

Mahila Samakhya

Bihar

National Evaluation

2004

NUEPA DC



D14579

Evaluation Team

Madhumita Pal

Shalini

Vandana Mahajan

Stuti Prasad

Subhas Chandra Roy

Niti Saxena Team Leader

371.824
PAL-BI

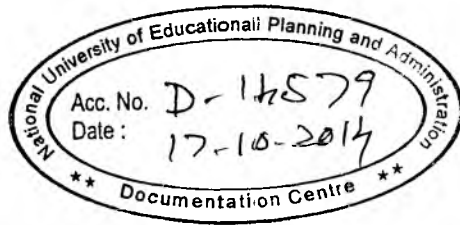


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
1. Acknowledgements.....	1
2. The Evaluation.....	2
2.1 Objective	2
2.2 Methodology.....	2
3. Mahila Samakhya, Bihar – An Overview.....	3
4. Key Interventions.....	7
4.1 Samoohs and Federations	7
4.2 Alternative non-formal educational structures.....	14
5. Impact of MS.....	22
5.1 Education	22
5.2 Health.....	23
5.3 Social and Gender Equity.....	24
5.4 Economic Empowerment.....	25
5.5 Social Recognition and Political Participation.....	25
6. Programme Strategies.....	27
6.1 Expansion and Outreach	27
6.2 Information Dissemination/Knowledge Building/Skills Development	29
6.3 Inter-linkages / convergence.....	30
7. Organizational Systems and Issues.....	32
7.1 Training and Capability Building	32
7.2 Monitoring, Reporting and Documentation	34
7.3 Planning, Administration and Management.....	35
7.4 Financial Management.....	36
7.5 MS-BEP - Changing Dynamics.....	38
8. Conclusion.....	40
9. Recommendations.....	42
10. Annexures	46

1. Acknowledgements

The evaluation team is grateful to the entire MS Bihar team for the enriching experience of observing Mahila Samakhya Programme in Bihar. We are also thankful to the functionaries of the Bihar State Education Department (specially Bihar Education Project Council), UNICEF Bihar Office, NGO representatives and District Administration of Darbhanga, Gaya and Muzzafarpur for extending sincere support and cooperation.

This acknowledgement would be meaningless if we don't put on record our gratitude towards The Pivotal Force of MS Bihar - the zealous women and girls, whose honest smiles rekindled our spirits (and stamina!) for the journey ahead. We sincerely hope that this report, in some way, would be able to make a meaningful contribution to the programme that is so closely intertwined with their lives.

Madhumita, Ilti, Shalini, Stuti, Subhas and Vandana

2. The Evaluation

2.1 Objective

To assess the progress of the programme based on the evaluation parameters identified for the National Evaluation of 2004 and the progress made since 2001

To critically review programme strategies and interventions in terms of:

Expansion

Inputs/ strategies at field level for information dissemination, knowledge building, skill development on identified issues

Status of sanghas and federations and their ability to function autonomously

Strategies for training and capability building (both at field and organizational level)

The impact of the alternative structures such as: non formal educational structures (such as Mahila Shikshan Kendras), forums for redressal of issues of violence

MS linkages with mainstream educational programmes

To identify constraints and areas that need strengthening

To recommend next steps

2.2 Methodology

Interactions/ Discussions with the following¹ :

Mahila Samakhya (MS) staff

Samooch and Federation members

Girls at Jagjagi, Kishori Manch and Mahila Shikshan Kendra (MSK)

Parents, Panchayat and community members

Education Secretary, State Project Director (SPD) Bihar Education Project Council and Director, Primary Education

District Administration/ Departments

UNICEF Field Office

NGOs - MS has been working with

Perusal and review of the following :

District Annual Reports/Presentations alongwith budget statements

Training modules and material

MSK/ NFE curriculum/Teaching Learning Material

Reports/Documents/Publications regarding MS Bihar

¹ Refer Annexure 1 for Itinerary of the Team

3. Mahila Samakhya, Bihar – An Overview

Mahila Samakhya Programme (MSP) in Bihar was initiated as an integral part of the Bihar Education Project (BEP)² in 1992. It was started in 4 BEP districts viz. Sitamarhi, Rohtas, Ranchi (now in Jharkhand) and West Champaran. In the following year it was extended to 2 new districts of Muzzafarpur and East Singhbhum (also now in Jharkhand). By the end of 1996 MS was covering total of 1700 villages in 26 blocks of the State. In 1998 it was launched in 4 Blocks in Gaya, Bhojpur, and Darbhanga districts. In 2001 when Rohtas was bifurcated, MS blocks fell in the new district of Kaimur. At present MS reaches out to 34 blocks across 9 districts of Bihar. A break up of the number of blocks and villages in which the programme was initiated along with the number of blocks/villages covered at present, is given below to provide an overview of the physical expansion of the programme since 1992.

Table 1: Coverage of MS, Bihar

Year	Blocks	Villages	Samoochs	Women in Samoochs
1992-1993	15	446	124	1300
Total up to Nov.2004	34	2089	2875	66654

With women and girls, specially from Scheduled Castes and Tribes, being the focus group of BEP and women's empowerment as the core of project activities, MS interventions gained impetus during its initial phase. Formation of Mahila Samoochs (women's groups), the core activity of the MS, inculcated a sense of collective responsibility and lead to accelerated implementation and improved monitoring of the project activities at the grassroot levels in BEP districts³. Subsequently, DPEP III was launched in the State in 1997-98. Since then all the educational initiatives are being covered under DPEP III with BEP Council as its state level implementing agency. Within this the Mahila Samakhya Programme is also covered as the Women's Development Programme (WDP) Component.

Organisational Structure - Being part of BEP, MS is governed by the BEP Council. There are total 24 posts proposed (covering all the units - State and District level) for MS out of which 11 are lying vacant⁴. All the 13 MS personnel are under BEP- on contract (upto 2006), almost an equal number of positions lie vacant as are filled. At the district level two or one out of three posts are vacant. Presently there are just two members at the State level MS Unit (one State Resource Person and one APO). The State Level Unit is located within BEP premises and the required administrative/secretarial support is supposed to be provided by the BEP staff. The State level unit is the link between MS National office and

² Bihar Education Project was launched in 1991 by the joint collaboration of Government of India, UNICEF and Government of Bihar as a response to the challenges faced in the State's Education scenario. BEP, the first Education for All programme in India, is a registered Council

³ Source : State Component Plan, BEP (1997)

⁴ Refer Annexure 2

the District Level Units. There are 7 District Core Teams looking after 9 revenue districts. The District level Units for all administrative purposes function under the respective District DPEP Project Office.

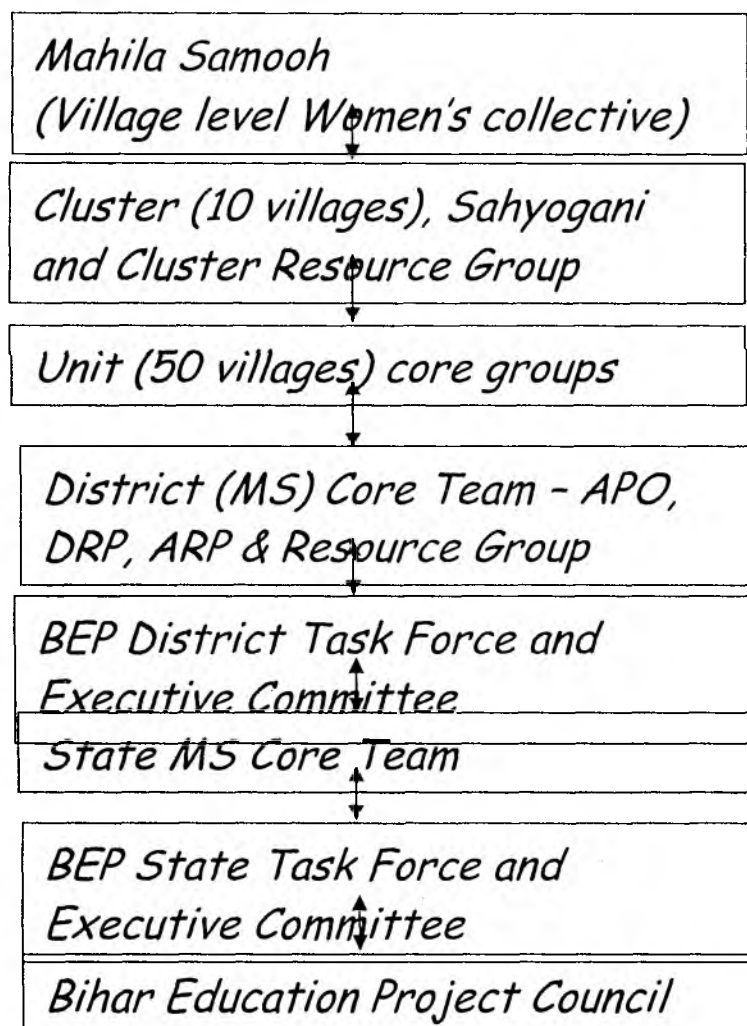
Adhering to the structural modification envisaged in The Tenth Five year Plan (2002-07) - a unit of 10 clusters has been introduced. The structure of Mahila Samakhya under BEP, has been outlined below -

Currently with the ongoing preparations for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the apprehension level of MS personnel in the State is also mounting - the common concern being the changing role of MS. It is strongly felt that with the movement from one programme to another (from BEP to DPEP and now SSA), once again the role of MS Bihar would take a detour from its original conceptualised format. Though under SSA special efforts of mobilization and organization of women, 'back to school' camps for adolescent girls, large-scale process based constitution of Mahila Samoochs would be attempted, the focus would remain on mainstreaming.

The concern of the MS programme personnel and other women's development agencies is that the vision and strategic focus of planned activities for MS under SSA is being severely restricted as is evident in its present clubbing under the component of 'Innovative activity for Girls' Education'.

Primary objectives of MS i.e. of Education for Equality and women's empowerment seem to be tied with achieving the target of universalization of primary and elementary education which is an important goal but it cannot be the single or predominant route to achieve the above mentioned objectives. Besides SSA, two new Government of India schemes, one targeting formal schools, the other targeting girls in remote habitations of educationally backward blocks, have been launched to include girls in elementary education, i.e. National Programme for Education of Girls at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Swatantrata Vidyalaya (KGSV). These are being implemented under SSA, but MS District Units will have the nodal responsibility for these two new initiatives (in MS blocks). The MS Units in the Districts visited by the team, beside their planned interventions under DPEP/MSP, were busy grappling with NPEGEL initiatives and submitting required proposals for KGSV.

BEP and other stakeholders see MS as a key player in taking NPEGEL and KGSV forward in the State. However, the MS personnel feel that instead of being used for technical and focussed inputs, this structure will be used merely as a service delivery vehicle for the SSA girls' education component.



The situation would have been simpler if the samoohs/federations were mature and ready to take on the ongoing MSP in older areas. But in Bihar where federations and samoohs are at different level of readiness, sufficient time, along with sustained inputs are required before they can actually take on the MS activities for the two new schemes. Possibly federations could work on them with the assistance of the District Core Team (DCT) or the block level core team.

4. Key Interventions

4.1 Samoohs and Federations

The Samoohs -

Sanghas in Bihar MS are called samoohs. The uniqueness and strong identity of the MS in Bihar within and outside BEP is intrinsically linked to the strength of the women's collectives and the visible transformation these samooh women have brought within themselves and in impacting social change at the community level. The samoohs, whether weak or strong, independent or requiring guidance and support, are the embodiment of the MS vision and mission. These women's collectives are alive and evolving- some slow, others ready to take off on their wings of maturity- demanding more inputs, requiring consolidation, diversification, autonomy and facilitation to draw their own scheme of things. In the 2089 villages where MS has a presence, 2875 samoohs are at different stages of maturity. Of these 2344 samoohs are involved in thrift and credit activities. 388 are linked to Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and 192 to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)⁵.

The new samoohs, which are coming up, are mainly spin-offs from the positive and changed consequences of the action taken up by the old samooh members to address gender related issues. These have created an impact within their immediate environment as well as in the larger community and civic society institutions. Most of the new samoohs are being formed with a thrust on starting the savings activity. In comparison to the samoohs in the older districts, those in the later phase of expansion are still weak in terms of autonomous functioning and guiding their own agendas without the assistance of the Sahyoginis. After the re-structuring of the MS programme in the field at cluster and district level and with formation of thematic committees, the process in the samoohs has moved towards consolidation and streamlining for autonomy and effective bridge building with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and other grass root organisations. Women from the samoohs have a strong common identity and a high degree of self worth and pride reflected in the common sentiment expressed by the general council members of Jyoti Mahila Samakhya federation in Muzzafarpur that they will not be blindly complying with power and authority ("hum aandha hokar apna angootha nahin dengi").

While addressing a wide range of issues from raising demands for literacy, information and knowledge for women's and girls' education; taking collective action against oppression and violence; protesting against early marriage of their daughters; empowering themselves to be free from the clutches of local money lenders and creating an alternative system of thrift and credit, the underlying experience of all the samooh members has been of attitudinal change towards girls, women and society and a strong belief in their own capabilities and self-worth.

