

EDUCATION FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

A Pilot Programme in 10 Districts of  
Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh

Report of an Exploratory Mission

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A B R E V I A T I O N S

- APIA - Area Programme Implementation ~~Committee~~ Agency
- DIET - District Institute of Education and Training
- DWEDC - District Women's Education and Development Committee
- DWCRA - Development of Women and children in Rural Areas
- ICDS - Integrated Child Development Services
- ERDA - Education Resource Development Agency
- ~~IDARA - Information, Development and Resource Agency~~
- IRDP - Integrated Rural Development Programme
- NREP - National Rural Employment Programme
- NRG - National Resource Group
- RLEGP - Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme
- SSC - State Steering Committee

CHAPTER - I

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

India's New Education Policy, announced in 1986, was the product of nation-wide debate initiated in the previous year. The policy has attempted, for the first time, to bring education out of its isolation in that most neglected of all national priorities - viz. "social services" - into the forefront of the development struggle in which this nation has been engaged for the last four decades. It acknowledges clearly that the development of educational facilities in the country continues to bypass the vast majority of the poorest - be they men, women or children, and recognises that education in the form that it is currently provided, is neither relevant nor accessible to the needs of these millions. This can be changed only if education is perceived by the mass of people themselves as a socially meaningful process through which they can acquire the information and skills to transform their daily lives and their social condition, both as individuals and as a mass.

The policy also recognises that the social, economic and cultural situation of specific groups of people is the very barrier which keeps them beyond the pale; and yet, education may itself be the key which empowers them to break open these doors and claim for themselves a just place in society. This is perhaps most crucial of all in the case of women.

Women, of all ages, communities and classes, live in varying degrees of subjugation in the patriarchal system which dominates our social structure. Women in our society are seen basically as reproducers - not only of the next generation, but of the subsistence conditions which guarantee the daily survival of the family. The poorer the woman, the more securely locked is she in this win-

dowless box. Education of women has thus only been perceived as a means of improving her skills to play this role. Among the affluent, formal education is seen to do this quite concretely - she can look better, cook better, children, run a more efficient home, and may be even supplement the family's income. But among the poor, this type of schooling has little to offer: learning to survive against impossible odds, to walk longer distances to fetch water or fuelwood, to work in the field and on construction sites, to give birth to and feed the children - all these are far better learnt in the school of life experience. Checkmated for countless generations in the black square of poverty, the poor see no reason to send their daughters to school that can never lead them out of this trap. The ideology of male superiority and domination, internalised by both men and women, ensures its own perpetuation, for nothing has ever come along to challenge it. Certainly not the mindless rote-learning of the three R's in some desolate single-teacher school.

All these (among other) factors have therefore led to a situation where, despite the quantum leaps in the number of educational institutions and facilities, and in the investments in this sector, the overall female literacy in the country is an abysmal 24.8%, significantly lower than the male rate of 46.9%.

What is needed today, then, is a kind of education which enables people - and most of all women - to think critically, to question, to analyse their own condition, to acquire the information and skills necessary to alter it, and above all, to visualise the kind of society which they wish to bring about. Only then will they be able to participate fully in the social, economic and political

processes which affect their lives and take control of them. Education must provide women - indeed all oppressed and exploited groups - the means to move from passive acceptance to active self-determination. In turn, anything which does this must, in the broadest sense, be termed education. And this, in essence, is what this pilot programme hopes to achieve.

Part IV of the National Policy on Education states this clearly: "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women;... (it) will play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values.... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provisions of special support services....The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued.....to eliminate sex stereo-typing."

A. Aims and Objects of the Pilot Programme

Thus, in keeping with the main thrusts of the New Education Policy and the Programme of Action; this pilot programme will be designed to address the issue in a holistic perspective. The main objectives of the programme are:-

1. To build an infrastructure that will facilitate poor women and girls to participate in the education process. The infrastructure will include, support service like child care, clean drinking water, facilitate availability of fuel and fodder through existing rural development schemes.
2. To Create social awareness among women about their rights, various government schemes (RLEGP, NREP, IRDP, DWCRA etc.) that have been designed for the poor and to facilitate

the development of an effective pressure group to ensure their implementation. They will not only "build group cohesion but will foster decision-making and build a positive self-image." [P.O.A., p 106, 1986]. An ability to think critically coupled with a confidence in their capacity to change social reality, will enthuse the women to not only send their children to school, but participate in it themselves. Literacy and education should thus be perceived as an empowering process.

3. To revitalise the village schools, the non-formal and adult-education centres. The rural educational institutions are not only ill equipped, but its teachers and instructors are isolated and unmotivated. These institutions could be vitalised through sensitive training, providing educational support structures in the form of District Institutes of Education and Training and an Information, Development and Resource Agency.
4. To create regionally relevant vocational training institutions for women - based on the emerging needs of urban, sub-urban and rural areas. Illiterate/literate women could thus have access to employment and ~~self-employment~~.
5. To create, through a participatory planning process - institutions/associations/activity centres- that could encourage rural women to participate in the education and development process.

*Principles*  
B. Some Basic Tenets of the Philosophy of the pilot Programme:

Having spelt out what we believe to be the condition of women and the broad factors which have kept them out of the educational process, and the nature of the process itself, it will be useful to crystallise these into a

*principles*

set of ~~philosophical tenets~~ which must, in our view, infuse the entire methodology of the programme. These are the "non-negotiables" which must not be jettisoned in the urge to achieve targets or create <sup>mpe</sup> the mechanics of change.

1. ~~The~~ The programme must be shaped and determined by the people it seeks to reach. In other words, the ultimate form, nature and content of the programme in a given village will not be determined by a set of external planners, but by the women who are its participants. The external forces - the individuals, institutions and agencies who are its "catalysts", if you like - will only work out how this can be done in a specific context.
2. ~~But to do this itself demands a philosophical attitude:~~ *In order to do this* ~~that~~ the programme <sup>must</sup> ~~will~~ first and foremost create a time and space for women to meet, be together, and begin the process of thinking and reflecting on their situation, its meaning, and where they wish to go. This process must not be hurried or shortcircuited.
3. Education and literacy should not be confused. The conditions outlined above will create an "environment of learning", but what women decide to learn first may not necessarily be reading and writing. In fact, experience seems to show that poor women rarely see the relevance of literacy per se at the start of their journey to new types of knowledge and skills. Forcing it, or making this a condition of their participation, ~~proves~~ only serves to reduce interest and involvement.

It must be emphasised that such women have been the targets of various programmes in the past, all of which had some specific "motive" - spreading family planning, teaching them "child care" with little consideration



for the constraints under which they rear children, small savings drives, and countless others. Consequently, women have become highly suspicious of government programmes, which they feel always have an ulterior motive not necessarily in the interests of the women themselves. It is essential, therefore, that in this pilot programme, the same mistake is not made. If we wish to truly empower women, then we must honestly allow them to determine its mode and medium.

We are confident, however, and this has been the experience in countless micro-projects, that women always seek literacy themselves, at a point when its meaning and value become evident to them. So there need be no anxiety that such a programme will end up doing all else except making women literate. They must and will become so, and in a much more permanent way, if they are allowed to seek it at their own time and pace.

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4. The meaning of education itself will therefore have to be redefined in our programme. The "banking" approach to education - where we merely "deposit" various sets of information and skills in people, so that at the end of a given period their "accounts" are supposedly full - <sup>which, history shows, ~~does not necessarily~~ <sup>must be broken</sup> equip people to think, analyse, apply, or innovate. ~~must be broken~~. Instead, education must be understood as a process which enables us to question, conceptualise, find answers, act, reflect on our actions, and raise new questions. If the pilot programme under consideration does not set in motion such a process, but merely imparts literacy or even more advanced academic milestones, it can truly be said to have failed.</sup>

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But women's own perception of their place in society stems from a low self esteem. Therefore,  
: 7 :

5. ~~Perhaps most important of all, The educational process discussed above~~ must be based on total respect for women's existing knowledge experience, and skill. For too long, teaching and learning has occurred within an equation of power. This power relationship always favours the teacher and demeans the learner. ~~But since our most important goal here is to empower women, we know that they are weak, and part of this weakness stems from low self-esteem.~~ Obviously, we cannot help women build a positive and strong self-image if we consider the knowledge and skills they already have to be of little worth, or of less value than what we seek to impart.

This tenet has enormous implications for the training of functionaries in this programme. Even the most sophisticated training methods will be futile if the trainees, at all levels, do not emerge with such a sense of respect; if they fall into the traditional trap of superiority as "teachers"; if they use their training and their position to intimidate, rather than empower the women they reach.

6. The above points may seem to give little room or importance to the "external" mechanisms - the trainers, teachers, planners, resource persons and institutions - but in fact this is not so. The type of process described here, adherence to these <sup>principles</sup> ~~tenets~~ of a new faith, in fact demands a great deal more of everyone than any traditional educational approach. This kind of education <sup>can only be achieved with the backing of a strong</sup> ~~demands~~ a support system whose role is vital. At each level, continuous inputs will be needed in the form of training, supervision, resource material, analysis, replanning, concrete support, and troubleshooting. Otherwise, the entire process will die quickly and quietly. The role of all functionaries, therefore, will

*the process*

be the all-important one of keeping it alive, nurturing it, and helping it grow until it is strong enough to live on its own. If the recipient women are the centre of this programme, then the support system is the womb which must nourish them until they ~~are reborn to live anew.~~ *can survive on their own.*

*not clear - Rewrite*

7. Finally, we believe that every intervention and interaction which occurs in this programme must itself be a microcosm of the ~~philosophy spelt out above.~~ *larger principles process of change* The relationships, the processes, the questioning, ~~the change which we are hoping to~~ *it will* ~~empower women for in the outside world,~~ *experienced within the programme.* must first and foremost occur within the programme. Whether in a classroom, mahila mandals, vocational training centres discussion groups or meetings, the environment of learning, the respect and equality, the time and space, the room of for individual variation, and uniqueness, must be present. In other words, the cliché "practice what you preach" must be diligently observed. If the little niches created by this programme for women and girls lacks these qualities, we can never hope to "empower" women for battles in the outside world.

If the above ~~tenets~~ *principles* are observed in both letter and spirit, if they are infused into the training of functionaries and in the implementation of the pilot programme, we believe that "education for women's equality" can become a reality.

C. APPROACH TO PLANNING:

The ~~philosophy~~ *principles* underlying the pilot programme may appear somewhat diffused and abstract, but it can be readily concretised in the way the entire programme is planned.

The approach *to* and method of planning which has been practiced so far in most development programmes has certain

inherent weaknesses: planning exercises start with an analysis of the present situation and the shortcomings or problems within it, define the vision of the future ~~situation~~ ~~situ-~~ ~~ation~~ that we wish to move toward, and then identify a series of actions or interventions which will most likely lead us there. But what this type of exercise fails to take into consideration several crucial factors:

1. That each action or step taken changes the present reality; i.e., the present reality is altered from the one which existed at the time the plan was made; this sets up a chain reaction of changes in the strategies of further movement and future vision itself; thus, the plan as originally conceived may no longer be relevant.
2. Planning is always done for or on behalf of those who live in the situation which is sought to be changed, by persons outside that reality; planning rarely draws its "target group" into the process. Consequently, the plans tend to miss or ignore key factors which often make or break programmes;
3. Plans usually span considerable lengths of time, with no in-built mechanisms to check or change direction *when necessary*. ~~even though the plans themselves generally trigger changes which begin to impact on the given situation.~~ Thus, even though most plans incorporate periodic reviews or evaluations, these are usually at fairly long intervals, so that corrective measures or changes of course come much later than they should.
4. Finally, plans treat their quantitative inputs and targets as holy writ, so that adhering to these inevitably takes precedence over everything else. This itself generally inhibits programmes from really taking root. Qualitative change is sacrificed for quantitative coverage - even though quantitative achievements are rarely, if ever, a substitute for real success.

Bearing in mind the above factors, this pilot programme must take an entirely different approach to planning - an approach that does not turn plans into an albatross around the programme's neck, but which liberates us to develop varied, changing and consistently appropriate strategies.

First of all, we must recognise that planning is an attempt to ~~control~~ <sup>change</sup> the future within a framework of values. That is, we do not want just any future, but one which is based on our beliefs about society, ~~this is the the philosophical framework set out earlier in this chapter. The values inherent in this were spelt out as "tenets" of the philosophy. There can be no real planning without this firm philosophical foundation.~~ <sup>value base.</sup>

Secondly, since in any given situation there are some controllable and some non-controllable factors, our next task in the planning exercise is to identify these as clearly as possible. In the case of the present pilot programme, for instance, we can control the nature of the programme's leadership, the type of training imparted, the specific villages or blocks within which it will be launched, the learning materials to be developed, etc. We cannot control droughts or natural disasters which will affect the chosen districts and worsen women's situation, fluctuations in political support for the programme at different levels, or caste or communal conflicts.

