

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME (DPEP)
TWENTIETH JOINT REVIEW MISSION
(29 November - 13 December, 2004)

Aide Memoire

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DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
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Aide Mémoire

1. Introduction

The District Primary Education Program (DPEP) was designed to help achieve the objective of Universal Primary Education (UPE) through developing and implementing a replicable, sustainable and cost-effective program in the selected districts. The specific objectives of DPEP are (i) to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5% (ii) to reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10% (iii) to raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured baseline levels and ensure achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children (iv) provide according to national norms, access for all children to primary education classes (I-V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education. The program also aims towards strengthening the capacity of national, state and district institutions and organizations in relation to planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

DPEP started in November 1994 in 42 districts in 7 states, and expanded in a phased manner to 242 (273 bifurcated districts) in 18 states. Since then the two multi-state DPEP I and DPEP II projects have closed. The currently ongoing DPEP projects which were reviewed in this 20th Joint Review Mission (JRM) are as follows: World Bank supported UPDPEPIII (UP, Uttaranchal); DPEPIII (Jharkhand, Bihar); Rajasthan I and II and APDPEP (Andhra Pradesh) under APERP; DFID supported DPEP projects in West Bengal, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh; UNICEF supported DPEPIII (Bihar and Jharkhand) and Government of Netherlands supported Gujarat (funds administered through the World Bank). These DPEP projects are at various stages of implementation and were reviewed from this perspective. DPEP projects are monitored twice a year by a Joint Review Mission (JRM), which has been led, in rotation in the past, by the Government of India (GOI), the World Bank (WB), the European Commission (EC) and the UK Department For International Development (DFID). The XXth JRM is being led by the World Bank.¹

The 20th JRM, building upon the findings of the previous two Missions, defined four main areas for focused review (i) Progress on Access—to include assessment of status of progress indicators viz. decline in numbers of out of school and drop outs, increase in enrolments and grade transition, both overall and from the perspective of social and gender equity (ii) progress on enhancing quality with equity and improved learning levels (iii) progress on enhancing institutional capacity and (iv) project implementation. The 20th JRM also had the objective of completing the Mid term review of the Rajasthan II. (The detailed TORs are appended with the aide memoire). The mission also reviewed progress on the specific recommendations of the 19th JRM. The Mission studied recent research and study reports and other relevant documents, held

¹ On behalf of the World Bank (WB) Venita Kaul led the 20th JRM which constituted the following twelve members Prema Clarke (WB) and Roger Cunningham (DFID) visited Jharkhand; N.K. Jangira, Nalin Jena (WB), C. Chandramohan (GoI) and Tara Srinivas (Unicef) visited Rajasthan; G.C. Upadhyay (GoI) and Deepa Sankar (WB) visited Gujarat; Lipika Nanda (DFID) and S.N. Methi (GoI) visited Andhra Pradesh and Venita Kaul (WB) and Y. Josephini (GoI) visited Uttaranchal.

consultations at the national, state district and sub-district levels, and observed classroom and other processes to arrive at conclusions on progress of the program in the last five months. The mission would like to place on record its deep appreciation of the cooperation and cordiality it received from the Department of Elementary Education, MHRD, Government of India, the Technical Support Group and the State Project Offices and their state and district teams.

2. Review of Progress on implementation of Recommendations of 19th JRM:

The 19th JRM had made 14 specific recommendations under the heads of Quality of Access, Quality of Learning and Quality of Implementation. The Action Taken Report (ATR) on each recommendation along with the Mission's observations is appended with the aide memoire. Two heartening aspects reported in the ATR are the communication from GOI to the states to articulate a vision for framing strategies for upgrading the EGS and Alternative schools to regular schools in the interest of equity. However, the Mission did not see much evidence of this in the states except Jharkhand and Rajasthan, and would like to continue to flag this as an issue for follow up. Another welcome development is the opening up of the possibility of filling of DIET vacancies, a concern highlighted by every preceding mission, through the revised Teacher Education Scheme. The process and criteria of recruitment followed by states would be an important factor in assuring the quality of support the DIETs will be able to give to the elementary education system.

3. Progress on Access

3.1 Enrolment: All states report increased primary school enrolments, principally driven by the opening of a range of alternative schools in un- or underserved habitations as well as the establishment of formal primary schools. Both Gujarat and Jharkhand now report all habitations being served by some form of school or centre in DPEP districts, and the remaining states are able to enumerate those still remaining to be covered. States report GERs in DPEP districts ranging from 94% (Rajasthan I) to 114% (AP). In States such as Rajasthan, where annual fluctuation is reported, there is a need to take a closer look at the basis on which figures are derived through careful checking of data collection and analysis. There remains an issue regarding under- and over-age enrolment and the effect this phenomena has on enrolment figures. The collection of HHS has enabled states to enumerate their out of school children. Data provided to the Mission indicates low residual numbers of children aged 6 to 11 not enrolled: an estimated 4.9% in Gujarat, 3% in AP and 1.4% in Jharkhand.

The drive to enroll children has been based on a range of strategies. All states are now adopting, in one form or another, the tried and trusted approaches of EGS and Bridge Courses, the latter now clearly proving to be one of the most effective approaches in reaching never enrolled children, especially girls. The mission once again witnessed the impact of these courses. States are also reporting progress in mainstreaming children once they exit their bridge courses, though numbers are variable. Amongst the new and innovative approaches witnessed by the present mission the *Toli Nayak* (group leader) scheme in Gujarat and Rajasthan and *Sakha-Sakhi* (friends) system in Rajasthan being used for advocacy and social mobilization deserves commendation, as does the sharing of private school facilities for afternoon schooling of slum children in urban areas of Jharkhand.

3.2 Under age enrolment / ECCE: Progress is reported in most states on resolving the issue of underaged children's enrolment in Grade 1. Greater collaboration between Department of Education and Department of Women and Child Departments have resulted in the

establishment of pre-school facilities in primary schools where child care programmes under ICDS have not been established. AP reports the opening of 11,558 *Shishu* classes, serving some 2.5 lakh children, and Gujarat, Jharkhand and Rajasthan all report similar establishment of facility in schools where ICDS has yet to reach. Some states also report convergence with schools where ICDS is operational with the location of centers within primary schools. The issue of sustainability of these initiatives after project closure is still an issue. In this context, Government of Uttaranchal's decision in principle to continue this convergence through State funds is commendable.

3.3 Equity: The strategies described above have clearly had an impact of the enrolment of special groups (ST, SC and OBC), disabled children and girls. Enrolment of ST and SC children in schools and alternative centres has clearly improved. SC enrolment has doubled in Jharkhand. Notwithstanding, ST and SC out of school and drop out rates, where reported, are greater for SC and ST, though gaps are closing. States are reporting on the percentage of SC and ST in the enrolled school population. This alone is unable to show progress on closing social gaps, and such information needs to be considered against 2001 census data to determine how percentage participation rates of these groups compare with the general population. States are also reporting a closing of the gender gap, typically now within one or two percentage points. Drop out figures are more worrying, showing higher rates for girls, typically around four to five percentage points above that for boys. Most states report that more needs to be done for disabled children.

3.4 Drop out, retention and completion: Whilst overall enrolment of children presents an encouraging picture, their retention and progress through the system remains a cause for concern. Drop-out rates remain high, though in all cases are reported to be falling, based on reported three year trends. There are clearly major differences in the way states are calculating drop out rates, depending on the source of data which is either HHS or EMIS/DISE. Uttaranchal and Gujarat report drop out at 2.8% and 5% respectively, probably based on HHS data. In contrast Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan report drop out rates of 42% and 54% respectively. This would seem to be based on a simple formula comparing DISE / EMIS figures from Grade I (1999 / 2000) to Grade 5 (2003/4). Needless to say this is highly likely to exaggerate the drop out due to significant underage enrolment in Grade I. This method also fails to capture transfers to private schools. It is equally unclear the extent to which states have and make use of accurate repetition rates in their drop out calculations.

3.5 Pupil Teacher Ratio: It is encouraging to note from the state reports however, progress made in terms of teacher supply, with significant recruitment of formal and para teachers bringing the PTRs close to the prescribed SSA norm of 40:1. However, it is the range of PTRs that is important, with states still reporting some districts with high PTRs, Sirohi in Rajasthan for example with a PTR of 71:1. Class sizes in schools visited reflected a wide range as well.

3.6 Data: The Mission has identified a number of issues regarding data collection, analysis and use. There is an urgent need to ensure consistency across all states in how they define and measure key indicators related to access: enrolment, drop-out, retention, transition and completion rates. The variation in how figures are derived and presented does not currently enable a true aggregate picture; the mission reports some concerns regarding the quality of data in some states. EMIS data does not as yet capture enrolment in unrecognised private schools. All states need to follow the examples of Gujarat, UP and Orissa in undertaking independent data checks as suggested in the DPEP guidelines. Annual 5% sample checks will help strengthen the integrity of EMIS data. Similarly, there is a need to follow more consistently the methodologies for calculation of key indicators. Furthermore, cohort and

trend analysis of this data needs to be undertaken to establish more accurate readings of progress against objectives. Also highlighted in a number of state reports, is the need to remove discrepancies and improve consistency in the data yielded by the HHS and the EMIS. States clearly need further support in collection, validation, analysis and most importantly, use of the wealth of data they are now required to handle.

The availability of child data at village level through the VERs is a positive feature, and more needs to be done to support VECs in the collection and use of this information. Evidence from many states suggests that its use is limited, the school based *Bal Panji* being the more widely used, though it is less sensitive to child movement (change of school, migration or drop out) than the VER based on HHS. Several states (Gujarat, Rajasthan for example) are piloting and developing Child Tracking Systems (CTS). These are fledgling approaches that are of potentially great value in monitoring education coverage in the population. Similarly the piloting of cohort analysis in Uttaranchal is a further example of states trying to come to terms with the problem of securing an accurate picture of the educational status of all children. It would be useful if some evaluation of these initiatives were done, with a view to the production of some best practice guidelines being produced to help establish this more widely. **The Mission recommends that MHRD re-emphasize and clarify the definitions and methodology for computation and presentation of key educational indicators, and provide the necessary guidance to states to improve the consistency and integrity of their reporting. Furthermore, it is recommended that MHRD continue its efforts to ensure states undertake annual independent verification of data through a 5% sample check.**

4. Progress on Ensuring Quality with Equity Learning Achievement Levels:

- 4.1** Almost all states indicate a shift towards evolving a system of monitoring school performance as a whole, but greater focus is still required on monitoring learning levels of children. The MAS scores in states in which it was conducted give an inconsistent picture across districts with Rajasthan showing a decline in performance as compared to BAS in six out of nine districts. In other states too some districts show a decline. Overall, where improvements are seen, these are recorded as being better at the Grade 1 stage as compared to Grade 4 performance. Across subjects, improvement is overall more marked Mathematics as compared to language learning. This has serious implications since language is the foundation for learning of all subjects and this will have an all pervading influence on overall academic performance of children. The Mission's observations during school visits across the states, corroborates the evidence that on an average children are not learning at their grade levels. An interesting observation coming from studies conducted by states is that in many states the children in the alternative system are learning better than in the regular schools. This observation, though heartening from the perspective of equity, can also reverse the equation in favor of the alternative system which needs to be taken with caution! It is important to identify the conditions specific to the alternative system which contribute to their better performance as lessons for the formal system. In most states there is also improvement recorded in terms of gender parity with girls often scoring better than boys; social equity gaps though narrowed are still in many cases persisting. There is as yet, little evidence of support to the disabled for ensuring learning levels. Given the inconsistency as well as indications of decline in achievement levels across districts and states the low learning achievement levels emerge as the single most important concern in this mission. **The Mission recommends that, given the observation that children are not learning at grade level, in the remaining period of the project the states give top priority to addressing the issue of improving learning achievement levels of all children.**

- 4.2 Monitoring school performance:** Most states have reported some system being instituted to monitor school performance. The BRC-CRC links with schools are getting established and these are in some states extended to the DIETs. Some good initiatives are the School grading system in Uttaranchal, GAPIII in Gujarat, QMT in Jharkhand and QIP in AP. The School Grading system is a potentially promising instrument which could be extended to all states. However, the Mission's observations are that it should be used more as a developmental tool rather than an judgmental exercise, with collective accountability of the CRC, VEC/SMC and the school staff and not just the teachers. The value of this exercise is to give feedback on performance and suggest areas for improvement which should remain the focus.
- 4.3 Classroom practice and support to teachers and schools:** The Mission's visits to the schools show, as reported by previous missions, that children are being involved in activities and teachers are interacting more with them. The teaching learning materials (TLM) are visible in the classrooms and the use of TLM also appears to have broadened in some states to include other than charts and cards, kits, library books, workbooks etc which is a positive development. In *Jhunjhunu* in Rajasthan children were seen with workbooks and using them. In most states teachers have received the TLM grant and the School improvement grant has also been provided. While the TLM grant is being utilized there is still a sense of it being distinct from regular teaching and more for public display. The practice of organizing TLM *melas* in some states may also be contributing to this misunderstanding. This needs further reflection. While classrooms are looking better, the overall classroom practice in terms of active learning by children and time on task would still need further improvement. While in some states continuous, comprehensive assessments systems have been formulated, the schools visited by the Mission did not give indication of an effective continuous assessment practice in place. The Mission identifies these as symptoms of a larger issue which is the absence as yet of any evidence that the teachers as a whole are following a full learning cycle in their planning and teaching i.e. teaching – practice – enrichment – testing - remedial teaching - teaching. **The Mission recommends that the learning cycle needs to be reinforced and focused upon in all training and support activities for teachers across the formal and alternative systems, since this is critical to ensuring learning outcomes.**
- 4.4 Basic learning conditions in regular and alternative schools:** The basic conditions essential for creating a conducive learning environment for children were categorized very systematically by the last mission as those related to individual characteristics of children, supporting inputs, enabling conditions and the teaching learning processes. This Mission endorses these categories and has reviewed the conditions from this perspective. In terms of supporting inputs which include physical infrastructure, the Mission observed that across the states the physical conditions have improved in regular schools in term of classrooms, blackboards (though their maintenance is an issue), better maintained buildings, TLMs etc. The newly constructed schools are reported to be also more disabled- friendly. While facilities have improved their full utilization is often an issue in situations where the numbers of children are dwindling or attendance is low (e.g. Rajasthan). In terms of resources there are also good examples of community contribution across all states. Some highlights are the case of SMC donating a computer, phone, electricity and fan connection to a school and Youth Mandals taking classes where TPR's are high (e.g. Rajasthan). A close link is observable between the performance of school and the level of community participation which implies that the community needs to find value in the service offered and the two can be mutually reinforcing. Facilities in alternative schools and EGS are in contrast very poor. Interestingly, despite the poorer physical conditions they often learn

better than students in regular schools, which very significantly shifts the focus on the motivation, quality and competence of the teachers emerging as a critical factor.

An analysis of this phenomenon would possibly indicate that the accountability of the instructors and para teachers and the community affiliation are positive features impinging on their performance. In contrast, almost all state reports reflect a major concern regarding teacher absenteeism in schools particularly due to extra sectoral duties and in some cases training which is resulting in large class sizes and affecting quality. This issue needs urgent attention and redressal. The states are well cognizant of this issue and attempts are being made to address this through various modes. Specific initiatives have been taken in some states to address issues of accountability. For example, performance of teachers is being especially evaluated in AP. A good initiative reported is provision of housing for teachers in remote areas in Gujarat. However, the impact of this initiative would need to be evaluated. All states are placing increasing emphasis in this context on community involvement and monitoring through VECs, MTAs, SMCs who are potentially the best agency to provide effective monitoring, both as consumers as well as due to their proximity. Initiatives for school grading and monitoring by BRC / CRC are also expected to complement these efforts. However, the Mission suggests that the VEC / MTAs / SMCs should be involved in discussions on school grading, and school assessment, by BRC / CRC along with the administrators so that they get sensitized to the school performance indicators. Quality of leadership displayed by Head teachers is a potent factor in school performance and leadership training of headmasters could be a useful input for quality improvement. Along with teacher absenteeism, teacher competence is also an area of concern. Tests on teachers conducted by some states indicate that they themselves do not have mastery over primary level competencies and therefore require more support in content knowledge. Content focused training is now getting reported by most states to address this issue. Teacher vacancies are also adding to the complexity of the problem. The states are trying to meet this shortage largely from the provision for para teachers but adequate professional support for para teachers or any career planning for them is still not evident in most states visited.

5. Progress on enhancing institutional capacity

- 5.1 Staffing:** Progress in implementation is dependent on the extent to which sufficient staff are available. SPOs in DPEP states appear to be well staffed; however, high turnover in Rajasthan requires attention. Staffing is a concern in several DPOs including AP, Orissa, and Bihar. Low expenditure in all of these three states referred to later in this report could be taken as a reflection of the staffing levels and expertise of staff in the DPOs, BRCs and CRCs in these states. Rajasthan report on vacancies at the district level, which is due to a court stay order on all appointments. The Jharkhand report commends the state on carrying through its decision to make CRC full-time with regular teachers and the hiring of para teachers in place of these positions.
- 5.2 Training:** Most states have embarked upon regular training from different providers for project staff focusing on a variety of critical areas such as planning, monitoring, data collection and financial management. It would be useful to concentrate now on the capacity building and training of new staff and staff from the department of education involved with the project. DPEP has been implemented for several years in the states reviewed and a variety of training have been conducted over the years – teacher training, VEC training, administrative and management training etc. However, the effectiveness of the various kinds of training provided has been undertaken by few states. An understanding of what

training has contributed would help states to decide on whether such kind of training should be continued or whether the content and timing of the training needs to be revised. **The Mission recommends that the States (A.P., Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, U.P. and Uttaranchal), where the project closes within one year, conduct an analysis of the effectiveness of teacher training.**

5.3 Support institutions: School complexes introduced by Uttaranchal is an innovative approach to ensure the different levels of school education work together. Considerable improvement in DIETs functioning is reported by Gujarat, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, and AP. Understaffing is an issue in Rajasthan. It is important to sustain and expand the number of functioning DIETs in DPEP districts. Varying levels of involvement of apex institutions including the SCERTs and SIEMATs is reported. Rajasthan reports on their use "as and when required". Uttaranchal reports on the achievements of the new established SCERT. Jharkhand has not decided upon the establishment of either the SCERT or the SIEMAT. However, the model that is currently being followed in the Ranchi DIET is worth exploring for setting up these two institutions. The Ranchi DIET, due to the lack of staff, has only three core staff in place. All the activities are being outsourced by the hiring of skilled individuals as and when required.

5.4 Project evaluation and research: All states have utilized research funds. However, the amount spent is not impressive. Evaluation of project data and research on various interventions was envisioned as an important dimension of DPEP. In terms of project development objectives, DPEP states appear to be fairly advanced with the availability of comprehensive information at both state and district levels. However, an analysis of this information and the impact of various interventions, such as training discussed earlier, are not being done on a regular and systematic basis. With regards to research, most states convey the widespread use of small scale "action" research. While states have access to academic institutions, there has been limited use of these resources for research. It would be worthwhile for project states with the use of these institutions, to conduct broader studies on primary education.

6. Project Implementation

6.1 Project expenditure: Except in Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh, overall expenditure levels are low in the project states. All projects except Rajasthan DPEP II, Orissa and West Bengal are scheduled to close by end December, 2005. Extension plans for Rajasthan DPEP have been received by the Bank on November 24, 2005 and are currently being processed. All states except Bihar has released their counterpart share.

Bihar and Andhra Pradesh have the largest amount of funds which is likely to remain unspent by the project's closing date. DFID supported DPEP in AP has about US\$ 18 million to be spend by March 05. Similarly, World Bank supported DPEP in AP has about US\$ 35 million still available. This amount does not include the additional 15 percent counterpart funds. Under spending is highest in consultant category with 60 percent US\$27 million available. Expenditure has improved in Rajasthan DPEP and with the year's extension the US\$18 million is likely to be utilized. However, similar to AP, the consultant category in both Rajasthan projects have the highest unspent balances. US\$11 and US\$13 million for Rajasthan I and II respectively. Out of US\$ 20.37 million in Gujarat DPEP, only 58% has been spent and the revised completion date is June 30, 2005. Uttaranchal has utilized 76% of the project cost.

