

UNIT 4 GENDER-AWARE POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES

Gender-Aware Policies,
Programmes and Schemes

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

Gender-aware policies, by extension, are those which are based on the recognition that development actors are women as well as men; that men and women are constrained in different and often unequal ways, as potential participants and as beneficiaries in the development process; and that they may consequently have differing, and sometimes conflicting needs, interests and priorities. We have already discussed in Unit 3 how gender-blind policies are rooted and reflected. This was analyzed by policy makers and planners by conscious effort to bring transformation in the society, through gender-aware policies. We can explore gender-aware schemes and programmes of Government of India in this Unit.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- define gender-aware policies;
- describe the various programmes developed for the benefit of women and the marginalized; and
- analyze various schemes and programmes of Government of India from the point of view of using the gender-aware approach.

4.3 VARIOUS SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

Various schemes and programmes of Government of India have been formulated based on a gender-aware approach. These schemes are analyzed in this section.

4.3.1 Agricultural Schemes for Women

The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing special programmes and projects to provide training and extension support to women in the agriculture sector. The Scheme envisages motivating, mobilizing and organizing women farmers to form new groups or identifying and consolidating the existing groups of practicing women farmers. In order to ensure sustainability, each farm women's group, 'the Krishak Mahila Shakti Samuh' is registered as a society or with the panchayat/district agricultural office. The reports of the Review Mission have revealed that the Scheme had a positive impact on the production and income levels of women farmers. It had also increased their technological skills leading to overall empowerment – access to information, training, skill upgradation and capacity building. Extension Support to Central Institutes (2005-06) ensured that policies in agriculture reflected the national commitment to empowerment of women through the strategy of mainstreaming and agenda setting. The Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) provided extension support, with a minimum of 30% of funds under the ATMA scheme to be utilized for the benefit of women farmers. Under the revised Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme (2008-09), at least 33% of the funds have been earmarked for small, marginal and women farmers.

4.3.2 Small-Scale Industries Schemes for Women

Mahila Coir Yojana of the Ministry of Small-Scale Industries intends to provide self-employment to rural women artisans in regions producing coir fibre. Over the last two decades, production of coir fibre has substantially increased in India. Conversion of coir fibre into yarn on motorized ratts in rural households provides

scope for large-scale employment, improvement in productivity and quality of coir fibre, better working conditions and higher income, which ultimately leads to the improvement of standard of living of rural woman artisans. The Scheme envisages distribution of motorized ratts/ motorized traditional ratts in the ratio of 40:60 respectively for spinning coir yarn to trained women artisans. Not more than one artisan per household would be eligible to receive assistance under the Scheme.

The Coir Industry Act, 1953 enjoins upon the Coir Board the responsibility of formulating and implementing suitable schemes for the overall development of the Coir Industry and welfare of all others engaged in the Coir Industry. Coir Workers are among the most unorganized and socially and economically weaker sections of society. About 80% of the primary workforce consists of women. The Production Enhancement Linked Coir Workers Welfare Scheme introduced on an experimental basis during the latter half of 2005-06 provides basic amenities to the coir workers, most of whom subsist below the poverty line and are from economically and socially backward areas. The provisions such as work-shed, spinning shed etc. provide shelter to the women workers from the hot sun and rain and ensure uninterrupted production.

4.3.3 Schemes for Women Scientists

The “Women Scientists Scheme (WOS)” has been evolved by the Ministry of Science and Technology (DST) for providing opportunities to women scientists and technologists between the age group of 30-50 years who desire to return to mainstream science and work as bench-level scientists. Through this endeavour of the Department, a concerted effort would be made to give women a strong foothold in the scientific profession, helping them re-enter the mainstream and providing a launch pad for further forays into the field of science and technology, both from the point of view of pure science and its application in societal development.

Under this Scheme, women scientists are being encouraged to pursue research in frontier areas of science and engineering, on problems of societal relevance and to take up S&T-based internship followed by self-employment.

4.3.4 Schemes for Mothers

In this sub-section we will discuss the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana; Creches and day care centres; National Creche Fund, ICDS and its training programme - UDISHA

4.3.4.1 Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana

The “Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)” Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) Scheme targeting pregnant women aims to improve the health and nutrition status of pregnant and lactating women (of 19 years of age and above for the first two live births) and infants by promoting appropriate practices, care and service utilization during pregnancy, safe delivery and lactation; encouraging the women to follow (optimal) Infant and Youth Child Feeding (IYCF) practices including early and exclusive breast feeding for the first six months; contributing to better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers. It would be implemented through the platform of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and the focal point of implementation would be the Anganwadi Centre (AWC) at the village.

The Scheme would cover adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years under all ICDS projects in selected 200 districts in all the States/UTs in the country. In order to give appropriate attention, the target group would be sub-divided into two categories, viz. 11-15 & 15-18 years and interventions planned accordingly. The Scheme focuses on all out-of-school adolescent girls who would assemble at the

Anganwadi Centre as per the time table and frequency decided by the States/UTs. The others, i.e., the school going girls would meet at the AWC at least twice a month and more frequently during vacations/holidays, where they will receive life skill education, nutrition and health education, awareness about socio-legal issues etc. This will give an opportunity for mixed group interaction between in-school and out-of-school girls, motivating the latter to join school.

4.3.4.2 Creches/Day Care Centres

The Scheme of Creches/Day Care Centres extends day care services for the children of casual, migrant, agricultural and construction labourers. Children of those women who are sick or incapacitated due to sickness or suffering from communicable diseases are covered under the scheme.

4.3.4.3 The National Crèche Fund

The National Crèche Fund which was set up in March 1994 envisages that 75 per cent of the Creches being assisted by the National Crèche Fund would be of general nature and 25 per cent of centres would be Anganwadi-cum-Creche Centres. The general crèches assisted by the NCF would be on the pattern of the Creche Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and would provide services for children below five years including day-care facilities, supplementary nutrition, immunization, medical and health care and recreation facilities. Children of parents whose monthly income does not exceed ₹ 1800 are eligible for enrolment. While an ordinary Creche receives ₹ 18480 as a recurring grant and ₹ 4000 as a non-recurring grant per centre, an Anganwadi-cum-Creche Centre receives assistance of ₹ 8100 per crèche per annum under a schematic pattern of assistance. This includes honorarium to two crèche workers per crèche @ ₹ 600/- per month and contingency and emergency expenditure @ ₹ 75/- per month.

4.3.4.4 The Integrated Child Development Services

The Integrated Child Development Services is a centrally sponsored scheme run by state governments through Anganwadi centres. The main objective of the scheme is to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group 0-6 years. Under this scheme, nursing and expectant mothers and women in the age group 15-45 years are also covered.