⁵ Refer Annexure 3

The samoohs are regularly monitored for assessing their strengths and weaknesses. The grading and monitoring systems are well established and internalized by the MS personnel. All district teams are uniformly following the practice of grading the samoohs as strong, medium, weak and on verge of break down. The challenge now, to enhance the capacity of the weak samoohs to become strong, is recognized but new strategies for strengthening them have to be evolved.

Issues - Samoohs are undertaking activities in the six identified areas of education; health; addressing gender based violence; economic empowerment; involvement in the PRIs; Federation and strengthening of the Samoohs.

Women from the strong samoohs have taken up various economic activities – catering for the BEP, programmes organised by the BDO, PRIs and unit level MS training programmes; running 'line' (road side) hotels; 36 trained women masons are making low cost toilets and another 120 are trained in its installation. The success of these activities proves that with desirable inputs and support women can branch out of stereotyped and traditionally masculine areas of work and deliver professional services.

Women visit the block and district offices for the financial auditing of the accounts of the federations and for getting bank loans sanctioned, meeting the school officials, actively participating in the VECs, meeting the PRI representatives and block level development officials.

In a broader view, the empowered samoohs have an identity of strong collectives seeking gender justice and equality through women's personal struggles and collective action. The status of samoohs and federations is varied in terms of levels of maturity and strength as per the area, level of inputs and the cohesive strength of samoohs. In 7 districts the process of consolidation of samoohs into federations has begun, again with varying levels of maturity where some are more advanced in terms of autonomous operations than others. The process of Federation formation in turn is affected by the mass base of the samoohs and their capacities.

At one unit meeting where there was a representation from 40 villages, the sheer number of women who were present was overwhelming. The women were very vocal and articulate in sharing and exchanging their experiences - of prevention of a child marriage from taking place, or putting pressure on men to stop wife beating or practicing adultery, tackling alcoholism, land acquisition, addressing gender inequalities and related women's issues. The leadership and decision-making roles of women came out quite vividly along with an evident sense of confidence to raise social issues in the community.

In the meeting of the general council of the federation in Muzzafarpur, the Sahyoganis, Sakhis⁶ and samooh members shared that there was an increased awareness to have

⁶ Though Sakhis have been withdrawn under the Xth Plan, MS Bihar is still continuing with them. These are honorary samooh members elected by the samooh on rotation basis.

women's names included as joint owners in the purchase of new property and assets. The DCTs of Sitamarhi and Rohtas quoted similar incidents.

Women have taken initiatives in fighting oppression and gender based violence such as a rape case of an 8 year old girl in which the samooch was instrumental in getting a police case registered, and in admitting the girl to the hospital. Most of them strongly asserted that though they were married as young girls, they will not get their daughters married before 18.

The samooch at Mornisph (Musshari block of Muzzafarpur) cited one instance where they counseled the family and stopped the marriage of a 12-year-old girl - now that girl is studying. In matters of domestic violence the samooch summons the accused and counsels or threatens retaliatory action. The effect on the man is sobering and physical violence ceases after due monitoring. The women confessed that earlier they lived in fear but now they are relaxed and happy. They said, " Now others are afraid of us." Though the samooch at Dharharwa under Aurai block of Muzzafarpur is still at an early stage of maturation, it has agitated against shifting of the Bank from its neighborhood and succeeded in getting the order cancelled.

Situated within an overarching education programme of BEP, girl's education in MS has created a special niche during the process of women's mobilization and social action. Girls' education is viewed by samooch women as one of the important non- negotiables for securing basic rights and entitlements for their daughters. Samooch women have become strong role models for their daughters and other young girls. In cases where the mother gives in to the pressure of withdrawing the daughter from the school or to acquiesce for an early marriage, the girls have often taken the help of the samooch, Sahyogani and MSK to overcome these hurdles.

In terms of their own literacy almost all the samooch women are now able to sign their names and about 20-25% of them can read the broadsheet, Hulchul, brought out by the state MS office. It's still a long way for women's literacy and education to be taken up with the seriousness it deserves, strategic thrusts to promote women's education have still not caught attention and it therefore needs to be put up front in MS.

Numerous instances were narrated during the field visits and excerpted from the district reports, which showed that samoochs have been very successful in accessing and demanding accountability of local government structures.

Sumitra from village Shajapur, Dharbanga Sadar took her child for immunization. The doctor was not present and the compounder asked her to come another day. This had already happened thrice. When Sumitra placed this issue in samooch meeting the members decided to take action. Next day 35 women had 'dharna' at the PHC and got an assurance from the compounder and doctors that such things would not re-occur.

As samooths have become stronger and self reliant, they have taken on newer roles and are expanding their outreach to neighboring villages and blocks. Many Sahyoganis have become trainers within the MS programme and for other programmes as well. Financial management of the Jagjagi is handled entirely by the samooth members. Meeting the bank officials, seeking group loans and submitting status report of the thrift and credit groups to the banks and to the MS district staff is now being independently handled by the samooth members. Mobility has become their key strength, which they are using to good effect to raise issues and seek better delivery of government services from the local institutions and PRIs.

Since the Mahila samooths are primarily in the tolas of backward/ dalit/ minority sections of the villages, the focus remains on addressing the issues concerning these women. However, in all the areas where the programme has been running for more than five to seven years, there have been several cases of involvement of women across other castes and the upper class, especially to seek and provide support against incidents of gender based violence. This is also because violence itself is an issue that cuts across caste and class.

The participation of samooth women is strong in the structures of public power like PRIs and is considered an important indicator to determine the strength of the samooth when the grading and assessment is done by the programme functionaries and the samooth members themselves.

Economic empowerment initiatives of the samooths are broadly for building sustainable savings and credit self help groups, building collective assets of the samooths for linking up with the banks for entrepreneurial loans, convergence with government institutions such as DRDA, NABARD, PHD, DoE, and DWCD for effective delivery of socio-economic programmes for the women.

Organized economic activities taken up by the samooths has given a big fillip to the women's confidence and their recognition within and outside the family. Increased economic gains made by women from their saving activities and its effective use has provided them assertiveness and made a difference in their decision-making capacities. Women's significant economic contribution in meeting the practical and some of the strategic needs (for e.g. sending the daughter/son for higher education in a hostel/ city college) of the family has been the critical actor in dealing with socio- economic and political oppression and powerlessness faced by women.

Areas for strengthening - The stronger samooths require technical and financial support and enhanced managerial, networking and advocacy skills for ensuring greater autonomy and diversification of their roles. Capacities of the stronger samooths need to be systemically developed to offer peer support to the relatively weaker samooths.

A strong and mutually supporting bond among the samooth members is a critical area to focus on while the process of consolidation of samooths as district and state federation is

taking place. Instances of collapse of strong samooths, for reasons of personal rivalry amongst the members came to the fore in all districts. In Darbhanga many samooths broke down during floods in the region and have not yet been able to recover since then. It is natural for samooths to fluctuate between strength and weakness due to both internal and external forces. This situation of flux is an important factor in the sustainability of samooths. Strategies and mechanisms have to be built in so that samooth cohesion is not affected to the degree of it collapsing altogether.

Literacy skills of the women members need to be continually enhanced so that they can deal with situations and issues themselves and use their knowledge to build competencies of other groups and other women in the village. Materials for post literacy and continuing education need to be developed in accordance with their needs.

The negotiation skills of the samooth members need to be developed to move over from being activists to becoming partners with the mainstream system on their own terms. For this the samooth members would need other skills as managers, and advocates and negotiators for developing strategic equations with government functionaries and systems.

Under the new programme structure there is a need for focussed and sustained inputs for the strengthening of weak Samooths - the processes of samooth formation should not be diluted at the cost developing federations

Federations

In Bihar the process of federation formation is in a nascent stage. A lot of time and maturity is required for developing the state federation in Bihar and for it to become a dynamic self-reliant entity. There is a very high level of aspiration and zeal among the samooth women and the MS district and state teams for the federation/s to become strong and recognizable entities to advocate and work for gender equity. The preparation process is on going and is quite intensive and rigorous therefore it is rightfully taking its own time and space to evolve. Hence, it is early to assess their ability to address women's issues cutting across caste and class divides or to assess the nature of impact on the local community. But before the state level federation becomes an autonomous body, the cluster/ block and district level federations have to emerge to join up into a larger presence.

From field level discussions it came across clearly that there was a very strong need to move out of BEP and have a separate identity as an autonomous MS body which is guided by the philosophy and vision of the Mahila Samakhya in totality. The process of federation formation has also been guided with this spirit in which women from the samooths have fully been part of the journey of forming the registered bodies. At present the umbilical link between MS and the newly formed district federations is very strong and intertwined. Therefore presently there is little or no distinction between the strong samooths and district federations to claim separate credit for the work being done especially in the areas of gender based violence, convergence with PRIs and support to improve the government services in education and health.

However, the economic empowerment initiatives of the samooths under thrift and credit activities and for linking up with the banks for entrepreneurial loans, setting up SHGs on

the invitation from government institutions such as District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and NABARD, have been the initiatives which have provided the base for the federations to become economically self-reliant and independent. The four registered federations have opened their separate bank accounts and there has been progress in submitting independent proposals from the federations in Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur and Rohtas for running educational programs, economic empowerment programmes, for delivery and improvement of rural health and sanitation services and in Rohtas, the federation has given a proposal to address the issue of female feticide. The low cost toilet construction programme, supported by UNICEF, has been given for implementation to these federations. The federations in Sitamarhi and Rohtas have got sanction and funds to run a few alternative educational programme centres from BEP as well. Though the federation in Gaya is at a nascent stage (not registered) with members still busy understanding their roles and responsibilities, their concepts about the objectives and benefits of forming the federation are quite clear. Expanding the MS programme in the unreached villages is the key point in its agenda. For the federations to become self-sustaining models, there is a strong felt need by samooths, to develop a strong economic empowerment base.

The path towards autonomy and decentralization is well laid out and the journey has begun. Although, it is a long way to reach the goals and aspirations, nevertheless the samooths and MS functionaries are determined to keep on their journey for self-reliance and independent identity. In response to the question as to why they need to have their own body (federation)? they said, "When we'll be independent then we'll work according to our priorities and would not be bound by government policy and targets." "Our dream is to empower every woman economically, politically, socially and educationally and for this we need to have our own identity and not be dictated by someone else's terms and parameters". They are confident to make the federation an independent body "Will not be as difficult as it was to get the MS programme going in the villages when it was started in 1993". The reply on asking about the importance of having a separate registered body as a district level federation, summarises the strength, challenge and scope of the samooths- "We have now tasted the fruit of being independent and strong minded... now we can't go back and sit in our homes. The samooth and federation is our body- it has given us an identity therefore we need to have it to show our identity as collective women's strength." Their resolve shows in the statement of one of samooth women - "the struggle to carve out our independent niche as an autonomous body will not be more difficult than the continuing struggle to live life with dignity and equality as a girl and then as a woman."

The processes of federation formation - It varied, depending upon the maturity of the MS programme in the respective districts and the confidence of the samooths, depending upon the initiation of the programme in the district and other factors which are situational as well as related to programme evolution and management.

Federations in four districts have been formed. Samridhi in Rohtas, Pragati- Ek Prayas in Sitamarhi, Swadha in West Champaran and Jyoti Mahila Samakhya in Muzaffarpur have been registered under Societies' Registration Act 1860. All these societies were registered

Barabanga and Bhojpur districts are in the process.

The institutional procedures of the District Federations are clearly laid out and have been explained very systematically through rigorous theme based trainings on how, what and why of registration, grading and assessing the samoochs, formation/tasks of the general and executive council, financial management and proposal writing. Issue-wise sub-committees have been constituted at village, cluster and unit levels. All the representatives meet regularly at cluster, unit and block levels by rotation. They use issue specific modules for the trainings and meetings.

The federations have revolving funds which provide the base for the federations to begin working towards becoming economically self reliant and independent. The four registered federations have opened their separate bank accounts and there has been progress in submitting independent proposals from the federation in Muzzafarpur and Sitamarhi and Rohtas. The low cost toilet construction programme supported by UNICEF in collaboration with public health department has been given for implementation to the federations in Muzzafarpur, Sitamarhi and Rohtas districts. The federations in Sitamarhi and Rohtas have got sanction and funds to run few alternative educational programme centres from BEP as well. These district federations have also submitted proposals to government banks, DRDA and DWCD for starting SHGs and economic empowerment programmes, to health and education departments for delivery and improvement of rural health and sanitation services. In Rohtas the federation has given a proposal to address the issue of female feticide. The department of adult education to discuss the strategies for continuing education called representatives from Jyoti MS of Muzzafarpur.

Agendas addressed by the District Federations reflect that they are keen to:

- expand their outreach and impact the mainstream institutions by providing personal and collective expertise to take on gender issues.
- demand accountability of local government structures/ services and mobilise support for effective delivery of government services in education and health.
- take on the delivery of the government's economic and village development programmes.

Areas where the Federations require support are :

Guidelines for spelling out the nature and scope of relationship between MS and federations at the National, State and District levels

Continuous inputs to strengthen and upgrade the weak samoochs.

Capacity building and learning new skills for taking on expanded roles and responsibilities

Advanced training in accounts keeping, planning, management and administration.

Financial support and technical guidance to overcome the obstacles in the autonomous functioning of the federations.

Provide information of and develop linkages with government and other programmes schemes.