6.2 AWP&B: Average expenditure against AWP&Bs as of September 9, 2004 is 28 percent across DPEP project, which is low by any count. Expenditure ranges from eight percent in Orissa to 57 percent in Uttar Pradesh. The main reasons for this is over budgeting due to the large amount of funds remaining to be spent before project closing (APERP DPEP, DPEP III, Gujarat DPEP) making the AWP&B ambitious. Other reasons for low expenditure include the frequent transfer of key staff. In Gujarat, low expenditure was caused by delays in the agreement and amendment of closing date. The pace of implementation will have to be accelerated considerably to fully utilize the current year's AWP&B and the available funds. States will have to closely monitor districts with weak implementation and release funds in a timely manner. **The Mission recommends GOI monitor and supervise closely the implementation of DPEP in states such as Bihar and AP, where projects are to close next year and there are large unspent balances.**

7. Main Recommendations

- I. The Mission recommends that MHRD re-emphasize and clarify the definitions and methodology for computation and presentation of key educational indicators, and provide the necessary guidance to states to improve the consistency and integrity of their reporting. Furthermore, it is recommended that MHRD continue its efforts to ensure states undertake annual independent verification of data through a 5% sample check.
- II. The Mission recommends that, given the observation that children's learning achievement at the grade level is low, in the remaining period of the project the states give top priority to addressing the issue of improving learning achievement levels of all children.
- III. The Mission recommends that the learning cycle needs to be reinforced and focused upon in all training and support activities for teachers across the formal and alternative systems, since this is critical to ensuring learning outcomes.
- IV. The Mission recommends that States (A.P., Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, U.P. and Uttaranchal), where the project closes within one year, conduct an analysis of the effectiveness of teacher training.
- V. The Mission recommends GOI monitor and supervise closely the implementation of DPEP in states such as Bihar and AP, where projects are to close next year and there are large unspent balances.

Recommendations of the 19th Joint Review Mission and follow up action taken thereon

National Level

Recommendations	Action Taken / Comments
Quality of Access	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Mission recommends effective orientation and training of mainstream Education Department functionaries to enable them to meet the challenges of diversity of learners, to meet the goal of UEE with a thrust on equity for all. 	<p>Orientation workshops and training programmes are being organized for functionaries of the different mainstream Education Department of the States at the national level by the different academic bodies to expose them to the good practices in different States and also to enable them to understand their role and function in the programme. Exposure of the best of resource materials and practices has remained a significant milestone and achievement in DPEP since its inception. <i>The states reported on this to the Mission.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Mission recommends a long term perspective on EGS as 'evolutionary schools' wherever they are eligible as per schooling norms and EGS for classes I-III in remote habitations. 	<p>The facilities like MDM, etc is being extended to the EGS and AS. Also EGS schools are being upgraded into regular schools and/or upper primary EGS centers. States are encouraged to articulate a vision for such strategies, short term and long term so that EGS/AS options are phased out at the earliest. <i>The Mission was able to observe the MDM being served in schools and many states report that extension of this provision to the AS and EGS. However evidence of a vision and strategy for upgradation of these centers into regular schools was not reported in the states, except in Rajasthan. This would need further follow up.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The issue of basic learning conditions 	<p>Improving basic learning conditions in terms of additional infrastructure (teachers, classrooms and</p>

<p>deserves top priority in terms of teachers, learning space, materials, support for quality, monitoring learning progress, etc.</p> <p>In particular Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan need to speed up teacher recruitment at the earliest.</p>	<p>TLM) and academic support has been the focus under DPEP. 19364 para teachers have been engaged through Vidhya Shiksha Samiti in Bihar. 35000 teachers are being recruited in Rajasthan. Moreover, 46304 additional classrooms have been provided under DPEP in these districts. BRCC/CRCC have been appointed in DPEP to provide on-site academic supervision. Community is contributing to the quality of classroom transaction either by directly participating in it or by supporting it indirectly. The teaching learning materials including the textbooks have also been revised in Orissa, Bihar, and West Bengal for catalyzing more activity based pedagogy. <i>The Mission saw evidence of these provisions in all states visited. While some initiatives are extended to the AS and EGS centers too like textbooks and in some cases TLM grants, the infrastructure provided and quality of teachers needs attention.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action to make all single teacher schools and single classroom schools into a school with basic schooling in norms in terms of teachers, learning space and learning materials. 	<p>Teachers at the rate of 1:40 students, minimum two teachers per school and availability of one classroom per teacher are the overriding norms that the States are guided by. The States have been advised to address, gaps if any, these on a priority basis. <i>The states are trying to address the issue of teacher shortage through recruitment of regular and para teachers. In some cases there are delays due to a stay from the court.</i></p>
<p>Quality of Learning</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen structural coordination between 	<p>Although, the prime responsibility of project implementation lies with the SPO, SCERTs and the</p>

<p>key academic institutions such as SCERT, DIETs with Project Units such as SPO/BRC/CRC to effect integration of vision priorities and agenda.</p>	<p>DIETs are being increasingly involved to develop a shared vision of the pedagogical renewal process. The State Resource Groups and the District Resource Groups formed in various States invariably have representation from the SCERTs, SIEMATs, DIETs, NGOs etc. <i>The level of involvement and coordination varies in states. In some states individual representation is there in the resource groups but institutional involvement needs further strengthening.</i></p>
<p>▪ Formulate an annual academic plan with clear learning outcomes integrating all academic inputs like learning need assessment, teacher training, pupil evaluation, supervision and research.</p>	<p>The Quality Improvement Programme (QIP) in Andhra Pradesh, the statewide Learning Achievement Tracking System (LATS) in Orissa, Integrated Learning Improvement Programme (ILIP) in West Bengal, Gujarat Achievement at primary (GAP) are good examples of introducing systematic measures in all the mentioned areas. Most of the States have taken initiatives to grade their schools as per their infrastructural and academic environment and are trying to support the weaker schools on a continuous basis through the CRCs, BRCs, VECs, PTAMTA. Majority of the States have started drawing annual academic plans for their year wide academic activities. <i>Annual Academic Plans were seen drawn up by the BRCs. However these were more standardized and did not always reflect a bottom up approach.</i></p>
<p>▪ Capacity building of teachers on diagnostic remedial teaching.</p>	<p>Gujarat, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh have effective mechanisms for identifying the slow learners in their system through the ongoing quality enhancement programmes and are extending remedial support to them in extra time, vacation and through special remedial activities. Other States are also attempting</p>

	<p>to improve the status of their slow learners. The training programmes in Orissa, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have made it a point to build the capacity of teachers on a regular basis (through the in-service teacher training programmes and the monthly meetings at the cluster level) thereby enabling them to address this issue in their respective classrooms/schools. <i>The Mission noted that these initiatives are in most cases at pilot stage and need to be scaled up.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve on-site school support focusing on the quality of classroom transactions. 	<p>In Gujarat, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan CRCs are reaching schools regularly to extend on-site school support. Simultaneously they are also trying to look at the problems associated with their children's learning and other related issues. Such experience enables them to prepare contextually for the challenges before them in own area. Accordingly they try to address these issues through monthly cluster level meetings.</p> <p>Also Academic Resource Groups (DRGs, BRGs, CRGs) have been formed in most of the States to explore the problems associated with the schools/teachers/children and address them in a collective and systematic manner. <i>While cluster level meetings and visits of BRC s and CRC s are observed to be getting entrenched in the system, the quality of support may not be adequate as reflected in the performance of children .</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic capacity at all levels for analysis of data for improving management and 	<p>The importance of school level collection and analysis of data has been accepted by all States, which are taking initiatives to strengthen requisite capacities. States such as A.P., Orissa, U.P. and Rajasthan</p>

<p>academic support, especially at school level.</p>	<p>have already taken significant steps in this direction. <i>The Mission has commended many initiatives in this area but also raised the concern that the quality and consistency of data needs further attention for which the states may need national support.</i></p>
<p>▪ Strengthen mechanisms for tracking children's academic progression.</p>	<p>The Quality Improvement Programme (QIP) in Andhra Pradesh, Learning Achievement Tracking System (LATS) in Orissa, Integrated Learning Improvement Programme (ILIP) in Bengal and Gujarat Achievement at Primary (GAP) are significant examples of this. In all these programmes the States are trying to track their children's academic progress on a large scale through systematic measures. Along with this they also try to support the learning needs of the poor achievers through continuous remedial measures. <i>The Mission has commended these initiatives.</i></p>
<p>▪ Evolve accountability systems of the school to the local community for learning outcomes.</p>	<p>It is also attempted to draw the attention of these local bodies through local level meetings/discussions to focus more on the learning improvement of all the children in the school. The roles of PTAs/MTAs, SMCs etc are defined for their more attention on academic practices and school support mechanisms. For example, the Learning Achievement Tracking System (LATS) in Orissa shares its whole learning findings with these local bodies to make them understand the problems associated with their children's learning and urges them to play pro-active role in enhancing the learning achievement children on a continuous basis. <i>The Mission has appreciated this initiative and suggested this be done by all states to create greater awareness and use the school grading system as a feedback</i></p>

	<i>mechanism for further improvement.</i>
Quality of Implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early filling up of vacancies of key positions of SPO and DPO and in institutions (SCERT, SIEMAT, DIETs BRCs and CRCs) and efforts at more integrated working of project with educational mainstream institutions. 	<p>It is being attempted through the Teacher Education scheme to fill up the existing vacancies in the different Teacher Education Institutions (especially DIETs) in the State, including SCERT. Similar attempts are also being made in DPEP/SSA to fill up the vacancies related to the BRCs and CRCs and orient activate them for overall qualitative improvement all across the districts. <i>The Mission notes that this is a very promising solution to a problem raised by every preceding mission.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greater role for community organizations in making schools more accountable locally. 	<p>In States like UP, Uttaranchal, Orissa, Gujarat etc. the programmes related to elementary education are highly decentralized in nature. Power have been given to the VECs for most of the activities – construction work, recruitment of contract teachers, payment of honorarium, TLM grant, School Grant etc. Schools are more accountable to the local community. In majority of the States Head of the Gram Sabhas is Chairperson of the VEC. This has contributed to better community participation and accountability at local level. This also has contributed to performance of teachers to a good extent. <i>The Mission suggests the Orissa example mentioned earlier be tried out by other states as well to further enhance accountability.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvement in data quality, management and its use is an area for attention, especially when school and household data is being collected and maintained at school level through Village Education Registers 	<p>Better checks and controls to ensure quality of data are in place in many states. In Orissa, a sizeable proportion of schools' data are cross-checked at different levels. In Bihar, U.P. DISE data are used for preparing AWP&B specifically with respect to estimating need of additional classrooms, new school building, teachers, etc.</p> <p>Household survey has been conducted in all the States. While DISE data has been useful in</p>

and DISE survey.

identifying gaps within the school (school infrastructure, PTR, enrolment), household survey data is being increasingly used to plan interventions for out of school children. ***The Mission notes that there are state –wise variations and national support in this area is recommended to help the states address these issue in a more effective manner.***

ABBREVIATIONS

ABSA	Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari
ABT	Activity Based Teaching
ACR	Actual Completion Rate
ADI	Assistant District Inspector (of Schools)
ADOP	Additional District Project Officer
AEO	Assistant Education Officer
AIE	Alternative Innovation Education
ALS	Alternative Learning School
APPEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
AS	Alternative Schooling
ATI	Administrative Training Institute
AV	Audio-visual
AW	Anganwadi
A'WH	Anganwadi Helper
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan & Budget
AWS	Anganwadi Supervisor
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
BAG	Block Action Group
BAS	Baseline Assessment Study
BDO	Block Development Officer
BEC	Block Education Committee (Samiti)
BEO	Block Education Officer
BEP	Basic Education Project
BLCC	Block Level Coordination Committee
BLRC	Block Level Resource Co-ordinator
BMIS	Bihar Management Information System
BPEO	Block Primary Education Officer
BRC	Block Resource Center
BRCC	Block Resources Centre Co-ordinator
BRCF	Block Resource Centre Functionary
BRG	Block Resource Group
BSA	Basic Resource Group
BSPP	Bihar Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad
BSTBPC	Bihar State Text Book Publishing Corporation
BTC	Basic Training Centre
CAC	Cluster Academic Coordinator
CAG	Cluster Action Group
CB	Capacity Building
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CBTs	Computer Based Tutorials
CC	Continuous Comprehensive Assessment
CDI	Child Data Indicator
CEM	Centre for Education Management
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLRC	Cluster Level Resource Centre

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

GoJ	Government of Jharkhand
GoR	Government of Rajasthan
GoUP	Government of Uttar Pradesh
GoWB	Government of West Bengal
GP	Gram Panchayat
GPS	Gram Panchayat Samiti
GVVK	Girijana Vidya Vikas Kendram
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
IDA	International Development Agency
IDP	Institutional Development Plan
IED	Integrated Education for the Disabled
IEDC	Integrated Education for Disabled Children
IGE	Index of Gender Equity
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIE	Indian Institute of Education
IIM	Indian Institute of Management
INSET	In-service Teacher Training
IPMIS	Integrated Project Management Information System
IRM	Internal Review Mission
ISE	Index of Social Equity
JRM	Joint Review Mission
JRY	Jawahar Rozgar Yojana
KRP	Key Resource Person
LH	Listening Handicapped
LJP	Lok Jumbish Project
LP	Lower Primary
LSA	Lok Sampark Abhiyan
LSS	Lower Secondary Scholarship
MAS	Mid-term Assessment Survey
MBC	Most Backward Castes
MCDA	Model Cluster Development Approach
MD	Managing Director
MGLC's	Multi Grade Learning Centres
MGT	Multi Grade Teaching
MH	Mentally Handicapped
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIS	Management Information System
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MLT	Multi Level Teaching
MRCS	Mandal Resources Centres
MRG	Mandal Resource Group
MRP	Mandal Resource Person
MS	Mahila Samakhya
MSA	Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan
MSP	Mahila Samakhya Project
MT	Master Trainer
MTA	Mother Teacher Association
NCB	National Competitive Bidding
NPRC	Naya Panchayat Resource Centre
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCLP	National Child Labour Project

NCTE	National Council of Teachers Education
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPS	New Primary School
NSDART	National Society for Development Administration Research & Training
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Castes
OPEPA	Orissa Primary Education Project Authority
PEC	Panchayat Education Committee
PEEP	Panchayat Level Elementary Education Plan
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PMU	Programme Monitoring Unit
PRA	Participatory Rural Assessment
PRD	Panchayati Raj Department
PRDD	Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Department
PRI	Panchayati Raj Instruction
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PTTI	Primary Teacher Training Institute
PWD	Public Works Department
QMT	Quality Management Team
RCI	Rehabilitation Council of India
RCPE	Rajasthan Council of Primary Education
RES	Research and Evaluation Studies
RGSJP	Rajiv Gandhi Swaran Jayanti Pathshala
RGSM	Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha Mission
RPM	Reflection cum Planning Meetings
RSTB	Rajasthan State Text Books Board
RT	Resource Teacher
SAG	State Action Group
SAMIS	Student Attendance Management Information System
SARG	State Academic Resource Group
SC	Scheduled Castes
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SCR	Student Classroom Ratio
SDI	School Deputy Inspector
SDMC	School Development and Management Committee
SEEM	State Elementary Education Mission
SEMIS	State Education Management Information System
SI	School Inspector
SIEMAT	State Institute of Educational Mgmt. And Trg.
SIERT	State Institute of Educational Research and Trg.
SIET	State Institute of Education Technology
SIM	Self Instructional Material
SISE	State Institute of Science Education
SKP	Shiksha Karmi Programme

SLIP	School Based Learning Improvement Programme
SLM	Self Learning Materials
SLO	State Level Officer
SM	Shiksha Mitra
SMART-PT	State-wide Massive Training for Primary Teachers
SMC	School Management Committee
SPD	State Project Director
SPIU	State Project Implementation Unit
SPO	State Project Office
SRG	State Resource Group
SRY	Swayam Rojgar Yojna
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSG	School Support Group
SSK	Swayam Shiksha Kendra / Karamasuchi
SSR	School – Student Ratio
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STR	School – Teacher Ratio
TAS	Terminal Assessment Survey
TBC	Text Book Corporation
TC	Teacher Centre
TLM	Teaching & Learning Material
TLP	Total Learning Package
TSG	Technical Support Group
TSR	Teacher – Student Ratio
ULE	Universal Elementary Education
UP	Upper Primary
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VCC	Village Core Committee
VCWC	Village Civil Work Committee
VEC	Village Educational Committee
VER	Village Educational Register
VLC	Village Level Committee
VNC	Village Nirman Committee
VRP	Voluntary Resource Person
VS	Vidhya Shayak
VV	Vidhya Volunteer
WB	World Bank
WBBPE	West Bengal Board of Primary Education
WEC	Ward Education Committee

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
Twentieth Joint Review Mission
(November 29 – December 13, 2004)
Terms of Reference

I. Introduction

The District Primary Education Program (DPEP) was designed to help achieve the objective of Universal Primary Education (UPE) through developing and implementing a replicable, sustainable and cost-effective program in the selected districts. The specific objectives of DPEP are (i) to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5% (ii) to reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10% (iii) to raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured baseline levels and ensure achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children (iv) provide according to national norms, access for all children to primary education classes (I-V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education. The program also aims towards strengthening the capacity of national, state and district institutions and organizations in relation to planning, management and evaluation of primary education.

DPEP started in November 1994 in 42 districts in 7 states, and expanded in a phased manner to 242 (273 bifurcated districts) in 18 states. Since then the two multi-state DPEP I and DPEP II projects have closed. The currently ongoing DPEP projects which will be reviewed in this mission are as follows: World Bank supported UPDPEPIII (UP, Uttaranchal); DPEPIII (Jharkhand, Bihar); Rajasthan I and II and APDPEP (Andhra Pradesh) under APERP; DFID supported DPEP projects in West Bengal, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh; UNICEF supported DPEPIII (Bihar and Jharkhand) and Government of Netherlands supported Gujarat (funds administered through the World Bank). These DPEP projects are at various stages of implementation and will be reviewed in this context.

DPEP is monitored twice a year by a Joint Review Mission (JRM), which has been led, in rotation in the past, by the Government of India (GOI), the World Bank (WB), the European Commission (EC) and the UK Department For International Development (DFID). At present the European Commission is no longer a partner in DPEP. The XXth JRM is being led by the World Bank.

II. Mission Objectives

The 20th JRM will track progress on the status of project outcomes and indicators in terms of the identified targets, with respect to the stated objectives of the DPEP i.e. expanding access, quality with equity and strengthening of institutional capacity. In addition it will also look at project specific issues in terms of implementation, particularly from the perspective of their imminent closure. The Mission will also review progress on the specific recommendations of the 19th JRM, which are appended with the TORs. The Mission will use the documents provided by the GOI, make consultations at the national level and utilise the state visits to arrive at conclusions on the current status with regard to the overall objectives of the programme.

More specifically, the objectives of the Mission, in the light of the DPEP objectives, are as follows:

(A) Progress On Access-Objectives

- (i) *to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievement among gender and social groups to less than 5%*
- (ii) *to reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10%*
- (iii) *to provide, according to national norms, access for all children, to primary education classes (I-V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education.*

Issues To Examine

- What is the progress with reference to the baseline and more particularly since 2003 with regard to outcomes in terms of enrolment, attendance, reduction of drop out and completion with special reference to gender, SC, ST, disabled and other socially disadvantaged groups.
- What is the number and percentage of 6-11 year olds still out of school by gender, SC,ST, disabled and other socially disadvantaged groups in the project districts ? What is the strategy to bring them to school?
- How many habitations in the project districts are still without school? How many school are still single teacher schools?
- How many 'out of school' children in the project districts have been mainstreamed into formal schools? What measures are in place to encourage their continuance in school?
- What is the current pupil teacher ratio as against the baseline? If above the state norm what steps are being taken to attain the norm especially in UP in JPDPEPIII, Rajasthan I and II and DPEPIII districts?
- What measures are being adopted to deal with the issue of underage children in Grade I?
- To what extent is the expansion of access for UPE-
 - targeted and informed by data on the most difficult to reach children ;
 - provides diversity of models and how consistent are these with the needs and characteristics of the target group
 - ensuring basic learning conditions in terms of effective teacher availability and time, school facilities, teaching learning materials;
 - provoking an overall longer term vision for alternative schools and EGS centers from the perspective of quality and equity

(B) Progress On Ensuring Quality With Equity And Improved Learning Levels-Objective

- (i) *to raise average achievement levels by at least 25% over measured baseline levels and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40% achievement levels in other competencies, by all primary school children*

Issues To Examine

- What is the extent of district –wise progress with regard to improvement in achievement levels against the baseline, with special reference to gender, SC, ST and other socially disadvantaged groups? What evidence is there of this progress?
- Are districts monitoring progress in achievement levels?
- Are children learning at the grade level and how is learning being monitored in the classroom?

