

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2003-2004)**

(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

**MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND LITERACY)
(DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION)**

*[Action Taken on Sixth Report of Committee on Empowerment of Women
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)]*

FOURTEENTH REPORT

Presented to Lok Sabha on 18 August, 2003

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 19 August, 2003

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
August, 2003/ Sravana, 1925 (Saka)**

CONTENTS

Composition of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2003-2004)

INTRODUCTION

- CHAPTER I Report**
- CHAPTER II Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government**
- CHAPTER III Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government**
- CHAPTER IV Observations/Recommendations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration**
- CHAPTER V Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies**

APPENDICES

- I Statement of Observations/Recommendations.....**
- II Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha)**

PART II

- 1 Minutes of the Sitting of Committee on Empowerment of Women (2003-2004) held on 4th August, 2003**

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2003-2004)**

CHAIRPERSON **Smt. Margaret Alva**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Dr. (Smt.) Anita Arya
3. Smt. Jayashree Banerjee
4. Shri Bhan Singh Bhaura
5. Smt. Krishna Bose
6. Smt. Santosh Chowdhary
7. Smt. Renuka Chowdhury
8. Dr. (Mrs.) Beatrix D'Souza
9. Adv. Suresh Ramrao Jadhav (Patil)
10. Shri Bali Ram Kashyap
11. Smt. Abha Mahato
12. Dr. Ashok Patel
13. Shri E. Ponnuswamy
14. Shri Bishnu Pada Ray
15. Smt. Sushila Saroj
16. Dr. (Smt.) V. Saroja
17. Smt. Minati Sen
18. Smt. Shyama Singh
19. Smt. Jayaben B. Thakkar
20. Dr.(Smt.) Rajeswaramma Vukkala

RAJYA SABHA

21. Ms. Pramila Bohidar
22. Smt. Saroj Dubey
23. Smt. Vanga Geetha
24. Smt. S.G.Indira
25. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
26. Smt. Chandra Kala Pandey
27. Smt. Bimba Raikar
28. Miss Mabel Rebello
29. Smt. Savita Sharda
30. Smt. Maya Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P.D.T. Achary - Additional Secretary
2. Shri Ashok Sarin - Director
3. Smt. Veena Sharma - Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of Committee on Empowerment of Women, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present the Fourteenth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Education Programmes for Women' relating to the Ministry of Human Resources Development (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education).

2. The Sixth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women was presented to Lok Sabha on 26th February 2002 and laid in Rajya Sabha on 2nd May, 2002. Replies of the Government to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received.

3. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2003-2004) at their sitting held on 4th August, 2003. The Minutes of the Sitting form Part II of the Report.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix – I of the Report.

5. An Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at Appendix II.

NEW DELHI;

**5 August, 2003
14 Sravana , 1925 (Saka)**

**MARGARET ALVA,
CHAIRPERSON,
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.**

CHAPTER – I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Committee deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Sixth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women relating to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education).

1.2 The Sixth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 26th February, 2002. Replies of Government in respect of all recommendations have been received and are categorised as under:-

(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Para Nos. 1.66, 1.68, 1.72, 1.73, 1.74(i) to (viii), 1.74(x), 1.74(xi), 1.75(i) to (x), 1.76, 1.79, 1.80, 1.81, 1.86

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government:
Para Nos. 1.69, 1.70, 1.78, 1.82, 1.83, 1.84, 1.85

(iii) Observations/Recommendations, replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:

Para Nos. 1.65, 1.67, 1.71, 1.74(ix), 1.77.

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies have not been received.

Nil

1.3 The Committee desire that the replies in respect of recommendations contained in Chapter I should be furnished to the Committee expeditiously.

The Committee will now deal with those Action Taken replies of the Government, which need reiteration or merit comments.

Free and Compulsory Elementary Education still a major challenge

Recommendations (Para Nos.1.65, 1.67 and 1.84)

1.4 In the aforesaid paragraphs, the Committee had noted that the Constitution of India had made it obligatory on the part of the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years. This was to be achieved by the year 1960, but could not be achieved and the target dates had to be repeatedly extended to 1990. The National Policy on Education, 1986 again extended the target date to 1995. The modified Education Policy, 1992 further revised the target date so as to achieve compulsory education for all children upto 14 years of age by the end of the 20th century. In spite of the provisions having been made in the Constitution and the efforts made by successive Governments it has not yet been possible to universalise elementary education, and free and compulsory elementary education still remains a major challenge in most of the States.

1.5 The Committee had observed that as per the Census 2001, the literacy rate in the country was 65.38 per cent. Although female literacy had improved to 54.16 per cent in 2001 from (39.2 per cent in 1991), it was quite low as compared to that of 75.85 per cent in respect of males. Further, out of 203 million added to the literate population during 1991-2001, 107 million were males and 95 million were females. Contribution to the total decrease of 31 million illiterates during this period was dominated by males (21 million) as compared to the females (10 million). An estimated 60 million children were still out of schools, of which, 35 million were girls. The problems relating to drop outs, low levels of learning achievement, and low participation of girls, tribals and other disadvantaged groups persisted.

1.6 In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the Constitution 86th Amendment Act now provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group 6-14.

In reply to another recommendation of the Committee that the Constitution (Ninety-Third) Amendment Bill should have included Early Childhood Care and

Education (ECCE) for 0-6 years as part of Fundamental Right to Education, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the parliamentary standing committee set up to examine the constitution 93rd Amendment Bill to make elementary education a fundamental right recommended that ECCE should not be made a part of the Act. The Bill was framed accordingly. However, the Constitution 86th Amendment Act, 2002 states in para 3 that Article 45 of the Constitution shall be substituted to state that “the State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

1.7 The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have further stated that as per the latest educational statistics, the population of children in the age group 6-14 is 19.2 crore. Of these 15.7 crore children are enrolled in schools and the number of out of school children in the age group 6-14 is 3.5 crore of which 2.5 crore are girls.

1.8 In the Original Report, the Committee had observed that the Constitution of India had made it obligatory on the part of the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years. In spite of the provisions having been made in the Constitution and the efforts made by the successive Governments, it had not yet been possible to universalise elementary education, and free and compulsory education still remained a major challenge in most of the States. The Committee had pointed out that though female literacy had risen to 54.16% in 2001 from 39.2% in 1991 it still leaves almost 50% of Indian females illiterate, 55 years after freedom. Besides, it was quite low as compared to that of 78.85% in respect of males. Also an estimated 60 million children were still out of schools, of which 35 million were girls.

In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the Constitution 86th Amendment Act now provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. They have also stated that as per the latest educational statistics, out of 19.2 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years, 3.5 crore are still out of school, of which 2.5 crore are girls.

1.9 The Committee are concerned to note that despite the provisions made in the Constitution and the efforts made by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 3.5 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years of which 2.5 crore are girls, are still out of schools. The fact that the number of female out of school children still continue to be much higher than the number of male out of school children is a cause of concern to the Committee. This speaks adversely of the state of affairs in the field of education in the country. Apparently, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have failed in discharging their constitutional responsibility of providing free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years.

1.10 The Committee would like to point out that female participation in Education is low due to gender inequality, social discrimination and economic exploitation coupled with low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention and high drop out rates. The Committee hope that Government would look into these aspects which inhibit the education of children, particularly of the female, so as to increase the female literacy rate in the country.

Non-implementation of Scheme for education of girls

Recommendation (Para No. 1.71)

1.11 In the aforesaid Para of the Original Report, the Committee had pointed out that there was an urgent need to remove the constraints that led parents to keep their daughters out of school. The Committee had recommended that once girls were in school, it must be ensured that they were prepared for life, by developing curricula, textbooks and teaching aids that emphasised the life skills they would need. But the first step was for society to recognise that educating girls was not an option, but a necessity. This called for a massive programme of awareness generation in the educationally backward areas of the country.

1.12 In their Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the National Policy on Education, 1986, as modified in 1992, envisages the concept of a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste, creed, location and sex have access to education of a comparable quality. The national system of education will be based on a national curricula framework containing

a common core along with other flexible components. This will be designed to promote equality of sexes, removal of social barriers and promotion of values. Adequate provisions have been made to promote education of girls at each and every stage of education. A scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level has been formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The scheme that has recently been approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee, includes the provision of incentives, community mobilisation, gender sensitisation at all levels and special interventions to bridge the gaps in girls' education.

1.13 The Committee note that a scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level has been formulated as a distinct component of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The scheme which includes the provision of incentives, community mobilisation, gender sensitisation at all levels and special interventions to bridge the gap for girls' education is stated to have been recently approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee.

The Committee find that the National Policy on Education, 1986 as modified in 1992 envisages the concept of a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste, creed, location and sex have access to education of a comparable quality. It is a matter of concern that after 11 years of the modification of the National Policy on Education, the Department is stated to have formulated a scheme for education of girls at the elementary level which has recently been approved by Expenditure Finance Committee and is still to be implemented. The Committee deplore the delay on the part of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in taking action in regard to formulation of a scheme for the education of girls at elementary level. The Committee desire that this Scheme which should have been formulated and implemented much earlier, be implemented expeditiously.

