

National Report  
For  
**CONFINTEA VI**



**National Literacy Mission**  
Department of School Education & Literacy  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
Government of India

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## ***Abbreviations***

<b>AFLP</b>	Accelerated Female Literacy Programme
<b>AE Bureau</b>	Adult Education Bureau
<b>ALE</b>	Adult Learning and Education
<b>CACEE</b>	Centre for Adult and Continuing Education & Extension
<b>CE</b>	Continuing Education
<b>CEC</b>	Continuing Education Centre
<b>CEP</b>	Continuing Education Programme
<b>DACEE</b>	Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension
<b>DAE</b>	Directorate of Adult Education
<b>DEE&amp;L</b>	Department of Elementary Education & Literacy
<b>DOE</b>	Department of Education
<b>DRU</b>	District Resource Unit
<b>DSE&amp;L</b>	Department of School Education & Literacy
<b>DIET</b>	District Institute of Education and Training
<b>EB</b>	Environment Building
<b>EFA</b>	Education For All
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GOI</b>	Government of India
<b>HIV /AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>IAEA</b>	Indian Adult Education Association
<b>ICDS</b>	Integrated Child Development Scheme
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>ILD</b>	International Literacy Day
<b>IPCL</b>	Improved Pace & Contents of Learning
<b>JSS</b>	Jan Shikshan Sansthan
<b>KRP</b>	Key Resource Person
<b>MHRD</b>	Ministry of Human Resource Development
<b>MIS</b>	Management Information System
<b>MRG</b>	Media Research Group
<b>MTs</b>	Master Trainers
<b>n.d.</b>	No date
<b>NAEP</b>	National Adult Education Programme
<b>NCEC</b>	Nodal Continuing Education Centre
<b>NFE</b>	Non Formal Education
<b>NFHS</b>	National Family Health Survey
<b>NIC</b>	National Informatics Centre

<b>NIOS</b>	National Institute of Open Schooling
<b>NGO</b>	Non Government Organization
<b>NLM</b>	National Literacy Mission
<b>NLMA</b>	National Literacy Mission Authority
<b>NPE</b>	National Policy on Education
<b>NPA</b>	National Plan of Action
<b>NREGP</b>	National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme
<b>NREGS</b>	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
<b>NRHM</b>	National Rural Health Mission
<b>NSSO</b>	National Sample Survey Organization
<b>Pdf/PDF</b>	Print Document File
<b>PL</b>	Post Literacy
<b>PLC</b>	Post Literacy Campaign
<b>POA</b>	Programme Of Action
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>PRIs</b>	Panchayati Raj Institutions
<b>PRI</b>	Projects for Residual Illiteracy
<b>RASI</b>	Rural Access Services through Internet
<b>Rs.</b>	Rupees
<b>SC</b>	Scheduled Caste
<b>SDAE</b>	State Directorate of Adult Education
<b>SFLP</b>	Special Female Literacy Programme
<b>SHGs</b>	Self Help Groups
<b>SIOS</b>	State Institute of Open Schooling
<b>SGSY</b>	Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna
<b>SLMAs</b>	State Literacy Mission Authorities
<b>SRCs</b>	State Resource Centres
<b>SSA</b>	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
<b>ST</b>	Scheduled Tribe
<b>SWOT Analysis</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis
<b>T-L</b>	Teaching - Learning
<b>TL</b>	Total Literacy
<b>TLC</b>	Total Literacy Campaign
<b>TSC</b>	Total Sanitation Campaign
<b>TSP</b>	Target Specific Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>UTs</b>	Union Territories
<b>VTs</b>	Volunteer Teachers
<b>ZSS</b>	Zila Saksharta Samiti

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## Chapter 1

### **Adult Education and Literacy in India: A Brief Overview**

Universal elementary education and adult literacy always had an emotive tinge in the national discourse and policy deliberations in India. These were perceived as the basic entitlement of the citizens, the minimum that the state owed it to the people and something which had a critical role to play in the nation's socio-cultural and economic development and strengthening India's democracy. Recognizing this importance, the Constitution enjoined the state to provide, within 10 years from the adoption of the Constitution in 1951, universal free and compulsory education to all children till they completed 14 years of age. In all the subsequent Five Year Plans starting from 1950-51, there has been an overriding priority on universal elementary education. The education of adults witnessed shifts in focus and contents as well as scale, in terms of the size of the programme and its outreach, from one decade to another until the National Literacy Mission (NLM) came on the scene. In the following paragraphs, a brief overview of the major programmes and their main focus are provided, as a backdrop to the literacy movement after the launching of the NLM.

