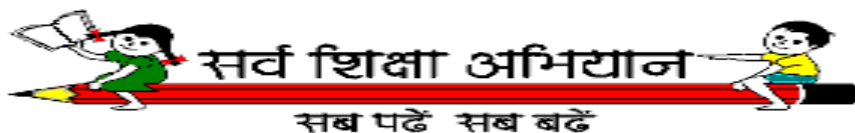


**SECOND HALF YEARLY**  
**MONITORING REPORT OF**  
**JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY**  
**ON SSA FOR**  
**NEW DELHI STATE**  
**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> October 2006 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> March 2007**

**DISTRICTS COVERED**

Bhojpur,  
East Champaran,  
Gaya,  
Goplaganj  
West Champaran



# SSA Monitoring Report

## **BIHAR STATE**

October 2006 – March 2007

for

**MHRD, Govt. of India**

Sample Districts

Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya,  
Goplaganj & West Champaran

by

**MI: Jamia Millia Islamia Central University  
New Delhi**

Prof. M.A. Siddiqui, M.I. Coordinator

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# I

## BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

Democratic societies believe in the ideal that every individual in the society should get equal opportunity of full development, irrespective of his/her personal circumstances. Modern democratic countries also firmly believe that opportunity of development is very closely and directly linked with educational opportunity and educational attainments of the people. To extend the educational opportunity to all citizens the approach of universalisation of education is followed at different levels of education. As a first step in this direction attempts are made to take the first level of education i.e. elementary education to all people. Universalisation of elementary education in India has been a cherished educational goal of the nation envisaged to be achieved by the turn of this decade. Considering it a joint responsibility of the center and the states to realize this goal, the Union Government has been extending its generous support to the States to enable them to initiate such steps as would hasten the process of goal achievement and its ultimate realization in the stipulated time frame. With this in view, the Govt. of India launched a massive scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in a center-state partnership mode according to which both will share financial implications of the programme in the proportion of 75:25.

SSA is a fresh, powerful and unique attempt to universalize elementary education by community ownership of the school system lays particular emphasis

on quality and quantity considerations in education. SSA programme is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children, through provision of community-owned quality education in a *mission mode*.

While meticulous planning of any programme is an essential core step for its success, a close and careful monitoring spread over the entire course of its implementation assures its effective and efficient enforcement. SQ, in SSA, monitoring of programme implementation was assigned a special significance and a community based monitoring system alongwith monitoring by State Implementation Societies and representatives of the National Mission for UEE was visualized. It is in this regard that GOI has sought collaboration with various established research and educational organizations of the country to act as Monitoring Institutions (MIs) for SSA. Jamia Millia Islamia as a renowned central university with its oldest and reputed Faculty of Education, was identified to act as one of the MIs for the state of Bihar from the beginning of this programme. Since then Jamia Millia Islamia has been shouldering this responsibility and in this way is trying to contribute to the realization of the objectives of the Mission and that of the UEE.

## **1.2 The Monitoring Visit**

The SSA monitoring visit to Bihar for monitoring the implementation of SSA interventions in the State during the last six months of the year 2006-07 (October to March, 2007) was conducted on 8-13 May 2007 by a team of six senior faculty

members from the M.I. Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, under the supervision of M.I. Coordinator Prof. Mohd. Akhtar Siddiqui, (Dean, Faculty of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia). The monitoring activity was conducted according to the new TOR which required coverage of a sample of 25 percent districts assigned to each M.I. for this purpose and in these districts coverage of about 5 percent or on an average 100 primary/elementary schools/alternative institutions in each district as a representative sample of the institutions in the sample districts.

Monitoring exercise now was more intensive as well as more extensive. It involved much larger number of schools, teachers, parents, community members, administrators, Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS) members and students and was carried through a more structured as well as open ended devices to capture the information from the schools, clusters, blocks, districts and the state's offices and institutions. Monitoring visit was preceded by a detailed two day meeting at M.I. of experts and colleagues who were to participate in the monitoring visit and telephone and e-mail interaction with Bihar Education Project office to finalize the districts to be covered during the ensuing visit by this M.I.

Since the M.I. Jamia was allotted 20 districts of Bihar for SSA monitoring, the sample of 25 percent comprised 5 districts which were purposely selected by the M.I. team. These five districts were Bhojpur, Gaya, East Champaran, West Champaran and Gopalganj. 5 percent schools/institutions from each district were so selected that the sample had representation from North, South, East, West and central blocks of the selected districts and it provided a more representative and reliable view of the implementation of SSA and other related schemes in each

district. Two of the five districts viz. East Champaran and West Champaran were quite large so more blocks were covered in these districts than other districts. In all 46 blocks were covered which included 6,5,5,13 and 17 blocks from Bhojpur, Gaya, Gopalganj, East Champaran and West Champaran districts, respectively. 643 schools and other institutions were included in the sample and visited by MI teams. (See Annexure I) Besides SSA, the monitoring team also looked into implementation of other SSA related programmes in each district like MDM, KGBV, NPEGEL, etc. As per the new guidelines/revised TOR, during the course of monitoring of SSA implementation, answers to several questions in the following areas were specifically found out in the visited districts, besides looking into the overall implementation of SSA and other schemes in the State. The areas on which information for monitoring purposes was collected and processed for this report are:

- a) Opening of schools (primary and upper primary)
- b) Civil works
- c) Textbooks
- d) School grants
- e) Teachers and teacher training
- f) Teaching learning material(TLM) grants
- g) EGS & AIE/NRBC/RBC
- h) Children with special needs (CWSN)
- i) National Programme of Education of Girls at Elementary Level  
(NPEGEL)

- j) Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBVs)
- k) DISE
- l) Research and Evaluation
- m) Functioning of VSS/VEC
- n) Staffing at State and District Levels
- o) Mid day Meal
- p) Other items to be checked like, no. of days schools functioned, school environment, sitting arrangement in class rooms, organization of health camps, playground for children, use of play material by students, enrolment and presence of children in schools, reasons of low attendance and measures taken to improve attendance, process of assessment of students' achievement, and level of achievement, dropout of students in 4 or 5 classes, teacher-student rapport, students being retained in a particular class and their continuation of studies in private schools.

The data on monitoring was collected from 46 blocks of 5 sample districts during a period of more than one week spent on the field visit to institutions which included schools, AIE centers, VSS, CRCs, BRCs , DLOs, SPO, KGBVs, NPEGEL Centres, etc. through recording of direct observations of the state of the institution and various processes in progress in these, scrutiny of records and registers and focused discussions with different groups of persons. Lists of blocks, clusters and villages/schools visited is given at Annexure-I.

**1.3** In the State of Bihar Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as pursued by the Central Govt. is being implemented by the State Implementing Society i.e. Bihar

Prathmik Shiksha Pariyojna or Bihar Education Project (BEP) through its State Project Office (SPO) and District Project Offices (DPOs) which was initially set up in 1992 for implementing District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in the State of Bihar (undivided). After carving Jharkhand State out of Bihar, 37 districts were left in the State. Later on, Patna district was divided into two districts as Patna (Rural) and Patna (Urban). Among these districts, 20 were those where DPEP was implemented. However, the SSA scheme is being implemented in all the districts of Bihar, including the erstwhile DPEP districts. In fact, the DPEP has now discontinued in the entire State. MI, Jamia Millia Islamia, is responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation of the implementation of SSA in Bihar, now on half yearly basis, in twenty districts. The remaining districts are being monitored by A.N. Sinha Institute, Patna. Jamia Millia is also a lead Institution in the State for monitoring. During the year 2006-07 the MHRD, New Delhi reformulated the entire process of monitoring of SSA implementation and decided to make it a more thorough and detailed exercise. Since the report of the first monitoring visit by JMI for the first half of the year 2006-07 was already submitted to MHRD, to Ministry through EDCIL released the second instalment of the monitoring grant in March/April 2007 which facilitated second monitoring visit in May 2007. The first monitoring visit was conducted on 16-23 December 2006 for the period April-September 2006 and its report was submitted to the Director, Elementary Education, MHRD, GOI, New Delhi and the TSG, Ed CIL, New Delhi. The present monitoring visit looked at the SSA performance in Bihar during the period October 2006-March 2007.

**1.4** The DPOs of five selected districts were informed by the SPD, Patna about the ensuing monitoring visit by MI in advance highlighting the points that were to be focused by the MI teams as per new TORs. The M.I. had sent a list of requirements to the DPOs that they were expected to fulfill in order to help in the completion of the monitoring exercise by M.I. After reaching Patna one monitoring team held a meeting and detailed discussion in SPO.

Jamia Millia Islamia is the lead Monitoring Institution which has been engaged for monitoring of SSA implementation in Bihar in 20 districts alongwith the second MI, the Dr. A.N. Sinha Institute, Patna which is entrusted with 18 districts in Bihar for this purpose. The A.N. Sinha Institute's Monitoring report for the second half year was expected to be submitted by 31.7.07 to MHRD with a copy to MI, Jamia to enable it to collate the data of the entire State and present the State's combined picture of SSA implementation.

**1.5** Five monitoring teams from Jamia Millia reached their respective districts as per the earlier drawn schedule on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2007. The teams included the following

1. Prof. M.A. Siddiqui, MI Coordinator
2. Prof. Aejaz Masih
3. Dr. Shoeb Abdullah
4. Dr. Kartar Singh
5. Mr. M. H. Quasmi
6. Dr. Jasim Ahmad

The teams conducted preliminary meetings with the DPO staff and each one formed a larger team with qualified and experienced local project

investigators who were duly oriented and trained by the M.I. representatives and team leaders on the dimensions of information to be collected from the field through scrutiny of records, interactions, interviews, observations, learning assessment, etc. The teams visited BRCs, CRCs, primary & upper primary schools, AIE centers, DIETs, KGBVs, NPEGEL centers, Apna & Angna Vidyalayas, Madrasas, etc. and interacted in detail with staff, teachers, HMs, Lok Shikshaks/AI Educational Volunteers, VSS members/office bearers, community members, parents of children, students in schools and AI centers for their deeper understanding of the SSA activities and interventions as these were in operation in the villages and gathered information to answer the questions raised in the revised TOR for monitoring. The teams also saw for themselves the civil works in progress in schools & KGBVs, the TLM & TLE acquired by schools, text books distributed among students, the maintenance of schools and other buildings and their surroundings done by the school authorities and VSSs, etc. The records available at different levels including attendance registers, teachers duty registers, pass books, expenditure registers, VSS minutes books, Bal Panji, display boards in schools, etc. were also perused. Teaching process in progress in classrooms was also observed and interactions with students were held and they were subjected to content based questions and reading of texts to ascertain their learning levels. The MDM cooking places and stores for safe keeping of grains were seen, quality of material/grain was checked and distribution of cooked MDM and its quality was observed. The aids and appliances distributed to CWSN and arrangements made for their barrier free movement in schools were

also seen. The teams also tried to ascertain the quality and time of distribution of textbooks to children in schools and other centers. Through the perusal of available records, they also tried to ascertain the availability of teachers in schools and regularity of students' attendance in their classes. A list of villages, clusters, blocks and districts that were visited by the MI teams and its project leader for data collection on implementation of SSA and other related schemes of the GOI is appended at Annexure-I to this report.

## **Some highlights of SSA related activities in Bihar**

### **2.1 Phasing out of EGS Centres and their total upgradation**

As per its decision, the Govt. of Bihar finally phased out all the EGS centers in the State by 30.9.2006 and converted most of them into primary schools or merged them into neighbouring primary schools, as the case may be.

### **2.2 Drive for recruitment of teachers**

Recruitment of regular teachers in Bihar was in suspension for many years. To meet the schools' needs of teachers until last year Panchayat Shiksha Mitras (PSMs) were appointed in the State on a large scale.

As reported earlier also, the Govt of Bihar had decided to convert the 24469 PSMs out of 34469 PSMs appointed by it in 2002-03 and 70151 PSMs appointed under SSA upto 2005-06 against a sanctioned strength of 80151 PSMs into panchayat shikshaks as regular teachers and also appoint another 2.3 lakh teachers as per following details: 48000 teachers against those posts which it received under SSA for the year 2006-07, 30,000 posts of teachers it got for new schools, 10,000 teachers posts under SSA remaining vacant from last year (2005-06), 82000 teachers & HMs against routine vacancies in primary and middle schools and 60,000 teachers for bringing 24 lakh out-of-school children to schools at the rate of one teacher per 40 children.  $(48000 + 30000 + 10000 + 82000 + 60000 = 2,30000)$ . Massive recruitment drive was launched in the beginning of the year in the district and sub-district offices of the State which is still in progress

and teachers in three different categories are being appointed regularly to achieve the laid down targets. 86680 teachers have been appointed in new primary and upper primary schools against 88000 (48000+30000+10000) SSA posts until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007.

### **2.3 Recruitment of other staff**

There have been a large number of vacancies in the State in the SPO and DPOs in different categories of staff including the engineering staff for quite some time. These vacancies are also being filled up on a large scale. Efforts of the State Government in this direction are commendable though many SSA related positions at the district level have yet to be filled up on priority.

### **2.4 State's initiative for Additional Civil works**

In order to meet the requirement of major repairs in many existing old school buildings and for construction of boundary walls of schools, both of which are not covered under SSA funding, the State Government has agreed to spend a sum of Rs. 300 crores on these items in addition to its 25 percent commitment of SSA project funding. The idea is that this step will further improve the schools surroundings and its improved appearance will help in making the school more attractive for children as well as for teachers and parents and this may contribute in improving students' retention in the school.

### **2.5 Funding of SSA**

The Govt. of Bihar has perhaps taken lead in the country in releasing its share of SSA grant even before the start of the current financial year. The AWP&B for the year 2006-07 for SSA was Rs. 2340.14 crores of which the share of responsibility

of GOB was Rs. 585 crores. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006 the GOB released a sum of Rs. 538.5 crores to BEP, much before the release of GOI grant. The GOI against its commitment for SSA of Rs. 1,755.11 crores for the year 2006-07 released 1026.29 crores till 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007.

Govt. of Bihar has also transferred an additional fund of Rs. 300 crores to BEP for construction of school boundary walls and a sum of Rs. 94.99 crores for major repairs, tours and sports facilities in the primary/upper primary schools. The G.O.B has also released its share of KGBV grant of Rs. 5.61 crores against AWP & B of Rs. 5.61 crores and its share of NPEGEL grant of Rs. 9.23 crores against AWP&B of Rs. 18.48 crores. However, GOI has released the entire amount of its commitment for KGBV and NPEGEL of Rs. 6.83 crores and Rs. 55.44 crores respectively for the year 2006-07.

## **2.6 Decentralized teacher recruitment**

As stated earlier also, the recruitment process to appoint 2,36,000 teachers (2,10,000 primary/upper primary and 26000 secondary teachers) which includes 88000 positions created under SSA and vacancies against Government of Bihar sanctioned posts, has been initiated with total involvement of PRIs across the state. The recruitment process has already started and many teachers have taken their positions in schools which has certainly begun to improve PTR in schools. Being less equipped for this task, the PRIs did face difficulties in undertaking this huge responsibility is still in progress.

## **2.7 Looking ahead**

The above highlights do indicate the state administration's concern and proactive role it is trying to play in getting to the goal of universal elementary education in

the state. However, the conditions needed for enforcement of the will of the state require an appropriate support of the administrative structures at the district and sub district levels which can translate State's plans into action without loss of time. The State's strong will was reflected in the allocation of funds by it over and above its SSA commitment just to ensure that the elementary schools look better and offer better quality education to all children. The level of expenditure at the end of the current financial year (2006-07) i.e. 99% of the available grant speaks aloud that the State has improved drastically in making good of the available resources for the benefit of elementary education. The situation may improve further if efforts are made to get the entire share of GOI's commitment for SSA released during the given financial year. This year, it was only 58 percent.

### **Performance of SSA in the State**

During the second half of the financial year 2006-07 (October 2006-March 2007) Government of Bihar made progress in different interventions related with SSA, MDM, KGBV and NPEGEL as seen against the targets laid in the AWP&B which was approved by the PAB for this year. Progress made on these interventions/programmes has been discussed in following pages in the sequence of these areas listed in the revised TOR.

#### **3.1 Opening of New Schools (Primary and Upper Primary)**

- (i) In the current financial year 15000 new primary schools and only 822 new upper primary schools were sanctioned for 38 districts in the State as per the requirement forwarded by each district. The sanction ranges between 18 new primary schools (district Lakhisarai) and 754 new primary schools (district Patna rural). Patna-urban was not sanctioned any new primary school this year. New upper primary schools were sanctioned only in 13 districts of the State. All the 15000 new primary schools were opened in the districts by the end of first half of the financial year. However, only 289 new upper primary schools could be opened, that too during the second half of the financial year 2006-07. The State also had a spillover of 548 primary schools against which 521 new primary schools were opened. There was a huge spillover of 7317 new upper primary schools against which 6639 new UPS were opened in the State during the current financial year. Thus during the current financial year against a total target of 15548

new primary schools and 8139 upper primary schools, 15521 (99.8%) new primary schools and 6928 (85%) new upper primary schools were opened.

