build on the fact that girls education is central to DPEP.

Felicitation functions are organised in the schools with active community participation, to welcome the new entrants and laud their parents. At these functions it is emphasised that the combined efforts of parents and teachers can ensure regular attendance and retention of girls in school. It is also pointed out that a system of regular stock taking to ascertain the number of girls who remain outside school and depending on the cause that keeps girls out of school, provision of Alternative Schooling facilities and other options can take the village closer to universal enrolment. Interventions of different kinds have been initiated in the clusters to address the concerns that emerged in the course of implementation.

AS Centres

With mounting pressure for augmented

participation of children in primary education, a demand for AS almost obviously gets generated in the MCDA villages.

By 1999-2000 110 AS centres have been started in the 30 clusters. The AS models set up are either *Shiksha Ghar*, *Prehar Pathshala*, *Bal shala* or *Makhtab/Madarassa*. There are a few centres targeting working children in Moradabad and Firozabad districts.

Enrolment

After the first year of experimentation in 227 Gram Panchayats (GP), cent percent enrolment has been achieved in 157 GPs which accounts for 69% of the total GPs covered by the MCDA.

Over a period of one year the enrolment of girls in the clusters, has recorded an increase of 43%.

Flexible timings

The idea of flexible school timings has been discussed with the teachers. The concept met with initial resistance but after several rounds of deliberations teachers agreed to try it out. Seeing the positive impact this has had on girls' attendance and retention, flexible timings is being tried out in several schools to encourage better participation of girls.

Escorts

Distance to school, natural barriers and highways on the way to school have often discouraged parents from sending their daughters to school. To overcome such constraints, the community is encouraged to take the initiative to find escorts who would accompany the children to and back from school. Thus far, escorts for girls have been arranged by the community in 38 schools, and the girls are now accompanied to school by a woman identified by the community.



Escorts who prevented girls from dropping out of school

Maulvi Kheda is a scheduled caste dominated hamlet, a kilometre away from Tikradawoodpur Gram Sabha in Hardoi district. Covered by the MCDA, intensive inputs are being provided. Consequent to the interventions all children are enrolled either in the primary school or the Prehar Pathshala. The activities of the WMG have become a subject of discussion and everyone is talking about the pioneering steps taken by them to enroll all the girl children especially those engaged in chikan work (a type of traditional embroidery). This has not been liked by the middlemen associated with the chikan embroidery trade.

During the summer break of 1999-2000, an unfortunate incident took place in the village, when an eleven old girl was raped while she was working in the field. The man responsible was caught by the villagers and handed over to the police. The fear that something similar may happen again, compelled parents to keep their daughters confined to their homes.

When the school reopened after the summer break it was noticed that nine girls of Classes IV and V were not coming to school. The reason was apparent. Immediately, the WMG held a meeting and discussed the issue. The proposal of the Pradhan, Smt. Nanki Devi, that girls should go to school in groups and initially be escorted by an elder person of the village, was adopted. Those girls who temporarily dropped out of school, are once again back in school.

Proud recognition for being regular at schools



Thehrao Parikrama

Coaching

Special coaching is being provided by school teachers in certain schools to girls whose attendance has been irregular or their achievement level has been low.

Retention Strategy

After the initial success of the MCDA in 30 clusters by way of significant gains in enrolment, difficulty to retain the students in schools remained. At this stage, a retention strategy was evolved. The retention strategy envisages shared responsibilities of the community, teachers and the grassroot groups. Based on information of attendance registers, children's attendance is monitored by the WMG and others in the village in consultation with the teachers. Monthly markings are given to the children – green, yellow, red. Obviously children are being motivated to achieve a green mark at the end of a month. Monthly attendance charts are put up on display in the classrooms so that children can see the overall situation and also get motivated to improve their position. Parents of those children getting yellow consistently, or slipping to the yellow or red mark or those repeatedly getting the red mark are contacted and the cause for irregular attendance is identified. Efforts are made to help the parents in finding solutions to their problems so that the children can attend school regularly. At the end of an academic year, felicitation meetings to laud those children scoring green for the highest attendance held.

Thehrao Parikramas (Retention Marches) have been carried out in the villages by the school

going children and by the teachers, VEC, MTA and WMG members. Homes of children who have been irregular are targeted, where children stop in the course of their march through the village. They perform small motivational skits, sing songs and shout slogans while teachers and

influential persons from the village speak to the parents and guardians.

The *thehrao parikramas* are being regularly held in most of the clusters in order to sustain the pressure on the parents who are defaulters with respect to their children's education.

A Workshop with a difference :

As a part of capacity building efforts for project personnel working on girls' education, a five day workshop was organised at the State Project Office which included a two days field visit to district Hardoi. The first two days were spent on reviewing the progress in the clusters wherein the Co-ordinators for Girls' Education shared their experiences and problems. On the concluding day the overall experiences were reviewed and analysed. In the course of the first two days, some data sheets and monitoring formats for the clusters were developed.

At the village, meetings were held with the community to discuss issues that emerged from the house to house survey, interactions with community members were held, schools visited, study of enrolment data, attendance registers and the status of incentives received (by eligible children) was examined. Before meeting the community, a meeting was held with all the teachers of the cluster to share the issues that emerged. With the support of teachers and the community it was decided to introduce alternative schooling initiatives targeted at 'out of school' children in the 6-9 years age set who are either drop outs or have never enrolled. Going through this process of interaction with community members and teachers, house to house data collection, scrutiny of data and actually confronting issues in the field, helped to build the capacity of project personnel to sharpen their understanding of the ways in which they could proceed in this strategy for girls' education.



District Co-ordinator busy with PRA exercise during Field Visit to a village

(v) Non formal education & alternative schooling

Non Formal Education

The Government of Uttar Pradesh has been implementing the centrally sponsored Non Formal Education Scheme in 576 blocks across the 83 districts in the state. This has extended access to children who have dropped out of school or those who are not been able to join the formal schools for various reasons. Over two years of implementation 58,241 NFE centres have been set up in the state. Out of these, 37,125 are exclusive centres for girls. The cost sharing pattern between the Government of India and the Government of Uttar Pradesh for the mixed centres and girl's centres, has been in the ratio 60:40 and 90:10, respectively.

A total of 13,85,511 children are enrolled in the NFE centres (1999-2000); of them 7,15,600 are girls (51.6%) and 6,69,911 (48.4%) are boys.

The enrolment of children in these centres is presented in terms of their gender and social background.

Of the total enrolment 51.1% are girls. This scenario is commensurate with the fact that majority of the children out of school are girls.

An Evaluation of the Shiksha Ghar Programme makes the following observations:

1. Enrolment of girls has been comparatively higher in the *Shiksha Ghars*.
 - Out of 316 learners in Semester I the number of girls is 168 as against 148 boys
 - In Semester II, as well, girls outnumber boys in most of the *Shiksha Ghars*
2. The performance of girls in the achievement tests was better than that of boys.

Source : An Evaluation of the *Shiksha Ghar* Programme under UP BEP, Jan Kalyan Ashram, Shahahanpur, 1998

Alternative Schooling in DPEP

Under DPEP-II the range of alternative models for education has been expanded to

Gender & Social Group Wise Enrolment in NFE Centres (November 1999)							
Boys	Girls	Total	SC	ST	OBC	Minority	General
669911	715600	1385511	354919	4528	465090	219727	341247

Source : Directorate of Non Formal Education, Government of UP, 1999.

Non Formal Education in UP BEP

As a part of its strategy of improving access to primary education, UP BEP had adopted a centre based approach, *Shiksha Ghar*, to reach out to the most under privileged children, in the age group 6-14 years, who were otherwise unable to access formal education. In this way, working children, children engaged in agricultural pursuits and domestic chores, drop outs and those who have not been able to enrol because of rigidities of school timings, got the opportunity to get educated. While the centres have successfully reached out to both boys and girls who were out of school, girls have benefited in a big way.

improve children's access to primary schools. Making a departure from a rigid centre-based approach, alternative schooling facilities that are more contextual, location specific and flexible – approaches that are most amenable to the particular situations of the target children – have been evolved. These have not only expanded reach to school less habitations; they also cater to the needs of various categories of children, particularly girls, who are out of school.

That the AS centres have been well received by the community and the children alike is evident from the number of functional centres and the number of children enrolled.

Enrolment in <i>Shiksha Ghars</i> run by UP BEP			
No. of Centres	Enrolment		
	Total	Boys	Girls
441	10,858	5307 (48.9%)	5551 (51.1%)

Source : UP BEP, State Project Office, 1999.

Enrolment in Alternative Schooling Centres in DPEP-II (1999-2000)			
No. of centres	Enrolment		
	Boys	Girls	Total
962	19,306 (52.5%)	17,479 (47.5%)	36,785

Of the many alternative schooling models being implemented in the State, there are a few like the *Bal Shala*, *Prehar Pathshala* and *Makhtabs/Madarassas* which particularly benefit girls.

Preparatory schools

Preparatory schools are started in villages (covered by the MCDA) where a number of children are found to be out of school in the age group of 6-9 years. It is expected that these children, with minimal efforts could be prepared for joining formal schools when admissions are open in the next academic session.



Preparatory schools

remain 'out of school' because of sibling care responsibilities.