#### **Social Education and Increased Economic Productivity: Changing Objectives and Focus of Adult Education in Initial Years**

In the context of the new aspirations of galvanizing Indian people in national reconstruction, adult education was invested with a wider objective of inculcating citizenship, health, acquisition of information and skills and improvement of vocational skills. This was called Social Education, and this focus informed the approach to adult education through the 1950s till mid-60 when a more direct correlation between literacy and economic development, known as Functional Literacy became the dominant focus. Functional Literacy approach was translated into the Farmer's Functional Literacy Programme (FFLP) to improve their efficiency in agricultural productivity. Jointly undertaken by Ministries of Food and Agriculture, Information and Broadcasting and Education, the FFLP that was initially introduced in the Green Revolution belt was later extended to new areas to also include small farmers, tribal areas, draught prone areas, etc., and by the end of 70s, the FFLP got transformed into Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP) covering more than a fourth of India's districts, and reaching out to .88 million people.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Mass Literacy Campaign – A One Off Enterprise**

Amidst the changing focus of adult education starting with social education and then functional literacy, there were some experiments in several

states which shone for a brief while. One was the Village Literacy Movement (Gram Shikshan Mohim) that started in Satara District in 1959 and quickly spread to the whole of Maharashtra State in the '60s. The Mohim started in rural areas of Satara district by impressing upon and enthusing the teachers and villagers through mass meetings to teach illiterates. It envisaged a 4 months teaching to impart minimum essential literacy proficiency and also provide follow up services for learning further. Within a period of 2 years, the persons made literate rocketed from 11,000 to 109,000 in the district. As regards standard of literacy, besides a basic minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy, information about sanitation, farming, and village administration was imparted. Villages achieving cent per literacy, complete cleanliness and necessary arrangements for good sanitation, drinking water, construction of approach roads by the villagers celebrated the event with great fervor. The UNESCO Mohammed Reza Pahlavi Prize to the Mohim in 1972 appreciated how the Mohim "managed to eradicate illiteracy completely in 36,693 villages... where it brought literacy to 450,000 men and 520,000 women...".<sup>2</sup> The success of the Mohim merited up scaling it into a mass movement for literacy on a national scale, but this could not be taken up for various reasons, and the issue of adult education came on national agenda only in 1978 with the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP).

### **First Nation-wide Adult Education Initiative – NAEP**

With a new government at the national level, highest priority was given to Universal Elementary Education and Adult Education. In NAEP, adult education was defined as literacy, functionality and conscientisation. However, given 65% of illiteracy in the country, literacy had to be the core component of adult education. Functionality would teach practical skills to improve productivity. Conscientisation meant imparting among the poor and the disadvantaged, critical awareness about the condition and organized to transform it. NAEP was to cover an estimated 100 million non-literates in the 15-35 age groups within five years, by 1983-84. Besides enormous preparation for techno-pedagogical support and training, the NAEP consciously tried to move away from being identified as a government programme, and provided for greater participation of voluntary agencies (VAs), in a host of activities ranging from running the centers, developing learning materials, providing training and taking up research and evaluation.

Launched in 1978, NAEP ran for two years and with a change of government at the Centre, was subjected to review.<sup>3</sup> It was noticed that whatever was under the government like creation of administrative and techno-pedagogic resource support structures and personnel, was got done, more or less, and whatever required mobilization of the people, did

not always get done. Of the 3 components of NAEP, literacy did relatively better, but functionality and awareness suffered from organizers and instructors' lack of clarity. The lack of involvement of political parties, and their mass organizations of women, youth and workers, associations of teachers and trade unions, limited the scope of NAEP as a people's programme. The major problems lay in the methodology. The government was not seen as the implementing agency. VA and NGOs as the main implementing agency brought numerous problems, with about 30,000 of them entering the fray, many of them 'fly by night' ones with pure commercial motives or those with communal and ideological agendas. But there were also many who saw in it a great opportunity to work in behalf of the poor, and in fact did remarkable work. Despite these limitations, one assessment reckoned that some 130,000 literacy centers were active, where some 3,640,000 adults were enrolled. At least 10% of those enrolled learned to read and write. 30,000 functionaries – instructors, supervisors and writers of books and primers – were trained. Some 3,000 literacy and post-literacy texts and materials were published. A start was made with monitoring and evaluation.<sup>4</sup>