As per the record of BEP, for the sample districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran 192, 368, 561, 207 and 262 (1590) new primary schools and 61, 53, 00,00 and 8 (122) new upper primary schools, respectively were sanctioned for this year. While all the sanctioned new primary schools as per SPO record were opened in these districts, not a single new upper primary school could be opened in these districts during 2006-07. However, as per the record produced by the DPOs of these districts, 255, 786, 433, 488 and 631 (2593) new primary schools and 61, 52, 00.00, 00 (113) new upper primary schools, respectively were sanctioned and all the sanctioned new primary schools and 61, 01,00,00,00 (62) new upper primary schools, respectively were opened in the five sample districts during the year. The records supplied by SPO and DPOS for both sanctioned and opened new schools at both levels for the year 2006-07 do not tally. SPO's record shows that in five districts 122 new upper primary schools were sanctioned but none was actually opened during the year. (See Annexure II) Whereas five DPOs records suggest that 113 new upper primary schools were sanctioned and out of these 62 were actually opened. DPOs have provided these data on the questionnaire developed by the M.I. Surprisingly, according to the statement of Physical & Financial Progress under SSA produced on modified version of form B of GOI i.e. Revised Format 1&2 SSA (2006-

07) submitted by five DPOs to the MI teams, no new upper primary school was sanctioned during the current year and so no new UPS was opened this year. As per these formats in East Champaran and Gopalganj districts, 786 and 488 new primary schools, respectively were sanctioned but not a single one was opened in these districts during the current financial year. This discrepancy in information submitted by DPOs on different sets of documents (MI Questionnaire and Form B of GOI) has created doubts about the authenticity of information supplied by these DPOs. Field visits and discussions with staff of DPO and BRC revealed that new primary schools in all the five districts including East Champaran and Gopalganj have been opened this year.

- (ii) *Land identification for new schools:* For majority of the new schools land has not been identified. It is reported to be in process. In Bhojpur out of 255 new primary schools land has been identified for 12 schools, in Gaya against 433 new primary schools (no new UPS) the DPO has reported to have been identified land for 616 new schools. The DPO Gaya has submitted blockwise detail of identification of land for 616 new schools. It cannot be said that schools in excess of 433 i.e. 183 for which also land has been identified were opened last year as no new school was sanctioned or opened during previous years. In East Champaran land identification is still in process, not finalized for a single school; in Gopalganj too land has not been identified for any new school. In West Champaran out of 631 new primary schools land has been identified for 158 schools. MI

representatives during field visits and interaction with VSS members verified that land has been identified in places where it has been claimed so in Bhojpur and West Champaran districts. In Gaya in seven new schools land identification was verified during field visit.

- (iii) *Funds for construction of new school buildings:* The SPO released funds for construction of buildings of 341 (2.27%) newly opened schools out of 15000 new schools opened this year and released Rs. 21.38 crores (14.76%) for this purpose till the end of March, 2007. The initial release of funds for this purpose, therefore in itself is quite small. This is said to be tagged with identification of land in each district. For this reason we find that in several districts for construction of new school buildings no funds have been released this year. Among the sample districts no funds for this purpose have been released this year for Bhojpur, East Champaran and Goplaganj. A small amount of Rs. 3.25 lakhs (less than one per cent of the sanctioned amount for new school buildings) was released for Gaya district though DPO of this district has claimed to have identified land for all new schools. Funds were released to West Champaran for new school buildings to the extent of 31.54% of approved budget of funds for this purpose which closely commensurates with the proportion of land identification for new schools in this district. Small release of funds has its obvious effect on construction of new school buildings and their availability for use by students and teachers. During field visits transfer of

funds to the VSS bank accounts was verified from bank records available with these Samitis.

Out of 643 schools visited in five districts 59 were new schools. 28 of them had received building funds and construction had started in 24% of these schools. In fact in one school in Gaya and 3 in West Champaran construction has completed and in the rest it is at different stages of completion.

- (iv) *Teachers' Posts sanctioned for new schools and appointments made:* For newly sanctioned primary and upper primary schools 80522 posts of teachers were sanctioned for this year for 37 districts, except Patna Urban. SPO has reported appointment of 86680 teachers this year which includes some appointments against the posts sanctioned last year under SSA. In all, the State has appointed 157134 teachers this year against an approved target of 184081 teachers and HMs. While comparing districtwise records of sanctioned and filled up posts of teachers at DPO level it was found that each DPO reported much lesser number of posts sanctioned than what was informed by the SPO. In the districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran as, per SPO records, sanctioned posts of teachers for the year 2006-07 were: 1741, 2308, 2882, 2510 and 2586 (12027 teachers), respectively whereas as per the information available from DPOs of these districts sanctioned posts were: 754, 4162, 866, 976 and 1262 (8020), respectively. Similarly, SPO reported that appointments have already been made on almost all the 80522 sanctioned posts of

teachers including those in the 5 sample districts in the order of 1918, 1704, 3862, 2811 and 3092(13387) teachers. In fact, barring East Champaran where appointments have reportedly been made on 1704 posts against 2308 sanctioned posts, in the remaining four sample districts more appointments have been made in the current year than the sanctioned posts for this year. At the State level out of 37 districts for which new posts of teachers were sanctioned for new schools, in 28 districts this year more appointments were made than the sanctioned posts. However, as per DPO records of five districts, appointments were made in East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts of 3403, 770, 976 and 1262 (6411) teachers in new schools. DPO Bhojpur did not provide any information about appointment of teachers against 754 sanctioned posts. It may be noted that number of new school teachers appointed in visited districts as per DPOs record is much less (6411 teachers) than what is shown in the SPO records (13387 teachers). So, the DPOs records show that out of 8020 sanctioned posts of teachers in 5 districts only 6411 posts were filled up this year whereas SPO record shows that against 12027 sanctioned posts of teachers in these districts 13387 teachers were appointed. The contention of DPO that sanctioned posts of teachers are still lying vacant in schools was verified during school visits in several blocks. For example, in Govt Girls Middle School, Lal Bazar, Betiah, against 12 posts 5 teachers were appointed for many years, in Primary School Madhu Saraiyan, Manjha Block, Gopalganj and Mahavir Govt.

Middle School, Motihari one post of teacher is lying vacant for some time, in Middle School Balakpur, Koilwar, 3 posts of teachers are lying vacant, in M.S. Rupdih Block Motihari against 11 sanctioned posts, 3 permanent teachers are in place and 6 panchayat shikshaks, all untrained, have been appointed for more than three years. Similar situation was observed in many visited schools. There were many schools where all the sanctioned posts were found filled up. For example, in Govt. Model School Luathahan, Motihari all the 19 posts of teachers had regular teachers, only HM's post was vacant. It was reported that the process of filling up of the remaining sanctioned posts for new schools is in progress in all the districts.

- (v) *Teaching Learning Equipment*: One time grant for acquisition of TLE at the rate of Rs. 10000 for primary schools and Rs. 50000 for upper primary schools was provided to schools through V.S.S. Scrutiny of SPO and DPO records and VSS passbooks revealed that SPO generally released this grant to DPOs in the first half of the financial year which was further released to the VSS within 15 days of its credit to the DPO accounts. This year there was a target of releasing this grant for 18488 schools in 38 districts including spillover but as per SPO records it could be released only for 1015 (5.49%) schools in 9 districts including one sample district of the State. In remaining districts this grant was not released until 31<sup>st</sup> March' 07. SSA performance formats of 5 sample districts revealed that in these districts targets of TLE grant were fixed for 316, 925, 627, 488 and

649 primary and upper primary schools, respectively but only Gaya received this grant for 78 schools and the same was distributed to schools. In the remaining four visited districts no TLE grant was received from SPO and so it could not be released to schools this year. In Gaya one primary and 9 upper primary sample schools had received TLE grant as was verified from bank records of their VSS. In most schools TLE grant was spent on purchasing benches and desks for students. In one school in Gaya TLE grant could not be spent before the end of financial year. VSSs in Bhojpur did not receive any TLE grant except for the upgraded schools. So visited schools in this district did not have furniture for students. Govt. Girls School, Lal Bazar, Betiah in town area reported that TLE grant was not provided to any town school. In Gaya district 7 of the nine schools having received TLE grant had received guidelines for purchase of TLE and they had followed these guidelines while utilizing the grant. The SPO had issued the guidelines for utilization of TLE grant to DPOs which in turn were circulated to schools. Schools informed that they received the guidelines but none could produce a copy of the same.

Furniture purchased from TLE grant was not of a good quality though VSS members had acquired it under their supervision. Record of TLE expenditure is being kept but a proper double entry record is generally lacking. Release of TLE grant on such a limited scale despite the need having been recognized and budget for the same approved has its

own adverse effects on classroom environment and teaching learning process.

### **3.2 Civil Works\_**

- (i) During the current financial year SPO had planned to construct buildings for 15000 new schools and 61000 additional classrooms in 37 districts. Besides, there was also a spillover from previous year of 2636 new school buildings and 20742 additional classrooms. Plan was also approved for 16410 toilets, 5339 water facilities, 193 schools boundary walls, 2929 electrification works, 841 headmaster's rooms, 266 BRC buildings and 1214 CRC buildings. These civil works had either completed or were in different stages of completion. However, no other item in this area like water harvesting, etc. was planned for this year.

By the end of current financial year as per SPO records, 1444 new school buildings were completed and 1298 (341+957) were in progress which means only 7.37% target was achieved. So far as additional classrooms are concerned, construction of 13985 classrooms was completed and it was in progress in 61238 (54844+6394) or (74.92%) classrooms. Water facility was installed in 4317 schools and in 883 it was in progress. Construction of 12661 toilets was complete and it was in progress for another 2671 toilets. This year 59 BRC buildings had been constructed and work was in progress in 190 BRCs. Similarly, 766 CRC buildings had been completed and civil work in 423 was in progress. These figures show that no civil work in 14894 (14659, fresh +234, S.O.)

new school buildings could be started during this year. Similarly, work could not be started in 6519 (6156+363) additional classrooms during the year. In fact, the SPO has reported that for current financial year fresh targets were fixed only for new school buildings and additional classrooms and no targets were laid down for other civil works. Only last year's spillover work was to be completed this for these remaining items of civil works.

Civil work related progress report of SPO was further verified at the DPO level in the sample districts. As per DPO records of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Golpalganj and West Champaran a target of 235, 700, 433, 450 and 631 (2449) new school buildings was approved for primary schools which was same as shown by SPO in its records. Out of these 00, 00, 01, 00 and 83 (84) school buildings, respectively were constructed as per the record of both, SLO and 5 DPOs. Similarly, targets of 1441, 2403, 2423, 1535 and 1969 additional classrooms, respectively were approved in five districts as per DPO records and out of these targets achievement was to the tune of 968, 2403, 1886, 1483 and 1918 classrooms, respectively. These targets and achievement data were the same as presented by the SPO.

- (ii) Physical verification and sample check of civil work was done at site in the presence of VSS members and CRC/BRC staff in sample districts. BRC, Gopalganj building was recently completed with satisfactory finishing; BRC Phulwaria building was under construction under the

supervision of BRCC; construction of BRC building at Kuchailot was also in progress. Both the buildings were in last stage of completion. In East Champaran most of the BRC buildings were under construction and had completed upto lintel or roof level. Construction was of moderate quality. Some CRC buildings were complete and some others were under construction in this district. Most of the new primary schools in the visited districts were operating from alternate private accommodation and were awaiting construction of their own buildings. For example, new P.S. Katar Purvi Tola, Dihra, Piro, Bhojpur runs in a house of a local resident, new P.S. Balwahin Tola, Piro operates from the covered verandah of a private house.

In Gopalganj, Primary School Madhusaraiyan, Manjha four additional classrooms were underconstruction and first floor RCC roof slab was being cast with the help of a mixer. It was late afternoon. HM and technical supervisor were present. Other members of building committee were away since morning. The ratio of CC as was found out from the workers who were operating the mixer was 1:3:4 which was against the norm and was likely to have inferior quality roof. In Govt. Girls Middle School, Lal Bazar, Betiah 4 additional classrooms were underconstruction. Brick work was almost complete. It was of satisfactory quality. Construction work was being supervised by Building Construction Committee of the school. In West Champaran generally the construction of BRC & school buildings in progress was not of satisfactory quality as

good quality building material was not being used. As per norms, K-14 sand has to be used in construction work. At site the sand used was found to be of extremely poor quality as it looked like earth (mitti) not as coarse sand at all. Soan river sand is considered to be of better and acceptable quality but it costs more in this district. For next year's construction work Soan river sand has reportedly been included in budget estimates. In West Champaran, building construction is complete for 17 BRCs. For the remaining one BRC building construction is yet to start. In Mahavir Govt. Middle school a CRC room and an additional classroom were under construction. Their superstructures were complete. In Bhojpur M.S. Balakpur, Koelwar 7 classrooms were under construction. The quality of bricks and mortar was found to be good. Work was being completed under the supervision of Building Construction Committee and the technical supervisor. In Girls M.S. Behiyan 4 additional classrooms were under construction, reportedly since 2004, at a snails pace affecting the strength of the incomplete structure.

- (iii) Though 3 days training is being arranged for the five member Building Construction Committees but it is confined to HM, President and Secretary of the Committee and they are expected to transfer this training to other members of the Committee. They are also being provided with guidelines containing norms and standards of construction work and quality of building material to be used. Effective supervision in many instances was found lacking.

- (iv) Manual for civil works was found available with 40.7% of the 643 VSSs and Building Committees but in some cases like P.S. Madhusaraiyan, Gopalganj and Mahavir Girls Middle School where construction work was in progress these norms were not found having been observed.
- (v) Ramps had been constructed in 32.3% visited old and new schools but these were generally without railings on either side. Sometimes low side walls in place of railings had been constructed.
- (vi) Some schools were without boundary walls and for this reason their premises were being trespassed or illegally encroached by general public. For example, in M.S. Marjadwa, Mainatand and M.S. Parsauni Bagh I, West Champaran school land had been encroached. In the former case, village Panchayat has occupied a portion of school land.
- (vii) Electricity connection and electrification was also not there in some of the visited schools and other centres. For example, in KGBVs at Sidhwalia and Baikunthpur in Gopalganj neither there was any electricity connection nor there was any alternative arrangement of electricity generator or solar charged power batteries. In P.S. Madhusaraiyan, Manjha, Gopalganj there was no electricity connection. In the day time it was a bit dark inside some classrooms.
- (viii) Drinking water facility was also found unsatisfactory in schools despite availability of handpumps in many of them. Out of 643 visited schools 24 per cent had either no arrangement or non operational arrangement of drinking water facility. Despite this, no fresh proposal for construction of

water facility was made this year. Only spillover of the last year was being completed in schools this year. In 75 per cent schools deep bore handpumps were installed. In only 0.8 per cent running water or tubewell connection was there. Swajaldhara scheme is in operation in the State as informed by SPO but amongst the visited schools only in 32 or 5 per cent schools it was found launched. In some schools in West Champaran a new model of handpump was installed which works on vacuum pressure basis. Design of this handpump is not child friendly as its handle connected pulley once pressed pushes back very fast bringing water with it. The upward sudden motion of handle has caught many children unaware and already some of them have been injured in their faces in West Champaran schools particularly in P.S. Narkatia. Drinking water facility was also not available in some town schools in Betiah. Construction of water facility is being done mostly (92.9%) by specialized agencies under the supervision of VSS. Since water facility construction is not a part of the building construction budget and it is to be done later, after the construction of building, some VSSs complained that it is causing lot of hardships in construction of buildings because of non availability of water at the construction site.

- (ix) Among the visited schools, only in five per cent there was a convergence of Swajaldhara Scheme for provision of drinking water facility in schools. The scheme is being executed through Public Health Engineering Department in collaboration with UNICEF in rural areas.

- (x) Toilet facilities in schools were not a part of this year's approved budget. Only last year's spillover was allowed to be completed this year. In many schools toilet facilities particularly for girls were found deficient. Under Total Sanitation Campaign (T.S.C.) single and double units of toilets are being constructed in schools in collaboration with UNICEF and with the help of Public Health Engineering Department. In the State of Bihar under T.S.C. 716 double unit toilets and 561 single unit toilets were sanctioned for the year 2006-07 and work has already started and it is in progress in 682 double unit and 452 single unit toilets. In West Champaran in many visited schools toilet facility was not available and as a result grown up girls and even lady teachers were forced to go away from school in the jungle to respond to the call of nature. This was pointed out in M.S. Marjadwa and P.S. Phulwaria in Mainatand block of West Champaran district. M.S. Marjadwa also runs NPEGEL Centre with more grown up girls. This problem was found in other places as well. Funds for construction of water facility and sanitation are transferred to VSS account through Canara and PNB banks.
- (xi) Supervision of construction is being done by a Bhawan Nirman Samiti constituted of HMs, a president, a secretary and 2 members of VSS. Earlier this committee used to receive two days training but now it is extended to 3 days, one day for training in maintenance of accounting records of the expenditure on construction work. Only 42 per cent of the VSS/BNS have received this training. 72% VSS are not maintaining

separate accounts of the funds for building construction. Despite training, accounts of receipts and expenditure are being maintained in a crude manner.

Technical supervision of civil works in schools and other related buildings is done at three levels: Executive Engineer/ Assistant Engineer level, Junior Engineer level and Technical Supervisor level. It is done at four levels viz. at layout plan level & foundation level, brickwork, lintel and roof levels. For regular supervision of work in progress earlier Technical Supervisor used to be given 7-8 sites in a year. Now as per new guidelines from SPO only a maximum of 4 sites in a year can be supervised by a Technical Supervisor. Technical Supervisor is holder of at least a Diploma in civil engineering. He is paid 2.5 per cent of the estimated cost of the construction project. Some DPCs, feel that restricting technical supervision by one T.S. to four will bring down minimum earning of a T.S. and this may affect quality of his supervision work. Technical supervisors are selected by VSS out of a panel prepared by the DPO. T.S. works in consultation with JE and AE.