Undaunted they worked

During a village meeting in Tiloyan Khurd Gram Sabha of Begumganj Nyaya Panchayat, in district Hardoi, it was decided to start a Bal Shala to harness the 6-9 year olds out of school so that they could be taken through preparatory classes for joining the formal school. A girl named Shama, volunteered to teach these children without any compensation for her services. The community readily agreed and after initial preparation, the Bal Shala started functioning. After two months the future of the Bal Shala became uncertain as Shama had to leave the village after her marriage. The issue was discussed at a WMG meeting and an appeal was made seeking the support of educated women of the village to continue the good work started.

Soon thereafter, two women, Deshpali and Ramdevi, came forward and took on the responsibility of running the Bal Shala. Once again, the children began their classes and majority of them are either back in school or have enrolled in the school for the first time.

Bal Shala

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. By combining two age sets under the same approach, it is expected to overcome the problem of child care faced by many girls who

Prehar Pathshala

Prehar Pathshala is a strategy 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. As this is the critical age when girls are withdrawn from school, it is important that they get an opportunity to educate themselves and even go back to school. A *Prehar Pathshala* can be started in a village if 15 girls in the age group of 9-14 years are willing to attend it. 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.

The unique feature of the *Prehar Pathshala* has 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 as 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.

Makhtabs/Madarassas

Strengthening of *Makhtabs/Madarassas* was designed to primarily benefit Muslim girls who comprise a large portion of the children out of school. Community preference to educate their girls in institutions of religious learning is quite



Maktab in Hardoi

evident. This has been one of the main reasons that have kept them out of formal education. The objective is to introduce the formal curriculum, provide teachers and encourage girls to participate in formal education, within the madarssa environment.

Children who are already coming to the *maktabs/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 *maktabs/madarassas*.

Camps

Short and long term camps have sought to mainstream out of school children, particularly girls, into formal schools by providing bridge courses. The experience in Lalitpur district has pointed out the relevance of such camps where 75 children attended a three months course and mainstreamed thereafter.

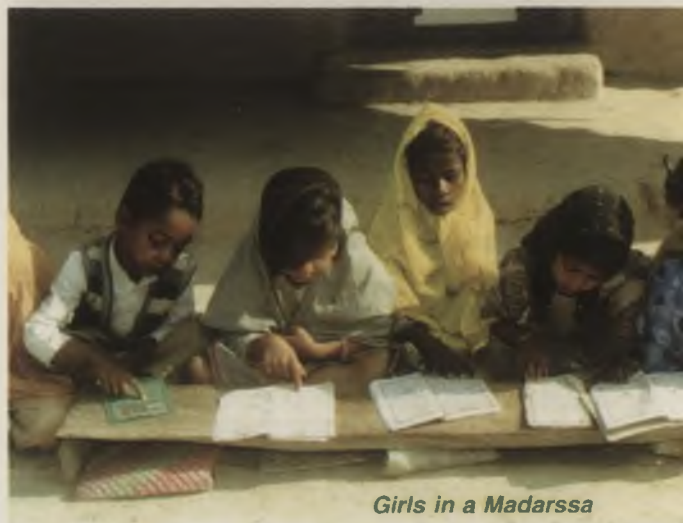
Multi Grade Schools for Scattered Habitations

A large number of scattered habitations do not allow for opening of a new primary school as per norms. An alternative model has been envisaged for such habitations which provides for one instructor. Sixty such alternative schools

in the remote areas of two DPEP districts i.e. Sonebhadra and Lakhimpur Kheri have been established. Using the techniques of multigrade teaching, supported by the use of self learning materials and a process of continuous evaluation at these centres has enabled the learners to learn at their own pace

Alternative Schooling for Working Children

Moradabad and Firozabad districts have been providing an opportunity to working children to access primary education in a flexible manner. An overwhelming response has been received from the community in grounding these centres. Support has been received from an active Resource Group at the state level and a network of NGOs, within and outside the State, in setting up these centres and training the instructors. Firozabad district prepared a detailed plan for opening of centres in the city areas, starting with areas where SC and Muslim populations are in a majority. For rapid implementation of the programme "Mohalla Committees", "Nagar Committees", and "District Committees" have been constituted from amongst the local community to guide programme interventions and mobilize parental participation. Two social animators for each ward are being provided to work for environment building, identification of children and survey work so as to make contact with the parents of out of school children and motivate them to send their children to school.



Girls in a Madarssa

(vi) Early childhood care & education

AIMS

- Frees girls from sibling care responsibilities and enables them to attend school regularly
- Facilitates school readiness among pre-school age children.

STRATEGIES

- Convergence mode - strengthening ECE in ICDS, the larger national programme, through training, material support, synchronization of timings of *Anganwadi Centres* and Primary Schools

IMPACT

- Children's enrolment in primary grades positively influences transition of children from ECCE to Primary School
- Synchronized timings, a fillip to girls' attendance in Primary School
- Increased confidence and participation levels in activities; improved personal grooming
- Positive change evident from community involvement and demand for new centres.

Early Childhood Care & Education

The acknowledged relevance of ECE towards achieving the goals of UEE are two fold in UPBEP and DPEP. Firstly it frees girls from sibling care responsibilities and enables them to attend school regularly and secondly, it also facilitates school readiness among pre school age children.

Universalising elementary education in the State with a focus on quality improvement prompted UP BEP to launch the Shishu Shiksha Kendra Scheme to provide effective ECCE services. As ECCE is provided primarily through the ICDS, the project interventions in this area are essentially in the convergence mode. The strategy is to work through existing ICDS centres. Blocks with low female literacy rates and large number of out of school girls, are targeted through this intervention. Proximity of the *Anganwadi Centres* to the Primary School and the predominance of SC/ST and minority children have been the other considerations in the selection process.



Selection of the centres is done in consultation with the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Uttar Pradesh. The training module that is used for training the ICDS functionaries is also developed jointly by the project and the concerned department.

The convergence approach eliminates the duplication of services and at the same time is a cost effective means to strengthen the pre school component of the ICDS. The projects have been committed to provide training inputs and material support to strengthen the ECE component of the ICDS centres.

1200 SSK through convergence and another 50 in a non ICDS block of Sitapur district run by an NGO (Society for Action, Vision and Entrepreneurship) are operational in UPBEP. 1050 centres under DPEP-II were operationalised in the first year and the numbers grow with each annual expansion. Another 4765 Anganwadi Centres are to be covered by the same strategy in DPEP III.

The main features of the ECCE initiative are :

- synchronise timings of the SSK with that of the primary school, so that these centres run for an additional two hours to free older siblings, particularly girls, of child care responsibilities and enable them to remain in school
- relocate the ICDS centres in the proximity of the primary school
- encourage the practice of play way method to provide children an appropriate environment for development.

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The project provides the following as additionality to an existing ICDS centre :

- i. honorarium to the Anganwadi Worker and Helper to compensate for the extended timings
- ii. supplementary training in pre-school education to the ICDS functionaries using a two level cascade training design. The orientation training and the annual refresher training is imparted over seven days in a year
- iii. play material for children in the centres
- iv. a non-recurring grant of Rs. 5000.00 is provided to each centre for purchase of equipment, toys, games and teaching material. Rs.1500/= as annual recurring grant is given to each centre for meeting contingency expenditure.
- v. Strengthening of the monitoring aspect with respect to the pre-school component of ICDS. An active role by the Village Education Committee and the head teachers is played in this context.

Special structural arrangements have been made to establish effective operational linkages between the ECCE centres and grassroots bodies such as VEC, MTA, Mothers' Groups and WMG. Linkages of this nature have enabled collective addressal of issues in ECCE in a spirit of ownership. On the ground, the grassroots bodies have not only been associated with the process of monitoring the functioning of the centres, but have also facilitated the process of awareness building and motivation for community participation in ECCE.

A common monitoring format has been developed and is in use by the *Anganwadi* workers, NPRCC and the district coordinator for Girls' Education. They provide monthly details from field observations and interactions along the following parameters :

- adequacy, suitability and utilisation of inputs
- effectiveness of programme execution
- visible achievements in the light of expected outcomes



Pre-school education..... ECCE centre

- identification of constraints and gaps
- indication of course corrections and modifications taken up

The implementation strategy has the sustainability factor built into it through convergence. The selected centres will continue to be run by the line department without any disruption. The added advantage will be that of greater community awareness and support around these centres which has been possible to achieve through the initiative of the two education programmes, viz. UP BEP and DPEP.

An evaluation of SSKs by NCERT found that children from SSKs were better groomed, disciplined, participated in more activities and were more confident. The workers and community members did report a positive impact of these centres, particularly after they were shifted to the primary school premises, on the enrolment and attendance rates of both boys and girls. A general feedback was that the extension of timings had facilitated girls' enrolment and participation. In one of the districts, elder girls were reported to have gained the most from this intervention. Further, with regard to retention, the regularity of children attending primary grades has received a boost.

In Nainital, it was found that the extended timings best impacted on the enrolment and retention of girls in primary schools where the centres are located in the primary schools. In some places, VEC members reported that where there were 60% children not coming to school earlier, the enrolment has gone up to 85% after the opening of SSKs.

Source : Shishu Shiksha Kendras, An UP Basic Education Project Initiative, NCERT, 1998.