Build alliances with local networks, NGOs, civil society institutions

Strengthen inter federation cooperation and communication mechanisms
Expanding MS programme in the new areas
Stronger networking with state and district level women's groups and programmes

Time and space needs to be given for federations to reach a level of maturity for their autonomous functioning. Greater emphasis and strategic focus on convergence of MS with other sectors and programmes was repeatedly expressed in our meetings with the District Magistrates (DM), District Project Coordinators (DPC) of the districts visited, BEP functionaries and the state level officials. Suggestions were given to plan for convergence between SHG activities under Swashakti programme (under Department of Women and Child Development) and also with Sudha Dairy Cooperative in Bihar in which women's dairy cooperatives have been especially successful. The strong MS samooths and district federations could be linked with the Cooperative. The option of convergence with the government programmes has to be balanced with the proviso that the federations should be able to negotiate their terms and conditions to overcome the threat of being co-opted or becoming the conduits for service delivery .

4.2 Alternative non-formal educational structures

For girls who have never had the opportunity to go to school, this is indeed a novel and exciting experience.

- Sakhi, Mahila Samakhya

Learners are of the view that Jagjagi centres are better than schools as they have life oriented learning . . .

Sahayogani, Mahila Samakhya

The Mahila Samakhya experience over the past twelve years offers a unique path of exploring and understanding the issues of women and girl's education and empowerment. Apart from mobilisation and organisation of women, Mahila Samakhya provides a range of educational opportunities for different age groups. Mahila Samakhya educational interventions include: Jagjagi kendras (non-formal centres for adolescent girls), Bal Jagjagi kendra (children's centres for both boys and girls), Kishori Kendras (centres for adolescent girls), and Mahila Shikshan Kendras (residential centres for out-of school girls)⁷.

Jagjagi Kendra

Jagjagi Kendras are non-formal education centres for adolescent girls with the primary objective of empowering them through meaningful education. Most of them are from socially and economically disadvantaged groups including migrant groups, often from remote areas/tribal area. They are also the ones who share an unfair burden of work at home and are engaged in wage earning activities from an early age. One of the challenges in Mahila Samakhya is to ensure that these girls have the opportunity to experience some years of schooling that is relevant and meaningful to their lives.

Jagjagi Kendra is a place where the girls, who have not been to schools, could come at a time that was convenient to them, ask whatever questions they wanted and learn at their

⁷ Refer Annexure 4

own pace without being 'laughed at or humiliated' by the teacher. It provides girls with life-oriented learning that is participatory and experience based. In the initial years the Jagjagi kendras were managed by a committee, which had a Sahyogani, Saheli or a Bal Mitra. But in recent years mahila samoohs not only manage and monitor the Jagjagi Kendra but are also involved in the selection of the Saheli (instructor) the venue, purchase of materials, setting the centre timings and ensuring the attendance of the learners and Saheli.

The timings of the centre vary from three to four hours and more if the children so desire. Formal school textbooks along with some specially designed TLM are being used. In each centre the attendance is quite high ranging anywhere from 25 to 30 learners. Some girls who were married were found attending the centres. We were informed that these girls have refused to go to their in-laws house for a year. The focus of these kendras is on empowering girls with knowledge and confidence and collective strength to help each other. A brief interaction with them informed us that by and large they fell into three categories:

girls who had never been to school due to responsibility for household work.

girls who have been to formal schools for a short period, had acquired some basic literacy skills but dropped out as teachers were irregular and they were fearful of physical beating and humiliation.

girls who helped to augment family income

A visit to Jagjagi Kendras

We were welcomed with loud enthusiastic greetings and MS claps. Girls wanted to know where we had come from. In one of the two Jagjagi centres visited, we found the centre beautifully decorated with pocket boards and colourful charts of animals and birds. The Saheli (studying in B.A. II year) had made the charts. One girl got up and quickly read out the parts of the body from the poster that was hanging on the sidewall. Some sang songs in their local maithili language. A small girl wanted to recite a poem that she had learnt from the book. The confidence with which the girls interacted, asked us questions and their curiosity overwhelmed us. The centre had started three months ago. The teacher had placed the girls in three groups A, B and C- according to learning levels and competencies.

The second Jagjagi centre was in contrast to the first. Very few teaching learning materials were visible. Despite the team's requests the Saheli was unable to provide the number of children who have been mainstreamed. We were informed that some of the records have been kept at home and whatever found needed updating and organising. The Kendra was being run in a cramped space provided by a samooch member as it was the only place available

The learners are divided in 3 groups - A, B and C according to their competency level. Students in group A should have the required competencies of class V whereas competency level of grade B students is expected to be same as for class 3 and grade C students are either beginners or girls who are unable to attend the Kendra regularly. Once the students gain the competency level for class V they have to write class V examination conducted by the State Education Board and on clearing the same, they are mainstreamed

in formal schools. The competency levels of each grade of children varied across districts. In one Jagjagi centre the team (name withheld) the team found that even grade A students had barely reached class II level. The team observed that while some children could read a randomly selected paragraph from their textbooks but could not always comprehend. The girls had been taught to use notebook but most of the girls had an unsteady handwriting. Their writing skills left much to be desired.

The learners had a very positive view of the centre because they appreciated the information and learning that they received, which included prayers, exercises and inputs on sanitation. A system of monthly assessment and annual examination exists and also of informing the guardians of the child's progress. Many learners were keen to continue their studies at the MSK. Interactions with the learners clearly indicated that they have become aware, confident, and oriented towards self-progress. This synchronizes with the MS vision, which is concerned with changing women's perception about themselves and the perception of society about women's traditional roles. One of the most visible impacts of MS educational strategies has been the mainstreaming of children in formal schools. Women from the samooch ensure that their own children attend schools.

Some of the problems identified by the teachers are :

Difficulty in teaching children who are shy and hesitant.

Difficulty in explaining some concepts about which they are unclear specially in science and mathematics.

Lack pedagogic inputs for teaching multi grade and multi level class room situation

Lack practical skills to deal with situations when children do not come irregularly

There is critical area of pedagogical concern regarding the medium of instruction used in the kendras. In Jagjagi teachers used the local dialect in curriculum transaction. But teacher training modules and textbooks suggest use of Hindi as the medium of transaction. The children are constantly expected to shift from their local dialect to standard Hindi. However, appropriate approaches to help children move from the use of dialect to standard Hindi, are yet to be articulated. Teachers need guidance to help the children transit from one to the other smoothly without making them lose pride in conversing in their native dialect.

During interactions with mothers they clearly articulated a desire for better future for their daughters. The overwhelming impression gathered was that they recognise the value of education, and notwithstanding their economic situation, are committed to send their girls to school. Acting against early/child marriage, postponing marriage by many years, withdrawing them from wage earning work and freeing them from household responsibilities meant that there was great concern that their daughters are not in the same position that women found themselves in.

Mahila Shikshan Kendra

The Mahila Shikshan Kendra (MSK) is an effective instrument to address the learning needs for out of school adolescents and young women in the age group 16-35 years. They

offer a unique residential learning opportunity to complete either primary or upper primary level of schooling. The curriculum is based on a holistic approach, which not only imparts basic literacy, but also instills in them qualities that will help young women and adolescents to play an active part in the development of their communities. In Bihar the MSKs operate as:

Residential condensed educational centres for adolescent girls and young women.

Making gender sensitive, quality education and life oriented skills available to non literate and semi-literate

A comfortable space and environment for the learners to develop as confident, aware, motivated and empowered women-leaders and animators

Besides its academic content the MSK includes life skills education and creates awareness about socio-economic realities. Two courses are conducted every year. The first one is of 8-9 months, which prepares girls for taking an exam or moving to another class. A short course for 1-2 months is also there for graduated MSK girls and MSK functionaries. Girls attain competencies of either class III, IV and V level.

In a study conducted to assess 'Competence Level among the Students of Mahila Shikshan Kendra in Gaya', 2004 it was found that:

- Mean achievement level increased from 28.97% to 33.82% in EVS

- Mean achievement level increased from 37.41% to 43.16% in Mathematics

- Mean achievement level decreased from 36.78% to 31.28% in language (this was seen as an area of concern)

Older girls from the Jagjagi Kendras who are desirous of continuing their education are admitted in the MSK. The girls were determined to be educated, even if it is against their families' wishes. Some girls reached MSK after struggling at home. They wanted to get out of the cycle of poverty and believed that education was indeed the key to economic independence. They go away from MSKs with a wealth of information and knowledge. Apart from these students, the teams met other girls who have finished the MSK course and are engaged in other activities. There were some students who, after completing their courses at MSK, had joined the government middle and upper primary residential school for backward girls.

For enrolment MSKs give priority to single, SC, minority or physically challenged girls. In Muzaffarpur MSK the current batch comprised of the majority of students from the minority community and some from the Musahar caste. Here also like in Jagjagi Kendras the group of 40 is divided into 3 groups (A -green, B- blue and C- yellow) based on their competency levels. After an eight-month course these girls appear for class 5th board examination and get mainstreamed. Some of the girls who have passed out from the MSK are now working as Sakhis, and Bal Mitras, Sahelis and in the MS production centres. One of them has become a Sahyogani too! A driving urge to study and to learn could be witnessed among students. At MSK girls and women appeared deeply imbued with the MS vision and were clear about their priorities.

All round development of their personality was clearly visible during interactions. The main reason for their accelerated pace of learning is that majority of the learners have already gone through a period of denial/deprivation/struggle before they came here. Consequently they are highly motivated in trying to acquire basic skills of reading/writing/ arithmetic in a short duration. It is this motivation level of the learners that determines their pace of learning. They also have a time bound-goal in front of them.

Sabiya Khatoon went and spoke to the Mukhiya of her village for her caste certificate when her family members opposed her.

Similarly Asha of Muradpur village, Bochaha block struggled against all opposition to attend the Jagjagi Kendra and later the MSK. She admitted that that she is leading a transformed life since then. She can now interact with Bank officials, has learnt how to save and also knows about sanitation. Her dream is to see her daughter who is in class 10, become a doctor. She commented 'now I feel strong from within'.

Learners have taken great pains to come to these centres. Manju a learner of the MSK in Amas block said that her mother used to beat her every day for going to the Jagjagi Kendra, but her determination got her through Jagjagi and now MSK.

Girls at the MSK are also given vocational training and taught karate and cycling. The vocational training includes candle-making, sewing, embroidery, tie and dye, making lac bangles etc. The learners revealed how MSK has lead them to develop a positive self-image, have confidence, interact with others, travel alone, discriminate between good and bad and to learn about inter personal behaviour. MSKs have played a significant role in delaying the age of marriage since the girls are able to take a stand about themselves and about their lives.

The girls who came to MSK took this once in a lifetime opportunity to get initiated into any kind of formal education. Here they leave behind the drudgery of household work and responsibilities and develop clear priorities about their lives. MSKs also enjoy immense support from local community and district administration.

Kishori Manch

Kishori Manch provides a platform for 'kishoris' to exchange their views, their rights and to share their agonies. An opportunity is provided to the girls to come out of their villages interact with other girls of their age and share their dreams and aspirations. This platform boosts the sense of togetherness, self-confidence and self-esteem in them. This Manch was initially designed as a forum where all adolescent girls in the village meet at a given time and place. But gradually this developed into a platform for adolescent girls of Jagjagi Kendra (there are variations across districts). Meetings of Kishori Manch are held once a week at village level and once a month at cluster level for three hours. Different issues are taken up for discussion. From every village two girls are represented at the cluster meetings along with Saheli and Sahyogani and Shikshan Sahyogani.

Kishori Manch meeting (45 girls) at Mathurapur was held in the Panchayati Bhawan. Amongst those present, two or three were enrolled in schools and the rest attend the

Jagjagi Kendras. All wanted to attend school after attending Jagjagi Kendra. 15 girls present in the Kishori Manch meeting were ready to join MSK for the residential programme.

At the monthly Kishori Manch meeting in Chandanpatti, the issues discussed were more or less the same as in the last three consecutive meetings (girls' education, child marriage, health, hygiene and dowry) with a slight change in the order. The girls appeared to be the passive listeners to the Sahyogani. Without the vibrancy such meetings could have generated, it appeared to be a routine academic exercise. Yet when we asked the girls whether they enjoyed coming to these meetings, the answer was unanimous YES! When asked about their dreams and aspirations, girls were very shy and hesitant. Some mentioned that they had no dreams at all.

The feeling of togetherness helps these girls to fight and overcome problems and discrimination faced in day-to-day lives. Discussion amongst the learners of different centres helps them in overcoming short falls if any. Learners, even demand for replacement of Saheli (teacher of Jagjagi) if she is not up to the mark. In the meetings of Kishori Manch attended, members of some Manch appeared conscious of social, health and sanitation issues and presented an impromptu skit expressing local response to issues like girls' education and early marriage.

However, on the whole the Kishori Manch did not appear to be as cohesive, focused, vocal, and assertive as the MSK and other groups belonging to the MS structure. The quality of inputs provided at these meetings needs to be monitored to make best use of this innovative intervention. Strengthening of the Kishori Manch is a crucial issue, which requires special attention and concerted efforts on the part of the state and DCTs. As subject's experts are not available the subject content has become very mundane, repetitive and boring.. Innovative activities like theatre workshops, puppet shows, study tours and science fairs among other activities could be designed for the Kishori Manch meetings.