- Is there an annual academic plan at cluster and block levels ?
- Are teachers supported appropriately by CRC/ BRC to facilitate learning and assessment of pupils? What are some of the major activities carried out by the BRCs since July, 2004?
- What measures are in place to improve the basic learning conditions in alternative systems and enhance learning outcomes?
- Are there any mechanisms being instituted /planned to increase accountability of the school to the community in terms of learning outcomes.

(C) Progress On Enhancing Institutional Capacity And On Project Implementation-Objectives

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

Issues To Examine

Institutional Capacity

- Is the staffing of positions in state and district offices and institutions adequate?
- Are any specific measures being taken or proposed for regular capacity building of institutions at all levels , particularly at the level of the BRC and CRC?
- Is there effective coordination between project and mainstream institutions? What measures have been taken to make the coordination effective?
- Are the states/districts using research funds to conduct research? If yes, how are the research findings being used?
- Are the planning and monitoring processes becoming more evidence based at State and district levels and is this reflected in AWP&B?
- Is there evidence of new initiatives being introduced in improving system of data collection, validation and use?

5 Project Implementation

- Is the fund availability timely against the AWP&B at State and district levels?
- What measures have the states taken to accelerate pace of expenditure specially with reference to Rajasthan, Bihar, AP and Gujarat?
- To what extent has the approved AWP&B been implemented as planned? What are the constraints, if any?
- Are revised allocations doing justice to all components of the program?

(D) Mid-Term Review For Rajasthan DPEP II

For Rajasthan DPEP II, the Mid Term Review (MTR), which was initiated in the previous mission, will be completed with the review of the (i) the achievement surveys for all districts on mathematics and language achievement scores of children in primary education, all with separate categories for females, Scheduled castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes; the evaluation studies on (ii) early childhood education centres, (iii) alternative schools, (iv) changes in classroom teaching practice, (v) functioning of BRCs, CRCs and

SMCs and (vi) quality of civil works. The draft reports of the studies on alternative schools, changes in classroom teaching practice, and functioning of BRCs, CRCs and SMCs were submitted to the last mission. The mission will also review the environmental, social, and financial management components.

The results of the evaluation studies and achievement survey will be made available by the Bureau at least ten days in advance to the Mission.

Since no JRM has visited Rajasthan DPEP I districts since April 2003, the current Mission proposes to visit the Phase I districts.

III. Preparation for the Mission

- The participating agencies agree on the TOR and the Mission framework.
- The EE Bureau discusses and shares the TOR and the Mission approach and objectives with all the DPEP states.
- The DPEP states, the EE Bureau and the Mission Team leader will work on the details for the state and district visits.
- Background materials will be provided by the EE Bureau to the Team Leader at least ten days prior to the start of the JRM.
- Each participating agency will arrange and provide briefing on DPEP, the JRM objectives and process to their team members before the start of the JRM.
- The Team leader with the help of a small group will process and analyse information made available through background papers, studies, documents and reports. Each participating agency will share and discuss these analyses with their team members before the start of the JRM.

IV. Mission Tasks

- Individual state teams will be responsible for the state reports, which will be annexed to the Aide Memoir.
- The whole team will be responsible for consolidating cross-state issues with conclusions, on return to Delhi.
- The core team, which will be established by the Team leader in consultation with the other agencies, will facilitate the discussions while the Mission is working in Delhi.
- The Core team will assume complete responsibility for drafting the Aide Memoir, for taking it to a Pre Wrap-up meeting and presenting it at the Final Wrap-up meeting.

V. States to be visited and Mission composition

While reports would be sought from all DPEP states on the TORs , the Mission will visit only 5 states – Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Gujarat. The Mission will therefore be comprised of 12 members with two members for each State. For Rajasthan the team will include Environment /Social and FM specialists since this mission will complete the MTR for Rajasthan II. The composition of the team will be GOI-4, WB-4, DFID –2, Netherlands and Unicef-1each.

VI. Organisation

The Mission will take place from November 29, 2004 to December, 13 2004.

Monday, November 29, 2004: The full JRM team will start their work with a short introduction to DPEP, the XXTH JRM process, the TORs and the review of reports made available for this mission. This will be followed by a detailed presentation in the afternoon by the EE Bureau, followed by briefing for State visits.

Tuesday, November 30, 2004 The Mission members meet to discuss the State visits and Focal Areas for field visits. They depart for the state visits.

Wednesday, December 1 - Saturday, December 4, 2004 : Field visits to the districts

Sunday, December 5 - Monday, December 6, 2004: Interaction with other districts and departments and state report preparation.

Tuesday, December 7, 2004: State Wrap up. Return to Delhi.

Wednesday, December 8, 2004: Sharing of highlights of state visits. Peer review of reports and despatch to Bureau. Identification of core issues in plenary (afternoon)

Thursday, December 9, 2004 – Friday, December 10, 2004: Core team meets to prepare aide-memoire

Friday, December 10, 2004 (afternoon): Pre wrap up with Bureau

Monday, December 13, 2004 : Wrap up with Secretary, Elementary Education.

Five full working days will be available for the field visit. The focus of the State / field visit will be very outcome focused, ascertaining the performance with regard to the Mission Objectives. The state team will return to Delhi in the evening of December, 7, 2004 and hand over their draft state reports to the JRM Secretariat in the forenoon of Wednesday, December 8, 2004.

VII Background Material

The following documents will be made available to the Mission.

- State Report Part 1- Progress overview from the States with a clear focus on DPEP objectives and expected outcomes.

- State Report Part II – Information specific to progress with respect to the Terms of Reference of the 20th JRM.
- Action Taken Report on the 19th JRM recommendations.
- MTR Study Reports of Rajasthan

VIII. Reporting

The Mission will produce the Aide-Memoire that includes the Overview and the State Reports.

Appendix: Key Recommendations of 19th JRM

Appendix

Key Recommendations of 19th JRM

Quality of Access

- The Mission recommends effective orientation and training of mainstream Education Department functionaries to enable them to meet the challenges of diversity of learners, to meet the goal of UEE with a thrust on equity and quality for all.
- The Mission recommends a long term perspective on EGS as 'evolutionary schools' where ever they are eligible as per schooling norms and EGS for classes I-III in remote habitations.
- The issue of basic learning conditions deserves top priority in terms of teachers, learning space, materials support for quality, monitoring learning progress, etc. In particular Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan need to speed up teacher recruitment at the earliest.
- Action to make all single teacher schools and single class room schools into a school with basis schooling in norms in terms of teachers, learning space and learning materials.

Quality of Learning

- Strengthen structural coordination between key academic institutions such as SCERT, DIETs with Project Units such as SPO/BRC/CRC to effect integration of vision priorities and agenda.
- Formulate an annual academic plan with clear learning outcomes integrating all academic inputs like learning needs assessment, teacher training, pupil evaluation, supervision and research.
- Capacity building of teachers on diagnostic remedial teaching.
- Improve on-site school support focusing on the quality of class room transactions.
- Build capacity at all levels for analysis of data for improving management and academic support, especially at school level.
- Strengthen mechanisms for tracking children's academic progression.
- Evolve accountability systems of the school to the local community for learning outcomes.

Quality of Implementation

- Early filling up of vacancies of key positions of SPO and DPO and in institutions (SCERT, SIEMAT, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs) and efforts at more integrated working of project with educational mainstream institutions.
- Greater role for community organizations in making schools more accountable locally.
- Improvement in data quality, management & its use is an area for attention, especially when school and household data is being collected and maintained at school level through Village Education Registers and DISE survey.

India
District Primary Education Programme
Twentieth Joint Review Mission

Andhra Pradesh State Report
(29th November - 13th December 2004)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Twentieth Joint Review Mission (JRM), consisting of Dr. Lipika Nanda (DFID) and Dr. S.N. Methi (GoI) visited Andhra Pradesh from November 30th – 7th December to review the progress made in implementing the District Primary Education Project I and II (DPEP I and II) since the nineteenth JRM in July 2004. The team visited the district of Nizamabad (Telengana Region) to appraise project activities. Meetings were held with the Principal Secretary, the State Project Director, the District Collector, State and District project staff. The team visited and interacted with staff from the DIET, Mandal Resource Centres (MRC), a Teacher Centre (TC), School Education Committees (SEC), a residential bridge course, an alternate school, several primary schools, school children and a few village communities.
- 1.2 The mission commends the State of Andhra Pradesh for working in an integrated manner towards achieving the objective of eliminating child labour and ensuring that all children are in the school. This was especially evident during the district travels where the mission saw several habitations and mandals that have been declared as child-labour free and displayed this information. The Government of AP has taken a unique stand by campaigning against child labour and defining it as 'any child out of school'. The effort of the project staff in Nizamabad in working closely with the community members along with locally elected representatives deserves special mention. One of the mandals – 'Vailpur' has achieved 100% net enrolment by complete elimination of child labour. This has been possible by the commitment of the district staff – who have been recognised for this effort. The mission thanks everyone, the education department and the project staff, teachers, community members and students in the schools visited, for making it possible for them to understand the experiences and lessons learnt during the mission. The mission appreciates the commitment and perseverance of the project staff that has enabled the project to achieve some of its objectives. The vision and plans for the overall development of education at the highest levels of government and at the collector's level in the district clearly support and strengthen the project's progress in meeting its targets and outcomes. The commitment to the education sector, as a whole, at the State level is evident from the increases in the budgetary allocations to the primary education sector.
- 1.3 The next steps identified by the last JRM may need to be revisited, as all have not been addressed as of now. The last JRM mission recommended that the project focus on five aspects. (i) The first was to ensure clear and unambiguous data through improved collation and reconciliation of the different data sets available by improving the capacity of staff responsible for statistical analysis, identification of trends, programme and policy options and subsequent action at all levels. (ii) The second was to undertake a rationalisation exercise for re-deployment of regular teachers, before recruiting more staff, both regular as well as the temporary ones. (iii) The third was to undertake an impact assessment of the Quality Improvement Programme before integrating it into the regular curriculum. (iv) The fourth was to develop simple objective indicators as measurable minimum competencies for each grade so that everyone is clear what competencies the child should have at each grade level. (v) The fifth and final recommendation was to focus more comprehensively on the issues of children with disabilities. The mission reviewed the project's

progress towards these recommendations and felt that the project had responded to the third and fourth recommendations of the last JRM. The other recommendations were yet to be worked upon. The mission urges the SPO to treat the first recommendation as urgent and ensure that the key staffs of DPEP understand the purpose of this effort.

1.4 DPEP, in general, has had considerable influence on the new national and state level programme for universalising elementary education: Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. This should be taken as a good indicator of its success and the appropriateness of the approach taken in DPEP. Two key features of AP DPEP's success in primary education include the high level of political commitment and the quality leadership within the education bureaucracy that has adopted an open approach and commitment to innovation. The emphasis on getting all children into school has had high political backing resulting with few children out of school. In order to obtain an overview of implementation in project districts, it is necessary to examine progress made in the project vis-à-vis the various goals of DPEP. Reliable data on progress was available from the external evaluation of project implementation in DPEP II and I districts, conducted by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM study)(IIM Bangalore, 2002). The study was based on a sample of 5 districts from the two projects. DISE data was not available due to the serious discrepancies in the information provided by the districts. Due to absence of skilled EMIS personnel, the state does not have authentic comprehensive data on project indicators.

2. Quality of Access

2.1 The state is close to achieving its goal of Universal Access by providing schools in 99% of the habitations, as per the norms of the DPEP. The state is also moving towards completing its target of providing one primary school in every habitation. With regard to access in tribal areas, action has been taken to run Alternate Schools and Ashram Schools wherever necessary. Access is in accordance with the need and agreed norms to achieve UPE. In addition to opening formal schools, bridge courses of varying duration are being conducted and out of school children are being admitted into these courses with the aim of mainstreaming them at the end of the year.

2.2 *Enrolment:* The first goal of DPEP is to ensure 100% enrolment of children within the project districts. According to the figures provided by the AP DPEP, the state is close to achieving this goal by gaining the status of having 97% children in the age group 6-14 years enrolled in schools – Education Guarantee Schools (EGS), Alternate Schools (ALS), Residential Bridge Camps (RBC), and Non-residential Bridge Camps (NRBC). 96% of SC children and 98.6% ST children in the state have been enrolled. Even though there are about 3% of children currently not enrolled in the schools, they constitute the most difficult to reach group, the state will need to adopt a special strategy to get them enrolled and retain them within the system. But it is not clear whether the number of disabled children that are currently out of the school system have been considered while making this calculation. Completion rates continue to be a concern in DPEP. Drop out rates reported at 42% are high, though it fails to capture enrolment in unrecognised private schools. The mission would also draw attention to the enrolment of disabled children in school, noted in previous missions, which continues to require close monitoring and attention particularly the sensitisation and training of teachers.

2.3 *Attendance:* The second goal is to ensure the regular attendance of students in schools and completion up to grade V. According to the IIM study, attendance has improved from 83% in 1997-98 to 84% in 2001-02 for boys and from 82-83% for girls. Comparable improvements have also been observed for SC students at 86% and ST students at 76%. The average attendance of students in the schools, which were visited by the JRM (tabulated by the mission), was about 86.5%. The attendance can be further improved by developing mechanisms like temporary hostels for migratory children. Teachers and the members of School Education Committee (SEC)

can effectively monitor attendance of irregular students, on a daily basis.

2.4 *Diversity of Learning Opportunities*: The primary ways in which the learning needs of various groups have been dealt with in project districts are through residential bridge courses and alternate schools. The residential bridge courses, meant for students that have dropped out of school or have never enrolled, have been a success. The mission observed a well functioning residential bridge course programme with enthusiastic students, systematic instruction and learning taking place. The staffs in this school were clear that students attending this program had to be mainstreamed at the end of the year. Most students would have to join the permanent residential schools in the State. Alternate Schools were established in remote areas especially for tribal communities. These schools are informal to suit the convenience of out of school children. Para-teachers or Vidya Volunteers (VV) are trained and appointed for this purpose. The State's intention is that in most cases these schools are temporary, while in the case where students do not have any other option these schools would continue. In tribal areas especially, there does not seem to be any other alternative but to allow these schools to continue. Getting children into the school system and retaining them is closely linked to poverty within the society. Unless poverty issues are dealt with in a holistic manner, there maybe a need to continue with such schools – as support systems for getting children into the school system.

2.5 *Basic Learning Conditions*: School buildings appeared to be sufficient and by and large, spacious. In most of the schools visited the blackboards were usable. In the IIM study, which sampled children's perceptions, 74 percent felt classrooms were good while 22 percent felt it was poor. The availability of toilets has remained a low priority in school infrastructure. In the schools visited, there were separate toilets in some schools for girls, but there were no toilets in newly raised schools in tribal areas. In some cases the toilets were lying defunct as a result of the lack of water.

3. Quality with Equity

3.1 As identified in previous JRMs student learning and development of skills in key curricular areas within the context of the school and classroom continues to be the major challenge as identified by district and State project officials and reiterated by this mission. In terms of vision, the concentration of the State and project Districts on enrolment has now evolved to focus on the quality of education provided. While this is clear to staff at State level (SPO), the overall objective of this initiative needs to be much more clearly enunciated at both the school and institutional levels.

3.2 The Terminal Assessments for the DPEP I districts have been completed. While comparing BAS to the TAS, most districts seem to have achieved the DPEP objective of 25 % increase in student achievement in languages & maths except one district (Vizianagaram). Though the overall objectives of DPEP in this area may have been met, the TAS identifies subtraction as a difficult area for Grade I students. The limitations among Grade IV students are more serious. Students failed to grasp basic themes in language, addition and subtraction of large numbers, concepts related to fractions, geometrical figures, solving problems in mathematics. Limitations in learning were also evident when the mission asked 5th grade students to solve simple multiplication problems. Most students were unable to solve the problem. All districts of DPEP-I have also been able to reduce gender and social group differences in achievements.

3.3 Terminal assessments have not been conducted in DPEP II districts. While comparing BAS to the MAS it was found that the achievement level of students of grade I have improved in language and Maths. For the grade IV students, the improvement in achievement level was in between 5.8% to 8.8%. Some of the districts have experienced reduction in learning achievements.

Observations made by the mission during field visits on the basic competencies of Grade 3 pupils in maths and language suggest that many are not achieving appropriate levels of learning. The state needs to continue to take careful note of achievement information, checking for its reliability and more importantly continuing to develop appropriate strategies to improve learning outcomes. Mastery of basic reading and writing skills, as well as basic numeracy, are the necessary foundations on which subsequent levels build.

3.4 The District and State officials of the AP DPEP emphasised the testing of students learning done through the Quality Improvement Programme (QIP) – a pilot remedial teaching initiative. This programme focuses on ensuring teachers provide remedial instruction over a period of 45 days. The QIP first took place in the beginning of the 2003-04 academic years and is now taking place for this year, during the afternoon sessions only. Before the programme begins students are given a pre-test to identify their learning levels. Based on the pre-test results, students are graded from A to D, with A being the highest. Structured learning activities are prescribed over the 45 days, for students with low grades. While this programme had brought quality learning centre stage, the mission in the 19th JRM had suggested that the impact of the QIP be assessed and ways in which to revise this program be considered. This mission's view is to re-look into the pre and post-test (the same diagnostic test is used for both pre and post test) content, the remedial curriculum, and the time for remedial instructions. The curriculum for remedial instruction should be based on the results of the diagnostic analysis of answer books. The best time for remedial instruction is in summer vacation. This would also ensure that student performance is communicated to parents and parents have to take the initiative to make their children attend remedial instruction before the child can enrol in the next school year. Teachers, in this case would also be held responsible for not bringing children up to grade level in the previous year. The project should ensure objectivity in the conduct and evaluation of these tests.

3.5 Inadequate learning could be attributed to classroom instruction observed during the district visit. While every school had a set time table for subject teaching, it was not clear that this was being systematically followed over the school year. Instruction itself appeared to be haphazard and disorganized. The distribution of work among the teachers present in schools was not clear, leading to lack of clarity in the allocation of responsibility for student learning. The mission also observed that the interactions in classrooms were teacher-centric, mainly consisting of copying from blackboards, inadequate use of TLMs and child-to-child interaction. Teachers were reading out lessons in great speed and did not really use any teaching methods like the 6 pedagogical principles as specified by the APDPEP in their report (providing teacher generated activities, promoting learning by doing, discovering and experimenting, developing individual/group and whole class work, providing for individual differences, using local environment, and creating an interesting classroom by displaying and organising it effectively) or the steps of learning cycle (teaching, practicing, enriching, testing, remedial and finally teaching). The workbooks cum textbooks were not used appropriately; written work assignments were not checked. There were clear pedagogical gaps in language and maths teaching. For example, it was observed that the teachers usually solved a multiplication problem on the board without interacting and involving the students, while they sat and watched the blackboards blankly. The students were tested monthly through tests, without adequate follow up. It was also observed that the least qualified teachers, the Vidya Volunteers, were usually assigned the 1st and 2nd grade classes and other subjects that regular teachers find difficult to teach. For e.g., in Eddapally School a Vidya Volunteer (SSC qualification) was recruited as a Hindi pundit but was assigned to teach the 1st and 2nd grade and also maths for all classes. Vidya Volunteers did not receive adequate training and support, did not participate in TC meetings and were not eligible for receiving TLM grants. This is certainly an area of concern! The Teacher Pupil Ratio as observed is 1:35 in the year 2003-04.