The 50 ECCE centres being run by an NGO, SAVE, in Sitapur district, have clearly shown that ECE can be successful even without nutritional inputs. SAVE managed centres are sited within one kilometre of the primary school.

Castewise and Sexwise Classification of Children from SAVE Centres Enrolled in Primary Schools

Category of Child	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
General	118	142	108	100	113	113
SC	111	99	94	102	81	98
OBC	173	127	134	158	103	134
Total	402	368	336	360	297	345

The year wise transition of children from those *Anganwadi* Centres covered (strengthened) by UP BEP, to Class I in the formal schools, has been captured in eight of the districts (Allahabad, Auriya, Etawah, Hathras, Nainital, Kaushambhi, Pauri Garhwal, Varanasi and Chandauli) covered by the project. Details are as given below :

Year wise Transition to Class I from Anganwadi Centres

Total		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Centres in 8 Districts 510	Boys	1265	2143	2652	2023
	Girls	1220	2030	2570	2321
	Total	2485	4173	5222	4344

During the four years of implementation 16,224 children have enrolled in the primary schools from the Anganwadi centres.



(vii) Quality Improvement Programme

The Baseline Learner Achievement Surveys conducted under the UP BEP and DPEP revealed the low achievement levels of children in primary grades. Though there was no significant disparity in the levels of learning achievement among boys and girls, girls seemed to be poorer in mathematics. The thrust of quality improvement in the project has been on a systematic revision of the curriculum, instructional materials and teacher training methodologies so as to remove gender bias and help create a positive image of women and girls in society.

Elimination of Gender Bias in Textbooks

Textbooks can influence children in the way

they think, perceive, respond and eventually determine their attitudes as adults. It is imperative that elimination of gender bias has to be carefully addressed in textbooks.

An independent study undertaken on the textbooks of primary schools in UP with special reference to gender stereotyping examined textbooks of the pre UP BEP era as well as those developed under BEP, with a focus on

- themes with male and female characters and other non human related themes
- illustrations and visuals.

Many insights were provided by this study which formed the basis for developing gender neutral textbooks under DPEP – II.

Proportion of Female Centred Themes in Textbooks

Class	Person Related Themes				Other Themes	Total
	Male Centred	Female Centred	Male/ Female Centred	Total		
I	10 (41.7%)	NIL	11(45.8%)	21	3 (12.5%)	24
II	9 (37.5%)	1(4.2%)	6 (25%)	16	8 (33.3%)	24
III	7 (29.2%)	2 (8.3%)	3 (12.5%)	12	12 (50%)	24
IV	11 (44%)	2 (8%)	NIL	13	12 (48%)	25
V	8 (32%)	2 (8%)	4 (16%)	14	11 (44%)	25
Total	45 (36.9%)	7 (5.7%)	24(19.7%)	76	46 (37.7%)	122

Proportion of Female Centred Illustrations in Textbooks

Class	Male Centred	Female Centred	Male/ Female Centred	Neutral	Total
I	49 (14.6%)	14 (4.2%)	19 (5.7%)	254 (75.6%)	336
II	36 (39.1%)	4 (4.4%)	21 (22.8%)	31 (30.7%)	92
III	18 (34.7%)	4 (7.7%)	19 (36.5%)	11 (21.1%)	52
IV	13 (50%)	2 (7.7%)	4 (15.4%)	7 (26.9%)	26
V	7 (53.8%)	2 (15.4%)	3 (23.1%)	1 (7.7%)	13

Both in the context of themes and illustrations, there is a definite skew in favour of the male centred ones. The other category of themes and illustrations seemed to have dominated across the textbooks. With these two distinct dominant strains, the female centred themes and illustrations are severely outnumbered.

A significant finding has been that lessons are not just male centred, but they reinforce traditional sex stereotypes. Such textbooks will perpetuate stereotypical images of women and promoting anti-women prejudices. E.g., there are lessons which show women and men performing the conventional role of housewife and breadwinner, respectively. Further, there are typical descriptions of women as beautiful, loving, modest, affectionate, religious, vulnerable, weak, superstitious, manipulative, soft spoken, while men are depicted as strong, brave, courageous, intelligent, cool headed. It is also important to note that bias in otherwise neutral lessons are also to be found, e.g., a lesson on the Dudhwa National Park is based on a conversation between father and son, which has a strong gender bias. The conversation could well have been between father and daughter or mother and son or mother and daughter. (Pallavi Bhatnagar & Rakesh Chandra, *Towards Becoming: A Psycho – Axiological Study of the Textbooks of Primary Schools in UP with Special reference to Gender Stereotyping*, Lucknow, 1998.)

A State Resource Group was constituted for the purpose of revising the textbooks. This group not only had the representation of practitioners, it was ensured that female teachers were adequately represented. District level coordinators for Girls' Education and representatives of Mahila Samakhyas were also members of this group. Two steps were taken to ensure elimination of gender bias in the textbooks.

A checklist of 'Dos' and 'Dont's' was provided to textbook writers and illustrators. This checklist cautioned them on the broad issues of content and illustration that must be consciously regarded to ensure bias free textbooks.

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.

A provision of reviewing the manuscript at various stages by experts drawn from different institutions and agencies was an integral part of the whole process. The research backed rigorous process adopted for textbook development in DPEP – II has borne positive results. Caution has been taken to maintain a balance in the male and female centredness of themes and illustrations in the new textbooks developed.

Pedagogical Improvement

- **Process of pedagogical renewal**
- **Decentralised academic resource structures**
- **Teacher empowerment**

Impact

- Gender biases removed from text books-classes I-III
- Supplementary materials on women's issues/achievements
- Teacher training modules gender sensitive/attitudinal issues
- BRC & CRC to follow up
- Provision of free text books & other educational materials for girls

Learning levels of girls improving

Gender sensitization

Integration of Gender Perspective in Teacher Training Programme

Gender sensitization of teachers in the UP BEP and DPEP districts has been targeted in the general training module for head teachers and teachers.

The new textbooks are gender sensitive and care has been taken to include greater representation of girls in terms of numbers as well as the range of activities they are shown to pursue. They have been depicted as articulate, curious and active individuals rather than in docile servile roles. The achievements of women in various areas have been shown as inspiring role models. The male stereotype has been made positive by showing them as concerned and sharing individuals rather than showing them in drastically opposite roles. To cite an example, all the Class II textbooks have an opening page for the child to write the names of her/ his family members including her/ his mother.



Textbooks with a difference

Class II

- Attempts have been made to project mothers as knowledgeable persons who are interested in their children's activities at school. In the EVS book, the chapter Nanha Chand (Little Moon), a mother is shown teaching her child about the moon. So also, in the language textbook, the chapter on 'Teachings of Gandhiji', has shown him practicing all of what he learnt from his mother as he had great respect for what she taught him.
- Mothers not confined to the four walls of their homes any more; fathers assuming a role within the home : There is a lesson 'Mera Ghar' (My Home) wherein subtle shifts in gender stereotyped roles has been attempted. The mother is shown to be working at the literacy centre and the father has been shown as sharing the responsibility of household chores.

Class III

- The story line in the chapter titled 'Children of Dumduma Village' centres around a girl who takes on the leadership role in getting the children together to clean their village.

Class IV

- The lesson 'Seema Caught in the Flood' unravels how Seema uses her presence of mind in an adverse situation and overcomes the threat posed by flood waters.

Class V

- In the chapter "Mahima Chali Shaher" (Mahima Goes to the Town), Mahima's interest in science, technology and modern devices is highlighted by her choice of purchasing a calculator rather than a doll.
- No longer the exclusive domain of men : The chapter 'World of Space', has Valentina Tereshkova - the first female astronaut – as the key character. Through a story as this, the entry of women into a profession that has always been considered a male prerogative, has been introduced and children's acceptance of women in diverse roles and professions is likely to expand.

Free Textbook Distribution to Girls

Free textbooks are distributed to all girls and SC/ST children in the primary schools of DPEP districts. In 18 of the DPEP-II districts, 27,63,606 free textbooks have been distributed to girls in one year. In addition 38 DPEP III districts will also benefit from this provision from 2000.

Indra Dhanush : The BEP Experience

The supplementary reading material, Indra Dhanush, developed for Classes I to V, under BEP is being used by DPEP – II. These materials have a strong gender element and there are several examples one could cite. Clear messages encouraging girls to participate in

primary education, their mobility and participation in non-traditional pursuits are very subtly woven in the text and illustrations.