Having identified the factors within our control, we then identify the various levels at which planning for these will occur. In other words, even though a broad structure and approach for the implementation of the pilot programme has been set in this report, this does not constitute the ultimate operational plan. It is only attempt to identify the layers and structures within which detailed planning will occur, and who will

do it. Thus, ~~we have set no targets, and prescribed no formulas or procedures. We have merely suggested various options or choices (among others) which can be selected at different points on the continuum.~~

~~In other words,~~ The planning of this programme will not be carried out by one centralised group or authority, but at multiple levels. ~~That is why we have identified individuals and institutions who can undertake to do this in each of the states,~~ <sup>must be identified)</sup> and they in turn will have to identify others to do it at deeper levels.

The content of planning will therefore vary considerably at different levels and stages. For instance, the state-level group (or State Steering Committee, as we have termed it) will initiate the planning exercise in terms of their own responsibilities, training of district personnel, time-frames, monitoring, and sequencing of activities in the state; the district group will do the same for themselves and the block-level functionaries; and the village-level workers will plan the nature, content, tasks, and direction of the programme with village women.

Notwithstanding this, some key programme leaders must be involved in the planning exercises at all levels in each state for an initial period of time. This is because the ~~philosophical premises, value base and approach~~ <sup>methodology</sup> of this programme are ~~unconventional and~~ <sup>dominant</sup> vulnerable to the ~~socio-cultural forces, into which most of us have been socialised.~~ They can be easily lost sight of or destroyed. The leadership of this programme must therefore take the onus of fostering this new approach to planning and execution, this new set of values and norms, these new relationships, until such time as they are internalised. ~~That is, the leaders of the programme will have to socialise as those~~

*Consequently*  
~~involved into a new way of being, working together,~~  
~~and viewing women - and this means ensuring that these~~  
~~elements and new values~~ *must be applied* ~~are present~~ even in the plan-  
ning stage.

Finally, the pilot programme must set up mechanisms for a continuous planning-evaluation-revision-planning cycle. To avoid the conventional pitfalls of ~~the~~ rigid, time-phased, target-oriented planning ~~mentioned earlier,~~ we must create a process of continuous revisability into our programme. This means that planning is not a special, separate activity undertaken at some designated points of time ~~in the programme,~~ but something that is part and parcel of our very operations. And this ~~can~~ is feasible only if planning is done not by one centralised body, but by those at each level of the structure. Our programme must never suffer from that commonest malaise of planning: of not being able to change course because it was "planned" otherwise !

Above all, only in this way can the grassroots women-whom we seek to involve in a process of change and self-realisation\* join in planning, rather than being the objects of someone else's plan.

D. TRAINING:

*Who is training whom?*

The approach ~~and philosophy~~ of this pilot programme clearly place a critical burden on the training that will be required to achieve its goals. Obviously, the type of training that will have to be provided at all levels of this programme will be very different from what is conventionally related to this term. For, to equip workers to facilitate women's empowerment through education is a far more complex task than training them to teach women to sew, cook, weave baskets, or learn the three R's.

The fundamental difference lies in the orientation of all training which will stem from the philosophy and value

framework of the programme. The tenets spelt out earlier are not only the value-base of the whole pilot programme, but even more so of its approach to training. Consequently the principle of training must be one with the overall philosophy of the pilot programme.

Training Methodology:

1. The training experience in this programme must, at every level and for every group, be a microcosm of the values and processes of the programme itself. It must simulate the very attitudes, values, interaction, and environment that the trainees must recreate and practice among women in the village. Therefore, the training programmes must be based on and actualise the following norms:
  - a. Training must be a participatory experience. It must allow room for the trainees to control and determine its shape, structure, content and goals, once they are thoroughly conversant with the aims and philosophy of the programme. If their own training exposes them to participatory norms in action, they in turn will be better able to impart these values and practices to their work and to the women with whom they interact in the community.
  - b. Training must provide the very "time and space" which we ask workers to later create for women. An over-structured, pre-determined, and task-oriented training programme cannot do this. Workers cannot even understand what "time and space" really means unless they have experienced this sense of openness and security in their own training. Thus, the experience of getting to know one another, sharing, self-awareness, etc., must be an integral part of



training programmes. They must provide the very pressure-free environment which we ask the trainees to provide for women. ?

- c. The training programme itself must occur in an "environment of learning" - this means (i) there should be no sense of haste to impart various mechanical skills or sets of information; (ii) the hierarchical relationship between "trainers" (the ones who "know") and "trainees" (the ones who must "learn") must be broken down; (iii) the knowledge, experience, diffidence, and problems of all present must be respected and acknowledged; and (iv) the training process must be interactive, rather than didactic.
2. Training must be a process, not a single, time-bound event with an artificial beginning and end. Because we seek to impart (through the training) a new set of values, behavioural patterns, attitudes, and methods of work, they must be continuously reinforced and supported if they are not to be quickly destroyed or extinguished. While providing such reinforcement will be one of the key tasks of supervision, this alone is not enough. From time to time, workers must gather again to discuss experiences, problems, insights gained, etc. This is the ongoing "training for which mechanisms must be created in the programme. These periodic reflection/review exercises need not be labelled "inservice" or "ongoing" training programmes, but that is what they will be, in effect. They can undertaken during monthly review meetings or within any other mechanism which is inbuilt into the planning/implementation cycle.

3. Although we feel that imparting a new set of values and attitudes is the most critical goal of the training needed for our pilot programme, it would still be incomplete if it did not equip workers with specific, functional skills. These skills, and the training methods for inculcating them, will have to be defined and developed for different functionaries according to their sphere of work and responsibility. However, the following are some of the basic types of skills which we anticipate as necessary:
  - a. Sensitivity skills: listening, observing, helping, respecting other and oneself. *Why?*
  - b. Collective skills: participatory planning, working, *Why?* evaluation, collective decision-making, group dynamics, dealing with conflicts, etc.
  - c. Information gathering skills: how to identify what information is needed, how and from where to get it, etc.
  - d. Analytical skills: how to analyse (collectively) information, social phenomena, quantitative data, etc.
  - e. Mobilisation skills: how to organise collective action, choose strategies, implement them, etc.
  - f. Communication skills: including use of audio-visual media.
  - g. Teaching skills: formal, non-formal, vocational, making aids, using them effectively, curriculum development, etc.
  - h. Technical skills: operation of equipment, repair, maintenance, etc.
  - i. Evaluation skills: defining in a participatory manner, parameters of evaluation, "positive evaluation" techniques, etc.
  - j. Training skills.

4. Training must result in an indepth understanding of the pilot programme and the social, economic, and political environment in which it is being implemented in each state and district. This means that every functionary in the programme must understand the programme's structure, the roles of various bodies and individuals within it, the linkages with other departments and programmes, and the problems inherent in all these. This kind of clarity will create untold dividends in subsequent functioning, for each member of the team will know where to go for which problem, and what sort of support to expect or demand from other departments and levels.

In addition, a detailed exposition of certain key departments and structures outside, but linked to the pilot programme - viz., education, social welfare, rural development, and the panchayati raj system - is essential. This should followed by detailed critiques to which all participants can contribute.

5. In keeping with the philosophy of this programme, we feel that integrated, multi-level training of functionaries is a must. In the very first phase of training, particularly in the value-base and team-building stages, functionaries from different levels of the structure (programme Directors, personnel from DIETs, APIAs, school teachers, and other village-based workers) must be brought together for this first training experience rather than workers of the same level or function being trained in isolation from others. In other words, training at the initial stage of the pilot programme must be vertically not horizontally integrated. This strategy will best achieve the aims and philosophy of training. It will help break down hierarchical relationships, facilitate personal and team bonding,

promote mutual understanding, cooperation and support, and create the esprit de corps without which this programme cannot succeed. The technical and skill-or task-specific training may subsequently be undertaken horizontally, but the initial exposure to the new values and norms of functioning must be provided in an integrated manner, for this is the real foundation of the programme.

#### Levels of Training

The different levels or groups of functionaries who will have to undergo training, both integrated and otherwise, must also be considered. The following is only a broad listing based on the structure of the programme as envisioned in this document. The identification of specific groups of functionaries will have to be done by the state steering committees and the national resource group.

- a. All Programme Initiators: including state steering committee members, resource institutions and individuals, etc.
- b. Implementing authorities: including state programme directors, district implementing authority personnel, etc.
- c. Trainers: including DIET personnel, State and district resource centre staff, teacher-trainers, etc.
- d. Village-level workers: primary and secondary school teachers, additional school teachers/school mothers, other workers responsible for mobilising women, etc.

In the case of some levels of functionaries (such as state level officials and programme directors, for instance) it may be wiser to use the term "orientation" instead of "training". The integrated training encounters mentioned in the methodology may also be called

"workshops" or "group-building exercises" to avoid possible negative reactions to the concept of being "trained". In fact, the term "training" need not be used at all, with any worker, at any level - for all we are attempting to do is to ready ourselves for the formidable challenge of "Education for Women's Equality".

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

In keeping with the philosophy of this programme, the monitoring and evaluation must be a continuous process built into its operational strategy. However, some key concepts and mechanisms need clarification:

1. If the philosophy, approach and training methodology described earlier are adhered to in letter and spirit, then a system of mutual, collective accountability will automatically come into being. This is the best possible strategy-to create an environment of self-monitoring and evaluation.
2. In the past, monitoring has tended to focus only on the "business-end" of a programme, so to speak, this is usually the village-level implementation. Components like training, planning, material development, etc., are rarely monitored or evaluated. Therefore, it is vital that all stages and inputs in the programme are continuously monitored, and not only the implementation of field-level tasks.
3. While we believe that an effective internal check-and balance mechanism can be created in the programme if the right set of functioning norms are sustained, the need for some external monitoring/evaluation inputs cannot be eliminated. It is therefore necessary that some body or set of persons be identified who, though

fully conversant with the programme's aims, philosophy methods, and so forth, are not part of the implementation machinery. Some members of the National Resources Group, State Steering Committee and the (IDARA) could ERDA play this role of external-internal monitoring and evaluation.

4. Quantitative and qualitative aspects of the programme will have to be distinguished for the purpose of monitoring. For instance, the APIA in a given district may not have extended the programme to the number of villages planned; but in the few villages reached, an environment of great enthusiasm and involvement may have been created. In a programme of this type, the latter achievement must take precedence.

Similarly, monitoring and evaluation techniques for the qualitative aspect of this programme must be given as much, if not more importance than quantitative coverage and milestones.

5. Evaluation should be of two kinds :
  - a. Continuous, in-built evaluation which is part and parcel of the program's approach and methodology, undertaken by all programme workers at all levels; and periodic evaluations designed to get an overview of progress and achievements, undertaken by the "external-internal" group mentioned under point.

CHAPTER - II

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

This programme should endeavour to build a structure that would - (a) Pool the resources available at the national level to evolve a programme that would break the stagnation we have been experiencing in the field of women's literacy and education, and (b) Evolve a structure that is best suited to the area concerned through a participatory planning process. The National and State level structures will be outlined in detail, while the actual education and empowerment strategies to be adopted at the Block/Village level will be open. However, some alternative empowerment strategies have been suggested.

The National and State level structures would ensure a good feedback and support mechanism, high quality training and production of educational material and above all, an ongoing evaluation and monitoring system designed to be sensitive to the problems that may arise. Post-facto evaluation leaves very little scope for change, and the success of any programme critically hinges on its capacity to evolve a flexible structure where corrective measures can be taken.

The Organizational Structure outlined will try to :

- (a) Build a back-up support for the Women's Education and Empowerment Programme - i.e. access to quality training, teaching aids and information.
- (b) Provide support services like child care, access to clean drinking water, employment avenues through ongoing government schemes and programmes, health care and nutrition and access to information about services available to rural women and children.

Expand a little more detail

- (c) Create a pool of educated and socially aware women who would in turn motivate women and thus activate the receiving mechanisms.
- (d) Establish a link between the rural women's education functionaries and the Resource group at the National and State level. This feedback cum support mechanism could break the sense of isolation experienced by rural development and education workers. Regular meetings, review sessions and direct access to information could go a long way in rejuvenating the rural education system.
- (e) Create institutions that would train education workers, teachers and non-formal education instructors. The New Education Policy outlines the possibility of establishing District Institutes of Education and Training - DIET. A "Information, Development and Resource Agency" could also be created. The State and District IDARAs could involve Voluntary Agencies working in the area. In fact if a good VA does exist, it could function as the IDARA. The IDARA and the DIET could be autonomous bodies that work in close coordination.

why?