The civil work is also being monitored at the State level by a Special Resource Group (SRG). At the State level SRG is a one man group. He is a retired Chief Engineer from PWD. The single man SRG acts for a third Party Evaluation Team. He visits every district for about 10 days. His visit to a district once a year is insufficient in the opinion of some DPOs and engineers. For example, Exec. Engr. West Champaran

feels that a 10 day visit to a district may not be sufficient to monitor the civil work. In every district, DPOs have formed committees for monitoring of civil work. The school building construction committees visit construction sites at different stages of construction. Technical supervisors visited school buildings under construction at different stages of completion. They visited 79 buildings at all the stages of construction upto completion, 91 up to lintel/roof level and 103 which were at foundation level. Convergence with TSC has been reported by SPO and DPOs. This was found happening only in 10 per cent cases.

- (xii) In MI's view quality of construction at visited sites varied from good to poor. This has partly been explained earlier also. In some places substandard/poor quality building material especially sand was being used and was being justified on cost grounds. Poor quality sand makes the entire super structure and slabs weak and risky. In another set of cases the quality and strength of the mortar and c.c. was being compromised by mixing of cement in smaller ratio than prescribed in the mortar or C.C. for roof slabs. It was also noticed that while casting the slab vibrator was not being used. This leaves the slab with voids and honey combed finish which weakens the RCC work. Because of lack of water facility at construction sites proper curing of the civil work was not being done which was affecting the strength of executed civil work. In many places, BRC buildings and some additional classrooms were found constructed with satisfactory quality. On condition of anonymity some VSS members

in Mainatand Block, West Champaran mentioned about some compulsory cuts in building funds being demanded by its BEO. If it is so, it is going to ultimately have a bearing on the quality of construction.

- (xiii) As stated earlier, for civil works there is an incharge at the SPO level. He is a retired Chief Engineer of PWD. A mechanism for reviewing progress in civil works at the district level has been prepared. This is based on a reporting format of phased completion of civil works which is used for monitoring the progress in civil works in the districts and at lower levels. This official also visits each district as per a plan. SPO has also recently recruited engineering staff for each DPO to strengthen the district level monitoring and supervision teams for civil works. The executive engineer at DPO West Champaran asserts that Third Party Evaluation mechanism has not properly been created despite requests. The State Resource Group (SRG) at the SPO is conducting third party evaluation which, he feels, is not very effective.

### **3.3 Text Books:**

Free textbooks are distributed to students of classes I-V and VI-VIII by SPO through DPO and sub district level structures. These free textbooks are meant for all focused group children i.e. all girls and SC/ST boys. It goes without saying that at primary and upper primary stages for a common student particularly in government schools, textbook is the main source of regular learning which defines the nature, level and type of knowledge of skills, etc. to be developed and forms of experience through which knowledge, skills, etc. have to be constructed.

It is a very organized source of learning and guidance for and precious possession of a young learner. So, it must be available with him/her right from the start of the academic session for his/her steady and even progress in learning during the study period.

- (i) In the year 2006-07 free distribution of textbooks to 60,61051 and 15,14067 primary and upper primary school children, respectively in focused group was planned. However, by the turn of the financial year free textbooks were distributed to 2547132 (42.02%) and 7,93990 (52.44%) primary and upper primary children, respectively. Both levels taken together only 33,41,122 children were distributed free books in elementary schools during the current year which comes to only 44.11 per cent of the envisaged target. It means that more than half of the focus group children spent their academic session without textbooks which has obvious implications for quality of their learning achievement.

The free distribution of textbooks is done by the SPO with the help of State's textbook publications organization i.e. BTBDC to DPOs and from there these are further dispersed down the stream to schools and distributed to students. Though free textbook distribution targets were fixed for all the 38 districts in the State for both the levels of elementary schools, as per SPO records, these books could be supplied only to 16 districts for both levels and to Araia and Sheikhpura districts for primary and upper primary levels, respectively.

Among the five districts visited by MI, free textbooks were supplied to Bhojpur (144767+33636) and West Champaran (109523+21621) districts during this year. As per SPO's record, Gaya and Gopalganj districts could not be supplied any textbooks this year. Still some funds for free textbook distribution were found debited to the DPOs of these districts.

- (ii) This year the academic session started in the month of January. In almost all the districts, textbooks started arriving from the month of March/April'06 and their distribution to BRCs began in the following month, generally within 15 days from their receipt from the BTBDC which made necessary arrangements for their distribution to schools immediately. The books were received in installments for different subjects/classes and medium and accordingly these were passed on to the lower levels. In five sample districts visited by the M.I. free textbooks were received in Bhojpur for 144767 and 33636 primary and upper primary children; in East Champaran textbooks were received for 311715 and 48327 primary and upper primary students, respectively; in Gaya, and Gopalganj no textbook were received and in West Champaran these were received for 109523 and 21621 primary and upper primary children, respectively. The number of children for whom the free textbooks were supplied by SPO in the five sample districts matched with the record of these DPOs. The time of supply and receipt of these books in DPOs was

also found matching. The SPO had sent a general circular regarding distribution of free textbooks to all the DPOs.

- (iii) As stated earlier the distribution of textbooks was unduly delayed in all the districts and nowhere these were distributed within one month of the opening of the school. Children, in fact, could get their free textbooks in the months of July/August onwards and these too were not received in one lot for all the subjects. Schools got books for different classes and of different subjects at different and scattered points of time between July/August and November/ December which shows how much delay was made in taking the textbooks to the hands of learners. The main reason of delay in distribution of textbooks to children was the delayed start of this process at SPO level affecting the entire supply chain. In those MI visited districts where textbooks were received this year i.e. Bhojpur, East Champaran and West Champaran in almost 48 per cent sample schools textbooks were received from DPO between September and December, 2006 and these were distributed to students thereafter. In these districts the received textbooks were distributed in highest number of schools i.e. 45 per cent in the months of September-December, 2006. The delay caused in the supply chain of these books right from the beginning was found adversely affecting their distribution to their end users in all the districts and all the schools.
- (iv) Free textbooks have not been distributed to all eligible students in focused group even in those districts which had received textbooks from SPO. In

sample schools in five districts only in 67.6 per cent schools free textbooks could be distributed to all eligible children. In the remaining schools, these were distributed in part or were not distributed at all. The main reasons for not distributing all text-books to all eligible students in relevant medium are: all books of different subjects/not available/not supplied, said 20.7 per cent school teachers and HMs; books not received in the DPO and, in turn, could not be distributed to schools and to children. 5.8 per cent teachers and HMs in schools said that since books of all subjects in different classes were not received these could not be distributed to all eligible children in all classes. In some schools teachers and VSS members pointed out that these textbooks are not easily available in the open market and, as a result, those students who are not covered under the free textbook scheme are not able to fetch them from open market and thus they at times remain without textbooks. In some schools non-availability of textbooks in relevant medium i.e. Urdu, also caused distribution of textbooks to lesser number of children than those who were eligible. For example, in M.S. Yashodha Art Kanya, Arah, Bhojpur Urdu language and Urdu medium textbooks for all subjects and all classes were not received from SPO/DPO and so eligible students in Urdu medium were given Hindi medium textbooks and were made to study in Hindi medium. In M.S.Nawada, Arah books on some subjects could not reach from SPO/DPO till the end of the session and so students were supplied the available subjects books only. School teachers and HMs in other

districts also reported similar problems that books of all subjects were not received and books as per requirement were not sent to them and so many eligible students remained without one or the other book(s) throughout the year. Similar observations were heard from HMs and teachers in other visited schools regarding delayed supply or no supply of textbooks on time for all subjects, in required medium for all eligible children. In M.S. Rupdih, Motihari not a single textbook was received during the session 2006-07. In Govt. Girls School, Lal Bazar, Betiah books were distributed in September & October. In Vipin Model School, Betiah one installment of books was received in March and another in October 2006 and still supply of books as per requirement particularly for Urdu medium students was not complete.

Some DPCs also pointed out that sometimes delay in supply of textbooks down to the school is caused due to non clarity of the provision of transport cost for taking books from BRC to CRC and CRC to school. There is no provision of transportation cost for textbooks from BRC to the schools. In order to expedite distribution of textbooks the DPC, Bhojpur has started supplying textbooks directly from DPO to CRCs by its own transport. This has resulted in saving on time that was taken by one more link in the chain i.e. BRC.

Some teachers and VSS members also drew M.I. attention towards the fact that there are many such children in their schools who come from below poverty line families but they are not covered under free textbooks

scheme. They are not in a position to purchase textbooks from the open market. Suggestion was made to request the SSA authorities to extend free textbooks benefit to these BPL children also.

### **3.4 School grant**

Primary and upper primary schools in the districts are given one annual token grant of Rs. 2000 by SPO for purchase of small items of school needs.

The SPO had got approval of PAB for 50754 primary and 19420 upper primary schools for release of school grant during the current financial year. By the end of the year this grant was released to DPOs for 45541(89.7%) primary and 15962 (82.2%) upper primary schools, both taken together, 61504 or 87.64% schools. In financial terms, out of a budget amount for school grant of Rs. 14.03 crores, a sum of Rs. 12.30 or 87.65% was released to the DPOs. Three fourth (74%) of this grant was released in the first half of the year particularly during July-September, 2006 and the remaining during the second half of the financial year. Thus this grant was released to the DPOs much after the lapse of the prescribed period of two months from the start of the academic session. Obviously release of this grant by DPOs to schools got further delayed and hence it's on time utilization and benefit to schools also got affected.

During field visits to five districts the MI noticed that targets of school grant for Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Chamapran as reported by SPO were much higher than the targets reported by the DPO. According to SPO, these targets were for 1582, 2171, 2532, 1149 and 1781 primary schools, and for 566, 815, 801, 410 and 670 upper primary schools,

respectively whereas DPOs submitted that approval was granted for 1090, 1470, 2111, 1149 and 1249 primary schools, and 436,735, 866, 410 and 531 upper primary schools, respectively for the current financial year. The discrepancy in these figures could not be explained.

(ii) As stated earlier the SPO released a major part of this grant to DPOs in second quarter and later in the financial year which was not as per the prescribed time of two months from the opening of the schools. Some discrepancy was noticed between the number of schools for which grant was released by SPO to the DPOs and grant having been released in turn by DPOs to the schools. SPO released school grant to DPOs of Bhojpur, East Chamapran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran for 1582, 1436, 2405, 796 and 1761 primary schools and 467, 1450, 606, 384 and 567 upper primary schools, respectively during the current financial year. DPOs of these districts reported to have released this grant to 1582, 1436, 2527, 796 and 1716 primary schools and 467, 1450, 629, 384 and 567 upper primary schools, respectively. DPOs of Gaya and West Chamapran released this grant for 122 and 22 more primary schools, respectively and DPOs of East Champaran and Gaya released this grant in excess of what they had received from SPO for 721 and 23 more upper primary schools, respectively. All the three DPOs of East Champaran, Gaya and West Champaran have interestingly released this grant to extra schools i.e. 122+22 primary and 721+23 upper primary schools in the month of March, 2007. The reason for release of school grant in excess of what the

DPOs had received from SPO and that too so late in the financial year could not be explained. During field visit by M.I. 455 out of 643 visited schools (70.8%) reported to have received the school grant from DPOs. Highest number of schools i.e. 61.3 per cent reported to have received their school grant in the months of July-December, 2006. 29.6 per cent also reported to have received their school grant in January-March, quarter of the financial year 2006-07.

All DPOs reported to have circulated the guidelines to schools for utilization of the school grant. However, only 32.2 per cent schools in the five visited districts confirmed that they received these guidelines.

- (iii) So far as centralized purchases from school grant released to VSS is concerned, except DPO Bhojpur, all have reported that no centralized purchases were made from this grant. The purchases in these cases were made by the VSS only. Generally VSS have spent this amount on purchasing utensils for cooking mid\_day meal and sometimes on acquiring durries, etc. for school.
- (iv) It was clear that VSSs received school grant from DPOs quite late and generally after a time lag of at least a fortnight from the date it was released by the DPO due to the slow clearing process followed by rural and other banks. Again, time lag was noticed between the receipt of grant by VSS from DPO and its actual utilization by the VSS. The VSS has to take formal permission from its members before utilizing this fund. The delay in receipt and utilization of this grant at VSS level was noticed in

almost all the schools. For example, VSS of Primary School Madhu Saraiyan in Gopalganj received the cheque of this grant in September 2006 and it took one and a half months to get it cleared from the bank. As a result VSS of this school could spend this fund only in December, 2006. Govt. Girls Middle School, Lal Bazar, Betiah did not receive any School Grant this year.

- (v) School grant received by VSS was generally utilized as per guidelines within the given financial year. But sometimes if the amount has been cleared as late as in the end of the financial year, this remains unspent in the concerned financial year itself. Passbooks of visited schools were perused. The amounts shown in the VSS bank passbooks related with receipt of funds and withdrawal for expenditure against this credit in their accounts was checked in visited schools. A general expenditure register was being maintained for keeping record of all the expenditures including the one from this grant. In Rupdih Middle School, East Champaran as per passbook entries this grant was credited to the VSS account in February'07. However, till May, 2007 this year's (2006-07) school grant was not spent. The VSS/school was not maintaining any cashbook or ledger book.

### **3.5 Teachers and Teacher Training:**

Teachers in the school setup and their preservice and continuing inservice training matters a great deal for improving quality of teaching and level of learning. It is the main and ultimate object to be achieved through SSA support.

- (i) In the year 2006-07, 80522 posts of primary and upper primary school teachers were sanctioned for 37 districts, except the DPO of Patna (Urban). Highest number of teachers were approved for districts of Muzaffarpur (9604), Gaya (9364) and Saran (9284). Against these sanctioned posts 86680 new primary and upper primary teachers were appointed in the State this year. These appointments included those which were made against last year's sanctioned vacant posts under SSA. In the visited districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran the targets of this intervention for this year were 1741, 2308, 2828, 2510 and 2586 teachers and appointments in these districts were made in the order of 1918, 1704, 3862, 2811 and 3092, respectively which shows that in four of the five sample districts more appointments were made than the posts sanctioned for this year for the reason that these included spillover posts of teachers sanctioned last year. If we take all categories of teachers and HMs for whom outlay was approved for this year including the spillover i.e. teachers for new P.S. (3000), last year's sanctioned P.S. teachers (1096), HMs for newly upgraded UPS (822), new TGTs in upgraded UPS (1644), HMs and TGTs in upgraded UPS sanctioned last year (7317+14634), additional teachers sanctioned for P.S. and UPS (48056) and additional teachers for last year sanctioned UPS and P.S. (80512), the total strength of approved posts comes to 184081 teachers and HMs under SSA. Against these posts 157134 (85%) teachers were appointed during the current financial year which was a substantial

achievement of the target. A sum of Rs. 432.14 crores (72%) out of the sanctioned budget of Rs. 597.39 crores was spent on this activity this year.

When the figures of sanctioned posts of teachers for the year 2006-07 in five visited districts were compared with the records of DPOs it was found that SPO & DPOs had the same figures of sanctioned posts. However, when actual appointments reported by SPO were compared with actual appointments reported by DPOs in five districts, it was found that except East Champaran other four DPOs informed that not a single appointment was made against these sanctioned posts this year. The East Champaran DPO reported that 3274 additional teachers were appointed in the month of March 2007. The SPO had reported that only 1704 appointments of teachers were made in this district. The discrepancy in reports of SPO and DPOs could not be explained.

- (ii) The recruiting bodies at the district and subdistrict levels are the PRI institutions across the State. Recruitment in all the districts was done in a decentralized manner in both rural and urban areas. There are three categories of teachers who are being recruited in the State viz. Panchayat Shikshaks (Primary school teachers in rural areas), Prakhhand teachers (upper primary school teachers in rural areas) and Nagar Shikshaks (primary and upper primary school teachers in urban areas in a district) In urban areas Nagar Palikas will collect applications of candidates, process them and appoint Nagar Shikshaks for Nagar Palika maintained primary and upper primary schools. At block level Panchayat Samitis will process

the applications for Prakhand Shikshaks (Block Teachers) and appoint them in upper primary schools in the respective blocks. Similarly, at the third level the Gram Panchayats will process applications for the posts of Panchayat Shikshaks for primary schools falling in their jurisdiction and supervision.

Recruitments were made on the basis of the required qualifications possessed by the applicants and scores obtained by them in these qualifications. The basis of selection for appointment is a common score earned by each eligible applicant which is computed on the basis of his/her qualifications and division earned in each qualification and preservice teacher training completed by him/her. Selection was made on the basis of a cut off score calculated after placing in merit order the total scores earned by each applicant based on their qualifications. Merit list is prepared for applicants in each PRI. For recruitment of teachers at any of the above three levels, the State has done away with any kind of interview or screening test. For those selected teachers who do not possess any prescribed preservice teacher's training degree/ diploma, arrangements will be made for their training through distance mode in collaboration with IGNOU. In all the five visited districts recruitment process was in advanced stage and already many selected teachers had joined in the concerned school.

- (iii) The appointments of all the Nigam Shikshaks, Prakhand Shikshaks and Panchayat Shikshaks have been made on regular basis but still none of

these teachers are being paid their full salary rather, a lump sum amount per month has been fixed for each of the three types of teachers. No doubt, salaries being offered to them now even at fixed rates are much higher than what was offered to PSMs or para teachers who were doing almost the same work as is being done by the presently recruited teachers. The recruited teachers are the employees of the Government of Bihar. It is reported that after the lapse of a fixed period all these teachers will be given their full salaries as per the prescribed scale.

It was generally reported by the visited DPOs and also by the SPO that the appointments of Nigam Shikshaks, Panchayat Shikshaks and Prakhand Shikshaks have been made on regular basis. However, East Champaran DPO informed that all these appointments of teachers by PRIs in this district were initially made on contractual basis but now these appointees have been confirmed in their respective positions.