3.6 A review of the attendance register of the teachers showed that the teachers are spending a lot of time in other activities – invigilation, election duties, yoga training, QIP training, TC meetings, etc. Some of these trainings are very costly and have resulted in no returns – the yoga-trained teacher in one of the schools has not used the training in teaching yoga to the children. To be more specific, a count of the number of days from Jan to Nov 2004 showed that a particular teacher actually attended school for 140 days! This is resulting in very few classroom days for the teachers.

3.7 The mission is of view that the Parents Teachers Association and the School Education Committees should be encouraged to monitor the learning achievements in children and be able to question the teachers and the school authorities about learning outcomes. Some attention needs to be given to the seating arrangements to ensure individual attention for every child. Teachers should follow the learning cycle and the 6 pedagogical principles needs to be incorporated in methods of teaching. Along with this, non-academic activities like games, sports and art need due attention in schools.

4. Institutional Capacity and Quality of Implementation

4.1 This is the final year of the DPEP II and I projects after having received extensions of closing date. DPEP I had been extended to March 2005 and DPEP II to September 2005. The mission has specifically looked into the quality of implementation of the project in great detail. Feedback from this JRM on the existing issues and best practices will feed into effective implementation of the SSA programme. For DPEP I, the original project budget has increased from Rs. 215 crores to Rs. 353 crores due to exchange rate fluctuation. Rs. 260 crores (73 percent) of this amount has been expended, cumulatively. For DPEP II, out of the project budget of Rs. 633 crores, Rs. 483 crores or 76 percent has been expended, cumulatively. 19% of the DPEP I funds and 25% of DPEP II funds of the annual allocation has been spent as of September 2004. The amount of project funds available and required to be utilized before project closing date is substantial - Rs 91 crores in DPEP I to be spent by March 2005, Rs. 128 crores in DPEP II by September 2005.

4.2 With reference to the implementation of last year's AWPB, information provided to the mission suggests that these plans have not been fully implemented. GoAP had taken some time to release the state share of DPEP funds quite late and hence a lot of activities had stalled in the recent past. However, the SPD mentioned that this situation had been dealt with and there were no further issues with the release of funds. 19% of the AWPB financial target for DPEP I has been spent, for DPEP II only 25 percent of the Rs. 124 crores allocated for 2004-05 has been spent by September 2004. The range for district level expenditure of the allocated funds is from 9 percent in Warangal, 16% in Vizianagaram, 23% in Nellore, 17% in Kurnool and 27% in Karimnagar. These districts are covered under DPEP I which are due to close in March 2005. The State office has spent only 12 percent of its allocated funds in DPEP I, and 9 % in DPEP II. While the lag in expenditure can be explained by the late release of funds by the State and the considerable over budgeting in the AWPB, if the full credit available is to be utilized by project closing, there is clearly a need to improve project expenditure. It will be crucial for the State authorities and SPO to ensure that these funds are fully utilized. GoAP must release its share of the funds – which has been an issue in the recent past for implementation of certain components of the project. As DPEP I will be coming to an end by March 2005, it is essential that the state authorities develop strategies to expedite the necessary expenditure and complete the necessary components as quickly as possible. As the State has done some good progress within the past two months, they maybe able to expedite a major chunk of the funds in the next few months in DPEP I.

4.3 The SPO has introduced a monthly monitoring system of implementation and attainment of financial targets at the district level. Monthly monitoring involved the filling out of detailed

category-wise budget and expenditure. In addition, each state office sectoral staff had been assigned one districts, which he or she had to monitor closely by spending about 10-15 days each month in that district. This process had begun six months back and was expected to improve the implementation of AWPBs at the district level. But the delay in the release of state funds has created some gaps in expenditure and the stalling of some civil works in the districts. The overall completion rate of civil works is 53% in DPEP I, 92% in DPEP II. Physical progress of civil works in DPEP I have been 64% for school buildings, 46% additional classrooms constructed, 66% for toilets constructed and 33% for drinking water facilities provided. The civil works related expenditures have been better in the DPEP II.

- 4.4 53 of the sanctioned 132 sanctioned posts in DPEP I, 176 of the 342 sanctioned posts in DPEP II are currently vacant. The project needs to urgently review whether these vacancies are real and are affecting delays in project implementation. But the lack of capacity of key staff in certain areas at the state level was evident during interaction with the mission. There is a need to recruit staff, especially at the district level, with adequate computer, statistical and financial management skills. In addition, the project may wish to explore the recruitment of additional senior level staff at the State project office so that they are able to provide proper guidance to the district project staff as well effectively monitor the implementation of project interventions in DPEP districts. There is also a need to strengthen the research/evaluation and MIS competencies at the State Project Office. In order to ensure that lessons learnt in DPEP are shared with the SSA and the whole school education sector, it is essential that there is convergence/merger of the DPEP office with the Commissionerate of School Education. In addition, convergence will facilitate more effective institutional collaboration (especially SCERT and DIETs) at different levels.
- 4.5 During interaction with the state level sectoral staff and the APCs of all districts of the project, it was evident that there were lots of gaps in understanding of the basic indicators like the dropout rates, transitions rates, and retention rates. The data collection, compilation and analysis are currently done in a mechanical manner. When the mission probed further to understand as to why the dropout rates looked so negative, it so turned out that the project staff did not have information to track students after they dropped out from the DPEP schools. Most of the staff had confusion about the commonly used indicator within DPEP. The mission feels that there are serious gaps in understanding of the basic concepts of DPEP – maybe because of a high turnover of the key staff. The state office should build capacities of these frontline staff in the key indicators used in DPEP and SSA. The project should develop some mechanism to improve the integrity of the data provided to the mission and GoI. Currently there are serious issues with the data collection and compilation within the project. There is lack of capacity within the state office to understand the issues comprehensively. This should be done by recruiting specialised staff in MIS, possibly from the open market, to sort out the data issues before the completion of the project. The mission emphasises the need to validate the consistency and quality of data through annual, independent checks based on a five percent sample.
- 4.6 The SPO has been emphasising that there has been participatory planning of AWPBs starting with Habitation Education Plans, following by Mandal, District and State Education Plans. The formation of Habitation Education Plans involves teachers and School Committee members. However, this level of participatory planning was not clearly enunciated during the mission's district visit. Two issues that the mission observed indicates that planning was not as effective as it should have been. The first issue is the problem with the EMIS data at both the State and district levels. However, Nizamabad seemed quite organised with data issues and were able to provide all necessary data to the mission. This has been possible due to the effective leadership of the DEO in that district. Interaction with the district staff showed that too much data is collected without much emphasis on its use and applicability. Likely due to the attention given by the

department of education to State level data collection, the emphasis on the maintenance and use of DISE data, especially at the district level, has been relatively limited in previous years. As a result there were considerable discrepancies and contradictions in the DISE data, which the SPO now had to deal with. More seriously, data availability and use at the district and MRC level requires urgent attention. The second issue is the surplus teachers observed across schools visited during the last mission, which suggests that contractual hiring has been taking place without much planning and analysis of enrolment trends. Both these issues are only indicative that the AWPBs may not be representing real concerns and including significant activities. It would be worthwhile to examine AWPBs more closely to understand the effectiveness of planning taking place at district and sub-district levels. Third is the inadequate emphasis to the availability of functional toilets and acceptable drinking water facilities within the school premises.

4.7 During interactions with the teachers at a teacher centre meeting, it was evident that there was need for more innovative and substantial discussions during these meetings. They formed into groups and discussed the difficult lessons in the text books/curriculum. The mission felt that they could spend this time developing innovative methods/ideas for teaching certain topics in the curriculum. The mission gave a practical demonstration by taking one of the topics for discussion. The Mandal Resource Persons (MRPs) could play a leadership role during these TC meetings in a proactive manner. The roles and responsibilities of the Mandal Resource Centres and MRPs, needs re-examination. A visit to a few MRCs in the district suggests that MRPs have ceased to perform tasks originally intended for them namely, to motivate and provide academic support to teachers. Similarly, the Mandal Education Officers (MEO) are unclear as to how they fit in with the overall vision and objectives of DPEP or the SSA. Role definitions and capacity building of the MRCs require urgent attention in project districts. Some assessments of whether they have the required skills, expertise and training to impart their responsibilities needs to be carried out by the SPO. Interaction with several MRPs showed that it was practically difficult for them to report about a fellow colleague to the MEO. They did not seem to have competencies in all subjects to be able to advise all teachers in adopted schools. The mission suggests that the project adopt a slightly different method to address these issues. Instead of having one MRP provide academic support to all the teachers in adopted schools, they should become subject experts and work together in the whole mandal as a team. This will ensure that the reporting of teachers' performance is done as a team. This will also ensure that they develop some real capacities in specialised areas. They would, in the long run, developed strengthened capacities in specialised areas and have better self-esteem in advisory capacities in front of their teacher colleagues. MRPs' capacities with regard to data analysis and spot academic support to the teachers & VVs also need to be built. There is a need to involve them in tracking children's dropout and academic progress.

4.8 The DIET visited appeared to be adequately staffed and functional. The principal of this DIET, however, mentioned that many of her staff was on deputation to other programmes within the department. The capacity of DIET faculty could be further developed, particularly in research methodology. However some of the teachers within DPEP have undertaken action research initiatives to understand different aspects of the project. The involvement of the teachers in such activities specifically impressed the mission. The DIET faculty need to play a leadership role in guiding these action research projects at the district level. This will serve dual purpose – first it will enable the faculty to be in touch with the real issues at the classroom level, second it will also allow the teachers to get some guidance from these staff.

5. Next Steps

5.1 The mission recommends that the understanding and internalisation of quality indicators developed for reflecting competencies of children at each grade level should be enhanced

amongst teachers and the district staff. Consistency in understanding will enable the teachers to ensure that children develop these competencies and for the monitoring staff to measure against these competencies .

- 5.2 The project staff is doing a lot of good work by involving the community to realise the full potentials of DPEP. There are other projects in other parts of India that have established best practices in involving the community. The Shikshakarmi project is a good example of such practices. The APDPEP should send their staff to projects like these for exposure visits before the completion of the DPEP I.
- 5.3 The SPO and the education department have to look for alternate and innovative mechanisms to ensure that teachers are not involved too much on non-teaching duties.
- 5.4 The infrastructure required for Management Information System both at the state and the district level will have to be in full strength urgently for effective and dependable data collection, analysis and integration in planning process.
- 5.5 The project needs to take some decisions regarding the inequitable status of the Vidya Volunteers – in terms of their pay (which is currently much below the minimum wages as per the minimum wages act), training, TLM grants and also participation at the TC meetings.
- 5.6 Most importantly, the mission cannot but emphasise the importance of giving high priority to the component of integrated education for the disabled. This aspect has been considerably neglected in AP DPEP. This needs to be addressed by ensuring that the state office capacity is built to provide adequate leadership to the districts – through community based approaches of sensitising teachers and linking up with the other projects like Velugu and possibly recruiting a person with appropriate skills to provide direction to the project in this particular topic.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
TWENTIETH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Gujarat State Report
(November 29 – December 13, 2004)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Twentieth Joint Review Mission team consisting of G.C. Upadhyay (GOI) and Deepa Sankar (WB) visited Gujarat from December 1- 7, 2004 to track progress on the status of project outcomes and indicators in terms of the identified targets, with respect to the stated objectives of the DPEP i.e. expanding access, quality with equity and strengthening of institutional capacity. In addition, the mission also looked at the project specific issues in terms of implementation, particularly from the perspective of their imminent closure. At the state level, the team had intensive discussions with the State Project Director and the personnel at the State Project Office, the District Project Officers from the districts not visited by the team (Kutchh and Surendranagar). The team visited the Gujarat Council of Education Research and Training) and interacted with the faculty. The team visited the district Sabarkantha where the team interacted with the District Project Officer and his team. The mission visited the DIET in Idar, four schools in Mathasur, Padhara, Pedhmala and Thumra, one Alternative Learning Centre in Maravadvivas, and attended the observation of the World Disabled day at the school in Posina after visiting the on-going construction of Staff quarters. The team interacted with the DIET personnel, the teachers and students in the schools, the parents, community, MTA members, PTA members and the members of the Village Education Committees. The team also had meetings with the BRC and CRC members.
- 1.2 The Mission appreciates the documentation and database shared by the SPO and DPO, which facilitated the mission to assess the implementation progress. The mission expresses its gratitude to the officials of the State Project Director and her entire team at the State and District levels for facilitating the field visits and interaction with all significant stakeholders of DPEP and for extending generous hospitality to the team.

1.3 Actions taken on the 18th JRM recommendations

- 1.3.1 The State was not visited since the Eighteenth JRM held during November 25-30, 2003. The Eighteenth JRM had urged the state to develop a holistic vision with regard to the retention of girls along with a comprehensive gender policy. The NPEGEL program implemented along with the DPEP and SSA is addressing these issues now. The mission had also pointed out the need to address the issue of under representation of female teachers in certain districts and in rural areas. Of the new teachers appointed in the DPEP districts, more than 30 percent are female teachers.
- 1.3.2 The Eighteenth JRM also recommended that there is a need to address the Multi-Grade situation in many schools. With the appointment of 1600 *vidya sahayaks* and the building of around 558 new classrooms, the state no longer has prevalence of large scale multi-grade situations.
- 1.3.3 With regard to quality issues, the Eighteenth JRM also urged the state to address learning achievement issues with focus on the continuous assessment system. The project has initiated many devices which are elaborated later.

2. Access and Enrolment

- 2.1 *Physical access:* The Gujarat State has been successful in ensuring relatively higher levels of access of school facilities to its child population. The state has achieved this by opening a primary school within the 1 KM norm in the entire state. There are no unserved habitations in the districts under reference. There are no EGS centers in the State. For providing access to out-of-school children, a total of 546 Alternative Centers are functioning in the state under the Back-to-School program.
- 2.2 *Enrolment:* The enrolment rates in the three DPEP districts of the state are also quite satisfactory with more than 95 percent of the 6-11 age group in school. There has been steady increase in enrolment during the last 3 years as a result of effective mass mobilization programs. The enrolment has increased by nearly 40,000 during the last three years. From nearly 89 percent enrolment in 2002-03, it has increased to 95 percent in 2004-05. The share of SC, ST and OBC children in the total enrolments have increased over the years, and so is the share of girls enrolment. In the schools visited by the JRM team in the ST and OBC villages, the VECs reported that there are no out-of-school children in their villages. Around 10,800 children are being covered under the AS centers, of which more than 50 percent are girls. Around 1000 students were mainstreamed till October 2004, of which 53 percent are girls. The survey of disabled carried out during December 2003 showed that a total of 10611 children with special needs are enrolled in DPEP districts. The project has also provided ECCE centers (452 in three DPEP districts) where there is no ICDS / Anganwadi centres. This measure has facilitated children who used to be out of school for sibling care to attend school as well as providing a convergent approach to the provision of services.
- 2.3 *Out of School Children:* However, around 19,000 children, which forms around 4.9% of the children in the age group of 6-11 years are out-of-school and they need to be brought to the schools during this year, this task being a tough one as they are the hardest to reach and girls form around 62 percent of these out-of-school children. The process of opening new ALS centers to cover the remaining out-of-school children are evident in Sabarkantha, though it was reported that in the other two DPEP IV districts, the identification of *Balmitras* and their training is yet to take place. The State have devised many strategies to get the out-of-school children into school such as the Child-Tracking System, *Toli Nayak* or team leader system, up-scaling of community participation and specific programs aimed at girls education. Special enrollment drive for girls, *Kanya Kelavani Rath Yathra*, especially in those villages where the female literacy was low, was led by the State Ministers themselves. This led to massive increase in enrolment and the interaction with MTA/PTA/VEC members reiterated the impact these programs had on the increase in enrolment in the state.
- 2.4 *Repetition, Retention and reduction in Drop outs:* The main challenges in terms of access and opportunities for learning is now related to the issues of retention, reducing drop-outs and ensuring completion of the primary cycle of education. Around 10 percent of the students in the three DPEP IV districts were repeaters, though the rate varied across districts. While the repeaters were around 6 percent of the total enrolment in Sabarkantha district, in Kutchh and Surendranagar, the repetition rates were more than 10 percent. The drop out rate has fallen to around five percent in Sabarkantha and Kutchh, while in Surendranagar, it is still a bit more than five percent. There is significant reduction in the drop out of girls, for example, in Sabarkantha, the drop out rates of girls reduced from 8.7 percent in 2002-03 to 5.5 percent in 2003-04. It is found that the enrolment, drop out and retention rates vary within districts across blocks and villages. For example, in Sabarkantha district where the team visited, the drop out rates varied from 9.5 percent in Khedbrhma block to around 2 percent in Himmatnagar.

2.5 *Tracking the Child*: The state has initiated efforts to track the progress of children enrolled in terms of their retention, repetition and completion of schooling. The state has introduced a "migration card" system for children who leave the school in between an academic year/at the end of an academic year to join some other school in other locations. This migration card consists of all the information related to the child, including the marks in the assessment tests. These migration cards serve the purpose of transfer certificates and help to track the child even if he/she leaves a particular school.

3. Progress on Ensuring Quality with Equity and Improved Learning Levels

- 3.1 *Provision of desirable learning conditions*: Under the DPEP project, the districts in the State have been provided with educational and physical facilities that should be there to facilitate the Basic Learning Conditions, as per the state definition. In all the schools visited, the school premises and class-rooms were well designed, clean, well-lit and with good air circulation, and child-friendly. Barring a few schools, all schools are provided with drinking water facility, separate urinal/toilet facilities for girls and teachers, a play ground and good TLMs. Under the Earth quake rehabilitation scheme, schools were provided slides and swings in the schools, providing additional environment for joyful learning, and which are liked by students and used by them. Given their value addition to the school life, these equipments require continuous maintenance. There is still a problem of multi-grade teaching in some of the regular schools.
- 3.2 *Special schemes and courses for encouraging retention*: For encouraging retention of the girl child in the school, an innovative scheme, *Vidya Laxmi Yojana* is launched in the state wherein a bond of Rs.1000/- is purchased in the name of the girl to be given to the girl child after she passes Grade VII without dropping out in between. To address the problem of comparatively high repetition figures, the state has introduced Bridge Courses (meant to mainstream temporary drop outs) within the school system. While the mission is appreciative of these courses, the real impact of these courses needs to be assessed. Under the Mid-day meal scheme, cooked meals of different varieties are provided to children in all the primary schools. There are three personnel allotted to manage the MDM in schools, viz, an organizer, a cook and a helper. The management of MDM was found to be very effective.
- 3.3 The provision of ECCE facilities in 452 locations where *Anganwadis* do not exist have facilitated not only the enrolment of children between 3-5 years in these ECCE centers, but also has facilitated elder girls to attend schools by taking away the responsibility of sibling care from them. The ALSs need greater attention in terms of quality, as they constitute a great heterogeneity and deprivation among children. The higher the quality of ALS the higher will be mainstreaming and retention of children in regular school. There is a need to look into the quality of existing ALS centers.
- 3.4 *Special efforts for tribal population*: To facilitate the schooling of the tribal population in the state (around 14% of the population), the special TLMs developed by the state under DPEP II, now extended to DPEP IV is extended to the tribal pockets and teachers are trained to use them.
- 3.5 *Integrated Education for Disabled*: An assessment of children with special needs was carried out during an assessment camp at Sabarkantha as well as in other districts. The state is going to provide aids and appliances for children with special needs at the end of the assessment camps during December 2004. Construction of ramps in all new school buildings and rooms are now carried out. This is helping to retain children with special needs in the school. IED training needs to be imparted to more teachers as per the requirement. In some of the schools the team visited, the VECs and schools reported that special teachers who could train children

with visual disabilities have been appointed who visit schools on particular days to train the students who have visual impairment.