Targets to Universalise Elementary Education unachieved

Recommendation (Para No. 1.73)

1.14 The Committee had noted in the aforesaid paragraph that various schemes/programmes such as the National literacy Mission, Mahila Samakhya, Operation Blackboard, Non-formal Education, Lok Jumbish and District Primary

Education Programme, had been initiated/undertaken for improvement of girls' education. These schemes were stated to have made enormous progress in terms of increase in number of schools, teachers and students in elementary education. The progress achieved in the female literacy rate during the last decade had been attributed to a great extent to the implementation of these schemes. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was stated to be another new holistic and integrated approach for universalising elementary education. The Committee were informed that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had the objective of bringing every child in the 6-14 age group to school/back to school/to an Education Guarantee Scheme Centre by 2003. It also aimed at providing 5 years of primary schooling for all by 2007 and 8 years of elementary schooling by 2010. Mainstreaming of gender in all the proposed interventions through the District Elementary Education Plan (DEEP) was central to the proposed Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Committee had expressed the hope that vigorous efforts would be made under the aforesaid schemes/programmes to ensure that the constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years became a reality.

1.15 The Department have stated in their Action Taken reply that the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a culmination of the efforts of the Government of India to universalise elementary education by community ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. The Abhiyan is an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capability of all children through provision of community owned quality education in mission mode. The SSA will provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age group by the year 2010. The SSA will also bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of the community in the management of schools.

1.16 The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in their Action Taken reply have further stated that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides for a primary school or an alternative schooling facility, within one kilometre of every habitation. The programme has targetted bringing all children to school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003 and Universal retention by 2010.

1.17 The Committee had observed in the Original Report that various schemes/programmes had been initiated/undertaken by the Government for improvement of girls' education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was stated to be another new holistic and integrated approach which had the objective of bringing every child in the 6-14 years age group to school/back to school/ to an education guarantee system by 2003. The Committee had expressed the hope that vigorous efforts would be made under the aforesaid schemes/programmes to ensure that the constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years became a reality.

1.18 The Committee are disappointed to note that the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in their Action Taken reply have simply repeated the objectives of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and have not informed us as to what concrete steps have been taken so far to achieve the objectives of the programme. As already pointed out earlier in the Report, 3.5 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years are still out of school of which 2.5 crore are girls. The fact that the target year 2003 is already half way through and a large number of children, especially, girls are still out of school, makes the Committee apprehensive about the reply of the Department that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years by the year 2010. The Committee desire that the Department carry out a study to evaluate what has been the impact of the programme (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) and what have been its shortcomings, with a view to taking suitable remedial steps so that the targets set for bringing every child, particularly girls, between 6-14 years to school, becomes a reality.

1.19 As a measure to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls, the Committee had recommended that the facility of non-formal education for school drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend schools be provided. In reply, the Department have stated that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides for a primary school or an alternative schooling facility, within one Kilometer of every habitation. The Committee feel that to universalise elementary education, special programmes need to be drawn up to get working children to school. It is not only important to provide primary schools or alternate

schooling facility, but it is also necessary to ensure that all children including working children attend such schools. The Committee, therefore, desire that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan should include a component which not only provides flexible hours to the working children but also makes them compatible with their work schedule, enabling them to receive at least a minimum level of learning at the primary level.

Provision for Mid-Day-Meal Scheme

Recommendation [Para No.1.75(iv)]

1.20 In order to increase retention and reduce drop outs, one of the measures recommended by the Committee to the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in consultation with the State Governments, was that instead of raw wheat/rice, cooked meals should be served to children. This has now been made compulsory by the Supreme Court.

1.21 In reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education popularly known as the 'Mid-day Meal scheme' was launched on 15th August, 1995 with the specific objective of giving a boost to the universalisation of primary education by impacting upon enrolment, attendance, retention and the nutritional needs of children in primary classes. The programme aims to cover all Government, local body and Government-aided schools. The Government of India's support under this programme is provision of food-grains free of cost to the children @ 100 grams per school day per student in States where cooked meals are provided and 3 kg per child where food-grains are being distributed subject to a minimum of 80% attendance. The Scheme envisages serving of hot cooked meals having a calorific value equivalent of 100 grams of wheat/rice per student per school day. A number of States are already providing hot cooked meals under this scheme.

1.22 In order to increase retention and reduce drop outs, the Committee had recommended that instead of raw wheat/rice, cooked meals should be served to children. The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in reply have stated that under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education popularly known as 'The Mid-Day Meal Scheme' the Government of

India provide food-grains free of cost to the children. The Committee find that though the Scheme envisages serving of hot cooked meals, in some States uncooked food-grains are being distributed to the children. The Committee are of the opinion that instead of raw food-grains, cooked meals should be served to children in primary classes to meet their nutritional needs. It will serve the dual purpose of attracting more and more children to schools specially in rural and semi-urban areas and also in checking the consumption/selling off of the food-grains by their families. Besides, it will also check drop outs and increase retention of the children. The Committee desire that the Scheme for distribution of cooked meals as now made compulsory by the Supreme Court should be properly monitored by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy to ensure that it is properly implemented in all the States.

The Committee also emphasise the importance of Child Care Centres for Early Childhood Education or Pre-School Education. Apart from enabling the all round development of children through child centred play activities, this ensures that young girls are freed of their responsibility of sibling care, enabling them to go to school. The Committee, therefore, feel that to universalise elementary education and increase female literacy, the first step should be to set up Child Care Centres/Creches, especially in rural and slum areas in the vicinity of Primary/Elementary Schools.

Orientation of Policies in related sectors

Recommendation [Para No.1.74(ix)]

1.23 As a measure to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls, the Committee recommended in the aforesaid para that there should be orientation of policies in other sectors for providing support and facilitating access to services like pure drinking water, fuel, fodder and crèches, thus freeing girls from the drudgery of household chores, and helping them to attend to their education.

1.24 The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in the Action Taken reply have stated that the observations of the Committee are noted. The issues raised require a convergence of efforts of several Departments and Ministries viz. the Ministry of Health and Family, Department of Rural Development, Department of Women and Child

Development, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.

1.25 One of the measures suggested by the Committee to be taken on priority basis to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls was orientation of policies in other sectors for providing support and facilitating access to services like pure drinking water, fuel, fodder and creches, thus freeing them from the drudgery of household chores, and helping them attend to their education. In their Action Taken reply, the Department have simply stated that the observations of the Committee are noted. It has been stated that the issues raised require convergence of efforts of several Departments and Ministries viz. the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Rural Development, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.

1.26 The Committee regret the evasive reply furnished by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy. Being the nodal Department for Universalisation of Elementary Education, it was expected of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy to initiate necessary steps in consultation and coordination with other concerned Ministries/Departments for orientation of policies in other related sectors which would help girls attend to their education. Apparently, the Department have not taken the recommendation of the Committee seriously. The Committee, desire the Department to take a more proactive role in this regard and to address the issue in a holistic manner.

**Association of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Anganwadi workers in the Literacy Programmes
Recommendations [Para No. 1.75(viii) and 1.75 (ix)]**

1.27 In the aforesaid paragraphs, the Committee had pointed out that vigorous steps were needed to associate the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the Literacy Programmes. The Committee had desired that the women elected to local bodies should be actively involved in such programmes and be provided sufficient protection while they acted as supervisors of the educational institutions.

1.28 The Committee had also recommended that the Anganwadi Workers should be involved to enable them to play an active role and become the focal point for a number of activities and support services for literacy programmes especially of girls.

1.29 In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that under the National Literacy Mission (NLM) a large number of literacy campaigns are being administered through Panchayati Raj institutions in certain States notably in West Bengal and Kerala.

1.30 The Committee had suggested that vigorous steps be taken to associate the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the literacy programmes. The women elected to local bodies should be actively involved in such programmes and be provided sufficient protection while they acted as supervisors of educational institutions. The Committee are not satisfied with the superficial reply furnished by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy which states that under the National Literacy Mission (NLM) a large number of literacy campaigns are being administered though Panchayati Raj Institutions in certain States notably in West Bengal and Kerala.

1.31 While reiterating their earlier recommendation the Committee desire that the literacy campaigns through Panchayati Raj Institutions be extended to all States and not only in selected few States. Further, the Committee desire that Anganwadi workers should also be involved to play an active role and should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for the literacy programmes especially of girls.