- (iv) Panchayats/VSS/Nagar Nigams have been duly empowered to make decentralized recruitment of teachers for schools being maintained and supervised by them. Appointments made by these agencies are being treated as done on behalf of the Government and so these teachers are considered as the employees of the Government of the Bihar. Detailed guidelines for recruitment of these teachers were issued by the State Government laying down the procedure to be followed and criteria to be used while making these recruitments. The local community in the visited districts as well as the teachers were found satisfied with these

decentralized appointments in more than 65 per cent cases. MI came across some grumble about the problems with the officials at the helms of affair. For example, in West Champaran district some teachers and community members informed the MI representative on condition of anonymity of palm greasing being encouraged by the BEEO of Mainatand block.

- (v) However, in general the local community has considered this teacher recruitment drive in which local qualified persons are being given preference as a very good job opportunity for them. More than 65 per cent members of the community and new teachers in schools have expressed their satisfaction towards these recruitments.
- (vi) Districtwise lists of teachers' positions, appointed teachers on these positions, number of teachers present on the day of MI visit and the names of habitual absentee teachers may be seen from Annexures IV& V. Against 3393 posts of teachers in 643 schools in five sample districts, 2918 (86%) teachers were found present in schools during the MI visit. For example, in M.S. Balakpur, Koilwar, Bhojpur against 10 posts 7 teachers and one Nagar Shikshak were appointed. All the eight were found present in the school. In Govt. Girls Middle School, Lal Bazar, Betiah, against 12 sanctioned posts only 5 teachers including HM had appointed since 1990. A few habitual absentee teachers were also reported during visit to sample schools who would remain absent from school for days together without proper authorization.

- (vii) As was deduced from discussions held with the VSS members and observed during the progress of teaching in classrooms by the MI representatives, the rapport between the teachers and their students was restricted to delivery of subject content by teachers and only a limited opportunity of question answer based interaction was usually provided by the teachers to their students.
- (viii) A target to provide inservice training to 152302 teachers was approved for the current financial year at a cost of Rs. 15.2 crores. This target excluded one day CRC level reflection meetings of teachers. If spillover of 2005-06 is also included, the target would be 255936 teachers for which a total outlay of Rs. 36.54 crores was approved. By the end of the financial year only 60351 (39.62%) teachers were provided inservice training. 30969 of them received training in second half (Oct-March) of the financial year 2006-07. If spillover is also taken into account, in all, 87251 (34.1%) teachers could be provided inservice training at a cost of Rs. 11 crores during the year which is not a very satisfactory achievement.

In the five sample districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran against the target of 3396, 9532, 4406, 2096 and 2908 (22338) teachers 2491, 875, 3165, 00 and 1298 (7039) (31.5%) teachers could be provided inservice training during this year was below the State level average of 39.62% teachers receiving inservice training. The situation was worst in the cases of Gopalganj where not a single teacher could be given this training and in East Champaran hardly

875 (0.09%) teachers could be provided inservice training. There are some other districts like Banka, Jehanabad, Khagaria, Madhubani, Nalanda, Saharsa and Siwan where similar low level (around 10-15%) training was imparted to teachers.

Inservice training programmes for teachers are arranged at district and subdistrict levels in the form of sequential training courses of Ujala I, II & III and subject centred refresher courses and general orientation courses. Each DPO draws its own training calendar of the year for inservice training programmes to be organized at BRCs for teachers and other functionaries associated with SSA implementation. Among the five districts visited training calendar was prepared by DPOs at Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts for this year. The trainings are imparted by a mix of external resource persons and the resource teachers appointed in the BRCs. These training programmes are generally supervised and monitored by BRCCs and occasionally by the DPCs also. Content of these training programmes is decided at the BRC level except for the content of subject centred training programme in which resource persons from the district office also participate. For Ujala trainings and subject refresher training courses modules have been developed at the State level which are adopted at lower levels.

During the course of training, feedback is taken from the participants on a programme but there is no regular system to take more feedback from other sources after the trainees join back their regular

teaching. Training programmes are being organized for Panchayat Shikshaks for a period 51 days divided into 25+5+21 days' phased training. The phase of 25+5 days training was over and 21 days field work/training was in progress in Gopalganj. BRC, Betiah, West Champaran organized training for 3 batches of 3 days training for IED, two PSM training of trainers of 3 days each, one PSM key Resource Persons training was organized, one 30 days training of Panchayat Shikshaks is to be followed by 21 days field work and one Ujala-III Maths T.o.T. of 5 days duration. BRC, Motihari, East Champaran organized Ujala-II of 10 days for 10 batches of 40 teachers each, Ujala I for 10 days, a batch of 350 teachers, two batches of Panchayat Shikshaks and Parkhand and Nagar Shikshaks, 4 days IED-I training for two batches of PS/NS; 3 days residential training of two batches of 80 PSs, and two batches of 85 PSMs of 3 days duration each were trained. At BRC Behiyan two Parkhand Shikshak training programmes of 5 days duration with 39 PS was in progress. It was after 25 days training organized earlier for the same group. It also organized a training of 20 PS, for 5 days, two Ujala III trainings with 38 and 52 teachers, and a 30 days training programme for 39 PS.

DPO, Bhojpur organized training programmes for 1000 teachers and 2000 PSMs during the year 2006-07. In its 9 BRCs training for 40 Panchayat and Parkhand Shikshaks on an average was in progress for 25+5 days duration. BRC organized 3 batches of 5 days duration of Ujala

III for Panchayat Shikshaks. Training programmes of Panchayat Shikshaks and Nagar Shikshaks of 25 days duration was in progress in BRC, Behea with 40 teachers. At BRC Udwant Nagar, Ujala III training was in progress for school teachers.

- (viii) 152302 teachers as per the fresh target and 255936 teachers including the spillover of 2005-06 were stipulated to be provided inservice training during the current financial year. However, only 87251 (34.09%) teachers which included 60351 teachers from the current year's target could be given inservice training. The target included training of 30 days duration to all the newly recruited 80495 teachers in different districts which of course could not be delivered to all of them. Only 26092 such teachers (32.41%) could get 30 days orientation training by the end of the year. Some 14 districts in fact drew a complete blank in this regard. No target was fixed for Patna Urban for this training.
- (ix) The SPO had planned and got approved 60 days refresher training for 23112 working teachers. However, none in this group could be provided the proposed training during the year. RPs at the BRCs were prepared to arrange this training in BRCs and DIETs. The mode of training for these teachers was face-to-face to be carried out under the supervision of DPO.

The 40000 untrained teachers working in the State will receive training from IGNOU as per an agreement signed with it. The five visited districts have  $4000+1281+1600+1377+602 = 8860$  untrained teachers who needed immediate attention for their training.

- (x) SPO has appointed quality coordinators to monitor teacher training programmes in the State. They are Education Officers who have been made responsible to coordinate and monitor the teacher training programmes in the State. DPCs in the visited districts during the course of discussion expressed their satisfaction towards the quality of different programmes organized at BRCs/CRCs though they did feel that there is scope for further strengthening of these training programmes by involving teacher educators from colleges/departments of education. The weak teacher education structures in the districts and in the entire State are acting as a limitation and handicap in this regard.

While interacting with teachers in the visited schools in five districts it was found that teachers, in general, were satisfied with inservice training as well as induction training organized for them at BRCs. Many of them had attended Ujala I, II and also Ujala III. Some PS/NS who had also attended the 30 days training also found satisfied with the kind of exposure and training in teaching they received in the 51 days orientation programme organized at BRCs. However, participants felt that they needed to receive more training in activity based teaching and making learning a joyful experience. Some felt that instead of teaching them the content of subjects they should be taught about the pedagogy of transacting these subjects. Some felt that physical education resource persons may also be invited for a couple of sessions for their benefit. Some participants drawn from Urdu medium schools held that experts of

Urdu teaching should also be invited as recourse persons and sessions on Urdu teaching methodology should be included in the inservice training programmes which were completely missing. This was particularly emphasized by participants of a 30 days PS/NS training programme which was in progress at BRC Behea, Bhojpur. The orientation programme, felt the MI Representative during visit to Gaya, needs to be followed with another cycle of specialized training in specific areas for the benefit of PS/NS who are basically untrained teachers. This has to be kept in mind by both BRCCs and CRCCs while training these PS/NS.

(xi) The MI teams visited 39 BRCs and 60 CRCs as mentioned in the appended list at Annexure I. Activities being carried at these centres as found out by MI teams during their visits to these places have been discussed here in brief.

(a) Various inservice and induction/orientation training programmes are being organized by BRCs for teachers and Panchayat Shikshaks, Nigam Shikshaks, ToTs, key resource persons, VSS members, building committee members, etc. for durations ranging from 2 days to 30 days with an addition of field work in continuation of orientation training of 30 days. Untrained Panchayat Shikshaks are receiving 25+5+21 days training at BRCs. For example, BRC Barauli was found organizing 25 days, PS orientation training which will be followed by 5 days 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of training. It has already organized 2 days training for VSS for building construction orientation for six members from each VSS in the block. The training

focused on civil work. BRC, Gopalganj had just completed 51 days PS orientation training programme in three phases of 25+5+21 days. No programme was in progress BRC at Betiah, West Champaran was found conducting a 3 day training programme in 3 batches for IED workers which were joined by 118 teachers. It organized several other programmes including 5 day Ujala III in subject of Maths for 36 teachers. It has planned to organise Ujala I for 34 PSM in July'07. This BRC has also organized one key Resource Persons training for P.S. and 2 ToT programmes of 3 days each for PSMs joined by 52 and 68 KRPs and ToTs, respectively. For 40 PS a 30 days programme of orientation was in progress. A two day workshop for VSS members on building/civil works was also organized during the year 2006-07. BRC at Motihari block is still under construction and not fully functional. No RPs were appointed till now in this BRC. Yet it has been able to organize 10 cycles of Ujala II of 10 days duration for about 400 teachers, 9 cycles of Ujala I for about 350 PSMs for 10 days each, two batches of 86 PS/MS of 30 days duration and 3 days residential training programme for 80 PS in two batches. In Bhojpur BRC Behiyan a 25 day Parkhan Shikshak training for 39 PS was in progress. With the help of 3 RPs who were supervising preparation of teaching aids by participants. Training was being supervised regularly by ToTs who also provide useful suggestions to RPs.

At CRCs, monthly reflection meetings are being organized regularly. It is expected that in these meetings reflection on hard spots in

the syllabus shall be discussed, model teaching on these points will be organized and other academic issues will be discussed. However, many a time, routine administrative issues are discussed. Separately selected CRCCs have now been appointed CRCCs visit schools and AIE centres regularly round the week. Monthly meetings in CRCs are held on a fixed date. For example, in Motihari block these meetings are held on 11<sup>th</sup> of every month. The CRC at M.S. Rupdih has 17 schools and 74 teachers in this cluster. According to its CRCC seventy per cent teachers attend the monthly meetings. He visits each school 2-3 times a month. During these visits he also visits classrooms and observes teaching-learning in progress and also pays attention on distribution of MDM in schools. On CRC meeting days teaching remains suspended in schools. CRC at Luthana has only 4 schools with 33 teachers in its domain. A look at CRC minutes book revealed that attendance ranges between 22 to 28 teachers. Main discussion is on TLM, government orders/communications, teachers demands to be communicated to HMs. CRCC feels that absentee teachers are not taken seriously and their names are not reported to higher authorities for any action. CRCC at Girls Middle School Bahiyar Nagar Panchayat, Bhojpur has 13 schools with 50 teachers under its supervision. CRCC is organizing regular meetings and almost all teachers attend these meetings regularly. CRCC reportedly visits each school twice every week which does not seem to be correct. He is reported to be rather less active. In meetings, teachers say, not much attention is paid on issues concerning

quality of teaching-learning.

BRCs and CRCs follow a calendar of training and monthly meetings as decided at DPO level. Generally this calendar is adhered to except in rare cases. For example in CRC Sakadhi, Bhojpur monthly meeting of March 2007 could not be held. In the meetings at CRC as pointed out, more of routine administrative matters are discussed and sometimes hard spots are also taken up. Their activities are reviewed in BRC meetings every month which are attended by CRCCs of the Block. There again review of implementation or communication of administrative matters dominates these meetings. In these meetings rarely any review is done of effectiveness of a new set of teaching material or method of teaching as taught in any training programme in the BRC training. As observed by some teachers and CRCCs monthly meetings are routinised affairs. If some teachers don't attend them frequently no action is initiated against them at higher levels. CRCC Mahavir Govt. Middle School Luathahan, Motihari and others held similar views.

(b) BRCCs and CRCCs are expected to pay monthly and weekly visits to the schools in their area regularly. While interacting with CRCCs often it was claimed that they visit every school two to three times every week which does not seem to be meaningfully feasible. And if at all this frequency is being observed it is not going to serve much purpose. Some CRCCs like one at M.S. Rupdih, Motihari, and others were more realistic when they reported that they are able to visit each school twice or at the

most thrice a month, not every week. Many of them have good number of schools under their supervision like, CRC Rupdih has 17 schools or CRC Behiyan Nagar Panchayat has 13 schools to supervise. The BRCCs visit to schools is more limited than what is expected of them. They feel that they are heavily occupied in several official works and sometimes they are looking after the BRC in addition to other responsibilities and so it is generally not possible for them to visit every school in the block per month.

During visits to schools CRCCs, visit classes and supervise teaching. They also make suggestions and give feedback to teachers. They also sometimes supervise distribution of MDM and ensure compliance of any official communication received from DPO/BRC in the schools. They also look into the test results of students and sometimes with teachers' help identify difficult topics in school subjects to be dealt with during monthly meetings. Occasionally only model lessons are arranged. However, no specific efforts are made to see if classroom teaching is being improved or how children are fairing in their tests. In BRC meetings of CRCCs administrative and organizational matters dominate. During visits to schools by BRCCs which are limited and of shorter duration no attempt is made to see if the training imparted in any particular programme organized at BRC is being followed up in the course of teaching learning by those who were trained at the BRC. No specific innovative steps by

BRC/CRC for improving teacher performance were reported during the M.I. visits to schools.

(c) In Bihar the preservice teacher education system, of which DIETs are an important part, is out of gear for many years now. Hence, DIETs with their envisaged role are not in existence. In many districts they don't exist and if they do in some, they are under-staffed and being used only for organizing some inservice programmes by the DPO. Visit to existing DIETs reveals a pathetic state of affairs. The available DIET faculty is occasionally engaged in programmes of inservice/orientation training organized by BRCs where they play the role of resource persons. Gaya DIET which has been one of the two or three most functional and active DIETs in the entire State is not able to keep pace with its past record of activities as it is seriously handicapped by shortage of staff. Those who have retired during the last 5 years have not been replaced. The remaining staff consists of a principal and a sole lecturer. Principal is stationed in a state office in Patna and rarely visits the DIET and the lecturer who comes regularly is going to retire shortly. She is also not involved in any inservice training programmes or supervision or guidance activities.

(d) BRCs and CRCs are extending their support to AIE centres also. EGS centres have already been phased out. The AIE centres which earlier included EGS/AIE centres are being supported by the BRC of the area. There are Apna Vidyalay and Angna Vidyalay which are supported academically by BRCs & CRCs. BRCC/CRCC visit these centres and

provide them with academic support and guidance. AIE centres volunteers attend the monthly meetings of CRC and learn from the interactions held there. AIE centres include madrasas also. But from two visited madrasas in Ara, Bojpur it was found out that the BRC and CRC concerned have no interaction with these madrasas at all.

- (xii) SPO has a Quality Coordinator. Education Officers in the State have reportedly been assigned this responsibility. At present their role is restricted to monitor the teacher training programmes organized across the State so that these programmes lead to improvement in quality of teaching-learning in schools. Not much seems to have been done in this direction. The idea is yet to take a shape and show its impact.

### **3.6 TLM Grant**

As a part of the process to improve quality of classroom transaction in elementary schools attempt was made to ensure that suitable supplementary materials are readily available at the disposal of the teachers and are used by them and their students during the course of teaching learning. To facilitate them in this direction a sum of Rs. 500 per teacher per annum is released to him/her through the school/VSS every year and it is expected that by preparing or acquiring relevant teaching learning material from this fund and using it in the classroom he/she will be able to enhance interest and motivation of students and their understanding of the content being transacted.

- (i) 222752 teachers in 38 districts were considered as eligible for receiving TLM grant during the year 2006-07. However, TLM grant of Rs. 8.93

crores (80.20%) was released for 178490 (80.13%) teachers during the year. Some districts received hundred per cent TLM grant while others got less than what was approved. The lowest TLM grant was released to West Champaran (17.13%) Gaya (17.13%), Purnea (17.3%) and Bhagalpur (42.35%) whereas in most cases it was around 90 per cent. In the five districts visited by the MI viz, Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran, the targets approved for TLM as per SPO were for 6017, 11408, 10293, 6107 and 6525 teachers and grant released was for 6016, 10368, 3824, 6107 and 1118 teachers, respectively. As per DPO records of these districts the approved outlays and release of grant was exactly the same as was shown in SPO records of this intervention.

- (ii) The TLM grant was released by the SPO in July-September 2006 and it was released by the DPOs throughout the year. For example, in Bhojpur district it was released even in March 2007; in East Champaran it was released from August '06 through January'07; in Gaya it continued to be released until March'07; in Gopalganj and West Chamaparan also it was released in the second half of the year 2006-07. During visit to schools it was reported by the teachers in all the five districts that necessary instructions have been issued by the DPOs regarding use of TLM grant.
- (iii) The session in the year under study had started in January 2006. By the middle of the session (June 2006) only 16.7 per cent teachers in five districts had received the TLM grant. By the end of September 2006, the middle of the financial year, only 27.6 per cent teachers had received this

grant. In the quarter October-December another 25.3 per cent were disbursed this grant. Major part of the grant i.e. 47 per cent was distributed to teachers in the quarter Jan-March 2007 when the session was over. The next session as per GOB's decision, started in April, 2007.

