

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL
BOARD FOR SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN HELD ON 30.10.2002**

The 24th meeting of the Project Approval Board for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was held at Patna under the Chairmanship of Shri S.C. Tripathi, Secretary, Elementary Education & Literacy on 30.10.02. A list of participants is annexed.

Item No.1: Consideration of Annual Plans 2002-2003 of Bihar.

1.1 Secretary to Government of India, Elementary Education & Literacy, while welcoming the members, wanted to know about the reasons for the poor literacy and education indicators in the State and the strategies being proposed to improve the situation. SPD, Bihar made a presentation highlighting the educational scenario in the State and the steps being proposed. Some of the important points made were:

- The literacy rate in the State is 47.53% with the female literacy being only 33.57%. In the last decade the literacy growth has been only 10.04% against the national average of 13.84%. While the DPEP districts witnessed a growth of 10.90%, the growth for non-DPEP districts was only 9.88%. Secretary (EE&L) wanted to know the reason for such a minor difference between the DPEP and the non-DPEP districts. SPD explained that DPEP districts were initially the less literate districts, and also that the programme had been in operation only for two years before the Census was taken.
- The State has 37 districts, 533 blocks, 8471 Panchayats and 43307 villages. Generally the Panchayats would have had a population of 5000-7500.
- The total 6-14 age-group population is 1,76,63,024, of which 1,31,60,982 are enrolled in either Govt or private schools. The enrolment in Govt schools only is 1,17,83,257. The total number of children out-of-school are 45,02,042, of which 22,99,516 are girls.
- The drop-out rate was 58.95 for Class I-V and 27.26 for Class VI to VIII. The major drop-outs were occurring after Class I, Class V and Class VI. The major reasons for drop-outs are economic constraints (25%), wage employment (12%) and domestic work (21%).
- There were totally 41,521 primary schools and 9,859 upper primary schools, with the Primary to Upper Primary ratio being 4:1. There were many panchayats not having a single upper primary school.
- Of the total 73,603 habitations, 18,135 were uncovered of which 13,848 qualified for EGS centres. The State has taken a policy to have only EGS centres and not new primary schools in these habitations.
- The infrastructure in the existing schools is very poor. 6% of the schools do not have buildings, while 34% do not have drinking water facility and 82% do not have toilets. Even in DPEP districts, 70% of the schools do not have furniture and 15% blackboards. JS (EE) wanted to know why the DPEP districts do not have any blackboards. SPD replied that under DPEP portable blackboards were given to many schools, which have not been counted as blackboards in the data. Secretary (EE&L) directed that all VECs should be asked to provide for blackboards under the school grant if they are not already available in the schools.
- Out of the total 1,70,905 sanctioned posts of teachers in the schools, 215 (35,671) are vacant. The PTR is 69:1 if sanctioned posts are taken into account and 87:1 if the actual teacher numbers are taken. Even in DPEP districts, 20% schools are one teacher schools. The State is taking steps to keep the vacancies in abeyance and recruit Shiksha Mitrs

instead through panchayats as teachers. 47000 Shiksha Mitrs are likely to be employed in the next few months.

- Around 1.68 lakh children in the 6-14 age population have special needs
- Out of the 78,72,785 children in the 3-6 age-group population, 31% are covered under ICDS and ECCE component of DPEP. Out of the 533 CD Blocks, only 233 are covered under the ICDS. Secretary (EE&L) desired that the State should take special measures under the innovative head of SSA for providing improved Early Childhood Care and Education. The State may also think of a special project for this age-group.
- Planning has been done based on the Household survey conducted in 2001, with State and District level Planning teams formed for the purpose. Diagnostic study were conducted in all the 17 non-DPEP districts, findings of which were used for planning

1.2 Secretary (EE&L) stated that seeing the magnitude of problem projected by the State, there should be a special focus by the Planning Commission on the State, especially for improving the infrastructure. The Planning Commission may be requested to include this item during the discussion with the State on the Annual Plans. Director, Planning Commission stated that a special package is being developed for Bihar after bifurcation and education may also be included in the special package.

