

**MINUTES OF THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL
BOARD FOR SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN HELD ON JUNE 23, 2003**

The 39th meeting of the Project Approval Board for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was held under the Chairmanship of Shri S.C. Tripathi, Secretary, Elementary Education & Literacy on 23.6.2003. A list of participants is annexed.

Item No.1: Consideration of Perspective and Annual Action Plan 2003-2004 in respect of Bihar.

1.1 Secretary of Education, Bihar, in his opening remarks, welcomed the members of the PAB and thanked them for holding the meet at Patna. He assured that the State would try its best to achieve the goals of SSA. Secretary (EE&L) in his comments stated that Bihar is a high priority area as far as achievement of the goals of SSA are concerned. There are difficulties but these would have to be addressed.

1.2 Secretary (EE & L) reviewed the progress of the previous year's plan and expressed unhappiness at the poor progress in the State. It was found that the civil engineering works had not started in most of the sites. The State Secretary explained that progress under civil engineering was poor because the elections to the Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS) took place only last year and they were in the process of opening their accounts. Around 23890 VSSs out of the total 27991 VSSs have opened their accounts and now funds are being transferred to them. First instalment of the three instalments of the civil works outlay is being released to the VSS. Secretary (EE&L) suggested that to speed up the process, the State may examine the release of funds in two instalments. State Secretary stated that the State is even thinking of releasing the entire amount to the bank, with instructions to release further instalments only on advice received from the Project Authorities. He also pointed out that technical support to VSS is lacking and now the posts of JEs are being created for employment on contract. The AEs are being taken on deputation from other departments. Secretary (EE & L) suggested that this process should be speeded up. In the meanwhile one member of the VSS should be trained in supervision and the VSS itself made accountable for the construction. Normally in rural areas enough local capacity is available in the form of masons and so smaller constructions can be taken up by VSS without technical support. The assets created by VSS through State funds should be transferred to the Village Panchayat and the ownership of this should remain with the Panchayat and not the State Government. If recruiting new personnel is a problem, the State can examine placing an entire division of engineers from other departments at the disposal of the Society for technical support. Secretary (EE & L) wanted that all school-related works should be completed by December 2003 and BRCs by March 2003.

1.3 Secretary (EE & L) further stated that progress under other heads was also not satisfactory. Even the grants like teacher grant, school grant and maintenance grant has not gone to all schools or teachers. He added that the grants like maintenance grant, school grant and teacher grant should be passed on to the VSS within 15 days of receipt of funds in the Society's account. Another critical item where poor progress has been seen is the textbooks where only 25% of the textbooks have been distributed so far. The State Secretary explained that there was initially some problem in placing orders, but now arrangements have been made and all textbooks would be sent by mid-July. Secretary (EE & L) further pointed out that the State has not taken any steps for either appointment of additional teacher posts created in 2002-03, or opened EGS centres sanctioned or upgraded primary schools to upper primary. The State Secretary explained that the State

has recently appointed around 40000 Panchayat Shiksha Mitrs (PSM) out of 47000 planned against the 36000 vacancies in the State. JS (EE) suggested that the balance over and above the State vacancy can be treated as against the SSA posts created, provided this is separately accounted for by the State Government. The State Secretary added that the upgradation of primary to upper primary was delayed because of a rigorous procedure being followed in the State. However he promised that the State would appoint all the teachers, upgrade the primary schools to upper primary, open EGS centres and have all VSS open accounts by 2nd of October this year.

1.4 Secretary (EE & L) wanted to know the position of out-of-school children in the State. It was explained by the SPD that as per 2001 Household survey there were totally 46 lakh out-of-school children in the State. Taking the natural growth and the additional enrolment, there were 42 lakh children unenrolled at the beginning of 2003. The State expects to enroll 24 lakh this year and balance in 2004. This year itself the State has enrolled around 16 lakh children so far and an additional 6 lakhs are to be enrolled through EGS & AIE interventions. The balance targeted this year would be enrolled in regular schools before 30/9/2003. Secretary (EE & L) wanted to know whether the 16 lakhs enrolled are the regular fresh enrolment or additional enrolment of out-of-school children. Since class-wise enrollment of previous few years was not readily available, SPD explained that out of total child population of 186 lakhs, 127 lakhs were enrolled in Government schools in the beginning of the year. An additional 33 lakhs are enrolled in private schools leaving a balance of 26 lakhs. Around 6 lakhs are expected to be enrolled through EGS leaving 20 lakhs for 2004. Secretary (EE & L) stated that SSA envisages all children to be in school by 2003 and we cannot afford not to plan to get all children in school by the year end. So the State should aim for additional enrollment through the capacity available in DPEP districts and plan enrollment of additional 8 lakh children in these 20 districts under DPEP. The State should give a detailed block-wise details of number of children, number of children enrolled, number of out-of-school children, number of out-of-school children planned to be enrolled this year and balance who will be still left out after this year's plan. This should be sent by 31st of July, so that alternative ways of getting these children may be thought of by focussing on these blocks.

1.5 Shri Gopalan of the appraisal team stated that the appraisal has been done for the perspective plan from 2003-07 and the annual plan of 2003-04. However, since the perspective plans were prepared in 2002-03, some data discrepancy have been found between the perspective plan and the annual plan of 2003-04. In such cases the latest data provided for in the 2003-04 plan has been taken into account. Shri Asadullah of the appraisal team added that the district plans have a lot of data on the socio-economic conditions and educational scenario. However, the data has not been often used for the planning process. For example, while plans explain the various reasons for drop-outs, no strategies based on these reasons have been spelt out in the plans. The involvement of NGOs in the State is also minimal. The plans do not have enough evidence of community involvement in the planning process. Further, while a separate plan has been prepared for Patna Urban, no specific strategies have been spelt out urban deprived children.

