

BIHAR EDUCATION PROJECT (SITAMARHI)

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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE BACKGROUND

1.1.1 The Bihar Education Project was launched with a mission mode to reconstruct the educational system by universalisation of elementary education through a composite process of expanding access, enrolment and retention and imparting quality education through the formal and non-formal schooling. Teachers were given central role in the project and participatory development and planning formed a key strategy for improving primary education at the grassroots level. The project was launched in 1992-93 in seven districts of Bihar, viz., Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, West Champaran, East Singhbhum, Ranchi, Rohtas and Chatra.

1.1.2 The following were the broad objectives of BEP:

- (i) Universalisation of Primary Education, viewed as a composite programme of access to primary education for all children upto 14 years of age, universal achievement at least of minimum levels of learning.
- (ii) Orientation of the educational system so as to serve the objectives of equality for women and their empowerment.
- (iii) Making necessary interventions to provide equal educational opportunity to adults and children belonging to the lower castes, ethnic communities and poorest section of society.

1.1.3 The BEP has completed five years since the initiation of the project. The present study was undertaken to evaluate the project with a view to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the processes involved and effectiveness of interventions made under the project to achieve its objectives. This report presents the experiences of Sitamarhi district.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 In view of the above, the study was taken up with the following objectives:

- (i) To analyse the achievement levels vis-à-vis the targets in terms of access, enrolment and retention and to identify the reasons for the shortfalls, if any;
- (ii) To assess whether the existing TLM were developed on the basis of local culture and environment as envisaged in the project;
- (iii) To examine the process of capacity building of teachers and other educational staff and its overall impact on improvement in learning achievements of the children of various social groups and sex;
- (iv) To ascertain the extent of improvement in school infrastructure and the facilities created for improving school environment;
- (v) To find out the effectiveness of the process adopted for school readiness (pre-school education) programme and non-formal education;

(vi) To examine the inter group coverage of beneficiaries, e.g., scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and girls, vis-à-vis the dominant castes/groups under different interventions of BEP;

(vii) To review the various processes involved in project management and problem solving at the district and sub-district levels;

(viii) To assess the extent of community mobilisation and participation and the processes adopted by the project officials and the contribution made by the village education committee;

(ix) To examine how far the BEP has been effective in establishing linkages with ongoing programmes in furtherance of project activities;

(x) To analyse the overall outcome against the anticipated outcome of the project.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

1.3.1 The methodology of the study included the analysis of both the primary as well as secondary data and information. The secondary information was collected from project documents, progress reports and other published material of BEP while the primary information was collected through various schedules designed for different target groups. Since the study aimed at assessing the overall outcome and the strengths and weaknesses of the project interventions, the perceptions of different stakeholders in the project have been gathered and analysed in a systematic manner. Further, the study adopted participatory approaches to analyse various issues in addition to eliciting information through structured schedules.

1.4 SAMPLING PLAN

1.4.1 It was proposed that all the blocks of the district would be categorised as intensive blocks, expansion blocks and new blocks on the basis of intensity of interventions by BEP. In case of Sitamarhi, there was no expansion block and there were only two intensive blocks. These two blocks alongwith two new blocks were selected for the purpose of the study. These new blocks were selected randomly. The name of the intensive blocks were Sonbarsa and Reega while the new blocks were Pupri and Runnisaidpur. Equal number of villages, i.e., 11 villages, were selected from both intensive and new blocks (a blockwise list of villages is given in page 8). A map showing the location of the sample villages and blocks in Sitamarhi district covered under this study is given at the end of this chapter. The other parameters of selecting these villages were the size of the village as well as the composition of population, categorising as general, SC and others. As far as the size of the village was concerned, there were also three types such as population ranging between 50 - 500, 501 - 1500 and more than 1500. Out of the 11 villages selected from each type of block, there was atleast one village from each category. Twenty households were selected from each village and urban ward for interview, representing different religions and socio-economic background.

1.4.2 Apart from the villages, two primary schools in and around each village or urban wards were selected wherein 96 teachers, (taking two from each school) were administered the teacher schedule. A number of 110 class V students were also selected from 12 schools taking 10 from each school to get their opinion about the school. The MLL test was administered on 120 students each in class II and class V in 12 different schools. In this case also, 10 students were selected in class II and V from every school. The test included both the language and mathematics. The class II students were administered oral test while for the class V students it was a written test.

1.5 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

1.5.1 As mentioned earlier, a number of schedules were developed and canvassed for different target groups. The following is an account of the schedules administered under this study.

- (i) Village schedule to collect demographic features, occupational patterns etc. from each of the 22 villages and 2 urban wards.
- (ii) Listing schedule to list out all the families in each village with some basic parameters.
- (iii) Household schedule to collect data on its socio-economic characteristics and perceptions on issues relating to access, enrolment, dropout etc.
- (iv) NFE schedule to collect information on the ongoing and old NFE centres in each village.
- (v) School schedule for collecting data from each school on facilities available with the school and classwise, castewise, genderwise information on various aspects of primary education.
- (vi) Teacher schedule for various perceptive questions, teaching methods, TLM, availability of infrastructure etc.
- (vii) Student schedule for getting the responses of the class V students regarding school environment and teaching.
- (viii) MLL tests were administered on class II and class V students to assess achievement level and to find out the differences in achievement in different blocks.

1.5.2 A comprehensive check-list was prepared for conducting interviews and group discussions with the functionaries of BEP. Various meetings were organised with the district and sub-district level functionaries, such as CRC Co-ordinators and VEC, and other departments at the district levels and teachers organisations to get a perception on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the project.

1.5.3 The method of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was adopted to analyse the views and perceptions of the rural people, especially the disadvantaged sections of society. This exercise was conducted separately for different focus groups, viz., women in general, SC men and women, in each village. It is important to mention that PRA is a very delicate approach to learn from and with the people to investigate, analyse and evaluate the constraints and opportunities and their perception of the development process and structures. People's participation was the main focus of all the BEP interventions. Hence, while conducting PRA, important dimensions kept into consideration by the facilitators were 'behavior and attitude', 'methods' and 'sharing'. BEP has developed an approach to conduct the PRA through 'Prasoon'. We have also tried to evaluate the micro-planning through 'Prasoon'.

1.5.4 In this evaluation study, two PRA tools were used, viz., Venn diagram and ranking and prioritisation. The community participation and mobilisation and the process of micro planning for promoting primary education was evaluated. The present level of enrolment and retention as perceived by the community members have also been taken into account.

1.5.5 With the help of Venn diagram, the interface between community, teacher, VEC and other institutions and functionaries was assessed while by ranking prioritisation, the perceptions of the people was analysed after finding out their problems and solutions. It is important to mention that the evaluation process was not extractive. Instead it enabled us to share the views of the people. The concept of visual sharing and visual literacy has been taken into consideration while conducting PRA in the villages. Mainly the results of Venn diagram and ranking prioritisation were used to analyse the community mobilisation component in BEP.

1.5.6 In this way, the primary data and information have been gathered from various sources (conventional survey and PRA methods) and efforts have been made to get a total idea of the complex situation related to primary education. The qualitative data was collected through PRA and interaction with focus groups alongwith secondary data available with the BEP. The information gathered from interviews and group discussions has been used to supplement the primary and secondary data. On the other hand, the information collected through various schedules was computerised and analysed with the help of software developed for this purpose. The map of Sitamarhi has also been digitised.

1.6 THE FACILITATORS

1.6.1 Sixteen facilitators were engaged to collect the primary data through conventional survey methods and PRA tools. Emphasis was given to select equal number of male and female facilitators (a list of all these facilitators is enclosed at the end of this report). A five day (2 - 6 January, 1998) intensive training programme was organised for the facilitators at DIET, Dumra in Sitamarhi to equip them to fill the schedules correctly and objectively and use the PRA tools with a fair degree of precision and objectiveness. The training programme included one day field testing of all the tools in real life situation by the facilitators. This effort helped in reducing the biases and minimising the possibilities of errors in filling the schedules.

1.6.2 All the facilitators were divided into 8 teams and each team was assigned three villages or urban wards to be surveyed within 17 days (7 - 23rd January, 1998). Thus, on an average five days were kept to complete the survey and PRA in one village including collecting data from two schools and one NFE centre. The last two days were devoted to re-checking the schedules and collecting the left out information. The study team monitored the survey work and visited all the sample villages and urban wards selected for the study. The team also visited villages where micro-planning had been completed and where it was under progress. It also solved the problems of facilitators on the spot.

1.7 TIME FRAME

1.7.1 The study was initiated in the month of November 1997 and completed by March 1998. The details of the time schedule for the meetings/workshops, field work and report writing are given below:

Sl. No.	Activities	Dates
1.	Initial workshop at Patna	November 14-15, 1997
2.	Workshop to finalise tools and schedules at Patna	December 20-24, 1997
3.	Desk research, Preliminary work and schedule printing	December 26-31, 1997
4.	Training of District facilitators at Sitamarhi	January 2-6, 1998
5.	Field work and survey including PRA and group discussions	January 7-23, 1998
6.	Analysis, Interpretation of data and report writing	January 27 to March 12, 1998
7.	Submission of Draft Report	March 16, 1998
8.	Sharing workshop on finalising the report	March 17, 1998
9.	Submission of the final report	March 27, 1998

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.8.1 As discussed earlier, efforts were made to evaluate the BEP interventions in Sitamarhi with professional competency in most difficult and complex set of conditions. The study had naturally some limitations. Some of the major limitations of the study were as under:

- (i) The BEP is an additionality to the present educational system. It would be difficult to dissect and separate the impact of BEP from other ongoing programmes and measures.
- (ii) Size of sample was small and the pattern emerging out of the study may not be applicable in general. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted cautiously.
- (iii) Problems of non-response and other attitudinal biases connected with perceptual questions.
- (iv) The teachers strike during the conduct of field work posed some difficulty in getting their responses.

Blockwise list of villages selected for the study

Blocks	Villages
Riga (Intensive block)	Sirauli Posua Patania Ramnagra Basantpur Bishnupur Dhodhni
Sonbarsa (Intensive block)	Bharsana Marpa Kachaur Indarwa Jamunia Lohkhar
Pupri (New block)	Balha Madsudan Madhubani Bazidpur Baura Gangwara Bedoul
Runnisaidpur (New block)	Tikauli Bhapura Bhimpur Ibrahimpur Kharka Bhanspatti Manpur Ratnauli
Urban wards	Sitamarhi, Ward No. 21 Dumra, Ward No. 5

CHAPTER II

THE BIHAR EDUCATION PROJECT :

STATE LEVEL STRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The estimated population of Bihar in 1997 is 10 crores which has been growing at the rate of 2.4 percent per annum. Over 87 percent of the population is rural. The sex ratio is low at 911 females per thousand males and has been declining sharply over the years. Among the various states in India, Bihar has the largest proportion of population below poverty line, female literacy is less than 20 percent as against 43.31 percent among males in rural areas, land-less agricultural population is about half of the working population – characteristics that symbolise various forms of exploitation and deprivation. Improvement of literacy and educational achievement may be viewed in this context as one of the sustainable effort to fight deprivation and inequality. Access to education itself is unequal and the educational system tends to perpetuate such inequality. To say that bringing about basic change in such a situation is a challenge is an understatement. The Bihar Education Project took up this challenge with an ambitious plan, although the effort may be termed as quixotic, if one were to take the objectives and the time span specified in the plan to realise the objectives as stated as realistic.

2.1.2 The Bihar Education project represents the first major attempt in India to include a holistic approach to Education For All (EFA) using district as a basic unit of planning and implementation. The project had conceived a micro approach (village level) as well as a macro approach (state level), strengthened by a structure of autonomous body and brought in multilateral (UNICEF), Government of India and the Government of Bihar funding. The project was launched initially in three districts - Ranchi, Rohtas and West Champaran in 1991-92 and subsequently expanded to four other districts, viz., Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Chatra and East Singbhom.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF BEP

2.2.1 The BEP ushered in district as a unit of planning and implementation in primary education. Educational reconstruction was the major goal and the stated objectives of the programme may be summarised as follows:

- (i) Universalisation of primary education, including access to all children up to 14 years of age, including enrolment and retention either through formal and non-formal education as well as universal achievement of MLL
- (ii) Modifying educational system to provide equal opportunities to girls and SC/ST children; and
- (iii) Relating education to the working and living conditions of the poor people.

2.2.2 The project experienced a slow start and an attempt was made to prepare a comprehensive annual work plan during the financial year 1993-94. Management structures were established both at the state and district levels. The approach was radically altered from mobilisation activities for literacy to empowerment of focus groups. It was open ended with varying degree of emphasis on various components of the project. Such flexibility can and has proved to be both its strength and weakness, leading to experimentation rather than specification and achievement of targets. Mission mode as opposed to bureaucratic mode was perceived as the cornerstone of the project.

It was proposed that a team building approach from the grass roots as opposed to rigid hierarchical administrative mechanism that manages primary schooling is the key requirement. It was partly with this view that an organizational structure different from a bureaucratic one was adopted (Fig. 2.1).

2.2.3 The main tasks of the state Mission Team are to formulate perspective policy objectives, directions and assessment of plan implementation. Keeping in view the objectives, various Task Forces and other working groups are also constituted. At the district level the plan formulation and implementation has been initiated by the DPC, who is also the Member Secretary of District Executive Committee. It has been emphasised that participatory process is the guiding principle of project management. The other state level activities are supportive such as publishing MLL text books, preparation of training modules for teachers training and for VEC (e.g. micro planning).

2.3 BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

2.3.1 As per the agreement between the Government of India, Government of Bihar and the donor agency (UNICEF), the total cost of project was estimated at Rs. 1,578.40 crores (at 1990-91 prices) for five years from 1990-91 to 1995-96. The share between UNICEF, GOI and GOB was fixed as 3:2:1. A ceiling of 6 percent for management expenses and 24 percent for construction activities was agreed. The budgeted and actual expenditure between 1991-92 and 1994-95 is recorded in table 2.1.

Table 2.1
Budget Estimate and Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Budget	Receipts	Utilization	Utilization as %	
	Estimate			Budget	Receipt
1991-92	540.00	182.78	168.86	31.30	92.40
1992-93	1702.00	594.59	594.51	34.90	100.00
1993-94	4780.00	2305.00	1394.06	29.20	60.60

Source: BEP- Report of the Review-cum-Appraisal Mission 1994.

2.3.2 The figures basically indicate an ambitious plan, a large part of which remain unimplemented. The total expenditure originally allocated for BEP for various components is summarised in table 2.2

Table 2.2
Original Budget Allocation by Components

Component	Budget (Rs. in Lakhs)	Percent
Primary Education	64940	41.44
NFE	41850	26.51

Alternative Schools	25000	15.84
ECCE	6220	3.94
Women Development	5330	3.37
Culture & Communication	4390	2.78
Training	6260	3.97
Management	3850	2.50
Total	157840	100.00

Source: BEP- Report of the Review-cum-Appraisal Mission 1994.

2.3.3 While the objectives of the project continue to be relevant, the strategy and focus appear to have undergone changes at various periods of intervening time. It started with emphasis on literacy, but found that the Literacy Mission could address this issue and therefore, moved out of this focus to avoid duplication. While the focus is on age group 6-14, very little of the project activities address 12-14 age group. In the hindsight this appears to be the right approach – since the consolidation of activities relating the lower primary school is yet to take place, there is not much dividend that one can get by dissipating the effort on upper primary level.

2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

2.4.1 A very important review of the project took place in 1994. This review dealt with planning and implementation aspect of the project and pointed out crucial gaps. In 1994, the project had barely taken off and it was too early to experience significant impact. At present, the project has been implemented in seven districts for about six years. All parts of each district did not receive equal attention throughout the project period. Similarly, all components of the project did not receive equal emphasis. The criteria for differential emphasis - both geographical and functional areas – are not clear. Consequent upon this one expects differential impact – partly intended and partly unintended - which is the focus of this study.

CHAPTER - III

BIHAR EDUCATION PROJECT IN SITAMARHI

3.1 GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THE DISTRICT

3.1.1 Sitamarhi district, a part of north Bihar, is situated on the Indo-Nepal Border at 85.50⁰ latitude and 26.33⁰ longitude. It is surrounded by Madhubani and Darbhanga districts of Bihar and part of Nepal in the east, Muzaffarpur in the south, East Champaran in the west and Nepal in the north. The district had a mythological past, days back to the period of Raja Janak, from where Sita emerged. Earlier it was a sub-division of Muzaffarpur district and got the status of a separate district on 11th December, 1972 with 3 sub-divisions, viz., Sitamarhi Sadar, Pupri and Sheohar. On 6th October, 1994, the Sheohar sub-division was also declared as a new district. The present Sitamarhi district has 3 sub-divisions again and 17 blocks. There are 1037 villages (including 53 uninhabited villages) in the district. The total number of Panchayats is 298.

3.1.2 The border between India and Nepal is open at various places and the citizens from either side have free and uninterrupted access to the other side. A number of Nepali students get their education in the middle, high schools and inter colleges in the bordering areas of Sitamarhi district. This puts more pressure on the upper primary level educational system. The district has its unique administrative and socio-economic problems. The open border with Nepal often creates law and order problems. The area is sensitive to communal riots. It is highly flood prone and the administration has to spend much time and energy for protection from floods during June to October end. Migration through Nepal border is also very frequent.

3.1.3 Although Sheohar has been declared as a new district, it was a part of Sitamarhi district when the BEP was initiated there in April 1992. Therefore, most of the data and statistics of Sitamarhi district cover Sheohar also as in Bihar Education Project this newly created district was also included.

3.1.4 Topographically, the district forms a part of the Bihar plains and it is almost completely levelled and at no point does its elevation exceed 80 meters above the sea level. The only diversities seen on the surface are those caused by the fluvial action of rivers. The important rivers of the district are Bagmati, Lakhandei and Adhwara group of rivers. It has therefore all the advantages and disadvantages of being surrounded by rivers which are flooded during rains and mostly dry during summers. Because of floods, the academic calendar was disrupted almost every year in the district.

3.2 LAND USE PATTERN

3.2.1 The total reporting area of the district is 258127.29 hectares out of which negligible area is under forest and 39258.25 hectares area is not available for cultivation. The land use pattern in the district in four categories is given below.

Table - 3.1 Land Use Pattern

Sl. No.	Item	Area (ha)
1.	Total reporting area	258127.29
2.	Area under forest	3.82
3.	Area not available for cultivation	39258.25

4.	Cultivable area	2071.15
5.	Culturable waste	11749.08
6	Irrigated area	88479.21
7.	Unirrigated area	118636.00
8.	Percentage of Irrigated area to cultivable area	42.7

Source: *Primary Census Abstract, Sitamarhi, 1991*

3.2.2 It would be obvious from the above table that culturable waste area is quite high and the percentage of irrigated area is low. The agricultural productivity is also low. Because of this, the district remained agriculturally under developed.

3.3 INFRASTRUCTURE

3.3.1 The district is served with a single meter-gauge line viz., Samastipur - Darbhanga - Narkatiaganj line of the North-Eastern Railways. The rail line enters the district after Jogiara station and passing through Sitamarhi town, leaves the district after Bairgania station. It serves the important places of the district such as, Pupri, Sitamarhi, Riga and Bairgania.

3.3.2 After the upgradation of Sitamarhi district as a district, about 740 kms. of District Board Roads were transferred to the newly created District Board, Sitamarhi. Some new roads have been added to this road length. However, the soft soil and floods, being an annual feature in many pockets of the district, have always posed a problem for better maintenance of roads. All the block headquarters of the district are connected with roads. However, during rains, road communication is severely affected, the frequent visitations of floods damage the roads very badly. Because of the damaged roads, supply of inputs connected with primary education such as mid-day meal etc. are interrupted. Monitoring and feed back system is also disturbed.

3.4 IRRIGATION

3.4.1 The major sources of irrigation in the district are canals, tube wells, wells, tanks, rivers etc. The total irrigated area is constituted of 11 percent by canal, 59 percent by tubewell and 3.5 percent by wells. The remaining area is irrigated by other sources.

3.5 ELECTRICITY AND POWER

3.5.1 Only 26.24 per cent of villages are electrified in the district according to census 1991. Although latest precise data is not available, the situation has not improved significantly. Because of non-availability and inadequacy of power supply it is not possible to use audio-visual aids and other publicity material like films, documentaries etc., adequately.