Among the 643 visited schools TLM was found displayed in 58.4% classrooms. In the rest, these materials were either kept in store/almirah or were not seen around. The MIR during his visit to 11 schools did not find TLM in a single classroom. The grant he felt was not utilized properly. Display of teaching aids was generally confined to charts, maps, flash cards, globes, chalkboard, items of stationery, some toys, etc. Only 51 per cent teachers in the visited schools were found using the available TLM bringing the possibility of TLM impact on teaching learning process to half, to begin with. The use of TLM was also quite routinised. Hardly any good or innovative example of use of TLM in teaching learning process could be observed by MIRs in visited schools. In visited schools most of the teachers had received training in preparation and use of teaching learning material generally at the BRC and CRC levels and sometimes also in the Ujala training for teachers and orientation programmes meant for P.S. The CRC level one day meeting was used to conduct a workshop for TLM development which was also repeated as per teachers' requirement. However, a maximum number of teachers in the visited schools (70.8%) had received this training during their 10 day training programme. Only 6 per cent had received this training in

reflection meetings at CRC and 12.2 per cent had been trained during their 30 days orientation programme. Maximum amount of TLM training (44%) was received by teachers at BRCs and sometimes at DIET (5%) and DPO (8%). However, despite teachers having been trained in preparation and use of teaching learning material generally it was noticed that preference was given by them to purchasing ready made materials or preparing TLM generally in the form of charts of routinesied type, at times done in a shabby manner. Obviously, such TLM may not produce the desired impact on student learning. Trainers of these teachers in TLM were generally the ToTs or RPs or sometimes CRCCs or more experienced school teachers. The MI could not come across any example of sharing and demonstration of good practices in use of TLM amongst the teachers.

### **3.7 EGS/AIE Centres and NRBC and RBC**

As has been reported earlier the GOB has finally phased out all its EGS centres as on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2006, and in place, either new primary schools have been opened or children enrolled in these centres have been enrolled in the nearby existing or new schools. For example, in West Champaran against 747 EGS Centres 631 new primary schools have been sanctioned/opened. Community members reported that almost all the 116 EGS centres for which no new school has been sanctioned were Urdu medium. So all the children of these 116 Urdu medium EGS centres have been diverted to Hindi Medium schools. In this regard DPC reported that no discrimination was made between Urdu medium and Hindi

medium EGS centres while sanctioning their conversion to primary schools. It is only by chance that this would have happened so. He agreed to look into the parents' contention objectively.

In Bihar AIE Centres are organized in the form of Apna Vidyalayas and Angna Vidyalayas by NGOs. Swayam Sidha, Ant Uday Chetna Mandal, Samoshesh, Sarthak and Mahila Samakhya are the mother NGOs which are helping in the organization of various AIE Centres. Apna Vidyalayas are meant for children of 6-11 years and are gradually being reduced in number. Angna Vidyalayas are meant for girls of 9-14 years and are expanding in number. These AIE centres are also organized under the supervision of Mahila Samakhya as Bal Jagjagi Centres meant for children of 3-6 years age. AIE centres are also run in maktabs and madrasas for minority community children.

The State also makes other interventions for out of school children like Back to School Cams – Vidyalaya Chalo Camps, Bridge Courses and Residential Bridge Courses for short durations. For example, the duration of Vidyalaya Chalo Camp is of 3 months to prepare the child to join a formal school.

Exact number of these AIE centers/courses was not made available by the SPO. Targets and achievements for these interventions have however, been specified in terms of number of children to be enrolled and actually enrolled in EGS/AIE Centres and NRBC/RBC Centres.

By the close of the year 2005-06 a large number of children were enrolled in EGS/AIE Centres as may be seen from the table given below. The table also shows the targets laid down for the year 2006-07 and enrolments done in these

Centres during the year. The enrolment figures for the current year as supplied by the SPO on the Data Capture Form of MI are much higher than the targets approved for the current year as supplied by SPO. The SPO also submitted a separate statement of approved outlays and approved budget for 2006-07 which included spillovers from 2005-06 and actual achievements. The achievement figures shown in this SPO supplied statement also do not tally with the achievement figures shown by SPO on Data Capture Form of M.I. These figures are being produced below.

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Children enrolled till March 2006</b>	<b>Target for 2006-07</b>	<b>Target for 2006-07 including spillover</b>	<b>Actual enrolment supplied to MI on DC format</b>	<b>Actual enrolment as per SPO's statement of outlays</b>
EGS Centres	3,76,080	11,69,660	12,00,139	6,41,842	10,78,626
Bridge Courses (NRBC)	37,618	1,26,820	5,92,060	6,85,599	1,27,949
Residential Camps (Res.Bridge Courses)	1,660	8,910	37,666	6,66,249	8,816
AIE Centres & others	1,29,938	1,22,862	8,21,020	6,39,855	2,07,956
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,45,296</b>	<b>14,28,252</b>	<b>26,50,885</b>	<b>26,33,545</b>	<b>14,23,349</b>

**Source: Annual Progress Report with spillover 2006-07.**

There is a serious discrepancy in the figures supplied in two different documents by the SPO, even, if spillovers and spillover included achievements are taken into account. In view of these discrepancies, the districtwise analysis and comparisons have been done on the basis of data supplied by SPO on MI Data Capture format and the data of five districts supplied by DPOs for EGS/AIE on related interventions.

- (ii) During the year 2006-07, 2633545 children were enrolled in EGS/ AIE Centres/RBC/NRBCs as per the SPO supplied information to M.I. on data

capture format which came to 1205293 children in excess of the target for this year. The enrolment figures with spillover were surprisingly much less than the figures furnished for current year's achievement by SPO. If we consider the spillover inclusive targets as the final ones and compare achievement figures shown in M.I. data capture format with it then it becomes clear that the achievement was very close to the targets. It is also not clear when the SPO has repeatedly stated that as per its policy all EGS Centres have been phased out by September 2006, why it continues to show targets as well as achievement/enrolment figures for EGS Centres on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 in every document submitted by it.

Districtwise and categorywise target and achievement figures for AIE Centres in the five sample districts were also studied. The figures have been taken from SPO supplied information on Data Capture format and the QPR 2006-07 submitted by DPOs of five districts. Both may be seen at Annexure VI & VII. These comparisons may be seen from the following table.

**Table showing number of children planned to be enrolled and actually enrolled in EGS/AIE & NRBC/RBC Centres 2006-07 in 5 Districts**

District	Intervention	SPO supplied data		DPO supplied data	
		Target	Actually enrolled children	Target	Actually enrolled children
<b>Bhojpur</b>	(a) EGS	16628	4950	23214	00
	(b) AIE& others	8873	405	15209	7562
	(c) NRBC	1155	9186	4120	00
	(d) RBC	00	683	683	00
	(e) School Camps	-	-	00	00
<b>East Champaran</b>	(a) EGS	155542	5049	177790	157617
	(b) AIE & others	5151	225	38536	8984

	(c) NRBC	00	00	00	00
	(d) RBC	00	00	00	00
	(e) S.C.	-	-	00	3900
<b>Gaya</b>	(a) EGS	42966	1622	42123	00
	(b) AIE& others	5428	100	16661	1700
	(c) NRBC	00	00	185	00
	(d) RBC	00	185	00	00
	(e) School Camps	-	-	00	00
<b>Gopalganj</b>	(a) EGS	39974	2636	40858	33213
	(b) AIE& others	1445	100	3177	00
	(c) NRBC	00	8112	7712	00
	(d) RBC	00	1081	1081	00
	(e) School Camps	-	-	-	-
<b>West Champan</b>	(a) EGS	64927	5432	69432	69432
	(b) AIE& others	12343	450	51283	8664
	(c) NRBC	17515	46297	34884	00
	(d) RBC	00	650	650	50
	(e) School Camps	-	-	3500	2502

**Source: Data Capture Format III of M.I. and QPR 2006-07 from 5 districts**

It may be seen from the above table that the targets as well as achievement figures supplied by the SPO and DPOs of five districts suffer from wide discrepancies. Some items in the five districts have been shown with zero achievement in DPO records and these have been shown with specific achievement figures in SPO records. Similarly, targets of AIE enrollments shown in DPOs records are much higher in five districts than what has been shown in SPO records of these districts and their achievement in four districts is also much higher in DPO records than the SPO records. Similar is the case with EGS enrolment targets in at least four districts. Both the offices have reported these figures without spillovers. However, records of both the offices does show that at least in EGS/AIE Centres lot of enrolments have taken place during the year.

- (iii) MIR visited AIE centers and also schools opened in place of EGS centers. 59 such schools were visited which were operating as EGS centers earlier. AIE centers like Angna and Apna Vidyalayas, Maktabas, etc. were also visited. In general the attendance of students ranged between 46 per cent to 65 per cent. In Angna Vidyalaya, Doghara, Bihiyan, Bhojpur out of 30 enrolled girls 14 were present. In Angna Vidyalaya, Ghasiyar Patti, Betiah out of 15 girls enrolled, 11 were present. In madrasas Miftahululoom & Betiah out of 200 and odd students hardly fifty per cent were present.
- (iv) In district Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya and Gopalganj districts 449, 124, 2437 and 454 EVs are working. Everyone of these EVs has been trained. All have been given 10 days residential training in teaching and on other related issues concerning children joining alternative educational institutions etc. The training in each district was organized by the DPO at the BRCs. EVs were trained through VCK training modules provided by SPO. These modules are quite suitable and appropriate for EVs training as was also informed by these volunteers. The EVs are satisfied with the training imparted to them but feel that 10 days training is not sufficient to take up the EV responsibility. The training period or number of training cycles has to be increased. EVs give their feedback in the monthly meetings held at CRC level reflection meetings.
- (v) EVs are getting academic support regularly from the BRCCs and CRCCs as was reported by DPOs. EVs contacted by the MI, however, informed

that occasionally only they are getting this support. Sometimes they are invited to monthly reflection meetings of CRCs where they participate in the discussion on academic issues related to them. CRCCs have been instructed by DPO to provide support to EVs and to involve them in reflection meetings but this does not happen as often as it should. CRCCs visit the AIE Centres in the area on a limited scale.

- (vi) Generally the EVs are at least senior secondary passouts. In some cases they are graduates and post graduates also. But they have no formal training in teaching. They only possess academic qualifications and no teaching experience. The only training they have before joining as EV is the one arranged by DPOs for at least 10 days duration. Perhaps this is the only professional input and guidance that they received in concrete form before taking up their responsibility. The BRC or CRC hardly provided them any on-going academic support though all DPCs in their reports have claimed that they provide regular support to these EVs. But none provided any details of the kind of support they extended to the EVs. Only DPC East Champaran specifically reported that BRCCs/CRCCs guide them in methods of teaching and classroom management processes.
- (vii) EVs are getting a monthly honorarium of Rs.1000/- which is paid by cheque only. In general it was reported in all the visited districts that payment of their monthly honorarium is almost regular. In the previous monitoring visit of MI the payment of EV honorarium was found to be

generally late by 2-3 months in all the visited districts which seems to have improved now.

- (viii) EVs are regular in their duties and come to their centers regularly, as was reported by concerned VSSs. During field visits by MIRs EVs were generally found present in their centers.
- (ix) Every DPO has a designated district coordinator for AIE centers in the district. In Gaya DPO the ARP is a District Coordinator. Generally these designated coordinators are post graduates. For example, the one in East Champaran DPO is M.Sc. (Chemistry) and the district coordinator in Gaya is M.A. (Hindi). The district coordinators are not formally trained but in some cases they have been oriented for their job through a short training. The district coordinator at DPO Gaya has reportedly received 7 days capacity building training for this responsibility at SPO, Patna. Other DPOs have not furnished any such specific information regarding orientation of district coordinators for AIE centers.
- (x) The DPOs have developed a format for monitoring the activities of AIE/EGS centers operating in their area. During visit to the AIE centers by CRCC this format is used to collect relevant information which is furnished to SPO on quarterly basis.
- (xi) In the State all the existing EGS centers have been phased out during this year and in their place new primary schools have been opened. So the need for upgradation of these centers does not arise. It was reported by SPO that all the existing EGS centers have been phased out and in their place

new primary schools have been opened. But in case of some EGS centers their children have been sent to the nearby schools and in their place no new primary schools have been opened. For example, in district West Champaran against 747 EGS centers only 631 new primary schools have been opened and the children of the remaining 116 centres have been adjusted in the 631 new schools.

- (xii) Since the EGS centers in this State stand phased out the need for instructions by SPO for upgradation of EGS centers did not arise in this year. However, instructions for conversion of EGS centers into primary schools were issued and already funds for setting up these schools have been released, as reported by the SPO. Funds for construction of new primary schools in place of EGS centers are issued subject to identification of land for these schools.
- (xiii) SPO as well DPOs have failed to provide MI any figure of the exact number of EGS centers that have been phased out and in place the number of primary schools that have been opened this year. However, only two districts have furnished this information in part. In East Champaran 786, Gaya 723, new primary schools have been sanctioned in place of EGS centers. During discussions at DPO West Champaran it was reported that 631 new primary schools have been sanctioned in place of existing 747 EGS centers. But from other information furnished in the data capture formats by DPO West Champaran it seems much higher number of these centers have been replaced by new primary school. In East Champaran all

the sanctioned 756 new schools in place of EGS centers have reportedly been opened whereas in Gaya against 723 sanctioned schools only 244 have actually been opened. In West Champaran DPO has reported that SPO has already released funds to 1788 VSS for construction of new primary schools. DPO has also informed that land for 2419 new primary schools against phased out EGS centers has already been identified.

- (xiv) Actual upgradation/conversion of EGS Centres into primary schools has taken place in East Champaran, Gaya and West Champaran for 786, 224 and 631 schools, respectively. MI visited 59 such schools during field verification and found these schools opened in temporary alternative sites.
- (xv) Land for construction of new primary schools converted from EGS centers has been identified in West Champaran for 2419 schools. In East Champaran and Gaya it is in process. DPOs of Bhojpur and Gopalganj have not furnished any information in this regard. In the visited 59 new primary schools land was found to have been identified by the VSS. Land identification rests with the VSSs which in themselves are in the process of formation for the newly created schools as has been reported by DPO, East Champaran.
- (xvi) SPO has only informed in general terms that funds for new primary schools have been released. DPO records show that barring West Champaran district it has not been received in the DPOs/VSSs as it is tied with identification of land. In West Champaran land has been identified for 2419 new primary schools and according to DPO funds have already

been given to 1788 VSS in this district. Out of 23 new primary schools visited in this district VSS of 10 schools reported to have received funds for construction of school building. 10 more VSS in other districts informed that they have received funds for this purpose.

(xvii) Construction has started only in a few cases as was found out during field visits. Otherwise DPOs have not furnished any information on the start or phase of construction of new primary school buildings. Among 59 visited new primary schools construction has started in only 16 (27%) . In 85% cases it was either at foundation level or near lintel level. In only 15 per cent cases it was near completion stage.

(xviii) This year the SPO got 2466 posts of teachers approved from PAB for new primary schools planned to be opened during the year in place of the EGS centres. Actual appointments made against these posts in each districts and in the entire state have not been reported by SPO. In the five visited districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran share of these posts was 183, 159, 00, 00, and 24, respectively. Surprisingly, the DPOs of these districts have supplied quite different figures of sanctioned posts of teachers and appointments made against these posts for new primary schools. According to DPOs for this year 00, 1572, 1558, 00 and 11954 teachers posts were sanctioned and 00, 1572, 00, 00 and 9926 appointments respectively, were actually made against these posts. Barring Gopalganj, figures of sanctioned posts in the four districts don't match at all with the ones supplied by the SPO. The figures

of sanctioned and filled up posts of teachers in place of EGS centres and their volunteers (EVs) particularly in the case of West Champaran district are unrealistically different and DPOs figures of five districts exceed even beyond the total number of posts indicated by SPO for the entire State.

- (xix) SPO has not given districtwise details of number of children mainstreamed from EGS/AIE centres during the session 2006-07. Only aggregate data of 45192 and 72098 children, who have been mainstreamed from EGS and AIE centres during the year, respectively have been supplied. All these children have been mainstreamed in government schools only. The district or subdistrict authorities did not face any difficulty in mainstreaming these children except in those cases where a formal primary school within almost the same distance range as the phased out EGS/AIE Centre earlier existed, was not available. In the visited primary schools, school administration in Bhojpur and West Champaran confirmed that some children have been mainstreamed from EGS/AIE centres in the districts but none could give any exact figure in this regard. MI could find only 18 such students in the district of West Champaran who were mainstreamed from EGS/AIE centres.
- (xx) The AIE centres had durries in almost 40 per cent centres. Books were available in 80 per cent cases, blackboard and chalk & duster in 90 per cent centres and TLM in an equal number of centres.
- (xxi) MDM was being supplied only in twenty per cent centres. In the rest, it was not provided due to non availability of grant.

- (xxii) 425 children were found enrolled in 24 AIE centres. The attendance ranged between 50 to 55 per cent which came further down at the time of some social occasions in the community. This was despite the continuous attempt of the educational volunteers to bring children to the centres.
- (xxiii) In thirty per cent centres the achievement level was average and in sixty per cent it was satisfactory. The rest had poor achievement level.
- (xxiv) The EVs were maintaining better rapport with children enrolled in their centres than what was observed in schools and were paying more individual attention to them perhaps due to limited number of children given to their care in each case.
- (xxv) The AIE centres are provided reading material/books especially developed by SPO for children of these centres. These books were available with many children and were being used by the EVs. There was no abnormality in the distribution of the books. However, it was noticed that some children did not have these books while sitting in the centre though, as informed by EVs, they all had been supplied these books.