- 3.6 Improved Pupil-Teacher Ratio:** The para-teachers in Gujarat are known as *Vidya Sahayaks*. Unlike in other states, they are regular, qualified teachers employed on a fixed but lower scale than the regular teacher for a maximum period of 5 years. They are absorbed in the system against any vacancy available as teachers retire. The project office reported that around 3000 vacant posts existed in the three DPEP districts against the sanctioned posts for elementary sections. With the appointment of another batch of new teachers under the *Vidya Sahayaka Yojana* from December 1, 2004, the existing vacant posts are expected to dwindle. The Pupil-Teacher Ratio has improved in the DPEP IV districts and the current PTR is much lower than the national average of 40. All the single-teacher schools have been converted into two-teacher schools in the DPEP IV districts. More than half of the teachers currently in the state are female teachers, while in the DPEP districts, they are more than 30 percent.
- 3.7 Attendance of students and teachers:** All schools visited by the JRM team displayed details of the schools and VEC/MTA/PTA. The interactions with the members of the local communities, VEC, MTA and PTA reported intensified joint efforts to ensure regular attendance of the children in schools. However, the schools, those in the backward areas reported that some children are irregular due to certain domestic compulsions, such as those children who help the family in seasonal agricultural activities. Overall, the emphasis is laid on the creation of a joyful environment and basic learning conditions to attract the children to school. There is a visible positive attitudinal changes in teachers and improved pedagogy which goes a long way in ensuring better classroom transaction leading to regular attendance and subsequent retention of the children. The VECs, MTA and PTA reported that they also monitor the regular attendance of teachers. To address teacher's problem in commuting, teacher quarters are being provided in some tribal pockets. The staff quarters for teachers in remote areas are under construction in selected locations in the DPEP districts. This will ensure that those teachers not hailing from the village could get accommodation near the schools.
- 3.8 Learning Achievement assessment:** The GAP (Gujarat Achievement at Primary), tests, administered by GCERT in every two years in order to assess the State level scenario on learning achievement, is a unique feature of Gujarat DPEP project. This exercise is conducted for all the grades in all subjects using the random sampling method in 50% of the blocks in the State. DIET is involved in this exercise. This is being undertaken consistently since 1998 and has shown improvement in learning achievement across the districts. As the Mid Term Assessment Survey is yet to be undertaken, there is no data to compare the achievement levels of children over the Baseline Survey in DPEP IV districts. However, GCERT has sponsored a series of research projects, titled "Profiles of Academic Achievement of the Primary School children of Gujarat". Research project series GAP-I (1998-99), GAP-2 (2000-01) and GAP-3 (2002-03) were conducted by Bhavnagar University, GCERT and DIETs. The results of the studies indicate that there is increase in learning achievement from 48.08 percent to 54.14 percent. The Mission also made observation on learning of children in the schools visited and found that they are not learning at grade level.
- 3.9** As part of the monitoring of the learning in the Classroom and to assess the achievement levels of the children in various subjects in primary schools, it was reported that the Monthly Achievement Tests were administered in one cluster in each of the six DPEP districts. The monitoring is being done by the CPCs in their respective schools. However, the system for monitoring learning achievement is yet to evolve and the indicators for monitoring learning achievement have to be evolved so as to become the part of the system. At the school level, the pupil achievement is assessed by periodic terminal tests based on the question papers

prepared at the district level. The results of these are fed into a progress card which is also prepared and printed at the district level uniformly and distributed.

- 3.10 *Teachers training:* For facilitating teaching and learning in primary grades in different dialects, TLMs and supplementary materials are developed. A total of 90,995 man days of teachers training were conducted in six DPEP IV Districts on Multi-grade Teaching, hard spots, CRG, Action Research, preparation of TLM etc.
- 3.11 *Increased participation of community in school activities / accountability of schools to community:* The interactions with the VECs / PTA / MTA revealed the increased involvement of the community in school affairs and a sense of ownership from the community part. The community also monitor the functioning of the school, meet regularly and discuss issues related to studies. It is quite an encouraging sign that while interacting with the local community, the JRM team noticed that the discussions are moved beyond getting children into school to higher level objectives, i.e., the community is now more concerned with the quality issues in teaching and learning. Increased transparency in the administration of the schools with a view to involve community was also sensed as schools were found displaying the details of various grants received, the contributions of the community and how the funds were utilized. The village facilities mapping and school mapping activities are carried out in all districts with the joint efforts of schools and community organizations.

4. Progress on Enhancing Institutional Capacity and on Project Implementation Objectives

- 4.1 *Staffing positions at state and district level:* The Mission is impressed with the progress under DPEP-IV in terms of establishing the staff and structures in place at all levels. All the key positions in the Project are now filled up, though two vacant posts at the State office and five in the districts still exist. However, there is no difficulty in project implementation due to paucity of manpower in DPEP districts. However, 62 posts of CRCCs out of 525 planned are vacant in 3 DPEP districts. In all the 3 DIETs, one DIET in each district, the staff strength is full. The DIETs/ BRCs/ CRCs are well equipped and the ET facilities are also in place. Filling of vacant posts of teachers (Vidya Sahayaks) has just taken place during the visit of the team.
- 4.2 *Capacity building measures:* The state coordinators for various functional areas participated in the national level workshops, orientation programs and project review meetings. As detailed earlier, teachers have also been given training on various issues. There are 225 PTTIs (primary teacher training institutions) with a capacity of 12,000 student trainees per year. The team visited DIET in Idar where 104 girls were under going PTC (primary teaching certificate) training. In future, it appears that there will be surplus primary teachers available in the state.
- 4.3 *Coordination between project and mainstream institutions:* The coordination between project and mainstream institutions like Directorate of Primary education, Directorate of School Text Book Board, GCERT, GIET and DIETs emerged as quite cordial and smooth. GSCERT, DIETs, BRCs and CRCs have established functional linkages through activities of training, research and pedagogy improvement plans. SRGs, DRGs and CRGs have been constituted to develop plans and execute them. All DIETs, BRCs, CRCs have been provided with DRS sets for two-way audio and one-way video teleconferencing and strengthening of supervision and monitoring. The co-ordination between DIETs, SPOs and DPOs is well established.
- 4.4 *Role of CRCs and BRCs:* Roles and functions of BRC/CRCs are evolving as the system of monitoring learning achievement, school development plans are evolving. The BRC and CRC coordinators are providing continuous academic support to the teachers during the monthly

meetings as well as during their visits to the schools. However, clarity in terms of roles and functions of these institutions is needed. On site guidance is provided by them on tracking the issues of hard spots and teaching them in an effective manner. Data collection for DISE and reporting of data on monitoring and supervision at various levels, participation in teleconferences, academic planning, organizing enrolment drive, conducting meetings of VECs etc were reported as some of the major activities carried out by the CRC and BRC coordinators. The facility of teleconferencing is providing opportunities to understand better the roles and responsibilities they should assume.

- 4.5 *Use of funds for Research:* The State Project Office reported that the funds earmarked for research are fully utilized by the districts. Each DIET undertakes 30 Action research studies per year in each district and 4 corporations. Four major studies that are ongoing are: (a) Impact of Sanitation Units on Enrolment and Retention of Girls in Primary Schools, (b) Impact of Mid-Day-Meal on Enrolment Retention and Health of School children at Primary level, (c) Impact of CRC monthly meeting on Teachers Empowerment, and (d) Impact of Intervention of DPEP on Enrolment Retention and Quality of Education at Primary level.
- 4.6 One of the encouraging aspects of the research activities in the state is the fact that the State functionaries distinguished between evaluation study, action research and academic research. The state has the access to research institutions for getting technical support for improving the quality of research and evaluation studies and this could be utilized for exploring the quality aspects and impact of research studies. The State Project Staff reported their experience of enhancement in their skills for planning and management of AWP&B over the project years. The planning is decentralized, participatory and more realistic.
- 4.7 *Planning, Monitoring and Management Processes:* DISE is operational and computerised in DPEP-IV. There is collated and analysed information available at state and district levels on the status of enrolment, teachers, out of school children etc at all disaggregated levels. The MIS in-charge also reported that the DISE department in the State also prepares the "School Report Cards" (similar to the District Report Cards) and the School report cards are given to the respective schools so that (a) they can keep a track of the information in their schools and (b) the reporting of data for DISE purpose is more standardized and made available to the schools. In addition to this, regular cascade mode training to grass root levels for filling information in the DISE forms are imparted in the DPEP districts. DISE data collection for 2004-05 is now completed in all districts and the data entry is expected to be over for all districts in the state by the end of December 2004. Already, workshops to share the DISE data collected is carried out up to the CRC levels. The state has also improved the quality of data collection and validation of data. Five percent of the data collected is cross checked and got validated by CASE Baroda. Discrepancies in the data collected, if any, are under the process of rectification. All DPOs and BRCs are maintaining databases. It was commendable to see that BRCs, CRCs are competent to prepare presentations and reports by themselves and effectively use the data, distance education strategies and ET.
- 4.8 These data is reportedly fed into the preparation of Annual Work Plan and Budget. Upgradation of Village Education Register is carried out every year and the VER is kept usually at the schools. The districts have also conducted household surveys and analysed data at their level. The field visit to the Sabarkantha district and the discussions with the project officials of Kutchh and Surendranagar revealed evidence for the use of this information for planning purposes at school, CRC and BRC level, especially to monitor out of school and hard to reach population. Now the next step in terms of using the data for better child tracking is to link the school wise information available in the DISE to the data obtained from the household survey for enrolment and out of school children.

- 4.9 *Project Implementation:* The State Project office is the nodal office for all the education projects including DPEP IV (which will come to a closure on June 30, 2005) as well as SSA and the NPEGEL. This ensures continuity and convergence of DPEP interventions. Regarding mainstreaming DPEP structures, the District Project Coordinator is also the District Primary Education Officer.
- 4.10 *Civil Works:* The Mission notes that the State has proceeded well in the area of civil works and is applying interesting designs. As already described, it was quite visible that the civil works were oriented towards providing the basic education-related physical conditions in a better and child-friendly manner. Class rooms, toilet and drinking water facilities, the BRC/CRC/DIET/SCERT works were carried out with aesthetic creativity and in a manner which is environment friendly. The constructions were also created with the earthquake resistance technology. Progress of Civil works include the completed and on-going construction of planned BRC and CRC structures, new schools and additional classrooms, physical facilities such as toilet-urinal blocks, drinking water and repair works.
- 4.11 *Expenditure trends:* The Gujarat DPEP IV Project was effective from September 3, 2001 and the original closing date was April 30, 2006 for an original total budget costs of 26.47 Million US Dollars. However, with an amendment made effective from November 30, 2004, the project completion date is revised to June 30, 2005 and the total project amount is revised to be 20.37 Million USD. The percentage of expenditure against the revised total project costs is around 58 percent. In the first year of DPEP IV implementation (2001/02), the spending was low due to the efforts on earthquake reconstruction activities and after that the expenditure slowly picked up. Expenditure up to March 31, 2004 amounted to Rs. 42.56 crores. This was mainly due to the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the project which is resolved now. However, the timely release of funds by the Government of Gujarat has helped the DPEP project to carry out its activities in good time. Given that the state has to spend this year's budget during the remaining seven months timely release of funds is crucial.

5. Main Recommendations

- 5.1 Since the project will be closing down in another 6-7 months, the state Project office should take efforts to speed up the activities and utilize all the available project funds.
- 5.2 Focusing on issues of quality of learning in regular schools and ALS including improving classroom transaction, enhancing teaching time and monitoring learning outcomes are the areas for future interventions.
- 5.3 Sustaining community mobilization and involvement for educational development, from planning to implementation and outcome assessment, through evolution of the mechanisms and procedures already initiated, would be highly desirable.

India
District Primary Education Programme
Twentieth Joint Review Mission

Jharkhand State Report
(1th-6st December 2004)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Twentieth Joint Review Mission (JRM), consisting of Roger Cunningham (DFID) and Prema Clarke (WB), visited Jharkhand from December 1-6 to review progress made in implementing the District Primary Education Project since the Nineteenth JRM in July 2004. The team visited the district of East Singhbhum to assess project activities. Meetings were held with the Honourable Chief Minister, Development Commissioner, the Secretary Education, the State Project Director, the Deputy District Commissioner and state and district project staff. In the district, the team visited and interacted with staff from the Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Cluster Resource Centres (CRC), School / Village Education Committees (SEC), camp schools, bridge programs, teachers and students in government primary schools and Education Guarantee Schools (EGS).
- 1.2 The mission thanks project staff, teachers, community members and students in the schools visited, for sharing with us their experiences and lessons learnt during the mission. The hospitality of both district and state project staff and the frank tenor in which the discussions were held are much appreciated. The mission appreciates the hard work and commitment of project staff to achieving the project's objectives. Clearly, the project is moving towards accomplishing its development goals. This discussion of project activities and the recommendations made are to assist project staff in fine tuning and building upon what has been implemented so far in the project.
- 1.3 **Action taken on the 19th JRM recommendations.**

Most of the recommendations of the 19th JRM are in the process of being met. The first recommendation was to strengthen the infrastructure and other facilities of EGS/Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres. EGS and AIE centres are being strengthened, in addition the state has also introduced the policy to upgrade all EGS centres to regular primary schools if the school has been functioning for two years and enrolment is more than 60. Notwithstanding it will be important to also pay close attention to developing smaller schools with less than 60 pupils. The second recommendations dealt with the setting up and strengthening of DIETs, SIEMAT and SCERT. No action has yet been taken on this; see para 4.5 below for further comment. The third recommendation was to commence independent evaluations including access, learning and programme implementation. The Terms of Reference for some of these evaluations have been prepared and contracts are to be completed by early next year.

2 Progress on Access

- 2.1 *Enrolment:* As pointed out in the last JRM, the state has made remarkable progress with regards to increases in enrolment especially through the EGS and AIE centres. The GER is reported in the EMIS as having risen from 75% in 1998/9 to 86.5% in 2003/4. The Household Survey (as at December 2003) gives a GER of 96.3%. There are no habitations now without a school. The Alternative schools that were visited by mission were clearly committed and owned the objectives of DPEP to ensure enrolment and quality education. The mission was pleased to note the extent of private partnerships for providing schooling in the district visited. The partnerships included NGOs, corporate and private providers.
- 2.2 Two sets of data are available on the project's key development objectives: the Educational Monitoring and Information System (EMIS) and the Household Survey (HHS). According to the EMIS system the number of students in regular government school has increased from 12.46 lakhs in 1998-99 to 13.82 lakhs in 2003-04. This represents an increase in actual enrolment of about 10.9 percent. In addition to children enrolled in regular primary schools, 2.75 lakh students are enrolled in EGS centres. If the number is added to the enrolment in regular primary schools the increase in enrolment is about 32 percent. Similarly, EMIS increase for girls is about 17 percent and if EGS enrolment is added it is about 42 percent. The gender differences in enrolment (EMIS) which was about 5 percent at project commencement is now 3 percent.
- 2.3 Overall SC enrolment has increased from 128415 in 1998-99 to 228299 in 2003-04, indicating a doubling of enrolment of SC children. This represents an increase of about 24 percent in regular government schools and 80 percent with EGS/GAV enrolment. Girls SC enrolment is available only for two years and this data show progress. However, the share of girls SC enrolment in regular primary schools could be improved as it is only 30 percent in 2003-04. ST enrolment has increased from 430355 in 1998-99 to 596456 in 2003-04 representing an increase of about 17 percent in regular government schools and a 38 percent increase in EGS/GAV. The share of ST girls enrolment is about 45 percent in regular primary schools.
- 2.4 *Retention and out of school children:* The Household survey (HHS) has been conducted now for the last two years. The survey captures very important information such as never enrolled, dropped out children and children with disabilities. According to the HHS for East Singhbhum, out of a 6-11 population of 287389, 2163 are never enrolled and 4901 are students that have dropped out of the system. 1,62491 are enrolled in government schools and 105953 (39 percent) in private schools. Average enrolment in private schools across DPEP districts is estimated to be about 25 percent. While dropout based on HHS appears to be negligible, if completion rate at Grade V is considered with repetition, the dropout is high: 44 percent for all students, 51 percent for SC and 46 percent for ST.
- 2.5 This situation of high dropout and the small number of out of school children needs to be probed and enumeration of dropout in the HHS defined more clearly. Perhaps, there is need to define more accurately out of school children. For example dropouts depending on the grade and year in which they dropped would provide more useful information. While the definition of how GER is calculated appears to be correct there is need to redefine the calculations of gender and social parity. The gender and social index cannot be based on percent enrolment over percent in population as the percent enrolled in government schools are not proportionate to the population. There is an overrepresentation of SC and STs in government school, which could distort the calculations. While the state has a no detention

policy, children are not allowed to move to the next grade students if for example they have joined late or have not sat for the examinations.

- 2.6 The project has come of age with reference to the availability and quality of data on primary school education. Detailed and comprehensive data is now available at the state and district levels. The project now needs to concentrate on how data can be maintained, updated and used at sub-district and grassroots levels – the BRC, the CRC, the VEC and school. In addition to the institutional analysis discussed later in this report, the intention of the project to introduce computers at the BRC level, during the next few months, could facilitate the situation. The Village Education Registers (VERs), which was first introduced last year, can be a powerful tool for VEC participation and monitoring. At present, the information contained in VERs lack clarity and validity. In addition, there is the state's *Bal Panji* or micro-planning data, which is maintained at the school level. The mission recommends that instead of the VER and *Bal Panji*, one data set be maintained at the school level. There is also a critical need to distinguish the geographic and school coverage of one VEC from the other and to ensure that accurate and comprehensive information without overlap is collected and updated each year. To check the integrity of data, the mission recommends an independent 5 percent sample check of enrolment data be done annually.

3 Progress on ensuring quality with equity and improved learning levels

- 3.1 The need to raise learning standards now emerges as the key issue for elementary education. All habitations in the project districts are now covered by a school of some description, and enrolment is approaching the universal target. But as many as half of all children either drop-out or migrate to private schools before completion of five years, suggesting that the quality of education provided in Government schools needs attention. Public opinion and informal evidence indicates that mastery of basic skills, knowledge and understanding by pupils is woefully low. The formal assessments of pupil learning available at the school, cluster and district levels need to be carefully validated, as they do not correspond to the weight of public opinion and informal assessments, including that undertaken as part of this mission. Notwithstanding, the project continues to make progress in addressing the issue of learning achievement through the provision of learning resources, teacher training, school based support and supervision and periodic assessment to gauge progress. It is commendable that the PTR in Jharkhand has reduced from 1:54 in 2002 to 1:39 in 2004.
- 3.2 The 19th JRM presented a comprehensive picture of the range of strategies being employed. This mission also notes the significant efforts being made through extensive training programmes, school supervision and support processes, and the provision of teaching and learning resources, all of which should be translating into improved learning achievement. The current mission does not intend to reiterate these, nor reproduce information found in the comprehensive state reports; rather we make some specific recommendations based on discussions and observations on a few key aspects of the drive for improved quality. These are based around the notion that learning achievement is conditioned by regular and sound pedagogy, the availability of appropriate materials, ample opportunity for student practice to ensure mastery of curriculum and careful assessment of progress.
- 3.3 It is difficult to quantify the number of training days provided to teachers (both regular and para), but suffice to say that huge efforts are being made to upgrade skills and understanding. This is being done through a number of ways - the use of radio, Distance Education courses through IGNOU, and in-service programmes of varying duration from one to ten days. Areas covered include subject specific maths "hard spots", Language teaching, practical science,

and basic foundation training for para teachers, and bridge materials for tribal children. Evaluation of this training, to see the extent to which it translates into improved classroom practice and, more importantly, improved learning, is largely anecdotal and subjective. The mission recommends that a formal, independent evaluation of teacher and VEC training be carried out, with a view to determining what works best in particular circumstances and what might be done to improve the focus and impact of training.