3.6 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

3.6.1 There are no heavy industries in Sitamarhi district, except only one sugar factory, situated at Riga. As this is an agricultural district, the main trades are also agro-based. Among the important industrial units, 19 modern and big Rice and Oil Mills are worth mentioning. There are around 500 single hullers distributed all over in the district. But, this is a seasonal industry. These small industrial units provide employment to a very limited number of workers. As regards trade, the most important item is rice, both milled and hand pound. The other important items are pulses and linseed. Trade in Sal wood, which is mostly obtained from Nepal is also significant.

3.7 TOTAL MAIN WORKERS

3.7.1 The information in census 1991 about the workers gives a fairly good idea of the economic backwardness of the district. The following table gives the distribution of total main workers in the district.

Table - 3.2

Distribution of Total Main Workers by Sectors

Sl. No.	Workers	Male	Female	Total
1.	Total main workers	651929 (100%)	32101 (100%)	684030 (100%)
2.	Cultivators	260456 (39.9%)	4633 (14.4%)	265089 (38.7%)
3.	Agricultural Labourers	310966 (47.7%)	23226 (72.3%)	334192 (48.8%)
4.	Livestock, forestry, fishing	2379 (0.36%)	105 (.32%)	2484 (.4%)
5.	Mining & quarrying	189 (0.03%)	7 (0.02%)	196 (.02%)
6.	Manufacture & process in household industry	7165 (1.1%)	1021 (3.2%)	8186 (1.2%)
7.	Manufacture & process in other industry	10506 (1.6%)	259 (.8%)	10765 (1.6%)
8.	Construction	3650 (0.5%)	33 (.1%)	3683 (.53%)
9.	Trade & Commerce	21646 (3.3%)	654 (2%)	22300 (3.2%)
10.	Transport, storage, communication	4870 (0.7%)	24 (.07%)	4894 (.7%)
11.	Other services	30102 (4.6%)	2139 (6.6%)	32241 (4.7%)

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sitamarhi, 1991

3.7.2 It would be obvious from the above table that agricultural labourers constitute around 50 percent of the total workers. The percentage of workers in other sectors (except 38.7 percent cultivators) is almost negligible. Since there is large scale underemployment in agricultural sector and there are no employment opportunities outside agriculture, a large scale migration of these workers to Punjab and other states takes place every year.

3.8 FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LINE

3.8.1 According to the data given in DPEP plan for Sitamarhi, there are 256445 families living below poverty line. These constitute 63.5 percent of the total number of 403648 families in the district.

3.9 DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

3.9.1 According to the census 1991, the total population of the district was 23.91 lakh constituted by 4,13,463 families. This gives an average family size of 5.8. Of the total population, 53.1 percent (12.70 lakh) were males and 46.8 percent (11.20 lakh) females. In other words, the sex ratio was very adverse with 882 females for every 1000 male population. It was very low as compared to 912 for Bihar and 929 for the country as a whole. The sex ratio has been decreasing. It was 934 in 1981 and drastically reduced to 882 in 1991. While there were few Schedules Tribes (STs) in the district, Scheduled Castes (SCs) constituted 12.12 percent of the total population. The density of population in the district was 910 per sq. k.m. as compared to the average density of 497 persons per sq. k.m. for Bihar as a whole. It implied that the pressure of population of children per school was very high and the schools should have more space. The following table gives important demographic characteristics of Sitamarhi and Bihar state.

Table - 3.3

Demographic Characteristics of Sitamarhi and the State

Sl. No.	Item	Sitamarhi	Bihar
1.	Total population (lakh)	23.91	86.35
2.	Rural population (lakh)	22.57	75.00
3.	Urban population (lakh)	1.33	11.35
4.	Percentage of urban to total population	5.56	13
5.	Growth rate of total population (1981-91)	23.8	24
6.	No. of females per 1000	882	927
7.	Percentage of SC population	12.12	14.55
8.	Literacy percentage	28.12	38.54
	Male	39.30	52.63
	Female	15.31	23.10

Source: Census, 1991

3.10 LITERACY LEVELS

3.10.1 As mentioned in the above table, according to census 1991, the total literacy in the district was 28.12 percent which included 39.30 percent for the males and 15.31 percent for the females. The literacy rates for rural areas were not available for 1991. However, in 1981 literacy for rural areas was 21.4 percent (30.3 percent for males and 11.3 percent for females). The literacy rate

for the scheduled castes was 8.51 percent of the total scheduled caste population. Only 1.6 percent of women of the scheduled castes were literate.

3.11 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

3.11.1 It must be obvious from the above analysis that Sitamarhi presents a spectre of backwardness characterised by stagnant economy, lack of infrastructure, lack of entrepreneurship and little investment in development and economic growth. If we try to go into its causes, the most important cause would be the socio-economic structure of the district. As a matter of fact, this is the cause as well as the effect of under development.

3.11.2 The social structure of Sitamarhi is characterised by clear cut divisions on caste lines. The position in caste hierarchy is the determining factor for social relationships, behavioural patterns and cultural norms. Here, the composition of society has all the castes and sub-castes. There are Brahmins, Rajputs, Bhumihars, Yadavas, Kurmis and the castes now include OBCs and the scheduled castes divided into sub-castes like Paswan, Chamars and the lowest in the rung - Mushars.

3.11.3 In Sitamarhi, the reminiscents of a feudal society now well saddled in the form of semi-feudalism are so pronounced that one could feel its impact as soon as he enters the rural scene. The inequalities in the erstwhile Zamindars and their subordinates pervade through each and every realm of life.

3.11.4 The socio-economic structure in Sitamarhi revolves basically round the land ownership or ownership of productive assets and the assetless people. As in Bihar as a whole, the caste and class are so intermingled that it is difficult to make any distinction while judging the status of a person.

3.11.5 It is a well known fact that the land reforms in Bihar has no impact and there is a very skewed distribution of land. Either there are owners of very small holdings or very large holdings. The owners of large holdings mostly belong to the upper or middle castes. For examples Rajputs, Bhumihars, Yadavas and Kurmis are among the main land owners having sizable holdings. Although the lower castes and small land owners might form the numerical majority in any multi caste village, the lower castes could not become dominant castes. The dominance emerged out of the control over land and other resources available in the village alongwith the legitimisation of such ownership by caste ideology. It is now well recognized that inequalities in economy and social inequalities are mutually reinforcing. The following generalisations made by some studies on Bihar are equally applicable to Sitamarhi also:

- i) Persistence of caste as an important feature of rural structure.
- ii) Rural power structure being concentrated in the hands of dominant castes.
- iii) Ownership of productive assets could enable a caste in improving its inter-se position in social structure.
- iv) Dominant castes mediating and controlling the flow of resources and technology coming from outside into the rural society and usurping of benefits meant for the weaker sections.
- v) Phenomenon of dominant caste was a feature of contiguous region and cuts across villages in a given region.

3.11.6 The lower castes are still facing lots of discrimination in their day to day life. The women folk of these sections are worst victims of this. Their status is abysmally low. Without any asset base and social disability, the disadvantaged sections are not able to sustain any economic activity and they have to depend on others for livelihood. Consequently, they are subjugated and exploited. Due to their living being on subsistence level and having no savings, they have to borrow money for meeting social obligations and emergency needs like illness. The incidence of rural indebtedness is very high. In such a situation, every member of the family whether old or young has to be occupied in whatever work is available. This precludes their participation in education.

3.11.7 As a matter of fact, non-participation of the disadvantaged groups in education and other development activities should be seen in a historical perspective. It should be realised that there is more to the poor than only rural poverty; that in their case, the nature of social organisation of which they are an integral part, they have been at the receiving end. The values they have inculcated and how they have oriented their responses to the opportunities should also be seen in this background. Given these disadvantages stretching back to centuries, it is meaningless to attribute to them a capability for self help.

3.11.8 The socio-economic structure coupled with poverty and unemployment have further lowered down the status of women, discrimination against girl child and low educational status of the weaker sections and poorer among the Muslims. This is reflected in demographic features and literacy levels discussed above.

3.12 VICIOUS CIRCLE OF ILLITERACY, POVERTY AND INEQUITIES

3.12.1 It may be concluded here that Sitamarhi is a poor and economically backward district having the problems of flood affecting agriculture badly with large scale unemployment and under employment. It also has gross inequalities in distribution of productive assets leading to all kinds of disparities reinforced by outmoded socio-economic structure. Super imposed over it is mass illiteracy. Therefore, the most pressing need is that concerted and strong measures be taken to pull it out of the above vicious circle. Empowerment of the weaker sections through education and improving the quality of human resource amongst the disadvantaged must be the starting point. For this, a big boost is required in bringing their children in the schooling system. This provides sufficient justification for supplementing the efforts for educational development through some special programme. BEP was launched in Sitamarhi in this background.

3.13 CONVENTIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

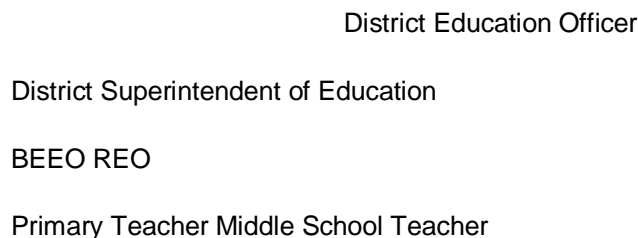
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3.13.2 At the district level there is a District Education Officer (DEO) who controls both primary as well as secondary education. For primary education, there is a District Superintendent of Education (DSE) who is the chief administrative officer for primary education covering both types of schools. Below him there are two separate streams; first, for the primary schools from class I to class V. In this, there is one Block Education Extension Officer (BEEO) at the block level who is the Inspecting Officer of primary schools from class I to class V. For inspection and supervision of middle schools from class I to class VII/VIII, there is a Range Education Officer (REO) who looks after three or four development blocks.

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3.14.2 In the beginning, Deputy Development Commissioner acted as District Programme Co-ordinator but the supporting staff could not be appointed. There was only one resource person for MS and one assistant resource person looking after all other jobs. This situation continued from 1992-93 to 1994-95. The work, therefore, suffered during this period. A whole time District Programme Co-ordinator joined the project in February 1996. The following table shows the staff position in different years.

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A block level task force was also constituted under the chairmanship of BDO with BEEO as convenor. This was responsible for overseeing the work of constitution of VECs in the early phase of the project.

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3.16.1 Educational planning and development can not be seen in isolation of the other development departments. There is always an input : output relationship between education and

other sectors. In the context of primary education, there are number of schemes which have direct or indirect bearing on the former and dovetailing is necessary between them. This can be analysed at two levels. At the district level, co-ordination, policy planning and mechanisms for delivery of inputs are decided while the actual convergence of these inputs with primary education is to be achieved at the school or village level. The following departments have a significant role in strengthening/supplementing primary education.

(1) Integrated Child Development Services Scheme

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is in operation in two blocks, viz., Belsand and Bathnaha. It is extended to Majorganj block from 1997-98 where the selection of Anganwadis was being done till December 1997. Anganwadi centres have a component of pre-school education for the children of 3-6 years age group. This helps in preparing the child for primary education. Pre-school education can motivate the child in his enrolment and retention in primary school. It was felt that the pre-school component of Anganwadis was weak. A programme of training was organised for Anganwadi workers for improving their methods of instruction. A grant of Rs. 500/- was also sanctioned for preparing TLM. The co-ordination with Programme Officer, ICDS was done through DEC of which he is a member.

(2) District Mass Education Department

The department of mass education was created in 1985-86 by closing the department of adult education. This department opened non formal education centres for the children who either dropped out or could not join the school due to various reasons. Presently, two types of centres are being run by the department. In the first category, there are those NFE centres in which there is only one instructor teaching 25 children. The second category includes special education centres which are generally opened in SC/ST predominant habitations. The latter has two instructors, one of them is a lady. These centres have 50 children. Both the centres have two years course divided into four semesters.

These centres are started on the initiative of Tola Samiti or Gram Samiti which are formed in the localities where the need of such centres is identified. These Tola Samitis are also involved in supervision of their functioning. According to the information supplied by DMEO, 500 centres are functioning in the district. However, no information is available about the number of children admitted to primary school after completing their education in NFE centres.

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3.17 BEGINNING OF BEP IN SITAMARHI

3.17.1 The conventional education system could not create desirable impact despite many changes which were introduced from time to time. As a matter of fact, paradigm used for educational planning and implementation emphasized top-down, delivery oriented approach. In this, educational planning was concerned mainly with opening of schools, appointment of teachers and provision of other inputs. It did not take into account whether everybody especially the most needy would be able to benefit from it. It was based on paternalistic approach implying that what the administrators thought was good for the people.

3.17.2 The situation in Sitamarhi was not different. People were dissatisfied with the primary education system. The community had no sense of belonging to the school. People in general were not assured that the approaches adopted so far could bring any systemic change particularly in reducing the intra-class and inter-class inequalities. This view was further strengthened when the working of grass root level democratic institutions were analysed. These were dominated by the elites and the disadvantaged sections of society and women were marginalized. The benefits exclusively meant for the disadvantaged sections of society were also appropriated by the dominant sections.

3.17.3 BEP was launched in seven districts of Bihar including Sitamarhi with the goal of bringing about a driving force in the state through educational reconstruction. A change in the educational situation was expected to bring improvement in all spheres and the atmosphere of despair, cynicism and violence would give way to a firm determination to deal with the environmental, social, cultural and gender issues.

3.17.4 It has already been mentioned in chapter-II that the BEP adopted the more important principles of the new strategy for educational reconstruction which included i) Holistic view of

education, ii) Involvement through understanding, iii) Woman's empowerment, iv) Equity, v) Harnessing institutions of proven quality, vi) Enlarging the quality circle, vii) An open project.

3.18 BEP AS A PROCESS - A BRIEF DOCUMENTATION

3.18.1 As mentioned in the last principle of strategy that BEP was an open project, it was implied that BEP should be treated as a process rather than a programme which encompassed the realisation of human rights, dignity, self respect and self reliance leading to social and economic justice. Education had been rightly viewed as an instrument of social change. The most important element in BEP strategy was participatory planning and implementation in which participation of all stake-holders was sought. The last but not the least was that the project was to be launched with mission mode.

3.18.2 It must be added here that the participatory processes and mission mode took unusually long time because there could not be any uniform prescriptions which could be applied for solving the local problems and could be applied in all the situations.

3.18.3 In such processes which aimed at bringing about social change, everything evolved out of the social dynamics and consensus of the people of the target groups. The set of strategy or methods successful in one situation might not be replicable in others. Further, the social situation was dynamic and changing fast and in a changing scenario, it might be necessary to make corresponding changes in the methods and techniques of project implementation. Therefore, great perseverance was required to try out and expect results from such efforts. As a matter of fact, the progress of BEP must be assessed from the process and not from the targets achieved. If the process of change had taken roots and the direction was right, the project would be said to have achieved significant success/progress. The litmus test was that, once the people especially the target groups started identifying themselves with the school it would be possible for them to launch a frontal attack on the problems associated with illiteracy. In this manner, the sustainability of the process could be ensured.

3.18.4 It must be mentioned here that it is difficult to evaluate any project or process like BEP. It should be recognised that no programme is totally successful or a failure. The success or failure is always relative and partial and this applies to BEP also. The most important aspect is to find out whether solid structures or foundations have been laid and the procedures adopted are followed and sustainable.

3.13 CONVENTIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

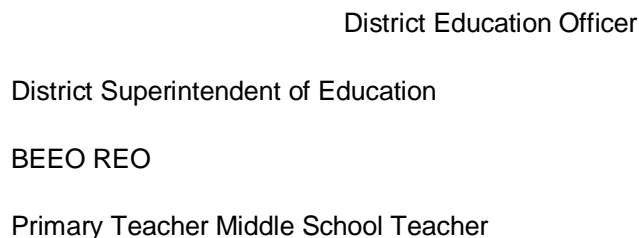
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3.17 BEGINNING OF BEP IN SITAMARHI

3.17.1 The conventional education system could not create desirable impact despite many changes which were introduced from time to time. As a matter of fact, paradigm used for educational planning and implementation emphasized top-down, delivery oriented approach. In this, educational planning was concerned mainly with opening of schools, appointment of teachers and provision of other inputs. It did not take into account whether everybody especially the most needy would be able to benefit from it. It was based on paternalistic approach implying that what the administrators thought was good for the people.

3.17.2 The situation in Sitamarhi was not different. People were dissatisfied with the primary education system. The community had no sense of belonging to the school. People in general were not assured that the approaches adopted so far could bring any systemic change particularly in reducing the intra-class and inter-class inequalities. This view was further strengthened when the working of grass root level democratic institutions were analysed. These were dominated by the elites and the disadvantaged sections of society and women were marginalized. The benefits exclusively meant for the disadvantaged sections of society were also appropriated by the dominant sections.

3.17.3 BEP was launched in seven districts of Bihar including Sitamarhi with the goal of bringing about a driving force in the state through educational reconstruction. A change in the educational situation was expected to bring improvement in all spheres and the atmosphere of despair, cynicism and violence would give way to a firm determination to deal with the environmental, social, cultural and gender issues.

3.17.4 It has already been mentioned in chapter-II that the BEP adopted the more important principles of the new strategy for educational reconstruction which included i) Holistic view of education, ii) Involvement through understanding, iii) Woman's empowerment, iv) Equity, v) Harnessing institutions of proven quality, vi) Enlarging the quality circle, vii) An open project.

3.18 BEP AS A PROCESS - A BRIEF DOCUMENTATION

3.18.1 As mentioned in the last principle of strategy that BEP was an open project, it was implied that BEP should be treated as a process rather than a programme which encompassed the realisation of human rights, dignity, self respect and self reliance leading to social and economic justice. Education had been rightly viewed as an instrument of social change. The most important element in BEP strategy was participatory planning and implementation in which participation of all stake-holders was sought. The last but not the least was that the project was to be launched with mission mode.

3.18.2 It must be added here that the participatory processes and mission mode took unusually long time because there could not be any uniform prescriptions which could be applied for solving the local problems and could be applied in all the situations.

3.18.3 In such processes which aimed at bringing about social change, everything evolved out of the social dynamics and consensus of the people of the target groups. The set of strategy or methods successful in one situation might not be replicable in others. Further, the social situation was dynamic and changing fast and in a changing scenario, it might be necessary to make corresponding changes in the methods and techniques of project implementation. Therefore, great perseverance was required to try out and expect results from such efforts. As a matter of fact, the progress of BEP must be assessed from the process and not from the targets achieved. If the process of change had taken roots and the direction was right, the project would be said to have achieved significant success/progress. The litmus test was that, once the people especially the target groups started identifying themselves with the school it would be possible for them to launch a frontal attack on the problems associated with illiteracy. In this manner, the sustainability of the process could be ensured.

3.18.4 It must be mentioned here that it is difficult to evaluate any project or process like BEP. It should be recognised that no programme is totally successful or a failure. The success or failure is always relative and partial and this applies to BEP also. The most important aspect is to find out whether solid structures or foundations have been laid and the procedures adopted are followed and sustainable.

3.19 IMPLEMENTATION OF BEP IN SITAMARHI

3.19.1 The Bihar Education Project was launched with much fan-fare and enthusiasm in 1992-93. During first year, cluster approach was adopted and a cluster of 10 villages was selected in each of the sixteen blocks. Thus, 640 focus schools were identified with a view to saturating these schools with different inputs and organising special intensive enrolment and retention drives. In these drives or campaigns, the teacher, the members of VEC, students, social workers, educationists were involved. The following activities were undertaken in the focus schools:

i) Distribution of free text books and education kits for all girl students and for boys and girls belonging to scheduled castes

ii) Distribution of science and mathematics kits called innovative kits for all the focus schools (This scheme was not continued later)

iii) Distribution of sports and games material such as football, skipping rope etc. (This was not continued after 1992-93)

iv) Award to two best teachers in every block per year (This scheme continued till 1996-97)

v) Organisation of monthly Guru Goshtis at the block level convened by BEEO and to be attended by DSE, DEO and District Mass Education Officer (This scheme was being continued)

3.19.2 In the schools, other than focus schools, a grant of Rs. 3000/- was given to the concerned VECs primarily for meeting the needs of furniture and some equipments/articles.

3.19.3 First of all, the work of environment building was taken up in the 640 villages. For this purpose, entire district machinery was mobilised. The District Magistrates and the District Development Commissioners went to villages themselves to preside over the meetings on a large scale. Adequate publicity was made through pamphlets, banners and other media. The village level functionaries of all the departments were involved in organising these meetings. In these meetings, problems relating to education were discussed and solutions were also evolved.