### **3.8. Children with Special Needs (CWSN)**

Keeping in view the right of the children with special needs to acquire education at par with other children, certain special provisions have been made in the SSA for these children.

- (i) As per the information supplied by SPO this year 242603 children were identified as CWSN in 38 districts including 4033, 11923, 7207, 3197 and 7256 children in Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West

Champaran, respectively. Out of them 155344 (65%) CWSN were enrolled during the current financial year including 3019, 8581, 5675, 2407 and 4962 (24644) CWSN in five districts, respectively. DPOs of five districts reported that 2100, 11923, 7207, 3197 and 7256 CWSN were identified in five districts and that 3099, 8581, 5675, 2407 and 4962 CWSN were enrolled in schools in these districts, respectively during the current financial year. Except in the case of Bhojpur, where figures of CWSN identified as per DPO record were much less than the SPO records, figures of CWSN identified and enrolled supplied by SPO and DPOs tallied. The reason of discrepancy in this data in Bhojpur district could not be explained.

- (ii) (a) During the current financial year, as per SPO, record 50034 children were provided aids and appliances which included supply of these appliances to 539, 3329, 1696, 500 and 716 CWSN in Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts, respectively. However, DPOs of five sample districts reported on MIR questionnaire that only 00, 254, 00, 00 and 2298 appliances, respectively were supplied to special need children in these districts. The figures of appliances provided to CWSN in these districts as submitted by SPO have been shown by DPOs in their QPR statements as target figures only for the current financial year. As per these QPR submitted by five DPOs no aids and appliances were distributed to CWSN during the current financial year which is in total contradiction of the information supplied by SPO in this

connection. During field visits by MI teams to 643 schools, however, it was found that in the current financial year only 19.3% CWSN had received hearing aids and appliances like, in Bhojpur district these appliances were distributed to 500 children. In Gaya, 2148 appliances were reportedly distributed which also included some appliances obtained from other than SSA sources, through in QPR it was reported that no appliances was provided during the year 2006-07. In West Champaran it was reported that 298 hearing aids and 1564 other appliances to orthopaedically challenged children were distributed during the year 2006-07 which according to DPO was done for the first time. He however accepted that need assessment of CWSN requiring aid/appliances could not be done in all the blocks for 2006-07. For some other blocks, it has been done for the year 2007-08. During field visit it was found that some tricycles were dumped in a room in Sitta Block BRC. It was reported that these belonged to the financial year 2006-07 but were received about a month after the close of the financial year 2006-07. In other blocks of this district also these appliances were reportedly received late from the DPO. Arrangements were now being made to distribute the stored appliances to CWSN.

- (ii) (b) SPO feels that there was no difficulty in providing aids and appliances to CWSN. MI found delayed supply of these appliances by the DPO in West Champaran district. Efforts need to be made by SPO to

ensure timely supply and distribution of these aids and appliances to the concerned CWSN.

(iii) 100 resource teachers have been identified for different districts and detailed guidelines have been issued about their role and responsibilities towards CWSN. SPO is working in close partnership with nine NGOs to look after the needs of CWSN in the State. In Motihari, East Champaran MI met with a Resource Teacher who was busy in working with the hearing impaired children. RTs visited schools at varying frequencies but generally in more than a month in each school.

(iv) (a) Each district has reportedly appointed an IED coordinator.

In 5 sample districts except Bojpur, the DPOs have appointed IED coordinators. The four coordinators are sufficiently qualified as one is Ph.D., another one is M.A., B.Ed., the third one is M.Sc. with Diploma in Special Education and the fourth one is M.A., M.Ed. All of them have been oriented by DPOs through specialized experts in the field during the course of their induction.

(b) The SPO has prescribed a monitoring format which is being used for furnishing information concerning IED to the SPO. In SPO, IED coordinator has been appointed but its details could not be furnished by SPO.

(v) DPOs of East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts reported to have provided ramps in 100, 345, 1033 and 611 schools, respectively. East Champaran DPO informed that till now ramps have

been constructed in almost 50 per schools in the district. In West Chmaparan many visited schools were found without ramps. In 643 visited schools in 5 districts ramps were found constructed in 157 (24.4%) schools. In many schools these were quite steep, without proper railings and therefore not user friendly and rather risky for handicapped children to tread on them. As per norms ramps have to be constructed at 1:20 slant. VSS in visited schools informed that due to shortage of open space they are forced to construct steep ramps. In some schools to solve this problem, ramps were constructed in L shape so as to maintain their prescribed slope within small space. In new schools ramps are being constructed as per norms. Among the 643 schools visited by MR in five districts only 157 (24.4%) had ramps but many of these with above mentioned shortcomings.

- (vi) Approximately 35000 CWSN, as reported by the SPO, were provided with home based support during the financial year 2006-07 which was confirmed by DPOs and VSS during field visits by MI teams.
- (vii) Only 650 parents, as per SPO records were given counselling during the financial year 2006-07 in the entire State. In the visited sample schools 11.4% parents had received this counselling for their handicapped children. Coverage of parents for counselling needs to be enhanced drastically so that more parents are trained to cope with the needs of their CWSN.

(viii) SPO does not have any specific data on CWSN enrolled in schools across the State. But it does have district wise data on enrolment of CWSN. As per SPO and DPO records, as mentioned earlier also, it was reported that 24644 CWSN were enrolled in schools in these districts. During visits to 643 schools it was found that out of 1105 CWSN enrolled in these schools 768 (69.5%) were present on the day of MI visit to these schools.

**Table showing CWSN enrollment, presence, appliances provided and ramps constructed in 5 districts**

CWSN	Bhojpur	East Champaran	Gaya	Gopalganj	West Champaran	Total
No. of CWSN	4033	11923	7207	3197	7256	33616
No. of CWSN enrolled	3019	8581	5675	2407	4962	24644
CWSN provided aids (SPO)	539	3329	1696	500	716	6780
CWSN provided aids (DPO)	00	254	00	00	2298	2552
No. of schools	1933	2184	2646	1655	2556	10974
Schools with Ramps	00	100	345	1033	611	2089

Source: DCD III & DCD II of SPOs and DPOs Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj, West Champaran

### 3.9 NPEGEL

Across the country particularly in educationally backward states girls are far behind boys in the process of education and social development which has resulted in glaring gaps in different educational measures between the two sexes. In order to fill this gap and bring girls at par with boys in the field of education the Govt. has launched, besides other schemes, the programme of NPEGEL which is operational along with SSA. Status and accomplishments of this programme in Bihar have been discussed here. NPEGEL programme has to be launched in educationally backward blocks of each district.

- (i) The BEP targeted 3669 clusters for launching the NPEGEL in 38 districts of Bihar and was able to make 3426 (93.3%) model clusters functional for this programme which was quite a good progress. For 2006-07 the number of model clusters identified in Bhojpur, E Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran was: 131, 187, 149, 120 and 116 (703) and model cluster schools made functional for NPEGEL during the year were: 131, 187, 98, 120 and 116 (652 or 92.7%), respectively. In Bhojpur all the 131 blocks are educationally backward (EBB) and so in all these blocks NPEGEL has been launched. However, 100 of them as reported by DPO are functional and work in the remaining will be completed next year. The reason for not launching NPEGEL in all the clusters as explained by SPO is that in some districts which had no EBB, some blocks were wrongly included in the target. But besides this reason, in some blocks/clusters work could not be completed till the end of the financial year. Due to work being in progress these centres could not be made functional. During field visit to the 132 centres in 5 districts as indicated in the lists provided by DPOs all were found functional.
- (ii) Under NPEGEL 3778 additional classrooms were planned to be constructed in all the districts. However, work could be completed in 1510 (40%) additional classrooms and it was in progress at the end of the financial year in another 1717 (45.4%) classrooms. In the five sample districts against a target of 703 additional classrooms work was complete in only 194 (27.6%) classrooms and it was in progress in 405 (57.6%)

additional classrooms. It means that construction work for additional classrooms could not be started in about 15% schools in the State. However, records of 5 DPOs revealed that the target for construction was 596 classrooms and work was in progress in 440 (73.8%) classrooms. Among the visited 132 schools where NPEGEL centres have been opened construction of additional classroom was complete in only 16.9% centres. It has been started in another 14.4% centres. However, in the remaining 69% centres till the end of the financial year 2006-07 construction activity for additional classroom could not be started. Construction work of toilets for NPEGEL was found complete in 34% centres and drinking water facility was also constructed in 48% centres. According to DPOs drinking water facility provision work and toilets construction work was also in progress in 73.8% centres under NPEGEL and electrification work was in progress in 66% classrooms.

- (iii) Though SPO has informed that all the model clusters in the districts have been provided with gender sensitized teaching learning materials, only three DPOs (Bhojpur, Gopalganj and West Champaran) three out of five sample districts reported to have made available such material. Gender sensitization in this material has been done around names, photographs and symbolic actions. Though the SPO and three DPOs stated to have provided this kind of gender sensitized material no such material could be seen in the visited NPEGEL centres in these districts. SPO has also informed that vocational training and bridge courses have been organized

at the model clusters in all the districts but DPOs of only three districts (Bhojpur, Gaya and West Champaran) have reported that these training/courses have been organized at the centres. DPOs of East Champaran and Gopalganj informed that these centres have not yet been organized. However, as reported by SPO, gender sensitization programmes have been organized in all the visited districts. For example, in Bhojpur district with the help of Mahila Samakhya some programmes of gender sensitization and women empowerment were organized in which 440 teachers were trained. 96 Sanyojikas working in this district have also been provided this training. The training programmes on gender sensitization and women empowerment were three days residential courses, each one attended by about 35 teachers. Similar programmes were organized in other districts also. As reported by some VSS members efforts are being made to mobilize community and women's groups to improve the status of girls education and bring down gender gap in education. Though Mahila Samakhya is doing a commendable work in organizing such programmes and enhancing the status of girls' education and development in the State, some women's groups of local educated ladies in Sitta Block, West Champaran felt that Mahila Samakhya in looking after NPEGEL etc. programmes is not involving them and transparency is lacking in their functioning.

- (iv) SPO released funds for NPEGEL for Rs. 64.67 crores. As per new arrangement, says the Gaya DPO, the NPEGEL funds are now directly

released by SPO to Bihar Mahila Samakhya Samiti (BMSS) which is now a registered body and thus DPOs do not handle this fund any more and so they have not furnished any record of this fund having been received from SPO this year. This year NPEGEL is focusing on building construction activity on a large scale. Civil work in itself is a slow process. Hence, even though funds have been released as per approved plan only 45.12% of the released fund or 40% of the approved budget has been spent by the end of the financial year.

- (v) In each district a district gender coordinator has been appointed with the help of BMSS. DGC is generally an experienced and sensitized lady teacher from the respective district who is deputed for this responsibility. Also monitoring system to check progress in the implementation of the interventions for girls education has been developed in all the districts. At the district level it is DRG which monitors this activity in coordination with Block Coordinator who is an experienced working teacher from the block and below her there is a Sanyojika in each cluster to affect monitoring at the cluster level. Besides, there is also the NPEGEL coordinator who participates in monitoring process. Monitoring format has been developed and used for upward communication of progress in girls education interventions. A copy of the format may be seen at Annexure VIII. At block level a monthly meeting of Sanyojikas is organized regularly to review the monthly progress in the interventions. The monitoring format collects information on several personnel, funds, civil

works activities, Bal varg, etc. related matters at the district level by comparing targets with achievements across the district. DPOs East Champaran feels that NPEGEL monitoring is weak because at State level no SRG has been formed for it.

- (vi) As per the information submitted by SPO, under the Innovation Head funds of Rs. 15 lakhs which is meant for girls education, this year 5248 ECCE Centres were planned in 38 districts. By the turn of the year 2006-07, close to the target, 5030 (95.8%) centres had become operational. In almost all the districts on an average 140 ECCE centres were planned and in many districts this target has been completely achieved. In the sample districts as per SPO record not only the target has been achieved rather in Bhojpur and West Champaran against the target of 140 centres each 149 and 147 centres have been opened. However, DPOs of these districts informed that only 139 ECCE centres have been opened in each of the two districts during this year. MI teams visited 29 ECCE centres which were found operational in the morning hours for 3-6 year age children. T-2 kit was being used by children in the centres. In Bhojpur, DLO has also utilized a sum of Rs. 26.8 lakhs from Innovative Activity fund for purchasing 1380 bicycles for class VII SC/ST girls which has generated lot of interest among these girls in school and its activities.
- (vii) The SPO has developed a monitoring format for this activity to be used at the district level which gathers monthly information from the districts. As

stated earlier, Bhojpur DPO feels that due to absence of SRG at SPO monitoring of ECCE/NPEGEL is rather weak.

### **3.10 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalay (KGBV)**

- (i) KGBV is another special scheme supplementing the SSA efforts which focuses on those deprived girls of the society who need multidimensional attention and assistance for their education and development. Through a dedicated residential girls schools opened under KGBV scheme such girls are taken out of their community setting and kept in KGBV where besides education, their all round development is practically fostered by engaging them in co-curricular activities, sports, marshal arts, etc. These girls may be school dropouts or those who have never been to a school.

In Bihar there are 495 Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB). So, 495 KGBVs were identified in the State. Only 350 KGBVs were sanctioned for the year 2006-07. However, 128 KGBVs could actually be made functional during the year. Later, SPO clarified that until December, 128 KGBVs were made operational and in January and March, 2007, 35 and 59 more KGBVs, respectively were sanctioned and work had started for them as well. Since the scheme is comparatively new and requires a self sufficient purpose-built residential complex to be constructed, it is taking time to start each KGBV in its own building. As a result, many KGBVs at present are running in makeshift/temporary/rented accommodations which are often not satisfactory at all. In the five sample districts, as per SPO, 69 KGBVs were sanctioned but only 39 of them

could be made functional this year. The worst progress has been in East Champaran where out of 24 sanctioned KGBVs only one could be made functional. In Bhojpur 3 KGBVs are functional in makeshift accommodation. In East Champaran only one KGBV is operational and that too since the previous year. Only towards the end of the year 2006-07 in March 2007 four more KGBVs were sanctioned in this district and land identification for them is said to be in process. In West Champaran one KGBV at Virandoan Ashram is run by Mahila Samakhiya. 15 more have recently been sanctioned, 4 to be run by BMSS, 9 by different NGOs and two by VSS. The functional one in West Champaran had 51 girls, 8 of them Muslim girls. It is being run in a rented house. In Gopalganj 5 sanctioned KGBVs are being run by different NGOs from rented buildings.

- (ii) SPO could not provide details of KGBVs for whom land has been identified or construction has been completed or is in progress. In the visited districts, as reported by DPOs, 3, 5, 4, 5 and 16 (33) KGBVs were sanctioned for Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts, respectively this year.

In respect of 4 KGBVs in East Champaran and 15 in West Champaran land has been identified whereas land identification process is still in progress for 2 KGBVs in Bhojpur and 3 KGBVs in Gopalganj.

The State has drawn up detailed guidelines for running the KGBVs and these are being adhered to by the NGOs including Bihar Mahila

Samakhya Samiti. In fact, Bihar Mahila Samakhya Samiti now in itself is a registered society since 2006, which is like a small counterpart of BEP. Sister Sabina has been appointed as its SPD in Patna. She has appointed DPCs in all districts. Mahila Samakhya now channelizes all funds for KGBV, NPEGEL, Jagjagi in AIE and TSP of UNICEF. Mahila Samakhya is appointing teachers in the KGBVs across all districts. Some local educated ladies in West Champaran reported that selection process of teachers for KGBVs by Mahila Samakhya was not transparent.

All formalities for construction of KGBV buildings have been completed in respect of 1,1,4,2, 1 KGBVs in Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran districts, respectively and construction work has already started for these KGBVs. During visit to the Vidyalays, underconstruction buildings of one KGBV in Bhojpur – Jagdishpur, two in Sidhwalin and Baikunthpur in Gopalganj and one in Tetaria in East Champaran were also seen. The quality of construction was found to be satisfactory in all these cases.

In the sanctioned KGBVs in five districts, 11 posts for teachers and 9 for non teaching staff in Bhojpur; 6 for teachers in East Champaran; 40 teachers plus non teaching staff in Gopalganj as per Model III of recruitment; and 64 teaching posts in West Champaran were sanctioned and against these teaching and non teaching posts 20, 05, 40 and 48 appointments, respectively were made.

In Gaya, DPO informed that since recruitment of KGBV staff is now being done by BMSS he had no information for staff recruitment. As stated earlier also, some educated ladies from the community pointed out that appointments by Mahila Samakhya are not being done in a transparent manner. During visit the appointed staff including warden and teachers were found present.

In the visited districts 155 girls in Bhojpur, 50 in East Champaran, 250 in Gopalganj and 700 in West Champaran were admitted and most of them were present in the KGBV or some had gone to attend regular classes in the mainstream school. In KGBV Sidhwalia and KGBV, Baikunthpur, which are being run by Reform International Consortium, an NGO, 40 teachers and others were appointed and 50 students in each were admitted and they were mostly present in the KGBV. 15 students and a couple of teachers who were absent, had submitted their leave applications. In KGBV, Virandoan Ashram, one teacher and one warden were appointed and 51 girls of 10-14 years age were admitted. 14 of them were dropouts and 8 were minority girls. In West Champaran, however, the girls shown as admitted in KGBV were not present and when MIR visited the KGBV the girls were informed and hurriedly called. In Gaya district the girls enrolled were not present in the Vidyalaya but were traced to the formal school they had gone to attend regular classes as a part of mainstreaming exercise. In the formal school KGBV girls were found sitting separately from other regular students and were academically much

better, due to training by KGBVs. But the way they were sitting separately was not the sign of true mainstreaming.