Women's literacy and education cannot be encouraged without the active cooperation of other government departments. (-) The programme structure should create committees at the District and Block level to ensure inter-departmental cooperation. For example, the departments of Social Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Water etc. could provide the support structures.

The organizational structure suggested will try to :-

1. Formalise inter - departmental coordination to provide the back-up support.



2. Establish a direct link between the National and State level Resource groups and the programme functionaries and beneficiaries.
3. Evolve an ongoing participatory planning cum evaluation process.

A. NATIONAL RESOURCE GROUP :

Many groups, both within the government and outside, have been working with women or on women's issues. The Central Social Welfare Board and the Department of Social Welfare, for example, have initiated programmes like the Awareness Training Camps, Condensed Courses etc. Similarly, Voluntary Organizations all over the country have been working with women, or in the field of non-formal education. There is an urgent need to pool all the available resources from different parts of the country to give a positive thrust to this programme of 'Education for Women's Equality'. A systematic collation of such experiences will go a long way in designing an effective women's education programme.

A National Resource Group could be set up in the Ministry of Human Resources, with the Secretary Education and Secretary, Social welfare as the chief coordinators. This NRG could draw upon diverse experiences, and steer this programme in the initial phase. The State Programme Directors of this project could also be included in the NRG. Professionals in the field of audio - visual communication could also be included in this group.

The main tasks of the NRG :

1. Communicate the concept, aims and objectives of the programme. Stage one of the Sequence of Implementation outlines the tasks of this stage. The bane of

*Why?*  
*How wd. you ensure*  
*... ..*  
*and not wasted interest to not*  
*... ..*

most innovative projects is one of communication.

*Project*

The original concept gets distorted and thus reduced to a series of tasks as it filters down the bureaucracy. In some cases the original concept is lost in this process. Thus the NRG should communicate the concept directly to the programme functionaries at the State, District and Block levels.

2. The NRG could identify a good media person to prepare a series of audio-visual programmes on the aims and objectives of this programme. They could draw upon the experience of similar <sup>experiments conducted by the</sup> government programmes, <sup>successfully</sup> like the Women's Development Programme in Rajasthan.

3 ~~Experiences of Voluntary Agencies, Adult and Non-formal Education could be analysed.~~ The NRG could also help identify individuals and institutions to be involved in training, monitoring and evaluation.

~~4. The NRG could have a few full time members who could coordinate the resources of the NRG.~~

4 MS R NRG

A separate financial allocation should be made for the NRG. The NRG will be the Natural Coordinating Committee of this programme, and will have representatives in the SSC and the DWEDC.

B. STATE STEERING COMMITTEE :

A steering committee should be set up at the State level under the Secretary Education to coordinate and launch the programme. This SSC should strive to do the following :

1. Identify Institutions and individuals to run the programme. It could appoint Programme Directors for each District, set up the District Institute for Education and Training; & the Information, Development and Resource Agency as the evaluation cum monitoring agency.

2. The SSC could launch Stage I of the programme as outlined in the Sequence of Implementation, and be actively involved in all subsequent stages.

Basically the SSC should concretize the concept and evolve a strategy and structure to suit the area, organise a series of workshops to both communicate the concept and identify potential programme functionaries, and above all, finalise and draft the detailed programme document through a participative planning process. Once the programme document has been finalised, the SSC could be the overall coordinating body for the State.

The composition of this committee would vary in each State. However it should consist of individuals who are committed to this programme. Secretaries of Social Welfare and Rural Development and Panchayati Raj should be members of this committee. This body will be the chief decision making authority for this programme, and all financial resources should be channelised through this committee. The State Programme Director could be the Member Secretary of the SSC. This person could be drawn from the Administrative Service, Department of Education, or brought on deputation from the non-government sector.

#### DISTRICT AND BLOCK LEVEL STRUCTURE :

#### C. DISTRICT WOMENS EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (DWEDC)

The DWEDC could be set up under the chairpersonship of the District Collector (or the Chief Secretary, in the case of Karnataka). This should be a coordinating committee to help pool various development resources to provide the support services. The District Programme Director could be the Member-Secretary of this committee. This body will not have any responsibility to actually implement the programme.

The success of this programme depends on the availability of support services like child care, health and nutrition, and above all access to information about various development schemes and projects. Programmes like the DWCRA, RLEGP, Drought Relief Programmes and the like could provide employment to women, help construct educational institutions, provide vocational training etc. The ICDS programme structure could provide the infrastructure for childcare and nutrition.

??  
The, again, is, etc.  
much

The DWEDC could consist of (1) District Collector/Chief Secretary, (2) Block Development Officer, (3) District Education Officer/Education Extension Officer/N F Ed Director, (4) Individuals who are actively involved in this programme and (5) Representatives of the SSC and may be the NRG.

In the initial phase, the programme should be launched in one Block only, and once that takes off the ground it could be extended to other Blocks. Extension of the programme should be preceded by a situational analysis and identification of education and empowerment strategies to suit the area.

D. AREA PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY :

This body will be responsible for actually implementing the programme at the Block level. It will be set up by the SSC, under the Directorship of the District Programme Director. Financial allocation should be made directly to this Authority. The Chief task of the APIA, will be to involve women in a process to identify specific strategies to achieve the desired objectives. The APIA will decide the tentative empowerment strategies in active consultation with the beneficiaries. The APIA will be responsible for :

1. Conducting the situational survey and analysis and then conduct a series of workshops with local officials/groups and village women to evolve a strategy to suit the area.
2. Coordinate with the SSC, DIET, and the IDARA to organise a series of training programmes for the programme functionaries.
3. All major decisions about the programme should be taken in this body.
4. The programme workers may be drawn from various institutions like the Village Primary School, Non-formal or Adult Education workers, Childcare/Balwadi or Anganwadi workers etc. Once such workers have been indentified and trained, they should be responsible to the Programme Director. Special financial arrangements whould be made so that they draw their salaries from this Authority. These workers should be given a special deputation allowance to work through this programme. Non-government workers working in this programme will however work directly under this Authority and will be appointed by the APIA.

The actual structure and composition of this body will depend upon the programme strategy. Nevertheless this body should have an executive committee. The executive committee should include the Block Development Officer, a few govt. officers involved with relevant programmes in the concerned area, representatives of the SSC, DIET, and the IDARA.

All financial allocations for the programme should be made directly to the APIA. It will in turn be directly responsible to the SSC.

*Complimentary*

E ALTERNATIVE EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES :

Introduction :

As it has been reiterated above, the main thrust of the programme is to encourage women's education, create a pool of educated and aware women in each village, and improve the education infrastructure so as to make it both interesting relevant and responsive to women's needs. Children, especially girls in the 6 to 14 age group should be encouraged to attend school. The Programme of Action of the New Education Policy outlines the following tasks :

1. Elementary education for girls upto the primary stage. This would involve (a) Realising the crucial importance of rapid physical and mental growth during early childhood and designing inputs by way of support services to (ECCE, Programme Of Action) achieve this end.

*Not clear*

b) Total development of the child - physical, motor, cognitive, language, emotional and social. The ECCE involves a complex integral process; thus the ECCE worker Primary School teacher should be trained to deal with it. Secondly, the existing Primary Schools are not equipped to deal with this responsibility, and thus there is an urgent need to improve the school environment. The school should have enough space for games, educational toys, a children's library of books, music tapes etc. Basically the school should be the primary focus. If girls have to attend school, then the timings should be flexible.

*Very*

The village school should be transformed fundamentally if it has to provide a total learning environment for children.

*Anything at village level cannot be transformed fundamentally*

*If you do not have it*

This would involve :

- A - Intensive training of the school teacher. Under the Operation Blackboard scheme minimum essential facilities could be provided to the primary schools.
- B - Consturction of essential buildings for primary schools with NREP and RLEGP funds. Procuring land for grounds.
- C - Appointing an additional school teacher in the village primary school who could be responsible for girls education. (For example the Karnataka Govt. officials were discussing the possibility of appointing "School Mothers". These women could be identified and trained under this programme).

- 2. Adult Education for women in the age group 15 - 35.

Local women or men could be identified and trained to become adulteducation instructors. Their training and supervision could be done by this programme.

- 3. Increased women's access to vocational, technical and professional education. Short term intensive/condensed courses could be designed to impart both literacy and relevant technical education. The employment opportunities and avenues for self-employment should be explored before any such venture is taken up.

- Contribution between the General and specific recommendations*
- 49 *who* Review and reorganisation of educational activities to ensure that it makes substantial contribution towards womens equality. Womens equality is inextricably linked to empowerment. Thus, any meaningful education strategy should aim at building a positive self image; developing ability to think critically and ensure equal participation in the development process.

Any strategy chosen should conform to the above measures outlined in the POA of the New Education Policy. Given below are a few strategies that could be considered at the Block level.

*Suggested Strategies :-*

~~E. ALTERNATIVE EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES :~~

1. INTENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS.

An intensive training programme could be organised to upgrade the skills of primary school teachers and non-formal education instructors. They could be provided with good teaching aids, and be sensitized to deal with the specific needs of poor women and children. The training programme could be conducted by the DIETs at the block level. These trained teachers could become catalysts in this programme. The District IDARA and DIET could be in constant touch with these teachers through periodic refresher courses and meetings.

2. VILLAGE WOMEN'S ACTIVITY CENTRES :

*Who designed it?  
Why did it come here?*

One Activity Centre could be planned for every 1000 population. This could either be attached to the Village Primary School or be an autonomous unit. Each VAC could provide space for meetings, AE classes etc; disseminate information about various govt. schemes and programmes; have recreational facilities for women and children, organise social awareness camps, provide space for child care, regular health camps etc. and have a TV and Video for entertainment and education.

*maintain it*

*The approach of strategy contradict society below*



The activity centre coordinator could be trained by the DIET and the IDARA. Members of the VAC could contribute a nominal sum of one rupee a month, and regular elections could be held to choose the coordinating committee. These VAC's could become the hub of the village. This programme could be organised in the concerned village through these centres.

Housing should be provided for the coordinator, and the centre could be used as a training centre. The AC could basically provide a pleasant environment for women to meet and talk. Women workers like the ANM, Community Health Worker, AE workers etc. could use the VAC's as a base for their activities. The VAC coordinator could be paid a honararium to run the centre.

3. INTENSIVE RESIDENTIAL CONDENSED COURSES :

*There is said to be some thing at not running?*

Residential or day condensed courses institutions should be set up where literate or illiterate women could come for a 6 months or a one year condensed course. Women should get a stipend to attend which is already available in current Department Social Welfare Board and Social Welfare Department schemes and child care and hostel facilities could also be provide.

*The point is...*

The condensed course could consist of 1. Literacy component, 2. Awareness about development issues and womens issues, 3. Information about govt. schemes and programmes designed for rural women and children, 4. Basic health and nutrition education, 5. Some teachnical skills that may prove useful in the area, and 6. Some organizational skills. The Womens

Development Programme in Rajasthan has developed a good comprehensive training programme for their village level workers - Sathins. Their experience could be studied before the course is designed.

The Central Social Welfare Board has a few schemes for condensed courses, their experience could be analysed before this programme is initiated.

4. TRAINING OF PART-TIME EDUCATION WORKERS :

Part-time education workers, identified and selected from the programme area could be trained in an intensive 3 to 6 months programme. Women with some basic educational skills could be trained and sensitised to work within the Non-formal education programmes. The existing schemes for Adult and Non-formal education could be considered as a potential input into this programme.

5. VOCATIONAL TRAINING :

A Vocational Training Institution could be set up at the Block level, after local employment and self employment avenues have been explored. Women could be trained in a variety of skills like maintainance of pumps, construction and maintainance of smokeless chullahs, sericulture, plant nurseries, preventive health etc, in addition to other conventional skills. However local opportunities and demands should be surveyed before any skill is chosen. A literacy and awareness component should be built into the training.

Alternative Empowerment Strategies have been suggested to launch a debate on possible paths to be explored; however the SSC and the APIA could explore other avenues. The main objectives of a participatory planning process is to involve people in all levels of planning and implementation so that the programme functionaries do not look upon their job as executing predetermined tasks, but take an active part and be involved in all aspects of the programme. An innovative and resource-intensive programme like this can succeed only if the workers are highly motivated, and active participation in planning can alone generate this enthusiasm and motivation.

F. DISTRICT INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING :

Chapter 23 of the Programme of Action of the New Education Policy outlines the possibility of establishing District Institutes for Education and Planning. "An important change in the educational system will be brought about by the radical transformation of the present system of Elementary Teacher Education. Their functions would include - (to quote a few ) -

- pre service and inservice training of teachers ... .
- training and continuing education of non-formal and adult education instructors and supervisors.
- training and orientation of heads of institutions in institutional planning and management and micro-level planning.
- orientation of community leaders, functionaries of voluntary agencies
- academic support to schools.