Illustration from
Indradhanush



Indra Dhanush I

- *There is the story titled Mamta Ka Chhata (Mamta's Umbrella). Mamta, a little girl, is shown as going to school regularly – even though it may be raining – because she has her own umbrella. The 'accepted' practice would be to detain the girl on rainy days and send the boy with an umbrella to school – it is quite unusual for a girl to have her own umbrella.*

Indra Dhanush II

- *The cover of this volume has a picture of Nanoo, who is the central character in the first story. She is projected to be a regular school going child, who is not bound by domestic chores and is also allowed free time to play with her pet puppy, Pintoo.*
- *In the story, Gopal Ki Yatra (Gopal's Journey), Usha, a young girl takes her brother to school on her bicycle.*

Indra Dhanush III

- *This volume carries stories of characters like Maya Didi and Kamla. The former, a lady teacher, is a role model for her students Salma, Ratna and David while Kamla is a brave girl in the story 'Lion's Justice'. Efforts have been made to project a joyful school environment with active participation of girls in the classroom and in various co-curricular activities.*
- *In the story 'Television', mother and daughter are shown watching the television instead of showing them as preoccupied with household chores. Care has been taken to have a female news reader in the same story.*
- *Reena, who is the key character of the story 'Grandmother's Coins', is yet again a regular student. She learns the concept of money from her grandmother which sends a positive message that women have knowledge to share and also have control over money.*

Besides these, Workbook II on Mathematics, has consciously tried to demolish the pre conceived notion that girls' are weak in mathematics. The whole workbook is built around Chutki, a little girl, who is innovative, logical and evinces interest in mathematical operations.

Gender Sensitisation of Teachers

Integration of Gender Perspective in the Teacher Training Programme

Over one lakh teachers are trained in the project districts on an annual basis. Similarly, all district and block level educational functionaries are provided inputs for gender sensitisation on a recursive basis so as to orient them for supervision of classrooms and teaching practices which promote the girl child.

Gender sensitisation of teachers in UP BEP and DPEP has been integrated in the teacher training modules developed for in-service training of Head Teachers and teachers.

The module, *Shikshakodaya*, for the first round of teacher training in DPEP – II has devoted a whole session, covering five topics, on the issue of gender sensitisation. Different methods were used in transacting the topics; there were group activities individual exercises, games and discussions. The table below tries to explain the objectives of each topic and methodology used in transacting them.



Topic	Objective	Method
<p>1. What is education? Why is it necessary?</p> <p>Time : 30 mins.</p>	<p>To understand prevalent views about education in society</p>	<p>The participants are split into five groups. Each group is given the task of deliberating on the possible value attached to education by families of different socio-economic backgrounds viz.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those deprived of basic needs in life • deprived families engaged primarily in the agricultural sector • those employed in the service sector • affluent families <p>2. One of the groups looks at the family's attitude towards an educated daughter in law.</p> <p>After the groups discuss the issues, group presentations are made, followed by discussions among all the participants.</p>
<p>2. Exercise on gender bias.</p> <p>Time : 30 mins.</p>	<p>To sensitise participants about the status of women.</p>	<p>The methodology adopted in conducting the exercise is described below :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each participant is given a blank sheet of paper for furnishing the following information : <p>Name :</p> <p>Son/daughter of :</p> <p>Address :</p> <p>Names of the last 3 visitors to his/her home :</p> <p>They are then asked to write the name and draw the picture of a teacher, doctor, District Magistrate or any renowned sportsman.</p> <p>The information coming from the participants upon analysis reveals that only father's name is provided against son/daughter of. Most of the names and pictures, of persons in various occupations, are of men even though women have excelled in the fields of education, medicine, sports, et al. These are presented to the participants to highlight the evident bias in their responses. Discussions follow on recognition of personal gender bias and how not to be influenced by them in performing our roles.</p>
<p>3. Gender sensitisation using the bottle activity</p>	<p>To change the conventional way of thinking among the participants and to, to build a conducive environment for the development of women's overall personality.</p>	<p>Three bottles are placed in a row, at a distance of one foot between them. Three participants are called upon to jump over the three bottles in a row. While doing so, they were cautioned to jump over the bottles and over their sides. The participants are made to repeat this three times each with their eyes open and later blind folded. They are positioned appropriately to jump over the bottles. But, this time the bottles are removed and the blind folded participants asked to jump. They do so, without realizing that the situation is different; there are no bottles any more. After this they are asked about their experience of jumping over the bottles under different conditions. Obviously they do not point out any difference.</p> <p>This activity seeks to make the point that we tend to get so conditioned to certain things that we do no question them and carry on accepting or practicing them as always. We</p>

Topic	Objective	Method
		are not sensitive enough to changes that may have taken place. Our acceptance of superstitions and many stereotypical notions can be explained in the same way. We behave like the blindfolded participants; we shut a blind eye.
4. Group discussion on the status of women.	To make participants aware of women's actual life situations in various age groups.	The participants are divided into four groups and asked to discuss the real life situation of women in one of the four stages in their life, which is defined in terms of age. The age groups given are : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 to 10 years • 11 to 18 years • 19 to 45 years • 46 until death After the discussion, the groups' views are presented. This paves the way for further emphasising the plight of women throughout their lives and how their lives can be bettered with a sensitive approach.
5. Importance of educating girl children and primary education	To motivate the participants to ensure equal opportunities to girl children in the area of primary education	A discussion about the significance of primary education for girl children is carried out. The discussion tries to create an awareness about the benefits of primary education for the girl children.

The second round of teachers training based on *Sabal* also covers issues that have a bearing on the girl child and her learning in the school environment.

A whole lot of messages get transmitted to children through the environment of the school and behaviour, attitude, expressions and language of the teacher. Though the teacher may not be conscious of these messages being picked up, they often leave a lasting impression on the minds of the children, with a possibility of affecting their overall personality. In view of this, a chapter 'Inadvertent Messages' in one section of the IInd round of Teacher Training package has been specially designed. Various situations have been created for the participants to assess the 'damage' they could do to the overall personality development of the children by making those statements and specifically the signals of bias against girls which emanate in classroom situations.



No more segregation...
sitting together

Undesirable Signals

Case 1: *In this classroom, girls and boys have been made to sit apart. The artificial separation at school strikes the children, as no such segregation is practised in their village or home where they are allowed to mix freely and play together. They are consequently, bothered by the question as to why the massabh (teacher) seats boys and girls separately in class.*

Case 2: In this school, the class monitors of all classes happen to be boys. The girls also want to become monitors to shoulder responsibilities in the classroom just like the boys do, but the teacher has little faith in their capacities and capabilities and cares little for their feelings.

Case 3: This teacher is recognised for his grasp over mathematics and the ability to teach the subject. But he does not consider girls fit for learning the intricacies of mathematics. Whenever a girl makes a mistake, he is prompt to point out "tum to ladki ho, ganith tumhare bas ka nahin hai; waise bhi ganith ladkiyon ka vishay hai hi nahin" (You are a girl, mathematics is not your cup of tea; as such mathematics is not a subject for girls.) Remarks of this nature make the girls hang their heads in despair. During this whole episode, the teacher does not have the slightest inkling that his negative comment and biased perception lend in developing a feeling of despair, worthlessness and self-rejection in the tender minds of girl children.

Case 4: Not only the behaviour of the teacher in classroom, but the textbooks and other supplementary materials used during classroom transaction also carry and transmit unwanted and undesirable messages to children. E.g., the pictures in our textbooks show girls primarily in traditional or conventional roles like sweeping the floor, cooking, caring for younger children, etc.

Case 5: By making girls sit with academically weaker children at the back and treats them as non-entities in the classroom, the teacher instead of empathising with them, creates a situation that further reduces the pace of their learning and also discourages them to learn. This issue has been addressed by raising the issue of teachers' conscious or subconscious gender bias in their behaviour which can impede learning among girls.

Case 6: Efforts have been made to install the practice of having common classroom activities for boys and girls. Their active involvement is ensured in all the activities so that they grow up in surroundings that encourage full participation in a spirit of healthy competition. Care is to be taken to address them as bache (children) rather than as ladke (boys) or ladkiya (girls), as was the earlier practice, to create a gender neutral environment in the classroom – one in which no child feels discriminated against or neglected.



MCDA Clusters

Teacher sensitisation is deemed to be an essential ingredient of the model cluster approach for girls' education. A teacher sensitisation package including materials/handbook are used. The teacher sensitisation package is participatory in nature. Teachers are familiarised with the objectives of the MCDA and other conceptual details. They are presented the overall educational situation of the concerned cluster and selected villages. The progress made is also shared with them to motivate them to play a supportive role in the process of universalisation of primary education.

Content of the initial package

1. What are the objectives of DPEP and what are we trying to achieve in the realm of girls' education through this programme?
2. What is the model cluster approach for girls' education? What are we trying to achieve by adopting this approach?
3. What is the situation of girls' in the family, society and school? Why are girls not actively participating in primary education?
4. Is it possible to ensure improved participation of girls in primary education in your village? What all can be done? Who will do what?
5. What will our school look like once girls are provided a congenial environment in the school/classroom? As a consequence of this what will be the educational status of girls in the concerned village? How are we going to continue the momentum generated through this approach?
6. What can be done to strengthen the school/teacher community ties? How is this going to help in achieving our goals? what are the ways in which we can bring about such ties?
7. The expected role of the teacher in bettering girls' participation in primary education vis-a-vis the prevalent situation of girls in the concerned village and the ultimate objective of UPE.

Content of the handbook

1. Some educational data on girls' education/women's literacy in the district/block concerned
2. Findings of the house to house survey in the



cluster/village along with an analysis of the data

3. Write up on gender issues
4. What a teacher can do in the school/classroom to provide a supportive environment to girls for encouraging their active participation in primary education
5. What is to be avoided by the teacher
6. How the community and school/teacher can work together in improving the participation of girls in primary education
7. Solving local specific problems of girls that keep them away from school or lead to their withdrawal from school.