4.3.4.5 ICDS Training Programme – UDISHA

Training being the most critical component of ICDS, the Ministry of Women and Child Development formulated a comprehensive training strategy for different functionaries of ICDS such as Anganwadi Workers, Supervisors, Additional Child Development Project Officers (ACDPOs) and Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs), Medical Officers (MOs) and Paramedical Staff. The training component has been recast as UDISHA with assistance from the World Bank.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: a) Use this space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit.

1) Critically evaluate the schemes for women in agriculture.

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2) How is Ministry of Science and Technology encouraging women to come forward in mainstream science research?

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3) Would you consider “Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)” a welfare programme?

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4) How do you rate the utility of the National Crèche Fund?

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4.3.5 Programmes for the Girl Child

We will discuss various programmes targeted at the girl child in this section.

4.3.5.1 Balika Samridhhi Yojana (BSY)

The Scheme of Balika Samridhhi Yojana (BSY) was launched on 2nd October, 1997 to extend a post-delivery grant of ₹ 500 for the mother of the Girl Child belonging to the Below Poverty line (BPL) Group. For this, the Government released an adhoc grant of ₹ 60 crore to cover 12 lakh girl children in the financial year 1997-98. The programme of BSY was recast in 1999-2000 with the following features of a post-delivery grant of Rs.500 per girl child upto two girl children born on or after 15th August, 1997 which would now, instead of being paid in cash, be deposited either in the Bank/Post Office in an interest-bearing account in the name of the girl child. A portion of the post-birth grant of ₹ 500 would also be permitted to be withdrawn towards the sole purpose of paying the premium on an Insurance Policy in the name of the girl child under the Bhagyashree Balika Kalyan Bima Yojana. Such utilization may be permitted with due authorization of the mother/guardian of the girl; (ii) annual scholarships would also be given to the girl child when she starts going to school. The rate of scholarships will be ₹ 300 each in classes I-III, ₹ 500 in class IV, ₹ 600 in class V, ₹ 700 each in classes VI and VII, ₹ 800 in class VIII and ₹ 1000 each in classes IX and X per annum; (iii) however, the amount of annual scholarships may be permitted to be utilized for purchase of text books or uniforms for the girl child, with due authorization of the mother/guardian of the girl. The amount of scholarship remaining after such utilization shall be deposited in the same interest bearing account in which the post-delivery grant has been kept. These deposits will be paid to the girl child on attaining the age of 18 years and remaining unmarried till then.

4.3.5.2 National Plan of Action for Children and the Girl Child

Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has given further impetus so as to achieve the goals set under the two National Plans of Action – one for children and the other exclusively for the Girl Child, adopted in 1992. These Plans of Action are expected to ensure survival, protection and development for children. Based on the National Plans of Action, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and NCT of Delhi have formulated their own State Plans of Action. To monitor the progress of the implementation of these two Plans of Action, Inter-ministerial/Inter-departmental Coordination Committees have been set up both at the Central and State levels.

4.3.5.3 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

The Government of India had approved a new scheme called Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) for setting up 750 residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, Other Backward Castes (OBC) and minorities in difficult areas. The scheme will be coordinated with the existing schemes of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy viz. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Mahila Samakhya (MS).

The scheme identified Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where, as per census data of 2001, the rural female literacy was below the national average and gender gap in literacy was more than the national average. Among these blocks, provisions were made for schools to be set up in areas with concentration of tribal population, with low female literacy and/or a large number of girls out of school; concentration of SC, OBC and minority populations, with low female literacy and/or a large number of girls out of school; areas with low female literacy; or areas with a large number of small, scattered habitations that do not qualify for a school. The objective of KGBV is to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups of society by setting up residential schools with boarding facilities at the elementary level. The components of KGBV include setting up of residential schools where there are a minimum of 50 girls predominantly from the SC, ST and minority communities available to study in the school at the elementary level; providing necessary infrastructure for these schools, preparing and procuring necessary teaching-learning material and aids for the schools; and putting in place appropriate systems to provide necessary academic support and for evaluation and monitoring; motivating and preparing the girls and their families to send them to residential school. At the primary level the emphasis will be on the slightly older girls who are out of school and were unable to complete primary schooling. At the upper primary level, emphasis will be on girls, especially adolescent girls, who are unable to go to regular schools.

In view of the targeted nature of the scheme, 75% girls from SC, ST, OBC or minority communities would be accorded priority for enrollment in such residential schools and only thereafter, 25% girls from families below the poverty line. Established NGOs and other non-profit making bodies will be involved in the running of the schools, wherever possible.

The scheme is implemented by State Governments through the Mahila Samakhya (MS) Societies in MS states and through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) societies in case of other states. Funds are released as per SSA pattern to the State SSA societies. The monitoring and evaluation at the State and district level will be undertaken by the MS State Resource Centres and in non-MS states, through the committee created for the National Programme for Education of Girls at the Elementary Level in the SSA society. The SSA pattern of financing with a 75:25

ratio of sharing between the Centre and the States during the Tenth Five Year Plan, and 50:50 thereafter will be adopted for Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) as well. Commitments regarding sharing of cost would be taken from the State Governments in writing.

(http://www.education.nic.in/kgbv_guidelines.asp)

4.3.5.4 National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)

The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is an amendment to the scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for providing additional components for education of girls at the elementary level. The NPEGEL will form part of the SSA and will be implemented under the umbrella of SSA but with a distinct identity. NPEGEL has been formulated for education of underprivileged/disadvantaged girls from class I to VIII as a separate and distinct gender component plan of SSA. The gender component is necessary to achieve UEE for girls in educationally backward areas.

The scheme is applicable in the educationally backward blocks where the level of rural female literacy is less than the national average and the gender gap is above the national average. Blocks of districts which have at least 5% SC/ ST population and SC/ ST female literacy rate below 10% shall also be taken up under this programme. The SSA State Implementation Society will be the implementing agency of the NPEGEL at State level. Therefore, funds for this programme will be routed through the SSA society of the State. At the State level a 'Gender Coordinator' will be appointed who will look after the NPEGEL. In States where the Mahila Samakhya (MS) programme is operational, the SSA society will have NPEGEL implemented through the MS Society. In such States, the SSA society shall transfer funds to the MS Society for implementation of the programme. The monitoring and evaluation of the component will be done by the State SSA Society. In states where MS is not being implemented, the implementation of this component will be through a sub-unit called the 'Gender Unit' of SSA society and the existing mechanism for implementation of SSA will be followed. State Mahila Samakhya Societies (MSS), wherever set up under the directions of the Government of India, will provide direction and support to the programme. The MS society will ensure the representation of SC/ST women's organizations in the State Resource Centres of MSS. In States that do not have an MSS, a sub-committee of the SSA society with nominees from relevant departments of the State Government, Government of India, experts in girls' education and representatives of SC/ST women's organizations will be set up for the purpose. Components of the programme include a Model Cluster School for Girls. This girl child-friendly infrastructure will be used by all the schools in that cluster, by rotation. It shall have facilities in terms of teaching-learning equipment, books, equipment, games, etc. Facilities available, like books will also be circulated to the schools in the clusters. Facilities will be used for learning through computers, film shows, reading material, self-defence, life skills, riding bicycles, reading, games etc. Instructors will be hired for the day or on contract for imparting vocational and other training. These would be aimed at improving the achievement of girls, fostering an interest in education among them, and raising the importance of girls' education in the community. The facilities will also be used for teacher training in the cluster. While selecting the location of the model cluster schools, the density of the SC/ST population would also be taken into consideration.