Bal Jagjagi and Bal Chaman

Bal Jagjagi is a pre-school centre for girls and boys with the objective of providing physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of the girls and boys (3-6 years age group) and extends support to the parents/ caregivers to provide the care that they need. These centres are being managed by Samoohs and are being run on the same lines as ICDS with the only difference being that supplementary nutrition is not served in Bal Jagjagi Kendras. In the ICDS areas all Bal Jagjagi centres have now been converted into ICDS centres and in some places Bal Mitras (instructors) have been appointed as Aganwadi workers. Along with these centres there are also Bal Chaman, forums to ensure the retention of the children mainstreamed from Bal Jagjagi to formal school and their follow up.

Bal Jagjagi is a healthy initiative for conditioning pre-school age group children to educational environment, but it needs attention in terms of trainers, pedagogical strategies and development of TLM and its usage. The interventions should also focus on sensitising

parents, siblings and other community members to recognise and address the specific developmental needs of children and extend required support to the centres as well.

Women's literacy camp

The team observed a 5-day non-residential literacy camp and interacted with the samooch women there. The age group of these women was 18-40 years, which further extended to 55 years in some cases! Sahyoginis teach in these camps. Curricula in the camps follow the lines of adult literacy centres including:

recognition and writing alphabets and numbers

writing their as well as their husband's name and also their address

It was impossible to gauge how much the women would have learned by the end of the camp since all of them were at various stages of learning. Some women were able to write their own as well as their husband's name while others were still at the level of recognition of alphabets. During our interaction, women informed us that they saw literacy and education not only as merely acquiring reading, writing and numerical skills but also as the ability to use these skills to directly address issues of livelihood and breaking down gender stereotypes by entering male domains by acquiring non traditional skills like masonry. These camps have some impact but they require regular follow up to ensure that the literacy skills acquired are retained. Once women acquire rudimentary literacy they should have access to an environment and to gender informed reading material that sustains their skills. MS could link up with NGOs involved in developing gender sensitive neo-literate materials. These content could be modified to make it relevant to the needs of the women.

Jhola Pustakalaya

Jhola Pustakalaya functions at the unit level. Though the libraries are maintained at unit level - Sakhi/Shikshan Sahyogi also take the books and other reading materials to the centres in a bag, therefore the name. There is an annual membership fees of Rs.5 for students of Jagjagi kendra and Rs.10 for other women.

Currently the idea of the Jhola Pustakalaya is still evolving therefore it requires more systematic inputs to mainstream it as a popular means for continuing education. Its location at the unit level restricts its access to girls from far off villages. It requires more inputs in matters of selection of books and reading material. The variety of books and teaching learning materials is limited and its outreach is restricted. Collection could always be enriched by including some more books on general knowledge, autobiography of eminent Indian personalities, dictionaries. More strategic planning needs to be done for enhancing its qualitative and quantitative outreach. MS could learn from other states and NGOs where innovative programs (mobile libraries) have been a huge success. Jhola Pustakalaya could go a long way to strengthen the ongoing learning opportunities of the girls and women.

Issues of concern -

In spite of these achievements some fundamental questions have been raised. Some of the immediate concerns and issues that need to be addressed about MSKs are:

Residential camps, catering to children from a wide and difficult milieu, need extremely dedicated teachers with multigrade and multilevel teaching competencies, an issue which needs to be addressed seriously. Different approaches/strategies and inputs are needed to address the differential levels of learning of the learners.

The teacher's (sahelis) level of understanding of and command over the subject area needs strengthening. This was obvious from their inability to enrich the content and go beyond the textbook. Classroom transaction was largely textbook based and did not encourage independent learning. More academic support is needed for effective transaction of the curriculum.

The reading materials given to learners at the learning centre appear to be scanty. The learners are provided with the textbooks of formal school system, which often come late in the session. Secondly, these textbooks are designed for the mainstream children while the MS children have a different pedagogical requirement and programme. Hence at the centres the school textbooks need to be supplemented with other materials.

Assessment and follow up procedures need to be developed with external resource persons. This will help the learners to improve their proficiency.

Greater attention is required in the field of mainstreaming of younger girls from the Jagjagi Kendra and MSK to formal primary schools. This could be by organizing retention drives to put pressure on the parent and community. These need to be organized at regular intervals to sustain the pressure. Samooh members could be involved to monitor the attendance of each child. There is also need to link up with NGOs and sensitising the girls for education beyond schooling.

There was lack of any well-planned strategies and opportunities for older girls who after passing out from MSK and Jagjagi Kendra, did not have access to any formal learning. Strategies have to be formulated to develop innovative TLMs which would sustain their reading skills and enable them to continue their education.

Materials for neo-literate in the form of newsletter, booklets have to be generated and disseminated at the grassroots level. The materials based on alternative educational pedagogy have to explore new content areas, teaching-learning methodologies and activities that are grounded in women's lives and give space to their ways of learning.

MS platform needs to provide the continuous knowledge up-gradation support for women. A clear-cut strategy for post literacy and continuing education programme has to be articulated.

Clearly, the educational interventions for girls and women would have to evolve in response to specific local contexts. The transfer of knowledge, skills, and understanding cannot be a one-time input, it has to be sustained through continuous efforts. Educational inputs must respect and work alongwith women's existing knowledge base. Education must also address the issues of caste, class and gender and should help women to critically analyze their life situations and make informed choices.

5. Impact of MS

The impact of any intervention has to be measured in consonance with the socio-cultural context and developmental realities on the ground. Bihar, being the only State in India with a literacy level below 50% and the last among the 32 (selected) States/UTs according to Human Development Index and Gender Disparity Index⁸, certainly does not provide an enabling environment for any developmental intervention. The situation was much grimmer when the MS programme started in the State. With the sex ratio of 907⁹ and female literacy abysmally low at 22%, women in Bihar were faring worse on almost all the social indicators, which in turn reflected the continued denial of their civil, political, economic and social rights. Given this, initiating a programme - with a vision of women's equity and empowerment, and sustaining it, was certainly a rocky path to tread. While assessing the impact of programme in different areas, old or new, mature or not so mature, the common thread that runs across all the indicators is - the women who have made it this far against all odds, can go further, given optimal support, opportunities and resources facilitation.

The MS programme with its women centered and process oriented approach has made a visible impact on the ground, in the lives of poor marginalised women. During the discussions with community members (other than samooh women) they expressed that samoohs have made a perceptible difference in the overall environment of the village - specially in areas of education, health and hygiene and sanitation. As one community member in Darbhanga district commented 'the sensitivity to the needs of our people and the commitment with which samooh members have worked in our community is commendable and has left a mark on all of us.'

5.1 Education

Since MS Bihar has been an integral part of BEP and DPEP - girls' education has been its focal issue. It is also the key agenda for the samoohs and federations. There is an apparent increase in the overall literacy status (enrolment, retention of girls particularly) in the areas where samoohs have been working very strongly. Samooh members have been elected as the President, Secretary or members of Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (School Education Committee). Even the women who are not in any formal committee, exert a strong influence to improve the delivery of the educational services in their respective areas. Contribution of MSP in the village level educational scenario can be assessed by the fact that in Gaya district out of the total 249 villages covered by MSP, 36 percent villages have 100% enrollment in the primary school. It is not the numbers that gets the attention but the confidence with which take pride in the fact that these impressive rates of improved enrollment are only due to MS initiatives!

Enrolment in primary schools has increased tremendously; Jagjagi Kendras and Bal Jagjagi Kendras are star attractions of MS. MSKs occupy the place of pride in the hearts of so many young adolescent girls who have been transformed from meek, invisible and

⁸ Source : GOI (2001), *National Human Development Report, Planning Commission, New Delhi*

⁹ Census 1991

tremblingly shy girls to confident, self-reliant young girls who demand, negotiate for their right to education, make choices and live a life with a future objectives, full of dreams and aspirations. Balika Manch at the cluster and block level is becoming a potential forum for building a second generation girls and women imbued with the MS philosophy and with a vision for an empowered girl/womanhood. 11,217 girls from Jagjagi Kendras have been mainstreamed to formal schools and another 18,325 children have been mainstreamed from Bal Jagjagi. 327 villages are now total enrolment villages.

The alternative educational structures of MS appear strong and effective in the villages. The district administration strongly affirmed the contribution of the MS team for making the education programme very strong in the respective districts. Their success can be assessed by the fact that in Muzaffarpur district when last year 175 Jagjagi centers were sanctioned, in some of the village tolas the criteria of having required no. (30 nos.) of drop out girls (between 9-14 years) couldn't be met because most of the girls from the younger age group were already attending the primary school! The success of the girls' education in MS areas has been the influencing factor in introducing NPGEL and KGSV in Bihar with the mandate for its implementation given to MS.

The positive role of the MS in getting the older girls back in mainstream education was appreciated during the various discussions held at district and State level. Though with limited coverage, MS could not have changed the overall educational status of the State but it is seen as the forerunner of gender equity in State level educational initiatives. The concept of alternative education structures of MS are being replicated in the educational programmes - viz. Navachar Jagjagi under DPEP and MSK under SSA.

5.2 Health

Women and girls at all levels of MSP are extremely aware of the value of information on reproductive health, sanitation, nutrition, safe drinking water, garbage disposal and other hygienic practices. These issues are taken up at different health committee meetings (from samoochs to unit level). Health committee members are responsible for raising awareness about issues related to health and hygiene, reproductive health, sanitation, AIDS, immunization, environment and developing toilet habits. Use of herbal and home remedies are encouraged in the samoochs, the Jagjagi Kendras and the MSK.

Sahyoginis, Sakhis and samooch members have been working for immunisation, pulse polio and other public health related drives at the village level viz. eye camps, distribution of Vitamin A tablets and for prevention of Filaria. At some places, as a result of close monitoring of the samooch women, ANMs have become more regular with their village visits. The functioning of the PHC/sub-PHCs, where there are active samoochs, has improved considerably. On the request of samooch members, health camps have been organized at the sub-block level. Samoochs have held rallies and demonstrations against non-functioning PHCs, non-availability of medicines and doctors.

The samooch acts as an arena for informal learning and self-development, as well as a platform for awareness raising activities within the wider community. They have also been spreading awareness of important issues such as Child Rights and Adolescent Health,

which are communicated through street theatres on health and sanitation or demonstrations on garbage management techniques.

Under the Total Sanitation Campaign (supported by UNICEF) – MS is engaged in the promotion, production, and installation of sanitary toilets in rural areas. There are Production centres for low cost toilets in the districts with trained women masons who have taken up construction activities. At present there are 169 trained women masons and 4441 toilets have been installed. MS intervention in this area has been successful in terms of demand for installation of toilets and also for training because here the means of employment becomes closely integrated with means of sanitation and protecting women from violence/abuse - the two issues being of vital concern for them. Many awareness building drives and campaigns are being carried out in this regard, resulting in a cleaner and healthier environment.

5.3 Social and Gender Equity

Issues related to gender discrimination and violence against women are being raised at community level. Alongwith these many other the social issues (e.g. caste class discrimination, child labour, alcoholism etc.) are also being addressed by women at family, village and community level using their collective strength as a pressure group.

These issues, particularly regarding domestic violence, dowry demand and harassment and early marriage of girls, have also been taken up by the samooch members in non-MS villages where it was brought to their notice and their intervention was sought. An important and growing indicator of samooch empowerment has been the confidence with which the women have been addressing issues of oppression and violence. They have decisively stopped child marriages, prevalence of dowry and have played a prominent role in preventing younger girls from getting married to older men. With pressure from samooch women, errant men have been stopped from indulging in adultery.

The samoochs have emerged as vocal and effective informal forums that have gained community respect and acceptability in cases of domestic violence, land disputes, dowry, rape and murder. Women were unanimous about being recognized by their names – a sense of identity and solidarity. During the field visits, many instances were given of collective action taken by women in fighting oppression and violence. In matters of domestic violence the samooch summons the accused and counsels or threatens retaliatory action. The women confessed that earlier they lived in fear but now they are relaxed and happy. This was visible on their joyful and shining faces. Now for them their husbands or family elders of their marital family are no longer objects of terror. They feel empowered to negotiate and dialogue with them in expressing their viewpoint.

The women have rewritten the folk songs using words and nuances that are indicative of gender-empowerment. In them they ridicule the traditional image of women and project them in a different light reflecting their changed role and situation. In this they are dislodging the deep-seated prejudices regarding social and cultural roles of women.

5.4 Economic Empowerment

The Thrift and Credit concept was introduced in the samoochs through informal financial operations based on group-based lending and saving. At the initial stage the lending was for consumption loans, such as emergencies, illness or marriage in the family, education of children and other household consumption. But later with the maturity and institutionalisation of samoochs the lending pattern also changed and women have started taking loans for individual or group income generation activities. Samooch members mentioned that while being part of the savings groups they are safe from the clutches of moneylenders. Entrepreneurial linkages with NABARD, Swashakti, SGSY and other rural banks/schemes have made the groups economic activities more organised and viable. Women have become economically self-reliant and confident. Access to and control over resources is another area where samoochs and federations have made a positive contribution. During the course of samooch formation women are also made aware about the minimum and equal wages. There are instances where these women have struggled and succeeded in getting daily wages equal to those of men.