3.19.4 Future strategies were chalked out with some kind of action plan. Villagers were motivated to raise funds and contribute labour towards school improvement and their whole hearted participation was enlisted. At the end of these meetings, new VEC was constituted in the presence of all the villagers. This programme was going on well but hampered due to communal riots in October, 1992. But no doubt, it has laid solid foundation for BEP. The entire administrative machinery worked for BEP because the DDC and DM spearheaded the movement. During this period, a scheme of giving matching grant 80:20 was started for construction and repair of school building by the VECs. Many VECs came forward to participate and during 1993-94 itself 249 works were taken up out of which 194 new school buildings were constructed and repair of 55 school buildings was carried out. For new buildings, land was also made available by the villagers. This period was also marked with extensive networking with other departments through which drinking water facility was provided, toilets were constructed and black-boards were given to schools. From JRY funds buildings of schools were constructed and repair works were undertaken.

3.19.5 During 1992-93 and 1993-94, four seminars and conferences with teachers organisations were organised. Also, 107 workshops were organised on UPE and micro planning in the district at Panchayat level. Under Mahila Samakhya 13 Sahyoginis were appointed. However, the working on cluster approach was abandoned during 1993-94 and it was decided to cover the entire district under BEP. In the following paragraphs a brief description of major activities completed during 1992-97 is given, followed by the table 3.5 showing the project activities at a glance during this period.

(1) Distribution of free text books

It was during 1992-93 that free text books were given only to all girls and SC boys and girls. The feed back received from the field was not favourable and it was decided that all children should be covered under this scheme. Therefore, from the year 1993-94 onwards all children from class I to V were given free text books and kits.

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Earlier the training of teachers was organised at SCERT in 10 and 11 days modules developed by the SCERT. This continued till 1994-95. As many as 2627 teachers were trained in these modules. UJALA training was started from 1995-96 and 1173 teachers have been trained so far.

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In the first two years 206 VECs were constituted. This work continued and during 1994-95 large scale reconstitution of VECs (750) was taken up. The training of VEC members was also started in 1993-94 and it was still going on and so far 1343 members have been trained.

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Survey in 287 villages was undertaken for finding out whether the village required NFE. During 1993-94, under BEP 106 NFE centres were opened and another 60 opened in 1994-95. These were phased out in 1996-97 after completing two years each. But 30 centres were still continuing which were being run by an NGO called REED.

(5) Mahila Samakhya

Mahila Samakhya became fully operational in 1993-94 and was now working in 12 blocks of the district. Under ECCE nothing was done during the project period. Only in 1996-97 training of Anganwadis was done on pre school education and Rs. 500/- was provided for preparing suitable TLM.

Table - 3.5
Project Activities at a Glance
BEP, Sitamarhi, 1992-97

Component	Activities	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Primary Formal Education	Seminar and conferences with teacher's organisations	4	2	-	-	-
	Workshops on UPE, Micro Planning	107	3	-	-	-
	Distribution of free text books	58,862	92,555	-	-	2,30,000
	Construction of school building	24	155	69	-	10
	Repair of school building	33	55	2	-	-
	Toilet construction	100	100	407	200	100
	Drinking water	93	93	-	200	-
	Teacher's training	420 SCERT	1117 DIET	1242	-	482

	Constitution of VECs	160	46	750 (Reconstituted)	1389	-
	Training of VEC members	-	437	222	680	4
	Surveys conducted	160	160	-	-	-
	Enrollment drives	-	64	171	-	-
	School Library	-	1	480	-	-
	Black board	-	640	-	-	-
	Award to teachers	-	32	16	-	24
	MLL & Curriculum	-	-	3	-	-
	Innovative materials to schools	-	-	480 schools	-	-
	Grants for TLM	-	-	-	-	3524
	Training in MLL	-	-	-	-	108
Non-Formal	Village survey	-	160	127	-	-
Education	NFE Centres opened	-	106	169	150	30
	Training of Instructors	-	116	326	-	-
	Book Distribution	-	3,080	3,350	-	-
Mahila	No. of Sahayoginis selected	13	1	20	-	-
Samakhya	Sahelis selected	-	6	268	-	-
(12 blocks)	Training of District Core Team	-	2	2	2	2
	Training of Sahelis	-	250	5	-	-
	Training of Sahayoginis selected	-	12	90 Samooh	-	196 Programmes
	No. of	-	120	163	-	-

	covered					
	Bal Jagjangi kendra	-	30	85	-	-
ECCE	Training of Anganwadi workers	-	-	-	-	144
	Training of ICDS workers	-	-	-	-	5 Programmes
Culture,	Plantation	4	-	4		-
Community	Jathas/Rallies	308	-	-	5	70
Mobilisation	Cultural Programme	27	17	4	3	144
	Bal mela	-	4	1	-	70
	Video film	-	6	-	-	-
	Construction of CRC	-	-	-	-	19
	Micro planning	-	-	-	-	Started in 3 blocks.

Source : Annual Report, Sitamarhi

3.20 ANALYSIS OF BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UNDER BEP

3.20.1 The total budget allocation under BEP in Sitamarhi was Rs. 2654.65 lakh for the entire project period. Out of which Rs. 916.85 lakh was utilised, i.e. the utilisation was 34.53 percent of the budget for five years. Looking at the figures of annual budget and expenditure, the total budget allocated for 1992-93 was Rs. 256.63 lakh out of which Rs. 87.93 lakh was utilised which came to 34.26 percent. Similarly, in 1993-94 the amount of Rs 349.95 lakh utilised was 54.37 percent of the annual budget of Rs. 643.60 lakh. During 1994-95 the budgeted amount was the highest at Rs. 1002.98 lakh while the utilisation was also the lowest at Rs. 136.68 lakh constituting only 13.62 percent of the budget. During 1995-96 the budgeted amount was reduced to Rs. 309.79 lakh out of which an amount of Rs. 191.15 lakh was utilised which was 61.7 percent. In the year 1996-97 an amount of Rs. 151.14 lakh out of Rs. 441.65 lakh could be utilised. It would be obvious that except in 1995-96 and 1993-94 when 61.7 percent and 54.37 percent respectively of the budgeted amounts could be utilised, the utilisation in other years was very low ranging between 13.62 percent to 34.53 percent.

3.20.2 So far as yearwise expenditure as percentage of the total expenditure is concerned, it was 9.59 percent in 1992-93 which rose to a maximum of 38.16 percent in 1993-94. Therefore, the year 1993-94 and 1995-96 were better years in terms of utilisation of budget.

3.20.3 Analysis of expenditure by components shows that in the total budget and expenditure during 1992-97, the budget under management and administration was 7.04 percent while the expenditure was 8.27 percent, under primary formal education the budget was 62.55 percent and expenditure was 74.9 percent, under non-formal education the budget was 6.96 percent and expenditure was 2.68 percent, under Mahila Samakhya, the budget was 5.27 percent and the

expenditure was 5.2 percent and under training the budget was 7.06 percent and expenditure was 5.07 percent.

3.20.4 So far as cumulative shortfall in utilisation of budget is concerned, it can be seen from the following table, that the maximum short fall for the project period (1992-97) was under the head of ECCE in which no activity was planned. The second in order was non-formal education under which 13.29 percent of the total budgeted amount was utilised. The third in order was community mobilisation, culture and continuing education under which 20.11 percent of total budget was utilised. Under this head, very little amount was spent in the first three years but it consistently went up in consecutive years. The analysis of budget and expenditure is given in table 3.6.

Table - 3.6
Analysis of Budget and Expenditure Sitamarhi

(Rs. in lakh)

Budget head		1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	Total	% of total budget & expenditure
Mngt. & Admn.	Budget	50.40	41.90	56.55	22.82	15.40	187.07	7.04
	Expn.	18.31	23.45	15.64	9.58	8.86	75.84	8.27
	%	36.32	55.96	27.65	41.98	57.53	40.54	
Primary	Budget	148.48	527.79	704.58	178.71	101.12	1660.68	62.55
Formal	Expn.	68.59	317.92	106.44	145.08	48.75	686.78	74.9
Edu.	%	46.19	60.23	15.1	81.18	48.21	41.35	
Non-Formal	Budget	25.00	7.18	93.79	35.24	23.69	184.9	6.96
Formal	Expn.	0.01	3.44	2.66	13.79	4.68	24.58	2.68
Edu.	%	0.04	47.91	2.83	39.13	19.75	13.29	
Literacy/Alternate	Budget	-	-	-	2.17	76.95	79.12	
School	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Women's	Budget	1.25	33.38	31.29	30.73	43.43	140.08	5.27
Dev / MS	Expn.	0.41	3.93	9.87	12.59	20.91	47.71	5.2
	%	32.8	11.77	31.54	40.96	48.14	34.05	
ECCE	Budget	5.00	17.35	2.10	4.44	3.95	32.84	1.23
	Expn.	-	-	0.01	-	1.26	1.27	0.13
	%	-	-	0.47	-	31.89	3.86	
Culture/Comm.	Budget	15.00	15.00	25.98	9.91	103.77	169.66	6.39
Mobi.	Expn.	0.60	1.21	2.06	3.41	26.84	34.12	3.72
	%	4	8.06	7.92	34.4	25.86	20.11	
Training	Budget	-	-	88.69	25.47	73.34	187.5	7.06

	Expn.	-	-	-	6.70	39.84	46.54	5.07
	%	-	-	-	26.3	54.32	24.82	
Support	Budget	1.50	1.00	-	-	-	2.5	
to NGOs	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Micro	Budget	-	-	-	0.30	-	0.30	
project	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Others	Budget	10.00	-	-	-	-	10.00	0.37
	Expn.	0.01	-	-	-	-	0.01	.001
	%	0.1	-	-	-	-	0.1	
Total	Budget	256.63	643.60	1002.98	309.79	441.65	2654.65	
	Expn.	87.93	349.95	136.68	191.15	151.14	916.85	
	%	34.26	54.37	13.62	61.7	34.22	34.53	
% of total Budget		9.66	24.24	37.78	11.66	16.63	100	
% of total Expn.		9.59	38.16	14.9	20.84	16.48	100	

Source: Annual work plans and annual reports, BEP, Sitamarhi

3.21 PER CAPITA COST OF ENROLMENT

3.21.1 Although this is not fully valid indicator of calculating the economics of the project, an effort is made to find out the per capita cost of enrolment of children in primary schools. This is calculated by the total expenditure incurred under the project divided by the number of additional children enrolled in a particular year. These costs in different years are given below:

Table - 3.7

Per Capita Cost of Enrolment

Year	Additional no. of children enrolled	Total cost of the project (in Rs. lakh)	Per capita cost of enrolment (in Rs.)
1992-93	28161	87.93	312
1993-94	38434	349.95	910
1994-95	34452	136.68	396
1995-	16681	191.15	1145

96			
1996-97	37888	151.14	398

Source: DPEP III for enrolment figures and BEP for expenditure figures, Sitamarhi

3.22 SUMMING UP

3.22.1 It may be added by way of conclusion that the project lacked continuity and consistency. Due to transfer of the DM and DDC posted in the initial phase, the tempo could not be maintained and for about two years till a regular DPC joined, the scale of activities was stagnant. The programme suffered because of the vacant posts of programme officers and resource persons. Several programme components could not make the success to the desired level. Even after the posting of DPC, he could not devote whole hearted attention to Sitamarhi BEP because he was required to look after another district, East Champaran. He is also loaded with a number of other jobs not directly connected with BEP implementation in Sitamarhi. The following table presents the SWOT analysis of BEP.

Table - 3.8

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Philosophy of the BEP, specially mission mode and participatory processes. Emphasis on Environment Building. Focus on disadvantaged groups. Women empowerment through Mahila Samakhyas. VECs largely brought out of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak management capacity due to majority of posts lying vacant especially posts relating to programme components. Lack of understanding of BEP as additionality. No changes seen in conventional structure with low motivational levels. Conventional and BEP management structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of the process of social change. Empowerment of women and focus groups. Transformation of the disadvantaged groups for active participation in primary education. Integration of education with district planning process & integration of primary education with ongoing programmes. Mobilising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio economic structure characterised by gross inequalities. Tendency of appropriation of benefits/incentives meant for focus group by elites. Social disability and discrimination faced by the disadvantaged groups

<p>control of dominant castes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient running of NFE through VECs. • Resource mobilisation by VECs for school building and repair work. • Mobilisation of all stakeholder at different levels. • Creation of CRC for quality improvement and teacher motivation. • Teaching for Joyful learning. 	<p>running parallelly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial enthusiasm of VEC not sustained. • Networking and convergence with other departments lacking. • Micro planning not done on continuous basis. • No sound data base. • Low motivational status of teachers. 	<p>political will for education and making it a peoples movement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of active forum for collective activity for integrated development of village. 	<p>and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and non ownership of productive assets by the disadvantaged.
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3.19 IMPLEMENTATION OF BEP IN SITAMARHI

3.19.1 The Bihar Education Project was launched with much fan-fare and enthusiasm in 1992-93. During first year, cluster approach was adopted and a cluster of 10 villages was selected in each of the sixteen blocks. Thus, 640 focus schools were identified with a view to saturating these schools with different inputs and organising special intensive enrolment and retention drives. In these drives or campaigns, the teacher, the members of VEC, students, social workers, educationists were involved. The following activities were undertaken in the focus schools:

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	construction					
	Drinking water	93	93	-	200	-
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	Award to teachers	-	32	16	-	24
	MLL & Curriculum	-	-	3	-	-
	Innovative materials to schools	-	-	480 schools	-	-
	Grants for TLM	-	-	-	-	3524
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	Training of Sahayoginis selected	-	12	90 Samooh	-	196 Programmes
	No. of villages covered	-	120	163	-	-
	Bal Jagjangi kendra	-	30	85	-	-
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	Bal mela	-	4	1	-	70
	Video film	-	6	-	-	-
	Construction of CRC	-	-	-	-	19
	Micro planning	-	-	-	-	Started in 3 blocks.

Source : Annual Report, Sitamarhi

3.20 ANALYSIS OF BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE UNDER BEP

3.20.1 The total budget allocation under BEP in Sitamarhi was Rs. 2654.65 lakh for the entire project period. Out of which Rs. 916.85 lakh was utilised, i.e. the utilisation was 34.53 percent of the budget for five years. Looking at the figures of annual budget and expenditure, the total budget allocated for 1992-93 was Rs. 256.63 lakh out of which Rs. 87.93 lakh was utilised which came to 34.26 percent. Similarly, in 1993-94 the amount of Rs 349.95 lakh utilised was 54.37 percent of the annual budget of Rs. 643.60 lakh. During 1994-95 the budgeted amount was the highest at Rs. 1002.98 lakh while the utilisation was also the lowest at Rs. 136.68 lakh constituting only 13.62 percent of the budget. During 1995-96 the budgeted amount was reduced to Rs. 309.79 lakh out of which an amount of Rs. 191.15 lakh was utilised which was 61.7 percent. In the year 1996-97 an amount of Rs. 151.14 lakh out of Rs. 441.65 lakh could be utilised. It would be obvious that except in 1995-96 and 1993-94 when 61.7 percent and 54.37 percent respectively of the budgeted amounts could be utilised, the utilisation in other years was very low ranging between 13.62 percent to 34.53 percent.

3.20.2 So far as yearwise expenditure as percentage of the total expenditure is concerned, it was 9.59 percent in 1992-93 which rose to a maximum of 38.16 percent in 1993-94. Therefore, the year 1993-94 and 1995-96 were better years in terms of utilisation of budget.

3.20.3 Analysis of expenditure by components shows that in the total budget and expenditure during 1992-97, the budget under management and administration was 7.04 percent while the expenditure was 8.27 percent, under primary formal education the budget was 62.55 percent and expenditure was 74.9 percent, under non-formal education the budget was 6.96 percent and expenditure was 2.68 percent, under Mahila Samakhya, the budget was 5.27 percent and the expenditure was 5.2 percent and under training the budget was 7.06 percent and expenditure was 5.07 percent.

3.20.4 So far as cumulative shortfall in utilisation of budget is concerned, it can be seen from the following table, that the maximum short fall for the project period (1992-97) was under the head of ECCE in which no activity was planned. The second in order was non-formal education under which 13.29 percent of the total budgeted amount was utilised. The third in order was community mobilisation, culture and continuing education under which 20.11 percent of total budget was utilised. Under this head, very little amount was spent in the first three years but it consistently went up in consecutive years. The analysis of budget and expenditure is given in table 3.6.

Table - 3.6

Analysis of Budget and Expenditure

Sitamarhi (Rs. in lakh)

Budget head		1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	Total	% of total budget & expenditure
Mngt. &	Budget	50.40	41.90	56.55	22.82	15.40	187.07	7.04
Admn.	Expn.	18.31	23.45	15.64	9.58	8.86	75.84	8.27
	%	36.32	55.96	27.65	41.98	57.53	40.54	
Primary	Budget	148.48	527.79	704.58	178.71	101.12	1660.68	62.55
Formal	Expn.	68.59	317.92	106.44	145.08	48.75	686.78	74.9
Edu.	%	46.19	60.23	15.1	81.18	48.21	41.35	
Non-	Budget	25.00	7.18	93.79	35.24	23.69	184.9	6.96
Formal	Expn.	0.01	3.44	2.66	13.79	4.68	24.58	2.68
Edu.	%	0.04	47.91	2.83	39.13	19.75	13.29	
Literacy/	Budget	-	-	-	2.17	76.95	79.12	
Alternate	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
School	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Women's	Budget	1.25	33.38	31.29	30.73	43.43	140.08	5.27
Dev /	Expn.	0.41	3.93	9.87	12.59	20.91	47.71	5.2
MS	%	32.8	11.77	31.54	40.96	48.14	34.05	
ECCE	Budget	5.00	17.35	2.10	4.44	3.95	32.84	1.23

	Expn.	-	-	0.01	-	1.26	1.27	0.13
	%	-	-	0.47	-	31.89	3.86	
Culture/	Budget	15.00	15.00	25.98	9.91	103.77	169.66	6.39
Comm.	Expn.	0.60	1.21	2.06	3.41	26.84	34.12	3.72
Mobi.	%	4	8.06	7.92	34.4	25.86	20.11	
Training	Budget	-	-	88.69	25.47	73.34	187.5	7.06
	Expn.	-	-	-	6.70	39.84	46.54	5.07
	%	-	-	-	26.3	54.32	24.82	
Support	Budget	1.50	1.00	-	-	-	2.5	
to NGOs	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Micro	Budget	-	-	-	0.30	-	0.30	
project	Expn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Others	Budget	10.00	-	-	-	-	10.00	0.37
	Expn.	0.01	-	-	-	-	0.01	.001
	%	0.1	-	-	-	-	0.1	
Total	Budget	256.63	643.60	1002.98	309.79	441.65	2654.65	
	Expn.	87.93	349.95	136.68	191.15	151.14	916.85	
	%	34.26	54.37	13.62	61.7	34.22	34.53	
% of total Budget		9.66	24.24	37.78	11.66	16.63	100	
% of total Expn.		9.59	38.16	14.9	20.84	16.48	100	

Source: Annual work plans and annual reports, BEP, Sitamarhi

3.21 PER CAPITA COST OF ENROLMENT

3.21.1 Although this is not fully valid indicator of calculating the economics of the project, an effort is made to find out the per capita cost of enrolment of children in primary schools. This is calculated by the total expenditure incurred under the project divided by the number of additional children enrolled in a particular year. These costs in different years are given below:

Table - 3.7

Per Capita Cost of Enrolment

Year	Additional no. of children enrolled	Total cost of the project (in Rs. lakh)	Per capita cost of enrolment
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			(in Rs.)
1992-93	28161	87.93	312
1993-94	38434	349.95	910
1994-95	34452	136.68	396
1995-96	16681	191.15	1145
1996-97	37888	151.14	398

Source: DPEP III for enrolment figures and BEP for expenditure figures, Sitamarhi

3.22 SUMMING UP

3.22.1 It may be added by way of conclusion that the project lacked continuity and consistency. Due to transfer of the DM and DDC posted in the initial phase, the tempo could not be maintained and for about two years till a regular DPC joined, the scale of activities was stagnant. The programme suffered because of the vacant posts of programme officers and resource persons. Several programme components could not make the success to the desired level. Even after the posting of DPC, he could not devote whole hearted attention to Sitamarhi BEP because he was required to look after another district, East Champaran. He is also loaded with a number of other jobs not directly connected with BEP implementation in Sitamarhi. The following table presents the SWOT analysis of BEP.