Recurring Grant to Model Cluster Schools

A maximum amount of ₹ 20,000 per annum will be provided to each cluster to meet the requirements of expenditure on various activities for promotion of girls' education in that cluster including maintenance of the school and engagement of

part-time instructors for additional specified subjects provided that no instructor would be hired for more than 3 months in an academic year and he/she would not receive remuneration of more than ₹ 1,000/per month.

Awards to Schools/Teachers

One award per year @ ₹ 5,000/ (in kind) will be provided to a school/teacher at cluster level for achievements in enrollment, retention and learning outcomes of girl students.

Student Evaluation, Remedial Teaching, Bridge Courses, Alternative Schools

Special models of alternative schooling catering to hard-to-reach groups of girls including bridge courses, flexible timings, back-to-school camps, remedial teaching, etc. for out-of-school, girls or girls with irregular attendance will be started in such villages where this poses a serious problem. In addition to the provisions already available under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) component of SSA, a maximum amount of ₹ 20,000 per annum will be provided to each cluster for student evaluation, remedial teaching, bridge courses and alternative schools. There may be two such centres under one cluster.

Learning through Open Schools

Children at the upper primary level, even in the open schooling system, in certain special cases, require some short-term residential training at regular intervals. The scheme will provide waiver of fees of girls for courses under National Open School and State Open Schools, setting up of specially designed open learning centres. The implementing agency will devise a suitable system with NOS, State Open Schools or other such organizations for this purpose. The cluster school will form the venue of the residential upper primary school/NGO Centre. This will facilitate bringing to the educational system those girls who have dropped out from regular schools for some reason. A maximum amount of ₹ 50,000 per annum will be provided to each cluster towards the payment of fees and provision of supplementary teaching to be taken up with the help of National Institute of Open Schooling or State Institute of Open Schooling. Short-term residential courses can also be organized. To the extent possible, the payment on this account would be made by the State Societies directly to National Institute of Open Schooling or State Institutes of Open Schooling as the case may be.

Teacher Training

Under this scheme Teachers and teacher educators will be trained for gender sensitization. A maximum amount of ₹ 4,000 per annum will be provided to each cluster for annual training of at least 20 teachers especially on gender aspects. This amount will be in addition to the provisions under SSA for normal teacher training on subjective issues.

Child Care Centres

The scheme provides opening of additional Early Childhood Care and Education Centres to meet gaps in the Integrated Child Development Scheme and to relieve girls from the burden of sibling care. Two Child Care Centres per cluster run by the community may be opened in areas where there is no Child Care Centre under any scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and/or the State Government concerned. Each centre opened under the 'Girl's Education Component' of the SSA will receive a recurring grant of ₹ 5000 and non-recurring grant of ₹ 1000 per annum.

Additional incentives

SSA provides for free textbooks to all girl children up to a limit of ₹ 150 per child. In addition to the existing norms, a package of incentives shall be available to the girl child under this programme. For each school a Mother's/Women's Committee would, depending upon the real needs, decide on additional incentives within the already prescribed financial ceiling of ₹ 150 per girl child per year, under SSA. On the sanctioning of a Model Cluster School for the Girl Child, a list of such schools mentioning the nearest Government Hospital or Referral Hospital or PHC Centre nearest to the school will be provided to the concerned State Health Department under intimation to the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy who will request the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for providing necessary services to the Model Cluster Schools.

Community Mobilization (Mobilization for enrollment, retention and learning)

At the District and Cluster (a group of about ten villages) level, mobilization activities including the training of teachers and educational administrators, mobilization of the community, including formation and training of resource groups [Mother Teacher Associations (MTA), Women Motivator Groups (WVG), Mahila Samakhya (MS) Sanghas etc.], activities by resource groups like enrollment, retention, talking to parents etc., training and review of resource groups, community-follow up of enrollment, attendance, achievement etc. shall be carried out.

[http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/India/India_NPEGL.pdf]

4.3.5.4 Programmes for SC/ST Girl Child

Under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, a Special Education Development Programme for scheduled caste girls with low literacy levels has been initiated. It aims to provide a package of educational inputs through residential schools for scheduled caste girls in areas of very low literacy and where traditions and environment are not conducive to learning amongst SC girls. This Scheme is implemented by the Zila Parishads of the concerned Districts. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has also introduced schemes for strengthening education among Scheduled Tribe Girls in low literacy districts. The scheme aims to bridge the gap in literacy levels between the general female population and tribal women, through facilitating 100% enrolment of tribal girls in the identified Districts or Blocks, more particularly in naxal affected areas and in areas inhabited by Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), and reducing drop-outs at the elementary level by creating the required ambience for education. Improvement of the literacy rate of tribal girls is essential to enable them to participate effectively in and benefit from, socio-economic development.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: a) Use this space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit.

1) "Mahila Samakhya Societies are envisaged as a strategy for empowerment of women and adolescent girls". Comment on the statement.

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4.3.6 Employment Schemes for Women

Various protective legal provisions have been enacted on the employment of women. To give effect to the constitutional provisions as well as to ensure the enforcement of ILO Convention No. 100, the Equal Remuneration Ordinance was promulgated in 1975, which was replaced by Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, applicable to the whole of India. Section 5 of the Equal Remuneration Act prevents discrimination against women employees while making recruitment for same work of similar nature. Under the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, there are provisions for crèches in every plantation where fifty or more women workers are employed or where the number of children of women workers is twenty or more. Under the Factories Act, 1948, there is provision of crèches in every factory where thirty women are ordinarily employed. Maternity leave upto 12 weeks with wages are provided. Under the Mines Act, 1952, employment of women underground is prohibited in mines. There is also provision of toilets and washing facilities for women workers. Under the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, maternity benefits are provided on completion of 30 days of working. Women are not required to work during six weeks immediately following the day of delivery. The Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996, specifies representation of a woman member on building and construction worker's welfare boards. It provides maternity benefit to female beneficiaries of the Welfare Fund. There is also provision of crèches where more than 50 female construction workers are ordinarily employed.