Samooch women enjoy this newly gained sense of identity and confidence that 'their money' gives them. Their families have also benefited with increased access to credit and other services. Women are aware about the change in their decision making and bargaining power in the family, as some of the members proudly mentioned "The family now feels that our work is important and we are respected." " Our opinion is also sought when taking important decisions in the family," "Earlier our opinion was not valued but now it is sought and respected". While speaking on the dynamics of economic empowerment and domestic violence one Sahyogani commented, "In the middle class families since women are dependent on the men, there are greater incidents of gender based violence and powerlessness experienced by women". Women at different levels felt that their families are now more supportive in sharing household chores and childcare responsibilities. The tangible benefits from thrift and credit also changed family members' attitudes towards them.

5.5 Social Recognition and Political Participation

MSP has increased opportunities for the women to come out of their homes and interact with people outside their family domain, be it with the government officials, bank officials, Mukliya (village headman), school teachers and others. There is a definite change in their attitude and overall personality. The impact of a strong samooch is not only visible in their own lives but also in their families and surroundings. The women admitted that now they play a decisive role in the decision-making process of their families as well as other forums. They also felt that their work is taken up on a priority basis at the government offices. Even the people notice and wonder at the confidence and visibility of these women at Block offices and Banks. In villages where samoochs are strong, women actively participate in Gram Sabha meetings – raise issues on development work like installation of hand pumps, Indira Awas Yojna, Sulabh toilets and have demanded information on government schemes.

The field visits and discussions with the MS team members at all levels in Bihar clearly reflect a positive change in their self perception and a brand new identity imbued with respect and power at the family and community level as well. Recognition gained by women within the family and community is perceptible. Women have become more visible in different community based forums viz. Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat, VSS etc. Presently there are 1,810 MS women as VSS members and 428 are the elected members of PRI - this is indicative of the changing face of rural women in MS areas. Table 2 shows representation of samooch women in PRI.

Table 2: Representation of Women in Panchayati Raj from MS

District	Up Mukhiya	Ward Member	Member Panchayat Samiti	- Pramukh	Member Parishad	Zila	Total
Sitamarhi	1	35	1	0	0		37
Gaya	3	76	10	0	1		90
M.Champara	1	38	2	0	0		41
Muzaffarpur	2	54	6	0	0		62
Darbhanga	0	69	0	0	0		69
Rohas	0	80	7	1	1		89
Bhojpur	0	38	2	0	0		40
Total	7	390	28	1	2		428

The MS women receive recognition and support from their respective Mukhiyas. In fact many expressed a strong desire to stand for post of Mukhiya in the next elections. The women elected in PRI are working towards making the government services and resources available to their areas. Most of them are being looked upon by the community members for their honesty and sincerity.

Shaheedan Bibi (ward member and an old samooch member) of Shantipur village 'I saw to the installation of 4 handpumps, construction of 2 roads and reconstruction of one bridge after winning the election. I could do all this with the help of the samooch.'

As the samooch members of Rori Dhia village said - "Our language, way of talking and thinking has changed. Now we don't waste our time in gossiping, we try to think together, be together, act together for the upliftment and welfare of women, family & village".

3.1.2 Organisation and Outreach

The outreach of only 34 blocks out of the total 136 blocks and 484 Panchayats out of a total of 5070 Panchayats reflects the limited nature of the geographical expansion of MS. However the most significant reason for this is lack of personnel at district level to take the programme forward in new/adjoining areas. The shortage of staff is especially experienced in the case of Sitamarhi and Rohtas districts where the DCTs shoulder the additional responsibility of the new districts of Sheohar and Kaimur respectively.

Since the programme is process oriented it requires sufficient time to root itself in the villages and guided by its non-negotiables, it allows the women time and space to come together and influence the pace of the programme. Moreover, obligation to the parent body, the DCF and the resultant constraints appear to restrict the time and space of MS which could otherwise be channelised for the purpose of expansion.

In pursuit of the MS objectives the programme definitely focuses on Districts and Blocks that are most disadvantaged, with the lowest socio-economic indicators. More specifically, the criteria for selecting the Districts are low female literacy rate¹⁰, the presence of educationally backward blocks identified in the recent Census, higher SC/ST population and people below the poverty line. The districts in which literacy campaigns have been held are also preferred. For selecting the Blocks the same criteria are operational in addition to some others such as low girl child population, high infant mortality rate, geographical proximity to an MS Block, and a very weak or no NGO interventions in the area. Flood-ravaged (in Sitamarhi, Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur), and crime-infested (in West Champaran, Rohtas, Kaimur and Gaya) areas have been given special attention and also the areas where regressive social customs have further suppressed women's lives (purdah in Rohtas, bigamy in Gaya) are taken into consideration. At the village level the most marginalised groups are selected - SC (especially the Musahar, Ram and Paswan castes), ST (in W. Champaran and Rohtas districts), OBC and the Minority groups.

However, the same level of impact is not visible uniformly throughout the villages where the programme is active the villages appear to be only partially covered. The programme remains mostly concentrated on tolas which are lowest in terms of socio-economic indicators within a village. Though this is in consonance with the Mahila Samakhya objective, it has led to the formation of pockets of intense impact in a village with spillover effects of varied degrees in the surrounding areas.

The programme has not succeeded in cutting across caste/class divides in most Blocks though gender issues related to domestic violence, dowry demands and harassment and

¹⁰ Female Literacy rate in 1991: - W.Champaran-14.41; Sitamarhi-15.49; Sheohar-14.34; Gaya-24.02; Muzaffarpur-22.33; Kaimur-20.69

early marriage of girls are being raised across class and caste lines by the certain strong samoohs. A further strengthening and replication of this in many more areas is required in order to spread the MS vision to different castes and classes so that a change could be uniformly effected in societal perception about a woman's status. The role of Samoohs and Federations therefore becomes critical in expanding the MS ethos and vision to other areas.

The expansion of the programme to other blocks of the districts and also across all sections of the society is an issue that the district MS teams have to seriously consider. A well-defined strategy needs to be thought out not only for expansion to other blocks but also densification of the existing blocks.

On the positive side, even though the outreach may be limited or small in terms of territory and numbers of villages, MS has brought about a major transformation in the lives of the women and girls of the marginalised social groups. Hence, even though the expansion may seem limited quantitatively, it has certainly impacted the lives of women qualitatively with intensity, despite the oppressive socio-political environment.

Expansion can also be assessed in terms of the spillover effect of strong MS samoohs in the adjacent tolas, villages and Blocks mainly through information flow and to a lesser extent through personal interaction. Daughters of samooh women married in families of non-MS villages carry the seed of MS vision and experience with them and try to sow it in their new surroundings. At Mahila Shikshan Kendras a few girls admitted that they try to convey the information, skills and teachings of the MSK to other girls they know.

The presence of an indirect intervention through the programme is supported by the project findings of Wendy Janssen, Jacques van de Gaag and Jan Willem Gunning (Amsterdam Institute for International Development). They have researched the impact of Mahila Samakhya programme on social capital in Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi and Darbhanga (2002-2003). Their findings are strongly suggestive of a positive relationship between the MS programme, increased social capital among its members and education outcomes such as preschool/primary school enrolment, immunization coverage and the treatment of diarrhea. More significantly, the findings suggest a substantial spillover effect in the other non-MS villages, thus indicating the positive indirect effects of the programme even on the non-participating families in the community. It is advisable that such indirect influences are consolidated and processes are facilitated through federations, in order to further the acceptance and influence of the MS philosophy even in the non-target areas.

The spillover effect is probably the reason behind the demands for MS intervention coming usually from a neighbouring region. The Core Team also considers geographical proximity as one of the criteria for expansion at the Block level. Jairam Kharama village of Muzaffarpur the Samooh women claimed that they had formed 5 samoohs in other villages when women asked for them. In Gaya, the two subsequent blocks identified (e.g. Imamganj and Dumaria) for coverage were mainly based on demand coming from the area and also the contiguity of the existing MS Blocks. However, these blocks are not in

consonance with the selection criteria spelled out in the Xth Plan document. The samoooh women are informally addressing the demand coming from the neighboring areas as the women in these areas are familiar with the work being done in the MS blocks and are willing to take up issues and activities.

6.2 Information Dissemination/Knowledge Building/Skills Development

Information dissemination has been the key strategy for reaching the out to women and increasing awareness at community level. The Sahyoginis along with the samoooh women act effectively as the providers and disseminators of the relevant information on education, health, nutrition, social and gender issues etc. MS has been working continuously on awareness generation and information dissemination through:

Community mobilisation activities - community meetings and issue-based campaigns/rallies are organised at local level for awareness generation.

Sammelans and Melas are organised at a larger scale at cluster, unit and district levels for advocacy focussing on the six identified issues.

Print media e.g. pamphlets, brochures, flyers, posters, banners are the most preferred tools for creating awareness and promoting relevant issues as they attract attention and cause message retention.

Folk Media including issue based folk songs, Nukkads (street plays) developed in local context are also being used extensively for reaching out to non-literate women and the community.

Women also organise meetings to celebrate international and national days/events viz. International Day for Women, Gandhi Jayanti etc.

Under Total Sanitation and Meena Campaigns, videos are also being used for awareness building drives.

Given the importance of role that these women play in information dissemination, enhancement of their own capability and knowledge becomes imperative. Sahyoginis, Sahelis, Shikshan Mitras and samoooh women should go on exposure trips to other districts/ states for cross learning and experience sharing. Capacity building initiatives in the programme include awareness generation/training on the functioning of local government (PRI) and other institutions, information regarding relevant government programmes, schemes and services etc. Women also undergo skills development in basic functional literacy, legal literacy, masonry, herbal medicines, accounts, book keeping etc.

Kishori Manch, Unit level Quiz competitions and Jhola Pustakalaya meetings are the forums for adolescent girls for information exchange and knowledge building through peer group learning. Life skills are imparted to them, enable them to examine their socio-cultural beliefs and values, provide them with information on adolescent and reproductive health, improve their communication skills, and help them in goal-setting and decision-making. All these, awareness generation and skills development processes are carried out in a planned and organised manner. However, the quality of inputs provided in the form of transactions/trainings, printed materials, pictorial charts etc. require proper review and assessment for the needs of users. The infrastructure developed under MSP like Resource

Centres, Mahila Kutirs, Field Centres etc. could play a major role as a clearing house for dissemination of such materials, techniques and systems. The quality and volume of different types of information disseminated can be regulated and streamlined from these centres.

Resource Centers - There is one State level Resource Centre 'Prerana' and 7 district level resource centres¹¹. These are conducive spaces for MS to organize meetings, trainings, workshops etc. with residential facilities. These centres are also used for other training programme under BEP/DPEP. Library and audio/visual materials are available here. However the usage of library facility is very limited, that too only by MS personnel. These centres which should be working as a forum for knowledge base development, are being utilised merely as physical venues for the various training programmes.

6.3 Inter-linkages / convergence

Networking, partnerships, convergence and developing "lobbying groups" together with integration of gender are seen as key strategic processes for taking the MS agenda across sectors. Being an integral part of BEP, MS has had very strong linkages with the programmes focussing on primary and elementary education viz. DPEP, SSA. The MS experience is being integrated into SSA through the NPEGEL initiative. MS has the responsibility of implementing NPEGEL in its programme areas, and expansion in the districts has been undertaken under NPEGEL Blocks too. MS is already actively involved enrollment drives, rallies, microplanning, maa-beti melas etc. They are also intensively involved in the planning phase of KGSV. Programme functionaries also coordinates the Total Literacy Campaign in their areas. In Muzzafarpur the MS team received a trophy from the Department for running literacy camps for women learners successfully especially in the flood prone and geographically inaccessible areas.

The district units have successfully forged links between the programme beneficiaries and relevant Government Departments like Health, Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA), Department of Social Welfare for Social, tribal welfare, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) etc.

The education and health sub committees of Samoohs monitor the functioning and demand accountability from the mainstream institutions like schools, Primary Health Centres and the ANMs. As mentioned earlier samooh women, Sakhi, Sahelis and Sahyoginis are also actively involved in pre- and post-immunisation campaigns. Since 1998 the Sakhis and health committee members, who are part of the Pulse Polio and Filaria prevention tablet distribution campaign, are being paid an honorarium by the Health Department. The health committee members have also been trained to distribute vitamin A tablets. The samooh members go to the Block health officials and give inputs for improved services. Samooh women are actually taking on the work of government health workers in many so ways while rendering services and support to the community.

¹¹ Out of these 3 are running in hired premises, others are in the building of BEP office or DIETs

The samooths have also successfully made their inroads in the PRI units. The women actively participate in Gram Sabhas, Vidyalaya Shiksha Samitis (VSS) and Village Water Sanitation Committees (VWSC). This is noticeable in various ways that departments take the help of MS in implementation of their programmes at the village level. The programme has developed a good coördination with the Health, Social Welfare, DRDA and the PDS departments to facilitate accessibility of government schemes to the rural poor. Its support is taken by the administration for flood relief activities. Bank officials also speak very highly of the good return by the MS samooths. All this confirms grassroot credibility of MS.