1.6 Prof. Siddique from the appraisal team stated that the district plans do not have enough focus on quality improvement. Even for untrained teachers the State has proposed training for only 30 days against the norm of 60 days which would affect the quality of teachers. Detailed strategies for teacher training has also not been spelt out. Focus and planning for curriculum review and textbook development is also missing. There is shortage of TLE in school, which may also affect the teaching process. The plans have provided for funding of research and evaluation but details have not been spelt out.

1.7 Based on the recommendations of the Appraisal Team, observations made by the participants and clarifications given by the State representatives, the Board approved the perspective plan for an amount of Rs 331423.65 lakhs as per details given in Annex I. However, it was also indicated that the approved plan could be revised in case of policy changes which could occur in the interim. The PAB itself recommended that instead of providing for upgradation of EGS centers into regular primary schools at the rate of only 15% of the EGS centers every year from the year 2005, the State should target conversion of all EGS centers into schools by the year 2007. The State Secretary also added that while the costing of the teachers has been done at the rate applicable for PSM, the State sees the PSM as only a temporary solution and regular teachers would be the long-term answer, which would necessitate change in the outgo provided for teacher salaries in the perspective plan. Hence, while approving the perspective plans, the Board also stated that these could be changed in the respective annual plans based on fresh data generated and policy changes in the course of implementation. Further, following decisions were taken by the Board in regard to Annual Plans 2003-2004:

- i) No new primary schools had been asked for by the State in the year 2003-04, since the State was focusing on EGS as the method for providing access in the initial years. 2268 new upper primary schools were sanctioned along with TLE grant and two teachers & one headmaster each. In addition, the requirement of 57820 additional teachers in the existing primary and upper primary schools proposed to be filled in the period 2003-07 was also approved for filling up in the year 2003-04 itself. It was also clarified that this requirement was based on the existing enrollment in the schools and would go up as more out-of-school children are enrolled. Salary was also approved for 17751 teachers sanctioned under the programme in the previous years. It was also clarified that the State should preferably fill up these positions through a decentralized recruitment process based on panchayats. The State should target taking teachers through Panchayats who have the minimum academic qualification and provide for NCTE approved training package so that they become eligible teachers as per NCTE norms.
- ii) School grant, maintenance grant and teacher grant was approved for the existing schools.
- iii) Free textbooks were sanctioned for all eligible children in Primary and Upper Primary. However, since the State has been providing 50% subsidy towards the textbook prices in primary, it would have to continue to bear this cost and only the balance 50% would be provided through SSA towards free textbooks for the upper primary. The SSA can only be an additionality to the State's programme as they existed at the time of launch of SSA and cannot be a substitution. Hence, the SSA share of 50% towards the cost of primary school books should not go towards substituting the State subsidy and would be contingent on the State continuing with the policy on subsidy.
- iv) EGS centres was approved for enrolling 305205 out-of-school children in access-less habitations. In addition AIE schemes such as bridge courses, remedial coaching, back to school camps and Balika Shivar were approved for 267914 children under SSA. In addition, 8000 additional Balika Shivirs in the 20 DPEP districts was also approved under DPEP in addition to that proposed in the DPEP plans.

- v) It was decided to approve all civil works under DPEP which are there in the EFC approved plan and which have not been taken up so far, subject to the 33% limit on civil works. To avail of the increased limit of 33% under DPEP, the State should immediately take steps to ensure that all those districts which are not eligible so far for increase in the limit from 24% to 33% become eligible in the course of the year. Also all building less schools should be taken up in the first year itself under SSA, subject to the limit of 33%.
- vi) Innovation for ECCE and computer training was approved only in principle, with the release-taking place only on receipt of detailed plans on this in consultation with Government of India.
- vii) It was directed that the State should take steps to empower the Education Department officials under the Child Labour Act.
- viii) Approval was also given for teacher training, innovation, management cost, civil works (restricted to 33%), R&E, BRC, CRC, community training, IED, etc as per the recommendations of the appraisal team
- ix) Based on the proposal of the State Government and the recommendations of the Appraisal Team thereon, a total Annual Plan 2003-04 for an amount of Rs 62208.75 lakhs was approved as per details given in Annex I.
- x) Rs 14267.85 lakhs was approved as Spill over for sanctions given in the year 2002-03 as per details given in Annex II.
- xi) Rs 5964.65 lakhs was approved under DPEP as fresh outlay and Rs 2655.61 lakhs as spillover as per details in Annex III for period April 2003 to September 2003, the scheduled ending of the project. Further, since talks are already on extension of the project, Rs 8478.08 lakhs was approved as outlay for October 2003 to March 2004 as per details Annex III with the condition that if the extension is not given, these interventions would be taken up under SSA to the extent that they fall under SSA norms.
- 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 society.
 - (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 ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

**ATTENDANCE OF THE 39th MEETING OF THE PROJECT APPROVAL
BOARD HELD ON 23.6.2003 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF
SECRETARY(EE&L).**

1. Shri S.C. Tripathi, Secretary(EE&L) Chairman
2. Shri Sumit Bose, JS(EE), MHRD
3. Shri Qasim AFA, MHRD (representative of F.A)

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. Shri S.P.Sinha, Director, Mass Education
5. Prof. Akthar Siddique, Jamia Millia
6. Shri Gopalan, Ed Cil
7. Shri Asadullah, Ed Cil
8. Shri Praveen Kumar, Director, MHRD