A separate Cell for women's labour which was set up in 1975 is functioning in the Labour Ministry to pay special attention to the problems of women labour. The Cell is responsible for: (i) coordinating effort in respect of women labour within the policy framework on women drawn up by Ministry of Women and Child Development - the Nodal ministry on the issue; (ii) Working in conjunction with Ministry of Women and Child Development and providing useful inputs on the female workforce for effective formulation of programmes and policies on the subject; (iii) Implementation of the Equal Remuneration Act, i.e., its extension to various employments/industries and examination of the difficulties, if any, pointed out by the Units/Industries; (iv) Setting up of an Advisory Committee for Promotion of Employment of Women under the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and providing secretariat assistance to the Committee; (v) Taking follow-up action on the Supreme Court Judgement in the matter of prevention of sexual harassment of women at their work place and periodical reviews of the initiatives taken in the matter in consultation with related agencies viz. National Commission for Women, Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Labour Institute, etc; (vi) Administering a grants-in-aid Scheme for providing financial assistance to organizations (voluntary and non-government) for taking up action programmes/projects for the benefit of women labour.

Ujjawala, a comprehensive scheme for prevention of trafficking, rescue, rehabilitation and re-integration of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is implemented through Social Welfare/Women and Child Welfare Departments of State Governments, Women's Development Corporations, Women's Development Centres, Urban Local Bodies, reputed Public/Private Trusts or Voluntary Organizations.

4.3.6.1 The Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)

STEP was launched as a Central Sector Scheme in 1986-87. The programme of STEP aims to make a significant impact on participation of women in development activities by upgrading skills for self and wage employment. The sequence of activities is envisaged as mobilizing women in viable groups; improving their skills; arranging for productive assets/access to wage employment; creating backward and forward linkage; improving/arranging for support services; providing access to credit; awareness generation; gender sensitization; nutrition education; sensitization of project functionaries etc. Thus, STEP advocates an integrated package of inputs aiming at the self-reliance and empowerment of women by enhancing their productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities.

4.3.6.2 Employment-Cum-Income Generation-Cum-Production Units (NORAD)

The programme of Employment-cum-Income Generation-cum-Production Units (popularly known as NORAD) assisted by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation aims to equip young women/girls through training in non-traditional and traditional trades like electronics, watch assembling, computer programming, garment making, secretarial practices, community health work, fashion designing, beauty culture etc. Since 1996-97, assistance from NORAD is being phased out. Therefore, the same is being supplemented with domestic resources. As per the agreement signed between the Government of India and the Government of Norway in 1997, a total assistance of ₹ 20 crore (NOK 38 million) was expected to be flowing over for a period of five years that is up to 2000-01. Thus, the share of the Norwegian Government remained around 33 per cent of the total outlay. Towards better monitoring of the programme, the State Women's Development Corporations have been involved not only at the pre-appraisal stage but also during the mid-term evaluation of these Projects.

4.3.6.3 Socio-Economic Programme (SEP)

The Socio-Economic Programme (SEP), being implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), aims to extend opportunities for women based on the principle of 'Work and Wage' and 'Earn While You Learn'. The same is being implemented through voluntary organizations for whom financial assistance is given to take up a wide variety of income generating activities which include the production of industrial components in ancillary units, handlooms, handicrafts, agro-based activities such as animal husbandry, sericulture and fisheries, and self-employment ventures like vegetable or fish vending etc. The scheme of SEP has been reviewed and modified to expand the scope of the programme. Now organizations working for the handicapped, women's cooperatives, organizations and institutions like jails, Nari Niketans etc. are also eligible to receive grants under this programme. Grants to the extent of 85 per cent of the project cost are provided by the Board, the balance being the matching contribution by the NGOs.

4.3.6.4 Condensed Courses of Education & Vocational Training Programme (CCE&VT)

The Scheme of Condensed Courses of Education and Vocational Training is being implemented in its revised form, through the medium of voluntary organizations for needy women in rural, hilly and tribal areas. Under the scheme of Condensed Courses, voluntary organizations are given grants to conduct courses of two years duration to enable females who are 15 + years of age to pass Middle and Matric level examinations. The vocational training programme extends training for young girls/women in employment-oriented trades such as dress designing, computer courses, typesetting, batik, handloom weaving, nursery teachers training, stenography etc.

4.3.6.5 Working Women's Hostels

Promoting greater mobility for women in the employment market, a Scheme called 'Hostels for Working Women' has been in operation since 1972-73. The scheme extends safe and inexpensive accommodation which is a 'Home away from Home' for working women of lower income groups. Under this scheme, financial assistance is extended to voluntary and other autonomous organizations to the extent of 75 per cent of the cost of construction of the hostel building and 50 per cent of the cost of the land. The income ceiling for eligibility of hostel accommodation has been raised from ₹ 5000 to ₹ 16000 per month in metropolitan cities and from ₹ 4500 to ₹ 15000 per month in other cities and towns w.e.f. 14th July 1998. A resident is allowed to stay in these hostels for a maximum period of five years. Women undergoing employment-oriented educational/professional courses are also eligible for accommodation in these hostels.

Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls

The Scheme of Short Stay Homes, which takes care of women and girls facing social/moral danger, was transferred to the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) during 1999-2000. The services extended in these Homes include medical care; psychiatric treatment; casework services; occupational therapy; education-cum-vocational training and recreational facilities. As per the revised norms, recently approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, the recurring cost will now be ₹ 401350 per Home per annum with a one time, non-recurring cost of ₹ 50000. Provisions have also been made for upgrading skills and capacities of staff and residents as well as education of the children of residents.

4.3.6.6 Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project (RWDEP)

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rural Women's Development and Empowerment Project (RWDEP) was launched in 1997 for a period of five years (1997-2002) with assistance from International Development Association (IDA) and International Fund for Agricultural development (IFAD). The scheme was in action in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Karnataka and Gujarat with an estimated outlay of Rs.186.21 crore.

The major objective of RWDEP is to strengthen the processes for creating an enabling environment for empowerment of women through : (i) establishment of between 7400 and 12000 self-reliant women's Self-Help-Groups (SHGs) having 15-20 members each, which will improve the quality of their lives, through greater access to, and control over, resources; (ii) sensitizing and strengthening the institutional capacity of support agencies to pro-actively address women's needs; (iii) developing linkages between SHGs and lending institutions to ensure women's continued access to credit facilities for income generation activities; (iv) enhancing women's access to resources for better quality of life, including those for drudgery reduction and time saving devices; and (v) increased control of women, particularly poor women, over income and spending, through their involvement in income generation activities which will indirectly help in poverty alleviation. The Women's Development Corporations, which are the implementing agencies, are expected to involve NGOs in the implementation tasks.

4.3.6.7 Swayamsidha Scheme

The Swayamsidha Scheme attempts to establish women's SHGs and create confidence and awareness among members of SHGs regarding women's status and health. It also aims at strengthening the savings habit in rural women, improving their access to credit, involving them in local level planning and improving access to microcredit. The concept note on Swayamsidha Phase-2 released by the Ministry of Women and Child Development is provided at Annexure 1 to this Unit.