Table - 3.8

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Philosophy of the BEP, specially mission mode and participatory processes. Emphasis on Environment Building. Focus on disadvantaged groups. Women empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak management capacity due to majority of posts lying vacant especially posts relating to programme components. Lack of understanding of BEP as additionality. No changes seen in conventional structure with low motivational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation of the process of social change. Empowerment of women and focus groups. Transformation of the disadvantaged groups for active participation in primary education. Integration of education with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio economic structure characterised by gross inequalities. Tendency of appropriation of benefits/incentives meant for focus group by elites. Social disability and discriminatio

<p>through Mahila Samakhya.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VECs largely brought out of the control of dominant castes. • Efficient running of NFE through VECs. • Resource mobilisation by VECs for school building and repair work. • Mobilisation of all stakeholder at different levels. • Creation of CRC for quality improvement and teacher motivation. • Teaching for Joyful learning. 	<p>levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional and BEP management structure running parallelly. • Initial enthusiasm of VEC not sustained. • Networking and convergence with other departments lacking. • Micro planning not done on continuous basis. • No sound data base. • Low motivational status of teachers. 	<p>district planning process & integration of primary education with ongoing programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilising political will for education and making it a peoples movement. • Creation of active forum for collective activity for integrated development of village. 	<p>n faced by the disadvantage d groups and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and non ownership of productive assets by the disadvantaged.
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CHAPTER - IV

ACCESS, ENROLMENT AND RETENTION

4.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

4.1.1 According to Bihar Education Project document, the principal objective of BEP in regard to access and enrollment was to create conditions for universal primary education. These were stated as below :

(1) Universal access

This presupposes that a primary school or an NFE centre is available to all children within a walkable distance and that they are able to join it. Effort has to be made to ensure that universal access to primary education becomes possible for all children of Bihar by 1995.

(2) Universal participation

Access by itself does not ensure participation. The drop-out rate at classes I - V level in Bihar is about 65 percent as against just below 50 percent for the whole country and the drop-out rate between class I and VIII is about 80 percent as against the national rate of about 70 percent. The goal for 1990-95 should be the reduction of the drop-out at the primary level from 65 percent to 45 percent. This is not an overall target but should be achieved by each block and each identifiable social group such as women and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

4.1.2 However, in Sitamarhi district plan, the above components were not mentioned as such. It included activities such as, new school buildings, expansion, repair, maintenance and drinking water facility. It laid down the following activities to be undertaken (*Source: Sitamarhi Plan, May 1992*):

- i) to carry out the repairs of existing buildings as soon as possible;
- ii) to assess the additional requirement of rooms in school buildings;
- iii) to get such architectural designs prepared for schools which will be appropriate to rural setting and which can be constructed by locally available building material and local skilled workers;
- iv) to make arrangements through which cost effective and durable school buildings could be constructed by involving the local community;
- v) to organise such training courses for developing knowledge and skills in the local community for above construction works.

4.1.3 Based on the past experience, it was decided that the civil works will be undertaken by VECs. First of all, the repair work was to be started from December 1992. For this, a village construction committee of 7-8 persons was proposed to be constituted. Subsequently, work on construction and expansion of buildings was taken up in luster of ten villages in 16 blocks. The work on the above lines was started although the framing of architectural design was rather not accomplished.

4.1.4 It must be mentioned here that at the time of launching of BEP, the various components of primary education were not so sharply defined as they were now under DPEP. Although almost all the activities now being planned under DPEP were conceived in BEP, their groupings were different and placement of activities in a particular group was not given so much thought. For example, in the Sitamarhi plan there was no head like access and enrollment or retention. Instead the heads were like environment building and peoples participation, formal education, school buildings, school equipment, achievement levels, non-formal education, training etc. Then there was another problem that from 1997-98 the district has switched over to the components of DPEP and thus the bench mark information of 1992-93 was not comparable with the latest information of 1997-98. This problem was faced in the evaluation of number of activities. This limitation needs to be kept in view while comparing the base year and the achievements in the last year of the project. To begin with, the following table gives the position of schools with or without buildings in the year 1992-93.

Table 4.1

Blockwise Position of Schools in 1992-93

Sl. No.	Block	Primary School			Upper Primary School		
		Total	Without Building	Without Building & Land	Total	Without Building	Without Building & Land
	Dumra	102	27	10	28	2	2
	Reega	76	26	8	0	-	-
	Sheohar	79	29	8	22	4	-
	Bairgania	40	5	2	8	-	-
	Majorganj	70	12	0	13	-	-
	Peeparahi	64	17	3	18	1	1
	Runnisaidpur	125	20	18	36	3	1
	Belsand	47	7	4	14	2	-
	Pupri	90	19	6	22	1	-
	Sursand	63	18	1	16	-	-
	Bajpatti	64	14	0	25	2	-
	Nanpur	94	22	19	21	-	-
	Tariyani	50	13	6	18	-	-
	Parihar	109	37	1	15	2	-
	Bathnaha	84	26	5	20	5	-
	Sonbarsa	80	16	4	13	4	-
	Total	1237	308	95	309	26	4

Source: Sitamarhi Plan (1992-93)

4.2 PROGRESS DURING 1992-97

4.2.1 In an effort to find out the achievement in the matter of construction of new school buildings, we tried to compare data in different annual plans of Sitamarhi district. It was very difficult to ascertain the actual number because of different figures given in different plans. Because of this inconsistency, it was difficult to say as to what was the number of schools without buildings during 1997-98. The progress of construction work of schools, toilets and installation of hand pumps is given in the following table:

Table - 4.2

Progress of Civil Works

	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Construction	24	155	69	-	10
Repair	33	55	2	-	-
Toilet	100	100	407	200	100
Drinking Water	93	93	-	200	-

Source: Annual Plans, BEP, Sitamarhi

4.2.2 Out of the above data a number of civil works were taken up through convergence with other departments like JRY and PHED. These were reflected in the physical achievement but not in the financial achievements. Thus, it was difficult to establish any co-relationship between the two. The problem which arose was that there were 308 primary schools without buildings and naturally the construction work would have been taken up only in those schools. According to the data culled from different annual plans, so far 256 schools buildings were already constructed and only 52 schools should be left which were without buildings. But the Perspective Plan DPEP for Sitamarhi states that there were 205 buildingless schools at the time of beginning of DPEP III. It was a problem, therefore, to find out exact number of schools without building.

4.2.3 It may be concluded from the above analysis that it is not possible to say exactly as to what improvement has taken place in the matter of access to education as a result of implementation of BEP. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the access improved when some new buildings are constructed. It can also not be said whether some unserved habitations were covered by construction of new schools under BEP because no such figures are available.

4.3 ENROLMENT

4.3.1 Increase in enrolment is an output indicator and it reflects the combined and cumulative end product of several inputs. In order to find out the increase in enrolment during BEP implementation three sets of figures were compared. The first set of figures are yearwise enrolment as supplied by DLO Sitamarhi from 1992-93 to 1996-97. With a view to comparing it with another set of figures, the data of enrolment of 44 sample schools was utilised. Lastly, the data collected through the listing schedule by the field investigators in sample villages has been utilised. These sets of figures have been analysed in the following paragraphs.

(1) Enrolment Data Supplied by DLO

A glance on the figures of enrolment for five years from 1993 to 1997 would show that there was marked increase in enrolment in primary classes. It increased consistently every year. The total enrolment in 1993 was 254744 which became 395514 in 1997 recording an increase of 64.4 percent. Out of these figures for enrolment, the enrolment of boys was 170482 in 1993 which increased to 241194 in 1997 and the increase was 70.69 percent. As for girls it was 84262 in 1993 growing to 154320 in 1997, recording an increase of 54.6 percent. The following table gives the figures of enrolment in the district from 1993 to 1997.

Table 4.3

Figures of Enrolment for the District

		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	Boys	72982	72288	46738	82818	68549
Class - I	Girls	37882	48533	75104	53864	52083
	Total	110864	120821	121842	136882	120632
	Boys	35102	41969	39529	47166	60019
Class-II	Girls	16773	22345	25796	28000	43210
	Total	51875	64314	65325	75166	103229
	Boys	24998	29511	33487	33548	49776
Class - III	Girls	11798	14515	17842	20861	24383
	Total	36796	44026	51329	54409	74159
	Boys	20297	21917	24960	28922	33453
Class - IV	Girls	9843	10858	13087	15165	20139
	Total	30140	32775	38047	44086	53592
	Boys	17102	18625	19745	22302	29396
Class-V	Girls	7966	8635	9589	11129	14506
	Total	25068	27260	29334	33422	43902
	Boys	170482	184310	193478	214747	241194
Total	Girls	84262	104886	113052	129018	154320
	Total	254744	289196	306530	343765	395514

Source: DSE Sitamarhi, September 1996

(2) Gross Enrolment Ratios

According to the data made available by the DPC, Sitamarhi the Gross Enrolment Ratios have consistently increased over different years. This is also confirmed from the above table. The Gross Enrolment Ratio was 65.64 percent in 1993 which increased to 92.79 percent in 1997. The GER from 1993 to 1997 are shown below:

Table - 4.4

Gross Enrolment Ratio, Sitamarhi

Year	Gross Enrolment Ratio (in percentage)
1993	65.64
1994	72.80
1995	75.21
1996	82.57
1997	92.79

4.4 ENROLMENT DATA FOR SAMPLE SCHOOLS

(1) For children of general category

During the evaluation study, enrolment figures were collected for all the 44 sample schools. The total enrolment in these schools was 4984 in 1993 which raised to 7295 in 1997 recording a percentage increase of 46.3 percent. In case of boys, the enrolment grew from 3557 in 1993 to 4469 in 1997 showing an increase of 25.6 percent while the enrolment of girls was 1427 in 1993 and 2826 in 1997, the percentage increase being 98 percent. This is shown in the following table:

Table 4.5

Enrolment of Boys and Girls in Sample Schools

		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Class-I	Boys	1439	1380	1484	1998	1706
	Girls	669	1017	990	1329	1266
Class-II	Boys	729	791	824	1028	986
	Girls	260	340	531	604	611
Class-III	Boys	571	591	697	708	780
	Girls	197	256	305	358	463
Class-IV	Boys	436	485	521	617	506
	Girls	158	183	214	247	308
Class-V	Boys	382	372	432	447	491
	Girls	143	145	163	204	178
Total	Boys	3557	3619	3958	4798	4469
	Girls	1427	1941	2203	2742	2826

Source: Data obtained from BEP, Sitamarhi, 1998.

(2) Enrolment of SC Boys and Girls in Sample Schools

The figures of enrolment collected from the sample schools were also analysed from the viewpoint of boys and girls. The number of boys belonging to the Scheduled Castes enrolled in 1993 was 1053 which increased to 1225, the percentage increase being 16.3 percent. In 1993, 545 SC girls were enrolled which increased to 689 in 1997 recording a percentage increase of 26.4 percent. The following table gives these details:

Table 4.6

Figures of Enrolment of Scheduled Caste Students in Sample Schools

		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Class I	Boys	511	422	356	455	427
	Girls	353	363	239	312	242
Class II	Boys	248	374	287	225	252
	Girls	98	160	146	149	184
Class III	Boys	137	237	309	227	186
	Girls	41	82	128	145	88
Class IV	Boys	102	155	184	253	157
	Girls	38	29	50	103	107
Class V	Boys	55	64	118	157	203
	Girls	15	31	26	45	68
Total	Boys	1053	1252	1254	1317	1225
	Girls	545	665	589	754	689

Source: Data obtained from BEP, Sitamarhi, 1998

(3) Enrolment of Muslim Children in Sample School

So far as enrolment of muslim children is concerned, the number of boys enrolled in 1993 was 587 which increased to 1022 in 1997 showing an increase of 74.1 percent. In case of muslim girls the number of 240 in 1993 increased to 568 in 1997 recording an increase of 136.6 percent. The details are shown in the following table:

Table 4.7

Enrolment of Muslim Children in Sample Schools

		Type of Block	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Class-I	Boys	I	158	187	215	278	210

		N	129	104	104	166	155
	Girls	I	78	128	120	162	139
		N	45	57	98	85	92
Class-II	Boys	I	70	112	99	151	190
		N	30	80	55	90	105
	Girls	I	31	52	78	92	79
		N	14	23	85	65	59
Class-III	Boys	I	73	60	99	85	98
		N	22	28	60	78	69
	Girls	I	17	27	52	35	60
		N	9	29	51	35	37
Class-IV	Boys	I	49	57	47	78	61
		N	17	20	13	47	55
	Girls	I	11	14	27	26	19
		N	9	11	19	32	25
Class-V	Boys	I	26	43	41	32	46
		N	13	17	19	15	33
	Girls	I	19	16	11	23	19
		N	7	7	10	13	19
Total	Boys		587	708	752	1020	1022
	Girls		240	359	551	568	568

Source: Data obtained from BEP, Sitmarhi, 1998

Note: I - Intensive, N - New

4.5 CHILDREN IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

4.5.1 In the evaluation study, a listing schedule for all the 22 sample villages was filled. It gives some valuable information about the status of education of the children in the villages. When analysed for children of different categories it was found that in the general category 44.4 percent of the total boys of 6-11 years age group were going to school. Among the SC and OBC children, this percentage was 38.3 and 36.3. These percentages were 32.4, 23 and 21.1 for girls of general category, SC and OBC respectively.

4.5.2 The percentage of boys who left the school was 5.2 for general category, 9.6 for SC and 6.3 for OBC. Similarly for the girls dropping out the percentages were 5.3 for general category, 7.7 for SC and 5 percent for OBC. The following table gives the details:

Table 4.8

Distribution of Children by Status of Schooling

	School going Children (in percent)		Children who left the school (in percent)		Not enrolled (in percent)		Total	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Gen.	(44.4%)	(32.4%)	(5.2%)	(5.3%)	(6.3%)	(6.1%)	2011	1578
SC	(38.3%)	(23%)	(9.6%)	(7.7%)	(9.1%)	(11.5%)	2493	1828
OBC	(36.3%)	(21.1%)	(6.3%)	(5%)	(15.6%)	(15.5%)	4102	2931
Total	5830	3643	1052	884	1724	1810	8606	6337

Source: Listing Schedule, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

4.6 Education of Children by Household Landholding Status

4.6.1 A comparison was made between the children of landless families and those having land as to how many of each of these children are going to school. The percentage of school going children amongst the landless was the lowest (boys 33.3 percent and girls 19.4 percent) as compared to the landed people, the percentage of boys and girls ranging between 41.5 to 51.1 and 27 to 34.5 respectively according to the size of holding. The details, are given in the following table which is self explanatory.

Table 4.9

Education of Children by Household Landholding Status

Land (Acre)	School going (in percent)		Children who left the school (in percent)		Children not enrolled (in percent)		Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
No land	33.3	19.4	7.7	5.4	17.2	16.8	7067 (100)
< - 1	41.5	27	7.7	7.7	7.5	8.5	4861 (100)
1 - 2	47	30.7	3.9	3.9	6.2	8	1347 (100)
2 - 5	48.1	31.5	5.5	5.2	3.4	6	1138 (100)
> - 5	51.1	34.5	3	2.4	3.4	5.5	530 (100)
Total	5830	3643	1052	884	1724	1810	14943

Source: Listing Schedule, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi, 1998

4.6.2 It would be obvious from the above table that the families having some land are in a better position to send their children and therefore, more children belonging to the landed class are going to school. Similarly, the number of children leaving the school is less in case of landed class as compared to the children of landless. This corroborates the fact that poverty and assetlessness are the major reasons for illiteracy in Sitamarhi district.

4.7 PROJECT INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE ENROLMENT

4.7.1 In order to have a perceptible impact on access, enrolment and retention, cluster approach was adopted in Sitamarhi district in 1992-93 and 1993-94. For this, a cluster of 10 villages was selected in every block in which all inputs were provided and intensive enrolment and retention drives were organised. The basic purpose was that if success was achieved in these clusters, it would have a radiation effect. Under this approach 160 villages were selected in 16 blocks which included 640 schools. The following inputs were provided to each school:

- i) Free text books and other material for SC boys and all the girls.
- ii) Innovative material, science kit, mathematics kit, sports material.
- iii) Award to two teachers per block.
- iv) Monthly *Guru Goshtis* were organised at the block level which were attended by DSE, DMEO, DEO, BDO and BEEO.

4.7.2 In other schools, an amount of Rs. 3000/- was given to VECs to meet the needs of furniture and material. Also these schools were covered under operation black board scheme. These programmes continued except the supply of innovative material and teacher's award.

4.8 IMPACT OF BEP ON ENROLMENT

4.8.1 From the above analysis, it may be noted that the enrolment in the district increased by around 200 percent in 1993-97. The gross enrolment ratios also increased during this period. This indicated that BEP inputs and the efforts made by VECs have made a positive impact. One of the factors responsible for this increase might be special enrolment campaign organised at the village level and initial efforts made for environment building when the entire administrative machinery was mobilised for this purpose. The enrolment of SC and Muslims and the girls had been reportedly increased. This performance must be given due weightage. However, the enrolment figures could not be relied up and these figures need to be rechecked because the attendance in the schools did not tally with the enrolment. This discrepancy had also been pointed out by the Review Mission Team which collected data on enrolment and actual attendance in schools. It found that only half of the enrolled children in standard I to V were actually attending schools on their day of visit. The study team also visited five schools and checked the attendance. We also found around half of the children enrolled were present in the school.

4.9 RETENTION RATE

4.9.1 As a matter of fact, for finding the impact of BEP on the retention rate we must have had two figures of retention rate before and after the implementation of BEP. We did not have the figures of enrolment for five years before BEP in order to calculate or reconfirm the retention rate in 1992 for comparison purposes. However, we have adopted the figures supplied by the DSE Sitamarhi which are given below:

Table: 4.10

Retention Rates in Primary Education

Year	Retention Rate (in percentage)
1993	22.61
1994	22.56
1995	24.08
1996	24.45
1997	36.39

Source: DSE Sitamarhi.

4.9.2 It is obvious from the above table that the Sitamarhi district has a very low rate of retention in class V as given above and concerted efforts are needed to improve the situation. It may be added that the retention rates calculated by us for the 44 sample schools is not at great variance from the district data. In case of sample schools, the retention rate is around 30 percent.

4.10 ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN AND ACADEMIC SUPERVISION

4.10.1 One of the major obstacles to achieve 100 percent retention of children in school is their irregular attendance. During discussions with teachers and also through checking attendance physically in some schools where teachers were not on strike, it was found that only 50 percent of the children enrolled were present on any day. The teachers reported that there are several compulsions due to which they have to show fake attendance of students. The first one is that the scheduled castes children are to be shown attending the school because they get the stipend at the end of the financial year. If their attendance is not shown, they will not get the stipend. This creates many problems. Not only the officials ask for the explanation for the shortfall but the parents also start harassing them. The second reason is that of mid-day meal scheme. In this, those children whose attendance is 80 percent are entitled to get mid day meal. Therefore, the teacher has to make *farzi* attendance so that the children who got mid day meal earlier continue getting this for all the 12 months.

4.10.2 It is not that this problem of fake attendance is being raised for the first time, everybody connected with primary education is aware of it. But it has not been possible to find any solution since all the functionaries are so occupied with other programmes that this aspect rarely came into focus.

4.10.3 The problem is related to academic supervision and integrity of the teacher himself. As mentioned earlier that with a few exceptions, the teacher feels compelled to this kind of reporting because of the vagaries of the system in which he is operating. The possibility of the teacher having some vested interest can also not be ruled out.

4.10.4 The academic supervision is done by the BEEO in which he follows the conventional methods of inspection (although this term was not used in the BEP). About the frequency and quality of his supervision we had a full day meeting with BEEOs.

4.10.5 In spite of the fact that the BEEO is an important co-ordinating link in the chain of BEP activities, no formal role was assigned to him. Efforts should be made to involve them creatively in BEP. Majority of BEEOs perceive BEP as a useful intervention for correcting the imbalances in the current education system. The BEEOs are keen to participate in BEP and improve the quality of their academic supervision. Their problem is that they do not get enough time for discharging their basic responsibility of academic supervision. They reported that out of the estimated 250 working days in a year, they spend around 40 days in law and order duty, 30 days in examination duty and atleast 20 days in flood relief work. It was also reported that around 40 days are earmarked for *Guru Goshti*, treasury and miscellaneous jobs. Thus, they have only 120 days left for academic supervision. Also they do not have proper office and other equipments. There might be some exaggeration in this but it is a fact that the work of academic supervision suffered. It would be advisable if they are not retained for law and order and other avoidable duties. This needs some action at the state head quarter by SLO.

4.10.6 The second kind of academic supervision introduced recently was through the CRC and CRC coordinators. This approach was based on motivation, facilitation, persuasion, self-discipline and peer group pressure. This approach was good in the long term but the results could not be expected so soon. As a matter of fact, it aimed at total transformation of the teacher which took time and needed lot of perseverance and patience on the part of key functionaries.