- serving as an evaluation and monitoring centre."

Existing institutions could be identified and developed as DIETs. Where no such institutions exist, a new structure could be created. The trainers and education workers of this institution could be identified and trained at two levels. Firstly, they could participate in the stage-one workshops and secondly they could go through a national level training programme where they are exposed to innovative work being done in the fields of education and womens education and empowerment. The SCC in coordination with the NRG could organise these training programmes. The success of this programme critically hinges upon the capacity of these DIET trainers to train the programme workers. Thus the training of trainers should receive utmost priority in the initial stages of this programme.

The DIETs could emerge as the nodal body for this programme. The NRG could identify individuals and institutions in different parts of the country to conduct this training. This will perhaps be one of the most important ongoing tasks of the NRG. Regional barriers should be transcended to create a pool of highly motivated trainers.

The DIETs should come directly under the SCC. All financial allocations to the DIET should be made by the SSC. Trainers could be drawn on deputation from other departments of educational institutions, or they could be appointed directly to the DIET. Needless to say, it will work in close coordination with the APIA and the IDARA.

#### INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE AGENCY

A womens education and empowerment project, which presupposes an active involvement of both the community and the government, will need a strong technical support group. This group could be involved in training with the DIET, but its basic involvement should be in developing a good feedback mechanism, through an intensive monitoring, evaluation and information dissemination process.

A good voluntary agency at the State or District level should be chosen to function as the IDARA. This institution could not only provide the back-up support to the programme functionaries, but could also develop mechanisms to be in constant touch with the beneficiaries. Monthly review meetings, regular discussions on issues decided by the programme functionaries and participation in the various training and refresher programme - could be some channels to build a direct link with the programme functionaries.

~~This body should consist of non-governmental people and institutions. For example the Dept. of Home Science in the MS University Baroda, Literacy House in Lucknow, SEARCH in Bangalore could be explored. The initial situational survey and analysis could be initiated by this group.~~

Thus the IDARA should be involved in three specific roles. Special subgroups should be formed in the IDARA to facilitate this.

1. **Generation of Resource Material:** The IDARA should generate resource material on important issues. It should be the body which gathers and disseminate information. The APIA/Programme functionaries/village education works should have direct access to the IDARA as a source of information (not teaching material).

2. Participate in the decentralised planning process initiated by the APIA. One subgroup of the IDARA should participate in all the workshops, training programmes and planning processes.
3. Documentation Evaluation and Monitoring: A subgroup of the IDARA should participate in the monthly meetings of the APIA, DWEDC and in any other meeting at the village level. They could document the discussions, the self-evaluation sessions and above all build a direct link with the programme activists and beneficiaries. This link could help build a continuous feedback mechanism. The APIA, DIET and the IDARA as a whole should set aside time for reflection and self evaluation. This subgroup should document the proceedings of these session.

Thus the IDARA will effectively be the non-governmental back-up support, actively involved in planning, training, documentation, information dissemination, monitoring and evaluation.

The IDARA should draw upon resources of the NRG and the SSC in executing the above responsibilities. However, the IDARA will be responsible for coordinating these activities.

In effect, the WORK is done by NGO  
The Govt. controls the local level of planning  
How would their relationship be ensured?

CHAPTER - III

STATE WISE REPORTS

The Secretary Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development in consultation with the Representative of the Royal Netherlands Embassy identified three States to launch the programme on Education for Women's Equality, the States being Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. The task of this mission in the states was to -

- a) Discuss the programme outline with officials of the State Government.
- b) Develop a criteria for selection of the districts.
- c) Consult departments and ministries to ensure maximum involvement in the programme design.

Our experience in the three States has been varied, and in fact the three States are so dissimilar that a uniform and prestructured rigid plan will not be appropriate for the States. There was thus a pressure on us to design a structure that could work in such diverse environments. Within each State, the districts were as dissimilar. For example the districts of Bidar and Bijapur in Karnataka are both economically backward, but the availability of support structures are uneven. The experience of the local administration in dealing with women centred programmes is also different. Similarly, Baroda in Gujarat, is well endowed with good educational institutions which could help in training and monitoring, but Banaskantha district is not only very backward, but is drought prone, and womens education is backward, and there are really no effective groups working in the area.

However, we tried to communicate the need to evolve a participatory and decentralised planning process, and by and large this concept was well received. In Mysore and Baroda, the

local officials and other individuals involved in education were very enthusiastic. Thus, we discussed the approach to planning with all concerned, and the response was very positive.

In all the States, the State Govt. officials responded positively, but the level of enthusiasm and willingness to actively participate in this programme was uneven. In all the States, they gave primary importance to the selection of the districts. But, in Uttar Pradesh they were in a great hurry to set up committees at all levels to launch the programme. Gujarat and Karnataka Govt. officials preferred to wait till the programme was officially launched. However, we could not meet many non-government education or social activists groups. Thus, the National Resource Group and the Steering Committee should help identify such groups to be actively associated with the programme.

#### CRITERIA OF SELECTION OF DISTRICTS:

One of the main objectives of our mission was to select, with the involvement of the state government education officials, the districts in which the pilot programme should be implemented. In order to do this, the criteria for such selection had to be evolved. This was done with inputs from government officials, voluntary organisations, and experienced resource persons.

Before we list the actual criteria some explanatory points must be noted.

Firstly, these criteria were used not as rigid parameters, but as broad indicators or guidelines. In many districts selected very few of the criteria were present. This was because we found that in reality there was no single district which could meet all the selection criteria.

Secondly, the involvement of state government officials in the selection process means that their knowledge of the conditions of the state, their interpretation of the selection criteria are bound to vary. Their working experience of func-



tional problems may lead them to select districts which may not appear entirely rational to the outsider.

Again, officials often have to take cognizance of certain political and administrative factors which cannot be part of 'objective' selection criteria, but which nevertheless influence subsequent implementation considerably.

Thus, in the ultimate analysis, the process of selection for a programme of this nature - be it of districts, blocks, villages, personnel, trainers, and strategies, cannot be 'objective'. Choices are made through a complex combination of subjective factors like, instinct, gut feeling, a 'sixth sense' etc, and so called 'objective' indicators. We submit, that this in fact results in a very rational set of choices being made. For record however, the following are the list of criteria developed:-

1. Districts with low female literacy, and poor enrolment and retention of girls in the school system.
2. Districts where support inputs would be available from other development programmes like ICDS, DWCRA, IRDP, RLEGP, NREP, etc. This is an important criteria since employment, childcare, fuel, fodder, and other basic needs are being facilitated through these programmes. Above all the evidence is clear that the absence of struggles for these has been a major obstacle keeping women out of the education system. Moreover, launching the pilot programme in districts where other development inputs are being provided, will have a double advantage.
  - a. The development programmes in the districts can become the focus of womens education strategy, since they cover many of womens most critical needs; hence the pilot programme can begin with issues most relevant and meaningful to women.

- b. The education process thus begun can straight away empower women to make their development programme "deliver the goods" and be more responsive to women.
3. Districts in which effective dynamic voluntary organizations are working, preferably where they are concentrating on women's issues. The approach and philosophy of this pilot programme, being radically different from traditional government schemes needs a good deal of support, sustenance and concrete inputs especially in the initial phases. Grassroots women's organisations which are already utilising similar approaches and strategies in their work can therefore do a tremendous amount for the pilot programme, from within and without the structure.

However, there is no point in selecting a district which has many voluntary agencies, but none with the perspective and experience needed for this programme.

4. Region-wise district selection became a dominant factor. In all three states, levels of development varied sharply from region to region and within regions. Thus selection of at least one district from each region was necessary. In some states this was necessitated by political, geographical, or administrative factors.

The regional factor took on different aspects in different States. In one State the "overdevelopment" of one region mitigated against the selection of even a single district from it. However, we have selected at least one district from socio-economically powerful belts, but where women's status and education level was appallingly low.

5. Wherever possible, and all else being equal, we selected districts where the Netherlands Water Project is being or will be implemented, for water is the most drastic need of women.
6. Although little significant information could be gathered on this aspect, the presence of relatively progressive and effective local self government bodies at district and village level was borne in mind. Karnataka, for instance, had handed considerable powers to these bodies at district and village level, thus in such cases their support can make or break the programme.
7. The location of educational support institutions (such as teachers training colleges; Universities with a dynamic extension programme; education research, material development and training centre with expertise in non-formal and adult education councils, etc.) within the district or closeby was also an important criterion. The logistics of their providing key inputs in training, teaching/learning material, information input, follow-up, etc. would be greatly facilitated.

The districts finally selected by the mission were chosen by a combination of the above criteria. We came to think of this mix as the "success probability factor", which best conveys what really happened in the selection process. Needless to add, these ten districts need not be viewed as final and non-negotiable. They can be changes or substitutes after a much deeper study by the National Resource Group or the State Steering Committee. This mission could not conduct an indepth study, as the time allotted was inadequate for that purpose.

## KARNATAKA

### Introduction :

It is widely recognised that Karnataka is one of the best-developed and progressive states in the country, with a better record in socio-economic development than many. For instance, implementation of land reforms was carried out with determined focus in the sixties and early seventies, benefitting the rural landless. Historically, Karnataka was fortunate in having had several progressive measures undertaken both in areas under British rule (then the Madras Presidency), and in the region governed by the Mysore monarchs who were relatively forward-looking and enlightened. Consequently, Karnataka enjoys better literacy rates, health status, and the position on women has never been as backward as in other parts of the country.

As far as women's education is concerned, Karnataka was swept by the major social reform movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where widow remarriage and the education of girls were particularly emphasised. The environment in the state, particularly as far as education in general and women's education in particular are concerned, is therefore quite positive.

Unfortunately, Karnataka has also seen an increasing trend of privatisation in education, particularly in medical and engineering sciences, with exorbitant capitation fees. The trend can be seen clearly even in the elementary education level. The impact of these factors on girls and women from the poorest strata may not be directly felt, but cannot be negated without detailed analysis.

Teachers training institutions are also privately owned, then the DIET prog is NOT being implemented in k

Response of the State Government:

On 18th May, 1987, we met the two Education Secretaries of Karnataka, Mr. Adhip Choudhuri and Mr. A. Bharat, and presented a summary of the objectives of the pilot programme and of our mission. Their response, insofar as it represents that of the State Government, could be said to be highly positive.

After ascertaining what exactly we wished to accomplish in the course of our week in the state, Mr. Choudhuri organised several meetings with other concerned officials and entered into the spirit of the mission. His only area of hesitation was with regard to the finances for the programme, and he was relieved to know that the Centre would be paying for it with Dutch assistance.

On subsequent occasions, we met the Commissioner of Public Instruction, the Deputy Director, Social Welfare, the Director, Social Welfare, the Director of the State Resource Centre, the Director, Regional Council of Education Research and Training, and the Secretary, Rural Development. They were all extremely responsive to the idea, though not in a facile or superficial manner. We continuously got a very serious hearing, and got the impression that the real objectives and methodology of the programme was fully understood, appreciated, and supported. We did not, at any point, feel that this reaction was based on the potential of the programme to increase individual power bases, or to gain control over large funds, unlike in other states. Nor was the response due to any innate respect for directives from Delhi - quite the contrary, in fact!

If one was to summarise the "sense" we had of Karnataka, its "pulse", as it were, this was, with few exceptions, that of a set of people who took their work and the problems of the state quite seriously, and wished to give deep consideration to a proposal which may attack or alleviate some of them. What is more, we found officials at various levels extremely comfortable

with the concepts inherent to this programme: "women's empowerment", "participatory planning", "mobilisation of women", "education is not necessarily literacy", "making education meaningful in changing women's and people's lives", "non-directive methodologies", "continuous evaluation", and a score of other tenets. This could be interpreted either as a mere familiarity with current development jargon, without necessarily understanding them in functional terms, or a genuine acceptance of such concepts. We are inclined to the latter view.

Existing Schemes Relevant to the Pilot Programme:

As has been discussed in the chapter on Structure of the Programme, successful implementation requires various support services from both within and without the education department. We have identified the following as the key departments whose cooperation and support services will be required in implementing any programme of education for women's equality:

1. Education;
2. Social Welfare;
- and 3. Rural Development.

Education's inclusion is too obvious to be discussed. Social Welfare Departments are important, however, because they implement (or fail to implement!) a large number of schemes for women and children, particularly from the "vulnerable sections", including vocational training, child care, nutrition, and social security schemes for destitute women and children.

Rural Development Departments also have a key role to play since they are responsible for virtually all the employment-generation and socio-economic programmes covering rural areas, including the NREP, RLEGP, IRDP, and a host of others. While women are not the only target group for these, current policy

directives increasingly call for large numbers of women beneficiaries, and some even require that a certain fixed quota of recipients be women. What is more, the DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) programme launched in this Five Year plan is implemented by the Rural Development Dept., and its entire package of socio-economic development services are aimed only at women and children.