Proper Utilisation of Funds for Education

Recommendation (Para No. 1.77)

1.32 The Committee, in the Original Report, had observed that Secondary Education was a bridge between elementary and higher education which prepared young persons between the age group of 14-18 for entry into higher education. The Committee had pointed out that the need for superior academic achievement was greater for girls as compared to boys, because of the prevailing socio-economic situation. The future of the girl child rested squarely on her educational achievements and economic independence

and were thus intimately linked to her educational advancement. It was no surprise that the National Policy on Education revised in 1992 *inter-alia* called for a planned expansion of secondary education facilities all over the country, with higher participation of girls, SCs/STs, particularly in science, vocational and commerce streams etc. However, it was a matter of concern that there had been under-utilisation of funds allotted for Secondary Education in each of the years from 1995-96 to 1999-2000. The reasons attributed by the Department of Secondary Education for this, included slow utilisation of funds by State Governments, delay in finalisation of Ninth Five Year Plan and delay in revision of some of the schemes. The Committee had observed that it was strange that while on the one hand experts recommended increased allocation for education, on the other hand funds earmarked for Secondary Education had remained unutilised. The Committee had expected the Department of Secondary Education to ensure that timely action was taken to remedy the situation and ensure the proper utilisation of funds for education.

1.33 In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Secondary and Higher Education have stated that the Department have taken a view against the States/UTs who have not utilised the funds allocated under different schemes/programmes and also not sent their utilisation certificates. Such States/UTs have been asked to refund the amount lying unspent with them. A few States have requested for extension of validity period to utilise this amount lying with them. These States have already been given extension of time.

1.34 The Committee, in their original Report, had observed that not only Allocation earmarked for Education was inadequate but the funds allotted for Secondary Education from 1995-1996 to 1999-2000 were not fully and properly utilised. The Committee are disappointed to note from the Action Taken reply furnished by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education that they have taken a view against the States/Union Territories who have not utilised the funds allocated in different schemes/programmes and also not sent their utilisation certificates. The Department have stated that such States have been asked to refund the amount unspent by them. It is a matter of deep concern that whereas Experts/Commissions have been recommending increased allocation for Education, the States have not been able to spend the limited funds allotted to

them for the purpose. The Committee are surprised that the Department have not cared to find out the specific reasons for non-utilisation of funds by the States which obviously have affected the Educational Programmes for children. The Committee feel that the Government should be more serious about the implementation of various educational schemes/programmes. They should not be content merely releasing the money to the States but should also ensure that each rupee allocated for education is meaningfully and timely spent.

Need for increased allocation for education

Recommendation (Para No. 1.80)

1.35 The Committee, in the aforesaid para of their Original Report, had pointed out that the Kothari Commission on Education (1964-66) recommended that the investment on education should be gradually increased so as to reach a level of 6% of GDP. The National Policy on Education, 1986 also reiterated that the investment on education be increased to 6% of the national income against the then allocation of only 3.3%. The Committee were concerned that the allocation for education was only 3.8% of GDP and fell far short of the target recommended by the Kothari Commission 34 years ago. The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy had admitted that in order to achieve the long cherished goal of universalisation of elementary education, there was an urgent need for increasing public expenditure on education to this level. The Committee were of the opinion that no concrete steps had been taken by the Government over all these years to step up the allocation. The Committee had desired that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should ensure increased allocation of funds for education in the immediate future. Further, since Education was a concurrent subject and was the joint responsibility of the Centre and the States, the States should also be associated in mobilisation of resources for achievement of the target of expenditure of 6% of GDP.

1.36 In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education have stated that it has not so far been possible to achieve the targeted investment on education due to constraints on resources and other competing priorities. However, due to sustained endeavours, allocation for education has been increasing over the years. The allocation for education in the Tenth Plan viz. 2002-2007 is Rs. 42850 crores as against

Rs. 24908.38 crores in the Ninth Plan period. This amounts to an increase of 72%. The expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP has risen from 0.64% in 1951-52 to 4.27% in 2000-2001.

1.37 In their original Report, the Committee had observed that the Kothari Commission on Education (1964-66) and the National Policy on Education (1986) recommended that investment on education should be gradually increased to 6% of the national income against the then allocation of 3.3%. The Committee had desired that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should ensure increased allocation of funds for education in the immediate future.

1.38 According to the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, the Allocation for Education in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) is Rs. 43825 crores as against Rs. 24908.38 crores in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002), which means an increase of 72%. Further, the expenditure on education as percentage of GDP has risen to 4.27% in 2000-2001. In this regard, the Committee would like to point out that in 1995, the Government of India had indicated that the State Governments and the Union Government were spending 3.7% of GDP on Education and by the turn of the century (i.e. by the end of 2000) this amount would increase to 6% of GDP. The Committee, therefore, feel that the thrust of the Government should be to increase the expenditure on education to 6% of GDP as was recommended by the Kothari Commission 34 years ago, and as per their commitment in 1995. It may also be ensured that the available funds are utilised properly and effectively. Further, since Education is a concurrent subject and is the joint responsibility of the Centre and the States, the Committee reiterate that the States should also be associated in mobilisation of resources for achieving the target of expenditure of 6% of GDP on Education.

1.39 The Committee would like to further point out that the female literacy rate in the country as per 2001 Census is 54.16% as compared to that of 75.85% in respect of males. The Committee are of the view that the economic and social returns on education of women are greater than those of men, as by educating women we can reduce poverty, improve productivity, ease population pressure

and offer the children a better future. Therefore, to improve the participation of girls in the field of education, special allocation needs to be made in the Educational budget for female literacy and thus abridge the existing massive gender gap in literacy rates.

CHAPTER II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

Shockingly, of the 900 million illiterates in the world, almost one-third belong to India. In other words, Indians constitute the largest number of uneducated people in the world. It is a paradoxical situation in which the gains made in the realm of education since independence have been overshadowed by the presence of a huge population of illiterates, especially in rural India, and more so among girls. Admittedly, the massive increase in the population in the last 50 years has been one of the major reasons for the imbalance in the literacy-population ratio. But, this can hardly be a ground for absolving the nation of its responsibility for the failure in providing primary education to all children.

(Para No. 1.66)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The observations are Noted.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Inter-State disparities also exist in regard to the female literacy rate. The Committee feel that special measures should be taken in those States where female literacy rate is very low as compared to the all India average. These States are Jharkhand (39.98%), Arunachal Pradesh (44.24%), Bihar (33.57%), Uttar Pradesh (42.97%), Rajasthan (44.34%) and Jammu & Kashmir (41.82%). The Committee would like the Government to study the situation in these States with a view to identifying the precise reasons for the low female rates there, so that necessary steps could be taken in consultation and coordination with the respective State Governments, apart from vigorously implementing the Schemes/Programmes already in operation.

(Para No.1.68)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Government has identified 2198 educationally backward blocks (defined as those blocks which have a female literacy below the National average and a gender gap above the national average) for special interventions in the Tenth Plan period. The following interventions have been proposed for these areas:

A scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level has been formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The scheme that has recently been approved by the EFC, includes the provision of incentives, community mobilisation, gender sensitisation at all levels and special interventions to bridge the gaps for girls' education.

The Mahila Samakhya programme, which is currently operational in 33 districts, be extended to cover such educationally backward areas. The proposal is being finalised. The National Literacy Mission (NLM) is also focusing on low female literacy districts. The NLM is planning to tackle low female literacy levels with the help of NGOs and Zila Saksharata Samitis. This is being done in consultation with the State Governments/District Collectors.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee are of the firm opinion that the achievement of universalisation of elementary education is essential as it is an index of the general, social and economic development of the country. Primary education plays an important role in laying the proper foundation of the cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, social and spiritual developments of the children. The economic and social returns for education of women are, on the whole, greater than those of men. Education empowers girls by building up their confidence and enabling them to take firm decisions about their lives. By educating women we can reduce poverty, improve productivity, ease population pressure and offer the children a better future.

(Para No.1.72)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The removal of women's illiteracy and retention in elementary education is receiving priority, particularly under the new scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee are informed that various schemes/programmes such as the National literacy Mission, Mahila Samakhya, Operation Blackboard, Non-formal Education, Lok Jumbish and District Primary Education Programme, have been initiated/undertaken for improvement of girls' education. These schemes are stated to have made enormous progress in terms of increase in number of schools, teachers and students in elementary education. The progress achieved in the female literacy rate during the last decade has been attributed to a great extent to the implementation of these schemes. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is stated to be another new holistic and integrated approach for universalising elementary education. Based on the experience of programmes for girls' education and women's empowerment, the proposed Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which is in mission mode, adopts many of the successful initiatives. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has the objective of bringing every child in the 6-14 age group to school/back to school/to an Education Guarantee Scheme Centre by 2003. It also aims at providing 5 years of primary schooling for all by 2007 and 8 years of elementary schooling by 2010. Mainstreaming of gender in all the proposed interventions through the District Elementary Education Plan (DEEP) is central to the proposed Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Committee hope that vigorous efforts would be made under the aforesaid schemes/programmes to ensure that the constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years becomes a reality.