The review of NAEP signaled sweeping changes in the programme in duration and implementation agency. Literacy as a redistributive justice that the state owed to the people was accepted when adult education was included first in the "Minimum Needs Programme", and later in the "20 Point Programme". All other parameters like clientele, age group, the administrative and techno-pedagogic support structures and programme – as Centrally Sponsored – remained the same even when NAEP was changed to Adult Education Programme (AEP) from 1984. The duration of the programme, viz., 10 months was considered too insufficient and a three-year duration was adopted whereby literacy, awareness and functionality components could be adequately covered during one year period. The target deadline fixed by NAEP, viz., covering 100 million non-literates by 1985 was shifted to 1990. In respect of resources, as compared to Rs. 2000 million allocated for NAEP, only Rs. 1200 million was earmarked under the revised Sixth Plan (1980-85), more than half of which was to come from the States.<sup>5</sup>

Looking back, clear changes could be discerned in policy perceptions, approaches, programme packages, shifts in focus of the clientele and decreasing resource allocations adult education in India. Adult education invested with lofty ideals could not really deliver either the literacy objective or other larger social objectives, except in brief spells and in a limited scale in terms of number of people covered.



## **NPE, 1986: First Breakthrough towards a National Initiative for Adult Education**

Prior to the National Policy on Education, 1986, and its Programme of Action, there were promises of a breakthrough many times, as with the Education Commission, 1966 and the first National Education Policy, 1968. Unlike the earlier efforts, the NPE, 1986 was a turning point, as became evident from the subsequent initiatives to translate its intents into a strategy document – National Literacy Mission - setting forth the vision, the mission and the measures to overhaul the design, methodology and agencies of implementation, as attempted by NLM. The literacy movement that India witnessed in the 1990s and later has few parallels elsewhere in the world not only in respect of the scale of the learners as well as those – volunteers, literacy activists, resource persons, etc., involved in reaching literacy and other objectives of NLM, but also in respect of the challenges faced and innovations adopted in every respect of the literacy initiative. Some of these dimensions are dwelt in detail in the ensuing sections.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Policy, Legislation and Financing**

#### **2.1.1 Policy Environment regarding Literacy and Continuing Education in India**

Adult literacy had always been viewed as crucial for the socio-economic and political development of the country. Literacy and educated citizenry has been viewed as the bedrock of Indian democracy. In respect of the policy environment in recent times, the genesis of India's famed literacy movement of the 1990s lay in the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and as revised in 1992 that accorded unqualified priority for literacy by stating that "the whole nation must pledge itself to eradication of illiteracy, particularly in the 15-35 age group".<sup>6</sup> The NPE's Programme of Action (POA), 1986 spelt out the operational strategy of covering the (what at that time was reckoned to be total) 100 million non-literates—40 million by 1990 and another 60 million by 1995. However, given the woefully inadequate coverage of stipulated targets in the past, and in view of the magnitude, the POA proposed the eradication of illiteracy to be treated with a sense of urgency, and hence to be made a "mission".<sup>7</sup> The National Literacy Mission (NLM) launched in 1988 was, thus, the offshoot of the NPE, 1986 and its POA, and it was set up with the aim of imparting functional literacy to 80 million adults by 1995. After trying out different models, the NLM came to adopt the mass campaign approach, known as the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), as the dominant strategy for adult literacy.

The TLC approach has been adopted for its area-specific, time-bound, participative delivery through voluntarism, cost-effective and outcome-oriented character. A combined Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PL&CE) was conceived in the beginning, as per the revised NPE's POA (1992), as a single unit in terms of a programme format, to consolidate literacy and improve the neo-literates' functional (literacy application) ability, keeping pace with changing requirements, to solve day-to-day problems and improve their well being. The Post-Literacy Campaigns had three specific learning objectives to address, viz., remediation, continuation and application. The PLC was also expected to address the skill development of neo-literates – skills relating to life, survival, communication and occupation. And, skill development for women became the major agenda of PLCs. The community was to be fully involved in planning and implementation the PL programmes.<sup>8</sup>

**Our Timeless Right to Read and Write  
Glimpses from TLC in Delhi**

Delhi celebrated the learning process when the Total Literacy programme was launched in the city. So much creativity was unleashed that people found themselves anew. A difficult social welfare scheme, where figures pointed to 1.2 million illiterates (1991 Census), turned into a joyful family affair spelling hope and determination to more than half of them. The capital city, known for its commercial cosmopolitan jungle of concrete and politics came alive with a concern and caring, epitomizing the voluntary spirit. How did this transformation come about?