Education Department Programmes:

Apart from the usual range of primary, secondary, higher education and vocational courses run by the department in the "formal" stream, the following special schemes have been introduced in Karnataka which could have major implications for this pilot programme:

1. Akshara Sene ("The Literacy Army"):

This scheme has three prongs: (i) A functional literacy programme for adults; (ii) A pre-primary programme under the care of a trained "School Mother" wherever one-teacher primary schools are in operation; and (iii) a Non-formal programme for school drop-outs and other "never-enrolled" children, in the form of evening classes at times and locations chosen by the children.

2. Vidya Vikasa (Student Development):

Here, free textbooks are provided to all children attending the first seven classes of elementary school. Uniforms are also provided free to students of the first and second standard, and upto the seventh standard for students from Backward Classes. The idea is to remove whatever deterrents parents and children face in the form of cost of books and uniforms for continuing schooling.

3. Midday Meal Programme:

Some 7 lakh school children receive nutritious meals under the CARE-sponsored scheme, while 5 lakh children receive an "energy food" supplement (developed by the Central Food Technology Research Institute, Mysore) under a state-sponsored scheme.

4. Foster-Parent Scheme:

This is one component of the state government's "Six Point Programme" for qualitative improvement of education in the state. The scheme encourages the foster-parenting of girls by better-off families for the duration of their elementary education. Some 15,000 girls are said to be covered by the scheme so far.

5. UNICEF-Assisted Schemes:

There are five UNICEF-supported educational programme in the state: the NHEES (Nutrition, Health Education and Environmental Sanitation) scheme to prepare and test instructional materials for primary schools; the Primary Education Curriculum Renewal scheme in 130 project schools to increase the relevance of the curriculum and these reduce drop-out; Developmental Activities in Community Education, with five project centres in the state experimenting in involving communities in their own development; Early Childhood Education projects in 65 pre-primary schools in backward areas, concentrating on supply of essential materials and training of teachers in the play-way method; and CAPE (Comprehensive Access to Primary Education) which seeks to diffuse the non-formal approach to teaching-learning, including relevant, self-learning materials and training of teachers trainers to impart this to primary school teachers.



6. Adult Education:

Apart from the 7,900 functional literacy centres of "Akshara Sene", the state runs some 12,700 adult education centres with a two-stage programme: an 8 month (350 hours) literacy-generating phase, followed by a 4-month (150 hours) literacy-retention phase. Of the nearly 7 lakh adults in the programme, over 3 lakhs are women.

Social Welfare Department Programmes:

The schemes run by the Social Welfare Department of the Government of Karnataka are too numerous (nearly 100!) to mention individually. It is sufficient to say that they cover most of the possible welfare needs of women, children, and the handicapped. However, the most important programme run by this department from the point of view of our pilot study is the ICDS (integrated Child Development Services) Programme, which has the widest network and coverage. Moreover, the ICDS has the greatest potential given increased inputs, for extending the necessary child-care and health facilities which could release adult women for participation in a programme of education for empowerment. Moreover, the ICDS is in operation in selected blocks of virtually every district in the state, which means that large pool of child-care workers (Aanganwadi workers) who interact closely with young mothers and older female siblings, are already in position to support this pilot programme - if it is made feasible and attractive for them to do so.

Secondly, the Social Welfare Department has just concluded a five-year integrated rural development project sponsored by UNICEF in Bidar District-known as the "BIRD" project - which was directly implemented by them. Although we were unable to obtain a copy of the evaluation report done by UNICEF, several persons informed us that this was one of the most successful projects implemented by a Government department.

Under the BIRD project, 280 village workers (majority women) were trained, given an honorarium of Rs.60/- per month, and asked to mobilise the rural population, particularly women, to utilise and participate in the several existing development schemes in the area. Under the scheme, and with the assistance of the village workers, some 200 mahila mandals were registered and took up income generating schemes for women. Women and girls were given training under the TRYSEM programme (Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment) as well as special skill-development inputs and assistance was provided for marketing their goods. Women were trained to obtain bank loans for starting small business and a 95% repayment rate was achieved!

Apart from this, the ICDS programme was launched and strengthened in all blocks of Bidar District (achieving a 93% immunization rate among children and pregnant mothers), and the Supplementary Nutrition Programme was introduced in urban areas for the poorest mothers and preschoolers.

Perhaps the most outstanding achievement of this project and undoubtedly due to the leadership of Mrs. Z. Tareen, Dy. Director of Social Welfare who was directly responsible for the project planning, implementation, and supervision - was the provision of non-traditional skills, training and employment to women. Among other things, girls were trained in transistor repair and handpump maintenance, marketing of bidis/cigarettes, footwear, clothing, bangles, etc. This marks a radical and refreshing departure from the usual sewing-classes and handicraft-making, and indicates a readiness to view women's development activities from a new perspective.

#### Rural Development Programmes:

Unfortunately, we met with no cooperation from the Secretary, Rural Development, Mr. Meenakshi Sundaram, although we were told that he was an outstandingly efficient and capable officer. His attitude was that our mission had nothing to do

with his department, and so he had nothing to contribute to our understanding.

Consequently, we could not elicit much information about this department's programmes. Apparently, all major national programmes (including IRDP, NLEP, DWCRA, etc.) are operating in Karnataka in most districts. According to Mr. Sundaram, the programmes are working "equally well" in all districts, but they were not "women's programmes", although women may be among the beneficiaries! He seemed to have little idea about the DWCRA programmes, since it was introduced only a couple of years earlier in Karnataka, and was currently operational only in Bijapur and Chikmagalur districts. DWCRA will presently be launched in Mysore and Dharwar districts.

Whether Mr. Sundaram's attitude will be reflected in a lack of support or cooperation at the district level for our pilot programme remains to be seen. His reaction may well have been based on general ascepticism about the large number of new programmes constantly being imposed from above, with little or no impact at grassroots level. Nevertheless, he is a highly-respected officer whose support should be sought.

These selection criteria were discussed at a meeting with the Education Secretary, Mr. Choudhuri, the Commissioner of Public Instruction, Dr. Malti Das, The Director of Adult Education, Mr. Ramkrishna Rao, and the Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Mrs. Z. Tareen (the post of Director, Social Welfare, is currently vacant).

Mr. Choudhuri first explained that Karnataka consisted of three distinct regions, and district selection would have to take these into consideration:

1. The northern region, which was formerly part of the old Hyderabad state, where literacy levels, particularly of women, were extremely low. Gulbarga, Raichur, Bidar, Bijapur and Bellary districts fall in this region, none having

an aggregate literacy rate of over 20%. In Gulbarga district, female literacy is said to be just 2% and not much more than 5% in the other four districts. These five districts are also the most socio-economically backward and under-developed region of the state, with the least political power in the state.

2. The central or southwestern region, which were part of the old Mysore kingdom, are relatively the most socio-economically prosperous and educationally advanced area. This is because of extensive cash-crop cultivation in these areas (such as coffee, pepper, cashewnuts, agriculture, etc.), high out-migration (the Shetties of Udipi are restauranters to the whole country), and a matrilineal system which ensured a higher status of women and consequently high female literacy. The districts of this region include Mangalore, North and South Kanara (Uttar Kannada and Dakshin Kannada), Chikmagalur, Chitradurga, Coorg., Dharwar and Belgaon. Because of its economic importance to the state, this region is also politically powerful.
3. The southeastern region, formerly part of the British ruled Madras Presidency, is not as educationally advanced as the Central region but is politically most powerful, and has the most development programmes, being closest to the state capital (Bangalore). While this area, comprising Kolar, Mandya, Tumkur, Mysore, Coorg and Hassan districts, had witnessed considerable industrial development in the last two decades with its concomitant urban growth, it also contains extremely backward pockets with very low literacy rates and other social indicators. For instance, Kolar and Mysore districts which have highly-developed urban centres, also hide poverty-stricken hinterlands which have been bypassed by development efforts. The introduction of mass sericulture and eucalyptus programmes in these areas have also changed their agricultural profiles, rthough not necessarily for the benefit of the poorest.

For actual district selection, therefore, this regional backdrop was kept in mind. Mr. Choudhuri favoured selecting all three districts from the educationally backward north - viz., Gulbarga, Bijapur, and Bidar, which are also adjacent to each other and would thus make a neat "cluster" administratively. He argued that not only are these the worst districts from the view-point of female literacy, but the ones generally neglected by development programmes although they need them the most. The south and the centre have always had the lion's share, in his opinion.

However, his colleagues did not agree with this, especially since we had pointed out that we did not necessarily want to choose the lowest-literacy districts, but ones where this fledgling methodology would have a change of success. If environmental, administrative, political, economic and social conditions were all difficult in a given district, the programme would be much more likely to die prematurely. Furthermore, both Mrs. Das and Mrs. Tareen pointed out that many districts in the southern part of the state needed such a programme just as much, since women were very much exploited, illiterate, and oppressed in these areas. In fact, Mrs. Tareen argued for the inclusion of a district where the devdassi (the "marriage" of girls to the temple, and their subsequent prostitution) system prevailed, such as Belgaum, Raichur, and Bijapur.

A lively debate then ensued, and we were impressed by the atmosphere of equality and freedom from hierarchical behavior among those present, a tribute to the Education Secretary's real practice of participatory decision-making. Finally, the following districts were tentatively selected, though an earnest appeal was made to allot four districts to Karnataka):

1. Bidar; 2. Bijapur; 3. Mysore; and, if a fourth district is allotted to Karnataka, either Raichur or Kolar.

District Profiles:

1. Bidar: situated in the northern cluster of backward districts, Bidar does not, at first glance, fulfill most of the selection criteria mentioned earlier except that it has a low femal literacy rate (below 5%). However it was selected because a large, effective infrastructure and considerable women's awareness was created under the BIRD programme mentioned earlier. The existence of a network of women activists at village level, the increased efficiency of the ICDS programme, and the creation of employment opportunities and increased incomes for women, would it was felt, all constitute some ideal pre-conditions for the implementation of our pilot programme. The absence of local voluntary organisations to help monitor and provide training inputs to the programme is also not a major drawback, since two major agencies, INGRID and ACTION AID are working in the adjacent Raichur district, only a couple of hours away by road. Also, the College of Home Science and a Teacher's Training College are located in Dharwad, again only a few hours from Bidar by road. These institutions could also be feasibly linked up to the programme.

Bidar is a drought-prone district with rain-fed agriculture. Coarse grains like jowar and ragi are grown, and only one crop a year is raised. There has been no industrial development in the area, rendering it a very poor district where unemployment is the most serious problem, as are water, fuel, and fodder. A significant proportion of the population are Muslims, with the lowest literacy levels occuring among Muslim women.

2. Bijapur:

Bijapur's profile is almost identical to that of Bidar. It was chosen because it is adjacent to Bidar, and the group felt that since the BIRD infrastructure and trained personnel were readily available next door, it would be relatively easier to expand this network into Bijapur. Two voluntary organisations, SAKTI (working for women's awareness and advancement) and AIKYA (working with landless families) have been active in some parts of Bijapur for several years, and have gained credibility particularly among women. Bijapur has also had the DWCRA programme operating for the last three years; even though this is not thought to be very effective, it could be energised and brought to support the women's education effort. Bijapur was also considered a good choice because the Devdassi (temple prostitution) system is prevalent here - the eradication of the social evil through a massive education/awareness drive under the aegis of our pilot programme was thought to be essential.

A question may well be asked at this point as to why, with the presence of several effective voluntary organisations (ACTION AID and INGRID), and the Netherlands Water Project, Raichur was not included in the three selected districts. The answer is simple: because of these very inputs. All concerned felt that since both ACTION AID and INGRID were working actively in the field of education, particularly in primary and adult education, this district was already receiving significant inputs in this field. Although ACTION AID admits that they are not really stressing the gender issue at this point, they are very much aware of it and intend to concentrate on it in the coming phase. It was therefore felt that women's education and awareness could well be taken up on a larger scale in Raichur with the assistance of these organisations, whereas in the other

districts, there was no mechanism or body to do so in a rigorous manner. However, if four districts are allotted to Karnataka, then Raichur would be the first to be included.

3. Mysore:

As mentioned earlier, the choice of Mysore at first appears anomalous, since it seems to epitomise one of the most advanced districts of Karnataka, not only thanks to the industrial development of the last decade, but because of its historical position as the seat of the enlightened Mysore Maharajahs (the last Mysore ruler is a Ph.D. in Philosophy and a Visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii). However, education dept. officials well-versed in the true (educational) profiles of the districts insisted that only urban Mysore and its surrounds could lay claim to any advancement. Large tracts of the district were both socio-economically and educationally backward, particularly the tribal belts. Inputs in women's education were sorely needed here.