(Para No. 1.73)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a culmination of the efforts of the Government of India to universalise elementary education by community ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. The Abhiyan is an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capability to all children through provision of community owned quality education in mission mode. The SSA will provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age

group by the year 2010. The SSA will also bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of the community in the management of schools.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee desire that the following measures be taken on priority basis to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls :-

- (i) Universal enrolment of all children .
- (ii) Provision of primary school, within one kilometre of walking distance;
- (iii) facility of non-formal education for school drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend schools;
- (iv) Reduction of drop out rates especially of girls.
- (v) Achievement of minimum levels of learning by all children at the primary level, and introduction of this concept at the upper primary stage on a large scale;
- (vi) Increased allocation of funds for various schemes/programmes initiated for girls' education and optimum utilisation of allotted funds.

[Para No.1.74(i-vi)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme is an effort to universalise elementary education. SSA provides for a primary school or an alternative schooling facility, within one kilometre of every habitation. The programme has targeted bringing all children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003 and Universal retention by 2010. SSA also proposes to bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and a focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life. The SSA programme now covers 561 districts in the country. It is proposed to cover the entire country under the scheme by the end of this financial year.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Taking up of intensive awareness generation activities for bringing about change in societal attitudes towards girls' education .

[Para 1.74(vii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Both the Mahila Samakhya programme as well as the proposed scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan incorporate a strong emphasis on awareness generation activities for bringing about change in societal attitudes towards girls' education.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Orientation of educational policies to take care of specific needs and requirements of girls and women, particularly in their socio-economic context.

[Para 1.74(viii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The National Policy on Education, 1986, as modified in 1992, envisages the concept of a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste, creed, location and sex have accessed to education of a comparable quality. The national system of education will be based on a national curricular framework containing a common core along with other flexible components. This will be designed to promote equality of sexes, removal of social barriers and promotion of values. Adequate provisions have been made to promote education of girls at each and every stage of education.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Gearing up of economic policies to improve employment of women and their earning capabilities so that they can relieve the girls' for educational activities.

[Para 1.74(x)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Under the National Literacy Mission, 108 Jan Shikshan Sansthan have already been sanctioned in the country. The Sansthans are basically vocational education institutions to equip and provide skill development/upgradation of skills for empowering women and thereby improving the income of poor people, neo-literates, weaker-sections and especially women in the country.

Recommendation

Exploring the possibilities/potential of imparting distance education, through TV, to reach backward areas - SC/ST/Rural women/nomadic tribes/slum dwellers of urban centres.

[Para 1.74(xi)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan there is a special provision for interventions for the education of children belonging to the tribal community and in backward and remote areas.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee further recommend that to increase retention and reduce drop outs, the following measures may be taken by the Department in consultation with the State Governments:

- (i) School should be made an attractive place, learning an enjoyable experience and teaching child centred and activity oriented, with text books made colourful and attractive from the child's point of view.

[Para No. 1.75(i)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Under the District Primary Education Programme, States have revised the textbooks and conducted large scale teacher training to make the classrooms more child centered and activity oriented.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V, dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Early childhood education or pre-school education focuses on providing a learning environment for children under the age of six years. This fosters the natural process of initiating children into self-motivated education in which they learn as they play. Apart from enabling the all round development of children through child-centred play activities, this ensures that young girls are freed of their responsibility of sibling care enabling them to go to schools and thus contributing to universalisation of primary education. The Committee, therefore, emphasise the need for pre-school education as a significant input for providing a sound foundation for the growth and development of a child, especially from poor families. Government should pay special attention to this aspect.

[Para1.75(ii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Integrated Child Development Services programme of the Department of Women and Child, is the largest ECE programme in the country. ICDS was started on 2.10.1975 in 33 blocks as a programme for the holistic development of children

under six years to break the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality. ICDS provides health, nutrition, ECE and convergence services.

ICDS provides support to the national efforts for universalisation of primary education. It provides increased opportunities for promoting early development, associated with improved cognitive and social skills, enrolment and retention in the early primary stage. By releasing girls from the burden of sibling care it also enables them to participate in primary education.

ICDS is now operating 4725 projects in the country, with more than 6 lakh, twenty thousand operational anganwari centres. The total number of ICDS projects sanctioned are 5652. The balance 927 projects will be operationalised during the Tenth Plan period.

Apart from the Integrated Child Development Services Programme scheme of the Department of Women and Child, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy did not start any major programmes for early childhood education. However, under the DPEP and the Mahila Samakhya programmes some ECE centres have been started.

A proposal to start child care centres as part of the proposed scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, had been formulated. This was, however, rejected by the Expenditure Finance Committee.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The teachers should be motivated, dedicated and fully trained. NCERT should launch a pilot programme in close collaboration with State Councils of Education, Research and Training for the training of teachers. There should be provision for substitute full time

teachers in all schools including Kendriya Vidyalayas when regular teachers go on long leave so that students do not suffer.

[Para 1.75(iii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Under the District Primary Education Programme large scale teacher training programmes have been organized which have addressed issues related to teacher motivation.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Instead of raw wheat/rice, cooked meals should be served to children.

[Para1.75(iv)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education popularly known as the Mid-day Meal scheme was launched on 15th August, 1995 with the specific objective of giving a boost to the universalisation of primary education by impacting upon enrolment attendance, retention and the nutritional needs of children in primary classes. The programme aims to cover all Government, local body and Government add schools. The Government of India's support under this programme is to provide foodgrains free of cost to the children @ 100 grams per school day per student in States where cooked meals are provided and 3 kg per child where foodgrains are being distributed subject to a minimum of 80% in attendance. 100% central assistance is being provided for meeting the cost of foodgrains through reimbursement to the Food Corporation of India. Cost of transportation is reimbursed through district authorities for movement of foodgrains from the FCI grams of wheat/rice per student per school day. A number of States are already providing hot cooked meals under this scheme.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Free text books, uniforms and teaching/learning materials may be provided at the start of the academic session especially in rural areas, for girls.

[Para1.75(v)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Free text books to girls at the elementary level is approved under the SSA programme. IN the Educationally backward blocks, additional incentives like uniforms are also admissible under the proposed scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Proper toilets and drinking water facilities should be made available particularly in the girls co-educational schools.

[Para 1.75(vi)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Provisions are being made to provided toilets and drinking water facilities to elementary schools under the SSA programme. Provisions have also been made under the tenth finance commission and the district primary education programme.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The children of the nomadic tribes, shifting cultivators, and construction workers are the most vulnerable groups of school drop-outs. Therefore, special attention must be paid to these target groups.

[Para 1.75(vii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Education is a subject on the Concurrent list of the Constitution and elementary education is the primary responsibility of the State Governments. The Central Government, with the aim of achieving universalisation of education, which includes education of tribal children, launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) under which financial assistance is provided to States as per their demands projected in their work plans for implementations of this programme. The SSA framework also has a special provision for intervention for the education on children belonging to the tribal community.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Vigorous steps are needed to associate the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the Literacy Programmes. The women elected to local bodies should be actively involved in such programmes and be provided sufficient protection while they act as supervisors of the educational institutions.

[Para 1.75(viii)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Under the National Literacy Mission (NLM) a large number of literacy campaigns are being administered through Panchayati Raj institutions in certain States notably in West Bengal and Kerala.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Anganwadi Workers should also be involved to play an active role and should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for the literacy programmes especially of girls.

[Para 1.75(ix)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The observations of the Committee are noted.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Basic education programmes such as Lok Jumbish and District Primary Education Programme have built in decentralisation as part of their management structures. The Committee desire that the local community, parents, women and local bodies should be associated in education through participation in the decentralised management structures like Village Education Committees, Parent Teacher Associations etc.

[Para 1.75(x)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Lok Jumbish Programme was established to function as a social mission for bringing about a fundamental change in the basic education system and through it the overall socio-cultural situation. Lok Jumbish itself means the people's movement as well as movement for the people. The programme is implemented through active participation of the local community and local bodies. Similarly the District Primary Education Programme lays great emphasis on decentralized management, participatory processes, empowerment and capacity building at all levels. The programme has a marked gender focus and involves not only the local community and local bodies but also parents and women. Under DPEP Village Education Committees/School Management Committees have been set up in almost all project villagers/habitation/schools.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The National Policy on Education, 1986, had emphasised "Education for Women's equality", envisaging that the National Education system would play a positive

interventionist role in the empowerment of Women. The National Policy on Education saw education as an agent for change in the status of women, and their empowerment as a critical precondition for their participation in the development process. Education must function as an equaliser in providing equality of opportunities in education so that no individual is denied access to quality education, solely on account of personal attributes or primordial identities. However, inequality of educational opportunities exists throughout the world and more so in India. The Committee therefore, desire that equal opportunities be ensured to all citizens and nothing be allowed to obstruct their path to development, particularly of the underprivileged, the disadvantaged, the disabled and women.

(Para No.1.76)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Mahila Samakhya programme, was initiated to translate the goals of National Policy on Education (NPE) into a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas and is currently being implemented in 33 districts.