With progress in the clusters covered by the MCDA, new issues emerge and call for attention. These become the focus of the subsequent teacher sensitisation efforts. In the clusters, the constant support of teachers is vital; this makes it imperative to keep them dated on achievements, progress, failures and evolve their role in association with other players, in the new context.

The USAID Experience in Sitapur

A special programme for girls' education sponsored by USAID was launched in two blocks of Raebareli district in 1997. The programme developed special strategies for gender sensitisation of teachers through a gender sensitisation module and a gender handbook for teachers. The UP BEP picked up this experience



Opportunity to have more fun in schools

and field trialled the package in Kasmanda block of Sitapur district in 1998. The response was very positive from the teachers and the cluster/block resource centre coordinators. The feedback is being incorporated in a revised version of the package which is to be applied on a large scale in UP.

Impact on Classroom Processes

Changes have been observed in teacher training and supervision of classroom activities and student achievement levels in the Mid Term Assessment Study carried out in UP BEP districts in 1996. Some of the significant changes are mentioned below.

Teacher Training and supervision

- 95 percent of the teachers have received in-service training
- 60-90 percent of teachers reported making

and using teaching aids

- 60-70 percent teachers were receiving assistance from school heads and 30-55 percent from cluster coordinators

Classroom activities

A wider variety of activities are now undertaken in the classroom. Children get the opportunity to read aloud in the classroom, take dictation and are given home assignments. Correction of work by teachers is also regular.

Achievement levels

Composite mean scores in language in Class I showed increase from the baseline surveys. Similarly mean achievement in Maths in project districts was higher than the control districts.

In half of the districts covered, the mean achievement of students of Class V has shown

improvement in language as well as in mathematics.

A classroom observation study carried out by SIEMAT in 1999 has made observations about the teachers' attitude and classroom environment, which have a bearing on girls' education. The study included four BEP districts and two non-project districts in order to assess the differences/changes in the project districts.

Teachers' Attitude

Teachers were observed during class whether they paid special attention to particular categories of children. The findings about special attention to girls were as follows :

- Maximum attention was paid by the teachers to the low achievers and girls. While achievement has always been a concern of the teachers the girls getting an equal amount of attention is quite heartening. The level of teacher sensitivity and commitment in this regard shows a marked difference in both categories of districts studied. The instances of teachers paying special attention to children who needed it, is higher in the BEP districts as compared to the non-BEP districts.

Classroom Environment

In the BEP districts 80% schools had toilets for girls and 96% children had textbooks as

compared to only 60% in non – project districts.

In the BEP districts the environment in the classroom was found to be friendly in 77% of the classrooms observed. Negligible aggressive behaviour & special attention to disadvantaged sections was recorded. In the non-BEP districts, the scenario was somewhat different, where only 22.8% classrooms had a friendly environment.

Teacher Attendance

A study on teacher absenteeism conducted in Saharanpur in 1998, a BEP district and Meerut, a non project district, has revealed that teachers'



Individual enterprise impacting on learning experience

Shri Ashok Pandey, a primary school teacher in Janakpur Primary School, Parasar block, Gonda district, began feeling the need of improvising learning material. He wanted to make learning an interesting experience for the children which will help retain them in school. He discussed the matter in one of the VEC meetings, where he was encouraged to go ahead with his venture. The village Pradhan contributed Rs 2000.00 towards translating his ideas into reality. Shri Pandey got support from the community in various ways and he developed some TLM which he began using in the school. The new TLM aroused great interest among the children and very soon the news reached the out of school children. This led to increase in enrolment.

Soon thereafter, an opportunity came by for Shri Pandey to participate in a district level TLM workshop. The Pradhan encouraged his participation and went to the extent of accompanying him to the venue of the workshop in his jeep. It so happened that Shri Pandey was awarded the first prize.

This is an example of how a trained VEC successfully supported a process of improving the quality of education being provided to the children by encouraging the teacher to develop effective TLMs.

attendance has been 78% in Saharanpur. The study also revealed that 89% teachers in Saharanpur district had received In-service Training while only 55% were trained in Meerut.

SIEMAT Initiatives

Regular programmes are conducted by the State Institute of Educational Management Training (SIEMAT), State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) as well as at decentralised levels through the District Institutes of Educational Training (DIET), Block Resource

Centres (BRC) and Cluster Resource Centres (NPRC) for head teachers and teachers by way of workshops, seminars, exposure visits, training and documentation of good practices.

Gender sensitisation programmes taken up by SIEMAT target participants from the districts and comprise ABSA, SDI, District Coordinators and DIET Lecturers.

SIEMAT has integrated gender sensitization modules in the regular training programmes for Project Staff and all Basic Shiksha Adhikaries (or Districts Education Officers).

Programmes on Gender Sensitisation at SIEMAT

Topic	Duration	Participants
Universalisation of Girls Education and Gender Sensitisation	5 days	ABSA, District Coordinators, DIET Lecturers, SDI
Community's role in promoting girls' education – achieving qualitative and quantitative goals	3 days	DIET Lecturers, Technical Assistants, District Coordinators
Training programme for the improvement of girls' education	3 days	DIET Lecturers, ABSA, SDI, District Coordinators
Training programme on gender sensitisation	4 days	DIET Lecturers, ABSA, District Coordinators

A few gender focused seminars and workshops have also been organised by SIEMAT. These include

Topic	Duration	Participants
<i>Balika Shiksha</i> (Girls' Education)	1 day	Members of judiciary, Principals, NGOs, local school teachers of minority institutions
Role of women in educational development under the local self government (in collaboration with UNSCAP)	2 days	Women mayors of South Asian countries
Women in Educational Management	2 days	SCERT, Mahila Samakhya, NGOs, college teachers, academicians and educationists
Universalisation of girls' education and gender sensitisation	3 days	SIEMAT faculty members and college teachers

GIRLS EDUCATION

1. Policy / Support

- Positive Interventionist role of State for girls education
- Education seen as an agent of social change
- Free education for all girls upto graduation
- Open examination for class V & VIII
- No detention upto Class II
- Gender coordinator in all DPEP districts appointed
- Active SRG Meets regularly

2. Community /

- Environment Building
- Meena campaigning
- VEC sensitization
- MTAs/PTAs
- Micro planning and
- Women's groups
- Mahila Samakhya
- Cluster Model appro



Girl Child

- Join Education
- Confidence
- Self-esteem

3. Teacher

- Female Teachers
- Para teachers
- Gender Sensitization thru training module
- Followup Attendance
- Close working with VEC, PTA / MTAs
- Removal of gender bias in revised textbook
- Sensitive Classroom Transactions
- Gender sensitive teacher guides

4. Incentive

- Mid-day Meals
- Scholarships to SC/ST/ Min
- Freedom from sibling care
- Free Text books distributio
- Augmenting infrastructure
- Alternative schooling
- Flexible school timings
- Innovative practices eg. E
- work experience, double s

(viii) Incentives

1. To encourage girls' participation in education the Government of Uttar Pradesh has made education free for females from primary level right through to graduation. Girls can also draw benefits of the existing scholarship and mid day meal schemes.
2. At the elementary level all children belonging to SC/ST and minorities are provided scholarships of Rs 25.00 and Rs. 40.00 per month at the primary and upper primary levels, respectively. Scholarships are also awarded to poor children and those children belonging to backward communities.
3. 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, which is the end of the upper primary cycle, so as to give them recognised certification at the time of appearing and the possibility of continuing in the educational mainstream.
4. The midday meal programme of the Government of India provides 3 Kg wheat to all children with 80% attendance in primary schools. It seeks to ensure retention of girls in particular, improve their nutritional standards and seeks to partially offset the opportunity cost of educating them.

Special Interventions

Pilot Project on Work Experience for girls

A pilot project of work experience was introduced in 24 upper primary schools, in as many blocks of 11 UP BEP districts.

The main aim of the project was to identify and ensure the effect of work experience on enrolment, retention and post scheme activities of girl students at the upper primary stage. More specifically the objective was to reduce the dropout rate of girls at the upper primary stage and develop vocational skills so that girls may enter into the world of work with better prospects. The total enrolment in three years of project implementation in different classes were as follows :

Year	Classes		
	VI	VII	VIII
First year	267	270	235
Second year	301	299	315
Third year	206	252	312

Source : C K Mishra, *Evaluation of the Pilot project of Work Experience for Girls of Upper Primary Schools in Uttar Pradesh, 1998.*

The girls were given the option to choose from the following programme of work experience :

- Hand Knitting
- Tailoring
- Mat working
- Chalk making
- Sapling nurseries
- File cover making
- School bag making

In addition, the options of agriculture and craft based programmes such as silk-worm rearing, mushroom cultivation, etc. were also provided.

The intervention successfully achieved its major goal of ensuring retention of girls and preventing them from dropping out. It is reported that not a single girl who participated in the pilot project, left school. "This is the most encouraging and important finding which supports the hypothesis that skill development programmes help in retention of girls at upper primary stage of education".

Further, there has been a positive impact of the project in skill development and attitudinal change among the girls. The girls are highly motivated and confident. Students' interest in work experience measured on a four point scale either scored "high" (44%) or "average" (56%). No one scored "low" or "no interest".