4.3.6.8 Swadhar Scheme

The Swadhar Scheme purports to address the specific vulnerability of each group of women in difficult circumstances through a Home-based holistic and integrated approach. The target group/beneficiaries of the scheme include widows deserted by their families and relatives and left uncared for near religious places where they are victims of exploitation; women prisoners released from jail and without family support; women survivors of natural disasters who have been rendered homeless and are without any social and economic support; trafficked women/girls rescued or runaways from brothels or other places or women/girl victims of sexual crimes who are disowned by families or who do not want to go back to respective families for various reasons; women victims of terrorist/extremist violence who are without any family support and without any economic means for survival; mentally challenged women (except for the psychotic categories who require care in specialized environments in mental hospitals) who are without any support of family or relatives; Women with HIV/AIDS deserted by their family or women who have lost their husbands due to HIV/AIDS and are without social/economic support; or similarly placed women in difficult circumstances. The scheme aims to provide: (i) primary need of shelter, food, clothing and care to the marginalized women/girls living in difficult circumstances who are without any social and economic support; (ii) provide emotional support and counseling to such women; (iii) rehabilitate them socially and economically through education, awareness, skill upgradation and personality development through behavioural training, etc.; (iv) arrange for specific clinical, legal and other support for women/girls in need of those interventions by linking and networking with other organizations in both governmental and non-governmental sectors on case-to-case basis; (v) provide for help line or other facilities to such women in distress; and (vi) provide such other services as will be required for the support and rehabilitation of such women in distress.

Box 4.1: Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)

One of the Schemes which aimed at integrated development for women is IMY. It addresses the capacity building, income and awareness generation related requirements of the women and covered all the available schemes for advancement of women. IMY a centrally sponsored scheme implemented through the State Government, basically aims at converging all the social development programmes to meet women's needs and integrated various sectoral allocations at the district level for addressing their needs. It has been proved by several experiments in different parts of the country that women's groups become a very strong medium for accessing information and also for bringing about attitudinal changes on issues of community concern. The group, then, became a very strong mechanism for empowering women with information, knowledge and resources. Under this scheme too, the formation of Indira Mahila Kendras (IMKs) at the anganwadi level and association of other groups under the adult literacy programmes and health programmes with these IMKs, would serve as grassroots level women's organizations for need-based interaction.

The major thrust of the IMY was the formation of self-help groups at the village or the anganwadi level, so as to establish a strong base for women at the Panchayat level and support the panchayat system of prioritizing women's needs while directing the application of resources at the Panchayat level to meet the needs. Such an endeavour is expected to help prepare women for decision making and participation in decision making bodies. As a part of this strategy, the self-help groups which would be formed at the grassroots level, would be able to give women access to the various programmes implemented

by the rural development, urban development, water supply, education and health sectors, agriculture and industrial sectors.

Source: *Schemes for Assistance – A Handbook, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 1999.*

Box 4.2: Recommendations for State Policy

In Tamil Nadu the Women's Development Corporation (TNWDC) and UNICEF organized regional level workshops involving people and civil society organizations at many places from 2001 onwards to provide recommendations for Gender Policy. In one such workshop the participants came out with the following overarching recommendations with regard to women and health:

- 1) Focus on prevention rather than care
- 2) Work on setting right the current socio-economic gender imbalance
- 3) Create awareness about gender inequality
- 4) Encourage men to share the responsibility of sexuality and reproduction with women
- 5) Increase the number of female health personnel in all health department activities
- 6) Provide counselling services at all Primary Health Centres (PHCs)
- 7) Collect gender disaggregated data on all aspects of health so that both men's and women's health problems can be dealt with more effectively
- 8) Introduce marriage counseling prior to the registration of marriages
- 9) Curb all forms of violence against women
- 10) Keep updating disease profiles
- 11) Rather than centralized planning, plan local and participatory programmes (community-based health) with the involvement of panchayat
- 12) Set up village task force on health in each village
- 13) Conduct focus group awareness programmes on male-female equality
- 14) Review on meaningful health programmes district-wise
- 15) Analyze the gender budgeting allocation for women and child care under health

4.4 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN (NCW)

The National Commission for Women (NCW), set up in 1992, has a mandate to safeguard the rights and interests of women. The Commission pursues its mandated activities of safeguarding women's rights through investigations into individual complaints of atrocities; sexual harassment of women at the work place; organizing Parivarik/Mahila Lok Adalats; legal awareness programmes/camps; review of Legislations etc. The Commission maintains a Complaints Cell as one of the Core Units of the Commission which processes both written and oral complaints and takes suo-moto action in matters relating to: (i) deprivation of women's rights;

(ii) non-implementation of laws; (iii) non-compliance with policy decisions; (iv) guidelines or instructions aimed at mitigating hardships to women; and (v) taking up issues arising out of such matters with appropriate authorities. The complaints received relate mainly to harassment for dowry, dowry deaths, torture, desertion, bigamy, rape, refusal to register FIR by the Police, discrimination in employment, domestic violence, incest, and cruelty by husbands and in-laws.

Emergence of Family Courts

Alarmed by the large number of cases relating to matrimonial disputes in various courts and representation from several associations of women, the Family Court Act, 1984 was enacted by the Government of India to provide for the establishment of family courts with a view to promote conciliation in and secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to marriage and family affairs. At present there are 80 family courts spread over 17 states.

4.5 APPROACHES TO GENDER EQUITY IN THE ELEVENTH FIVE YEAR PLAN

The Eleventh Plan's approach to gender equity has five elements:

- 1) The recognition that women are not a homogeneous category for planned intervention – that they belong to diverse castes, classes, communities, economic groups, and are located at a range of geographic and development zones, and that mapping and acknowledging the specific deprivations which arise from these multiple locations, can alone determine the success of planned interventions. In order to operationalize this understanding, official directives must be issued to Women and Child Development programmes as well as women-related programmes in other Ministries to reach women across multiple axes of deprivation (gender, class, caste, community, marital status, geographic location etc.) to monitor implementation and collect disaggregated data along these multiple axes. The double deprivation of particular categories of women (SC, ST women, Muslim women, Single women/Widows and Women in conflict zones like the north east and J&K), in addition to being addressed through general programme interventions, have to also be addressed through a range of special, targeted and/or pilot interventions.
- 2) The recognition that only inclusive development of all categories of women can ensure holistic national development goals toward the millennium development goals;
- 3) The recognition that both inter-sectoral convergence as well as targeted, exclusive women-focused planning (through the Ministry of WCD) are necessary;
- 4) The recognition that for interventions in favour of women to have a sustained, long-term, incremental impact beyond individual five year plan periods, they have to be four-pronged;
 - i) to provide women with basic entitlements such as food security, health and education;
 - ii) to address the reality of globalization and its impact on women by prioritizing economic empowerment and mainstreaming women in new and emerging areas of the economy;
 - iii) Ensure an environment free from all forms of violence against women-physical, economic, social, psychological; and
 - iv) Ensure the participation and adequate representation of women at the

highest policy levels, particularly in parliament and assemblies. Even a state like Kerala with high female literacy, has only 7 women in a 141 member state legislative assembly. This situation must be urgently remedied.