There is an increased participation in government and non-government domains not only by the Samooths but also by the registered Federations of Rohtas, Sitamarhi, West Champaran and Muzaffarpur. Federations have started submitting proposals for running educational and economic empowerment programmes, and also for delivery and improvement of rural health and sanitation services. However, the samooths and federations are neither yet ready nor accepted in a wider network of women's movement-that still remains the territory of the well-heeled men and women and essentially a patriarchal domain.

Mahila Samakhya has also collaborated with UNICEF, Bihar - specially for the Total Sanitation Campaign. Besides awareness generation campaigns in the villages Samooth women are also engaged in promotion, production, and installation of sanitary toilets.

However, the linkages with NGOs and women's groups seem to be weak in all the districts and at state level. The reason stated was there were no strong and genuine NGOs working in the area or that they had a limited outreach and/or are working in a specific sector /domain. They were either reluctant to coordinate with other programmes or did not have the vision and competence to do so. Perhaps they are also wary of MS because of its gender focused empowerment approach.

Review of convergence will not be complete without taking cognizance of the recognition Mahila Samakhya has gained as a training agency. Samooth members from the federations have conducted trainings for DRDA, NABARD officials and Public Health Department. Technical and training inputs in the sanitation programme for installing low cost toilets is being provided by Muzaffarpur and Sitamarhi Mahila Samooth teams to other districts. The MS women masons have given training to groups and institutions like READ (Bettiah) and IDF (Patna). MS Trainers have also conducted Training of Trainers under Total Sanitation Campaign, trainings on SHG formation under TLC and microplanning training for PHED.

The district units have been trying sufficiently to realize MS objectives by coordinating with the government and other agencies at the local level. At the State level MS Unit seems to be overshadowed by the BEP structure and paraphernalia and the networking at State level is almost non-existent.

7. Organizational Systems and Issues

7.1 Training and Capability Building

The capacity building initiatives being imparted to MS functionaries and target groups for enhancing their capabilities give a positive impression of the MS programme in the state. These interventions are undertaken through well planned and regular trainings, reflection seminars, workshops and field visits at different levels. Training programmes¹², which are participatory and activity based in nature, encompass almost all the inputs/ issues/ objectives envisaged under the MSP. Apart from these, programme personnel are also exposed to various subject specific, in-service training programmes of BEP e.g. UJALA -I & II etc. This gives the impression that the MS personnel get enough exposure on leadership, gender, social and pedagogical issues.

Training Resource Group - All the seven district units have their district level team of trainers and resource persons. These trainers are selected by the DCT. In addition, the districts also invite expert trainers from the adjacent districts at times to cater to the specific needs of its target group. These expert trainers also form a floating group of State Level Trainers.

Training Needs Assessment- Training needs are generated and assessed from the field level which is quite logical and strategic. However, the need assessment process has to be made more structured, rigorous and continuous. As of now it appears to be casual and based on verbal reporting. The training needs should also emerge from research studies which is not the case presently.

The mechanism of monitoring and follow up of the training programmes, though well understood by the district level MS teams, is loosely set in all districts. Hence, the impact of training is less than expected. The transmission loss gets increased manifold at each level, diluting its purpose eventually. The documentation of training requires better structuring at every level. Many good things generated during trainings and meetings are poorly recorded, making the system unable to capitalize on these new ideas for implementation and action.

Training Modules- These have been developed for each kind of training. Most of the modules are sufficiently available in printed form in the state office, district offices and at the training centers as well. The development process of training modules is very much participatory. It is evolved through a series of workshops with active participation of Sakhis, Sahelis, Sahyoginis, Sikshan sahyogis, resource persons and district programme staff. The expertise of the state and national level resource persons is also sought during this process. The needs, aspirations and objectives of the trainings are discussed at large and finally the activities are developed in a modular form. It takes days together to

¹² Refer Annexure 5 (A) for categories of training programmes

complete one workshop and one training module is the outcome of 2-3 such workshops. Training modules thus developed are field tested, modified and finalised accordingly.

Though almost all the important training modules have been developed at the state level with participation of district representatives, districts are given ample scope for modification in the module as per their local needs and requirements.

Most of the trainings are residential in nature which make them more rigorous and focused. Some of such training sessions observed during the field visits were being conducted with full attendance till late hours.

The materials¹³ used in various trainings are modules, books, work-books, pamphlets, flip charts and photos along with other accessories. However, the quantity appeared to be insufficient in some training programmes.

Apart from these, other BEP training materials and textbooks of formal schools are also used during training as most of the MS trainings are held at CRCs / BRCs or the resource centre as reported by MS personnel. However, the situation on the ground is different. The training materials may be considered as optimum, but their availability in sufficient quantity at the centers needs to be ensured. For a quality training the access of trainees to those material is equally important.

The teaching-learning materials used by learners at the Alternative Centres need to be worked on with inputs from experts. MS has been unable to generate sufficient materials of its own for learners with different needs. The formal curriculum of schools used could be transacted differently as per MS methodology. Besides this, other condensed and well designed teaching learning materials could be accessed from other sources or developed within MS.

The reading materials given to learners at the Jagjagi Centres appear to be insufficient. They are mainly school textbooks which are not made available to MS timely. Secondly, these textbooks do not cater well to the different pedagogical approach of the programme. The capacity for identifying and selecting learning materials also needs to be focused, so that quality learning materials are accessed through different sources within and outside the state. Even the books for Jhola Pustkalaya need to be identified, enlisted further and be supplied to the Centres.

Apart from the above training programmes and modules, the workshops and reflection meetings held on a regular basis have also been envisaged and formulated as a capacity building measure. They are held at the samooch, cluster, unit, district and the state level on a regular basis. There were operational gaps in structuring and organizing such meetings at cluster/unit level. However, the contribution of these to the enrichment of the programme can not be denied.

¹³ Refer to Annexure 5 (B) for list of various training material/TLM used

7.2 Monitoring, Reporting and Documentation

With a view of optimising the effectiveness of interventions, internal reviews and monitoring processes are built in the programme design as part of implementation activities. Regular monitoring, review and reflection systems have been developed at all levels. These processes are participatory in nature thereby enhancing accountability of everyone involved in the programme. The processes for review and monitoring are designed for intensive and detailed analysis of achievements, constraints, strengths and gaps of various components. The strategies developed for review and monitoring are -

- Regular field visits by MS personnel including Core team members, Sahyoganis and Shikshan Sahyogis.
- Monthly review meetings at Samooh, Cluster, Unit and District level
- Reflection Meetings at District level and State level - Monthly reflection meetings for Sahyoganis and bi-monthly meetings for Sahelis and Balmitra. At State level the core team meets quarterly.
- Jagjagi Kendras and Bal Jagjagi kendras are monitored by Samoohs. For monitoring the pedagogical aspect of the centres Shikshan Sahyogi (1 per 10 kendra) and Sahyoganis visit the centres monthly.
- There is a regular system of collective assessment of the strength of the samoohs to take up development and gender issues. This takes place in the monthly reflection meetings through pictorial and graphic system of grading and coding. All the samoohs at the unit level are then categorised as strong, medium and weak samoohs

Besides these review meetings, monthly internal reports are also submitted at the district and State level. Internal assessment and evaluation of the programmes are carried out through committees at district and state level. Interdistrict and intercluster review and assessments using key indicators also monitor the progress of programme.

The outcome of these review and reflection meetings at different levels leads to strategising and planning for the future course of action. The information flow during the entire monitoring, reflection, planning and action is both horizontal and vertical.

Reporting, monitoring and assessment formats have been developed at the State level but their usage at district level and below, needs to be looked at more carefully. The monthly internal reports submitted by Sahyoganis, which are the basis for forward reporting, are usually quantitative and sketchy. Similarly, the discussions/outcomes of the intensive meetings or field notes get recorded in registers in the usual proceedings format. Reporting and process documentation are areas of major concern. Also training documentation requires attention because it needs to highlight learnings and gaps for the planning of future inputs for capacity building. MS team members, despite being well aware of this weakness, are helpless because of the limited staff strength and increasing workload. Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that with time, valuable information

regarding history and achievements of the programme (which is not best captured in reporting formats and matrixes) is being lost.

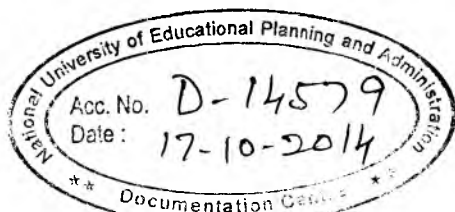
7.3 Planning, Administration and Management

The Planning process in MS is need based, participatory and decentralised. The District unit is the basis for planning and budgeting. MS Core Team members (State/District functionaries) meet at the State level in February every year (one of the four Reflection Meetings) before preparation of the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB). Once the basic framework is agreed upon plans are prepared at the District level and submitted to the District Project Coordinators (of DPEP). Subsequently, as practiced in other DPEP areas, the AWPB is consolidated and incorporated in the overall district plans and sent to BEP State Office for finalisation of the State Plan. Once the AWPB is approved there are usually no problems at the implementation level. The MSP functionaries have to keep the DPCs informed about the status of programme implementation. Despite all the need based, realistic planning, factors such as midterm transfer of a DPC, level of gender sensitivity of the person incharge etc. affect implementation of the programme adversely.

Since MSP is a part of the larger BEP structure, it comes under the administrative and managerial purview of the Council. Both at the State and District level programme functionaries have to depend upon the BEP office for administrative and logistical support. They have to 'adjust/negotiate' with their BEP colleagues for the basic office facilities like photocopying of documents, computer usage etc. Usage of vehicle is also a major bone of contention. Few jeeps were allotted to MSP in the initial phase, all of them except one, are being used for the BEP programme activities. Availability of vehicles and their use is ascertained by the nodal BEP authorities and allocation for them made according to their needs and priorities, which affects the mobility of MS staff.

Another area where MS functionaries have to use their creativity and adjustment skills is in 'printing of IEC material'. With a belief that the printing orders for MS IEC material would never get past the rigmarole of the purchase/procurement committee, the DCTs prefer to use the 'documentation/photocopying' expenditure head. As a result of this juggling their entire concentration is on 'how to get it done'. Consequently the quality of some of the locally developed material is sadly poor! Similarly, due to the 'not so facilitative' norms and procedures, printing of Hulchul, the newsletter for neoliterates, was discontinued. Despite being much in demand, the newsletter is not being printed for last one and half years. Apparently the 'show case' component for the Education Programme - MS, gets the least priority in the larger administrative and managerial set up of BEP. As one the Core Team member somberly said " MS being a women's programme gets the least importance, the situation is similar to the status of women in our society. At times when we bring up these problems - we are laughed at as being a Mahila Samasya Karyakram' - reflects on the level of anguish and frustration these women have to go through.

Paucity of staff and its consequent impact on programme implementation is also visible. With the ever-growing nature of demands at field level the functionaries are extremely



pressurised and stretched by the work burden, which in turn is affecting the pace and quality of the programme. No efforts have been made to fill the vacancies due to recruitment restriction in BEP since 1998.¹⁴ On being asked about the possibilities of hiring services of short-term professionals/consultants to facilitate the programme implementation, the core team explained that this could not be done mainly due to cumbersome hiring procedures and abysmally low consultancy rates. Even the remuneration given to MS Bihar personnel is below par than their MS counterparts in other States, because the enhancement in salaries within the Xth Plan has not come into effect for MS, Bihar.

There is also a growing concern amongst the functionaries regarding retrenchment of Sahyoganis under the new structure. The concept of block level structures with Sahyoganis in changed roles has not been visualised or debated within the programme. Some Sahyoganis have already left the programme.

Unlike in other MS states, there are no Junior Resource Persons (JRPs) at block level to support the district teams and extend capacity building inputs to the clusters of samoochs and the federations. If some Sahyoganis had the opportunity of upward mobility as JRPs they would not have been so disillusioned and the district teams would have been somewhat expanded. Also, this would have lessened the burden of work while enhancing the capacity of the Sahyoganis. Currently, the staff is feeling insecure on two counts – low paid contracts and cessation of the programme with effect from 2005. Some of them are already thinking of leaving even though they feel they need to strengthen and build the federations for another couple of years or so until the structures become sustainable.

Since such issues have not being debated and discussed formally in consonance with the new structure, they surface every now and then. In any case there is no formal system for addressing grievances of functionaries. The tensions and problems within MS are discussed and resolved during the reflection meetings. Any important decision regarding such issues gets recorded in the proceedings. But, at times, the solution suggested might not be acceptable by the aggrieved party. Then the person has to 'compromise' and accept the decision, though many a times these compromises are accepted by the aggrieved in a spirit of sacrificing the self for the larger cause of the programme. However, the feeling of insecurity among the personnel, of working under a contract and in accepting such decisions in stressful work environment cannot be denied.

7.4 Financial Management

BEP, being a registered society has its own Service and Financial regulations. However under DPEP III, IDA norms and procedures are adhered to. Similar to all other

¹⁴ Government was asked to bring reservation roster, which was opposed by BEP personnel due to the Government pressure for reserved post not advertised since 1998

components, the annual budget proposal for MSP is submitted alongwith AWPB. There is fixed budget for all the programme components e.g.training programmes, reflection meetings, costs for MSK etc. The proposed budget is made on the basis of these agreed upon unit costs for each activity.