Double shift schools

On the basis of community's demand for separate schools for grown up girls double shifts are being run in select upper primary schools. The noon shift is catering to the needs of girls in the age group of 11-14 years. Learning from the experiences in UP BEP, double shifting as a strategy for improving access to schools, has been built into the plans for DPEP III.

Some Target Specific Initiatives

- *Providing escorts*
- *Providing special coaching*
- *Mobilising influential persons and religious leaders to promote girls' education*
- *Awards to schools achieving 100% enrolment and retention of girls*
- *Placement of community based volunteers in areas with low enrolment/retention of girls.*
- *Special training to women VEC/Panchayat members*
- *Special inputs for adolescent girls.*

Balika Shiksha Mission

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 Girl's Education Mission in 1999. The Mission covers both the

primary and upper primary levels of education. The Mission objectives are to:

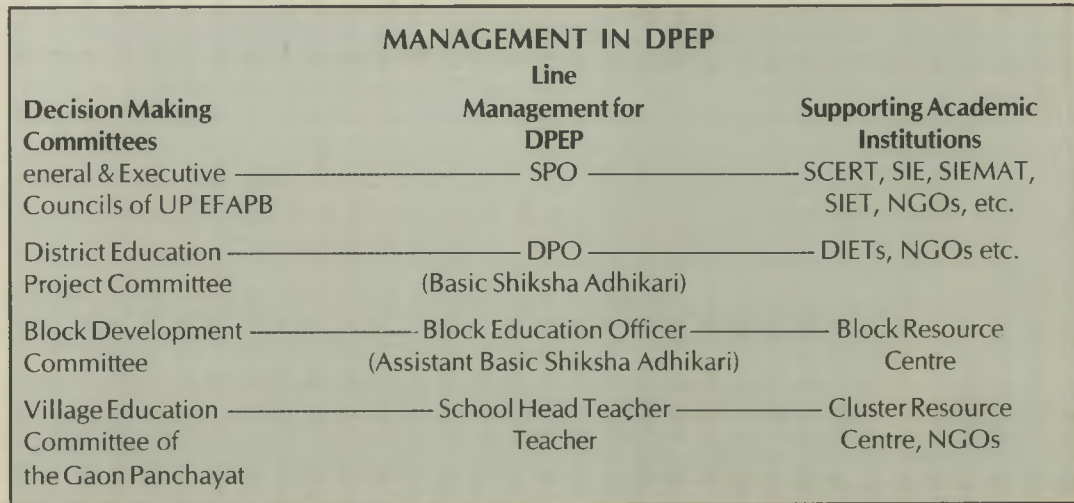
1. Provide educational access to all boys and girls in all unserved areas according to state norms.
2. Ensure 100% enrolment of girls (6-11 years age group) at primary level.
3. Ensure achievement of girls (age group 11-14 years) enrolment from 40% to 70% within the next three years at the upper primary level.
4. Ensure community participation to encourage girls' education.

The approach is holistic and envisages opening new primary/upper primary schools for girls, providing toilets and hand pumps in schools so that girls in the age group 6-11 year have access to primary education and they complete the primary education cycle. Local community will be involved to mediate parents to send their girl child to the schools regularly. The community will be sensitised for awareness building the creating congenial atmosphere.

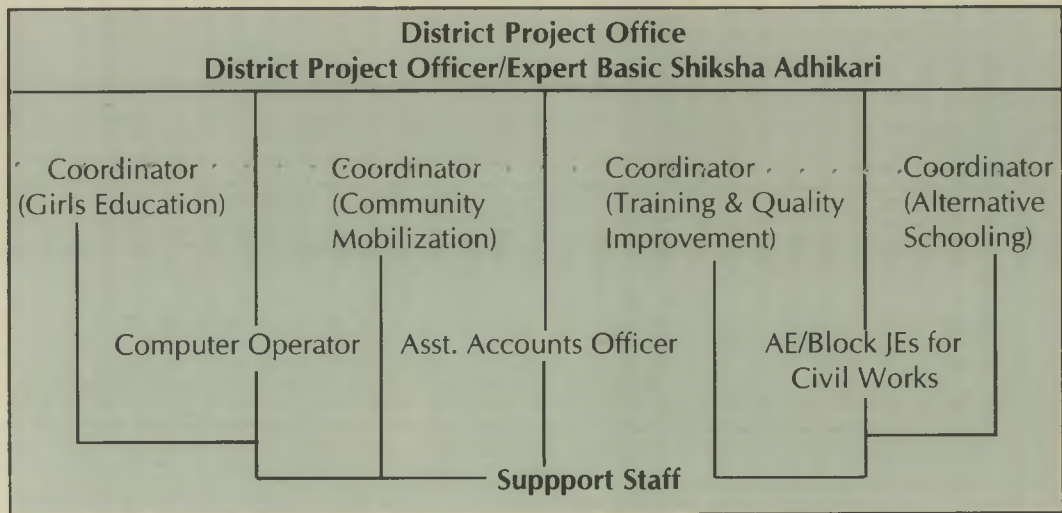


(ix) Gender Sensitive Management

The management structure at different levels is given in the diagram below :



The district office headed by the Expert Basic Shiksha Adhikari has four coordinators. One of them is the coordinator for girls' education.



The key figures in strategising for girls' education and implementation of activities in the project are the State/District Coordinators for Girls' Education at the State Project Office and District Project Office. They play the role of a catalyst and resource person in capacity building efforts, designing strategies to promote gender equality through integration of a gender perspective in all aspects of planning, monitoring, research, etc. Additionally they access external resources and information for

wider dissemination as 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 other functionaries in areas of planning, community mobilisation, pedagogy, alternative schooling etc. They are closely in touch with the VECs, PTAs, MTAs and women motivator groups at the village level.

The Role of District Girls Education Coordinators

Role	Responsibilities	Activities
Catalyst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design/recommend strategies to promote gender equality in DPEP • Co-ordination • Capacity Building • Capacity Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of gender concepts in all aspects Planning • Training • Implementation • Impact studies • Monitoring
Gender resource person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop resource base on gender • Access external sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection, documentation and dissemination of material • Sensitisation programmes for personnel
Follow up and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concurrent evaluation of all strategies and interventions • Flag potential trouble spots • Evolve methods to ensure gender integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review meetings • Briefing missions • Impact assessment • Conduct micro studies • Evolve gender checklists • Regular field visits

Planning and Management

- Gender perspective an integral part, from project preparation to implementation.
- Gender related activities (Direct & Indirect) clearly articulated in Annual Work Plans of State/Districts.
- Gender Co-ordinators appointed at State and District level.
- Constitution of Gender and ECE resource groups with extensive networking.
- Gender sensitization programmes for management structures.
- Representation of women mandatory in Village Education Committees.

Building Resource Group to advise and monitor

An active State Resource Group for Girls' Education and ECCE has been set up to bring in a network of experience from NGOs, women's groups, universities, other related government departments, field organisations and activists. Debate and cross sharing of experiences have

combined to evolve a holistic vision of issues of girls' education and implementation strategies. The State Resource Group has supported the programme in various ways, particularly in strengthening the gender perspective in the textbooks.

DIET, DPO & Educational Administrators

DIET faculty members, block & cluster officials are provided 5 days gender sensitisation training on a regular basis. These training programmes focus on :

- The conceptual framework of gender.
- Data on gender disparities.
- Analysis of causes pertaining to low enrolment and retention of girls'.
- Identification of discriminations.
- Local specific interventions, that can be developed
- Measures for qualitative improvement in girls education
- Community perception and mobilisation
- Attitudinal change

(x) Research & Evaluation

A number of exploratory and evaluative researches on educational issues have been sponsored by UP BEP and DPEP-II either directly or through SCERT and SIEMAT, Allahabad. Apart from this, gender issues have been an integral part of various other studies. These studies have helped in improving and redesigning initiatives for girls' education.

Studies on Gender Related Issues (Completed)

1. The comparison between formal and non-formal Education in Relation to Girls Education, Dr. Usha Srivastava, NFE Unit, SCERT, Lucknow.
2. A study on repetition and Dropout Among Minority Students, Dr. Rehana Tariq, Hamidia Girls Degree College, Allahabad.
3. Job Involvement and Problem of Female Teacher, Dr. Usha Gupta, Arya Kanya Degree College, Allahabad.
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8. A Study of Enrolment, Attendance and Retention in Primary Schools in Relation to Incentive Schemes, Dr. Sudha Malhotra.

Studies on Gender Related Issues (In progress)

1. Reflection on Attendance and Retention in General and of Girls in Particular.

Other Studies with a Component of Gender Related Issues

1. Sample Study of Dropout in Six BEP Districts of UP, SIEMAT, Allahabad, 1999.
2. A Study of Classroom Processes in EFA Supported and Non-EFA Districts of UP, SIEMAT, Allahabad (1998-99).

Monitoring and Evaluation

One of the major management tools available to DPEP is the Education Management Information System (EMIS) which provides school based information on an annual basis. This gender segregated database that is generated is available at decentralised levels, right up to the school. Gender focused information is available on enrolment, repetition, female teachers, distribution of textbooks, etc. Further analysis of the available data sheds light on girls in higher classes, the 9+ girls, SC/ST/OBC girls, schools without female teachers and girls' enrolment, etc. Such analysis facilitates responsive strategy formulation for the project and also impinges on policy issues.