Mahila Samakhya endeavours to create a learning environment where women can collectively affirm their potential, gain the strength to demand information and knowledge, and move forward to change and take charge of their lives. Education is understood as an ongoing process of learning and empowerment which transcends mere literacy.

One of the objectives of the schemes is to create an environment where women can seek knowledge and information and thereby empower them to play a positive role in their own development and development of society.

The outcomes of the MS processes have validated the MS strategy for the achievement of this objective.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,

dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

Although education facilities have increased in recent years, yet they have not kept pace with the increasing demands of a growing population. Scarcity of resources is perhaps the main constraint in expansion of educational facilities. The people demand quantitative and qualitative improvement of education. The efforts of the Government need to be supplemented by private sector involvement and should be encouraged. The private sector can contribute not only in monetary terms but also in the form of expertise for quality improvement through effective management systems and investment in technical education. The Committee hope that the Department would explore the possibility of greater involvement of the private sector in the education system. Bureaucratic hurdles should be removed and the help of the private sector encouraged.

(Para No. 1.79)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

Efforts will be made to explore areas of public-private partnership. Government, local bodies and Government aided schools will be covered under Sarva Shikhsa Abhiyan as is the practice under the Mid-day Meal Scheme as well as under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). In case the private sector wishes to improve the functioning of a Government or a local body or a private aided school, efforts to develop a partnership would be made within the broad parameters of State policy. Depending upon State Policies, the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS) and other Government teacher training institutions could be used to provide resource support to private unaided institutions, if the additional costs are borne by these private bodies.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, as modified in 1992, provides for a National System of Education which implies that up to a given, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. It

includes a common educational structure, a national curriculum framework and minimum level of learning for each stage of education. The NPE also envisages separate and special provisions for the education of disadvantaged sections of the society. It lays special emphasis on the removal of disparities and equilisation of educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far. Concerns regarding social justice, quality and equity in education are continuously addressed and several measures have been taken which include separate schools, hostels, exemption of tuition and other fees, incentives such as free text books, stationery, uniforms, scholarships, free studentships for poor and meritorious students, reservation in admission etc. it, while encouraging non-governmental and voluntary efforts including social activist group in the field of education, calls for steps to prevent commercialisation of education. Several Schemes of the Centre/States encourage the participation of NGOs/Vas to supplement governmental efforts. In order to enlist the support of all concerned and mobilise extra-budgetary resources to fill in the gap in actual requirements and the available budgetary support, as a measure, 'Bharat Shiksha Kosh' has been constituted to receive donations/contributions/endowments from individuals and corporates, Central and State Governments, NRIs and PIOs for various educational purposes.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January, 2003]

Recommendation

The Committee would like to point out that the Kothari Commission on Education (1964-66) stated that the investment on education should be gradually increased so as to reach a level of 6% of GDP. The National Policy on Education, 1986 also reiterated that the investment on education be increased to 6% of the national income against the then allocation of only 3.3%. However, it is a matter of deep concern that the current allocation for education is only 3.8% of GDP and falls far short of the target recommended by the Kothari Commission 34 years ago. The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have admitted that in order to achieve the long cherished goal of universalisation of elementary education, there is an urgent need for increasing public expenditure on education to this level. Apparently no concrete steps have been taken by the Government all these years to step up the allocation. The Committee desire that the Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance should ensure increased allocation of funds for education in the immediate future. Further, since Education is a concurrent subject and is the joint responsibility of the Centre and the States, the States should also be associated in mobilisation of resources for achievement of the target of expenditure of 6% of GDP.

(Para No. 1.80)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

It has not so far been possible to achieve the targeted investment on education due to constraints on resources and other competing priorities. However, due to sustained endeavours, allocation for education has been increasing over the years. The allocation for education in the 10th Plan viz. 2002-2007 is Rs. 42850 crores as against Rs. 24908.38 crores in the 9th Plan period. This amounts to an increase of 72%. The expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP has risen from 0.64% in 1951-52 to 4.27% in 2000-2001.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

It has not so far been possible to achieve the targeted investment on education due to constraint on resources and other competing priorities. However, due to sustained endeavour, allocation for education has been increasing over the years. The allocation for education in Tenth Plan (2002-2007) is Rs. 42850 crore as against Rs. 24908.38 crore in the Ninth Plan (1997-02). The increase is about 72%. The expenditure on education as percentage of GDP (based on GDP figures at fact cast [New Series base = 1993-94] rose from 0.64 in 1951-52 to 4.19 in 1999-2000. The provisional figures for 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 are 4.27% and 3.99% respectively.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January, 2003]

Recommendation

The Committee would like to highlight the main deficiency in the education system due to which a large number of degree and diploma holders in our country remain unemployed. Students come out of universities with high expectations, which are often belied. It is indeed tragic that planners have confined their duties to only providing degrees to thousands of students every year, without linking them to employment generation which in turn leads to frustration. It is, therefore, essential that curriculum at the secondary school level should be such that it also technically equips students so that

they are able to get jobs easily and quickly. The need for vocational education and computer literacy cannot be ignored. The Committee desire that the requisite changes/modifications should be effected in the existing curricula to make the courses more professional and job oriented. Certification should be provided to students who pass the eighth class to enable them to take up academic or vocational courses according to their aptitude.

(Para No. 1.81)

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

The vocationalisation of Secondary education at +2 level provides for diversification of education opportunities so as to enhance individual employability, reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled manpower and it provides an alternative for those pursuing higher education. The Scheme provides job-oriented courses in the areas of Agriculture, Business and Commerce, engineering and Technology, Home Science, Humanities etc. New job-oriented courses, considering the changed market requirement, are being developed to attract girls students in the vocational stream. The programme is being strengthened by the introduction of more job-oriented courses by starting more Sections under vocational streams in all States/UTs. The State Governments have been requested to give more importance to the diversion of vocational stream from the general stream to achieve the desired target since the implementation of the scheme is the responsibility of the State Governments. The scheme is being revised to make the courses modular in form with flexible multi entry/exit pattern to enhance skills and employability.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January, 2003]

Recommendation

An effective monitoring system is a necessity for the successful implementation of education programmes. Regular visits by high level teams from the Department of Education to educationally backward States should be undertaken. Review meetings of Education Secretaries of the States should be periodically held at the Centre to assess the progress made and to identify the shortcomings and lacunae in the various schemes with a view to taking suitable remedial measures. Otherwise policies and programmes will continue to set targets and make laudable projections which will never be achieved.

(Para No. 1.86)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

A scheme called Area Officers Scheme has been introduced with effect from August, 1999 as a mechanism for regular and effective review, monitoring and coordination of central and centrally sponsored schemes to ensure appropriate and timely achievement of physical and financial targets in collaboration with the State Government and Union Territories. Monthly/reports on the status of implementation of schemes have been prescribed for quarterly and half yearly reviews at the appropriate levels.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

There is a system of nomination of middle and senior Officers of the Department as Area Officers to monitor some of the centrally sponsored schemes in the States. These Area Officers are expected to make regular visits to their respective States and monitor the working of the target schemes and give their reports for further action within the Department. In addition, a specific bureau of the Department has been entrusted with the responsibility of reviewing all the schemes being operated under the auspices of this Department.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January, 2003]

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES RECEIVED FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

The Department of Elementary Education have asserted that consistent efforts have been made to improve the participation of girls in the field of education in the last 50 years. According to them, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for girls has gone up from 24.8 per cent in 1950-51 at the primary level to 81.8 per cent in 1996-97. The Committee find that while the GER for girls at the primary stage in the country, as a whole and in most States, has improved, it is low as compared to GER for boys. A study of the progressive enrolment of girls and boys at primary and middle school levels points to a massive gender gap. Further there are a few States/UTs where the (GER) is considerably low in respect of girl students. These are Bihar (54.6%), Jammu & Kashmir (53.1%), Uttar Pradesh (59.9%) and Chandigarh (62.1%). Similarly, the drop out rate in respect of girls is very high in some of the States such as Bihar (63.44%), West Bengal (55.59%), Tripura (56.65%), Sikkim (55.4%), Rajasthan (57.2%), Mizoram (56.95) and Meghalaya (62.46%).

(Para No. 1.69)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The new scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level, has been designed to bridge the major problems that inhibit the enrolment, retention and achievement of girls at the elementary level at the family, community and school level in educationally backward areas. These measures will help to bridge the gender gap. The scheme also includes the preparation of special curriculum and pedagogy, gender review of text books, development of supplementary gender sensitive teaching learning material, etc.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee are concerned over the lower Gross Enrolment Ratio and higher drop out rates among girls especially as compared to those in respect of boys. Low enrolment ratio and high drop out rates lead to children especially girls,

lapsing into illiteracy, rendering futile, the efforts and investments made in improving literacy. The main reason for this situation in rural areas is that girls are engaged in household works such as fuel and fodder collection, fetching of water and care of siblings. The other reasons could be parent's lack of interest, poverty, absence of single sex schools, unsafe travel and lack of facilities in schools such as women teachers, separate toilets, etc.