The budget is released to the BEP account and from there it is transferred to the Districts. At times the funds for the first month of the financial year reach the district by month of June. But that does not delay implementation of the activities sanctioned under AWPB, except for the MSK as the MSK session starts from May. In such cases the spill over money of the previous financial year gets utilised. Once sanctioned the planned activities go on as per schedule. No constraints were reported regarding release of payment to district functionaries. Funds to Samooths for Jagjagi and Bal Jagjagi kendras are released bi annually. At State/ district level funds required for particular MSP activities are released as and when requested. Needless to say MS functionaries have no direct access to the budget allocated for MS activities. Although MSP has separate bank accounts in respective districts, these are used exclusively for the funding received from UNICEF under TSC. Accounting books for this funding are maintained separately by the DCT.

All the district budgets are made on a same pattern with common expenditure heads. The Annual Budget and Utilisation Status of MSP, District Gaya is presented here in Table 4. The budget is not categorised into Management and Activity Heads¹⁵, but for analysis the information available has been categorised. The budget and expenditure reflects high activity costs including higher allocation and relatively better utilisation, which is favourable for the programme. The management cost is low due to the low salary expenditure and negligible administrative costs (because those are under BEP).

Table 3: Budget and Utilisation for District Gaya

Annual Budget - Budget and Utilisation for Management and Activity Cost District Gaya				
	Proposed Management Cost (% of total budget)	Proposed Activity Cost (% of total budget)	Utilisation of Management Cost (% of total Management Cost Budget)	Utilisation of Activity Cost (% of total Activity Cost Budget)
2001-2002	14.49	85.51	42.01	68.06
2002-2003	9.67	90.33	57.62	76.39
2003-2004	5.64	94.36	48.07	70.52

¹⁵ Management Cost to include - Salaries for officer & staff, Vehicle- R/M FOL Operating Cost, TA/DA other than Workshops, Computer Hardware and software

Activity Cost to include - Honorarium to Sahyogani, Mahila Kutir, MSK (Old&New), MSRC, Jhela Pustakalaya, Study Tours, Convention/Mela/Camp, Jagjagi, Bal Jagjagi, Monitoring and Evaluation, Documentation, Reflection of Saheli, Reflection of Balmitra, Training of Bal Mitra, Strengthening of Federation process, Strengthening of Unit & Block structures, Kishori training, Training of Saheli, Sakhi Training, Training of Mahila Samakh, Vocational Trg, Workshops

According to the personnel there are adequate funds available under all heads of expenditure. However, they feel that currently 60-70% of funds is for educational interventions which could be evenly distributed for other issues also. According to the utilisation pattern of the district there is high percentage of unutilised funds. Similarly substantial percentage of unutilised funds are reflected in the data from other districts (refer table 5).

Table 4: District Annual Plans: % Expenditure against Allocated Budget

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Rohtas	52.14	55.61	63.13	52
West Champaran	56.16	55.9	66.2	82.6
Muzaffarpur	64.8	74.07	72.16	40.93
Sitamarhi	61.28	44.95	52.06	45.02
Bhojpur	32.58	34.57	40.21	45.13
Gaya	44	64.29	74.57	69.26
Darbhanga	39.49	54.07	65.18	96.37

Main reasons for underspending of funds could be ambitious budgeting, lack of professional staff and dependency on non-MS staff for budget preparation and monitoring. While planning for the budget, experiences from previous years should be taken into consideration. Besides the BEP/DPEP rules and regulations MS should have its own internal norms and processes for budget planning and monitoring to facilitate effective utilisation of funds made available.

7.5 MS-BEP - Changing Dynamics

MS Bihar has made considerable progress in the last decade. The inputs and support from BEP in the various stages gave the programme a momentum that is still being maintained to an extent. The enabling environment provided by BEP, helped the initiative for women's and girls' education to take root and grow by leaps and bounds in Bihar (with the lowest of literacy levels in the country). During this process the relationship between MS and BEP/DPEP has been mutually benefiting in some ways, especially at the grassroots level. However, there are strategic differences between the two programmes - one being 'target oriented' and the other with a 'process oriented' approach. While DPEP sees the women's development programme as a strategy for enhancing girls' education, MS works towards women empowerment and equity through education. The education agenda is not being superimposed on women but they have taken it up as a vehicle of empowerment for their children and themselves. This is in particular reference to the most marginalised and the poorest of the poor. However, the noticeable fact is that there is a definite lack of synergy between the two programmes as regards work culture.

BEP structure that was meant to be flexible, open and decentralised is becoming bureaucratic with increasing levels of stringent rules and regulations and interfering mode of operations. The lack of clarity about the nature of MS philosophy and work amongst BEP staff at State and District level indicates their level of disinterest in the programme.

Duality in the work culture i.e. working under the control of BEP at State and at district level while being more flexible, open and decentralised within its own framework - is adversely affecting the vibrancy and spontaneity of the programme. But it is not the external environment that has changed, even the dynamics within MS have been changing in due course. People met during the course of evaluation talked about the change in pace and mode of functioning of the programme - it is becoming more structured and decision making processes are becoming less transparent with time.

Women in the field are in flux due to ambiguity on the future course of direction and structure of the programme. 'What after DPEP III?' looms large in the air. The absence of a capable, dynamic and decisive leadership at the State level haunts the core team at this crucial juncture of the Programme. They also strongly feel that the support and guidance the programme should have got from the MS National Office was not there (or not sought by the State Unit). They expressed their anguish over the 'step-motherly' attitude of National Office towards them. Though they have been fighting tooth and nail on the ground to keep the MS non-negotiables intact, they feel, they were treated as the 'education people' amongst other MS State programmes. But they also candidly admit that after the '2000 Delhi Sanghamitra workshop' and '2002 Bangalore Workshop' things have changed - they feel more accepted within the National setup now.

At this juncture the programme, which believes in providing ample time and 'space' for women's empowerment, is striving for its own 'space' - for autonomy. The issue of autonomous structure for MS was frequently raised at different levels of discussions.

The Director, Primary Education, Bihar also strongly supported the need for a separate autonomous identity for MS, although he felt that for it to become a self-sustaining model, it has to have a very strong economic base. He gave the example of successful milk cooperative Sudha dairy Cooperative in Bihar, in which women's dairy cooperatives have been especially successful. The new SPD, BEP and State Education Secretary were also supportive of the need for MS to have a separate identity, however they expressed their concerns about the multiplicity of educational and women development programmes and the confusion caused due to vertical programming. According to these officials the issue of autonomy of the MS will be discussed in the forthcoming Executive Committee meeting of BEP Council.

In the meeting with the NGO partners they also advocated for the autonomy of the MS programme based on their previous association with the MS at the state and district level. They felt that the political participation of women would be a challenge, if MS remains limited as part of an elementary education programme. The National Office should take this opportunity to support MS to have an autonomous identity.

MS sees for itself two options available regarding its autonomous structure - (a) either to get registered as a state level Federation or (b) as an autonomous state project society, with linkages with BEP (as in other states). The first option has a weak standing as the bottom up processes for federation formation at block and district level are yet not

concretised or mature enough to allow for a strong foundation. Interlinkages amongst the district federations are yet to be formalised. Ample time and efforts have been invested in these federations and more inputs are needed to lead upto a state federation. At the present stage - it would be injudicious to rush them through the process to have a State level Federation. Besides a federation would have certain limitations which an autonomous MS society would not.

The second option for MS to be implemented through an autonomous State Society as a State Programme located outside BEP is a viable idea, as this model is in operation in several other states. Learnings from them would help MS Bihar to develop its operational model. This would provide the much-required autonomy to MS with fewer operational blockages and more facilitative working relationship between MS and BEP, given the right leadership. However, before MS registers as an autonomous society it should invest in concretising its own framework of financial and operational rules and regulations to start on the right foot.

3. Conclusion

It is extremely satisfying to put on record that within the given limitations of being a sub component of a larger education programme, MS has achieved so much more in Bihar by giving a very successful and holistic model of women's empowerment. However, up scaling the Programme's Vision and Mission while being a part of a larger structure could be seen as a tightrope walk. The journey so far has been successful and enriching because women have been able to carve out their niches at various levels to shed their shackles and give the programme their best. However, the programme had its own share of constraints and challenges. Some of the constraints expressed by the District Teams, NGO partners and govt. officials are :

Being a part of BEP, MS has faced problems of bureaucratic and administrative delays, which hampered decision-making at the programme level.

Frequent changes of the SPDs in the recent past have affected the pace of programme adversely (six SPDs in 18 weeks)

The top down approach and directives from BEP related to programme management and implementation are counter productive with the process intensive and need based programming of the MS (e.g. directive of opening 175 Jagjagi centres in a short span of 9 months)

The district teams felt that too much energy and time goes into responding to the dictates of the BEP that they get limited in their aspiration to plan and work for greater impact outside the scope of the BEP and its programmatic guidelines.

Most of the programme areas are poverty ridden, flood/drought prone, densely populated and having a highly caste ridden and a politically motivated society. This, in totality has affected the pace of development of MS programmes in districts.

At the district level the programme suffers a lot due to poor infrastructure, shortage of personnel, lack of due support from district level BEP office and poor coordination between

the district and the state level office. Vehicles and other office support are also scarcely available at times for the district level MS functionaries.

The many crucial posts lying vacant at the State as well as district level have impacted the efficient implementation of the programme severely. The quality of inputs in planning, strategizing, implementation and assessment of programme have also been impacted.

Lack of intensive and sustained internal strategies for capacity building of personnel has been on the back burner due to inadequate networking and linkages at state level.

Low remuneration to programme functionaries, non-implementation of Xth plan salary structure is a demotivating factor as well. Shortage of personnel has made monitoring very weak and more so because even the numbers of Sahyoginis has come down to 17 from 24.

Weak networking with Government departments – this could be mostly due to attitudinal problems of Government Officials.

Quality of pedagogical inputs in form of TLM methodology is poor due to lack of investments in external expertise.

Support from the state is not very forthcoming except for special programs. The programme needs tightening at all levels.

Lack of resources - human and technical, which the programme has not been able to access is affecting its pace and momentum. This is especially a serious concern in the new areas such as Khaimur and Sheohar.

Documentation is weak due to work pressure, lack of skills/aptitude of personnel. External help not sought to build the institutional history of the programme.

The constraints identified also reflect the areas that need strengthening. MS Bihar has progressed well despite these constraints but a lot has yet to be done, may be with more intensity. There is a felt need for MS programme interventions to continue for some more time. If the proposed autonomous structure of MS is provided with requisite technical, managerial and infrastructural support and resources - it is bound to make an impact in Bihar that would stay with the generations of women to come.

In the Xth Plan funding is available for MS Bihar and at the same time the State Government including the Executive Committee members of BEP are in favour of the idea of autonomy for MS. The situation is extremely favourable - if MS, Bihar has to become autonomous at any point of time - it is NOW!

Suggestions from the Bihar MS team on the role and scope of Bihar MS after getting an independent identity:

Entire Bihar MS team very strongly supports and desires an independent identity of the MS.

Physical expansion of the programme, but without compromising on the process oriented principles of MS.

Broad base the philosophy and methodology of MS implicitly and explicitly in other geographical areas as well as in other sectors and programmes (e.g. SJSY, NPGEL, WDC, PHD, PRIs).

District level forums to address and advocate against gender based violence and network

with other NGOs, PRIs and civil society agencies through District Resource Centres.
 Strengthen the State gender training, resource group for creating greater impact and outreach in other government and non-government Programmes.
 Concerted inputs for capacity building in the areas of planning, programme management, organizational development and advocacy if they are to play a bigger role outside the BEP in an independent capacity.
 Streamlining of research and documentation activities and developing skills for quality documentation and reporting.
 Training and resource groups from samooch to the state level.

The following table encapsulates the analysis of the Bihar MS by the MS team:

Strengths	Gaps	Threat Perception
Strong programme and infra-structure-Clarity of objectives	Subsumed within a larger programme Shortage of personnel at all levels	Autonomous status will invite political pressure Likelihood of decreased government support if independent from BEP
Trained and experienced human resource groups at all levels	Limited in number, therefore programmatic expansion and outreach low	More new personnel would increase probability of facing legal and other problems.
Sound planning processes are there for different levels	Strategic Planning and visioning as separate entity to carry forward the programme. MIS in place but needs strengthening	More efforts would be required establish identity and credibility
Strong identity as a programme	Lack of strong state level leadership	They would need to acquire skills for multi tasking, negotiation and advocacy as there would be constant pressures from different sources- government/agencies/NGOs
Ability to forge linkages and networking with other states and at state level in Bihar	Different structure from other state MS programmes makes Bihar MS feel isolated	Identity with other states may be forged but isolation from within Bihar may be felt

9. Recommendations

Autonomy

The Mission strongly recommends that Mahila Samakhya, Bihar to be registered as an autonomous body on the same pattern as in other MS States e.g. MS - UP, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, because the present conditions are ripe for such action.

Formal organisational structure of MS under Mahila Samakhya Society would require a change in management strategies. The eminent need would be effective recruitment and selection through appropriate, open and transparent procedures. Quality and capability of the personnel occupying crucial positions at State and district level has to be ensured. Providing sustained support, cooperation and guidance from National Office and State Education Department becomes imperative at this stage.