Much of the information available is feeding into the formulation of Annual Work Plan and Budget. Information on availability of teachers in the schools informs project management decisions such as positioning of *Shiksha Mitras* (who are para teachers). The experience of using the EMIS and its usefulness as a management tool, has prompted the decision for universalisation of the system in the state of Uttar Pradesh.





Outcomes of interventions

Outcomes of interventions

Project interventions are guided, designed and driven by the objective of achieving set targets and goals. Thus, it becomes imperative to periodically assess the outcomes, even though it may not be possible to attribute particular outputs to specific inputs. In the context of the primary education projects under discussion, the two critical output indicators, viz., enrolment and dropout have been examined in the light of the baseline figures, gender, project districts and the State as a whole/non project districts.

Girls' Enrolment : the Changing Scenario

The implementation of UP BEP has shown marked improvement in the enrolment of girls in both the primary and upper primary levels when the figures for 1999-2000 are compared with that of 1991-92. The percentage increase in girls' enrolment has been very significant at both levels of elementary education. In fact, the manifold increase in girls' enrolment has contributed towards the achieved high levels of increase for all students.

Gender wise Enrolment in Primary & Upper Primary in UP BEP

Level	Students	Enrolment (in lakh)		% Increase in Enrolment
		1991-92	1999 - 2000	
Primary	Boys	17.44	26.42	51.5
	Girls	9.39	18.53	97.3
	Total	26.83	44.95	67.5
Upper Primary	Boys	6.60	10.42	57.8
	Girls	3.17	6.53	105.9
	Total	9.77	16.95	73.5

Source : Directorate of Basic Education, Government of UP

The overall GER shows remarkable improvement in the UP BEP districts and the GER of girls merit specific mention in this regard. It is also clear that GERs achieved have risen far beyond the set project targets for girls (24 percentage points), boys and all students (29 percentage points).

Improvement on GER for Girls, Boys and All Students in UP BEP

Students	GER (%)			Percentage point Increase in GER
	Project Baseline	Project Target	1999-2000	
All	66.0	78.0	107.0	41.0
Girls	50.0	71.0	95.0	45.0
Boys	82.0	85.0	115.4	33.4

Source : Directorate of Basic Education, Government of UP

The spurt in enrolment that has resulted in the UP BEP districts when compared with the GER of the State as a whole and the non-BEP districts, points out the level of improvement in the UP BEP

districts. As expected, the percentage increase has been highest in the project districts and the lowest in the non-project districts. The improvement in the project districts has contributed in recording the level of increase in the State as a whole. The comparative figures in this respect are presented in the table below.

Comparative Statement of Enrolment & GER in UP BEP & Non-BEP Districts

State and Districts	1996-97		1999-2000		% Increase 1999-2000
	Enrolment (In lakhs)	GER	Enrolment (In lakhs)	GER	
Project Districts	26.8	74	44.95	107.0	67.7
UP (State)*	148.2	81	211.57	100.4	42.8
Non-Project Districts	121.4	82	166.62	98.7	37.2

Source : Directorate of Basic Education, Government of UP

* Includes the UP BEP districts as well.

Enrolment in the DPEP districts also shows significant increase, especially in the case of girls, which is more than that of boys by 28.3 percentage points.

Increase in Enrolment in DPEP Districts

Students	Enrolment (in lakhs)		% increase
	1996-97	1999-2000	
Boys	26.67	29.42	10.3
Girls	16.73	23.18	38.6
Total	43.40	52.60	21.2

Source: Directorate of Basic Education, Government of UP

The increasing trends in enrolment in the DPEP – II districts have certainly impacted on the overall increase in enrolment across the State between 1996-97 and 1999-2000.

Comparative Statement of Enrolment & GER in DPEP and UP

State and Districts	1996-97		1999-2000		% Increase In Enrolment 1999-2000
	Enrolment (In lakhs)	GER	Enrolment (In lakhs)	GER	
Project districts					
Boys	26.67	96.2	29.42	109.4	10.3
Girls	16.73	85.4	23.18	99.7	38.6
Total	43.40	90.60	52.6	105.5	21.2
UP (State)*					
Boys	106.96	98.7	115.53	105.3	8.0
Girls	77.08	80.4	96.04	98.7	24.6
Total	184.04	90.1	211.57	100.4	15.0

* Includes the DPEP – II and UP BEP districts

Source: Directorate of Basic Education, Government of UP

The increase in children's enrolment in the primary stage has undoubtedly been impressive. But, the real test of any impact of interventions cannot be complete without taking stock of the impact on the socially most disadvantaged groups. In this context, the table below presents the

enrolment of Scheduled Caste children and children from Other Backward Castes during 1997-98 and 1999-2000.

Enrolment of SCs and OBCs in Uttar Pradesh (in lakhs)

Social Group	Category of Children	1997-98	1999-2000	% Increase
Scheduled Caste	Boys	23.17	27.86	20.2
	Girls	17.44	22.02	26.3
	Total	40.61	49.88	22.8
Other Backward Castes	Boys	29.18	34.30	17.5
	Girls	22.10	26.56	20.2
	Total	51.28	60.86	18.7

The increase, as evident from the table, has been substantial. It will be interesting to examine the extent of increase in enrolment among the same social groups in the project districts during the same period. The table below tries to capture this.

Enrolment of SCs and OBCs in Project Districts (in lakhs)

Social Group	Category of Children	1997-98	Enrolment 1999-2000	% Increase
Scheduled Caste	Boys	8.98	13.62	51.6
	Girls	7.29	10.53	44.4
	Total	16.27	24.15	48.4
Other Backward Castes	Boys	12.29	16.76	36.3
	Girls	9.09	12.67	39.3
	Total	21.38	29.43	37.6

The phenomenal surge in enrolment across the board that has been recorded in the last 5-6 years is bound to have an overwhelming implication for the literacy rates in the State. This stands authenticated by the NSSO survey conducted in 1997, according to which the increase in the literacy rates for male and female has been 13.27 and 15.69 percentage points, respectively. For the same period, the increase at the national level has been to the tune of 8.87 and 10.71 percentage points for male and female, respectively. This has undoubtedly been a period of transformation of the educational scenario in Uttar Pradesh and the State is gradually gaining ground in respect of literacy.

Literacy Rates (%) in Uttar Pradesh and India – 1991 & 1997

Year & Source	Uttar Pradesh			National		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Census 1991	55.73	25.31	41.6	64.13	39.29	52.2
NSSO Survey 1997	69.0	41	56	73	50	62
Increase	13.27	15.69	14.4	8.87	10.71	9.8

The intensive efforts over a year in the clusters covered by the MCDA, have made it possible to achieve universal enrolment in 69% of the Gram Panchayats.

- It is interesting that there is no marked gender difference in the enrolment of children in different types of schools.
- In Hardoi 4 out of 5 children in 6-11 age group were enrolled in schools and in Moradabad it was 3 out of 4.
- GER for Hardoi was 103 and for Moradabad 103.
- NER for Hardoi was 80 and for Moradabad 73.
- Enrolment in primary classes by different types of schools was 75-79% in government schools, 15-17% in private recognized schools and 6-8% in private unrecognized schools.
- SC's participate more in government schools than private schools.
- 75% of children attendance was found marginally lower in government schools than private schools.

Source : *Study on Participation of Children in Primary Education in Two Districts of UP, Development & Research Services, New Delhi, 1999.*

Declining Trends in Drop Out

When the two education projects took off, drop out rates were a matter of concern. During project implementation, various strategies were designed to lower the levels of drop out among children in primary schools. Sample studies have been conducted to ascertain the changes in the drop out rates among boys and girls and children from different social groups.

According to the *Sample Study of Dropout in Six BEP Districts of UP,*

1. The dropout rates in 1991 and 1998 have been as follows :

Category of Children	Dropout Rates (%)		
	1991	Target	1998
Boys	40	20	34.4
Girls	60	30	34.3
Total	50	25	35.0

Quite clearly,

- the dropout rate amongst girls has reduced very sharply in the BEP districts. It has come down by 42.8% in six years
- The gender gap in drop outs between girls and boys has been bridged.

Evidently, the girl child centered strategies of the UP BEP have contributed in overcoming the special disadvantages faced by girls in primary schooling.

2. the differential in dropouts by social group has been reduced to less than 5 percent

General	SC/ST	OBC
33.5	32.6	37.6

Strategies focused on the disadvantaged sections have also borne results as the drop out rates, among children of these social groups, have shown a sharp decline. Some parity in the drop out rates is now seen among children of different social backgrounds and the general category of children.

Source : *Sample Study of Drop Out in Six BEP Districts of UP, SIEMAT, Allahabad, 1999.*



Towards Zero Dropout in Select Villages

After almost four years of implementing the BEP, the problem of dropouts persisted to be a concern. To tackle this problem, a strategy was evolved, over four phases. As a first step it was decided to

- identify villages from each BEP district where the dropout rate was alarmingly high
- eradicate the problem of dropouts in four phases within a year
- declare the district as a 'dropout free district' after the problem has been effectively tackled
- The game plan was to work closely with teachers & the community whereby setting up a core team in the first phase was setup, with the purpose of :
 - identifying blocks and villages where dropout rates were high
 - identifying dropout children by conducting door to door surveys
- finding out the reasons that lead to children dropping out of school : in the second phase
- motivating the community : in the third phase
- getting the dropout children re-enrolled with the help of teachers
- achieving all the objectives of the three phases and formulation of future plans for sustaining the programme in the fourth phase.