All the KGBVs in five sample districts were found running from rented accommodation which generally lacked basic facilities. In KGBV, Tetaria teachers and warden both complained that the place was not safe for them and for girls as it was located in a remote desolate village. They complained of seepage during rains in the thatched roofs of the rooms they were living in. There was no market or medical store/facility in the vicinity of the KGBV. Food being served was of poor quality. Some students demanded fish/meat to be included in the menu. The KGBV in Gaya was located in the rented basement of a house which was not suitable for the Vidyalaya. In the two KGBVs in Gopalganj, there was no electricity, no electricity generator and no solar batteries. Kerosene lanterns were being used for light. There was no furniture for students. They at least needed mattresses and uniforms. In fact, in more than 50 per cent of the visited KGBVs bedding provided to girls was not adequate. The rented house of KGBV, Sidhwalia, Gopalganj had a 7 room accommodation, without boundary wall and so it was unsafe for girls especially at night. The house was located just on the main highway of the city.

All the KGBVs were following a strict time table of daily routines since early morning for conducting teaching learning and extra curricular activities until the evening. Teachers in KGBV Sidhwalia were either +2

or BA passed but none had received any training in teaching. Teaching in KGBV, particularly to a multigrade group was more challenging for them. The KGBVs in Gopalganj as also in other places were being run by different NGOs who needed better monitoring and supervision.

**Table showing details of KGBVs in sample districts**

District	KGBVs sanctioned	Under construction	Land identified	Land not identified	Staff sanctioned	Staff appointed	St. admitted
Bhojpur	3	1	-	2	11+9	20	155
E. Champaran	5	1	4	-	6	-	50
Gaya	4	4	-	-	-	-	NA
Gopalganj	5	2	3	-	40	40	250
W. Champaran	16	1	15	-	64	48	700

**Source: DC Format of 5 districts**

### **3.11 District Information System for Education (DISE)**

As per SPO, EMIS has been set up in all the districts of the State and requisite number of computers have been installed there with computer operators appointed in each DPO. While updating this information from DPOs it was found that EMIS has been set up in all the districts and except Gopalganj, computers have been provided in all the visited districts. Similarly, computer operators were not in position in East Champaran and West Champaran districts. DPO West Champaran has, however, initiated the process of their appointment. At the State level MIS is being looked after by a well qualified person who possesses a Ph.D. degree and has good experience to his credit to look after MIS. He received his training from NIEPA in maintenance of DISE at the State level.

A time schedule has been drawn up by the SPO for DISE data collection. Data capture formats were supplied to all schools by August 2006. Teachers have been trained in filling up these formats by CRCCs who were trained by BRPs. DPO had organized training of BRCCs in this regard. The time schedule for submission of DISE formats is being adhered to and completed DCFs are passed on to DPOs on time. DPOs submit this data to the SPO on quarterly basis. Thus the data collected from subdistrict levels is passed on to the SPO within 30 days of the end of each quarter. However, it is not regularly being maintained in each DPO as was experienced during the visit to these DPOs for collection of monitoring data. Though SPO had reported that CRC/BRC coordinators have been given the task of verifying 5% of the data collected and for that they have been oriented. But in most DPOs this was found that this exercise was not being done regularly. DPO Gopalganj accepted that MIS was still weak in the district. None could report as to how 5% of the collected data is being verified, though they all reported to have done this exercise. For example, Gopalganj DPO reported that all CRCCs and BRCCs check all the formats submitted to them and put their signatures on them before their submission at the higher level. At the SPO level 5% sample verification of the data is carried out. In the year 2005-06 it was done by the an outside agency i.e. A.N. Sinha Institute, Patna. As stated above, DPOs pass on the collected data to the SPO on time i.e. by November. The MIS incharge at the State level is a well qualified, duly trained and now well experienced person who is well versed with his job and the requirements of SSA

in MIS. He has attended a national workshop organized by MIS unit of NIEPA, New Delhi.

### **3.12 Research and Evaluation**

Research and evaluation aspect of SSA is quite neglected in the districts. In the name of research and evaluation some DPOs have reported that they conduct household surveys, collect data for MIS and complete the annual evaluation. They have no idea of this part of SSA intervention. Though earlier some such work was done by Gaya DPO in cooperation with Gaya DIET. At SPO one officer is incharge of research and evaluation who is responsible to get research issues identified and studied from within SSA set up or from outside agencies and also get sample DISE data verification done for SPO. In the past SPO has done following six studies which was an in-house exercise of the SPO.

- Cohort Study of All Districts; Student and Teacher Absenteeism in 4 Districts;
- Utilization of Grants in four Districts; Sample Checking of DISE data in Six Districts; Grade I Enrolment in 2 Districts; and Grade I Repetition in 2 Districts.

No plan of any research by an external organization has been drawn by SPO for this year. Good coordination on research issues could have been done with the SCERT, SIEMA and DIETs but for the fact that all these structures in the State in themselves are in an extremely weak state, not much has been visualized in this direction. SPO has a State level committee which evaluates and sanctions

the research projects. As of now no prescribed contract format for commissioning of research has been developed by the SPO.

### **3.13 Functioning of VEC or Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS)**

In Bihar as per the State legislation the nomenclature and area of work of the village education committee (VEC) have been modified and instead of having one VEC for each village there is a committee or Samiti for early school in village or town area called Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti. However, whether it is VEC or VSS the purpose of these committees is to promote and popularize the idea of decentralized planning and management of elementary education and make people not only participate in these processes but also own the elementary education institutions in their area and demonstrate a sense of concern for these institutions and for children who come or may come to these institutions. In Bihar VSS are formed under the PRI Act of the State VSS Act 2005 which have a fair representation of all the sections of the community around who join it through a democratically organized process of elections. Weaker sections and women folk of the area are duly represented in VSS.

In the State there are 50148 VSS in place in 38 districts with their number depending upon the availability of schools in the district. Guidelines for formation of these committees and their powers and functions have been distributed by DPOs and are available with VSS. In some places like Gaya these guidelines alongwith format of some important applications to be used by VSS have been provided in the form of a small booklet to all the VSS. These guidelines clearly mention the representation to be given to women. SPO informs that adequate

representation has been given to women in VSS in all the districts and all VSS members in every district have been provided training in their role and responsibilities. In the 5 visited districts, as per SPO record, 1079, 2179, 2527, 1161 and 1760 VSS, respectively were functioning. But DPOs of three districts have reported different number of these VSS in the districts. In Bhojpur, East Champaran and Gaya their number is 1554, 2184, and 2977. The remaining two DPOs have not supplied the required information. The DPOs have given these figures as per the number of existing schools. New primary schools have not been included as for them VSS are yet to be formed but even in the case of old schools all don't have VSS in place. For example, in Motihari block in East Champaran out of 144 only 107 VSS are in position. The rest could not be elected since 2005 due to excessive political interest and interference of people of the area. In some other blocks elections could be held only after deployment of police force. In Bhojpur, except two or three schools VSS are there in all 1560 old schools. However in Gaya VSS are not in place in almost one fourth of the schools as elections have not been held in these places for more than a year. Guidelines have also been issued for representation of women in the VSS. In 643 visited schools 642 had formed VSS with 7221 members. Among them there were 32.26% women members and 20.2% SC and ST members of the VSS. They, like others, became VSS members through open elections. Some of them were also elected as president/secretary of VSS like in Model Middle School, Ahirpurva, Govt. Model School, Betiah; Middle School, Rupdih, Motihari; Mahavir Middle School, Luthahan; etc. Only 47.19% VSS had received guidelines for SC/ST and women

members. In almost all the VSS visited by the MI team women were found to be present as members of the VSS. Once elected, VSS members and office bearers enjoy a tenure of 3 years from the date of their election and notification of results. Elected members are given training in their roles and responsibilities soon after their election. In the training they are oriented with financial matters and procedures as well. Among 642 VSS, members of 588 (91.5%) had received two days training after their election. However, some VSS members met with MI teams expressed their dissatisfaction with the duration and frequency of training as they wanted it to be of longer duration and repeated every year. In East Champaran some VSS members suggested that this training should be organized every six months as the powers and importance of VSS are continuously increasing and so they need to receive retraining and more capacity building as also motivation to take interest in school activities. In many schools VSS meetings are held almost every month but in 17.7% cases VSS meetings were held three to four times a year, in 28.6% schools five to six times a year and in the rest from six times to twelve times a year. In VSS meetings women members do participate but not as regularly as the male members do. But while talking to these women members it was clear that they understand the issues concerning the village school and had their own views about these issues. In the 642 visited schools it was found that VSS members were attending VSS meetings but not all of them are regular. In visited 642 schools 5188 teachers attended meetings regularly. They included 22.5% SC/ST members and 32% women members. As stated earlier also, 91.5% VSS members had received their training after

becoming VSS members. 67.7% of them received 2 days training whereas 11% reported to have received only one day training and 18% informed to have been trained for 3 to 4 days after their becoming the member of VSS. These trainings were organized by ADPCs in 8% cases, BRCCs in 26%, CRCCs in 47.68% and by others in 18% cases. These trainings were organized either at BRC, CRC DPO or other places including schools. Many VSS members felt that the trainings were quite useful but were too short and too less to make them fully aware and confident of their role and responsibilities. More frequent trainings will help them share their problems and seek guidance for better shouldering their responsibilities. While 63% VSS members work for improving the environment of the school, 57.2% work for improving enrolment and retention in the schools, 64.5% feel that they work for maintaining discipline in the schools and checking teachers attendance and 58% feel that they contribute by maintaining proper records of funds released to VSS and spent on schools by them. About two thirds also felt that they supervise the preparation and distribution of MDM. Almost 60 per cent VSS are maintaining proper records of funds received and expenditure made out of these funds. It is true that records of funds and expenditure are being maintained by VSS but generally its responsibility is substantially shouldered by the school HM who keeps this record in his/her safe custody. In a few visited schools it was noticed that in the name of maintaining of records of funds and expenditure, bank passbooks and expenditure vouchers with only a crude record in a note book are being kept. It seemed that VSS members need better training in keeping proper record of funds received under different heads and expenditure

made in these heads, especially when good amount of funds for building construction and MDM are now being received by them. In fact, this was repeatedly pointed out during the field visit that politicization of VSS elections has increased only for the very fact that VSS now has to handle more funds and this has become a real bone of contention among many prospective candidates for VSS. To depoliticize and facilitate the formation of VSS regularly the Government of Bihar is contemplating to issue an order according to which in those cases where VSS is not being formed, funds for civil works will be released in the name of School Building Committee consisted of some VSS members. Some DPOs feel that this is only a transitional phase for VSS in Bihar. Gradually when activities involving huge finances will come down due to completion of major civil works in schools and which will accordingly bring down the budgets of the VSS, the vested and political interests in VSS may also come down. It is at this stage that one may expect smoother and more sincere formation and functioning of VSS.

A perusal of minutes of VSS meetings suggested that sixty to seventy per cent members often attend VSS meetings and discussions take place on different school related issues including civil works, dropouts, teachers' presence, students' attendance, MDM, food grain procurement, storage and cooking and distribution of meals, etc. Achievement in learning is rarely an issue discussed in these meetings. All VSS members are also not visiting schools regularly. Some of them only take active interest and visit school while it is in operation or while some civil work is in progress. Some visit the school to supervise cooking and

distribution of MDM. Dedicated involvement of VSS with all its members in the day to day functioning of school and progress being made by students in studies and learning is something that is yet to be observed on a reasonable scale.

### **3.14 Staffing at State and District Level**

One who visits the SPO, SCERT and SIEMAT at the State headquarters consecutively can easily and clearly make out that the staffing situation in the SPO is much better than the later two organizations in the State and that the work culture in SPO despite lot of pressure of work on each employee has been evolved among its functionaries. SPD, despite being burdened with the additional charge of some other State departments is somehow maintaining effective supervision and leadership of the SPO, though this may not be good for the long term administrative health of the organization. The work culture he has developed is sustaining the activities and performance of the SPO. Most of the staff sanctioned in the SPO is in position. Specific programme coordinators for quality; pedagogy; training; gender and girls education; civil work; inclusive education; AIE interventions; financial management; MIS; planning and community mobilization/participation; and monitoring, research and evaluation have been appointed. Some officers have been assigned varied functional areas of responsibilities. Programme coordinators are well oriented and knowledgeable about their work. Many of them have long experience to their credit of working with DPEP and SSA in this office. A copy of the office order regarding distribution of work among programme coordinators and staff of the SPO is attached at Annexure IX. General body and Executive Council of the society are

held as per norms. Earlier, DPOs did not have all the sanctioned staff in position. However, during the current financial year SPO took initiative to beef up the DPO staff position. For DOPs, out of 600 sanctioned posts 311 are now filled up and for remaining the recruitment process is about to start.

At the district level the positions are grouped into two categories. Those which will be filled up by the SPO and the ones on which recruitment will be done by the district administration. A look at the staff position in the five visited districts of Bhojpur, East Champaran, Gaya, Gopalganj and West Champaran revealed that each DPO is still understaffed despite the fact that some positions have recently been filled up by the SPO in each district office. The exact picture of staff position in five DPOs may be seen from the following table showing sanctioned and filled up posts in group I, II & III categories including engineering staff. This may be seen that in almost all the districts the staff in position is around 50 per cent and in all the five DPOs taken together it is even below 50 per cent which is not a healthy picture of staff position at all.

**Table showing staff sanctioned and in position in 5 districts in class I, II, III including Engineers**

<b>District</b>	<b>Positions sanctioned</b>	<b>Staff in position</b>	<b>%</b>
Bhojpur	28	15	53.6
East Champaran	31	17	54.8
Gaya	30	16	53.3
Gopalganj	25	11	44
West Champaran	45	15	33.3
	159	74	46.5

**Source: DCD II of 5 districts project offices**

In class IV category also which includes peons, night guards, store keepers and drivers, less than 50 per cent employees are in place. For civil works, Gaya and West Champaran DPOs have Executive Engineers. Other engineering staff is

almost fifty per cent. Shortage of staff is certainly not a good sign for institutional performance. It is adversely affecting the work of DPOs and the efficiency of the staff in position. Lack of engineering staff has implications for quality of construction as was seen in some of the buildings under construction in the districts visited. Besides being overburdened by the work due to shortage of staff, the service conditions and terms of appointment are creating a sense of insecurity in the employees despite their long years of service which is also affecting their work morale.

The staffing position is not much different in BRCs. The SPO has clearly laid down rules/regulations for filling up the SSA positions at all levels and these are being adhered to while recruiting people for these posts. SPO is already on the task to fill up the remaining 289 vacant posts in the DPOs across the State and the staff situation is likely to improve in the following year.

### **3.15 Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

The scheme of Mid-Day meal, an independent programme being funded separately from SSA, aims to supplement the efforts launched under SSA to universalize the elementary education, particularly for improving enrolment and retention of children in schools. This intervention was considered rather essential in many places and for many groups of people and for creating conditions for realization of the goals of SSA.

Interaction with students, teachers and parents/community members in the visited schools revealed that in most cases meal is served hot. 85% students, 81% parents and 78% teachers in the visited schools informed that the mid-day meal is

served hot to children. 78% teachers, 78.6% students and 72% parents reported that the menu of the meal is not the same every day though it is dominated by khichri on many days. Around 75% teachers, students as well as parents were of the view that green vegetables and fruits are occasionally included in the MDM menu. The vegetables are cooked with rice to make it nutritious and tasty. 15 to 20 per cent students and parents were not only having the view that not much change is seen in the menu of MDM over the week, they also demanded more variety in the meal. 7 to 8 per cent teachers, students and parents reported that sometimes mishaps also occur like fire in the kitchen, post eating sickness, theft of kitchen ware, theft of MDM grains, etc. which is very rare. Despite less variety in food reported by about one fourth students, 89% of them were found satisfied with the quality of food being served to them in schools. Similarly, almost the same proportion of students expressed their satisfaction over the quantity of food being served. The school administration also does not have any complaints about quality or quantity of food being served either from students or their parents. Community members also did not say much about the quality or quantity of mid day meal served to students. Hardly 15 per cent students informed that they were given micronutrients like iron, folic acid, vitamin A and deworming medicine by the school which happened once in the year. In fact, many of them were not even aware of the provision or distribution of micronutrients and deworming medicine. Schools record was also silent in most cases about this part of MDM scheme. School teacher-in-charge of MDM administers the micronutrients and medicine. In visited schools almost all the children took mid day meal. In many primary

schools younger siblings of enrolled students were seen sitting in lower classes who were too young to be enrolled in school. They would accompany their brothers/sisters in the hope to get a free meal from school. It was often found difficult by the teachers and administration for being local persons to turn these siblings away and ignore them while meal is served to enrolled children. Hardly one or two children were spotted in school and that too not in every school who would carry their tiffins from home for personal reasons. Generally a cooking help is appointed for working in the school kitchen who would cook the food and also distribute the same. In 96.6% schools a regular cooking helper, generally a lady from the local community, is appointed to shoulder this responsibility. In hardly 2% cases some NGO, has also shared this responsibility. In more than 80% cases the cook is a lady from a weaker section of the society. In 36% cases they are from SC/ST group. Cooks get a monthly remuneration from the VSS for shouldering this responsibility. Cook is engaged by school directly on a remuneration of 50 paise per child or Rs. 1500 per month which is met from the MDM grant as per norms. Cooking help gets his/her remuneration regularly. Pucca Kitchen shed is available in less than half (42%) of the schools. In the rest either food is cooked under a small thatched cover which is open from all sides or in the open space in a corner of the school.