Expansion and Outreach

The programme needs to develop new operational strategies for geographical expansion in the new districts/blocks and villages through federations. There is an eminent need for strategic and sustained planning in case of lateral expansion and outreach of the successful initiatives for women's' empowerment and dense coverage of the programme in the existing blocks and villages.

Status of Samoohs/ Federations

Time and space needs to be given for federations to reach a level of maturity for their autonomous functioning – the federations will continue to need technical and financial support and direction from the state and district core MSP teams in the foreseeable future- the mechanisms for this support outlining its nature and scope also need to spelt out clearly.

There is a definite need for planned and sustained inputs for strengthening of weak Samoohs - the processes should not to be diluted at the cost developing federations in a hurry.

Maintaining a strong mass base of the samoohs for ensuring coverage in terms of critical number of women need to be continuously factored in while moving on towards new strategies for expansion, programme implementation and changed roles of the MS team at all levels. Therefore care needs to be taken in the processes of federations formation that the mass base of the samoohs (weak, average or strong) remains strong and intact.

Future relationship and scope between MS State Society and State Federation of Samoohs need to be defined. National Office should envisage guidelines and directions for this partnership eventually.

Educational Interventions

It should be ensured that girls in Jagjagi Kendras reach the competency of class 5 level in an accelerated learning mode.

Teaching- learning processes and assessment methods need to be strengthened for pedagogic appropriateness and to address different contexts of the girls in all the educational interventions.

Develop strategies for scaling up the access of older girls from Jagjagi Kendras to upper primary schools.

Kishori Manch needs to be further strengthened to ensure active participation of all sections of adolescent girls from the community and their linkages with the schools to promote the second generation leadership.

MS should be an active partner in mainstreaming girls and women's education by providing experience from their non formal and innovative educational programmes and MSK and by offering technical support by the state and district resource teams. MS should also play a more active role in advocacy and networking with other government and non government educational initiatives such as TLM, NPEOD, KBVS, ICDS and in the formal school educational system.

Women's literacy and education component for empowerment needs to be analyzed and reviewed based on successful experiences within the programme and outside. Innovative strategies for its implementation on scale need to be put in place.

Continuing education for older girls and women needs to be promoted much more rigorously than is being done at present

Training and Capacity Building

Intensive capacity building of the MS team to undertake the enhanced roles and responsibilities in the new structure under the Xth Plan.

Need to develop specialized training capacities at the state, district and block level to provide technical resource support to other programmes for gender equality and women's empowerment

Work towards minimizing the transmission loss of the quality of trainings.

Role of the State Resource Centre needs to be broadened from merely being a training centre to a knowledge development centre for the MSP.

Need to develop specialized training capacities at the state, district and block level to provide technical resource support to other programmes for gender equality and women's empowerment

Quality control mechanisms need to be put in place for development and dissemination of the training and teaching- learning materials.

Monitoring, Reporting and Documentation

Systematic and concurrent documentation for building the institutional memory of the programme. This is also essential for drawing out inferences from the applied approaches and ensuing experiences of women's empowerment to add to the conceptual understanding of issues and concepts of gender relations and equity over time and space.

Monitoring mechanisms need to be followed more rigorously in the relatively weaker programme areas.

Qualitative reporting skills of the state and district teams need to be enhanced for collation and consolidation of the learning and achievements of the programme.

Convergence

Networking and advocacy with other programmes, organizations and women's groups needs to be strengthened at the state, district and panchayat level.

MS should work towards mainstreaming its learning from the alternative educational programmes with other state initiatives for girls education.

Clear strategies need to be developed for mainstreaming the MS vision across different sectors.

Organisational Issues

Within the recommended autonomous structure for MS the organizational capacity needs to be augmented with additional personnel, effective management systems and human resource development policies to meet the expanded roles and responsibilities.

Time bound phasing of the programme needs to be sensitive and flexible to accommodate different levels of capacities and readiness of the programme functionaries and structures.

Additional personnel need to be urgently recruited at all levels to meet the programme goal and expansion.

The State MS Office needs to play its leadership role for providing strategic support, technical inputs with decisiveness and greater clarity. The state leadership needs to play a more pro active role for providing guidance and direction.

10. Annexures

Annexure 1

Itinerary of the Evaluation Team

Date	Place	Programme
13.12.2004	Patna	Presentation and briefing by the State level Team. Meeting and discussions with BEP functionaries
14.12.2004	District Darbhanga	Welcome and Presentation of MS Programme BEP office, Darbhanga
		Training of Saheli (Part I) Block Resource Centre, Kabeerchak, Darbhanga
15.12.2004		Visit to Jagjagi Kendra Makhnai, Block Sadar Visit to Jagjagi Kendra Ramtola, Kotpatti, Block Jale Cluster meeting Kotpatti, Block Jale Cluster meeting, Cluster Resource Centre, Kamtaul
16.12.2004		Meeting with Kishori Samooh, Cluster Resource Centre, Chandanpatti, Block Sadar Women's literacy camp Kharthua, Sadar Sonki, Unit Meeting Dhoi Mahila Kutir Meeting with District Project Coordinator BEP office
17.12.2004		Meeting with District Magistrate, Collectorate Meeting with Sahayogini, Shikshan Sahayogini MS Resource Centre, Allapatti
14.12.2004	District Gaya	Unit level Women Sammelan, village Aukhadohar, Dobhi block Meeting with Women-Masons and Mukhia/community members village Aukhadohar, Dobhi block Workshop of Shikshan Sahayogi, DIET Gaya BEP & MS presentation, BEP Office Gaya
15.12.2004		Visit to Bal Jagjagi Kendra, village Nauhar, Block Banke Bazar Visit to Jagjagi Kendra, Jondhi village, Block Banke Bazar Meeting of Samooh members, village Roridiha, Block Banke Bazar Visit to Kishori Manch Baithak, village Bechu Bigha, Block Banke Bazar Meeting with Mukhiya, school teachers and other community members village Bechu Bigha, Block Banke Bazar Meeting with SDM, Sherghati Sub Division

16.12.20 04		Meeting with Federation Members, Block Amas Cluster level meeting (Sankul Baithak) at Mahila Kutir, village Paharpur Visit to Jhola Pustakalaya, village Suggi, Block Amas Training of Bachat Samooh village Suggi, Block Amas Visit to MSK, Production Center , village Saavkala, Block Amas Training of Kishori Manch, DIET Gaya
17.12.20 04		Meeting with all the Sahayogini at DIET Gaya Meeting with District Magistrate Discussion with girls passed out from MSK
14.12.20 04	District Muzzafarpur	Interaction with DPC & BEP personnel at DLO Presentation of Muzzafarpur MS; meeting with the DEO and DM, Muzzafarpur Meeting with the general body of Jyoti Mahila Samakhya(federation) Meeting with the executive committee of Jyoti MS
15.12.20 04		Visit of Bal Jagjagi Kendra in Mornisph, Block Kulhani; meeting with the mahila samooh in Mornisph Visit of Jagjagi centre, Sakri Saraiya Meeting with cluster level kishori mandal, Mathurapur Visit of Jhola Pustkalaya, Jagdishpur Meeting with cluster level education committee, Jairam Kharama
16.12.20 04		Visit of low cost toilet production centre, Block Mussahari Meeting with unit level health committee in the BRC Visit of ideal village in Dumri and meeting with Village Water & Sanitation Committee Meeting with SHG groups involved in group entrepreneurial activities in Dhodiya in Bocha block
17.12.20 04		Visit of MSK Visit of Samooh training in Aurain block, in Chaipur, Dharharwa
18.12.20 04	Patna	Meeting at UNICEF Office with PO and APO Education and NGO representatives Presentation/Meeting and discussion with the 9 MS DCTs Meeting with Director Primary Education
19.12.20 04	Patna	Meeting with the DCTs Meeting with Secretary Education and SPD, BEP
20.12.20 04	Patna	Presentation and Feedback by the Evaluation Team at BEP Office Discussion with PO - WATSAN UNICEF

Annexure 2
Programme Staffing Status

Level	Post Proposed	Occupied	Vacant
State	Project Officer	-	1
	Additional Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person	1	
Sitamarhi	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person	1	
Muzzafarpur	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person	1	
Darbhangha	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person		1
W Champanan	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person	1	
Gaya	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person		1
Rohtas	Asst. Programme Officer		1
	Resource Person	1	
	Asst. Resource Person		1
Bhojpur	Asst. Programme Officer	1	
	Resource Person		1
	Asst. Resource Person	1	
Total Staff Strength		13	11

Annexure 3

MS Savings Groups (Bachat Samoohs)					
District	Samooohs	Amount saved	Linkage		Women Beneficiaries
			SGSY	NABARD	
Rohtas	405	3509217.00	30	15	2177
Sitamarhi	397	3805729.00	37	56	300
Muzzafarpur	591	3171489.00	246	33	2373
W.Champaran	322	1722400.00	31	84	517
Bhojpur	108	1288869.00	0	0	85
Darbhangha	202	1944000.00	44	0	117
Gaya	319	1680197.00	0	4	95
Total	2344	17121901.00	388	192	5664

(Upto November 2004)

Annexure 4

Interventions in alternative education - an overview

Name of Districts	Jagjag i Centres	Women enrolled in Jagjagi	Girls enrolled in Jagjagi	Mainstreaming from BalJagjagi to Formal school	Bal Jagjagi Centres	Girls enrolled in BalJagjagi.	Boys enrolled in Bal Jag.	Kishori Manch	Kishori s in Manch	Traine d Kishor is	M.S.K.	Girls Enrolled in MSKs	No. of Mobile Libraries
Rohtas	80	1052	1306	3091	80	2287	1818	127	3269	727	1	36	28
W. Champaran	130	593	2942	5797	110	3225	1680	110	1424	630	1	42	7
Muzaffarpur	259	1269	6595	4569	151	2426	2090	164	2691	992	1	41	9
Sitamarhi	347	501	6595	2411	115	1885	1543	108	2047	956	1	37	8
Darbhanga	167	202	3640	1460	0	0	0	95	2347	442	0		5
Bhojpur	220	2003	4145	557	80	1439	1235	94	2576	293	0	36	6
Gaya	156	659	4393	440	78	1839	1463	156	5385	392	1	41	5
Total	1359	6279	29616	18325	614	13101	9829	854	19739	4432	5+1 = 6*	233 +33* = 266	68

* One MSK is located in a non-MS district; Sheikhpura run by an NGO

Annexure 5

(A) Categories of Training Programmes

Description	Duration	Type
Samooch Prashikshan	03 days, Phase I	non residential
Samooch Prashikshan	03 days, Phase II	non residential
Sakhi Prashikshan	5 days, Phase I	Residential
Sakhi Prashikshan	5 days, Phase II	Residential
Kishori Prashikshan	5 days, Phase I	Residential
Kishori Prashikshan	5 days, Phase II	Residential
Balmitra Prashikshan	15 days, Phase I	Residential
Balmitra Prashikshan	5 days, Phase II	Residential
Sahayogini Prashikshan	5 days, Phase I	Residential
Sahayogini Prashikshan	10 days, Phase II	Residential
Sahayogini Prashikshan	5 days, Phase III	Residential

(B) List of Various Training material/TLMs Used

1. TLM FOR JAGJAGI

- a. Shikshan- Prashikshan Pustika for adolescent girls and women
- b. Shikshan- Sandarshika for Saheli

Content – Alphabets and Issues regarding Social, Environmental and Health

2. KHILORI

Users - Neo literate, Adolescent girls of Jagjagi/ MSK, and other Women

Content - Stories and essays on scientific knowledge and local issues

3. JAL JANGAL JAMEEN (book on environment science)

Contents- Earth, Air, Water, Forest, Soil and Pollution

4. JAGJAGI-WORK BOOK

Total lessons – 22

Used by both trainers and learners.

5. CHINGARI

User- Neo-literates, Adolescent girls and women

Used in- Jagjagi and MSK.

Content- MS programme, role of education in women empowerment and related issues (Sajag Malti, Jahan chah wahan rah, Sahsi Laxmi, Bahuwayani se didi banne tak, Beimani ki Saza, Masterji ki uthak – baithak)

HAMARI KAHANI- HAMARI JUBANI

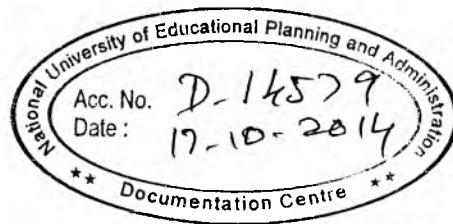
A reading material of MSK

Content- Khali batue se bachat, Parul ka sapna, Koi thag na sake, Mahilaon ki jeet, Barati man gaye, Anyaya ki har, Faisla, Taskaron ka gherao, Baat aise bani, Lata ki uljhan.

7. NAYEE SHAKTI-NAYEE PAHCHAN (picture-book)

Content- Mahilaon ki sthiti- chinta ka vishay, MS- kyon jaroori hai, Mahila samooh, MS- mahilaon ki barabari ki abhiyakti, MS ka Kendra bindu-prashikshan, Nari ke sahyog ke bina har badlao adhura hai, Jagjagi, bachat, Mahila kuteer, social issues, violence etc.

8. Photo-Language - collection of photographs on various women issues in a folder.



NUEPA DC



D14579