The chances of successful implementation of a pilot programme were also very high in this district because of the large pool of support institutions and administrative resources which are plentifully available in urban Mysore. These include the Regional Centre for Education, Reserach and Training; the Deputy Commissioner of Public Instruction and his staff; the Karnataka Adult Education Council (a voluntary body which, has been more or less defunct for some time but which, was felt, could be reactivated with fresh ideas and new people); and above all, the existence of a number of dynamic voluntary organisations in the district.



The latter is particularly important since local government officials themselves mentioned them, and seem to have had considerable positive interaction with them. They include: the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra led by Dr. Sudarshan (a medical practitioner) in Yelandur Taluk, working among Soliga tribals; the Organisation for Development of People, led by Father Becket D' Souza, working in several talukas; DEED (expanded form not clear) led by Dr. Pious, in Hunsur Taluka; the Rural Development Agency, led by a women activist, Vani Venkatram; and MYRADA (Mysore Rural Area Development Agency), led by Mr. Aloysius Fernandes, an agency so large it is referred to as a "mini-government".

The expansion of sericulture and eucalyptus cultivation in Mysore District has created important new employment avenues for the people, and these could be usefully utilised for women's economic development. Silkworm breeding for instance, was traditionally a women's skill and it is vital that this skill-base be retained and it is vital that this skill-base be retained and developed.

Mysore district also has the ICDS programme in all blocks.

The Status of Women in Karnataka vis-a-vis Education:

Some general observations of the status of poor rural women and the factors inhibiting their education seem warranted here. The scenario in Karnataka is not very different from that in most other parts of India:

Poor rural families may send their daughters to school, but they are forced to drop out after the first couple of years to assist their mothers in child-care and survival-based activities like fetching water, grazing cattle, fuel collection, etc. Older women do not see the value of literacy per se since it seems to make little difference to the quality of their lives

in the way it currently imparted. Many women also feel that learning to read and write is not an appropriate activity for adults; it is something children should do. What is more, they feel that if they have managed all their lives being illiterate, what will they gain from it now?

In North Karnataka, the key affecting women is water scarcity and unemployment. If literacy drives are linked to these issues, then the chances of their taking root are far greater.

On the plus side, however, the overall attitude to women in this state is not as oppressive as is the case in North India. Women's mobility is not so severely curtailed, and the education of girls is not inherently prohibited by cultural norms. The male child preference operates only to the extent that parents link the family's future well-being and prospects with that of their sons, for whose education many sacrifices will be made - including doing without their labour. But if girls can be educated without jeopardising the family's survival needs, it will not be inherently opposed. Female infanticide and gross neglect of girl children are relative rarities in Karnataka, which has one of the top five male-female sex-ratios in the country.

The caste factor is also not as rigid in Karnataka as it used to be, and as it is in some other states. For instance, all communities and castes send their children to the Aanganwadi even if the worker is a Scheduled Caste woman. The problem of lower-caste children being forced to sit outside the main classroom has also gradually disappeared.

Considering the above factors, we believe that women in Karnataka are ready, both socially and culturally, for an input of the kind envisioned in this pilot programme.

A word may be added here regarding Kolar, the district adjacent to Mysore. Karnataka officials suggest this as a suitable fourth district, along with Raichur. Kolar shares a similar

profile to Mysore, except for the fact that a high percentage of its people speak Tamil, since Kolar is on the border of Karnataka and Tamilnadu, and the labour for the old gold mines of the district came from the latter state. Female literacy is even lower than in Mysore district. However, we were warned that Kolar has been a politically volatile area, difficult to administer and unpopular with the state government because of the pro-Tamil leanings of its population.

## GUJARAT

### Introduction:

Gujarat State presents a very paradoxical picture with regard to the status of women. While on the one hand it had the dubious distinction of having the highest female suicide rate in the country, and its epicentre, Ahmedabad district, has one of the lowest sex-ratios in the country (890 females per 1000 males), but it was also Gandhi's birthplace, and thousands of Gujarati women joined the Sarvodaya movement, which, for that time, was an act of rebellion.

One of the explanations offered for the poor status of women in Gujarat is that the prevailing ideology is that of patriarchal merchantilism. (Gujaratis are famous for their business acumen, but not for scholastic or academic achievements. As one cynic in the State told - : "In Gujarat only do you find pure, unadulterated capitalism and its attendant values. So if you want something to succeed here, it must prove to have money-making as an important objective!") The Gandhian movement did not seriously challenge these tendencies, but rather called for a "change of heart" and greater philanthropy. Even in the area of women's emancipation, the movement attacked only overt social evils like child marriage and sexual degradation of women, not their subjugation within the sacrosanct portals of marriage and family. At the same time, chastity, celibacy, and non-materialism were also advocated by the Gandhians, and many women chose this path-way out of the oppressive familiar roles that were demanded of them. But on the whole, it was only middle class women who joined the Gandhians in large numbers, and the movement as a whole does not seem to have made much impact on the lives of the poorest women.

The female literacy rate in Gujarat is 32%, compared to over 54% among men. Only the backward Panchmahals and Banaskantha districts, however, have female literacy rates below 20%...

the rest of the districts can boast of rates generally exceeding 30%.

But for the purpose of our pilot programme, there are two important inter-connected factors which will have considerable bearing on the programme. These are the recent political history of the state, and the caste and communal dynamics. Far from softening, the rigid caste-structure of the state, has further solidified in the last decade. These caste and communal tensions have climaxed in periodic violence, particularly in urban areas, during the anti-reservation stir (against the reservation of jobs and educational opportunities for members of the backward castes), and during the religious festivals of Muslims and Hindus. (Perhaps the worst part of the problem lies in the fact that in Gujarat your name alone divulges your caste and determines your place in the social structure.)

In turn, caste politics dominate the scene in the state. Thus, from having been one of the most politically stable and administratively efficient states in the country, Gujarat has become a hotbed of caste and communal violence, political interference at all levels of the administration, and a general nightmare for progressive elements.

All this has had the worst impact on the position of women. While the periodic upheavals affect women the most, the return to fundamentalism threatens to push women back in every sphere. The possibility of our pilot programme, which hopes to empower women through educational inputs to demand just and equitable development, not only for themselves but for the poor as a whole, would thus appear to have little chance of success under the current conditions prevailing in this state. ~~The rest of this state report must therefore be read in this context.~~

I. Response of the State Government:

We met with the Education Secretary Mr. Balakrishnan and Director of Adult Education, Mr. Shukla on the first day

and explained our mission. Their response was polite and correct, but not enthusiastic by many means. Mr. Balakrishnan is clearly an efficient and capable officer, but he evinced no particular interest in the programme, and did not indicate in any way that he saw this as an opportunity to achieve his own department's (presumable) goals. Rather his attitude was one of politeness; someone doing the needful in assisting the consultants from his ministry in Delhi. He did not venture any opinions of his own about the programme or its methodology; rather, he seemed keen to organise our visit well and fulfill our objectives by putting us in touch with the right people and going about the district selection quite methodically.

The meeting was fruitful, however, in that the Education Secretary gave us a number of names of institutions, individuals and voluntary organisations we could meet to discuss the proposed programme and test their potential for involvement.

The response of the state education department could therefore said to be superficially positive; but deeper down, we sensed a feeling of this being yet another of New Delhi's many schemes, and not to be taken too seriously at this stage. There was also a subtle undercurrent of scepticism. Beyond saying that "We certainly need a programme of education for women", no one seemed particularly interested or concerned by the women's question. In contrast to Karnataka, therefore, we left the official meetings somewhat down-hearted, as we had expected more enthusiasm in Gujarat than we in fact encountered.

The only bright note here was an impromptu meeting we had with the State Social Welfare Minister, Mrs. Sushilaben Sheth, who welcomed the scheme and seemed very enthusiastic about it. Sushilaben, who comes from Rajkot, was herself

an active voluntary worker in Rajkot, (her district), and seems to have a good deal of experience in women's welfare work.

## II. Existing Schemes:

### 1. Education:

One critical problem is the lack of information and publicity material in any language other than Gujarati. In the education department this proved a particular problem since after the first meeting, Mr. Balakrishnan was not available for further consultation, and had asked Mr. Shukla to help and liaise with us. Mr. Shukla never gave us the promised pamphlet of schemes run by the education department, although we asked for this on several occasions. Therefore, we are ignorant of the specific schemes and programmes run by the department.

However, we learnt something of the adult education programme in the state from Mrs. Ramaben Desai, who is the Director of the State Education Resource Centre situated in Gujarat Vidyapeeth (the university established by Gandhiji). The centre has been developing innovative approaches and materials for the adult literacy programme, especially in functional literacy for women. The focus here seems to be on starting not with literacy per se, but identifying the special problems faced by a group of women - such as non-receipt of minimum wages on public works or drought -

relief sites - and then establishing the role that literacy can play in strengthening these struggles. The literacy classes are started only after this, with suitable teaching-learning materials developed by the Centre.

This scheme, particularly if it uses the approach outlined by Mrs. Desai, seems to provide a promising foundation for our pilot programme. For the rest, it is impossible to comment without concrete information.

In the non-government sector, however, a network of "ashram-shalas" or residential schools run by various Gandhian organisations in Gujarat seem to have functioned very successfully, particularly in the tribal belts of southern Gujarat. Most of these schools were started in the thirties and forties, and maintained gender-parity in admissions. Although in the past they had to plead with parents to send their children, today demand for admissions into these schools is greater than the seats available. In these areas therefore, the literacy rate among adult women is relatively high; but apparently an anomalous situation has occurred where in a family the mother or grandmother may be literate, but the young girls are not. The deteriorating economic situation has apparently made it difficult for such families to send their daughters to school. Nevertheless, the old guard of these ashram-shalas presumably possess a good deal of skill and experience in mobilising women to participate in education.

2. Social Welfare Department:

We met with greater success in obtaining information from this department. The majority of schemes for women and children fall under the purview of what is called the "Directorate of Social Defence". Mrs. Divyaben Marwari, its Director, was most helpful in giving us both oral and written information (in English!). As in other states, the Directorate operates numerous schemes for poor and destitute women and children, including vocational training courses with stipends given to women attending them.



Among the important schemes of this department which could be utilised for the purpose of the pilot programme are:

- a. State-level and district-level Mahila Utkarsh Samitia (Women's Upliftment Committees) whose aim is "to bring about awareness among women and prepare grass-roots organisations to fight against social evils and atrocities."
- b. Support to Mahila Mandals (women's organisations) in villages and urban areas to train women in socio-economic activities. Voluntary organisations are also assisted for this purpose.
- c. Most important of all, the Gujarat State Women's Development Corporation was set up in 1981 to concentrate on the development of economic status of women in the state. After several false starts, the Corporation has finally swung into action, thanks largely to Dr. Subba Rao, under whose jurisdiction it falls. Mrs. Kusum Chauhan, an IAS officer, has recently been appointed the Managing Director. The objectives of the corporation are quite sweeping:
  - to promote employment opportunities for women;
  - to execute plans for the benefit of women and to coordinate with financial institutions for this purpose; and
  - to draw up model plans for investment and production to be undertaken by women.

Specifically, the Corporation provides the following services: bank loans for self-employment; training programmes in non-conventional skills like radio/transistor assembly/repair, electronics/machines, handicrafts, handloom textile weaving,

carpet making, etc; formation and development of women's cooperatives; production-cum-training centres; stipends for technical training; marketing support; low-cost cafeterias serving nutritious meals (Annapurna); generation of marketing centres; rehabilitation of unemployed women textile workers; and manufacture of consumer electronic equipment.

Mrs. Chauhan, the Managing Director of the Corporation, seemed anxious to collaborate with the pilot programme in any way possible - particularly by extending the corporation's support in the pilot programme districts.

- d. The Social Defence Directorate also appears to work closely with the Social Welfare Advisory Board of Gujarat State, which in turn support various women's welfare and development activities undertaken by voluntary organisations and mahila mandals. The SWAB also sponsors vocational training programme for women in rural areas. We were told that Mrs. Vasuben Bhat, Chairperson of the Board, is a dedicated and energetic individual, seriously concerned with women's problems, but were unsuccessful in arranging a meeting with her.
- e. The Secretary Social Welfare, expressed the possibility of cooperating with this programme.

3. Rural Development Department:

Unfortunately, we were unable to meet the Secretary of this Department, or obtain much information about their programmes. However, Prof. Anil Bhatt of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, who has been involved in several studies of rural development programmes in the state, informed us that all major programmes like IRDP, NREP, DWCRA, etc., were operating.

in Gujarat, but with indifferent success. And as always, the programmes were least effective in the most backward districts where they were needed most. Other non-government activists and academics warned us, however that coordination between the various departments was non-existent at village, block and district level, so that any programme which was based on such coordination was doomed to failure. This must therefore be borne in mind.