(Para No. 1.70)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at primary and upper primary levels has improved significantly between 1950-51 and 1999-2000. The boys/girls differential in GER at the primary and upper primary levels also declined significantly. The drop out rates in primary classes has been decreasing year after year from 65% in 1960-61 to 40.25% in 1999-2000. Similarly in upper primary classes the drop out rates has decreased from 78% in 1960-61 to 54.53% in 1999-2000. Some studies have shown that pre-mature withdrawal of students, especially girls, because of poverty, is an issue which is more difficult to deal and requires an intensive effort at poverty alleviation.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee desire that adequate secondary schools be provided in the country particularly in rural, semi-urban and tribal areas. The Central School systems such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and the Navodaya Vidyalaya (where one-third of the seats are reserved for girls) should be expanded. Further the National Open School (NOS) particularly for children who do not get the chance to go to the regular school system, such as, working children, children with disabilities and children from other marginalised groups such as rural youth, girls and women, SCs & STs, etc. should be strengthened.

(Para No. 1.78)

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

Due to financial constraints there is no proposal to open more Kendriya Vidyalayas at present.

Under the Scheme of Navodaya Vidyalayas, one Navodaya Vidyalaya is to be opened in each district of the country. 482 Navodaya Vidyalayas have been sanctioned so far.

Both the above schemes are meant for all categories of students, which includes girls.

The National Open School is now known as National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). To provide a flexible education opportunity to various target groups, it reaches out to a prioritised client group which includes rural youth, girls and women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, Handicapped persons and Ex-servicemen. To encourage greater participation, partial concession in fee, cost of study material and fee for Personal Contact (PCP) of NIOS are allowed to female, SC/ST, Ex-servicemen and Handicapped candidates.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January,
2003]

Recommendation

Another shortcoming of the existing educational system is that it has distanced our younger generation from moral, social and ethical values. Although, it is claimed that character-building should become an inherent part of any education system, hardly anything is being done in this regard. The Committee are of the firm view that instead of loading the students with unnecessary, too detailed and extraneous curricula, the need of the hour is to inculcate in them social and moral values which would make them honest, law abiding citizens and social and civilised human beings.

(Para No. 1.82)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The National Policy on Education lays considerable emphasis on value education and highlights the need to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social and moral

values. The Policy states that in our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. The policy mentions that such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism. The Policy resolves to carry on all educational programmes in strict conformity with secular values. The Department implements a scheme of assistance for strengthening culture and values in education which has two broad components viz. (i) strengthening cultural and value education inputs in the school and non-formal education system and (ii) strengthening in-service training of art, craft, music and dance teachers. The scheme also aims at providing assistance for development of teaching/learning material, teacher training and community service activities aimed at inculcation of values.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

The National Policy on Education, 1986 was approved by the Parliament in May, 1986. The Programme of Action was approved in August, 1986 and reformulated in 1992. These documents of NPE and POA, 1992 which were laid before the Parliament in 1992 identified the goal of educational development and the strategies to be adopted for achievement of these goals. The details are as under:-

- i) Para 3.4 of NPE: Identifies Education about India's common cultural heritage as one of the core areas under the National System of Education.
- ii) Para 8.1 of NPE: While spelling out the cultural perspective in education policy stresses on need to bridge the schism between the formal system of education and India's rich and varied cultural traditions.
- iii) Para 8.2 of NPE: The curricula and processes of education will be enriched by cultural content in as many manifestation as possible.
- iv) Para 8.4 of NPE: expresses concern over the erosion of essential values and increasing cynicism in society and emphasises on the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values.

v) Para 8.5 & 8.6 of NPE: In our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism. Value education has a profound positive content, based on our heritage, national and universal goals and perceptions. It should lay primary emphasis on this aspect.

vi) POA 1992's Chapter 17: Under the title "identifies objectives and strategies for developing inter-linkages between education and culture to promote the process of child personality-development particularly in terms of discovering the inherent potentialities of the child. The POA lays down programmes covering pre-primary to higher levels of formal education laying stress on mutual participation, use of inexpensive and relevant materials for cultural exposure, the promotion of the concept of cultural brotherhood involving active participation of the community, a reform of curriculum, motivation of teachers and efforts to encourage the younger generation to participate in cultural and allied activities.

A central sector scheme of Strengthening Culture/Art/Values in Education for financial assistance to educational institutions implementing innovative programmes was formulated, in 1987-88 which started from 1988-89. Under this scheme, financial assistance is given to Governmental and Non-Governmental organisations, Panchayati Raj Institutions etc. to the extent of 100% of grant for the project proposals approved subject to a ceiling of Rs. 5 lakh approved by the Grant-in-aid Committee for activities relating to Strengthening of Culture and Values in Education in school and non-formal system of education and for training of in-service teachers in arts, crafts, music and dance. Till Ninth Plan, an amount of Rs. 531.97 lakh had been spent on assisting 149 NGOs.

Under the scheme core universal values i.e. Truth Righteous Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence are emphasised. NCERT has identified list of 82 values which forms the focal point of implementation of the scheme. As per policy, Human Values are specifically promoted and not the Social, Moral and ethical Values. NCERT is taking action for incorporating human values in the curricula of the school system.

Presently, the existing scheme is in process of its revision for covering all segments of education from pre-primary to higher education including technical and management education.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,

dated 30th January, 2003]

Recommendation

The Committee feel that there is need for meticulous decentralised planning with a view to providing education for all and improving the standards of education. Educational planning should give more emphasis on qualitative improvements of education while continuing the programmes for expansion, increasing enrolments and expenditure. The Government may also ensure that health care, nutrition, hygiene and physical education forms an integral part of the school curriculum at all stages.

(Para No. 1.83)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The observations of the Committee are noted. In so far as ensuring health care, nutrition, hygiene and physical education at the school level are concerned, the Government is seized of the matter and the various schemes and programmes cater to these aspects of health care, nutrition and hygiene etc. Literacy campaigns under the adult education programme have focused inter-alia on health and hygiene, and increased school enrolment. Shramik Vidyapeeths seek to enrich the people's lives by improving their occupational skills through vocational training programmes.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Reply of Department of Secondary and Higher Education

As per NCFSE-2000 of NCERT, Health and Physical Education should be an integral part of school curriculum. This would include games and sports, yoga, NCC, scouting and guiding etc. The detailed plans of courses are to be made and implemented by the State Government and board of School Education.

Under the Scheme of 'Quality Improvement in Schools' five new programmes namely: (i) Promotion of Science Laboratories, (ii) Environmental Orientation to School

Education (iii) Population Education Project (iv) International Science Olympiad (v) Promotion of Yoga in schools are being introduced in the Tenth Plan period.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,
dated 30th January, 2003]

Recommendation

The Constitution (Ninety Third) Amendment does not address the question of quality education by not categorically spelling out quality in education. It seems that Government will fulfill the formalities of education through non-formal education which is merely populist. Literacy does not mean non-formal education. The Committee feel that the Bill should have included Early Childhood Care and Education for 0-6 years as part of Fundamental Right to Education.

(Para No. 1.84)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

There is no question of the Government adopting a lackadaisical attitude to education. The Government both in the Centre and the States is committed to providing quality education to all children. The follow-up central legislation will also appropriately address the issue of quality of education.

The parliamentary standing committee set up to examine the constitution 93rd amendment bill to make elementary education a fundamental right recommended that ECCE should not be made a part of the act. The bill was framed accordingly. However, the Constitution 86th Amendment Act, 2002 states in para 3 that Article 45 of the Constitution shall be substituted to state that "the State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years".

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee would also like to point out that the Bill has put onus on parents for ensuring the education of their children. This may lead to harassment by the authorities of the poor and marginalised people who are not able to send their children to

school. The onus for ensuring compulsory education should in the first place be on the machinery of the State viz. the education department, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Local Schools and other bodies.

(Para No. 1.85)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Constitution (86th) Amendment Act, 2002 passed by the Parliament states that the State shall provide free and compulsory to all children of the age of 6-14 years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine. It may be stated that this particular insertion in Article 21 of the Constitution puts the onus on providing education to children on the Central and State Governments as well as the machinery of the Governments. The Act, however, also adds that a parent or guardian should provide opportunities for education to his child between the age of 6 and 14 years since it is their duty to send their child to school. There is no intention to harass the parents or guardians.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS REPLIES TO WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation

The Constitution of India has made it obligatory on the part of the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years. This was to be achieved by the year 1960, but could not be achieved and the target dates had to be repeatedly extended to 1990. The National Policy on Education, 1986 again extended the target date to 1995. The modified Education Policy, 1992 further revised the target date so as to achieve compulsory education for all children upto 14 years of age by the end of 20th century. In spite of the provisions having been made in the Constitution and the efforts made by successive Governments it has not yet been possible to universalise elementary education. Free and compulsory elementary education still remains a major challenge in most of the States.