- 5) The Inter-sectoral and Inter-Ministerial Agenda for Action is the Key Thrust area for the Eleventh Five Year Plan. In addition to prioritizing the key focus areas, the Eleventh Plan follows the following five-fold strategy:
- economic empowerment, with special focus on women in agriculture and on the effects of globalization;
 - social empowerment and engendering social change;
 - political empowerment to facilitate entry and effective functioning of women in parliament, PRIs and in premier government services;
 - strengthening mechanisms for effective implementation of women-related legislation; and
 - creating institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and strengthening delivery mechanisms for effective implementation of women related programmes.

In the Report of the Steering Committee on Empowerment of Women and Child Development for the Eleventh Plan, the following emphasis areas were listed:

Item 5.26 Women in agriculture: In India agriculture is highly feminized with 75% of the total female work force and 85% of rural women being employed in agriculture either as wage workers or as workers on their own/ contracted household farms. As men migrate and move to non-farm jobs, there has been an increasing feminization of agriculture. Agricultural productivity is, thus, increasingly dependent on the ability of women to function effectively as farmers.

Item 5.27 Land Rights for Women: Endowing women with land would empower them economically as well as strengthen their ability to challenge social and political inequalities. Evidence from around the world suggests that direct land transfers to women are likely to benefit not just women, but also children.

Item 5.28 Strengthening Agricultural Capacities: Measures to promote women's presence in village decision making bodies, control over complementary resources, direct marketing and training programmes for women, resource pooling and group investment, financial and infrastructural support must be taken to improve women's agricultural capacities.

Item 5.29 Women in the Service Sector: The most important trend for women's employment is their increasing presence in the tertiary sector over the last decade. However, women remain under-represented in higher level and higher paid jobs.

Item 5.30 Skill Development: Globalization has led to fast changing markets and technologies that require new skills, skill upgradation and skill in multiple trades. Globalization often puts a premium on skills and higher levels of education, which are often out of reach for women in the unorganized sector.

Programme and Policy Agenda for Ministry of Women and Child Development in the Eleventh Plan

The new programme and policy agenda for Ministry of Women and Child Development focuses on:

7.53 Women and Media: As a nodal agency for the welfare, development and empowerment of women, it will be incumbent upon the Ministry of Women and Child Development to not only seek to curtail the harmful effects of television on

women's lives through a gender-informed media policy, but more importantly, to harness this powerful medium to promote the agenda of gender justice and empowerment. In order to operationalize an aggressive and professional multi-media engagement, the Eleventh Plan envisages locating a separate media unit in the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with participation of professional media consultants and women's groups who specialize in media.

7.54 Gender Budgeting Cell: The Eleventh Plan proposes to give the highest priority to universalization of gender budgeting and gender outcome assessment in all ministries/departments at the centre and states. As the nodal Ministry for women, Ministry of Women and Child Development will continue to play a key role in steering this process through the Eleventh Plan period. The Gender Budgeting Cell of the Ministry accordingly needs to be strengthened.

7.55 Statistical Division: This Division is critical to monitor progress of the Eleventh Plan's gender equity and gender justice agenda through systematic, detailed collection of disaggregated data.

7.56 Relief and Rehabilitation of Rape Victims: As directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court the National Commission for Women has drafted a scheme titled "Relief to and Rehabilitation of Rape Victims". It is proposed to initiate the Scheme in the Eleventh Plan by changing the title of the scheme to "Relief and Rehabilitation of Victims of Sexual Assault".

7.57 Implementation of Protection from Domestic Violence Act and Other Acts of the Ministry.

7.58 Committee on SHGs and the Status of Women: There is a need in the Eleventh Plan to undertake a comprehensive national level review of SHGs and microcredit policies from a gender perspective with a view to determine how the quality of these SHGs may be further improved and better serve the interests of poor women. Thus, in the Eleventh Plan, it is proposed to constitute an autonomous, high level committee on SHGs and the status of women, to review SHG – related policies and programmes and make recommendations on the vision that underlies SHG intervention in terms of empowerment and poverty alleviation; to develop monitorable indicators of gender justice and equality; and to assess the role of sponsoring agencies including government agencies, microfinance institutions etc. and suggest changes required in overall SHG policy framework.

7.59 Pilot Project for Reaching the Most Marginal and Vulnerable: In the Eleventh Plan it is proposed to take up pilot projects for different categories of marginal and vulnerable women, which if found fruitful, can be taken up on a wider scale.

7.60 Pilot Scheme for Leadership Development of Minority Women: Inclusive growth is the key guiding principle for the eleventh plan. This scheme contributes to inclusive growth.

7.61 Gender-specific Education and Training Interventions: During the Eleventh Plan the Ministry of Women and Child Development was expected to constitute a Working Group with representatives from relevant departments, experts in training, literacy and livelihoods and gender justice to design a core curriculum framework for a capacity building package that would become a part of all the SHG programmes of the Ministry.

4.6 SUMMING UP

In this Unit, we have studied various Government of India programmes based on the Gender-aware approach. As we have seen in previous Units, the needs of the women and marginalized was reflected in the First Five year Plan onwards. But the country failed to tackle gender-related issues systematically. Resources were

not allocated methodically in the early years of planning. United Nations made an effort and conducted international Conferences relating to gender issues for wider debate. These conferences had the potential to influence many countries' budgets and this served as a platform to transform women's lives. International efforts were reflected in the Government of India budgets and policies and programmes were transformed from Gender-blind to Gender-aware. These Gender-aware policies and programmes were discussed in this Unit.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: a) Use this space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit.

1) Write briefly on the STEP programme.

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2) Who implements the "Swayam Siddha" and "Swadhar" Schemes?

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4.7 GLOSSARY

UN Conventions : Convention as a generic term: Art. 38 (1) (a) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice refers to "international conventions, whether general or particular" as a source of law, apart from international customary rules and general principles of international law and – as a secondary source – judicial decisions and the teachings of the most highly qualified publicists. This generic use of the term "convention" embraces all international agreements, in the same way as does the generic term "treaty". Black letter law is also regularly referred to as "conventional law", in order to distinguish it from the other sources of international law, such as customary law or the general principles of international law. The generic term "convention" thus is synonymous with the generic term "treaty".