4.10.7 In this transitional process, both the approaches need some reorientation and reinforcement. On the one hand, BEEO should be enabled to increase the frequency as well as quality of his supervision of schools. It also seems advisable that other functionaries who are committed and devoted to the project should be given the responsibility of academic supervision with special focus on verification of attendance of children. Thus, schools may be adopted by resource persons, social workers, NGOs, project coordinators etc. The BEEOs and other key persons will have to make surprise visits to check the attendance atleast in their adopted schools. Similarly, the CRC coordinators will also include in their duties the verification of attendance of children.

4.10.8 The last but not the least, the VECs should be actively involved in the above kind of academic supervision because without involving the VEC, the sustainability of this activity will not be achievable.

4.10.9 The whole programme will have to be organised in the form of campaign in which the teacher should be an integral part and whatever strategies are chalked out they should be done by taking him into confidence and in consultation with him. At no point of time, the sensitivity of the teacher should be affected.

4.11 FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

4.11.1 The data was collected for 42 schools during field work, 20 in intensive blocks and 22 schools in new blocks. The major deficiencies found were that only 4 schools had boundary wall and only 13 had toilet. Wall clock was available only in 16 schools. Only two schools in intensive blocks had Tatpatti for all the students. In most of the schools it was available for a small percentage of children. The following table gives the details of the facilities available.

Table 4.11

Facilities Available in Schools

Facility	No schools having the facility	
	Intensive blocks	New Blocks

	(20 schools)	(22 schools)
Toilet	6	7
Drinking water facility	18	18
Adequate no. of Black Board		
Boundary wall	4	-
Wall Clock	8	8
School Bell	15	15
Book Bank	13	13
Electricity	2	1
Chalk and Duster	12	12
Furniture for Teachers		
i) All	11	11
ii) Some	8	10
iii) None	1	1
Tatpatti		
i) All	2	-
ii) Some	16	5
iii) None	2	17

Source: School Schedule, BEP Evaluation, Sitamarhi, 1998

4.12. CONDITION OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

4.12.1 In this study 46 schools were covered. Out of these, most of them had two rooms accommodation. There were schools without building. There were 13 schools which had partially Pucca building and two had totally Kutcha building. Out of 46, 25 schools needed major repairs while 13 schools were in need of minor repairs.

4.13. WORKING DAYS

4.13.1 There were 14 out of 46 schools covered under the survey which had less than 150 working days in the last year. These were located in the flood prone areas due to which their time table/calendar was disturbed. The teaching is restored after a long time when the floods has already receded.

4.13.2 There were quite a few examples which would work for less number of days because of either one teacher was absent and the other was required to attend to administrative jobs.

4.13.3 By way of conclusion, it may be added that although enrolment has increased over the years, the retention is very poor. One of the reasons emerging out of the analysis is that the attendance of children was far below the mark. It needed remedial measures. Also all was not well with the facilities available in schools and attractiveness of schools. These should also be taken into focus because till now these aspects appear to be neglected. The VECs will have to be made effective to look after all the above aspects. A regular monitoring system taking into account these indicators need to be developed.

4.14 NON FORMAL EDUCATION

4.14.1 There was a large number of boys and girls who were not able to participate in the formal primary education or they could not continue their education in the school. These generally included girls and boys who belonged to economically and educationally backward sections of society and who were also the victims of social discrimination. These included working children, girls who had to stay in the house for domestic work and boys and girls belonging to the age group 9-14 years who were not suitable to join the school or had dropped out. These also included children living in such habitations which could not have a school under the norms of state government.

4.14.2 For the above children, non-formal education was the only alternative through which they could enter the mainstream of primary education. However, the quality of education under non-formal system should be of equivalent to the formal system. Otherwise the children belonging to the non-formal system are treated as inferior to those of the formal system.

4.14.3 This is an admitted fact that the programme of non-formal education has not been very effective not only in Bihar but in other parts of the country also. In BEP districts, it was proposed that efforts would be made to make NFE programme more effective through training of instructors, preparation of TLM and strengthening the arrangements for improving the environment of education.

4.14.4 Non-formal education centres were already running in Sitamarhi district under the Mass Educational Department (MED). There were two types of centres, first having one instructor with 25 students and the second having two instructors, one male and one female, with 50 students. The second was called special education centres to be opened in SC dominated habitations. Before opening these centres a need assessment survey was conducted in the concerned habitation and a Tola Samiti formed when the centre was opened. The curriculum was to be completed in two years divided into four semester. There was one project officer for each block to assist the DMEO in running these centres.

4.14.5 There were 495 NFE centres including 245 special education centres being run by MED. The number of boys in both these centres was 9780 while the number of girls was 8999. The details of these centres are given in table 4.12.

Table - 4.12

Blockwise position of non-formal education and special education centres (Centre and Enrolment)

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	No. of NFE Centres	Enrolment						No. of special education Centres	Enrolment					
			Total	Boys	Girls	SC	ST	Minority		Total	Boys	Girls	SC	ST	Minority
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1.	Sursand	55	1425	710	715	219	-	50	30	1515	785	730	701	-	105
2.	Parihar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	1211	624	587	563	-	82
3.	Nanpur	5	138	100	38	13	-	7	15	754	397	357	456	-	52
4.	Bajpatti	50	1231	600	631	170	-	157	16	803	416	387	379	-	59

5.	Pupri	50	1175	655	520	170	-	-	25	1252	658	594	586	-	92
6.	Bathnaha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	554	286	268	264	-	53
7.	Sonbarsa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	757	393	364	356	-	65
8.	Majorganj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	659	338	321	310	-	49
9.	Bairgania	90	2425	1360	1065	412	-	55	16	808	423	385	379	-	58
10.	Runnisaidpur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	907	468	439	425	-	69
11.	Riga	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	152	78	74	69	-	9
12.	Parsauni	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	606	317	289	276	-	46
13.	Belsand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	953	494	459	437	-	64
14.	Dumra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	1404	728	676	644	-	84
	TOTAL	250	6394	3425	2969	984	-	269	245	12385	6355	6030	5745	-	982

Source: District Mass Education Officer, Sitamarhi

4.14.6 The programme being run by MED appeared quite impressive in terms of the number of students. However, there was no information available with DMEO regarding the number of students passing out from NFE centres enrolled either in primary or middle schools. Without these figures it is not possible to judge the effectiveness of the programme.

4.14.7 In the sample villages, the evaluation team came across only four NFE centres run by MED. In all these centres the requisite enrolment was shown but as reported by villagers the attendance was much less. The centres did not run regularly. The instructors did not get honorarium on time. They also reported that TLM provided by MED was insufficient.

4.14.8 As a point of departure from the MED whose centres are largely run under government supervision, the BEP introduced its own NFE centre which were to run under the control of VEC or NGO. VECs were asked to conduct a survey in their area and suggest ways and means for providing education to the out of school children. In those villages where VEC's proposed to open an NFE centre, the BEP provided help to VEC in selection of instructors and payment of honorarium as well as teaching material. On the recommendations of VECs, 76 NFE centres were opened by BEP in Reega block during 1993-94. Another 30 centres were opened by REED, an NGO, in Majorganj block. During 1994-95, another 169 NFE centres and in 1995-96, 150 centres were opened in Bathnaha, Reega and Sobharsa blocks under BEP. Out of these, 80 centres of BEP were exclusively for girls. These centres had two years duration and had phased out before evaluation of BEP in January 1998.

4.14.9 The NFE centres started by REED are still continuing. The study team visited four NFE centres being run by REED for girls, interviewed the instructors and asked for the opinion of the villagers about these. According to their opinions and responses, the centres are running well, they are serving their purpose. Since these centres are still running, it can not be found whether the girls could be brought into the formal schooling system.

4.14.10 The study team made an attempt to find out the impact of NFE centres run by BEP which were closed about a year back. The NFE centres had left a positive impact on the village. Although it could not be verified but it was reported by both the VEC president and the instructors that the majority of children were enrolled in primary school after finishing their education in four semesters of NFE. Most of the villagers demanded that the NFE should be reopened in their villages to take care of out of the school children. It should be mentioned here that the NFE centres for girls and for children run by Mahila Samakhya have not been discussed here. These have been discussed in the chapter on Mahila Samakhya.

4.14.11 It would be obvious from above that NFE run by MED had not been able to contribute much to the enrolment as the NFE centres had only less than 10 percent children of the total enrolment of the district. It will not be said with certainty that how many of the children finally entered the mainstream schooling. It needs constant monitoring and DMEO should supply figures of children enrolled in primary school after the fourth semester every year.

CHAPTER V

QUALITY AND ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 The qualitative improvement in education and upgrading achievement levels of students was one of the major objectives of BEP. In Sitamarhi Plan, prepared in 1992-93, it has been mentioned that generally the teachers were using outdated teaching methods. Also the motivational level of teachers was low and they did not have aptitude for fulfilling their responsibilities towards UPE. It was rare that the teacher went to the habitations of the disadvantaged sections of society for motivating the guardians to send their children to school. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that the teacher should not only be equipped with skills for teaching for children's joyful learning but also to develop in him a positive and constructive attitude towards UPE, so that he feels committed to the goals and objectives of BEP. At the time of launching Sitamarhi Plan, the teachers working in primary and middle schools had the following qualifications.

Table 5.1

Qualifications of Teachers in Primary and Middle Schools

Sl. No.	Qualifications or Degree	Primary School	%age of the total	Middle school	%age of the total
1.	Middle	85	2.8	12	0.5
2.	Matric	2035	68.2	660	27.0
3.	I.A.	430	14.4	619	25.3
4.	I.S.C	20	0.7	150	6.1
5.	B.A.	376	12.6	828	33.9
6.	B.Sc.	-	-	74	3.0
7.	M.A.	39	1.3	100	0.4
8.	M.Sc.	-	-	1	0

Source: Sitamarhi Plan, May '92.

5.1.2 It would be obvious from the above table that 68.2 per cent of the teachers in primary schools were matriculates, while in middle schools about one third of the total teachers were graduates. The most striking feature was that the number of teachers having science qualifications was very low.

5.1.3 Although the figures of trained and untrained teachers were not mentioned in Sitamarhi plan, it was highlighted that there were gross inequalities in the qualifications of teachers and disparities in their training levels. This situation had arose because of the fact that the examination at matriculation and intermediate levels had become unreliable. The situation was further aggravated by the decision of the government in 1990-91 that training would not be an essential qualification for appointment on the post of primary teacher. The following objectives were fixed in connection with training:

- i) Teaching training of teachers to improve their performance;
- ii) Training of other functionaries, instructors and members of different committees;
- iii) To develop competent trainers and take measures for constant upgradation of their competency and efficiency;
- iv) Taking all required measures for improving the quality of training which will include curriculum renewal, preparation of training material, innovative experiments in training etc.;
- v) Creating institutional structures for strengthening management of training;
- vi) Periodic evaluation of different aspects of training management.

5.2 STRATEGY

5.2.1 With a view to achieving the above objectives the following strategic measure were suggested in Sitamarhi plan:

- i) Majority of teachers had inadequate knowledge of subjects they teach and because of this, they were not able to teach students with self-confidence and ease. Therefore, first priority would be given to assist teachers in developing their teaching capabilities.
- ii) In improving teaching skills attention would be focused on child centered teaching using local materials for joyful learning by children.
- iii) Using continuous and comprehensive evaluation and developing capacity for the achievement of MLL.

5.3 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT FOR TRAINING

5.3.1 It was also stated that merely induction training or one time in-service training would not be able to change teacher's attitudes and improve their motivational levels. Proper arrangement for organising training on a continuous basis would be essential. It would require strengthening of DIET so that it could run training programmes effectively. Till DIET was made fully operational some alternative arrangement should be made. In this connection the teachers training institute in Dumra was used. For providing academic input for training resource persons, resource institutions were to be identified. They were to be trained in developing training curriculum and other training material.

5.3.2 It was necessary to integrate the training system with educational management. It would improve the quality of educational administration and link them creatively with the teachers. The present stagnation in supervision would be replaced by creative educational activity. For this purpose, one cluster of 20 to 30 primary/middle schools (in 10 revenue villages) was constituted. One coordinator was to be selected from amongst the teachers who were to act as facilitator. The Cluster Resource Centres have been established in 106 clusters of all the blocks in the district.

5.3.3 In the first stage, selection of cluster of 10 villages in each block was done in all 16 blocks. In total 640 schools were, thus, selected. This selection had the twin purposes of doing intensive work and also starting training programmes for improving the quality of education. In these, free

text books and other material were distributed to SC boys and girls. Award to 2 teachers per block were given for better performance. These were done in 1992-93 and first half of 1993-94. In addition, science kit, mathematics kit, sports material were also given to these schools during 1992-93. The system of holding monthly *Guru Goshitis* was introduced which has sustained.

5.4 TEACHERS TRAINING

5.4.1 As mentioned in BEP document that teachers would be of highest importance in the project because its success depended on their participation and faithful discharge of responsibilities. For this, training of teachers was indispensable. In Sitamarhi, initially 8 master trainers were selected who were sent for Training of Trainers (TOT) to SCERT, Patna. Subsequently, in 1993-94, 210 teachers were trained in six courses organised by the above trainers in collaboration with SCERT. In this training, two SCERT training modules were used. The first one was of 10 days devoted to motivational aspects and the second module was of 11 days which was content based.

Table 5.2

Number of Teachers Trained under Different Programme

		1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1.	Training of Asstt. teachers (10 days) SCERT	420	584	336	330	-
2.	Training of ATs (11 days) SCERT	-	420	397	140	-
3.	Training of head teachers of middle school	-	94	190	-	-
4.	Induction Training (5 days)	-	-	366	19	-
5.	Training of joyful learning (8 days)	-	-	-	158	-
6.	UJALA training (10 days)	-	-	-	493	-

Source: Annual Work Plans, BEP Sitamarhi

5.4.2 It would appear from the above table that the focus of teachers training had changed over the years. During 1992-93 to 1994-95 the focus was on training of teachers in the modules prepared by SCERT. But from 1995-96 UJALA training module was introduced. The 10 days UJALA training module was attached high value in the whole system of improving the quality of teaching as well as upgrading MLL of students.

5.5 UJALA TRAINING

5.5.1 UJALA training module was a major break-through in teachers training in Bihar. It was now being adopted by all the Hindi speaking states after some modifications. UJALA training aimed at equipping the teacher with skills which would enable joyful learning for the children and would help in upgrading minimum levels of learning. It also aimed at bringing about attitudinal changes in teachers through which they would feel committed and motivated towards furtherance of objectives of UPE.

5.5.2 In the first phase 1996-97, all the primary teachers had been covered under UJALA-I training. In addition, the head masters and two primary teachers teaching class I and II where primary schools were attached had also been covered. Since the teachers were transferable from primary schools to the middle schools (having primary section) it happened sometimes that the school did not have any teacher with UJALA training. It was, therefore, proposed that all the middle school teachers should receive UJALA training.

5.6 IMPACT OF UJALA TRAINING

5.6.1 Assessment of the impact of UJALA training was an important part of the Evaluation Study of BEP, since this training was supposed to bring about radical changes in the performance of teachers. The teacher who had been trained was expected to be more committed and devoted to the objectives of UPE and to be punctual and regular. A perceptible change in the school environment was expected because of the teacher using teaching methods based on joyful learning by children and also using locally prepared TLM. With a view to finding out the post training scenario, the teacher schedule had questions on the motivational aspects as well as the technical aspects they learned during training and the ways in which they were utilising this training. Besides obtaining responses through the schedules, quite a few teachers were interviewed. The interviews showed that UJALA training was liked by the majority of teachers with a few exceptions. As a result of UJALA training, it was reported that majority of the teachers have become regular and punctual. This was a significant achievement. But on the qualitative front, the impact was not so heartening. It was found that only 66 percent of the teachers who had received UJALA training said that they were using new methods aimed at joyful learning and were using the TLM prepared by them. We expected this percentage to be higher. The remaining 33 percent teachers said that they were still not attuned to use new methods and usually revert back to the conventional methods because of the old habits. It pointed out the need for recurrent training of UJALA module to fully convince them and motivate them to use the methods of teaching for joyful learning by children. However, in six schools, which were visited by the evaluation team, the teachers were not found to be using new methods.

5.7 ROLE OF CRC

5.7.1 CRC has been conceived as a nucleus for developing, coordinating and supervising the academic inputs and activities in the schools under its jurisdiction. It was supposed to provide continuous guidance and academic support to the teachers and do the academic supervision. Theoretically, it was based on the mission mode, self motivation and discipline by having full faith in the teacher that he would work with commitment and have full loyalty to UPE objectives.

5.7.2 Teachers were supposed to make self evaluation of their work and were expected to solve their problems through collective wisdom. One of the teachers of all the schools under CRC was selected to act as a coordinator. All the activities of the teachers, their self evaluation and problem solving was done through monthly meetings on a prescribed date at the CRC. According to the concept, no outside supervision was required as every aspect was expected to be covered through CRC and the CRC Coordinator.

5.7.3 During evaluation of the role of CRC, six CRC coordinators and 20 teachers were intensively interviewed and were asked various questions about the functioning of CRC. While the CRC coordinators gave positive opinion about the role of CRC and said that they were able to perform their role as expected, the teachers as members of CRC talked otherwise. The following important points came out of their responses:

- i) There was great enthusiasm in the beginning but since the same teachers have been meeting every month for a number of months the deliberations were gradually being converted into a mechanical exercise;
- ii) New input was not coming because the same agenda was repeated every time;
- iii) The objective of preparing TLM was hardly achieved and quite often the tasks assigned to teachers were not timely completed;
- iv) The role of monitoring and evaluation was not clearly defined and therefore, not done rigorously.

5.7.4 It was also found that the teachers even after UJALA training did not go to village to meet the parents or to contact those parents whose children were not coming to school, especially the disadvantaged groups. The interface between teacher and villagers was not there at all. It emerged from the discussions with teachers and CRC coordinators that outside resource persons from various disciplines should be invited to CRC meeting for providing new academic inputs as well as some social science inputs for improving the school environment and community mobilisation because these aspects were not been included in the agenda of CRC meeting.

5.8 TEACHING LEARNING MATERIAL

5.8.1 An amount of Rs. 500/- per teacher was given for preparing TLM from the locally available material. Out of 94 teachers who were included in the sample, 80 percent reported that they had utilised it for preparing pocket board, flannel board, flash cards, charts, different masks, songs, stories in a visual form etc.

5.8.2 But when the teachers were asked about utilising these TLM on a regular basis, half of them gave evasive replies which created doubt about their utilising it. Probably the CRC coordinator should see whether TLM was being actually utilised when he visited the school. This item should be given more attention.

5.9 MULTI GRADE TEACHING

5.9.1 Around 90 percent of the teachers reported that they were always handling more than one class. This multigrade teaching was found very common in the sample schools. The teachers said that there were difficulties in multigrade teaching and when the number of students was quite large in both the grades then it became really problematic to carry out the academic work. Since

they had not received any special training in multigrade teaching, it posed difficulties for them. Therefore, the training in multigrade teaching should be introduced as early as possible.

5.10 TRAINED TEACHERS

5.10.1 A little more than half of the teachers in the sample schools had received high school teachers training. The ratio was more among the male teachers. However, there was no interrelationship between the quality of teaching of trained and untrained teachers. The major conclusion which emerged from this is that the pre-service training did not have any advantage for the trained teacher because the motivational level was found to be low. The differences in intensive and new blocks is also not significant.

5.11 USE OF TEXTBOOKS BY TEACHERS

5.11.1 Most of the teachers reported that they used text books regularly, while teaching the children. The method used was that some student was asked to read the lesson loudly and then the other students were invited to ask questions and raise doubts about the lesson.

5.12 GUIDANCE FOR ASSISTANT TEACHERS

5.12.1 Most of the assistant teachers reported that they got regular cooperation/guidance from the head teachers as well as fellow teachers. The CRC coordinators also provided guidance whenever they visited the school. The BEEOs did not provide any academic support or guidance. The VEC president would come very rarely and they did not expect some kind of academic help or guidance by the VEC members as the latter were not educated or did not have any idea about their role. Quite often, VEC president and members had a negative attitude towards the teacher community. It was very rarely that the teacher and VEC members sat together and sorted out the problems and chalked out a common strategy.