(Para No. 1.65)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The Constitution 86th Amendment Act now provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group 6-14.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

As per the census 2001, the literacy rate in the country is 65.38 per cent. Although female literacy has improved to 54.16 per cent in 2001 from 39.2 per cent in 1991, it is quite low as compared to that of 75.85 per cent in respect of males in 2001. In absolute numbers, female illiterates continue to be much higher than male illiterates. Further, out of 203 million added to the literate population during 1991-2001, 107 million were males and 95 million were females. Contribution to the total decrease of 31 million illiterates during this period is dominated by males (21 million) as compared to the females (10 million). An estimated 60 million children are still out of schools, of these,

35 million are girls. The problems relating to drop out rates, low levels of learning achievement, low participation of girls, tribals and other disadvantaged groups persist. In the opinion of the Committee female literacy rate is low due to gender inequality, social discrimination and economic exploitation coupled with low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention and high drop-out rates.

(Para No. 1.67)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

As per the latest educational statistics, the population of children in the age group 6-14 is 9.12 crore. Of these 15.7 crore children are enrolled in school and the number of out of school children in the age group 6-14 is 3.5 crore of which 2.5 crore are girls.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee strongly feel that there is urgent need to remove the constraints that lead parents to keep their daughters out of school. And once girls are in school, it must be ensured they are prepared for life, by developing curricula, textbooks and teaching attitudes that emphasise the life skills they will need. But the first step is for society to recognise that educating girls is not an option, but a necessity. This calls for a massive programme of awareness generation in the educationally backward areas of the country.

(Para No.1.71)

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The National Policy on Education, 1986, as modified in 1992, envisages the concept of a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste, creed, location and sex have accessed to education of a comparable quality. The national system of education will be based on a national curricula framework containing a common core along with other flexible components. This will be designed to promote

equality of sexes, removal of social barriers and promotion of values. Adequate provisions have been made to promote education of girls at each and every stage of education. A scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level has been formulated as a distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The scheme that has recently been approved by the EFC, includes the provision of incentives, community mobilisation, gender sensitisation at all levels and special interventions to bridge the gaps for girls' education.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

The Committee desire that the following measures be taken on priority basis to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls :-

(ix) Orientation of policies in other sectors for providing support and facilitating access to services like pure drinking water, fuel, fodder and crèches, thus freeing them from the drudgery of household chores, to help girls attend to their education.

[Para No.1.74(ix)]

Reply of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy

The observations of the Committee are noted. The issues raised require a convergence of efforts of several Departments and Ministries viz. the Ministry of Health and Family, Department of Rural Development, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.

[Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, O.M. No. 8-2/2000-PN.V,
dated 20th December, 2002]

Recommendation

As regards secondary education, the Committee consider it a bridge between elementary and higher education which prepares young persons between the age group of 14-18 for entry into higher education. The Committee

feel that the need for superior academic achievement is greater for girls as compared to boys, because of the prevailing socio-economic situation. The future of the girl child rests squarely on her educational achievements, and economic independence and are intimately linked to her educational advancement. It is no surprise that the National Policy on Education revised in 1992 inter-alia called for a planned expansion of secondary education facilities all over the country, higher participation of girls, SCs/STs, particularly in science, vocational and commerce streams etc. However, it is a matter of concern that there has been under-utilisation of funds allotted for Secondary Education in each of the years from 1995-96 to 1999-2000. The reasons attributed by the Department of Secondary Education for this, include slow utilisation of funds by State Government, delay in finalisation of Ninth Five Year Plan and delay in revision of some of the schemes. It is strange that while on the one hand experts recommend increased allocation for education, on the other hand funds earmarked for Secondary Education have remained unutilised. The Committee expect the Department of Secondary Education to ensure that timely action is taken to remedy the situation and ensure the proper utilisation of funds for education.

(Para No. 1.77)

Replies from the Department of Secondary and Higher Education

Comments of the Committee are based on facts and are noted. The Department of Secondary and Higher Education has taken a view against the States/UTs who have not utilised the funds allocated under different schemes/programmes and also not sent their utilisation certificates. Such States/UTs have been asked to refund the amount lying unspent with them. A few States have requested for extension of validity period to utilise the unspent amount lying with them. These States have already been given extension of time for utilisation of funds.

[Department of Secondary and Higher Education, O.M. No. V.11014/15/2002-CDN,

dated 30th January, 2003]

CHAPTER V

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH
THE GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES**

- Nil -

**NEW DELHI
5 August, 2003
14 Shraavan, 1925 (Saka)**

**MARGARET ALVA,
CHAIRPERSON,
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.**

APPENDIX I

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

SL NO	Para No.	Ministry/ Department	Observations/Recommendations
1.	1.8	Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy)	<p>In the Original Report, the Committee had observed that the Constitution of India had made it obligatory on the part of the Government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years. In spite of the provisions having been made in the Constitution and the efforts made by the successive Governments, it had not yet been possible to universalise elementary education, and free and compulsory education still remained a major challenge in most of the States. The Committee had pointed out that though female literacy had risen to 54.16% in 2001 from 39.2% in 1991 it still leaves almost 50% of Indian females illiterate, 55 years after freedom. Besides, it was quite low as compared to that of 78.85% in respect of males. Also an estimated 60 million children were still out of schools, of which 35 million were girls.</p> <p>In the Action Taken reply, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have stated that the Constitution 86th Amendment Act now provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. They have also stated that as per the latest educational statistics, out of 19.2 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years, 3.5 crore are still out of school, of which 2.5 crore are girls.</p>
2.	1.9	-do-	<p>The Committee are concerned to note that despite the provisions made in the Constitution and the efforts made by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 3.5 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years of which 2.5 crore are girls, are still out of schools. The fact that the number of female out of school children still continue to be much higher than the number of male out of school children is a cause of concern to the Committee. This speaks adversely of the state of affairs in the field of education in the country. Apparently, the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy have failed in discharging their constitutional responsibility of providing free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years.</p>

3. 1.10 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
(Department of Elementary Education and Literacy)
- The Committee would like to point out that female participation in Education is low due to gender inequality, social discrimination and economic exploitation coupled with low enrolment of girls in schools, low retention and high drop out rates. The Committee hope that Government would look into these aspects which inhibit the education of children, particularly of the female, so as to increase the female literacy rate in the country.
4. 1.13 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
(Department of Elementary Education and Literacy)
- The Committee note that a scheme for the education of girls at the elementary level has been formulated as a distinct component of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The scheme which includes the provision of incentives, community mobilisation, gender sensitisation at all levels and special interventions to bridge the gap for girls' education is stated to have been recently approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee.
- The Committee find that the National Policy on Education, 1986 as modified in 1992 envisages the concept of a national system of education which implies that all students irrespective of caste, creed, location and sex have access to education of a comparable quality. It is a matter of concern that after 11 years of the modification of the National Policy on Education, the Department is stated to have formulated a scheme for education of girls at the elementary level which has recently been approved by Expenditure Finance Committee and is still to be implemented. The Committee deplore the delay on the part of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in taking action in regard to formulation of a scheme for the education of girls at elementary level. The Committee desire that this Scheme which should have been formulated and implemented much earlier, be implemented expeditiously.
5. 1.17 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
(Department of Elementary Education and Literacy)
- The Committee had observed in the Original Report that various schemes/programmes had been initiated/undertaken by the Government for improvement of girls' education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was stated to be another new holistic and integrated approach which had the objective of bringing every child in the 6-14 years age group to school/back to school/ to an education guarantee system by 2003. The Committee had expressed the hope that vigorous efforts would be made under the aforesaid schemes/programmes to ensure that the constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years became a reality.