Only in West Champaran pucca sheds were available in a good number (70%) of schools. In Gopalganj in hardly 25% schools visited by MI pucca sheds for cooking mid day meal were available. In almost 97% schools firewood is used for cooking food for MDM. In one to two per cent schools either gas, coal or

kerosene is used for this purpose. In general, it is the handpump water which is used both for drinking and cooking purposes in all the schools. The potability of water has not been got tested by VSS but generally it is deep bore water which they say is safe for drinking and cooking purposes. In hardly a few town schools running water supplied by municipal authorities is available. Utensils used for cooking food were found to be adequate in about 75% schools. In the rest, VSS and school authorities felt these were quite inadequate. These utensils are purchased from SSA funds in most cases. Community contribution was noticed in negligible number of cases. The food grains are generally stored in a safe place in the school. If the school building has pucca structure, is located near the abadi and has some space to spare it is kept there in lock and key. Sometimes it is kept in CRC room or at the residence of Mukhiya of the village for its safety. Rare cases of food grain theft were reported.

So far as MI impression of the environment with regard to mid day meal from the view point of safety, hygienic, cleanliness and discipline among students is concerned, it ranges from fair to good. Safety concern for children at the place where cooking is done was felt to be good only in 40 per cent schools. It was due to the kind of space available in the school for cooking purposes. Hygiene and cleanliness among students varied from village to village and the socio-economic background they came from. In 80 per cent schools it was encouraging as it ranged between 'fair' to 'good'. Similarly, in the matter of discipline among students it was observed that it ranged between 'fair' and 'good' in 77 per cent schools. Students were found following the instructions of the teachers while

collecting and eating their meals. They would bring their own plates/bowls to collect the meal. Teachers as well as VSS members present at the time of distribution of MDM encouraged the children to wash their hands before and after the consumption of meal. As all the children in schools are used to take their meal by hands, washing of hands becomes very important and rather essential for their health. In 71% schools children were being encouraged to wash their hands before and after the consumption of MDM. Gopalganj and East Champaran were rather on a very high side in ensuring that all the children washed their hands before the start of their meal and after they finish it. Children in a large proportion (70%) were found following the advice of their teachers in this regard. In Gopalganj this was being emphasized in almost 90% schools. Children would generally wash their utensils after consuming meal. In 65% schools in five districts they were found being encouraged by teachers to conserve water while cleaning their utensils.

Generally (93-95%), no discrimination was observed in the course of distribution of mid day meal on the basis of caste, gender or disability. Parents and VSS members participation in MDM preparation/distribution varied from 'always' through 'sometimes', 'rare' and 'never'. While one third (33%) VSS members/ parents were always ready to participate in MDM preparation and distribution, another one third (34%) would never turn up for any cooperation in this regard. One fourth of them (26%) would however, sometimes visit the school and extend their cooperation in preparation and distribution of MDM. So far as daily supervision of MDM is concerned, in 54% schools this was being done on

daily basis. Otherwise this supervision was less regular and infrequent from the office of the BRC or CRC. In less than one fourth schools in 5 districts contribution in cash or kind was available to 'some extent'. Otherwise no such contribution was given by majority of parents/community members.

Though the MDM programme is now in operation in almost all the schools yet, it needs a fresh look from the point of view of quality of grains to be supplied to schools, regular availability of food grains of desired quality, transportation arrangement, provision of secured place to store food grains and provision of a proper kitchen shed in school. During the current year food grain for MDM was supplied through the PDS fair price shop. In many schools this was reported that the quality of rice supplied by PDS for MDM was very poor, sometimes even not worth eating. In many schools in Bhojpur and West Champaran it was reported that MDM was suspended for the last 2 or 3 months only for the fact that food grain supply was not available. In some places though funds for purchase of food grains from PDS shop were available with the VSS but due to non release of transport cost for lifting the food grains from the FPS, VSS could not procure the food grains and MDM could not be supplied to children. It was reported that Rs. 35 per quintal for transportation was though sanctioned sometimes ago, it was never released to VSS. The quality of rice was also questioned at many places. Keeping these problems in view Govt. of Bihar has considered to replace PDS by FCI's State unit. On experimental basis, this has recently been started.

In Gopalganj, M.S. Madhusarainyan a different kind of problem was noticed. In this school MDM has been stopped for the last more than three months due to non availability of cooking space in the school. In general, however, M.I. feels that MDM programme has clearly and definitely affected the progress in enrolment and retention in elementary schools and has improved both these aspects of elementary education. Strengthening of MDM programme will not only help enhance the achievement level of SSA rather, it would also improve the health status of millions of children across the country.

### **3.16 Miscellaneous Issues**

In this section those issues concerning elementary education have been discussed which could not be covered in the earlier discussion on SSA implementation and its performance in the State of Bihar.

- (i) Generally the record of number of days schools were functioned (it opened for teaching/examination/admissions) during a session is maintained by the head teacher. For the second time the MI team had this experience that out of 643 visited schools only 193 were able to tell the number of days, school was opened during the last academic year. A majority of the schools (43%) opened for 200-249 days and a close to this figure i.e. 38% were opened for more than 250 days during the session. There were some (6%) which could not open even for 200 days in the previous academic year. These figures suggest that in general schools were functional/open for quite a good number of days. It also needs to be noted as for how many days out of these working days actual teaching was

conducted in the schools as this is the real issue under discussion. During discussion with the HM/VSS it was revealed that children do not turn up for days together on many social occasions held in the community/village. These occasions/events include melas, festivals, poojas, local events, etc. in the village and any natural disasters. On these occasions, sometimes no child will turn up or a few of them will come but the number would be so small that a regular teaching-learning activity may not be conducted for them. Even before the start of important holidays like Dussehra/Diwali, etc. attendance dwindles drastically as children stop coming to school much in advance of the festival and take longer to return to school after the actual holidays for the festivals are over. Many precious working days are thus lost without any teaching learning exercise having been actually held in the school. Teachers and VSS campaign on some social occasions to bring children back to school on school working days has borne little fruit.

- (ii) As far as the overall environment and general appearance of the schools is concerned it varied from school to school. Generally, it was noticed that schools don't have boundary walls and no plantation could be done in the school campus, perhaps due to the open space being unguarded from all sides. Without boundary walls, even though the main school building exists, the impression of a well kept, exclusive, secure and tidy environment of the school does not really emerge. This is a feeling for both the visitors and for the students. Besides, without boundary wall the

campus is always insecure due to trespassers, stray animals, etc .This was pointed out at some places to MI teams. For example, in the M.S. Marjadwa, Mainatand Block, West Champaran school land was trespassed frequently by villagers due to non existence of boundary wall of the school. In this school girls were in much higher number than boys and many of them were quite grown up. Cleanliness was not always seen as a priority though in town schools it was strictly observed. In some village schools too the campus and classrooms were quite clean though many of these were not properly white washed. In more than 60 per cent schools however, the condition of buildings was found to be satisfactory and gave a look of a well maintained school. However, in 27% schools the condition was unsatisfactory due to un-repaired walls, unkept roofs and floors. But the condition in more than 8% schools was really very poor and in some cases highly risky for students and teachers. In these schools wide cracks in walls, broken khaprail thatching of the roof, falling supports of the roof were in need of immediate attention for major repairs. For example, the building of Middle School, Bipin, Betiah town was found damaged. In a classroom a portion of the khaprail roof had already collapsed, another portion was held on to a brick pillar which was also in a dangerous condition. Due to high level of enrolment in this school even these damaged rooms were also being used for classrooms which was quite dangerous and prone to mishap any time. Despite reports and request to authorities for major repairs the condition of the building remained

unchanged. In other places, old defective khaprail roofs were found with major seepage problem. In 67% schools roofs were found in satisfactory condition in 32% these were in poor or even very poor condition. Flooring in classrooms was in satisfactory condition in less than 50 per cent schools. In fact 32% floors were in a poor state and 4% in extremely poor condition, badly broken, kachcha or with brick pavement. Though bad floor condition in classrooms did not create any risk for children sitting in these rooms it did give a shabby look and obstructed in maintaining cleanliness. More than half of the classrooms in visited schools were found in good condition with proper structure, plaster, doors, etc. But 44 per cent were not in good condition, not repaired and white washed, poor condition of blackboard, etc. However, almost two thirds had proper light and ventilation arrangement with sufficient window and roof level ventilations in the walls. In 10% schools the condition of light and ventilation was very poor. Even in the day time in these cases it was very dark and stuffy inside the classrooms causing lot of strain and inconvenience to the students sitting in them. Electricity connection was also not there in some schools even after the construction of their new building. Play ground also has not been a major priority. So 49 per cent schools had playground in good condition though the condition of another 44% was quite unsatisfactory. Either the space was limited or it was not levelled for playing purposes or it was occupied by trespassers, animals of the neighbours, etc.

- (iii) Inside the classroom sitting arrangement was made on desks and benches and in some on tatpattis. Many schools by now have acquired desks from TLE grant. But in some classrooms the space was limited and enrolment was very high resulting in too much of congestion inside the room particularly where children had to share a desk with two children. Even gangways were not left in the middle of the room for teacher's movement in a few classrooms visited by MI which not only restricted teacher's movement but was also a highly obstructive sitting arrangement from students' movement point of view. The condition of blackboards was found to be better now. In three fourth schools these were maintained with black paint. In only 10% classrooms their condition was really very poor and needed immediate repair. In more than 50% classrooms teaching material was properly displayed on the walls. Some of these materials were prepared by teachers and students and some were acquired ready made. But the quality of TLM was not always very impressive and needed more attention of teachers and HMs. In 10% classrooms these were of highly poor quality both in instruction and content. Good teaching learning ambience inside the classrooms was created by its physical condition, sitting arrangement, proper light and ventilation and teaching learning materials organization inside these rooms which was certainly congenial for effective teaching-learning.
- (iv) During the last six months hardly any health camp facility was made available to the children of a school. It was only in East Champaran

district, that in 15 schools health camp was organized by school authorities which was also hardly 10 per cent of the existing schools in the district.

The rest had drawn a complete blank in this regard.

(v) As was the case of availability of playground in schools, only 53% schools had play material for children, both for indoor and outdoor games. But the material was firstly, in quite a limited quantity vis-à-vis the size of enrolment in the school and secondly, rarely it was seen in use by students during breaks or games period. However, availability of play material in schools was found to have improved during the last six months. Earlier, only 43% schools had arrangement of play material, now play material was available in 53% schools in the 5 visited districts. Emphasis needs to be laid on encouraging students to use this material for their better physical, social and emotional development.

(vi) Enrolments in schools have now improved as was seen from the school admission and enrolment records. In the State against the child population of 10593084 and 8910763 boys and girls, respectively (total: 19603837) in the age group 6-13 years. There was an enrolment of 17963024 boys and girls taken together in 38 districts and there were 764936 boys and 775877 girls, total: 1540813 or 7.9% children out of the schools at the end of the year 2006-07. (See Annexure X). In the visited districts against an enrolment of 162676 children in I to VIII classes, 111851 (68.75%) children were found present in schools on the days of visit by MI teams. The presence in primary (I-V) classes was 64.8% whereas in upper

primary classes it was as high as 85.9% which shows that presence of students in senior classes gradually improved. In fact in class VIII presence of students was 90.9%. Presence of girls was always higher than boys in all classes except in class VIII where presence of boys was marginally higher than girls. This was also noticed that presence of students in this second half of the year was better than what it was observed in the first half of the year 2006-07.

- (vii) Various reasons have been forwarded by teachers and head teachers due to which students remain absent from classes. Teachers feel that the unfriendly hot weather in the state, marriage season, harvesting activity, etc. are responsible for students absence from classes. Some children are also engaged in family trade and so they skip classes. Better attendance in higher classes shows that as the students grow up and reach higher classes they become more conscious and responsible towards their presence in schools. Continued efforts need to be initiated to strengthen students present in schools at teachers and community levels. Somewhere it has also to be found out if school environment and teachers' approach to students and their learning difficulties is causing students lack of interests in and absence from school.
- (viii) A look at the minutes of V.S.S. meetings reveals that the issue of students' attendance in school figures in these meetings but occasionally only. Some follow up action is also taken but that is not a general trend. Mobilization of students and parents to improve students' attendance needs to be

repeatedly done round the year especially at those points of time when students' attendance dwindles sharply. Community leaders and teachers know what are such occasions when this problem would arise. They should take special steps around those occasions persistently. In some schools continued suspension of MDM also might have contributed to students' absence from schools. Therefore attempts should also be made to immediately restart the MDM programme in the affected schools.

- (ix) Assessment of students learning achievement is based on evaluation of a combination of their written and oral performance. In 71% schools it is entirely based on written examination whereas in 13% schools in lower classes only oral examination is conducted and in 7% it is oral plus written examination. It is reported that in 9% cases practical work is also used as a basis of evaluation of students achievement. In an attempt to make the evaluation process more comprehensive and continuous some schools (only 8.4%) have initiated quarterly and half yearly exams besides their annual examination. They also conduct some practical work alongwith theory examination at the end of the year. Monthly tests are conducted in only 3% schools. Monthly tests are being arranged to gauge students' achievement in one or more units. Quarterly tests are arranged in hardly 5% schools. However, half yearly examinations are being held in 84% schools. Schools are compulsorily organizing annual examinations of their students in all the classes and all subjects. Still this was reported that only

64.8% schools are conducting annual examinations. CCE has not been introduced in the State in letter and spirit.

The above information shows that on a very limited scale CCE has been introduced but it is neither really comprehensive nor continuous assessment. Similarly, the system of grading is yet to be started in the State.

- (xi) Students' achievement is evaluated in cognitive areas. Hardly, 2.6% schools say that they also organize evaluation of achievement in non-cognitive areas. Practical examination is one such example cited by them. The achievement level of students as was found out during visits to classrooms by MI teams was found to be generally mediocre. In languages in elementary classes it was found in majority of the cases (48%) as satisfactory and in 42% cases as good. In Mathematics, in classes I-VIII it was satisfactory in 48.3% schools and good in 35% schools. 11.5% students showed very poor performance in mathematics. In EVS and Science in 52% schools students' achievement was satisfactory and in 30.7% schools it was good. In 13% schools performance in this subject was very poor. In English language learning in 30% schools the performance of students was highly unsatisfactory whereas in another 20% schools it was good. In 47% schools their achievement in English language was only satisfactory.
- (xii) Students rapport with their teachers entirely depends on the approach of teachers towards them and the methods of teaching followed by them

during teaching their students. In most of the classes teachers were found using lecture and chalk and talk method using textbook as the main source material for teaching. Hardly teachers would use any participatory methods in teaching. Still it was felt that students were not feeling much distanced from teachers and were maintaining reasonable rapport with them. This could have improved by giving them greater opportunity of bringing and sharing their own experiences inside the classroom.

- (xiii) Underage and overage children were seen in all the classes. However, as one moved upward from standard I the number of other age children gradually came down. In 643 visited schools in class I there were 625 underage and 1549 overage children. In absolute terms, their number came down to 353 and 1190 children in class VIII, respectively. In all the classes (I-VIII) in the total enrolment of 162676 children, there were 14611 (8.98%) underage and overage children. Their number gradually came down from I to VI classes but suddenly jumped in classes VII and VIII.
- (xiv) Children kept dropping out of the schools in all the classes in all the schools. It ranged between 13.67% (class V) and 10.57% (Class VIII). In class I it was 10.3% which went down to 8.46% in class III but rose to 9.1% in class IV and jumped sharply to 13.67% in class V. Drop out again came down to 10.35% in class VI and further down to 9.1% in class VII but again went up in class VIII to 10.57%. Unlike the previous half yearly data when in class VIII drop out was found to be as low as 2.425 this time it has been found quite high in this class in the five districts.

- (xv) Number of students who have been retained in one class for more than one academic session was found to be quite high in primary class during this year in the five districts. This was quite negligible in the first half year of this session in other five districts visited by MI last time. In all, 10530 students were retained in classes I-V in the five districts, highest being in class I (5642) and lowest class V (542). In upper primary classes, however, it was quite low in classes VI-VIII (556 children), highest being in class VI (260) and lowest in class VIII (69). In terms of percentages, total retention (i.e. not promoted) in classes I to VIII against an enrolment of 162676 in these classes was 6.8%. In classes I to V it was 7.9% and in classes VI-VIII retention rate was as low as 1.8% only.

### **Concluding Observation**

The SSA and its supplementary schemes like KGBV, NPEGEL and MDM were clearly seen being implemented in the State of Bihar in the second six months of the year 2006-07 in all its districts with varying degrees of achievement. The State Government's proactive role and resolve to achieve the target of universal elementary education by the end of SSA period was clearly seen in various steps having been taken by it during the recent past. Its decision to recruit teachers on a massive scale by involving PRIs in the State is a historic step forward in ensuring that schools have teachers as per students' requirement. Earmarking of an additional fund for school buildings and facilities for various civil works not covered under SSA again shows State Government's determination to push the elementary education upward in terms of quality of supply of education in all

parts of the State. Gradual reduction in out of school children and dropout rates are the evidences of the impact of the State's response to these steps. However, still much is to be done in terms of bringing all the out of school children to the fold of schools and bringing them out with quality education after their schooling is over. Teacher education in the State has also to be put back on vails at the earliest as this would only guarantee regular supply of trained teachers to schools every year which would have sure implications for quality of teaching and learning.

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