1.3 JS (EE) wanted to know the reasons of the OB money for TLE being unutilised in the State. Director, Primary Education explained that in the first year a vigilance case had been filed against certain procurement, which had led to stoppage of further activities. Now the process has been restarted and the list of TLE equipment has been finalised. They are now awaiting the approval of Finance department

1.4 Secretary (EE&L) wanted to know about the status of VECs in the State. It was explained by the SPD that the State has passed an Act constituting the VSS (Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti). Of the 55000 schools, VECs have been constituted in 30000 schools under the new Act. In other schools, VECs are already existing under the BEP programme and would be replaced by VSSs under the new Act as and when their terms lapse. The VSS consists of 15 members, of which 33% should be women and 33% SC/ST. Two members should be from the Panchayat and at least 9 of the members should be parents. President and Secretary are elected by the VSS members themselves. The Head-master is an ex-officio member of the VSS. Among other responsibilities, VSSs are also responsible for checking absenteeism in the schools. They pay the salary to the teachers and they are empowered to suspend the teachers. They also sanction casual leaves to the Head Master.

1.5 Dr. A.A.C.Lal of Ed Cil on behalf of the appraisal team made the following points:

- Since the time was less only desk appraisal of Annual Plan has been done. However, the team had visited the State in the previous year.
- The contribution of VEC in the planning process does not come out in the plans. No major differences have been seen in the different district plans, indicating a central input in the process.
- Data for transition rate from primary to upper primary was not available which made it difficult to arrive at the requirement of upper primary schools.
- Even large villages in the State have no schools, but the State has proposed only EGS centres even for the large villages. It would be better if the State has one school instead of 3-4 EGS centres.

- Teachers have not been appointed in the State for a long time leading to a very bad PTR scenario in the State.
- No State Component Plan has been prepared, which would affect many of the interventions at the district level, especially relating to quality.
- Quality interventions for upper primary have not been highlighted. Dr. Zaidi of NIEPA also wanted to know on the State's plan for restructuring of BRCs to take care of upper primary interventions.
- Not much effort has been visible towards institutional reform as envisaged under SSA.

1.6 The SPD in his reply on the observations of the appraisal team made the following points:

- The planning has been a grassroots planning only and the VSSs had been actively involved in the planning process. Each habitation has a separate plan prepared under SSA. Secretary (EE&L) directed that the appraisal team may visit the village and check this point with the VSS at the time of appraisal of the perspective plan. SPD clarified that each VSS has a Bal Panji, which has details of out of school children, and each VSS member has been given the responsibility of getting these children to school.
- The State is appointing 47000 Shiksha Mitrs, which would improve the PTR to some extent. The academic qualification of these parateachers is same as that of teachers, i.e. matriculate for primary and graduate for upper primary.
- The State is preparing the State Component Plan, which would be submitted to the Govt of India soon.
- The District Plans have provided for education of Muslim children in districts where the minority population is high.
- Since SSA proposes BRCs at CD block level the State, would establish additional BRCs at CD block level instead of educational blocks, which would provide for additional personnel for upper primary intervention.
- The issue of EGS centres is a policy issue. The State Secretary stated that the State would be willing to re-examine this policy if felt necessary.

1.7 Secretary (EE&L) directed that these Shiksha Mitrs should be given such training every year so that they acquire the professional qualification over a period of time. This can be discussed by the State Government with NCTE. Vice Chairman NCTE stated that the teacher training institutes are defunct in the State and there are only 21 institutions with an annual intake of 11000 that are recognized. Of the 25 DIETs, only 6 DIETS have received NCTE recognition. Secretary stated that the State should take steps to get DIETs established in all districts using GOI funds and ensure that these are recognised by NCTE. The state can also talk to IGNOU and NCTE regarding the distance education programme for training untrained teachers on the pattern of North-east. Also State should examine changing the qualification norms to plus two instead of matriculate, in line with NCTE guidelines. In the meanwhile the State may talk with NCTE for a transition period to the new norms, so that SSA funds could be used for funding the salary of these teachers.

1.8 Based on the plans prepared, remarks of the appraisal team and discussions thereon, following decisions were taken regarding the Annual Plans of both DPEP and non-DPEP districts of 2002-03:

- i) No new primary schools were proposed by the State. 547 upper primary schools were approved through upgradation of primary schools, along with TLE in non-DPEP

districts and 946 such schools in DPEP districts. For these schools, one headmaster and two teachers were also approved. However, for purpose of costing for teachers' salary the salary of Shiksha Mitrs were only taken into account. If the State appointed regular teachers in place of Shiksha Mitra it could come with a proposal for additional allocation corresponding to the salary of a regular teacher.