Convention as a specific term : Whereas in the last century the term "convention" was regularly employed for bilateral agreements, it now is generally

used for formal multilateral treaties with a broad number of parties. Conventions are normally open for participation by the international community as a whole, or by a large number of states. Usually the instruments negotiated under the auspices of an international organization are entitled conventions (e.g. Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969). The same holds true for instruments adopted by an organ of an international organization (e.g. the 1951 ILO Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, adopted by the International Labour Conference or the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly of the UN).

Suo Moto

: The meaning “on its own motion”, is a Latin legal term, approximately equivalent to the term *sua sponte*. It is used, for example, where a government agency acts on its own cognizance, as in “the Commission took *suo motu* control over the matter”. Example – “there is no requirement that a court *suo motu* instruct a jury upon these defenses”.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) The Ministry of Agriculture and cooperation is implementing special programmes and projects to provide training and extension support to women in the agriculture sector. The Scheme envisages motivating, mobilizing and organizing women farmers to form new groups or identifying and consolidating the existing groups of practicing women farmers. In order to ensure sustainability, each farm women’s group, ‘the Krishak Mahila Shakti Samuh’ is registered as a registered society or with the panchayat/district agricultural office. The reports of the Review Mission have revealed that the Scheme had a positive impact on the production and income levels of women farmers. It had also increased their technological skills leading to overall empowerment – access to information, training, skill up gradation and capacity building. Extension Support to Central Institutes/DOE (2005-06) ensured that policies in agriculture reflected the national commitment to empowerment of women through the strategy of mainstreaming and agenda setting. The Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA), provided extension support, with a minimum of 30% of funds under ATMA scheme, to be utilized for the benefit of women farmers. Under the revised Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme (2008-09), at least 33% of the funds have been earmarked for small, marginal and women farmers.

- 2) The “Women Scientists Scheme (WOS)” has been evolved by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) for providing opportunities to women scientists and technologists between the age group of 30-50 years who desire to return to mainstream science and work as bench-level scientists. Through this endeavour of the Department, a concerted effort would be made to give women a strong foothold in the scientific profession, helping them re-enter into the mainstream and providing a launch pad for further forays into the field of science and technology, both from the point of view of pure science and its application to societal development. Under this Scheme, women scientists are being encouraged to pursue research in frontier areas of science and engineering, on problems of societal relevance and to take up S&T-based internship followed by self-employment.
- 3) The “Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)” Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) Scheme targeting pregnant women aims to improve the health and nutrition status of pregnant and lactating women (of 19 years of age and above for the first two live births) and infants by promoting appropriate practices, care and service utilization during pregnancy, safe delivery and lactation; encouraging the women to follow (optimal) Infant and Youth Child Feeding (IYCF) practices including early and exclusive breast feeding for the first six months; contributing to better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers.
- 4) March 1994

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) The Mahila Samakhya programme was launched in 1988 in pursuance of the goals of the New Education Policy (1986) and the Programme of Action as a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalized groups.

The policy framework:

- 1.1 Provision of educational opportunities for women and girls has been an important part of the national endeavour in the field of education since Independence. Though these endeavours did yield significant results, gender disparities persist, more so in rural areas and among disadvantaged communities.

- 1.2 The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) as revised in 1992 was a landmark in the field of policy on women's education in that it recognized the need to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement.

The NPE also recognized that enhancing infrastructure alone will not redress the problem. It recognized that *“the empowerment of women is possibly the most critical pre-condition for the participation of girls and women in the educational process”*.

- 1.3 The programme of Action (POA, 1992), in the section *“Education for Women's Equality”* (Chapter-XII, pages. 105-107), focuses on empowerment of women as the critical precondition for their participation in the education process. The POA states that education can be an effective tool for women's empowerment, the parameters of which are:

- enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence of women;
- building a positive image of women by recognizing their contribution to the society, polity and the economy;

- developing ability to think critically;
- fostering decision making and action through collective processes;
- enabling women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health (especially reproductive health);
- ensuring equal participation in developmental processes;
- providing information, knowledge and skill for economic independence;
- enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society with a view to enhance their participation on an equal footing in all areas.

These parameters informed the framing of the objectives of the MS programme.

- 2) A maximum amount of ₹ 20,000 per annum will be provided to each cluster to meet the requirements of expenditure on various activities for promotion of girls' education in that cluster including maintenance of the school and engagement of part-time instructors for additional specified subjects provided that no instructor would be hired for more than 3 months in an academic year and he/she would not receive remuneration of more than ₹ 1,000/per month.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

- 1) STEP was launched as a Central Sector Scheme in 1986-87. The programme of STEP aims to make a significant impact on participation of women in development activities by upgrading skills for self and wage employment. The sequence of activities is envisaged as mobilizing women in viable groups; improving their skills; arranging for productive assets/access to wage employment; creating backward and forward linkage; improving/arranging for support services; providing access to credit; awareness generation; gender sensitization; nutrition education; sensitization of project functionaries etc. Thus, STEP advocates an integrated package of inputs aiming at the self-reliance and empowerment of women by enhancing their productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities.
- 2) Non-governmental Agencies.

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4.10 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

- 1) Evaluate the programmes for the Girl Child from the perspective of the gender-aware approach.
- 2) Write a short note on the National Commission for Women.

**Government of India
Ministry of Women & Child Development**

Concept Note on Swayamsidha Phase-2

- 1) Swayamsidha is the flagship programme of Ministry of Women & Child Development for holistic empowerment of women. The scheme was evolved from an earlier scheme, i.e. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY).

Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)

- 2) The first Self Help Group based women's empowerment programme of Ministry of WCD, **Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)** was launched in 1995-96 in 238 blocks in the country and ₹ 12.20 crores was released to States under the scheme for formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs), clusters and Block Federations and related training programmes. About 40,000 SHGs were formed under IMY and the expenditure was ₹ 7.20 crores. The scheme was not a success because it had no structured training programmes and there was no provision for monitoring, administrative expenses etc.

Swayamsidha

- 3) An improved version of Self Help Group based women's empowerment programme, namely **Swayamsidha** was launched in February-2001 in 650 blocks including the 238 IMY blocks in 35 States/UTs with total budget of ₹ 116.30 crores. Goa and the UTs of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh did not show any progress in the scheme and therefore, the scheme was withdrawn from them and the blocks were re-allocated to Rajasthan, Bihar and Sikkim. Although the scheme will end in March-2007, the expenditure as on 3-8-2006 is ₹ 71.76 crores (61.70%). The scheme is implemented through the ICDS set up in most of the States with no additional manpower for project implementation and monitoring in most of the States. The State functionaries do not get any extra remuneration/incentive for the additional responsibilities of Swayamsidha that they have to perform. As a result, it took two years for the States to initiate project activities at the field level. The Nodal Officers and Master Trainers selected by the State Governments were Government Officers who were transferred very often resulting serious disruptions in project implementation.
- 4) Swayamsidha was evaluated by an external agency in 2005. The evaluation report indicated that women in Swayamsidha Blocks have strengthened their social standing in society. Awareness of social evils like alcoholism, dowry & female feticide is visible. Economic status of women has definitely improved after joining the SHGs. Number of women members in Panchayat levels has increased and some of them have been elected to local bodies.