- 3.4 An innovative feature of DPEP Jharkhand has been the development of a structure and process for improving school supervision and support. The regular visits by project and Government officers in schools serve the dual purpose of monitoring standards and progress as well as being a catalyst for improvement by providing advice and guidance. The project has developed a number of instruments to ensure visits by both block and cluster personnel examine and report consistently on key aspects of school performance. The mission found a range of approaches to school visits being used by various officers, but little or no communication or follow up of results with those who might use the information to promote change. There is a need to develop and use a common tool (or set of tools) to improve the consistency of both enquiry and information.
- 3.5 Based on the *Quality Monitoring Tool (QMT)* being developed and piloted in a number of clusters as a sound basis for effective school monitoring, the mission recommends four basic actions to improve monitoring performance. Firstly, there is a need to fine tune/revise the instrument(s) that are currently being used. For example, simple yes/no reporting as in the case of the frequency and quality of checking exercise books/worksheets does not add value. There is a need to ensure fuller comment on key aspects relating to pupil learning. Secondly, those who visit schools need to have strong observational techniques and feedback skills if improvement is to result from visits. These skills need to be developed. Thirdly, the information gathered from these instruments needs to be more widely and quickly shared between those who have an interest and influence in school improvement at all levels, including DEOs, DSEs and DPCs as well as those nearer the school - Headteachers, VEC Chairpersons, CRCCs and BEOs. Finally, it would be helpful to develop a system for grading schools based on the outcomes of supervisory visits, so that focus of effort can be placed where it is most needed on those schools known to be performing less well. Better performing schools require less support and supervision.
- 3.6 Textbook provision has been supported by the development of worksheets which provide structured learning practice for pupils and, properly used, an important record of pupil progress. Schools visited were using and recording worksheets in an appropriate way. Presently the coverage is restricted to 10,500 schools in sample blocks; this should be expanded state wide. The importance of providing pupils with sufficient practice to master skills and concepts cannot be overstated, and the worksheets are an important development in this regard. Some caution needs to be exercised however in interpreting completion of worksheets and other exercises as mastery. Observation in one class found answers already written in workbooks (by a previous user) and children simply copying. When independently tested some pupils were unable to perform the task that they were assigned, yet their exercise book would suggest they could. A simple check of the book by the teacher would avoid this, and this needs to be more adequately covered in the QMT. If the workbook is to be reused it will be important not to allow children to write in it.
- 3.7 The project has developed kits to promote a more practical approach to science, maths and co-curricular activities. Over 14,000 schools have now been covered under a library scheme. The project are also developing a range of additional materials in tribal languages. The TLM

grant of Rs. 500 per teacher does not appear to be being allocated as specified; schools visited reported receiving set amounts of Rs. 1000 for primary and Rs. 1500 for middle, irrespective of size and number of teachers. The mission suggests that this issue be looked into and Rs. 500 is provided to each teacher as a TLM grant.

- 3.8 Student achievement is formally and routinely measured in a number of ways. All schools visited by the mission conducted monthly tests, and pupils marks are registered. Gradewise annual examination results are compiled in all clusters in three achievement categories (A – 60%+; B – 40%-59%; and C- below 39%). This covers subjects of Maths, Language, English and EVS. Analysis of the 2003-04 annual examinations for East Singhbhum District show that in Class 3 Language, 34% were either not entered or scored below 39%, and similarly 30% in maths. The mission's visits to classrooms indicated that about half the children in Grade 3 did not know the basic mathematical concepts that were to be mastered in Grade 2 such as addition, subtraction and multiplication. More than a third of the students were unable to write and comprehend simple sentences in language. These results would suggest significantly lower levels of achievement than revealed in the annual examinations. It is also evident that each child's abilities are not being fully assessed due to the practice of copying each other's work, suggesting that tighter invigilation of tests and examinations might produce cleaner, more reliable results. It is important that the state gain a reliable, and independent picture of pupil achievement through an objective sample learning assessment, in addition to the terminal assessment planned as part of project completion activities.
- 3.9 Discussion on quality and learning achievement is not complete without attention to the issue of teacher absence. The role of the teacher is pivotal, and substantial investments are being made under DPEP in expanding and enhancing their numbers and skills. The absence of teachers on official election duty during the general election, and again for the pending state election effectively removes a substantial number of teachers from their schools for weeks on end. Schools visited reported having experienced this. Some had found ways of staying open through the use of volunteer and temporary para teachers, other schools were reported as effectively having closed during this period. It is understood that reducing teacher absence is beyond the scope of the project, however, the mission would like to underscore the fact that the impact of DPEP specifically with respect to student learning will only be fully realized if this issue is addressed.

4 Progress on enhancing institutional capacity

- 4.1 Capacity building efforts have focussed predominantly on the provision of training for key officials (e.g. CRCC, BRCC, RP) and bodies (e.g. VEC) and has included critical areas such as planning, monitoring, time management, team building, data collection processes, and financial management. A range of providers have been involved including XLRI Jamshedpur, NIEPA and NIAR, Mussorie. Whilst individual skills and competencies have doubtless been increased as a result of these activities (though there has been no formal assessment) the mission team formed the view that collaboration and coordination between various functionaries could be strengthened. This is particularly important where Government and project functionaries are concerned, where observation and enquiry points to a lack of convergence.
- 4.2 Roles, responsibilities and working practices of key officials at Block and District level need to be more mutually supporting, with greater coherence in work planning and execution, as well as improved information sharing, particularly with regard to school performance. The importance of retaining and developing existing and new staff cannot be overstated, and

suggestions brought to the attention of the mission to introduce a new cadre of BRC and CRC staff needs to carefully considered.

- 4.3 The mission interacted with a number of VEC members and noted their increased involvement in school affairs in a number of places. In the absence of a Panchayat system in the state, the role of VECs in providing local control and accountability assumes greater importance. Their effectiveness will depend on sustained capacity building, in particular the development of skills in monitoring pupil performance. VECs now certify para teacher attendance as a precondition for payment of salary. The move to ensure a similar mandate for regular government teachers is a potentially significant step to counter the chronic problem of teacher absenteeism. Equally, the requirement to advertise widely para teacher vacancies improves transparency and reduces nepotism. The mission would further suggest that the criteria for selection of regular teachers includes some attention to location of the applicant (rather than solely being based on academic qualification) to reduce the problem of poor attendance due to travel. Evidence points to teachers being more accountable and productive if they are drawn from within (or close to) the community they serve.
- 4.4 Whilst the majority of project staffing positions within the project are filled, there has been a recent spate of transfers, particularly at Block level, which point to the need for some immediate succession training. Out of a total of 104 BEO / BRCCs, some 46 are newly appointed. There needs to be some immediate effort in orientation and training of these officers to develop an understanding of the vision and objectives of DPEP and to ensure continuity of effort. In the long-term there is need to institutionalize regular management training to address staff turnover and training needs.
- 4.5 The state is still considering the issue of the establishment of a SCERT/SIEMAT. The mission included a visit to Ranchi DIET and was impressed by the way in which it functions. Unlike many DIETS which have a large permanent establishment of faculty staff (with all the attendant problems of cost and tenure), Ranchi DIET operates on a "satellite" model, retaining only three permanent staff and drawing in on a needs basis resource persons as necessary to accomplish the range of tasks. This has the double advantage of keeping costs down as well as being able to identify and co-opt the specialists that they require to take forward specific initiatives. The competitive way in which they identify and secure these resource persons is highly innovative. In this way there is a clear preference for proven performance over and above academic qualification. It is important to consider function before determining structure for SCERT, and a similar model of outsourcing management training needs could be explored instead of establishing a SIEMAT. In addition, the state could consider introducing a small policy and planning unit to support the analysis of education across the state.
- 4.6 The mission recommends that greater effort is made to involve women at all levels of the project. Formal primary schools visited consisted of predominantly male staff, whereas EGS/AIE were almost exclusively female. Block and Cluster level functionaries are male dominated, as are resource persons. The Science and Maths master trainer groups met at the Ranchi DIET were exclusively male. The majority of VEC members met during the visit were male. Ways have to be found to facilitate the entry of women into these cadres; it is not acceptable to pass their absence off with reference to the ties of domestic duties preventing their mobility. A specific gender perspective should be part of the proposed institutional study recommended above.

5 Project implementation

- 5.1 Sufficient funds are available from GoI (Rs. 61.4 crores) and GoJ (Rs 1.6 crores) for project implementation. Total project amount is Rs. 386.7 crores of which Rs. 238 crores has been spent as of Nov 30, 2004. The AWP&B allocation for this financial year is Rs. 141.8 crores of which about 36 percent has been spent. When compared to expenditure during the April to October quarter of last year, which was Rs. 28.5 crores expenditure this quarter is higher at Rs. 51 crores. The mission was provided an expenditure plan for the remaining months of this financial year, which indicates that all funds allocated in this year's AWP&B will be spent. While project staff are optimistic, the mission is not convinced that Rs. 90 crores can be spent within the next four months, especially taking into account the forthcoming state elections.
- 5.2 If overall category-wise budget and expenditure is considered, the amount allocated for Category 1 (civil works), Category 3 (Textbooks) and Category 5 (Incremental costs) appears to be adequate. However, the allocation for Category 2 (Goods, materials and equipment) appear to be over budgeted and Category 4 (Consultants and training), under-budgeted. This suggests that, keeping in mind the need to improve learning in schools, the allocations across Categories needs to be examined.

6 Next Steps To be developed

- 6.1 Examine data maintained at the village/school level including the VERS and the *Bal Panji* and introduce a unitary system that is more effective. 5 percent sample check EMIS data by an independent agency.
- 6.2 Further development of the quality monitoring tool to improve monitoring of standards and the effectiveness of advice and guidance to schools.
- 6.3 An independent evaluation of the effectiveness of VEC and teacher training.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
TWENTIETH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Rajasthan State Report
(November 29 – December 13, 2004)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A mission comprised of C. Chandramohan (GOI), Tara Srinivasan (UNICEF), N.K. Jangira and Nalin Jena (WB) visited Rajasthan during November 29-December 13, 2004 to review progress both in first and second phases of Rajasthan DPEP. The mid-term review (MTR) of the second phase was also conducted. For the MTR of the second phase, Vishal Gandhi, Financial Management consultant (World Bank) visited the State to review financial management. Specific objectives of the Review Mission were to assess progress on (i) access; (ii) quality with equity and improved learning levels; (iii) enhancing institutional capacity and project implementation; and (iv) to conduct MTR for Rajasthan DPEP II.
- 1.2 The mission met with the Secretary of Education, State Project Director, and representative stakeholders at all levels-state to school/community levels. The list of places visited and people is in Annex-1. The mission thanks the project authorities for their hospitality and cooperation in making the review successful.
- 1.3 Structure of the Rajasthan State Report : This report is presented in three parts with a common introduction section. Part I refers to Rajasthan DPEP I. Part II refers to Rajasthan DPEP II and Part III refers to review of financial management component both in Rajasthan DPEP I and II.
- 1.4 **Actions taken on the 19th JRM recommendations**
- 1.4.1 Capacity building of newly recruited staff : Recently, all newly recruited Block Resource Center Facilitators (BRCF) and Cluster Resource Center Facilitators CRCF) have received a ten-day and a six-day trainings respectively at district level. Most of the newly recruited staff could not join, as the Court of Law clamped a stay on the recruitment.
- 1.4.2 Data validation and management: The State Project Office would undertake five percent sample check of District Information System on Education (DISE) data by an independent agency before the next JRM. The State had recruited Management Information System (MIS) experts for state as well as some district offices, but, again the Court has placed a stay on the recruitment.
- 1.4.3 Equity related issues: While the State has initiated a number of interventions in order to address equity issues with regard to access, little actions seemed to have been taken to monitor equity inside the classroom with specific focus on achievement of learning levels.
- 1.4.4 Monitoring of quality : The State does not seem to have made much efforts in implementing the specific recommendation in this respect.

PART I - RAJASTHAN DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT:

2. Progress on Access

- 2.1 Each district carried out a survey of all children in the catchments area using the newly developed Child Tracking system. All out-of-school children were identified and effort made to bring him/her to school. Bridge courses were organized for bringing back adolescent girls to schools, and "never enrolled" children were enrolled into the formal primary schools, alternative schools and Rajiv Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas (RGSJPs) and Shiksha Mitra Kendras. The districts of Jhunjhunu and Sikar have less than 1000 out of school children. The districts of Kota, Shri Ganganagar, Nagaur, Jhalawar and Bhilwara have out-of-school children ranging from 1000- 2000. Only Sirohi had more than 2000 out of school children. Most of these hard-to-reach children are from migratory families, tribal communities, children with disabilities, children engaged in labor and minority community. The schools are cognizant of the whereabouts of all children in the catchments area and the reasons for their non-enrollment and drop out. SDMCs and school teachers are following up with the concerned families to bring them to school. A senior student of class V is made a "Toli" (group) leader responsible for regular attendance of 10-12 children. She visits homes of absentee children and motivates them to attend. A similar innovation called "Sakha-Sakhi" (friends) in Kota district and Bal Manch in Tonk is practiced for the same purpose. Cooked mid-day meals seems to have improved enrollment, attendance, and retention, since it was available in all schools.
- 2.2 Retention rate in the district of Jhunjhunu improved from 55% in year 2001-02, through 68% in 2002-03 to 73% in 2003-04. Average retention rate is 46% with Kota, Sikar and Jhalawar showing retention rates of over 50%. The lowest retention rates are in the districts of Sri Ganganagar, Tonk and Bhilwara. There is a discrepancy between retention rate, out-of-school children, and enrollment which needs to be reconciled and explained in the next months. One reason for distortion in retention rate seems to be enrollment of under-age children in Class I, which ranges between 20 % to 30%. The percentage of under-age children is higher where ECE centers are not available and where Anganwadis are not functioning or not within close proximity of the primary school. These underage children are usually detained in grade I itself. Student attendance on the day of Mission visit ranged from 70% to 100%. About 10% of the RGSJPs have been upgraded to primary schools since the last JRM. More eligible RGSJPs are expected to be upgraded during the next six months as more regular primary teacher vacancies are filled after lifting of the Court stay.
- 2.3 The progress in construction of schools, additional classrooms, toilets, and repair work is good. About 98% of the civil works have been completed and the remaining are in progress which are expected to be completed during the next six months. Out of the 9 Schools /RGSJPs /AS visited by the Mission, one school did not have functional drinking water scheme (water harvesting structure) which was damaged by flooding from excessive rains this year. Toilets were available in all primary schools except in one RGSJP and one AS. The district project offices were urged to identify such RGSJPs and AS and make a provision for toilets at the earliest. All toilets that were visited in schools were functioning, with provision by Panchayats for cleaning and maintenance. The mission noted delay in construction of schools (RGSJPs and AS also) due to non-availability of land as per State

norms. It was suggested to the SPO that each case may be reviewed and wherever needed relaxation may be provided to ensure access facility.

- 2.4 The State has prepared an action plan to upscale the UNICEF supported Sanitation & Hygiene pilot programme in the districts of Alwar and Tonk. This is expected to ensure hygiene culture in schools and use of toilets. The Mission noted appropriate water drainage systems in these schools. In order to make the school environment attractive tree plantation by children has been initiated in many schools in Jhunjhunu. Similar practices were also reported by the district teams at Jaipur. In some schools the innovative feature is that each child adopts a tree to look after in his/her primary schooling cycle.

3. Progress On Ensuring Quality With Equity And Improved Learning Levels

- 3.1 Learning levels in the baseline survey (1999) of student achievement in language and math's in grades II and V were low. In mid-term achievement survey (2002) student achievement declined in six out of nine districts, probably due to larger enrollment of first generation learners and delay in positioning BRC and CRC facilitators. The SPO prepared an action plan for improving sudden learning and achievement e.g. workbooks for each grade were prepared and distributed during the current academic session. The mission found that all children in Jhunjhunu had workbooks and were using them. Text books have been revised for grades I-IV and for grade V revised text books will be provided in the new academic session beginning July 2005. TLMs are being used in classes by the teachers for demonstration purposes. The cluster resource persons provide on-site professional support to teachers to improve class-room processes and student learning. Effort was also made to increase working days. (109 upto November 2004 and 228 last academic session). There seems to be some improvement in learning in language and math's of grade III students who were tested by the mission team. While the Hindi reading and writing competencies were achieved by 80% of children in the visited schools, the math's competencies varied from 10% to 90%. The concept of digits, place value and Zero in addition and multiplication were not clear. The mission recommends that special efforts be made by teachers for remedial teaching in areas where the child faces difficulties.
- 3.2 Several innovations were observed for improving student learning. Hanumanpura school was an example of close and effective school community relationship. A computer was donated by an SDMC member to the primary school, and funds were provided for teacher training, and internet connection. The community also funded a phone connection, fans, and electricity. Youth manda. helped in taking classes when teachers were away on work or on leave. Several schools provided extra coaching to weaker students after school hours. Sikar district conducted a survey of learning levels of children in every grade by an independent consultant who provided feedback in order to plan further inputs to enhance student achievement.
- 3.3 The TLMs were being used in the classroom as teaching aids. Children also need to handle TLMs for exploration and understanding concepts. There is evidence of more English TLMs than Hindi and Maths.
- 3.4 Workbooks introduced in the current academic session need to be reviewed in the light of the feedback received from teachers and students. Based on the feedback the workbooks may be revised and printed, ensuring distribution in schools in the next academic session beginning July 2005.

- 3.5 Procurement of library books was delayed due to Court intervention but it is still pending for the last one year. The SPO agreed to procure library books for the schools by January 31st 2005.
- 3.6 Jhalawar district has sent a batch of master trainers to Rishi Valley School for on – site training in Multi-grade and Multi-level teaching (MGML). These master trainers will adopt a school for demonstration of MGML teaching and train teachers in this methodology for enhanced learning in multi-grade situations. The implementation progress of this methodology and classroom interaction process needs to be carefully monitored and up scaling ensured since over 50% of schools have multi-grade teaching.
- 3.7 The focus of training in 2005 needs to highlight basic subject competencies in language and math's for grade II. The goal should be that all children learn all basic competencies of listening, speaking, reading and writing and the four fundamental operations of math's. The mission noted progress of I.E.D implementation in some districts. It was weak in Jhunjhunu district. One reason was a weak three-day training program, which does not provide adequate skills and knowledge to deal with children with disabilities.
- 3.8 Teacher Pupil Ratio in a number of schools was reported to be over 1:50 despite appointment of guest faculty and community teachers. This situation is expected to improve after the appointment of 35,000 teachers after the Court stay is lifted.

4. Progress On Enhancing Institutional Capacity And On Project Implementation

- 4.1 Community participation in the district of Jhunjhunu was vibrant. In other districts also all SDMCs have been reconstituted. The headmaster is the chairperson with a teacher as the secretary. The committee has about 13-14 members including 5-6 parents and at least 3 females and 3 elected PRI members. All SDMC members have been trained to carry out their assigned tasks. SDMCs also mobilized funds to supplement project funds
- 4.2 SPO is fully staffed but staff turnover is high. The Mission urged the Govt. of Rajasthan to ensure stability of key staff. The vacancies in the district offices, CRCs and BRCs will be filled as soon as Court stay is lifted. The DIETS are grossly understaffed and need staffing at the earliest in order to contribute effectively to the quality component in DPEP and SSA. The DIETs need to adopt schools and develop them as demonstration sites for innovative practices which can be used for training of master trainers. Similarly schools need to be adopted by CRCs and BRCs. SPO will have to ensure training of newly recruited staff in the next three months.
- 4.3 The Government of Rajasthan requested funds for SIEMAT and informed the mission that the blue print and estimates have been approved by Ed.CIL. The mission pointed out that SIEMAT has not been included in the revised extension plan and will have to be considered by GOI for inclusion.
- 4.4 Forty research studies have been identified, which will be short listed through prioritization. The SPO informed that different research agencies will be funded to undertake research. At least three studies will be completed during the next six months. These studies relate to the assessment of effectiveness of different project interventions. The findings are proposed to be used for improving retention and completion of primary cycle and student learning and achievement.

- 4.5 As of November 2004, 70% of the project funds have been disbursed. The revised plan indicates that the remaining funds will be fully utilized by December 31, 2005 if the project is extended. Revised allocations against proposed activities have been provided in the extension plan. Implementation progress will have to be substantially accelerated since expenditure against AWP & B 2004-05 are about 40%.
- 4.6 The state share of 15% based on expenditure has been transferred to the SPO. Provision for more funds will have to be made by GOR to meet the additional requirements according to extension plan.
- 4.7 The SPO informed that the excess amount claimed has been duly decertified by the auditors and certificates have been submitted to GOI .