The innovation was launched on August 15, 1998 in the BEP districts. As planned, a district level core team was set up comprising professionals from DIETs, Expert BSAs, BRC/NPRC Coordinators and members of VECs.

The core team selected ten villagers from each district, which were grouped into clusters. The door to door survey was conducted with the help of teachers and VEC members to identify the children who were drop outs. The coverage of the strategy was as indicated in the table :

Physical Coverage			Coverage of Children		
No. of Districts	No. of Blocks	No. of Villages	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total Total
12	24	120	1021	782	1803

The next task was to understand the causes for children dropping out of school. This was elicited through discussions at VEC meetings and personal contacts with parents. Children who had dropped out of school and those in school were also contacted to find out the reasons from their point of view. Once the information collection was over, reasons were collated as :

- children did not find studies interesting
- elder children had to take care of their younger siblings
- children were either busy with household work or were engaged in their families' traditional business
- indifferent attitude of parents and elders towards education
- lack of conducive learning environment in schools.

Armed with these leads, the following steps were initiated :

- the parents of children who are drop outs were motivated by the VEC to send their children back to school
- regular school going children were motivated to help the drop out children to re-join school
- special permission was granted to these children to go to school along with their younger siblings

Contd...

- mothers of these children were honoured on various occasions to make them feel that they were important for the school
- activity based and joyful teaching learning processes were emphasised in the schools

Intensive monitoring that was carried out to keep track of the above efforts revealed that about 85% of the drop out children had been enrolled in the school. Out of the total 1803 drop outs identified 1433 rejoined the school, 42 joined the NFE Centres and the remaining 328 children migrated out of the selected villages.

In order to sustain the effect of the 'drop out eradication programme', it has been ensured that effective and interesting teaching learning processes continue in the classrooms, so that children do not leave the school.

Seeing the outcomes, it is proposed to

- reinforce academic support to the school
- maintain contacts with the VEC, teachers and parents by participating in VEC meetings and parent teacher meetings, respectively
- honour the village which registers zero drop out rates
- maintain academic records of all students and present these records to their parents at parent teacher meetings.

Attendance

Children's attendance is closely associated with the issue of drop outs. The study of classroom processes by SIEMAT has looked into the issue of children's attendance and found a 79% attendance ratio in UP BEP districts. The study made the following observation about girls and SC girls in Class I and V :

	District	Girls (%)		SC/ST Girls (%)	
		Class I	Class V	Class I	Class V
BEP Districts	Gorakhpur	72.7	74.8	65.5	66.7
	Saharanpur	80.2	86.1	81.9	84.0
	Sitapur	72.0	69.3	67.2	63.9
	Varanasi	83.3	81.8	80.7	85.7
Non-BEP Districts	Bahraich	35.3	21.5	42.8	21.2
	Fatehpur	64.1	76.0	69.0	85.0

The differences in the attendance of girls in the two categories of districts is obvious.

A study conducted in two districts of DPEP – II has made the following observation about children's attendance at school : " The school attendance of children of primary classes is impressive. Over 75% of the children, both boys and girls – enrolled in different schools – attend classes regularly. The attendance rates are marginally lower in government schools, compared to private schools." (*Study on Participation of Children in Primary Education in Two Districts of UP*, Development & Research Services, New Delhi, 1999.)

Elaborating on this, the same study, shows the attendance patterns of boys and girls in both types of schools on different dates in the table below.

District : Hardoi

Attendance at Different points of Time	Government Schools		Private Recognised Schools		Private Unrecognised Schools	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
September 30, 1998	83.3	86.7	78.9	87.1	79.3	68.2
December 15, 1998	82.2	84.1	86.0	90.5	79.2	86.3
March, 1999 – date of survey	75.5	88.3	85.0	83.4	75.1	82.0

District : Moradabad

Attendance at Different points of Time	Government Schools		Private Recognised Schools		Private Unrecognised Schools	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
September 30, 1998	83.9	83.1	80.2	79.2	83.4	79.4
December 15, 1998	81.2	77.9	91.8	89.7	85.5	81.3
Date of survey	79.6	76.5	84.1	85.5	82.0	82.6

According to the table, it is clear that on all the three reference dates, the attendance rates were quite high. At any point of time, the average attendance was found to be at least 75%, in any type of school, among boys and girls. There are marginal differences noticed in the level of attendance of boys and girls. In the case of Hardoi, girls have in most instances, shown higher levels of attendance, while in Moradabad the reverse has been observed.

**Still further to go.....**

Valuable lessons have been learnt from the UP BEP experience. With respect to inputs, processes and outputs there are sufficient indications of success. It is amply evident that the programme has been on the right track and also that 'things can happen' even with the

numerous operational and situational constraints. These are facts DPEP recognises and in turn strategises to bring in interventions more effectively and in good time. This approach addresses both the 'soft' and 'hard' targets from the very beginning and augments the prospects of better results.

Abbreviation

ABSA	-	Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari
AS	-	Alternative Schooling
AW	-	Anganwadi worker
AWPB	-	Annual Work Plan & Budget
BRC	-	Block Resource Centre
BRG	-	Block Resource Group
BTC	-	Basic Teacher Training Centre
CRC	-	Cluster Resource Centre
DIET	-	District Institute of Educational Training
DPEP	-	District Primary Education Programme
DPO	-	District Project Office
DWCRA	-	Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas
EC	-	Executive Committee
ECE	-	Early Childhood Education
ECCE	-	Early Childhood Care & Education
EFA	-	Education For All
EMIS	-	Education Management & Information Systems
EVS	-	Environmental Studies
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Ratio
ICDS	-	Integrated Child Development Scheme
IDA	-	International Development Agency
MCDA	-	Model Cluster Development Scheme
MLL	-	Minimum Level of Learning
MTA	-	Mother Teacher Association
MS	-	Mahila Samakhya
MSK	-	Mahila Shikshan Kendras (Women Education Centres)
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPE	-	National Policy on Education
NSSO	-	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	-	Other Backward Castes
PMIS	-	Project Management Information System
PRA	-	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PS	-	Primary School
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Association
SAVE	-	Society Action for Vision and Enterprises
SC	-	Schedule Caste
SCERT	-	State Council for Educational Research & Training

SDI	-	Sub Deputy Inspector
SDM	-	Sub Divisional Magistrate
SIEMT	-	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SPO	-	State Project Office
SRG	-	State Resource Group
SSK	-	Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra (NGO)
ST	-	Schedule Tribe
TLM	-	Teaching Learning Material
UEE	-	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UP BEP	-	Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project
UP DESCO	-	Uttar Pradesh Development System Co-operation
UP DPEP	-	Uttar Pradesh District Primary Education Programme
UPE	-	Universalisation of Primary Education
UPEFAPB	-	Uttar Pradesh Education For All Project Board
VEC	-	Village Education Committee
WMG	-	Women Motivator Groups

Glossary

Anganwadi centres	-	Centre for integrated child development.
Aanganwadi worker	-	Worker for integrated child development centre.
Anudeshika	-	Instructor.
Balika Shikshan Mission	-	Girls Education Mission
Bal Kendra	-	An alternative learning centre for children run by Mahila Samakhya.
Bal Shala	-	An alternative learning centre for the age group of 3-11 years
Basic Shiksha Adhikari	-	District Primary Education Officer.
Buransh	-	A popular flower of UP hills
Hindola	-	Name given to alternative centre for children by Mahila Samakhya
Khuli Baithak	-	Open Meetings
Kishori Kendra	-	Learning centres for teenage girls run by Mahila Samakhya.
Kishori Sanghas	-	Collectives of adolescent girls.
Kishori Kendra	-	Teen ager's centre
Maa-beti Mela	-	Mother daughter Fair
Mahila Sanghs	-	Women's Collectives
Mahila Samakhya	-	Programme for women's empowerment and education.
Mahila Shikshan Kendra	-	Residential multidisciplinary education centres run by Mahila Samakhya
Maktab & Madarasa	-	Centres for religions learning in muslim communities.
Meena Campaign	-	Video materials used to mobilise community for girls education.
Multigrade Schools	-	An Alternative Module
Prabhat Pheris	-	Morning Marches
Prehar Pathshala	-	Alternative Schooling for girls of 9-14 age group
Preparatory Schools	-	Where children who are out of school in the age group of 6-9 years are prepared for joining formal schools.
Saheli	-	Friend & guide teacher in Mahila Samakhya.
Sahyogini	-	Facilitator over 10 villages in Mahila Samakhya Programme.
Scheduled Caste	-	Socially weaker sections of the society.
Shiksha Ghar	-	Non-formal education centre for age group of 6-14 years
Shiksha Mitra	-	Para Teachers
Thehrao Parikramas	-	Retention Marches
Udan Khatolas	-	Name given to Alternative centre for children by Mahila Samakhya
Women's Parliament	-	A mock Parliament held by women to resolve their issues.

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