5.13 SUPERVISION

5.13.1 Supervision has been one of the most crucial aspects in BEP. While the project talked about the new ideas and activities for providing academic supervision to the teacher, this has not been the case in reality. Most of the teachers reported that the functionaries of BEP at the district level would rarely visit the school. Some of the teachers reported that they were overburdened with filling of the formats which were many in number. Almost two-thirds of the teachers informed that the BEEO hardly visited the schools. They also reported that the purpose of their visit was only to find out some fault with the teachers. They would check the attendance register exactly at 10 a.m. and mark the teachers absent. In another situation, they would come to the school a few minutes before 4:00 p.m. and if the teacher has left, he will be marked absent. There was little coordination between BEEO and the CRC Coordinator. It was reported that the BEEO, if he came to CRC meeting, put hindrance rather than playing a positive role.

5.14 EVALUATION

5.14.1 With a view to eliciting the opinion of students about BEP, a schedule was administered to 110 students from class V. Out of 110 such students, 101 reported that their evaluation was conducted twice in a year but they were not shown the examination copies. They were not able to know as to what was their performance and in which subjects they needed to work more. Around half of the students said that they were able to comprehend the subjects in the class. Most of them reported that teachers came to school on time. Around 50 percent students said that teachers asked them to read lesson and then clarified it and asked questions.

5.15 PRESSURE OF WORK ON TEACHERS

5.15.1 When teachers were asked about the pressure of work on them, around 60 per cent reported that they were overworked. The teachers also complained of bad service conditions and the government policy of posting teachers outside the home block. They said that BEP had not done anything in improving their service conditions. They were harassed by DSE office and there was lot of corruption in transfer/posting of teachers. They gave the following reasons for the extra burden on them:

- i) Absence of one to two teachers due to their engagements in non-academic work;
- ii) Non availability of text books on time;
- iii) Late release of amount for preparing TLM;
- iv) Lack of opportunities for innovative work;
- v) High teacher pupil ratio;
- vi) Shortage of class rooms due to which the children are herded in one room.

5.16 TEACHER PUPIL RATIO

5.16.1 Teacher was the most critical link in the whole chain of BEP activities. If teachers were duly motivated it would be easier to achieve the objectives of UPE. In 1992, there were 1953 male and 430 female teachers in primary schools. In middle schools the number of male teachers was 2764 and female teachers 338. In 1995, the number of male and female teachers was 2164 and 433 respectively while in middle schools it was 2557 and 353. The teacher pupil ratio in rural areas was the maximum of 97:1 in Sonbarsa and the lowest in 64:1 in Bajpatti.

5.16.2 According to the field data, out of 391 total teachers, only 48 were the lady teachers which constituted only 12.27 percent. In some of the villages the VEC presidents demanded that because there was no lady teacher, the girls were not motivated to go to schools.

5.17 MLL ACHIEVEMENT

5.17.1 MLL has been defined in terms of expected learning outcomes which are observable and measurable. Learners are supposed to have a number of competencies. Each competency has a learning objective. The learning objectives can be recognized in terms of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis. The MLL is also expressed in terms of learning competencies expected to be mastered by the learner in each class. Since a comprehensive exercise on all these aspects would be very time consuming, only measurement of achievement against MLL was included in the framework of this evaluation study. In this, 120 students each of class II and class V were randomly selected. Oral test was administered to class II students and written test to V class students with a view to assessing the performance of these students in language and mathematics in terms of percentage marks obtained. Through this, measurement of the achievement levels against MLL was done.

5.18 ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF CLASS II STUDENTS

5.18.1 In the language test, more than half of the students had obtained more than 60 percent marks and 21.43 percent showed a zero performance. The rest 24.6 percent were somewhere in

between these two ranges. The students of intensive blocks performed better than their counterparts of new blocks. The performance of girls was found slightly better than the boys. The pattern is almost the same in mathematics test also which is shown in the following table.

Table - 5.3

Percentage marks obtained by Class II Students in Language and Mathematics

Marks obtained	Intensive blocks		New blocks		Total	
	(in %)	Math.	Lang.	Math.	Lang.	Math.
0	3.57	7.14	31.43	32.86	19.05	21.43
1 - 20	1.79	1.79	4.29	2.86	3.17	2.38
21 - 40	12.50	8.93	4.29	4.29	7.94	6.35
41 - 60	19.64	19.64	12.86	12.86	15.87	15.87
More than 60	62.50	62.50	47.14	47.14	53.97	53.97

Source: Field data, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

5.19 ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF CLASS V STUDENTS

5.19.1 In class V, there was no student whose performance was zero in language test. However, there were some in Mathematics. Only 15.45 percent in language and 11.67 percent in mathematics obtained more than 60 percent marks. Majority of them (47.27 percent) had got 41 to 60 percent of marks in language whereas in mathematics, it was 21 to 40 percent marks that about half of them could secure. Boys' performances was found to be slightly better than the girls in both the subjects as was the case in class II. The following table gives figures of the percentage marks obtained by the students of class V in intensive and new blocks.

Table - 5.4

Percentage marks obtained by Class V Students in Language and Mathematics

Marks obtained	Intensive blocks		New blocks		Total	
	(in %)	Math.	Lang.	Math.	Lang.	Math.
0	5.36	-	-	-	2.50	-
1 - 20	7.14	1.75	15.63	3.77	11.67	2.73
21 - 40	32.14	35.09	64.06	33.96	49.17	34.55
41 - 60	32.14	40.35	18.75	54.72	25	47.27
More than 60	23.21	22.81	1.56	7.55	11.67	15.45

Source: Field Data, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

5.19.2 Analysis of the students who secured more than 50 percent marks in each subject was done to triangulate the above observations. It was confirmed that majority of the boys and girls had obtained more than 50 percent in both the subjects in class II. In class V the achievement

was relatively poor. In language a little more than one third of the boys obtained more than 50 percent marks while the percentage of girls was merely below 20 percent. In Mathematics only one fourth of the boys could obtain more than 50 percent marks, while the percentage of girls in this category was only 3.03.

5.20 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS IN INTENSIVE AND NEW BLOCKS

5.20.1 As would be obvious from the above analysis, the achievement level in the case of class II students both in language and mathematics was relatively better than that in the new blocks. This was also true in the case of class V students. Another difference was that in the case of class II, the performance of boys was better than the girl students in intensive blocks as compared to new blocks. In class V, there was no significant difference in the achievement levels in the intensive and new blocks. The following tables are presented to compare the achievements of class II and class V students in different types of blocks. The figures given are the percentage of total male or female in that particular type of block.

Table - 5.5

Percentage of Class II Students scoring more than 50% Marks

Subject		Intensive	New	Total
Language	Boys	82.05	50.00	65.06
	Girls	70.59	69.23	69.77
Mathematics	Boys	82.05	50.00	65.06
	Girls	70.59	69.23	69.77

Source: Field data, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

Table - 5.6

Percentage of Class V Students scoring more than 50% Marks

Subject		Intensive	New	Total
Language	Boys	41.67	25.81	35.44
	Girls	44.44	9.09	19.35
Mathematics	Boys	39.13	12.00	26.44
	Girls	10.00	-	3.03

Source: Field data, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

5.21 PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND COACHING CENTRES

5.21.1 During field visits, it was found that many private schools were operating in remote areas. Interestingly, many of these schools had adopted the name of 'Convent' claiming to be teaching English subject also. These were found to be quite popular and showing better enrolment and

attendance compared to government primary schools. It was also reported that those who can afford to pay the fees prefer to send their children to such schools. In 10 villages out of 22 sample villages there were either private schools or some kind of full time or part time coaching centres. The students of primary schools take tuition in these centres. This reflects badly on the popularity of the government schools and gives clear signal that the government school has still to go a long way in improving its attractiveness.

CHAPTER - VI

ENVIRONMENT BUILDING & COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 Situation analysis conducted at the time of formulation of Sitamarhi district plan under the Bihar Education Project clearly brought out a number of factors which had been responsible for low achievement in Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE). These can be summarised as under:

- i) Delivery oriented approach which implied that by providing a facility/service, all sections of society would derive its benefit.
- ii) Educational planning was concerned mainly with opening of schools, appointment of teachers and provision of other inputs. It was presumed that everybody would be benefited from this. If some sections were not able to utilise these facilities, the fault lied with the former.
- iii) In most cases, planning was not done at the district and sub-district levels and location and community specific needs were not taken into account.

6.1.2 Because of adoption of the above concepts and systems, the programmes of elementary education could have a very little impact on bringing the majority of children into the mainstream of UPE. The deprived sections of society who could not derive any benefit out of the educational facility did not have confidence that education was going to change their predicament. However, this was not the only reason for their non-participation. It was their sad experience of decades that the facilities created were not accessible to them due to social and physical factors. Further, the treatment meted out to them by influential sections of society created in them an inferiority complex and a feeling of humiliation instead of motivating them to get their children educated.

6.1.3 People in general were not assured that the approaches and methods adopted so far could bring any systemic change particularly in reducing the inter-class and inter-caste inequalities. This view was further strengthened when the working of the grassroot level democratic institutions was analysed. These were again dominated by the elites and the women and other disadvantaged sections of society were marginalised. The benefits meant for the disadvantaged groups were also usurped in this process.

6.1.4 It was in the above context that Sitamarhi plan aimed at bringing about fundamental changes in the process of planning and development. It implied that action planning for UEE would be done at the local/habitation level in a manner that every family could be involved and derived benefit from the facility being planned there. As a point of departure, the focus was on utilisation of the facility instead of its provision. In order to achieve these objectives the following measures were proposed under BEP:

- i) Building a congenial environment and establishing a communication system through which common men particularly women and disadvantaged sections of society could have a proper understanding of the current situation and were equipped to participate with self-confidence in changing this process.

- ii) Creating an institutional mechanism for people's participation that would make the community capable of supervising primary schools and non-formal education centres.

6.2 ENVIRONMENT BUILDING

6.2.1 Environment building was the major plank of the strategy for achieving the objectives. On the one hand, it aimed at initiating change in social and cultural conditions, so that the community especially the disadvantaged groups could have faith and confidence in the educational system. On the other, it aimed at eliminating the control of elites over education and giving it in the hands of common man. The more specific objectives of environment building were:

- i) Creating awareness about BEP in the society in general and disadvantaged groups in particular;
- ii) Motivate the people to participate in the activities of BEP;
- iii) Bringing about attitudinal changes in teachers, guardians and functionaries of BEP in order that they could pool their efforts and work as a team to attack the problems associated with illiteracy and lack of education;

6.2.2 The major activities proposed to be undertaken for this purpose were environment building through banners, posters in school and outside, organisation of Nukkad Natak, Nukkad meeting, Padyatra, Kala Jattha, folk songs, cycle rally, group songs, organisation of cultural functions and advocacy for BEP through seminars and conferences at various levels. Alongwith these it was proposed to utilise all media of communication both audio-visual, radio, television etc. Organisation of publicity campaigns at religious and national functions was also to be undertaken. All these activities were to be undertaken in the special context of Sitamarhi district and its social setting.

6.3 INITIATION OF ENVIRONMENT BUILDING PROCESS

6.3.1 The process of environment building in Sitamarhi could be visualised in three phases. The first phase covered 1992-93, 1993-94 and some part of 1995-96. During this period the DDC was working as DPC and the District Magistrates were also providing full and active support to the programme. As mentioned in chapter III, the entire district machinery was mobilised to work for the BEP. District and Block level task forces were constituted. Although efforts were concentrated in the clusters of ten villages, the spread effect could be seen. In the first year the focus was on mobilisation of all the groups and getting their creative involvement in BEP. These included social workers, educationists, retired teachers and even the student community specially the girls from degree colleges.

6.3.2 The meetings and conferences were systematically planned, dates notified in advance, the block and village level functionaries of development departments were required to do the preparatory and follow up work. Adequate publicity was made through all media. These meetings organised at the village level were called "Aam Sabha" were presided over by District Magistrate/DDC as well as BDOs and Deputy Collectors. These used to last for the whole day in which local problems regarding primary education and issues related to disadvantaged groups and women were thoroughly discussed and future indicative action plans were prepared. At the end of the "Aam Sabha" a VEC was constituted.

6.3.3 During second year the efforts for environment building were further refined. Enrolment drives were organised. For creating awareness, a video van was provided. Video films were exhibited in those villages where the schools had very low enrolment. A monthly magazine under

the title of "Bhor" was published and circulated. Drama division of GOI was retained for organising dramas at block headquarters. Organisation of workshops at block level and monthly 'Guru Goshtis' was a regular feature.

6.3.4 During this year MS programme was also strengthened. In selected villages the work of organisation of Mahila Samooh was accelerated and the Mahila Samoohs had started their collective action to solve their pressing problems faced in day to day life.

6.3.5 The above process continued till the first two District Magistrates and DDCs were there. It resulted in building a congenial environment in the district that the message of BEP reached the remotest village and the most disadvantaged groups. The DDCs also introduced a system of receiving direct feed back from the VEC president who were given reply post cards. Special arrangements were made to attend to the problems communicated through these post cards.

6.3.6 This continued for more than two years during the tenure of two DDCs who worked devotedly for BEP. It was possible to build such an environment in the district that the message of BEP reached every nook and corner of the district : BEP became a familiar name with the common men especially the disadvantaged groups who were also actively involved in the whole process of conscientisation and formation of VECs. Alongwith, Mahila Samakhya also started operating in selected villages of the 12 blocks adopted by them. During this period 800 VECs were constituted.

6.3.7 In order to attach prestige to the VEC and to ensure that there were no difficulties in their functioning, a meeting of President of VECs was held every month under the chairmanship of District Magistrate. The VEC chairpersons were invited to district headquarters to attain the national days such as Republic day etc. The above actions provides a solid background and environment for the BEP. Cultural programmes and plantation were also done.

6.3.8 The above process received setback due to communal riots in October, 1992 and again due to unprecedented floods in July-August, 1993. Despite these setbacks the momentum was created and solid foundation was laid for BEP. During the visits to villages, the impact could still be felt and people used to recollect those days.

6.3.9 Although the above method was greatly helpful in environment building and creating awareness about BEP objectives and activities, it did not have the replicability and sustainability. The campaigns, meetings and workshops were organised on the personal initiative of the DDCs. The administrative machinery worked for BEP because the DDC and DM spearheaded the movement. Such measures unless institutionalised were not sustainable because the moment the dynamic person, who had planned these measures, was withdrawn the progress was retarded. Nevertheless, the momentum created during the initial phase through the efforts of DDCs could not be underestimated. They actually saddled BEP firmly amongst the village communities.

6.3.10 During the above period another scheme of giving matching grant 80:20 was launched for construction and repair of school building. Under this scheme, if any VEC could mobilise 20 percent amount of the estimated cost, 80 percent share was released by the BEP. In this contribution, land was not included. In this manner, the VECs became stakeholders in the school management. During 1993-94, 249 works were taken up out of which 194 new school buildings were constructed and repair of 55 school buildings was carried out. For new buildings, land was also made available by the villagers. There is, however, a criticism of this scheme that it distorted the priority and many VECs got the school sanctioned where it was not so badly needed.

6.3.11 During this period 800 VECs were constituted and each VEC was given a grant of Rs. 3000/- who had opened their joint account under the signatures of the president VEC and the head teacher of the school who was its ex-officio secretary. Training of five members of VEC was

organised at Panchayat level. This training was conducted by resource persons and project staff who used to go from the district level.

6.3.12 This period was also marked with extensive networking and co-operation with other departments and agencies. The District Magistrates and Deputy Development Commissioners mobilised other agencies for assisting in the project during this period. The following major activities were taken up:

- i) Drinking water facility was made available with the help of Public Health Engineering Department.
- ii) Blackboards were made available to 310 schools with the help of MLAs fund.
- iii) Toilet facility was made available in 93 schools with assistance from JRY.
- iv) Construction of school buildings and repair work was taken up with the help of JRY.
- v) Plantation with the help of Forest Department.

6.4 STATUS OF VECs

6.4.1 As mentioned earlier, VEC was the fulcrum on which most of the activities of BEP were revolving. The village education committees had existed in Sitamarhi for a long time and its structure was prescribed by the state government. The Mukhiya (Adhaksha of Gram Panchayat) was its ex-officio chairman. Most of these were non-functional as nobody took interest in their working. The composition of the committees was also faulty as these were dominated by the powerful groups and did not have the representation/participation of weaker sections as also of women. Another defect was that the VEC was constituted at Panchayat level, not at the school level and they became meaningless. Therefore, as a point of departure, it was decided that the VECs should be reconstituted at the school level. Although minimum and maximum number of members of VEC was indicated, the whole process of its constitution was left to the concerned villagers so that it evolved in a natural manner. In order that the VEC assists in furtherance of the objectives of VEC and it is protected from the elites, certain conditions were imposed that it takes care of the women and disadvantaged groups by their adequate representation in VEC. It may be mentioned here that these VECs were constituted during the earlier phase of the project implementation which were constituted without detailed exercise of micro-planning. The concept was changed and now the VECs were being constituted after proper environment building through a detailed micro-planning exercise. It was only in Majorganj block that micro planning was done during 1995-96 where VECs were formed after completion of this exercise.

6.4.2 During the evaluation study the studing team visited 30 villages to interact with the presidents and members of VEC. These VECs were constituted without a detailed micro planning exercise during the earlier phase and were at least three to four years old. The most striking point we found that despite the lapse of three to four years, the people remembered about VEC and its president and they were able to guide us. The different aspects of VEC are discussed below:

(1) Composition of VEC

In the villages where the evaluation team tried to meet the members and president of VEC, only the president could be contacted as the village people did not remember the names of members. Even the presidents in most cases failed to give the names of members and they said that these could be given only from the register. It was also not possible to find out as to how many

members belonged to the scheduled castes and women community. In majority of VECs the presidents belonged to economically better classes such as Yadavs, Kurmis, Bhumihar, Sah (Teli) irrespective of the population composition of the village. Nowhere any woman was found to be the president of VEC.

(2) Meeting of VEC

The first and foremost condition for efficient functioning of VEC is that it should meet regularly and atleast every month. The 25th day has been fixed by BEP for monthly meeting of VEC. But it was found that VECs did not hold their meetings regularly. It was reported by many chairpersons of VEC that the minutes of the meetings were, however, recorded in the register which was sent for signatures of the members. The meeting was, thus, purported to be held even though the meeting actually did not take place and only the chairperson and the head teacher met.

Since the teachers were on strike in most schools in Sitamarhi during this period, the minutes of the meetings could not be seen. But it was reported that usually the agenda did not contain any new item and the same items of agenda were shown to have been discussed which included improvement in school building, improvement in teaching, increasing enrolment and attendance etc. When asked whether any follow up action was taken on the decisions in the last meeting and was recorded in the agenda, the response was in the negative. The frequency of meetings is given in the following table.

Table - 6.1

Blockwise frequency of VEC meeting in a year

Sl. No.	Frequency (in a year)	Intensive Block	New Block
1.	Upto 3 times	6	8
2.	4 - 6 times	2	2
3.	7 - 9 times	3	3
4.	10 - 12 times	3	2
5.	Do not remember	-	1
	Total	14	16

Source : Field Survey, Evaluation of BEP, 1998.

(3) Number of members attending meetings

It may be added that in the every third month, VECs are supposed to hold special meetings in which block level officers or BEP functionaries are required to be present, no where it was reported that such meetings were held. The functional efficiency of the VEC depended to a great extent on the participation of the majority of members. If there was participation of majority of members in the meetings of VEC, the decisions taken would have a majority support and would have a greater credibility. But as reported by the chairpersons, only a few members participated in VEC meetings despite the fact that the date was known. Because of low attendance in VEC meetings, the decisions taken has little acceptability and consequently, no implementability. The attendance of the members in meetings is given below.

Table - 6.2

Participation of members in VEC meetings

Sl. No.	Type of Block	Number of member			Women	Total
		Upto 4	5 - 8	9 and above		
1.	Intensive	4	10	-	-	14
		28.5%	71.5%	-	-	
2.	New	7	9	-	1	16
		43.7%	56.3%	-	6.2%	

(4) VECs Contribution in BEP Activities

In Sitamarhi district, the VECs have played a positive role in raising people's contribution to construction activities under BEP. As mentioned earlier, the VECs had participated in construction of new school buildings and repair of old buildings when the scheme of 80 : 20 was introduced. During that period, VECs were more active. Even after the close of this scheme, the VECs continued to contribute whatever they could do either in terms of cash or material or labour. However, the share of VEC in the total cost of these works was showing a decreasing trend. Nevertheless, it was a praiseworthy aspect and VECs should be encouraged to mobilise funds for school improvement activities. The following table shows the contribution of VEC in various civil works under BEP.