Swa-Shakti

- 5) Another similar project implemented by this Ministry from 1999 with funding from the World bank, IFAD and Govt. of India on experimental basis was **Swa-Shakti**. This project was implemented through State Women's Development Corporations (WDCs) at State level and NGOs at field level. Swa-Shakti showed good progress as it achieved most of its physical targets and has been **graded by the World Bank as satisfactory**.
- 6) The Ministry has analysed the reasons for poor take off of Swayamsidha by comparing it with the critical factors responsible for successful implementation of Swa-Shakti. The table below compares both the schemes:

	Components	Swa-Shakti	Swayamsidha
1)	Implementing agency	WDCs through 218 partner NGOs	Mostly through ICDS set up
2)	No. of States covered	9	31
3)	No. of blocks covered	335	650
4)	No. of SHGs per Block	52	100
5)	Cost per SHG	₹ 56,000	₹ 17,890
6)	Cost per block	30 lakhs	₹ 17.89 lakhs
7)	Total cost	₹ 100 cr. (₹ 13 cr. By GOI)	₹ 116.30 cr. (100% by GOI)
8)	Routing of funds	Directly to the implementing agencies (WDCs)	Through State finance department
9)	Salary for Project Cell at:		
	a) Central Level	Yes	Additional work for existing staff without incentive
	b) State level	Yes	-do-
	c) District level	Yes	-do-

7) Reasons for Slow Progress Under Swayamsidha

Swayamsidha phase-1 launched in 2000-01 was scheduled to end in March, 2006 was extended by one year on account of non-completion of physical and financial targets. The following are the main reasons for slow progress of the scheme:

- Swayamsidha implementation is additional responsibility for State Government staff rendering project implementation and monitoring weak.
 - Swayamsidha is thinly spread (only one or two Blocks per District are covered) making project implementation and monitoring ineffective.
 - The cost per SHG/Block under Swayamsidha was less than half of Swa-Shakti, thereby compromising on quality of inputs to SHGs.
 - Under Swayamsidha, fund transfer is through State Finance Department to the Project Implementing Agency (PIA) which has been slow due to resource crunch faced by most States and lengthy financial procedures mandated.
- 8) It may be concluded that additional inputs, especially in terms of administrative set up at central level, State level and District level enhanced cost norms and non-dependence on the State Governments for project implementation have contributed to better performance of Swa-Shakti project.

Proposed Revision of Swayamsidha:

- 9) In the Annual Plan discussions meeting for MWCD held in Planning Commission on 22-12-2004 under the chairpersonship of Secretary, Planning Commission, it was decided that the schemes of Swayamsidha and Swa-Shakti

should be merged as both are similar programmes. Since Swa-Shakti project ended in June-2005, revision of Swayamsidha on Swa-Shakti lines is contemplated by the Ministry.

10) In the Wrap-up meeting of Swa-Shakti project held on January 6, 2005, the proposed re-structuring of Swayamsidha on Swa-shakti lines was discussed. It was agreed that MWCD would prepare a concept paper for continuation of Swayamsidha Scheme (Phase-2) on Swa-Shakti lines which would be presented to the World Bank by 15-2-2005. The World Bank in its letter dated 18th February, 2005 had consented to support Swayamsidha Phase-2 for the following components:

- Provision of technical assistance including global experience in redesigning Swayamsidha.
- Supporting a slice of the programme cost.
- Contributing to supervision support during programme implementation especially in the Northern States.

11) Based on the recommendations of Planning Commission and the World Bank and the experience of this Ministry, it is proposed to continue Swayamsidha into Phase-2. The following strategy is proposed for Swayamsidha phase-2:

Strategy of Swayamsidha Phase-2

12) Swayamsidha Phase-2 will have the positive aspects of Swayamsidha, Swa-Shakti and Indira Mahila Yojana. The following will be the main features of Swayamsidha Phase-2:

- The scheme will cover all the blocks in the country.
- The scheme will be of 10 years duration.
- Formation of SHGs, clusters and federations, income generation activities etc. will be undertaken in the first 5 years.
- Strengthening of clusters, federations, group income generation activities etc. will be undertaken in the next 5 years.
- New SHGs will be formed wherever required.
- Efforts will be made to take women's SHGs formed under other schemes of Government, NGOs, private companies, banks, individuals, etc. under Swayamsidha fold for formation of clusters and block federations
- Strengthening of such SHGs will be undertaken
- By the end of the scheme, all women participating in the scheme will be part of strong, self reliant and functional SHGs, clusters and federations.

Coverage

13) Swayamsidha Phase-2 will be a country wide programme covering all blocks in the country. Efforts will be made to take women's SHGs formed under other schemes of Government, NGOs, private companies, banks, individuals, etc. under Swayamsidha fold for formation of clusters and block federations.

Duration

14) The Project will be of 10 years duration commencing on 1-4-2008, i.e., the end date of Swayamsidha phase-1. Formation of SHGs, clusters and federations, income generation activities etc. will be undertaken in the first 5 years (11th plan). Strengthening of clusters, federations, group income generation activities etc. will be undertaken in the next 5 years (12th plan).

Implementing Agencies

- 15) A separate unit will be established in MWCD for effective implementation of the scheme. Agencies will be identified in States for project implementation. Such agencies will be strengthened wherever necessary. New agency will be established if appropriate agencies are not available in the State.

Project Activities

- 16) The following will be the main activities under the scheme:

- Baseline survey
- Identification of project implementation agencies in States
- Identification of field level agencies for implementation of various components
- Formation of SHGs
- Training programmes on SHG components and women empowerment components
- Formation of clusters
- Formation of block federations
- Income generation training programmes including implementation of Government projects through SHGs, Clusters and federations
- Convergence with other Govt. schemes
- Community asset creation
- Establishment of marketing linkages
- Quality of control

Project Cost

- 17) Project cost in the 11th five year plan will be approximately ₹ 2850 crores. Project components and cost break-up will be decided after a series of workshops proposed to be organized before project preparation.

Funding

- 18) The World Bank intends to fund the following components which works out to about 50% of total cost:
- Provision of technical assistance including global experience in redesigning Swayamsidha through CPSU.
 - Supporting a slice of the programme cost .
 - Contributing to supervision support during programme implementation especially in the Northern States, through SPMUs and DPIUs.
- 19) The remaining components would be funded by GOI. State Government's/ community's share would be limited to providing land and unskilled labour for community assets to be created.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- 20) External agencies will be identified for carrying out concurrent monitoring, evaluation and research studies and for putting in place a Management Information System.