... The personalized beginning brought excellent rapport with the members of the learning community. Roadside 'chaiwallahs' [tea vendors] saw teachers and volunteers from all walks of life stopping to drink a cup with a learner. In our own experience, we found we became oblivious to the open drains or to the filth. We felt the warmth of the people who yearned to be taught! We saw the aspirations of the people who were less fortunate in their access to education. The blessings of all those who were ever so grateful was worth millions. In time, we found the slum dwellers themselves became aware of their surroundings and devised many ways of keeping their area clear.

A story that is set in the slums of Nangloi needs to be told. A lane where literacy classes were being held in the houses on either side had open drainage. The drains were far from clean. The literacy workers kept pointing out the danger of living in filth. Soon the learners too became sensitized and one day when the drain overflowed, a group of neo-literate women brought together by the literacy classes, went to the Municipal Corporation and refused to move till they had been attended to. Since then, any complaint from that lane is immediately attended to by the Municipal office!

...The credit for a programme run on such a mammoth scale is shared equally by all the volunteers. Volunteers came from many walks of life. Some were students. Some were special students, like this one in Sagarpur who was affected by polio and so could not walk. So motivated were his learners that they even carried him to class so that he could teach them. There is another teacher who is but ten years old, and you must see her to believe the command she wields over her students! There are those like Zia-ul-Huq. Zia is a young boy who came from Bihar to study in Delhi. He lives in Yamuna Pushta, notorious for drugs, murders and violence. This young boy walks the entire area, rain or shine, to motivate people to read and write, supervising the existing classes and in short taking upon him to run the literacy programme in the area. What motivates him, a boy so young, one cannot fathom.

Excerpts from S. Regunathan and Sudhamahi Regunathan,  
"Our Timeless Right to Read and Write", in UNESCO and NLM,  
*A Decade of Liteacy*, New Delhi, no date.  
S. Regunathan was Education Secretary of Delhi Govt.

### **2.1.1(i) Policy Environment of Literacy and Continuing Education after 1997**

The Scheme of Continuing Education, conceptualized as a separate scheme in 1996 and launched by NLM from 1997, as distinct from the combined PL & CE scheme envisaged in 1992, aimed to provide learning opportunities to the neo-literates on a continuing basis and to reinforce and widen the literacy skills for their personal, social and economic improvement. The CE Scheme has been designed to provide a comprehensive range of appropriate and effective opportunities to all for life long learning. For this purpose, the CE Centre, the main delivery point of CE programmes, manned by a Prerak (Animator), is meant to be a center of library, reading room, training, information, development (coordination and convergence), culture, sports, communication and discussion forum. The CEC was seen as a permanent institution, located in a public place and open to all. Community involvement, the bedrock of the literacy movement, was emphasized as one of the critical points of the CE Scheme, for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness. With this end in view, the organizational structure from district to block and village levels was mandated to be socially representative, and management and ownership of the CEC to be in the hands of the local community. Neo-literates, women, Panchayats (elected local self-government bodies), NGOs and village teachers were to be stakeholders of the CEC so that the programmes organized meet the explicit local needs.<sup>9</sup>

**2.1.1(ii) Figuring Out Future Directions of the Literacy Movement:** By 2000, the literacy movement that started in 1990, had covered more than 80% of India's near 600 Districts. By mid-2003, out of 599 Districts in India, 159 Districts were still under TLC phase; 232 were in Post-Literacy Programme phase and 153 under the Continuing Education phase.

In respect of the current focus and future directions, the Tenth Plan approvingly said that "NLM is now engaged in the task of imparting functional literacy to persons in the 15-35 age group and has set the following medium-term goal for itself: To achieve a sustainable threshold literacy level of 75 per cent by 2005".<sup>10</sup>

However, the same target deadline of reaching the threshold level of 75% literacy level had been reset around 2002-03 to be achieved by 2007.<sup>11</sup>