Table - 6.3

VEC contribution in civil works under BEP

Sl. No.	Year	Type of construction	No. of construction	Unit cost in Rs. lakh	Total const. in lakh	BEP contribution in lakh	VEC contribution in lakh	Nature of work done & contribution
1.	1993-94	School Building construction	194	1.180	228.920	183.136	45.780	20% by VEC and 80% construction by BEP
2.	1993-94	Toilet construction	100	0.145	14.500	11.600	2.900	- do-
3.	1993-94	Repair work	55	0.920	50.600	40.480	10.120	- do-
4.	1994-95	School Building construction	69	1.330	91.770	73.420	18.350	- do-
5.	1994-95	Repair work	2	0.920	1.840	1.470	0.360	- do-
6.	1996-97	CRC construction	19	1.300	24.700	24.700	3.840	Reconst. of old building, boundary wall repairs etc.
7.	1996-97	School building construction	10	1.840	44.200	44.200	3.610	- do-
8.	1997-98	CRC construction	34	1.300	18.400	18.400	1.080	- do-
9.			12	1.840	22.080	22.080	1.000	- do-

	98	building construction						
		TOTAL						

Source : BEP, Sitamarhi

(5) Utilisation of grants by VEC

It was reported by the VECs that each of them had received Rs. 7000/- as grants-in-aid till last year. When asked about the utilisation of grant, quite a few of them reported that the entire grant was lying intact in their account jointly operated by the chairperson and the head teacher. Some of them reported that they were waiting for the response of BEP to give matching grant of 80 per cent for construction of an additional classroom in the school. In some cases, it was reported that even if they wanted to spend the money on beautification of schools or other items, they could not do it because the account was inoperative as the one of the signatories (head teacher of the concerned school) had been transferred.

(6) Expected and Actual Functions of VEC

During discussions with presidents of VECs, a reference was made to the functions of VECs. In almost all cases, the presidents reported that their responsibility was to supervise the working of teachers whether they came regularly and on time. Beyond this, they were not aware of their role. Quite a few of them wanted administrative control over the teachers. During discussions, the VEC presidents as well as several members stated that without any powers, the constitution of VEC was just useless. Although they had received training or orientation with regard to the roles and responsibilities, they were not fully aware of this. In the following chart, we give the expected roles of VEC and the actual role performed by them.

Table - 6.4

Expected and Actual Function of VEC

	Expected role	Function	Actual role performed
1.	Motivation	Contact and motivate parents to send their children to school. Organising enrolment and retention drives.	Enrolment drives not organised regularly because of the non-availability of head teachers who did not stay in the village.
2.	Preparing village action plan for education development	The action plan is prepared at the time of micro planning exercise in which VEC is supposed to participate.	Not yet started.
3.	Supervision	Monitoring teacher's attendance and punctuality and quality of teaching through visits to school during school hours and	VEC president went to school sometimes and checks the attendance of the teacher.

		persons from the village to observe classroom instruction.	
4.	Supervision of construction works	Supervise construction of school and other civil works.	This was being done.
5.	Raise match funds for the above	Collect money or get Shramdan.	Done early but not now.
6.	Making the school attractive	Utilisation of grants of Rs. 2000/-, overseeing civil works in the school.	Action taken only on the utilisation of grants.
7.	Promoting girls education	Organising campaign for promoting education of girl child in collaboration with Mahila Samooh.	Not done.
8.	Co-ordination with Anganwadi	Co-ordination with Anganwadi for strengthening pre-school education component for increasing enrollment and retention.	Not known.
9.	Co-ordination with medical and health department	Co-ordinate with health department for regular check up of school children.	Not known.

6.4.3 It would appear from the above table that there was limited understanding of role of VEC and it was perceived to be supervising the teachers and children. It was because of the reason that there was limited perception of the role of VEC not only at the VEC level but also at the project level.

6.4.4 It may be mentioned here that the concept of VEC was based on the principle of collectivity. Therefore, if some collectivity was created through VEC, it needed to be given proper direction for achieving some goals or objectives. The scope of VEC functioning needed to be enlarged. Otherwise this collective energy is dissipated and only the president will represent and monopolise the entire body. It was necessary that VECs are assigned some more jobs such as ensuring convergence with other services and act as a pressure group at the local level to get education integrated with ongoing development programmes.

6.5 REASONS FOR INEFFECTIVENESS OF VECs

6.5.1 It should be obvious from the above analysis that the VECs can not be said to be functioning efficiently. The study team had intensive discussions with the VEC presidents, BEP officials at the district level and some head teachers as well. They described several reasons for this. The first reason forwarded was that the selection of the president or even the members during the earlier phase of the project was done in a haste through community mobilisation campaigns. Therefore, in some cases the choice might have fallen on a wrong person / persons who never had any interest or time for village development or social service activity. They did not have had basic commitment but might have thought that they would have some pecuniary or other benefits after becoming president of VEC even though the project people had made it clear

that no benefits, privileges were attached with it. This may also be the reason for the initial enthusiasm in VEC activities which later was reduced to minimum when they saw that no benefit had accrued to them.

6.5.2 Another reason was that there was no follow up with the VECs. No project staff ever went to the villages and had a renewal of contact with them. It was natural that they started losing interest in VEC activities. Whatever, prestige was attached to the post of president VEC, it was reduced by discontinuing the processes started by the earlier DPCs.

6.6 INTER-FACE BETWEEN COMMUNITY, TEACHER, VEC AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

6.6.1 In order to achieve effective community mobilisation for UEE, it was necessary to have a regular inter-face between the community, teacher, VEC and other institutions including higher supervisory officials. The analysis of this interaction was done through VENN Diagram, a tool generally used in Participatory Rural Appraisal. Through this technique, the perception of different sections of the community was assessed and analysed about the inter-face between different agencies concerned directly or indirectly with primary education. This exercise was conducted with the help of weaker sections of society, particularly women, who assembled at a common place. The investigators facilitated in analysing the perception. In this, chapatis of different sizes were used. The size of the chapati symbolising the community was standardized for all exercises. It was placed in the centre and chapatis cut into different sizes proportionate to the importance of the agency in UEE were located after arriving at consensus in the community. If a particular chapati symbolising some agency touched with the chapati symbolising the community, it was inferred that there was only formal communication between the two and it did not imply any interaction or inter face. If the distance between the two chapatis was large there was neither any communication or any interaction. If there was full overlap between the two, there was active interaction and connection between them. If the two chapatis had partial overlap it meant that there was limited or partial interaction. In this manner, an assessment about the inter-relationship between different agencies with the community was made. The following table gives an idea of this phenomenon in 22 sample villages.

Table - 6.5

Interaction between the Community (disadvantaged sections) and other agencies

Persons/Agencies	No Interaction	Touching	Small Overlap	Large Overlap
Block Extension Education Officer	19	-	-	-
Teacher	4	4	9	-
Village Education Committee	11	1	6	2
Jagjagi Centre	-	-	1	-
Anganwadi Centre	-	1	-	-
B.E.P functionary	2	-	-	-
Non-Formal Education Centre	1	-	-	1
Mahila Samakhya	3	-	-	3
School and guardians	3	2	2	-

D.E.O	1	-	-	-
Mukhia	1	-	2	-

Source: PRA, Field study, Evaluation of BEP, Sitamarhi

6.6.2 It may be observed from the above table that there is no interaction between the community and BEEO in almost all the villages while the teacher is near the community in nine villages but never visited the households of the disadvantaged groups and had never gone to the village. Interaction between school and the guardians is also less as there is only a small overlap with community found in two villages. It was also found that guardians did not usually go to the school. The most surprising finding of this exercise was that VEC has no interaction with the disadvantaged sections of the community. It was reported that the VEC president never visited the habitations of disadvantaged groups.

6.7 RANKING OF PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS THROUGH PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL

6.7.1 Under BEP, the focus was on location specific, familywise action planning for UPE. In this evaluation study, an effort was made to conduct participatory rural appraisal in a very limited sense. The purpose of this exercise was to analyse the perceptions of the community, particularly of the disadvantaged groups, about the reasons for their children's non-participation in schooling. Since the reasons and solutions were identified by the weaker sections of the community, the implications were that action needed to be taken on priority basis to solve these problems. The problems and their solutions in intensive and new blocks as perceived by the disadvantaged groups are given in the annexures 6.1 and 6.2.

6.7.2 It will be obvious from these annexures that the problems facing primary education in order of priority are parents ignorance, their poverty, apathy of teachers, child's reluctance to go to school, unattractiveness of school etc. whereas the solutions which emerged from this exercise are that their should be better supervision of teaching by VEC and BEEO, provision of facilities to be made by BEP and activitisation of VEC etc.

6.8 MICRO-PLANNING AND SCHOOL MAPPING

6.8.1 Bihar Education Project has made a pioneering effort to adopt participatory approaches in every stage of planning and implementation. With a view to conscientizing rural communities, especially the deprived sections of the society and enabling and equipping them to prepare their own plan for the village / Tola for UPE, micro-planning methodology had been evolved. This methodology contained in a small manual called 'Prasoon' has described the steps in simple language which could be easily followed by the field workers. Micro-planning formed an indispensable and primary process in the formulation of village plans which were intended to be integrated at the block and district levels.

6.8.2 In Sitamarhi also, in the first phase, micro-planning exercise was organised systematically in Majorganj block (including the newly created Suppi block) during the period 6th August to 16th August, 1996. An NGO called 'REED' acted as facilitator in getting this conducted at the village level. Through this exercise, environment building and participatory rural appraisal was done by following the steps given in 'Prasoon'. At the end of this exercise which also included school mapping, a village / Tola action plan was prepared by the local people including focus groups. The VEC was also reconstituted during this process.

6.8.3 In order to bring all the children in formal or non-formal education system in most of the villages, opening of non-formal education centres was preferred by the villagers and 30 centres

were opened mostly for the girls which were being supervised by REED. BEP had sanctioned financial assistance for running these centres.

6.9 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION - SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

6.9.1 The study team visited four villages namely Ramnagra, Barharwa, Gamharia and Manieri in Majorganj block where micro-planning had been done by REED to find out the differences between the effectiveness of VECs constituted without micro planning and those constituted after micro planning. It was reported that the NFE centres were running well and the villagers were generally satisfied with their functioning. But the impact of micro planning exercise had faded away. When the villagers were asked about this exercise, most of them had forgotten as to what were its contents. On further probing, they could recollect that some three or four boys and girls had come and contacted the villagers and urged to send their children to school or NFE centres. The team also made an attempt to judge the effectiveness of these VECs. It was the same story that VEC president did not remember the names of other members. These were invariably dominated by the rich people. No regular meetings were held and dependency syndrome was visible. In one village, the villagers had donated land, school building was constructed by BEP but it was lying incomplete for six months. Thus, the functioning of VEC in these villages was almost similar to those where VEC had been constituted without micro-planning exercise. No activity could be seen nor reported. In Ramnagra village, the VEC had Rs. 7000/- in its account but it was non-operative because of the transfer of the head teacher. This was the situation for about 6 months. The meetings of VEC were not taking place at all. The impression which one gathers is that the environment was not properly and sufficiently built, awareness not created during micro-planning and money and efforts put in here was wasted. REED did it only for opening NFE centres. The reason is not far to seek. Since nobody monitored it, the whole exercise became unproductive.

6.9.2 It needs no emphasis that the community mobilisation is a process of social change and it needs constant outside support and guidance for a long time. So was the case with VEC which was like a delicate sapling planted. It had to be protected and guarded from the destructive socio-political vagaries till it took the shape of a strong tree. It is always to be kept in mind that VEC is a kind of movement in BEP which intends to flow against the current of vested interests and initial BEP support was necessary.

6.9.3 After the above visit, it was reported by BEP functionaries at the district level that the methodology of micro level planning was revised. Now a period of 15 days is being devoted to this exercise. The first three days are spent on environment building in which 5 to 6 facilitators / animators are identified after holding orientation sessions and organisation of publicity and mass awareness campaigns. Subsequently, 10 days are spent on working on 'Prasoon' steps in which listing of households is done after numbering each household and then preparing a social map of the village and so on. Before starting micro-planning in the villages, good preparation is made. The micro-planning facilitators are selected and given intensive training for five days at the district level. Audio video aids are sent and publicity material is given to these teams.

6.9.4 The study team also visited two villages of block Bathnaha, viz., Musaharnia and Saihara where micro-planning exercise was under progress. In Musaharnia village, there was more number of women in the preliminary group orientation for environment building. Saihara village had less women in the group. The reason given by Saihara micro-planning (consisted of only male members) team was that in Musaharnia team there were two lady workers who could bring more women into this task.

6.9.5 Since micro-planning is one of the fundamentals of BEP, serious thought should be given to time allocation, steps etc. First of all, there should be flexibility in the conduct of this exercise. In some villages environment building might take less time while in others more time than prescribed might be required. As a matter of fact, we feel that to spend 15 days time in a village is

too long a period. Also some steps in 'Prasoon' could be allotted shorter time. For example, during discussion with micro-planning facilitators, we found that listing of all households by marking them with numbers was not necessary for social mapping because social mapping was a symbolic exercise to create inquisitiveness and secure the involvement of people in the whole exercise. It creates curiosity in the minds of participants and that prepares them to participate in the next steps. Thus, time could be saved without any adverse effect on the outcome of the exercise. It appears that the exercise has become ritualistic in nature which is against the philosophy of PRA.

6.9.6 In the light of above discussion, it will be advisable to divide the entire micro-planning exercise into three parts which can be taken up after an interval of three months. This will help in maintaining regular contact with the villagers and keeping the spirit of participation alive. Actually it should never be thought that micro planning is a one-shot affair and VEC once constituted will be working automatically and discharging its responsibilities without regular support and guidance. It must be recognised that we are building a team of devoted workers without giving them anything. This is totally against the current systems and practices. It must be reemphasised that micro planning with VECs should be treated and carried on continuous basis. It should be properly monitored by developing suitable indicators of community participation and indicators of effective functioning of VEC. As a matter of fact, more funds should be allocated for micro planning and related tasks.

CHAPTER - VII

CONVERGENCE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 In the conventional approach to project planning and implementation several deficiencies and gaps had been identified. There was a mismatch between objectives and targets and usually the services and inputs failed to reach the real target groups. Since different agencies and department were working in isolation of each other, there was no co-ordination in the departments. Quite often there was duplication and overlapping in the efforts of different departments. At times they were found to be working at cross purposes. A number of schemes remained incomplete or partially complete because supplementary or complementary inputs were not forthcoming from the concerned departments/agencies. As a matter of fact, the interlinkages and input-output relationship between different sectors of development had not been worked out before launching a project or programme. All these factors acted as impediments to creating a synergic and perceptible impact of the programme.

7.1.2 In the Bihar Education Project a bold attempt was made to introduce new management styles through mission mode and participatory approaches. The ultimate objective was to achieve convergence in all the services. The following might be described as key elements in new management style in the context of BEP.

Conventional Approach	New Approach
Sectoral Approach	Holistic Approach
Hierarchy	Team work
Command	Initiative
Discipline	Motivation
Co-ordination	Convergence

7.1.3 It will be analysed from the above that convergence was the ultimate goal of new management styles. In BEP, convergence was a well thought out strategy from the very beginning and therefore, it was emphasized at every stage to identify the inputs and services which could be obtained from other agencies/departments for enhancing the effectiveness of primary education.

7.1.4 It must, however, be mentioned here that in our opinion the convergence of different services and inputs for achieving a particular goal actually takes place and has to be managed or ensured at the micro level i.e. at the village or school level. Also, there has to be a mechanism which should be capable of developing a system for achieving convergence and constantly monitoring it. The planning and monitoring for fulfilling this objective should also take place at the higher levels also.

7.1.5 Therefore, for accomplishing convergence simultaneous action must be taken both at the micro and macro levels. In this case simultaneous action is required at the district level and at the village level. At the district level the BEP should have a continuous interaction or networking with those agencies which are able to contribute towards furtherance of objectives of BEP. These should include issuing guidelines to their grassroot level functionaries and decide processes and procedures for delivery of inputs at the village level. This cannot be done without proper

mechanism and District Executive Committee should be made effective to take such decisions. At the village level the VEC should be empowered and made effective to ensure convergence. A system of feed back and monitoring should also be developed to keep the DEC apprised of the progress. In the following paragraphs, the status of convergence with agencies or schemes connected directly or indirectly is being analysed. An effort should also be made to suggest measures required both at the district and village levels to improve the situation.

7.2 MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

7.2.1 The purpose of the scheme was to increase enrolment and retention in primary schools and to provide nutrition supplement to children. In Sitamarhi district, every child reading in a primary school and maintaining 80 percent attendance is given 3 kg wheat per month. The scheme was reportedly being implemented in all the blocks except Parsoni. In this, the ration is collected directly by the teacher from FCI godown and distributed to the children in the school in presence of VEC president. The major deficiency reported by the teachers and students was that the supply of wheat was irregular and sometime there was a gap of two to three months. It had an adverse effect on the attendance of children. The DEC should ensure regular supply of wheat to schools.

7.3 NON FORMAL EDUCATION CENTRES

7.3.1 The NFE centres of MED were being run in habitations where primary school did not exist. Also the MED organised a Tola Samiti to supervise its NFE centre. Therefore, there was no contact between the teacher and the NFE instructor and the Tola Samiti and VEC. The purpose of convergence in this case was that children from NFE centres should be enrolled in school. Here, the two institutions were functioning in isolation of the each other and there was no focus on enrolling the children in school. This matter needs to be taken up both at the district and village level. DEC should devise ways and means to monitor this and VEC and Tola Samiti presidents need to establish contact with each other. The Tola Samiti Adhyaksha should be invited to VEC meetings every month.

7.4 ANGANWADI CENTRES UNDER ICDS

7.4.1 ICDS programme was being implemented in two blocks, viz., Belsand and Bathnaha and it was started in Majorganj block recently. Anganwadi centres acted as early childhood care and education centres. There were two components, viz., distribution of nutrition supplement to children of 0-3 years of age and pre-school education for children of 3-6 years. It was a well known fact that Anganwadis mostly concentrated on the first component and pre-school education was not properly attended to. Under BEP, efforts were made to improve this component which helped in both the enrolment and retention of the child in primary school. For this purpose, 144 Anganwadi workers were given training during 1996-97 and Rs. 500/- was also given for preparing TLM. The scheme was partially successful because just after training, the Anganwadi workers followed new methods and some TLM was also prepared. But since there was no follow up by BEP, the efforts could not fructify. It was an important scheme and constant dovetailing between Anganwadi and primary school was required. This could be done through VEC which could supervise the functioning of Anganwadi centres. But some policy decisions would be required to be taken at DEC level.

7.5 DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

7.5.1 BEP had been taking help from DRDA in the district. So far DRDA had helped BEP in construction of new school buildings, installation of hand pumps and construction of toilets through funds from JRY. However, this was because of the efforts made at the district level. It

depended on the VEC to secure funds for other works, e.g., beautification of schools etc. For this, president VEC and Pradhan, Gram Panchayat should maintain a good liaison.

7.6 BEP AND IRDP

7.6.1 Actually, there was no thinking about the fact that a sort of convergence was required between IRDP and BEP. There should be a condition for release of financial assistance not only in IRDP but in other schemes such as, Indira Awas Yojana that the beneficiaries of these schemes should necessarily send their children to school. This would serve the twin objectives of bringing children into school and creating awareness in the beneficiaries that both economic and social development is necessary for empowerment of the weaker sections of the society. This would require DEC to issue guidelines to VLW and Panchayat Sewak to ensure this and send information to VEC.

7.7 MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT

7.7.1 Regular health check-up of students helped in their retention in the school. VEC could do this liaison work with the field level functionaries of medical and health department by organising special camps for this purpose. This would also help in identification of children with learning disabilities. This convergence was missing so far but it could be done easily by getting guidelines issued by CMO of the district in this regard. Even this programme could be dovetailed with Anganwadis.

7.8 FOREST DEPARTMENT

7.8.1 A very good scheme was taken up by BEP in Sitamarhi under which free seedlings were given to schools for plantation around the school. It worked well during 1992-93 but was somehow, discontinued. Also no monitoring was done. This might be taken up again and in schools where land was available plantation of fruit bearing trees could be done which would be good from both the environmental and nutritional view points.

7.9 MLA / MP FUND

7.9.1 The VECs could also approach the MLA / MPs concerned to grant some financial resources for school improvement activities and funds for organising cultural functions by children and for sports and games equipment which are expensive and cannot be bought out of VEC grant.