### III. District Selection:

After elaborating the criteria for selection of districts to the Education Secretary, Social Welfare Secretary and their officers, the usual process of selection began. This was, incidentally the only part of our meetings with these officials which became somewhat animated.

As in Karnataka, we were first made to understand the three different regions of Gujarat: viz., Gujarat, or the eastern part of the State, and Saurashtra and Kutch in the west. Gujarat, comprising Ahmedabad, Kheda, Baroda, Panchmahals, Bharuch, Surat, Valsad and Danga Districts, is the relatively better developed part of the state, most of which was under the British administration in colonial times (barring Baroda, governed by the enlightened Gaekwad rulers). Saurashtra/Kutch, which includes Jamnagar, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Bhavnagar, Amreli, Junagadh, Kutch, Banas Kantha, Sabar Kantha, and Mehsana districts, is the relatively backward part of the state. More important, the two regions are distinctly different in their social and cultural history and environment. For example, of the 600-odd princely states which existed in India prior to 1947, over 200 were from the Saurashtra region alone!

Educational levels tend to be higher in the Gujarat region than in Saurashtra, and the majority of voluntary organisations are also located in the former. Considering the criteria for

selection of districts for the pilot programme, it was decided that there should be two districts from Saurashtra and one from Gujarat. The districts/initially shortlisted for selection were: Baroda or Surat; Banaskantha or Panchmahals; and Rajkot. Finally, Baroda, Banaskantha and Rajkot were selected and their profiles are presented below:

1. Baroda District:

This is the advanced district among those selected, and the one in which there is a better chance of success. Although the female literacy rate is reasonably high, (over 37%), there are many tribal belts in the district where women's literacy is very low, and which are also extremely backward.

Baroda (or Vadodara) district and the city are rich in voluntary and other institutions who can provide their skills and support to the programme: a host of people from the Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda; "Antar Bharati" and Vikas Jyot, two good women's organisations; and Baroda's closeness to Ahmedabad (only three hours by road) means the logistics of involving Ahmedabad-based groups, individuals and institutions are simpler. The presence of these resource persons and institutions would also facilitate the district level planning, training and implementation of the programme.

2. Rajkot:

Rajkot is again the most developed district in the Saurashtra belt, with a high female literacy of nearly 39%, but with very backward belts. According to the education secretary, Rajkot has a number of colleges and teacher training centre, in addition to voluntary organisations with an emphasis

on women such as the Kanta Stree Vikas (formerly headed by the now Minister of Social Welfare, Mrs. Sushilaben Sheth) and Lok Bharti, headed by Manubai Pancholi.

Once again, Rajkot was included because of the chance of successfully fielding the methodology here rather than any innate educational backwardness of the district.

3. Banaskantha:

This is not only the most educationally backward district in the state (female literacy rate of only 11%), but also the most underdeveloped. Banaskantha is apparently a veritable desert, literally and metaphorically. Poverty levels are so high that a large proportion of the population migrate for employment on a seasonal basis. With the drought of the last three years continuing, water is the most precious commodity in Banaskantha. People are so desperate for water that they dig wells and consume even the saline, brackish groundwater which is characteristic of the district.

The development infrastructure is almost non-existent, and only two voluntary organisations have ventured into the area : Balaram Sagan Kshetra Samiti, headed by Vimlaben Mehta; and Nutan Bharati. Of the two, the former apparently closed down when Mrs. Mehta retired after 30 years' work, having made little headway. The latter organisation is not doing very much, from what we could gather.

Banaskantha is therefore the most difficult and challenging district in Gujarat, but one in which the rewards will also be the greatest. Finally, the implementation of the Dutch Water Project in this area should contribute a

good deal towards reducing the water-fetching burden on women, releasing them to some extent for the type of activities which may be organised in the pilot programme.

IV. Observations :

It should be obvious by this point that we are not very hopeful for the success of this pilot programme in Gujarat state. We strongly recommend that only one, or at the most two districts be taken up in Gujarat initially, and not three districts as planned. Since conditions are so much more positive in Karnataka, it would be more fruitful to allot another district to that state, rather than risk uninspired implementation in Gujarat.

The reasons for our gaining this impression were detailed in the introduction to this section, but may be reiterated here.

1. The caste factor is likely to play a much bigger role in the success or failure of this project than it will in Karnataka. The structure and methodology will have to take this factor into account. For instance, if we plan to train the additional school-teacher specified under Operation Blackboard to concentrate on mobilising village women and young girls for literacy, then the caste and community of this worker is likely to be critical. One may have to formulate an approach in which not one but several workers from different groups are trained for this work at village level. Similarly, the child-care support service considered necessary to release women's time for relevant education may also have to be provided to different groups at different locations. The modalities of reaching women across

caste barriers will have to be worked out by the teams involved in state and district level detailed planning exercises, but there are some of the key issues they will have to confront.

2. We were not able to locate a single truly dynamic official to whom this exciting and innovative programme appealed. Leadership for the programme may therefore have to be brought in from elsewhere in the country, or from the non-government sector on deputation.
3. There is a dearth of women officers in the state bureaucracy. This is not necessarily a severe handicap, since committed men could possibly do the job as well; but the absence of both makes for a general vacuum within government and administrative circles which may prove a stumbling block to the overall effort. This can only be overcome by involving greater numbers of people from outside government.
4. Barring a few isolated agencies, the voluntary sector itself in Gujarat has not generated too many groups committed to women's development issues in a specific way. Barring SEWA (which is not in a position to provide active leadership to this programme) and AWAG (Ahmadabad Women's Action Group - an organisation singularly unimpressive, lacking clarity of perspective and action), there do not appear to be any other radical women's organisations with field experience. Most of the other women's agencies are immersed in the welfare approach, within the bounds of the middle class ideal of womanhood.

The ideological and creative fuel for this pilot programme will therefore have to come from other progressive grass-roots organisations and individuals. However, the cynicism or inhibitions of the latter (especially regarding working with a Government programme) will have to be overcome first before their participation can become a reality.

5. The acute politicization of the administrative machinery at all levels in Gujarat - and the reports we received that it is virtually paralysed or totally under the control of local power groups in the districts - is another factor which will have to be born in mind when designing this pilot programme for the state.

It almost appears as if the only way to make work in Gujarat is in fact to construct a virtual parallel structures which works outside - if alongside the other government programmes. This was also the opinion of a number of the experts we spoke to in Ahmedabad and Baroda in this connection.

In summary, the conditions in the state do not augur well for the pilot programme. It is for this reasons that we suggest taking up only one district in Gujarat initially, observing the problems that arise, and only then venturing to invest in more areas. Otherwise, we genuinely fear that the entire programme will simply flounder and waste precious resources which may be far better invested in a state like Karnataka, where the situation is far more promising.



## Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh the most populous state in India, is marked by sharp regional differences. As one of the officials in UP remarked "Planning for a district from Lucknow is almost like planning for a State from New Delhi". Each district is vast and within the district, the blocks are dissimilar.

There are four distinct regions in U.P. Within Western UP, there are two regions. The Kumaon-Garhwal area in the Western Himalayan region and the Meerut-Agra-Rohilkhand area in the trans-gangetic plains. Eastern U.P. can also be divided into two specific regions - the Oudh-Jhansi-Banda area popularly referred to as Bundelkhand, and the Banaras - Gorakpur - Baharaich region inclusive of the Terai belt. The Eastern U.P. area falls in the lower Gangetic plains.

U.P. is almost like a microcosm of India, for economic development has been uneven. Literacy rates are low - Male - 38.78%, Female-14.04%. There are over twelve districts where the female literacy rate is below 10%. In fact there is no one to one correlation between economic development and female literacy rates. In agriculturally developed areas of Western U.P. and the Terai region, there are pockets which are educationally extremely backward. Religion, caste, culture and lack of proper infrastructural facilities for education, perhaps account for the low female literacy rates.

Almost all the schemes and projects designed for poor women and children by the central government are being implemented in U.P. It is again one of the few states to have appointed a Director - New Education Policy.

At the outset it may seem as if U.P. is the "ideal" ground for centrally initiated programmes, for the State

government expressed a positive desire to launch this programme. Unlike Karnataka and Gujarat, where the State government officials were cautious and wanted to ensure that no additional financial burden will fall on their State, the U.P. officials expressed no such anxiety. The State government was very positive about this programme, and they organised a series of meetings to discuss same. But we were cautioned by the officials that executing a programme in a politically volatile environment is not easy. In fact, the state bureaucracy is so gigantic and regionally differentiated, that sheer administrative coordination takes up all the time and energy. Thus, even if the government is willing to launch a programme for women, that does not guarantee smooth administrative cooperation at all levels.

However U.P. seems to have developed a sophisticated system of information collection and dissemination. The Rural Development and Panchayati Raj department is up to date on the progress of various schemes and programmes. Unlike Gujarat, in U.P. we had access to quantitative data - especially on block wise literacy rates. But again, unlike the other two states, we could not get a feel of the operational problems, or find out the impact of selected programmes like the ICDS and DWCRA. The experience of such programmes helped us pick up a wide variety of qualitative information in Karnataka. It also helped us in assessing the flexibility of the local administration and its willingness to work with non-governmental groups and institutions.

Thus we left U.P. with a mixed feeling. On the one hand the officials were extremely cooperative; they had scheduled a lot of meetings. They seemed to be in a hurry to select the districts and blocks and above all appoint various committees to launch the programme.

On the other hand, we did not get any information on the actual operational problems in the existing programmes for women and children; the successes and pitfalls on the non-formal and adult education programmes and the specific interventions planned under the new policy on education.

Voluntary groups working with the government or associated with the government could be a source of information. Barring the Literacy House, most other voluntary groups do not have a significant presence in Lucknow. Also we were so busy with meetings, that we had hardly any opportunity to have informal discussions with government officials.

Nevertheless, there are many good voluntary groups in U.P., and the success of this programme will hinge on the capacity of the government to involve such groups.

#### Response of the State Government

The state government officials expressed a keen interest in the pilot programme. They had translated and circulated the note sent to them by the Central Government. The Secretary Education, Mr. Jagdish Pant, convened a series of meetings with senior officials from the departments of Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

While they had clearly understood and appreciated the need to launch a programme for women's education and empowerment; they did not evince much interest in the philosophy and the approach. However, Mr. Jagdish Pant and Mr. R.S. Tolia (Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj) understood the philosophical tenets and the structural ramifications. We could not communicate the same to other officials, because the meetings were structured and task oriented. The officials

seemed to be in a hurry to select the districts, block and appoint various committees.

### DISTRICT SELECTION

On July 29th, a meeting of senior officials from the three departments was convened to discuss both the criteria of district selection, as also the actual selection. After a lively debate, the Secretary Education announced the need to choose one district from each of the four regions. The criteria for selection were, (a) low female literacy rates - i.e. less than 10% and (b) availability of other government inputs. The officials felt that a pilot programme should be launched in a representative district - so that its experience could be generalised to the entire area.

The following districts were selected :

1. BAHARAICH - with a female literacy rate of 5.23%  
and male literacy rate of 24.35%
2. BANDA - with a female literacy rate of 8.61%  
and male literacy rate of 35.99%
3. RAMPUR - with a female literacy rate of 8.88%  
and male literacy rate of 39%
4. TEHRI-GARHWAL - with a female literacy rate of 9.42%  
and male literacy rate of 47.99%

(As of the 1981 Census)

This was followed by a meeting of District Education officer's of the selected districts on July 2, 1987. This meeting was also tightly structured around specific tasks. The main aim was to choose the block in which the programme was to be launched. The selection of the blocks was also done on the same criteria.

While we tried to explain time and again that this was not really necessary at this stage, most of the officials expressed the need to take some "concrete steps", U.P. administration, we were informed, should be given specific

tasks.

After the selection of blocks, the meeting got down to choosing the various committees at all levels. The entire process was well beyond our expectations and control. Thus this meeting announced the setting up of a "State Standing Committee", "State Coordination Committee" (to ensure inter-departmental coordination) "District working Committee", and so forth. Members were also nominated to each of the committees.

This was in fact the essence of the U.P. government response. They were enthusiastic and wanted to take all the administrative decisions, without desiring to discuss the aims and objectives of such a programme or the approach. In fact, this is precisely what we should guard against in such a programme. The essence of this approach is to evolve a participatory decision making process - after internalising the main tenets of the programme. A task oriented approach to women's empowerment and education will not work. Thus in U.P. the National Resource Group and the State Steering Committee will have to communicate the basic concept of such a programme. This is perhaps the most formidable challenge before the government.