- | | | | |
|----|------|--|---|
| 6. | 1.18 | Ministry of
Human Resource
Development

(Department of
Elementary
Education and
Literacy | <p>The Committee are disappointed to note that the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in their Action Taken reply have simply repeated the objectives of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and have not informed us as to what concrete steps have been taken so far to achieve the objectives of the programme. As already pointed out earlier in the Report, 3.5 crore children in the age group of 6-14 years are still out of school of which 2.5 crore are girls. The fact that the target year 2003 is already half way through and a large number of children, especially, girls are still out of school, makes the Committee apprehensive about the reply of the Department that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years by the year 2010. The Committee desire that the Department carry out a study to evaluate what has been the impact of the programme (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) and what have been its shortcomings, with a view to taking suitable remedial steps so that the targets set for bringing every child, particularly girls, between 6-14 years to school, becomes a reality.</p> |
| 7. | 1.19 | Ministry of
Human Resource
Development

(Department of
Elementary
Education and
Literacy | <p>As a measure to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls, the Committee had recommended that the facility of non-formal education for school drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend schools be provided. In reply, the Department have stated that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides for a primary school or an alternative schooling facility, within one Kilometer of every habitation. The Committee feel that to universalise elementary education, special programmes need to be drawn up to get working children to school. It is not only important to provide primary schools or alternate schooling facility, but it is also necessary to ensure that all children including working children attend such schools. The Committee, therefore, desire that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan should include a component which not only provides flexible hours to the working children but also makes them compatible with their work schedule, enabling them to receive at least a minimum level of learning at the primary level.</p> |
| 8. | 1.22 | -do- | <p>In order to increase retention and reduce drop outs, the Committee had recommended that instead of raw wheat/rice, cooked meals should be served to children. The Department of Elementary Education and Literacy in reply have stated that under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education popularly known as 'The Mid-Day Meal Scheme' the Government of India provide food-grains free of cost to the</p> |

children The Committee find that though the Scheme envisages serving of hot cooked meals, in some States uncooked food-grains are being distributed to the children. The Committee are of the opinion that instead of raw food-grains, cooked meals should be served to children in primary classes to meet their nutritional needs. It will serve the dual purpose of attracting more and more children to schools specially in rural and semi-urban areas and also in checking the consumption/selling off of the food-grains by their families. Besides, it will also check drop outs and increase retention of the children. The Committee desire that the Scheme for distribution of cooked meals as now made compulsory by the Supreme Court should be properly monitored by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy to ensure that it is properly implemented in all the States.

The Committee also emphasise the importance of Child Care Centres for Early Childhood Education or Pre-School Education. Apart from enabling the all round development of children through child centred play activities, this ensures that young girls are freed of their responsibility of sibling care, enabling them to go to school. The Committee, therefore, feel that to universalise elementary education and increase female literacy, the first step should be to set up Child Care Centres/Creches, especially in rural and slum areas in the vicinity of Primary/Elementary Schools.

- | | | | |
|-----|------|--|--|
| 9. | 1.25 | Ministry of Human Resource Development

(Department of Elementary Education and Literacy) | <p>One of the measures suggested by the Committee to be taken on priority basis to achieve the objective of education for all and especially for girls was orientation of policies in other sectors for providing support and facilitating access to services like pure drinking water, fuel, fodder and creches, thus freeing them from the drudgery of household chores, and helping them attend to their education. In their Action Taken reply, the Department have simply stated that the observations of the Committee are noted. It has been stated that the issues raised require convergence of efforts of several Departments and Ministries viz. the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Rural Development, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.</p> |
| 10. | 1.26 | Ministry of Human Resource Development

(Department of Elementary Education and Literacy) | <p>The Committee regret the evasive reply furnished by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy. Being the nodal Department for Universalisation of Elementary Education, it was expected of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy to initiate necessary steps in consultation and coordination with other concerned Ministries/Departments for orientation of policies in other</p> |

Literacy

related sectors which would help girls attend to their education. Apparently, the Department have not taken the recommendation of the Committee seriously. The Committee, desire the Department to take a more proactive role in this regard and to address the issue in a holistic manner.

11. 1.30 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
- The Committee had suggested that vigorous steps be taken to associate the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the literacy programmes. The women elected to local bodies should be actively involved in such programmes and be provided sufficient protection while they acted as supervisors of educational institutions. The Committee are not satisfied with the superficial reply furnished by the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy which states that under the National Literacy Mission (NLM) a large number of literacy campaigns are being administered through Panchayati Raj Institutions in certain States notably in West Bengal and Kerala.
12. 1.31 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
- While reiterating their earlier recommendation the Committee desire that the literacy campaigns through Panchayati Raj Institutions be extended to all States and not only in selected few States. Further, the Committee desire that Anganwadi workers should also be involved to play an active role and should be the focal point for a number of activities and support services for the literacy programmes especially of girls.
13. 1.34 **Ministry of Human Resource Development**
i) Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
&
ii) Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education
- The Committee, in their original Report, had observed that not only Allocation earmarked for Education was inadequate but the funds allotted for Secondary Education from 1995-1996 to 1999-2000 were not fully and properly utilised. The Committee are disappointed to note from the Action Taken reply furnished by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education that they have taken a view against the States/Union Territories who have not utilised the funds allocated in different schemes/programmes and also not sent their utilisation certificates. The Department have stated that such States have been asked to refund the amount unspent by them. It is a matter of deep concern that whereas Experts/Commissions have been recommending increased allocation for Education, the States have not been able to spend the limited funds allotted to them for the purpose. The Committee are surprised that the Department have not cared to find out the specific reasons for non-utilisation of funds by the States which obviously

have affected the Educational Programmes for children. The Committee feel that the Government should be more serious about the implementation of various educational schemes/programmes. They should not be content merely releasing the money to the States but should also ensure that each rupee allocated for education is meaningfully and timely spent.

14. 1.37 Ministry of Human Resource Development
- i) Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
&
ii) Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education
- In their original Report, the Committee had observed that the Kothari Commission on Education (1964-66) and the National Policy on Education (1986) recommended that investment on education should be gradually increased to 6% of the national income against the then allocation of 3.3%. The Committee had desired that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should ensure increased allocation of funds for education in the immediate future.
15. 1.38 Ministry of Human Resource Development
- i) Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
&
ii) Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education
- According to the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy and the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, the Allocation for Education in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) is Rs. 43825 crores as against Rs. 24908.38 crores in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002), which means an increase of 72%. Further, the expenditure on education as percentage of GDP has risen to 4.27% in 2000-2001. In this regard, the Committee would like to point out that in 1995, the Government of India had indicated that the State Governments and the Union Government were spending 3.7% of GDP on Education and by the turn of the century (i.e. by the end of 2000) this amount would increase to 6% of GDP. The Committee, therefore, feel that the thrust of the Government should be to increase the expenditure on education to 6% of GDP as was recommended by the Kothari Commission 34 years ago, and as per their commitment in 1995. It may also be ensured that the available funds are utilised properly and effectively. Further, since Education is a concurrent subject and is the joint responsibility of the Centre and the States, the Committee reiterate that the States should also be associated in mobilisation of resources for achieving the target of expenditure of 6% of GDP on Education.
16. 1.39 Ministry of Human Resource Development
- The Committee would like to further point out that the female literacy rate in the country as per 2001 Census is 54.16% as compared to that of 75.85% in respect of males.

- i) Department of Elementary Education and Literacy**
- &**
- ii) Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education**

The Committee are of the view that the economic and social returns on education of women are greater than those of men, as by educating women we can reduce poverty, improve productivity, ease population pressure and offer the children a better future. Therefore, to improve the participation of girls in the field of education, special allocation needs to be made in the Educational budget for female literacy and thus abridge the existing massive gender gap in literacy rates.

APPENDIX II

[Vide Para 1.2 of the Report]

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE SIXTH REPORT OF
THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

I)	Total number of Recommendations	-	41
II)	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government		
	Sl .Nos. 1.66, 1.68, 1.72, 1.73, 1.74(i) to (viii), 1.74(x), 1.74(xi), 1.75(i) to (x), 1.76, 1.79, 1.80, 1.81, 1.86		
	Total		29
	Percentage		70.73%
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue taking into consideration the replies of the Government:		
	Sl . Nos. 1.69, 1.70, 1.78, 1.82,1.83, 1.84, 1.85		
Total		7	
	Percentage		17.07%
(iv)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies to the Government have not been accepted by Committee which required reiteration		
	Sl. No. 1.65, 1.67, 1.71, 1.74(ix), 1.77.		
	Total	5	
	Percentage		12.19%
v)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Final replies have not been received.		
	Total		Nil
	Percentage		

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2003-2004).**

The Committee sat on Monday, 4th August, 2003 from 1605 hours to 1625 hours in Committee Room `B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

In Chair

Dr. (Smt.) Anita Arya - Acting Chairperson

PRESENT

LOK SABHA

2. Shri. Bhan Singh Bhaura
3. Smt. Krishna Bose
4. Smt. Renuka Chowdhury
5. Smt. Abha Mahato
6. Shri E. Ponnuswamy
7. Smt. Sushila Saroj

RAJYA SABHA

8. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
9. Smt. Bimba Raikar
10. Miss Mabel Rebello

SECRETARIAT

1. **Shri P.D.T.Achary** - **Additional Secretary**
2. **Shri Ashok Sarin** - **Director**
3. Smt. Veena Sharma - Under Secretary

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Committee chose Dr.(Smt) Anita Arya to act as Chairperson for the Sitting under Rule 258(3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. The Acting Chairperson

welcomed the Members of the Committee. The Committee then took up the following draft Reports for consideration:-

- i) Draft Action Taken Report on 'Education Programmes for Women'.
- ii) Draft Action Taken Report on 'Training Programmes for Women'.

After some deliberations, the Committee adopted both the draft Action Taken Reports.

2. The Committee authorised the Chairperson to finalise both the Reports and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.