7.10 MAHILA SAMAKHYA

7.10.1 Mahila Samakhya (MS) came into being with the stated aim of empowering women through education. The Bihar Education Project incorporated Mahila Samakhya programme as one of its important components for mobilising women for education, development and social change. The objectives of MS under BEP are:

- i) Enhancing self image and self-confidence of women so that they can take independent decisions for changing their condition and can realise the importance of education in this work.
- ii) Creating women's interest in education and reach out education and development programmes to women.
- iii) Constituting groups of educated and conscious women in every village who could participate in VEC and make it responsive to women's development.

iv) Devoting special attention to girl's primary education and for this opening centres and arranging support services for these centres through BEP. Also to ensure that the girls attend these centres regularly, through contact with the mothers/guardians of these girls.

v) Contributing to the training programme by sensitising BEP functionaries to the issues of women development and poverty.

7.10.2 Mahila Samakhya programme was started in Sitamarhi from December 1992. A cluster of 10 villages was selected in each of the 12 blocks in which MS was launched. During 1992-93 ten workshops per block were organised in Riga and Sonbarsa which were adopted as model blocks. Later 90 more villages were included in the programme. The programme was being implemented through a Sahyogini who was appointed at the cluster level and there was one Saheli and Sakhi at the village level. First of all, a 'Mahila Samooh' was organised in the village. In each group there were 15-35 members. These groups started with identification of their most pressing problems. These might include functioning of PDS, immunisation of children or any other problem which was affecting their members' day to day life. They, then, tried to seek solutions to such problems through collective action.

7.10.3 The members of the women groups who were trained established contact with the mothers whose daughters were not going to school and tried to find reasons for this.

7.10.4 MS also has a scheme of providing vocational training to its members. Since the women found it difficult to find a place for their meeting, they decided to get Mahila Kutirs constructed. Each Mahila Kutir was expected to cost Rs. 50,000/-. There were 18 such Kutirs under construction at the time of evaluation. For these Mahila Kutirs land was donated by villagers. A legal cell was also working under MS which gave information and knowledge on matters related with discrimination against women. So far MS had covered 46 villages in Reega and 64 villages in Sonbarsa. There were 36 Sahyoginis appointed and trained and 200 Sakhis selected and trained. Similarly, 125 Sahelis were selected and trained.

7.10.5 **Kishori Mandal:** With a view to focusing attention on the adolescent girls and seeking solution to the problems of their health, education etc., Kishori Mandals had been organised. Till date 50 Kishori Mandals had been constituted. These also aimed at developing leadership qualities in these girls.

7.10.6 Thus, the first and foremost activity of MS was to create awareness among women and organise them to tackle their own problems. In the sample villages, the evaluation team analysed MS programme in five villages. The change in women was perceptible and they were actively participating in MS programmes as well as overseeing primary school and teacher's activities. In one of the schools, it was quite interesting to note that chairperson of Mahila Samooh was trying to point out the defects in teaching of children. The major activities of MS were:

- i) School Readiness Programme through Bal Jagjagi Kendra for the girls below 5 years of age to make learning joyful experience through playway methods (67 centres)
- ii) Jagjagi Kendras (114 centres) for education of adolescent girls and women
- iii) Active participation of women in VEC. The membership of Sakhi in VEC was made compulsory in the Bihar Education Project.

7.10.7 By and large, it was evident in the Mahila Samakhya villages that there was a positive impact especially with regard to school enrolment, attendance, school readiness among children

and achievement level. It could be safely judged that it had made a dent on school readiness programme. Wherever the evaluation team visited, it could find the Bal Jagjagi Kendra working well and the Sakhi was found to be very active. In one of the remotest villages which was never visited by any official for a number of years the Bal Jagjagi Kendra was running well in Mushar Tola.

7.10.8 It must, however, be added that there was still no whole hearted cooperation between Mahila Samooh and VEC. The convergence and its impact had yet to come. It appeared that women empowerment had not started spreading its effect on development of women and also on securing convergence of all services and inputs for children, especially girl child.

7.11 MAHILA SAMAKHYA AND DWCRA

7.11.1 MS Mahila Samooh and DWCRA have some common objectives. DWCRA groups work for income generation of their members. MS although did not have it as a primary objective but Mahila Samoohs were taking this up through savings and credit groups being recently formed under MS. If there was convergence between MS and DWCRA, there would be a better achievement in improving the socio-economic status of women. This would also help in improving the enrolment and retention of girl child in primary schools. This would need a policy decision at the DEC level.

CHAPTER - VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 THE CONTEXT

8.1.1 BEP aimed at initiating a process of social change through educational reconstruction. It has been mentioned that evaluation of any process, especially social change is very difficult. It was also mentioned that participatory processes and mission mode adopted in BEP took unusually long time and great perservance and patience was needed for expecting results. The important indicator of success in such a project could be to find out whether solid foundations had been laid and the process had taken the right direction. In this case, we can say that the solid foundation has been laid and BEP has taken its roots and the process could also be said to be going in the right direction. The participatory approaches has become the order of the day. Every stakeholder in the process has become aware of the fact that participatory planning and development is the key term or whizword of BEP. The basic structures in the shape of DEC and District Task Force at the district level, the CRC at the cluster of villages level and the VEC at the village level were well established. The process has also been initiated although in a very limited way. Since it has not waived and unwanted elements have not taken it over, its direction might be deemed to be have taken right course.

8.2 THE CHANGING PARADIGM

8.2.1 The BEP placed very high goals on its agenda. For example, effecting social change or removing economic and social inequalities for achieving social justice through educational reconstruction were goals which were difficult to be achieved in a relatively very short span of time. The only thing which could be expected was that it had a beginning. But it required a change in the entire system of which primary education was a small sub-system. For this, simultaneous changes were required, all the sub-systems which needed their help and mutual support and harness all resources and efforts to effect this change. It would almost be parallel to a revolution. In concrete terms, it needed a total change in the thinking of all key functionaries and stakeholders. Theoretically speaking, it needed a paradigm shift in favour of participatory development because philosophical underpinning were important for any action which we take for changing the situation. This is well recognised in the underlying philosophy of BEP also. In order to have a sound analytical framework, we have evolved some kind of paradigm for Educational Planning and Management as shown below:

Changing Paradigm for Educational Planning and Management

Sl. No.	Aspect		Conventional Approach	New Approach
1.	Purpose of planning		Delivery oriented, e.g Planning for creating a facility such as school	Planning with the people, especially, disadvantaged sections who will utilise it for improving their educational status.
2.	Goals		Pre-determined at higher level	Evolving and

				community or focus group level
3.	Nature	(a) (b)	Centralised, sectoral, top down Concentrating on targets irrespective of the fact that who were deriving benefits	Bottom up, holistic and integrated objective oriented with focus on the disadvantaged groups.
4.	Kinds of inputs and services		Fixed package	Varied basket decided by the people.
5.	Relationship between delivery system and the people	(a) (b)	Controlling and Paternalistic People treated as beneficiaries	Enabling and empowering equal stake holders. People treated as partners /stakeholders in management of education.
6.	Project Plan formulation		Done by government people which is gender and class neutral	Done jointly by the government and the people with sensitivity to women and disadvantaged groups.
7.	Management		Done by government	Management is joint responsibility with active involvement of the focus groups as stakeholders.
8.	Maintenance of assets		Government agency responsible for maintenance	Community takes over and maintains the assets.
9.	Sustainability of the system		No thinking	An integral part of micro planning and advance planning made for sustenance.
10.	Effect		Dependency syndrome	Self reliance.
11.	Financial Implications		Highly expensive and cost met by	Cost effective and community shares the cost.

			agency	
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8.2.2 It is obvious from the above elements of paradigm that the whole thinking has to be reversed. This is a time consuming process which needs complete restructuring both at the macro as well as micro levels. It generally happened that while changes at the micro level were perceptible, no change took place at the macro level. Thus, without changes at the macro level the changes effected at micro level were not sustained. The implications are clear, i.e., if some new thinking or procedures or even the process was aimed to be initiated, simultaneous action should have been taken at all levels. In BEP while we might be discussing the desirability of changes at the district or sub-district levels in favour of the new paradigm, the state level changes were never initiated. It might be added that to effect changes at the district and lower levels might be much more easier, these became very difficult at the state level because of high degree of departmentalism and resistance to sharing of power. But this was not impossible through recurrent training and other methods of reorientation.

8.2.3 Another important condition for change is the creation of sustainable institutional mechanisms which are progressive and do not support the status quo. In BEP, at the district level a district executive committee was constituted under the chairmanship of the district magistrate. This committee has an official character. It did not have any people's representative and its effectiveness depended on the individual initiative of the DM. This committee could be successful only if it had mass appeal and a political will which was indispensable for sustenance of any programme. It would be advisable to have people's representative also on it. The institutional mechanism at the village level, i.e., the Village Education Committee has been properly conceived and its constitution has been envisaged in a manner that the vested interests remained outside this committee. This structure was quite representative and its focus was to include women and members of disadvantaged groups. It needed constant guidance, support and encouragement. This can emerge as another centre of power in the village reducing the monopoly of the Mukhiya or powerful sections who had been placing hurdles before the disadvantaged groups in utilising incentives and inputs even meant exclusively for them.

8.2.4 It needs no emphasis that the above paradigm implies some changes in the management styles to which a brief reference was made in the Chapter VII. These include team work or mission mode instead of hierarchy, motivation instead of discipline, initiative instead of command and convergence instead of coordination. These styles had been, to some extent, adopted in the organisation of DLO but it did not have much meaning. It did not make any dent on the outside system of which BEP could be treated only an insignificant sub-system. Therefore, small changes in DLO did not help in changing the entire system. There had been a problem of conception also. It had never been taken into account that the BEP was an externality and it would be withdrawn after a certain period. Its major objective was to effect changes in the existing system so that the latter became capable of continuing the process started by BEP after its withdrawal. The question of sustainability of the process was probably not given any consideration at any level. The DLO worked almost in isolation of the conventional structure and none of them ever thought of the future when the process would have to be taken over by the permanent organisation. This fact was not even thought of at the state level. It had not been mentioned at all that the existing system would be improved and made capable of taking over the activities after withdrawal of BEP. Thus, replicability was also not given any thought. As had happened in Sitamarhi that the two DMs and DDCs on their personal initiative did very good works but these could not be sustained after their transfer. Similar was the case with conventional structure that would it be able to sustain or replicate the activities on their own without external assistance. The reply would be in the negative because no effort had ever been made to make any structural changes in the existing system. It was too much to expect that the BEP would be able to introduce changes in the other systems. No effort was made to orient and reorient the other departmental officers and thus, the sectoral approach continued and different departments were working in watertight compartments insulated from each other.

8.2.5 The BEP had managed to build up a sizable hand of motivated workers mostly from the younger generation. They were prepared to work on a very nominal honorarium. These were sharing the management of different activities. It was required to consolidate them by maintaining regular contact, calling them from time to time in experience sharing and perspective planning for VECs.

8.2.6 We feel that the functionaries associated with the BEP management were found to be highly motivated but their knowledge and skill needed to be upgraded. Their exposure to latest developments should be kept into focus.

8.2.7 We have recommended that the institution of BEEO should be utilised for BEP. He should be trained for DPEP to take up the work of academic supervision qualitatively. He should be relieved of the law and order and other avoidable duties so that he can work efficiently.

8.2.8 It is in the above background that we have framed our recommendation on other aspects of BEP implementation.

8.3 IMPROVING DATA BASE IN THE DISTRICT

8.3.1 Although the data base in DLO, Sitamarhi was relatively better than other districts (e.g. Purnea), there is still ample scope of improvement. Past records were not systematically kept and every time a large number of files were to be turned over when some information was required. Besides its own data base, the DLO needed information from other departments, for example the inputs and services provided by the latter to supplement and complement the BEP interventions. Now District Informatic Centre (DIC) was compiling information from all departments. DLO could design formats for them for supplying information relevant to BEP (now DPEP). In the district of Sitamarhi, as was the case in all other districts, the district level officers were indifferent and reluctant to do this task. The officer in charge of DIC also shared our views. The DPC might try to get this work done through DEC in case the DPC had the intention of ensuring backward and forward linkages with other agencies for district planning with education as a nodal sector.

8.4 INTEGRATION WITH ONGOING PROGRAMMES

8.4.1 It could be observed without any effort that networking of DLO with other departments was lacking. Even within the primary education department the coordination between DPO and DSE and other officers was found to be not very effective. On the top of it, the district level officers of other departments somehow could not develop positive attitudes towards BEP. For this purpose, orientation workshops should be organised for all district level officers at least on a quarterly basis so that attitudinal changes could be brought about in these officers. They should be involved in primary education and be assigned some specific job.

8.5 BOTTOM UP PLANNING

8.5.1 Although, in theory it was mentioned that the village action plans prepared through micro planning would be integrated upwards to prepare a district plan, this exercise could not be started due to various reasons. Now it is time to build some system of integrating village plans so that district plan comprises village level action plans. First of all, these should be integrated at the cluster level and then at the block level. It would be possible now that BRCs are being established under DPEP. This would help the DLO in proper monitoring and evaluation also.

8.6 IMPROVING ACCESS, ENROLMENT AND RETENTION

8.6.1 The problem of access did not receive adequate attention so far. A comprehensive planning should be done for covering the unserved habitations either under formal or non-formal education. We understand that this is being done under DPEP.

8.6.2 The problems of enrolment and retention were interlinked with the attendance of students. Therefore, the focus should be on ensuring reliability of figures of attendance. It would be advisable for the key functionaries of the project and others concerned to adopt some schools where they should make surprise visits so that enrolment and attendance figures tally with each other. This plan should have full cooperation and involvement of teachers.

8.6.3 We have also suggested that CRCs should have focus on attendance of students. In this task of adoption of schools, some social workers and resource persons including retired teachers should also be associated.

8.7 ROLE OF BEEOS

8.7.1 It had already been analysed in chapter IV that BEEOs should be creatively involved in the new educational planning and management. The matter of BEEOs being deputed for law and order duty should be taken up at the state level and also the institution of BEEO be strengthened. We understand that under DPEP, BEEOs are being given important role but before that the problem of their engagement in non-academic work should be solved.

8.8 IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

8.8.1 It is already apparent that UJALA training was quite successful in motivating the teachers and now UJALA - II module is being developed in which all primary and middle school teachers would be trained. Although training was a basic requirement, the follow up was equally important. This follow up was being done under academic supervision through CRC and its coordinator. It was found in some CRCs that some new input was needed as their monthly meeting was not a sufficient forum. We would suggest that some resource persons and social workers be associated with these meetings. This would help in strengthening the component of peoples participation or linking VEC and CRC. So far, this aspect did not seem to have received adequate attention.

8.8.2 The BEEOs should also be trained and oriented in the task of academic supervisions that the quality of teaching is improved.

8.8.3 The teacher pupil ratio in sample schools was reported to be very high and 15 percent posts were found vacant. Action needs to be taken for removing these deficiencies.

8.8.4 It was found that all the teachers were not preparing TLM or even some of those who had prepared TLM were not using it. This problem should be tackled through better academic supervision.

8.9 TEACHER

8.9.1 It will be necessary to increase motivational levels of teachers. Their complaints about service matters should be properly attended. The policy of transfer/posting should be reviewed from time to time. There should be a regular interaction between the teacher union, the DPC and DSE for getting their wholehearted cooperation in furtherance of BEP (or DPEP) objectives. It has already been suggested that their recurrent training should be organised. The evaluation of training should also be done for bringing about improvement in future courses.

8.10 ENVIRONMENT BUILDING

8.10.1 During the visit of the study team it was found that adequate attention was not being paid to publicity, awareness building through different media of mass communication. The video van was also lying damaged. The DLO was sending some video man to the villages, where micro planning exercise was being conducted, for video-recording. Actually all these activities should be covered under environment building.

8.11 STRENGTHENING OF VECs

8.11.1 It was found that most of the VECs, although established, were not functioning. The momentum created in the earlier phase had faded away. One of the reasons given by DPC was that since the VECs were constituted without micro planning these were not properly constituted. We compared these VECs with those which were created after a detailed micro planning exercise.

8.11.2 The first and foremost condition for effective functioning of VEC was that there should be a cordial relationship between the teacher and the VEC. We could not find it anywhere. Moreover teachers were antagonistic with VEC president while the VEC presidents wanted administrative control over the teachers. Teachers never visited the village. Therefore, the first priority should be given to holding of combined workshops of headmasters and VEC presidents/members. These types of workshops had been tried in many contexts and their results were encouraging as they helped in softening of attitudes between two parties. Here also, we hope that combined workshops would help in softening of attitudes of teachers and VECs towards each other. These workshops should be organised on a recurrent basis.

8.11.3 There should be a system of guiding the VECs in their day to day work and a calendar of activities should be developed for them. As a matter of fact, the VECs unless given some regular kind of job, they would not be functional. It would be advisable if the scope of its activities is enlarged so that they could act a pressure group for smooth running and opening of new facilities in the village and ensuring that the disadvantaged groups are able to make use of these facilities. The training of VECs should be done on recurrent basis with more effectivity. Actually, the training given so far did not show any impact. Since it is proposed to get the VECs reconstituted, it will be necessary to ensure that this time their composition is on correct lines.

8.11.4 The president and members of VEC should be selected by the community, ensuring the representations of women and disadvantaged groups in the committee, so that there is a constant interaction between the VEC and community people. There is also a need of renewal of contact with the VECs by the project staff in a regular interval. Such visits will benefit the VECs in clarifying their roles and functions and the project staff to review the strategies and the work plan. Any problem faced by the VECs should be attended and given them the required guidance. The functioning of VECs should be properly monitored by developing suitable indicators of community participation.

8.12 MICRO PLANNING

8.12.1 It is already suggested in chapter VI that micro planning exercise was being followed more or less in a ritualistic manner. Therefore, more freedom should be given to the teams to make changes in the whole structure and time allocated. It should not be treated as a one time activity going on for full 15 days. It would be advisable to divide it into two three parts after conducting pilot exercises. Also micro planing should be organised on a continuous basis which should involve VECs. This would help in environment building and helping in better functioning of VEC. Micro Planning teams should essentially have women members. Under the head of micro planning more funds should be allocated.

8.13 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

8.13.1 A summary of recommendations is given in the following table:

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPONENT		RECOMMENDATIONS
General		For achieving goals and objectives of BEP especially to bring about a driving force through educational reconstruction a change in paradigm for educational planning and management was needed which imply
	a)	Training and Reorientation of senior administrators for bringing about attitudinal changes in them so that they participate actively in interventions for bringing the disadvantaged into mainstream education;
	b)	District Education Committee should have people's representative to mobilise political will for education of the disadvantaged groups;
	c)	Bringing about changes in conventional administrative structure for education, so that the activities are sustained after withdrawal of additionalily either in the shape of BEP or DPEP;
	d)	Orientation and Training of all district level officers in the BEP (DPEP) objectives on a recurrent basis so that they become active partners in primary education;
	e)	The knowledge and skills of BEP functionaries need to be upgraded through training and exposure visits outside the state;
	f)	Involvement of BEEO in BEP (DPEP) should be ensured by their training and motivation and he should be relieved from law and order duty.
Improving Data Base		The data base in the district is weak and BEP (DPEP) can assist in improving it through District Informatic Centre.
Integration with Ongoing Programmes		Organisation of Orientation Workshops for district level officers and assigning them responsibilities in primary education.
Bottom up Planning		Systems should be developed for integrating village action plans at the CRC level and then at block and district levels. It would make the plans more realistic which could be used for monitoring and evaluation also.
Access, Enrolment and Retention		The problem of enrolment and retention were interlinked with attendance of students. It would be advisable for the key functionaries of the project and others to adopt some schools which they should supervise continuously to have reliable figures of enrolment and retention. Teacher should cooperate in this.
Quality of Education		It is suggested that in order to introduce new inputs in the CRC meetings, some outside resource persons and social workers be invited. The linkage of CRC with VEC should be strengthened.
Teacher		In order to increase motivational level of teachers, his problems and service conditions should be solved. There should be regular interaction between teachers union, DPC

		and DSE.
Environment Building		This aspect was not being looked after adequately. It has to be organised in the form of a mass campaign.
Strengthening of VECs	a)	Reconstitution of VECs should be taken up on priority basis.
	b)	The training of VEC presidents/members should be done on recurrent basis.
	c)	Combined workshops of teachers and VEC members be organised to develop cordial relationship between the two.
	d)	Regular guidance and monitoring of VECs is required.
Micro Planning	a)	Micro planning should not be treated as one time activity and it should be divided in two to three parts after pilot experimentations.
	b)	More funds should be earmarked for micro planning, which should be organised on a continuous basis.