However, our meeting with the project officers of the DWCRA programme highlighted this dilemma. Mr. R.S. Tolia has been making a sincere effort to regularly monitor the rural development programmes. Under the TRYSEM scheme, rural women are being trained for many vocations like Amber - Charkha, bee-keeping, weaving etc. The project officers felt that such a target oriented exercise was meaningless unless the government organised a marketing network. Mere training does not actually help women economically - and thus the programme in reality fails to take off. They emphasised the need to conduct market surveys to explore the local market - before deciding upon the

actual skill or vocation. Mr. Tolia expressed his eagerness to link up with a women's education programme.

Our meeting with the Director of the U.P. Social Welfare Board - Mrs. Sunita N. Kumar, was very informative. The Board is seriously evaluating its programmes, and the Director has been visiting the voluntary agencies supported by it. The Board officials also assured us that they will not only cooperate with this programme, but help organise support services like child care and condensed courses. They emphasised the need to inform and educate rural women about the schemes designed for them.

Thus , the state government was very positive about this programme in general. However, we could not communicate the basic methodology - and therefore we got no substantive response on the primary thrust of this programme.

#### DISTRICT PROFILES

**BAHARAICH :** This is one of the border districts in the Terai region. During our visit to Baharaich town, we had an opportunity to meet the officials - again in a meeting situation.

The block selected for this programme is Mahipura - where the female literacy rate is 2.6% as apposed to the district average of 5.23%. This is a tribal area. In the Tharu tribe, we were informed, the women have a high social status. They participate in most of the decision making processes. But literacy rates is very low, and in some villages there may not be even one literate woman. The Social Welfare Board runs a few creches here, and they expressed their willingness to start more when this programme is launched. The District Collector, Dr. Om Prakash, felt that an education programme could be very successful here - because the Tharu women are not socio-

culturally oppressed. They are the heads of their households and thus participate in the village panchayat. However, they are very poor and live far below the poverty line.

The ICDS programme have a few aanganwadi centres and the Netherlands water programme is to be launched shortly. Voluntary group are almost non-existent in this region and the educational infrastructive is average. There is one women's college in Baharaich town.

RAMPUR - It falls in an economically prosperous region, with a large Muslim population. The district is educationally backward. The block selected was Sayeednagar where the female literacy rate is a dismal .89% , as against the district average of 8.88%. Religious and cultural factors have possibly posed a serious challenge to expanding literacy and education in this district, particularly for women.

Very few government programmes are running in this district, and there are hardly any voluntary groups working with women.

However, being close to Almora ~~and Haldhari~~ - where there are good womens groups <sup>and</sup> social activists groups ~~and a good vocational training centre~~ - support structures could be organised.

Being a predominantly Muslim block, the experience of working in such an area could be very valuable to U.P. as a whole. Thus, even though it may pose a challenge - this district should be tried out in a pilot programme. The problems of such minority communities are very specific - and thus any effort will be an enriching experience.

TEHRI - GARHWAL -

This hill district adjoins Dehradun - which has

a large presence of good voluntary groups and educational institutions. ~~The Chipko Andolan group, could provide a good support structure.~~ However, in this district, some communities practice a poly-androus marriage system called Pandav-Pratha. Unfortunately, in this oppressive social system, a woman is married to all the brothers in a family, and these women are linked to the prostitution chain. Many women of the reproductive age group are temporary migrants to urban areas. Thus, this may pose a challenge to this programme - similar to the Devdasi (Yellamma) system in some parts of Karnataka. Women are socially oppressed, both within the family and in this prostitution chain.

The block selected is Jaunpur where the female literacy rate is around 4% (approximately) as against the district average of 9.42%. However, the fact that it is close to Dehradun, ensures good support structures from voluntary groups. The Netherlands water programme is also to be launched shortly.

BANDA - This falls in the southern tip of Eastern U.P. This is a draught prove area, and thus any women's education programme should be preceeded by a water programme. The ICDS and DWCRA programmes have been launched here. There are a few good voluntary groups also.

The Manikpur block selected has a female literacy rate of 2% as against the district average of 8.61%. The Social Welfare board run a few creches in this block, and the DWCRA programme has also been functioning well.

As is evident, we could not get much information about the districts - even though the meetings were geared to selecting them. Apart from quantitative data on literacy rates, we got very little information on government programmes running



in the area. We were however informed that almost all the central government initiated schemes and programmes are present in U.P.

The Literacy House, Lucknow has done very good work in the field of adult and non-formal education. They have published special teaching materials for almost all the regions of U.P. Mrs. Trivedi, who is in charge of women's education was at home with the philosophy and approach of this programme, and thus could be a great asset.

CHAPTER - IV

RECOMMENDATIONS - SEQUENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION

The sections above have outlined the philosophical tenets of the programme, the need to have an innovative training component for programme functionaries at all levels, and the organisational structure through which this programme could be implemented. Women's equality, empowerment and education is one of the most formidable tasks before the government, social activists and voluntary groups. Cultural and social attitudes; regional, community, caste and religious taboos; and above all the position of women within the family have defied the most innovative programmes. Thus if this venture is to make a dent, its implementation should be closely monitored. It should proceed in stages, so that we do not lose sight of basic objectives. This programme should on the one hand adhere to the basic principles, aims, objectives, and on the other hand it should be flexible enough to evolve strategies suited to the area. The plan itself must not be rigid, and institutional mechanisms should be provided to permit a planning - reflection - evaluation - change cycle.

This programme should thus be implemented in stages, so that the structures created are in tune with the participatory planning process to be inbuilt into the programme. The values the programme seeks to encourage must be internalised by the programme functionaries. The success of any such venture can be ensured only if the individuals identified to work in the programme are highly motivated and committed.

The sequence of implementation should thus follow the stages outlined.

STAGE I PREPARATORY STAGE. (6 - 9 months)

This is perhaps the most difficult stage of the programme. The main thrust of this stage is to (a) communicate the basic

tenets to the programme functionaries and those involved with the programme at all levels, (especially Govt. officials in various departments, social activists working in the area etc.)  
(b) To set up institutional mechanisms to launch the programme.

The first stage of the programme should thus aim to lay a solid foundation. This stage involves the following steps:

A. THE NATIONAL RESOURCE GROUP should be set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The MHRD should organise a series of workshops/meetings in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Lucknow to communicate the decision of the Government about the launching of this programme. These meetings/workshops should involve Government officials from the Dept. of Education, Social Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, voluntary groups working in the field of education or with women; social activists, and other individuals from Universities, Research Groups, Training Institutions etc. The main tenets of the programme should be spelt out, followed by a discussion. These workshops/meetings could help identify people who could work for or with the programme.

The NATIONAL RESOURCE GROUP should be constituted, and all subsequent steps should be taken by it. (~~The NRG should have a few full time members drawn from the Administrative Services or specially appointed for this programme~~) A Member-Secretary could be the overall administrative coordinator. Some members could be involved as consultants, ex-officio members, or honorary consultants.

B. A good media person, or group should be appointed by the NRG to produce a series of audio-visual programmes. The ramifications of this programme have to be effectively communicated to programme functionaries at all levels. The programme produced should draw upon the experience of other innovative ventures initiated by the government and by voluntary groups.

In our fields visits to Karnhartaka, Gujarat and UP - the main problem we faced was one of effective communication. Most people we met had been schooled in the dominant development paradigm with all its limitations and prejudices. They could thus not comprehend the ramifications of a planned intervention to empower and educate women so as to make them equal partners in the development process.

Thus a good audio-visual programme that draws upon the experience of such positive interventions, will help break the barrier of communication. However, only a group that is sensitive to rural reality, and has had worked with or on rural women should be entrusted with this task viz., the Satellite TV experiment in Gujarat had produced some excellent programmes for rural women. Uninitiated urban groups may be technically more competent and modernised, but may not necessarily comprehend the ramifications of an essentially rural experiment.

- C. A STATE STEERING COMMITTEE should be set up by the NRG in consultation with State Government, under chairpersonship of the Education Secretary.

The SSC should then be entrusted with the task of launching the programme at the State level. (See chapter IV an Organizational Structure).

1. The SSC could organise a series of State and District level workshops to announce and discuss the launching of this programme. The SSC should involve all concerned departments and individuals in these workshops and meetings. An outlined above, these meeting could help the SSC identify potential programme functionaries and support structures.
2. The SSC should identify Institutions or voluntary groups that have the potential to work as the DIET or the

ERDA

~~IBARA~~. Where such institutions do not exist, the SSC should try to create them, by identifying individuals who could start them.

3. The SSC should identify resource persons, who could constitute the core group of trainers. As has been explained in Chapter I - On Training - programme ?  
functionaries at all levels have to be socialised into the ~~philosophical~~ <sup>basic principles</sup> tenets of this venture. A special orientation programme should be organised for this core group of trainers. These trainers could be drawn from any part of the country, and the NRG should help the SSC to identify such resource persons.

Thus, Stage One will in fact lay the foundation, and set the ball rolling.

STAGE II PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND PROGRAMME LAUNCHING -

(9-12 mts)

This stage will effectively launch the programme at the state level. It will involve the following steps.

- A. The first step will be to set up the institutional support structures and train the programme initiators. These training programmes could be called orientation sessions, where the initiators at various levels are brought together in integrated encounters. The necessity of such a vertical orientation has been discussed in the section on Training in Chapter I. The first step in this stage will involve -
  - a. Establishing the DIET and the ~~IBARA~~ <sup>ERDA</sup>.
  - b. Vertical orientation sessions for programme functionaries, i.e. Programme Directors, DIET and ~~IBARA~~ <sup>ERDA</sup> members.
  - c. Designing and initiating the process of creating the DWEDC and other relevant support services.

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- B. Organising a series of block level and village level meetings to announce the launching of the programme and utilising this form to identify potential programme functionaries.
- C. Setting up the DWEDC, and ensuring the creation or effective functioning of support services like child care and other development inputs. The first step towards initiating this programme at the village level is to ensure the creation of support services. Development issues have to be given priority, especially availability of drinking water and the effective implementation of relevant rural development and social welfare schemes. For example, for a drought prone area, some rural drought relief work should be started, if it does not already exist.

The chief responsibility of the DWEDC is to ensure support services.

- C. Set up the AREA PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE AND ~~APPOINT THE~~ PROGRAMME DIRECTOR. The first task of the APIC should be to conduct a situational analysis.

. Local women or education workers could be involved in conducting this analysis. This should be the first step towards initiating a participatory planning process.

- D. Choice of specific strategies to be used in a given village, should be evolved by the APIC through a participatory planning process. However, some strategic interventions are vital for the success of this programme. Thus the APIC should -

- 1. organise an intensive training programme to upgrade the educational skills of the village school teachers. Wherever there is a possibility under the operation

The APIA should draw up the detailed sequence of implementation. On the basis of all this data and financial estimates, the SSC should draw up a detail programme outline. This will then serve as the document for the State concerned.

Thus this step is perhaps the most vital step, which will determine the course of the programme. The exact time-frame for each stage should be identified by the concerned body, and this should be communicated to the SSC and the NRG.

- E. The Evaluation and Monitoring System should proceed simultaneously. As spelt out in the section on E & M (Chapter I ), this process should not be considered a post-facto activity, but an ongoing activity, and the E&M sub-group in the ~~IDARA~~<sup>ERDA</sup> should work out the processes very clearly, and communicate them to the SSC and the NRG.

On the basis of all this information the NRG will draft a detailed programme outline and the sequence of implementation.

### STAGE III

Once the ball has been set in motion, each District will launch the programme as and when it is ready, for there should be no artificial barriers of a predetermined time frame. Thus Stage III may start at different points of time for different districts and within a district for different intervention strategies. The tasks of this stage will be determined by the relevant bodies.

Blackboard Scheme to appoint additional women school teachers, such women should also be identify and trained;

2. the infrastructural facilities of the village school should be upgraded. The POA of the Education Policy, stresses the need to improve the facilities available in village schools, and the POA should be implemented in coordination with the District Education Department;
3. non-formal education and adult education instructors should be trained similarly, and they should be put in direct contact with the DIET and the IDARA, so that they can draw upon the resources of these institutions;
4. in all these training programmes, there should be a conscious effort to sensitize functionaries to developmental and women's issues - i.e. these training programmes should be in keeping with the training philosophy.

The process of identifying other strategies may take time, as the real needs and desires of the beneficiaries must be understood and appreciated in active consultation with them. A participatory planning process basically seeks to involve women in determining specific intervention strategies. The alternative empowerment strategies outlined in this Report, and others identified by the programme functionaries, should be discussed with the women. The APIA should draw upon the resources of the IDARA and other trainers to help initiate this planning process. The APIA should then communicate these decisions to the DWEDC and the SSC. The SSC should then draw up the detailed programme intervention strategies and make the necessary financial allocations.