- ii) TLE grant for 2270 uncovered upper primary school in non-DPEP districts and 1908 schools in DPEP districts was approved with the condition that the State should certify that these schools were not covered under Operation Blackboard.
- iii) School grant and teacher grants were approved as per the recommendation of the appraisal team. If the State appointed additional teachers in the period, they could send proposals for teachers grant which would be processed on file
- iv) 13272 additional teachers for non-DPEP districts were approved for primary and upper primary. The costing for this would be done at the salary of Shiksha Mitrs, and if the State recruits regular teachers against this post then they could request for additional amount later. No additional teachers were approved for DPEP districts because the plans did not contain details of sanctioned posts for upper primary separately.
- v) EGS centres were allowed for 4088 habitations in non-DPEP districts. Other EGS & AIE interventions were approved as per the recommendation of the appraisal team. Release against these items would be only on the receipt of list of habitations and detailed plan for implementing the same. EGS & AIE interventions in DPEP districts could be taken up under DPEP.
- vi) In-service teacher training for 66613 teachers in non-DPEP districts and 5587 in DPEP districts, 2414 untrained teachers in non-DPEP districts and orientation training for 31694 new teachers in non-DPEP districts and 20658 new teachers in DPEP districts was approved.
- vii) Community training was approved for 8 persons per village, amounting to 156416 members in non-DPEP districts was approved. In DPEP district this training could be taken up under DPEP
- viii) Additional amount for ECCE under innovative activity, from that proposed by the appraisal team within the overall limit of Rs 50 lakhs per district for all innovative activities put together.
- ix) The proposals regarding R&E grant, maintenance grant, free text books (for Class I-VIII in non-DPEP and Class VI-VIII in DPEP districts), Management cost (subject to 6% ceiling) and civil works (subject to 33% ceiling), IED, BRC, CRC, etc were approved as per recommendations of the appraisal team.
- x) Based on the proposal of the State Government and the recommendations of the Appraisal Team thereon, a total Annual Plan 2002-03 for an amount of Rs 6053.33 lakhs was approved as per details given in Annex I (for DPEP districts) and for Rs 17600.59 lakhs as per details in Annex II (for non-DPEP districts).
- xi) Only an amount of Rs 4616.31 lakhs was approved as spillover activity out of the plan approved in 2002-03 as per details given in Annex III.
- xii) It was directed that the State should also satisfy the following conditions:
 - (a) The State Government should give a written commitment for meeting its share of the SSA outlay.

- (b) First instalment of the State share should also be released to the Society within one month of the release of Central share to the State Government.
- (c) At least 50% of the teachers recruited should be female.
- (d) Teachers appointed against posts created through SSA funds should be made accountable to the VEC for at least salary payment. The latter would monitor the attendance before releasing the salary.
- (e) VECs or equivalent bodies should be constituted and accounts opened to incur expenditure under teachers grant, civil works, maintenance grants, school grants and other such expenditure which has to be incurred only through these bodies as per SSA norms.
- (f) The State Government will maintain their level of investment in elementary education as in 1999-2000 and give the details of this to GOI before the release of second instalment. The contribution as State share for SSA will be over and above this investment.
- (g) The second instalment would only be released after the previous instalment of State share has been transferred to the State Implementation Society and substantial progress has been made in expenditure as far as money already released is concerned.
- (h) All appointments under the head of management cost should either be on deputation or on contract basis, with all persons being recruited having functional computer literacy

2.0 The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks for the Chair.

ATTENDANCE OF THE 24th MEETING OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL BOARD HELD
ON 30.10.2002 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF SECRETARY (EE&L)

1. Shri S.C. Tripathi, Secretary(EE&L) Chairman
2. Shri Sumit Bose, JS(EE), MHRD
3. Dr. R.S.Khan, Vice Chairman (representative of Chairperson, NCTE)
4. .Shri S.S.Sharma, Dir (Fin) (representative of F.A)
5. Ms. Indu Datta, Director, Plg. Commission (representative of Pr. Adv. Plg. Comm.)
6. Dr. Shabnam Sinha, Reader, NCERT (representative of Director NCERT)
7. Dr. S.I.M.A..Zaidi, NIEPA (Representative of Director, NIEPA)

In Attendance

1. Shri Anil Kumar Secretary (Education), Govt. of Bihar
2. Shri S.K.Negi, State Project Director, Govt. of Bihar
3. Shri A.K.Singh, Director, Primary Education, Govt of Bihar
4. Dr. A.A.C.Lal, Ed Cil
5. Shri Gopalan, Ed Cil
6. Shri Praveen Kumar, Director, MHRD
7. Shri O.P.Chaturvedi, US, MHRD