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 SPO to commission an independent agency to verify EMIS data from 5% schools/ RGSJPs / AS during the next six months and take corrective measures to improve data quality.
- 5.2 Enhanced learning of basic reading, writing and numeric skills in grades II and I to be given greater attention in teacher training and on-site support programs in the next six months.
- 5.3 Capacity of the institutions at decentralized levels especially BRC and CRC need to be improved through full staffing and focused training.

PART II – RAJASTHAN SECOND DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT

2. Progress on Access

- 2.1 Improved access coupled with DPEP's massive enrollment drive has boosted enrollment. According to the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) data, six (Bharatpur, Churu, Dausa, Hanumangarh, Karauli, and Sawai Madhopur) of the nine Phase II districts have registered progress in gross enrollment ratio (GER) during 2001-02 to 2003-04. In three years of DPEP implementation, Bharatpur, Churu, and Sawai Madhopur have witnessed more than ten percent increase in GER. However, GER in Bundi, Dholpur, and Jaipur have decreased because their 2003-04 data did not include private schools enrollment data. After this data is available, their GER would also show increase, as reported by the District Project Coordinators. Net enrollment ratio (NER) for all the Phase II districts has shown steady progress. (Gender disaggregated GER and NER data in Annex 2). In Bharatpur, Churu, Dausa, Hanumangarh, Karauli, and Sawai Madhopur, the gender gap in GER is below five percent points.
- 2.2 An analysis of 2003-04 data to assess enrollment of children especially girls from different social groups indicates that the increase in enrollment of children from SC communities was 6.5% and of ST children was 8%. Within these groups, the increased enrollment of girls was 10% for SC girls and 17.8% for ST girls. As per the enrollment data for 2003-04 girls constitute 47% of the total enrollment in schools.
- 2.3 DISE does not capture out of school children data, as it is based on school level data. In 2002-03, the State initiated a Child Tracking System (CTS), which is based on household data. Through the CTS, all out of school children in 6-14 age-group have been enumerated. According to the CTS, a total of 50,521 children are out of school in the age group 6-14 years. Out of these, 28,061 children have been provided access to education through a variety of interventions, e.g. Bridge Courses, Alternative Schools, Shiksha Mitra Kendras, and Mobile Schools. The districts did not have disaggregated data on specific groups of out of school children e.g. children from families that migrate, working children, urban deprived groups, children of special focus groups. The State Project office (SPO) reported that information on reasons for dropping out of school and non-enrollment, have been consolidated in the survey, and the data is being collated. Disaggregated data based on reasons for being out of school will be available soon. Analyzing the enrollment data reveals that while most children have joined school, it is the hardest to reach group of children who need to be brought into school. These also include children with disabilities.
- 2.4 The State has been taking various steps to mainstream children with disability in the regular schools. In nine project districts 28,172 disabled children out of a 33,666 have been enrolled. The districts have been conducting medical check up camps (1139 camps) and providing aids and appliances such as hearing aids, tricycles. Sensitization of teachers has been undertaken through training program. During the training program, teachers have been helped to list practices to be adopted at the school level to include these children with special needs.
- 2.5 All the Phase II districts reported high drop out rates. The drop out rates are as high as 65.45% in Bundi, 59.04% in Churu, 65.85% in Dausa and 52.07% in Dholpur. The State needs to make systematic and concerted efforts in order to achieve the goal of reducing drop out rate at primary level to less than 10% by the closing date of the project.

- 2.6 In Phase-II, the overall retention rate of a cohort comparing the figures of children in school in class I in 1999-2000 and enrollment in class V in 2003-04 shows a retention rate of 46.46% (girls 44.73% and boys 47.85%). It is noteworthy that the retention rate for girls is higher than boys in the later period. The districts of Bundi, Churu, Dholpur, Dausa, and Sawai Madhopur reported retention rates lower than the average of the nine districts.
- 2.7 Absenteeism among learners, especially girls, is an area of concern. In some of the schools visited, on the day of the visit, 50% and more children were absent. On analyzing the school attendance register, it was found that there was a similar trend on most days. An analysis of the class-wise enrollment shows that almost 31% children enrolled in a school are in class I, of these around 20% are children below the age of 5 years as reported by the DPC's and teachers. One of the contributing factors for enrollment of a large number of under age children is lack of pre-school or early childhood education facilities. The actual enrollment of class I should be assessed and interventions such as Early Childhood Education centers should be planned to address the issue. Measures like better coordination with the existing *Anganwari Center* (AWC) centers needs to be strengthened.
- 2.8 All districts reported pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) ranging from 1: 47 to 1: 58 in rural areas, and 1:25 to 1:89 in urban areas. Urban areas in Bundi, Dholpur, and Hanumangarh demonstrate much adverse PTR. There are about 30% schools which are single teacher schools in the districts. The SPO reported that about 35,000 teachers were recruited, who could not join because of the intervention of the Court of Law. Once these teachers join, PTR will further improve both in urban and rural areas, including the remote areas.
- 2.9 It was encouraging to see that all schools and all children in schools have received textbooks at the beginning of the session. The State has also developed workbooks for each subject from classes I-V. All children had received their class specific workbooks. During school visits, it was observed very little use of workbooks by the children and teachers taking special interest in use of workbooks.
- 2.10 While classrooms have blackboards, the mission members brought to the notice of the school headmasters, Cluster Resource Center Facilitators (CRCF's), and District Project Coordinator (DPC) the poor quality of the blackboards being used in the classes. Some of the blackboards were found to be broken, not freshly painted, and children were finding it difficult to read what was written. As per the approved plans for additional classrooms being constructed a chalkboard is to be painted for use of children along the wall at their eye level. The engineers at the block level, the school- teachers need to ensure that these chalkboards are painted. Full and proper utilization of infrastructure needs to be ensured.
- 2.11 All schools were observed having a large variety of charts and poster. These included those developed by the teachers as well as those purchased from the market. Teachers reported developing these charts and posters through the Teaching Learning Material (TLM) grant. While a number of posters were seen at every school, greater use of these needs to be encouraged. Increased variety in TLM and development of a TLM resource bank at the school level would add to quality of classroom transaction.

3. Quality of Learning

- 3.1 The concern for improving access to primary education and building up of supporting institutional arrangements does not seem to match the concern for improving the quality, which needs greater emphasis. It is now being increasingly recognized that improving

quality of education requires much more and synchronized efforts. High rate of primary dropouts ranging between 44.23% and 65.85% in Phase-II districts cause alarm.

- 3.2 The State is now determined to set right the lopsided development through multi-pronged strategy. Various types of trainings, workshops and orientation courses are conducted to improve the learning standards of children. Officials have been appointed at District and Block levels to monitor the achievement levels of learners. Each DPC is expected to visit at least five BRCs along with CRCs every month and review all activities including the quality of learning. All out efforts are being made to improve the classroom practices and there is greater emphasis on two-way communication between the teacher and the taught. Efforts are being made for improving the quality of classroom transactions with on the spot demonstration of teaching techniques, increased academic support and guidance during in-service training and effective use of TLM. The guidelines for TLM- *Tarang*, a book for preparation of TLM- *Shivam* and teachers support material in the form of *Sankalan* are all in place. These activities have resulted in some positive developments, as assessed in Mid-term Achievement Study (MAS) by the State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT).

Learners Achievement in DPEP II BAS and MAS (in average percentage)

	CLASS – II				CLASS – V			
	Language		Maths		Language		Math's	
	BAS	MAS	BAS	MAS	BAS	MAS	BAS	MAS
Bharatpur	82.50	85.62	77.15	80.15	56.69	63.77	46.95	54.73
Bundi	56.60	73.05	63.45	75.92	49.89	66.74	38.45	58.26
Churu	68.15	69.81	74.75	69.99	50.84	57.20	37.38	48.37
Dholpur	69.30	77.53	76.15	83.63	51.69	60.49	39.28	49.68
Dausa	49.70	77.46	49.45	84.4	43.39	67.75	31.05	59.92
Hanumangarh	57.10	64.30	66.75	74.14	45.70	57.64	35.10	47.35
Jaipur	75.35	74.23	75.90	75.25	60.47	58.51	50.30	48.53
Karauli	67.20	75.40	64.40	75.30	54.96	60.14	42.28	55.45
SawaiMadhopur	68.75	60.73	71.95	68.87	54.53	58.24	44.85	47.70

Source: SIERT

- 3.3 The results of the survey showed significant improvement in learner's achievement in the districts of Bundi, Dausa and Hanumangarh in language and Dholpur, Bundi, Dausa and Karauli in Math's at Class II level as compared to the levels obtained in BAS. However, some districts like Jaipur and Sawai Madhopur and Churu have slipped down from base level achievements. Even the best performing districts have not yet reached the desired level of achievement, which is expected to be above 95% at Class II level. The inter-district performance at MAS at Class V, although, showed some what similar trend, as in Class II, the mean level achievement continues to be low with high degree of variation as observed in the BAS. The districts like Jaipur slipped down in learners achievement both in language and math's. Poor utilization of TLM in the class rooms has been one of the concurrent factors in those district, which have shown relatively low performance in MAS as compared to BAS (Report on TLM, SIERT, October, 2004). Another study reported that innovations in teaching and classroom process have been undertaken in only about 50% of the schools (Retention Rate among Primary children, IDS, September, 2004).

- 3.4 The mission had the benefit of a detailed presentation of the MAS study report and interaction with all the nine DPCs besides the SPO officers. It was observed that the main

findings of the MAS were already circulated to all the DPCs asking them to take remedial measures. It appears that the MTR study on learner achievement has not been given adequate attention by the DPCs. Although, the mission appreciated the efforts made by SIERT, some suggestions for further improvement in the study analysis were provided to SIERT. The Director, SIERT agreed to recast the report in the light of the observations made by the mission.

3.5 It was observed by the mission in Dausa and Jiapur districts that, although a detailed annual academic plan has been drawn for various activities, it basically remained a top-down exercise with very little input from BRCs and below. Systematic efforts to involve the teachers in improving the academic environment, lending support to poorly functioning schools were lacking. The mandatory visits stipulated do not appear to be materializing either at BRC or CRC levels. The reported development of quality indicators for school effectiveness in the areas of classroom transactions, infrastructure and usage of TLM does not appear to have been applied.

3.6 With low level motivation and ineffective training, a majority of teachers of primary schools, with whom the mission interacted, appears to show very little interest in pupil evaluation, assisting weaker students, particularly the tribal children and first generation learners, utilization of TLM and even in ensuring proper seating arrangements in the class. There was little evidence of usage of workbooks provided and teachers expressed the need for training on how to use the workbooks, which are supposed to be user friendly. The role of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in lending support to the academic excellence through adequate training is conspicuous by its absence in the entire State. All the DIETs, barring Sikkar DIET, do not have full-time principals in position. Lack of staffing in DIETs has adversely affected reorientation and reorganization of teachers education programme. As the DIETs are not under the control of the State Project Director (SPD), the Directorate could do very little to improve the training system, in general. This also affected training to BRCs, which had the cascading effect on CRCs, and the teachers. There is an urgent need to improve the motivation levels of the teachers of the formal schools by using various methods, including recognition at district and sub-district levels. There is a need for proper manpower planning till adequate training, orientation and motivation of primary teachers are ensured to all. In the interim period, the State should plan to redeploy teachers to ensure that each school has at least one 'good teacher'. This is not asking for too much and along with school grading, some systems of teacher grading would be helpful in targeting support for improving quality of primary education, and school as an institution. The learning levels of children are critically dependent on the quality of teachers and their motivation levels.

4. Progress on Institutional Capacity and Project Implementation

4.1 Out of a total positions of 53 at SPO level, 52 positions have been filled up. At the district and below levels, 1243 out of 1421 positions have been filled up. At district level, 17 out of 189 positions, at block level, 43 out of 432, at cluster level 118 out of 792 positions are vacant. As these vacant positions are important for program implementation, the State needs to take prompt actions to recruit suitable personnel. The mission understands that recruitment has been done for most of these vacant positions, but the Court of Law has stayed the recruitment. The SPO should make special efforts to get the stay lifted as early as possible. Frequent transfer of, especially at the State level, is a serious concern. The

mission met with the Education Minister, at his behest, and drew his attention to these issues. The Minister assured the mission that State would ensure more stability to the staff.

- 4.2 A number of trainings has been conducted for staff at various levels. District Project Coordinators, BRC and CRC Facilitators, Key Resource Persons, Girl Child Motivators have been provided training on Management Information System (MIS), orientation on girl child empowerment, quality indicators, and School mapping and micro-planning. The State has developed a training plan for 2004-05, and most of the trainings would be delivered during the summer vacation so that the academic activities are not affected by absence of personnel.
- 4.3 The State has constituted component-wise State Resource Groups (SRG). SRGs on Distance Education, Primary Education, Integrated Education for Disabled Children, and Quality of Education, have been formed to provide advice and guidance on various components of the program, and to review aspects. All the District Resource Groups (DRG) are in place, and all the District Project Coordinators informed that their respective DRGs were providing guidance to the district teams.
- 4.4 Functional interaction with the mainstream education department has been established. The District Elementary Education Officer (DEEO) is currently the member of the District Executive Committee. Based on observations in Dausa and discussions with other DPCs, the mission is pleased to see greater involvement of Block Elementary Education Officers (BEEO). However, the involvement of DEEO needs to be enhanced, and the DEEOs as well as BEEOs need to be oriented on DPEP through structured programs and exposure trips to other States.
- 4.5 Although, the mission finds improvement in overall MIS, yet substantial strengthening of MIS is required in order for the State and District to generate quality data on key output and outcome indicators. Along with the CTS, DISE should be put to full use for planning and monitoring of DPEP, as it provides an advantage of collecting school level disaggregated data for 6-11 age-group. Five percent sample check to ensure validity of DISE data is not being applied.
- 4.6 Although some districts have initiated small research studies on specific issues, largely it appears that the SPO and the DPOs have not been able to pay adequate attention to evaluation and research. As a result, only 7.3 percent of the total budget for research and evaluation for Phase II has been spent as of October 2004. The State has conducted seven mid-term studies, and plans to conduct several small studies in a number of areas. The SPO has shared major findings and recommendations of the MTR studies with the districts. However, there is a need to analyze the findings and recommendations of these studies in a holistic perspective, and develop action plans to implement the recommendations, for which the SPO has initiated the process. The SPO would organize a workshop at the state level in order to finalize the action plan, and work out ways to implement it.
- 4.7 The most noticeable convergence that the mission observed at the district and below levels is with the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and the Public Health System (PHS). The *Anganwadi* workers of ICDS assist with early childhood education, and the PHS Auxiliary Nurse Mid-wife (ANM) conducts children's health check up. The mission observed during the field visit and in discussions with teachers, students and SDMC members that ill health of children is a critical issue, which affects children's attendance and learning. The State may develop a school health intervention and institutionalize the

intervention in convergence with the PHS. The mission met with the state officials from Health, ICDS, Social Welfare, and PHED departments and discussed about strengthening of convergence.

- 4.8 The observations of the 19th JRM on the involvement of SIERT and DIETS in DPEP still hold valid. The State has not made much progress in this direction. Their involvement has been on "as and when required" basis. The services of these institutions have been hired for specific assignments, e.g. for Baseline and MTR studies, review workbooks, etc. Based on intensive discussions with SIERT and DIET as well as DPEP staff, the mission is of the view that strategic involvement of SIERT and DIETS in the program would benefit DPEP as well as these institutions. DIET could play a greater role in strengthening BRCs and CRCs, and in monitoring quality. However, DIETS are not adequately staffed. The SPO jointly with SIERT, DPOs, and DIETS could develop concrete plans for long-term collaboration.
- 4.9 A total of 49.21 percent of the EFC approved costs has been spent as of October 2004. According to the Bank's Integrated Controller's System data, 41.80 percent of the total IDA funds have been disbursed as of November 29, 2004. 72.66% of the total IDA allocation in civil works, 31.72% in Category II (Goods), 5.08% in Category III (Books), 23.12% in Category IV (Training, consultancy, and studies), 46.77% in Category V (Incremental operating costs) have been spent as of November 29, 2004. Low expenditure in Categories III and IV is of serious concern.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Staff stability and recruitment of staff (at district, block and cluster levels) and teachers: Frequent transfer of SPO staff, especially the State Project Director, and lack of staff at various levels have affected the pace on implementation. The mission urges the State Government to make serious efforts to get the judicial stay vacated on various recruitments, and position staff at the earliest. The SPO needs to ensure that these new staff are trained appropriately. For example, the new DPCs should be trained on financial and project management and monitoring.
- 5.2 Data validation and management: The mission is concerned about the quality of data being compiled and generated at the project offices. The quality of data in general requires substantial improvement. MIS needs to be strengthened. The SPO needs to verify data through five percent sample check by an independent agency. The SPO and the DPOs will also need to ensure adequate analysis and use of collected data in formulating area and context specific interventions in their respective annual plans.
- 5.3 Equity related issues: Access related equity issues- enrollment of hardest to reach groups, out-of-school, girls from SC and ST communities, minority and other special focus groups; equity inside the classroom with specific focus on achievement of learning levels needs to be monitored, for further bridging these gaps.
- 5.4 Monitoring of quality : Monitoring of quality, especially of classroom processes and students learning, appears to be weak. The indicators and tools to collect and monitor data on school quality are heavily loaded in favor of learning conditions/input indicators. Specific indicators on classroom processes and student learning need to be included. Tools for data collection on school quality indicators need to be accompanied by a manual for users at various levels. The SPO may ensure this.

5.5 Strengthening of BRCs and CRCs: Both BRCs and CRCs, particularly CRCs, need considerable strengthening. In view of the fact that CRCs are expected to play a very critical role in terms of providing on-site academic support to the teachers, and improving quality in the classrooms, these institutions need substantial strengthening.

PART III – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR RAJASTHAN DPEP I AND II

Financial Management System

As part of the Joint Review Mission pertaining to Credit No. N-0440 (DPEP-I) and Credit No. 3529 (DPEP-II), we visited the SPO, DPO Jaipur (DPEP-II), DPO Tonk (DPEP-I), BRC Newai (DPEP-I) and CRC Mundiya (DPEP-I), to assess the status of Financial Management. The improvements in book keeping and reconciliations are distinct, when compared with the earlier mission reports. Following are some of key suggestions, based on the findings from the review, which the State may consider:

1. The level of book keeping and accounting should be further improved by adequate supervision or through workshops. As part of this exercise, efforts should also be aimed at improving the quality and timeliness of bank reconciliations and internal reconciliations.
2. Funds transfers from one project to another should be in accordance with the guidelines and financial management practices.
3. The mission discussed the functionality and limitations of the customized financial management software, which was proposed to be implemented in all the districts. The present monitoring and reporting system, based on excel spreadsheets, is able to provide the desired outputs.
4. The capacity in Financial Management has been augmented at various DPO's and BRC's as a result of additional accounting staff posted under the SSA program. These accountants should be provided with adequate training and timely supervision, for attaining sustainability of the financial management system.
5. For further strengthening the internal controls, the function of internal audit has been instituted by the state. The internal audit teams have also conducted training sessions on financial management, in relation to the project, at various district levels, with the support of the state. Audit of current period transactions and controls are not included in the agreement. Since the purpose of an internal audit is to primarily provide an assurance on the adequacy of information emanating from a financial management system, it is pertinent that current period controls be included in the scope of the internal audit.
6. The internal audit reports point to issues relating to impropriety in purchase of furniture, payment of SIF grants, staff payments etc., among others. Appropriate action should be initiated on all the findings set out in the internal audit reports, and adjustments, if any, determined for any disallowances in respect of expenditures claimed earlier should be made.

A detailed report of the financial management review has been shared with the State for their consideration and necessary actions in order to improve the financial management system further.

INDIA
DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME
TWENTIETH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

Uttaranchal State Report
(November 29 – December 13, 2004)

1. Introduction

1.1 On behalf of the Twentieth Joint Review Mission (JRM) of the District Primary Education Program (DPEP) Josephine Yazali (GoI) and Venita Kaul (WB) visited Uttaranchal from December 1-7, 2004 to review the status of the project as per the terms of reference for the JRM. The terms of reference include review of progress with regard to (a) expanding of access to primary education (b) ensuring quality with equity and (c) strengthening of institutional capacity. In addition, the mission also looked into project specific issues in terms of implementation, particularly from the perspective of imminent project closure. The actions taken on the specific recommendations of the 19th JRM were also reviewed.

1.2 The Mission interacted with the Chief Secretary, Government of Uttaranchal, the State Project Director (DPEP) and her team, the Director of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), the Director of Education and Director ICDS. The Mission visited Haridwar, a project district from December 2-5, 2004 to observe project activities at the field level. While in the district, the Mission interacted with the Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) and his team. In addition, it visited three formal schools of varying grades, an Education Guarantee Center (EGS) an Alternative School and a *maqtab*. The Mission interacted with the students, teachers and instructors and members of the Village Education Committees and Mother Teacher and Motivator Association (MAMTA). The Mission visited the District Institute of Education (DIET) in Roorkee where it met the faculty and observed a training program. In addition, the Mission visited a Block Resource Center and a *Nyaya Panchayat* Resource Center (NPRC) and interacted with a group of coordinators. The Mission also met with the District Magistrate, Haridwar. The conclusions of the JRM were shared in a meeting chaired by the Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Uttaranchal. The Mission would like to place on record its deep appreciation of the cooperation and courtesy extended to it by the State Project Director and her team and the District officials throughout this visit.

1.3 Action taken on recommendations of the 19th JRM

1.3.1 *Recommendation 1: The SPD may take the lead in developing context specific strategies to better address the varied learning needs of the children out of school and clearer articulation of the mainstreaming process between the EGS and the primary schools:* The SPD is focusing on specific initiatives for groups of children still out of school such as bridge courses, EGS/AS centers close to the industries for working children, bridge courses and residential schools for girls from migratory communities, comprehensive planning for the *Gujjar* tribes, standardization of education in the *Maqtabs* for the minorities. To facilitate this planning the state is devising strategies to collect disaggregated data to the extent possible.

1.3.2 *Recommendation 2: The academic support structure should lay stress on improving literacy and numeracy skills in grades 1 and 2 and also improve learning levels in grades 3 and 4:* The state has shared the findings of the MAS with the DIET and District personnel and is focusing on training of teachers in identified hard spots and motivational

aspects. In addition a cohort study and an evaluation of continuous and comprehensive evaluation is being carried out prior to scaling up.

1.3.3 Recommendation 3: *The SPD needs to provide direction in strengthening academic and administrative support structures with focus on planning and management capacity building at all levels.* The SPD has conducted a series of workshops on financial issues and budget performance and use of indicators in planning, involving all levels of functionaries.

2. Progress on Expanding Access

2.1 Uttaranchal DPEP covers 6 project districts of which four are hill districts and two are in the plains. Each category has its own distinct demographic features which adds to the diversity of issues, particularly in the context of providing access to primary education. Given this challenge, it is creditable that the state has been able to steadily reduce the number of out of school children from 6500 children in 2003 to 1665 in November, 2004. A review of data presented to the Mission indicates that enrolments have also correspondingly increased with the NER recorded as 99.67 percent for the primary stage. The children still out of school are to a large extent those hardest to reach, such as children in widely dispersed and isolated locations in the hills, minority girls and the disabled. In the DPEP districts, 3621 disabled children have been identified, of which only 301 children are still out of school. Two districts Haridwar and Champawat have a larger concentration of the disabled and would need more focused attention. A very innovative activity reported by the state is a camp held for parents of disabled to sensitize them to the needs of the children. Convergence with national level organizations in Dehradun has been effective in distribution of aids and appliances but only in a few blocks. A significant challenge in this context is the fact that in Uttaranchal a minor disability in the plains can become a major disability in the hills. Ramps were not seen in any of the schools visited but Mission was told that these are coming up with new construction. Gender and social inequity in terms of access has also narrowed. Compared to the baseline, gender disparity in terms of GER has declined from 1.10 to 0.98. With regard to social equity the state is reporting parity across all project districts. Access has been provided through regular or alternative mode in 10493 habitations in all DPEP districts, but 1865 schools are still within 3 km distance. These are the cases in hills where according to criteria there are less number of children in sparsely located habitations. The dropout rate has also declined from a baseline of 45 percent in 1999 to an average of 2.8 percent in 2004. Attendance, both of teachers and students, is still an issue particularly in formal schools. The JRM found about 30 percent children were absent on the day of observation. Adoption of ICDS anganwadis as ECCE centers in schools is a popular intervention and has been found to have multiple benefits in terms of both girls' enrollment and the children's own preparation for school. While this convergence is well received, its sustainability after project closure is an issue. The SPD informed the mission that this issue has been put up to the State government and the government has committed to provide for sustaining the ECCE centres after the project closure. This is a very welcome decision.

2.2 The Mission had an opportunity to visit some project initiatives for focused groups such as the EGS and Alternative centers for *Van Gujjars* in village *Nauki* and *Gandi Khatha* in Haridwar district and minority children in *Maqtabs*. Initiatives such as these bear evidence to the gains from the project, for these children would have otherwise been clearly left out of the education system. It was also impressive to note that the school staff are more aware of the mission to get all children into school and were able to identify specific status of children still out of school in the community in the schools visited.

- 2.3 While access has been provided and children are enrolled, there are still concerns about retention. Schools' data still reflect a declining trend in transition from grades 1-5, particularly of the older children (9+ years). This is particularly true in the case of older girls from minority community. The phenomenon is also evident in the attendance figures seen in the schools. (e.g. teachers' explanation that children in some cases work in *mandis* during school hours). Children such as these need to be tracked and the magnitude of problem ascertained. There is also a lot of mobility from school to school/EGS which is not always captured in the current system of reporting. This is being tracked as a pilot with the help of CCE in the districts of Bagheshwar and Champawat; however this needs to be evaluated and extended to other districts as well. Cohort analysis being undertaken in the schools needs to be systematized to take into account this concern. This can mask issues of both drop outs and double enrollments. Village education registers are prepared but there seemed to be little clarity on where they should be located and how these are to be used and updated. *Bal ganna* or school survey was the better known exercise. The current system needs to therefore be further strengthened as an effective child tracking system.
- 2.4 In the context of Uttaranchal, mainstreaming is conceptually different from other states. Alternative schools are full schools from Grades 1-5 with more flexible schedules for specific communities in plains who have been marginalized. These can accommodate children from 2-15 years as seen in one school visited in Haridwar. After completing the alternative school program the children are expected to move on in a natural progression to upper primary school. In hill districts there is provision for EGS which is for younger children in isolated habitations. It provides in a multi-grade mode for grades 1-2/3 and then children are expected to move to regular schools, even if at a distance. In certain cases the EGS have been upgraded to Grade V depending on demand. The transition therefore is expected to be much smoother. However, it is not clear from the discussions at the state and district levels what mechanisms are in place, given the difficult topographical conditions, to mainstream children into regular schools and/or ensure they complete primary education.
- 2.5 The project seems to have contributed to improved school infrastructure with opening of 356 new schools in the project districts and construction of additional class rooms. Toilets and hand pumps were found in all schools visited, many in convergence with other schemes. However, in the schools visited inadequate ventilation and light was noted as a concern. Since only three schools were visited it is hoped that this is not representative of all schools in the state. This could be attributed to both classroom design and a tendency of some teachers to keep windows closed during classes. In terms of design these were old construction and it is hoped this problem will not persist in the newer construction. Overall, schools were seen to be better maintained with availability of the school improvement grant which in some cases has been used with more creativity. A good example is the improvised structure seen in a school for holding quizzes and team events and different shapes put up on the walls. Another example is the fixing of Blackboards outside the school wall so that children can come and practice even when the school is closed. The blackboards inside the classrooms while available in all classrooms often appear to be poorly maintained. Non availability of furniture in classrooms is also still an issue with the community. However, it was heartening to note that in its mid-term assessment of the 10th Five Year Plan the State government has committed to have a separate dedicated head and budget provision for maintenance of all schools. The overall improvement in facilities seems to have evoked a positive response from these community. VEC contribution was also seen and mentioned in terms of fixing of boundary walls, floorings etc.

3. Progress on ensuring quality with equity and improved learning levels.

3.1 Learning Achievement: The learning achievement levels demonstrated in the Mid term Assessment (MAS) conducted in 2004 have indicated a consistent improvement over baseline in Grade 1 language scores, though at varying levels, in all districts except Tehri. In Uttarkashi and Haridwar the gains are very marginal. At Grade 4 level for language, other than Uttarkashi the other districts demonstrate marginal gains over baseline while in Mathematics the gains are more pronounced. This highlights the issue of language learning as an area for greater focus. In another study comparing alternative and formal systems it is intriguing to note that the children from alternative schools performed better than from EGS and formal schools with the performance of formal schools being the worst. The mission also observed in the course of the school visit that the students were not performing at their grade level with the problem being greater with language learning. It was also seen that the presence of a good head teacher in regular school contributes positively to raising achievement levels. A possible reason for low learning achievement in schools could be that while a systematic continuous and comprehensive evaluation system has been developed in the state, the mission did not see much evidence of this in practice in the schools visited. In terms of gender and social equity, the MAS data indicates that SC/ST differences are persisting in Bageshwar and Haridwar districts in Grade 1 language and mathematics achievement levels. Difference in mathematics achievement is seen also in Champawat district. In Class 4 Mathematics differences are not seen in districts other than Bageshwar and Champawat. Data on Haridwar is not available. In terms of gender, differences in favour of boys are seen in all districts except Haridwar and Tehri in Class 1 Mathematics. In Class 4 language, gender differences are reported in only Haridwar district. In Class 4 mathematics, gender differences are seen only in Uttarkashi. The MAS data has been shared with the DIETs and they have undertaken analysis of their district data in terms of identification of hard spots based on which training of teachers is being undertaken.

3.2 School grading system: The state has introduced a school grading system which is in place and it is commendable that in the schools visited there was awareness of grades assigned to the school not only among teachers but also in the community. The mission was informed it is also creating a sense of healthy competition among the communities. The schools visited were also selected on the basis of grades and reflected to an extent the varying quality. The active involvement of the DIETs in testing and further improving the tool under the guidance of SCERT is very evident. This is potentially a very effective though evolving instrument for improving quality. However, the Mission observed that at present this is being used more as an administrative tool to evaluate teachers whereas it should be used as a learning/development tool with collective responsibility at the school level for improvement among the VEC, NPRC and school staff and not merely of the teachers. At present it seems to be seen more as an administrative evaluation by the NPRC, often without adequate discussion with the school staff on areas of improvement. The ability of many BRC/CRC to assess quality and to be able to give acceptable mentoring to teachers is evidently also a question in the field which further has implications for their criteria for selection as well. The process of grading also needs to be further rationalized and in this context a more intensive training of BRC/NPRC coordinators in both conceptual understanding, skills of assessment and communication through "hands on situations" is a priority.

3.3 Teacher pupil ratio: The reported PTR is 1:40 which is the state norm but this camouflages the actual class sizes which can range from classes in hill areas of 1:10-15 to 1:109 in the plains. In the schools visited the range was from 1:51 to 1:109 in one school and 1:31 to 1:66 in another. There is a significant shortage of teachers in the schools with 5413 posts of regular teachers vacant in the state and 2111 posts vacant in the project

districts. The state is trying to address this issue. A total of 1100 posts of para teachers have been created under the project. Of these 730 are trained and posted in schools. A total 2600 Vishist BTC teachers who are trained graduates with a degree in education are under training in the DIETs and another 2700 are in the process of being selected. The para teacher and the first batch of Vishist BTC are expected to be in position by end December, 2004. This addition should ease the PTR to some extent. There is also the issue of teacher absence which needs to be urgently addressed. An analysis of teachers' attendance during school visits indicated deputation on training as a possible factor as well in addition to voluntary leave. Organizing training during vacation can be helpful to reduce absence due to this reason.

- 3.4 Classroom practices and pedagogy:** Uttaranchal is in a peculiar geographical situation so that it has two distinct constituencies – the large classes in the plains and the small multigrade schools and EGS in the hills. The approach to pedagogy needs to take this variation into account. While for multigrade the Kunjapuri model has been experimented with in some blocks the experience needs to be systematically evaluated and scaled up, if found effective. For the large classes in the plains the classroom practice was still seen to be traditional rote memorization with high noise volume and limited time on task. There is a need to introduce through training and supervision a more comprehensive package of specified pedagogical practices like cooperative learning, dialogic teaching/learning, group work, use of self learning materials, small group discussion activities etc. with teacher rotation to address individual needs. These could result in improved time on task, more active learning and reduction in rote memorization.
- 3.5 Teaching Learning Material:** TLM was seen to be used effectively in some classes visited e.g. Games with number cards, clay balls etc. but there was little evidence that it is being regularly used. Charts were seen in all schools, although in some cases much above eye level on the walls. The discussion the mission had at various levels indicated that TLM was perceived as a component in itself, as a mandatory indicator of good teaching practice instead of its role of facilitating good classroom practice. The focus on display and exhibitions may well be a deterrent to its regular use. The teachers had all received the TLM grant.
- 3.6 Continuous comprehensive evaluation (CCE):** A system of CCE has been developed and tried out in Bageshwar district by the DIET with very good results in terms of improvement of learning levels. There was also a good response from the community since the children were getting regular progress reports. However, in the schools visited the non detention policy was in vogue and only six monthly tests were being conducted. The learning levels were not very satisfactory. The urgent need therefore is to assess the relevance of the pilot methodology in large classes and scale up the initiative as early as possible. At present this is limited to only a few blocks in some districts.
- 4. Progress on Enhancing Institutional Capacity and on Project Implementation Objectives**
- 4.1 School complex:** A major development reported by the previous mission also is the Government of Uttaranchal's decision to restructure the framework of the Education Department through a more decentralized and coordinated approach. The revised framework, which has of this school primary, upper primary, secondary and senior secondary schools will work in the form of a school complex with the Senior Secondary school serving in the form of the nucleus of the school complex. The Principal would be the Area Education Officer. The same pattern would be at the block level. This system which is at present being tentatively adopted will soon get formalized. This is expected to improve the monitoring and functioning of schools.

- 4.2 **SPD and DPO:** The SPD and DPOs are functioning with a complete and active staff but the issue of frequent transfers particularly of the SPD has been a limiting factor. Continuity in the position is very critical to the success of the program. While data generation and organization is being done efficiently the capacity for use of data for policy analysis and impact evaluations needs further strengthening. Research capacity in the SPD could be strengthened in this context.
- 4.3 **SCERT:** Considering that the SCERT is a new and upcoming institution in the state, established only in 2002, it is to its credit that it has been able to establish its credibility by taking on several assignments in this short span of time. What is impressive is its range of activities which appear to be demand driven e.g. the module on introduction to computers. In the context of DPEP it is providing academic leadership to the DIETs particularly in implementation of the School grading tool and Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation. This is to be appreciated keeping in view the acute shortage of professional staff which is a major factor hampering SCERT's functioning and needs to be addressed urgently.
- 4.4 **DIET:** The mission interacted with three DIETs and also visited DIET, Roorkee. The DIETs in Uttaranchal are active and enthusiastic and have concerned themselves with research on specific issues significant for quality improvement e.g. study on teachers' competencies, need assessment, identification of hard spots, C.C.E, comparison of para with regular teachers, special focus groups etc. The DIETs are also actively working on the school grading system and continuous comprehensive evaluation. However, the DIETs are also constrained by shortage and turnover of staff. The DPEP has been able to strengthen DIET capacity through sponsoring participation of DIET faculty in various trainings including Design of training (DOT), Evaluation of training (EOT), etc. The Mission had the opportunity to observe a training in DIET of primary teachers in English. While the training adopted play way methodology and was actively enjoyed by the participants it did not reflect clear objectives and adequate planning. There is therefore a need to share and transfer learning from these courses to all faculty and move towards a cycle of problem tracking, need assessment, design of training and evaluation and follow up for every training initiative. For a more comprehensive and needs based approach, the DIETs need to adopt a lab area approach for practice teaching and demonstration in actual field situations, which at present is a weak component.
- 4.5 **BRC-CRC:** Issues of recruitment and training of these institutions have already been raised. Although their roles have been clearly documented now by SCERT, in practice there is still a considerable tilt towards administrative work which undermines their value as resource people. Also their acceptability with teachers is often in question. There is a need to build in collective responsibility for schools with these institutions and also orient and involve the ABSAs for more consistent support and supervision. The monthly meetings of the NPRCs could be made more reflective and demonstration based, on the UP model shared by the Mission.
- 4.6 **Head teachers and Teachers:** Given the importance of leadership in the school context the head teachers should be given specific training in school management and leadership.. With regard to teachers the feedback from the system seems to be Studies conducted by DIETs and for the mid term review indicate better performance by Para teachers as compared to regular teachers, due to community affiliation, proximity and greater accountability.
- 4.7 **Community based organizations:** The VEC, SMC and MAMTA groups were interacted with in the course of the district visit. An evaluation study reports 73 percent of the VECs are functional and meeting every month. Most are aware of the roles and responsibilities. The MAMTA group interacted with was however not very clear on its role and

responsibilities. There appears to be an overlap in their roles vis-a-vis SMC which needs differentiation. The Mission endorses the view of the Chief Secretary that the technical, administrative and monitoring roles need to be differentiated in this context and the latter two which are more feasible need to be strengthened. There needs to be greater information on current provisions for continuing education available with the MAMTA groups to advise the community since a demand is likely to be created. This needs to be incorporated in the training.

5. Project implementation.

5.1 The cumulative expenditure against project cost of Rs.9,582.29 lakhs is Rs.7,293.83 lakhs which is 76.12 percent. The expenditure levels across districts are also more or less at par. A review of the Annual Work Plan reveals that in the current year the project has not been able to meet all targets with regard to civil works since the counterpart funds from PMGY which amount to 60 percent have not yet been received. Cumulative expenditure under Category 3 i.e. Books is low at 55.21 percent due to delay in receiving bills from government press. Under Category 5 i.e. incremental costs the cumulative expenditure is at 76.4 percent. The state has requested the Bank through GoI to raise disbursement levels for Category 5 to 80 percent from April 1, 2004 as against the current 25 percent.

5.2 The first instalment of Rs. 342.68 lakhs was received by the state on August 2, 2004. Against this the state share of Rs. 60.47 lakhs which amounts to 15 percent has been drawn on September 23, 2004. The prerequisites, i.e. utilisation certificate and audit reports have already been submitted on October 12, 2004 for the purpose of drawing the second instalment. The Government of India has issued a sanction order for an amount of Rs. 967.44 lakhs on December 1, 2004 against which the PSR from the state has now been received. With the project due for closing on September 30, 2005 there is a need to assess the balance funds and proposed expenditure and reduced rates of disbursement and plan in advance for maximizing utilization of available funds.

5.3 Sustainability of project initiatives: Most of the initiatives under the project are likely to be sustained under SSA once project closes. It would be opportune at this stage prior to project closing for the SPD to carry out an analysis of the recommendations of the mid term review studies to derive lessons for SSA. In addition SPD could also undertake some studies on specific initiatives under DPEP which have not been covered by the mid term review and include these in the comprehensive analysis and impact evaluation. Some of the studies identified are a) study on achievement levels in EVS b) convergence with other schemes and programmes for education and its effect. c) involving community in ensuring quality education for children and d) district wise comparisons in achievement levels and reasons for the differences. While most initiatives can be sustained in financial terms under SSA the issue of sustainability of ECCE convergence with ICDS was discussed. It is commendable that the Government of Uttaranchal has very recently taken a decision in principle to support the convergence with ICDS from state funds, once the project closes.

6. Next Steps.

6.1 The data from schools still reflect a declining trend in transition from grades 1-5 particularly of the older children (9+ years). This is particularly true in the case of older girls from minority community. The phenomenon is also evident in the attendance figures seen in the schools.. The declining figures can mask issues of both drop outs and double enrollments. The current monitoring system needs to therefore be further strengthened as an effective child tracking system.

- 6.2 The School grading system should be presented as an learning/development tool as against an administrative evaluation. The process of grading also needs to be systematized in terms of making it evidence based. In this context training of BRC and NPRC coordinators should be planned and organized with an emphasis on conceptual understanding, skills of assessment and communication with teachers in a more 'hands on' mode.

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