At the national level, during the Ninth Plan (1997-2002), the focus of NLM was on re-organising its approach to Post-Literacy, and Continuing Education Programmes. With most of the districts in the country getting covered under TLC, the focus was getting shifted to reorganizing the Post-Literacy programmes. On the Continuing Education front, NLM was trying to figure out the ways of providing sustained support to the CE programmes. These shifts in focus were facilitated with the “revamping of NLM” by the Union Cabinet by approving some very significant changes in the range of activities of the Mission in the literacy movement. These included: (a) an integrated ‘Literacy Campaign’, amalgamating all the features of TL & PL phases; (b) freedom and flexibility allowed to ZSS (Zila Saksharta Samiti or District Literacy Society, a Registered Society, generally under the leadership of the District Collector – the executive head of a district), the implementing agency at the district level, to pool in the energies of local youth clubs, women’s organizations, voluntary agencies, Panchayats, small scale industries, cooperative societies, etc., for the literacy programmes; (c) major role envisaged for NGOs, by allowing them to receive funds from ZSS and actually run Continuing Education Centres in the villages, as well as running literacy classes for the beneficiaries of different development programmes and also for organizing life skills and vocational training programmes for neo-literates; (d) devolution of financial powers to the State Literacy Mission Authorities to sanction projects of Continuing Education; and (e) strengthening of the State Resource Centres and strengthening and enlarging the reach out of Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) engaged in building life and vocational/technical skills among neo-literates.<sup>12</sup>

### **Women on Wheels**

An aspect of Pudukkotai's literacy campaign that played a crucial role in catapulting the district to national eminence was a very imaginative and unique effort: teaching women cycling as part of the process of their becoming empowered and self-reliant. This proved a truly remarkable and successful movement.

In order to motivate women to learn cycling and to give the programme a focus, a series of cycle races were planned for the new trainees of the DWCRA groups -- 250 groups in the district, with about 2,500 members (a government funded poverty alleviation scheme). Races were planned at the group, block and district levels, with prizes for winners. The Indian Bank came forward to sponsor the prizes. The cycle races, while carefully planned, were informal affairs designed to draw women into an activity, which had hitherto been regarded as taboo for them. The races became the subject matter of discussion among the men and women of the district and set the stage for the introduction of mobility (cycling) as the fifth component of the TLC. After it got linked up with the TLC, cycling became a social movement and was truly massive in character.

All volunteers of the TLC were asked to give training in cycling to their learners. The village youth (men and women alike) were enlisted for this task, and all those who had cycles (mostly the men) were asked to lend them for a few hours each day for training the learners. In many places, volunteers and learners learnt cycling together creating a new bond of solidarity.

The cycling event, which took the district by storm, was the cycle yatra (procession) of 11 young girls. These girls traveled 750 kilometres across the length and breadth of the district on bicycles, visiting hamlets and habitations. Over a 25-day period, these 'arivoli ambassadors' took the message of literacy to every nook and corner of the district and also taught cycling. The cyclists were welcome in every village. Many women openly admired these young girls who were touring the entire district in support of women, literacy and mobility. The cycle yatra enthused thousands of girls in the countryside to come out of their shells and take to cycling in a big way.

The Cycling Training-cum-Demonstration week was a great success all over the district. About 70,000 coupons were distributed. There were 40,000 women who actually came and participated in the centers organized in different parts of the district.

International Women's Day on 8 March was celebrated in Pudukkotai with a massive cycle rally, with about 1,600 women cyclists from all parts of the district. The town of Pudukkottai was treated to the sight of 1,600 women cycling a 10 kilometre route round the town. A banner at the start of the rally read "Women on the Move" – a caption eminently appropriate, figuratively and literally. Ever since the rally, the parking lots in the girls' schools and colleges in Pudukkottai are overflowing with cycles.

Excerpts from Venkatesh B. Athreya and Sheela Rani Chunkath,  
**Literacy and Empowerment**, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1996.

### **2.1.2 Priority goals of Literacy and Continuing Education**

With the “revamped NLM”, the policy directions “beyond 2000” figured out in its EFA 2000 Assessment, and the Dakar Declarations as a reference point, the Tenth Plan Working Group identified the priority areas in adult literacy programme: adult illiteracy as basically the problem of social groups, including women, the SCs and STs, and, therefore, calling for special efforts to remove the obstacles to their participation in the literacy programmes.<sup>13</sup> The same has been endorsed and adopted in the final Plan as well.<sup>14</sup>

The EFA National Plan of Action (2003) [hereafter as EFA-NPA] endorsed: the changes approved in the “revamping” of NLM at the end of 1999; the “future policy directions”, indicated in the EFA 2000 Assessment, and the Focus Areas” as underlined by the Working Group and adopted in Tenth Plan final document. Thus, besides adopting the priority areas indicated already, the EFA-NPA had mainly re-set and re-focused a few of the priorities stressed during 1999-2002, for the X Five Year Plan in respect of literacy and continuing education. Some of the re-set and re-focused priorities include:

- ❖ Achievement of 75 per cent literacy level by 2007.
- ❖ A multi-pronged strategy in order to address the regional, social and gender disparities in literacy.
- ❖ Refocusing the literacy, post-literacy and CE programmes to increase and strengthen women’s participation, so as to bridge the gender gap in literacy.
- ❖ Encouraging PL and CE districts to pay special attention to mobilization and organization of women into neo-literate and self-help groups (SHGs).
- ❖ Special attention to socially disadvantaged groups like SCs/STs and women, in the Tenth Plan.
- ❖ 45 districts with <30 % female literacy rate selected for a multi-pronged strategy to raise female literacy.
- ❖ NLM’s special stress with the ZSS to take up literacy and skill upgradation programmes for the SCs/STs and women in particular.

Efforts made in different States to address these priorities had come in for special recognition from National Literacy Mission as they illuminate the new priorities envisaged under the Tenth Plan. These include: the innovative approaches adopted in different States in addressing female literacy; the involvement of the Panchayats to eradicate female illiteracy in low female literacy districts; literacy and improvement programmes, for women, using the SHGs as the basic unit, as promoted on a large scale in States like Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh; an accelerated programme of basic literacy for women, implemented through a network of about 100 NGOs, in the State of Uttar Pradesh, etc. As more and more districts completed the TL and PL phases, and graduate to the CE phase, NLM expected to cover all districts under CE by the end of the Tenth Plan period, i.e. 2007, bringing the entire country under CE by that time".<sup>15</sup>

### **2.1.3 Organisation of Literacy and Continuing Education within Government**

With respect to legislative and policy environment relating to literacy and continuing education in India, and the nodal agency (ies) for its implementation, it would be pertinent to remember the Constitutional set up and governance system in India. India is a federal set up with the Union or Central Government at the national level and State Governments (under 35 States and Union Territories). Education under Indian Constitution is a Concurrent subject and both the Union and State Governments have the right and obligation to promote education – both formal (from the pre-primary to higher education, including all branches and specializations) and non-formal education.

On the pattern of the national Five Year Plans, the State Governments too formulate their five year plans, conforming largely to the broad strategies, approaches and priorities spelt out in the national five year plan document. The same applies to education policies and legislations as well. In respect of literacy, the National Literacy Mission as an arm of the Central Government formulates the policies and strategies on the lines of the NPE 1986 and 1992 and its POA, as well as in conformity with the successive Five Year Plan approaches and priorities with respect to the EFA goals and targets. Within this overall national EFA and adult literacy perspectives, the State governments also align their EFA and adult literacy plans and strategies.

#### **2.1.3(i) National Literacy Mission Authority**

National Literacy Mission Authority was set up as an independent and autonomous wing of the Department, vested with executive and financial



powers in its sphere of work. The NLMA has a General Council, Executive Committee and Project Approval Committee. The General Council functions under the Chairmanship of Minister for Human Resource Development and lays down the policies and strategies in the field of literacy and Adult Education. The Executive Committee and Project Approval Committee function under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Elementary Education and Literacy. While the Executive Committee carries out all other functions of the Authority, the Project Approval Committee considers and approves literacy projects for financial assistance.

The Central-State share for TLC and PLP is 2:1 for the general districts and 4:1 for the tribal districts. For CE programmes, the Central Government provides 100% funding for the first three years and the funding is shared on a 50:50 basis respectively in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years. The State Governments are expected to take over the programme in its entirety after five years. One CEC is sanctioned for a population of 2000-2500 and a Nodal Continuing Centre (NCEC) for a cluster of 8-10 CECs. A one time non-recurring grant of Rs. 25,000/- for each CEC and Rs. 45,000 for each NCEC is sanctioned. Recurring grant on the same scale is provided for CECs/NCECs each year.

### **2.1.3(ii) Empowering State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMAs)**

Keeping pace with the endeavours, campaigns and programmes, which are being initiated by the NLM, it was decided to strengthen and revitalise the State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMA) – the State-level society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. This is a step Towards decentralisation, as it shows that the SLMAs have reached a stage where they can be made responsible for the programmes, which are being initiated for their States. The devolution of administrative and financial powers to them will lead to a faster-moving administrative set up, and therefore, programmes can be initiated faster, and decisions taken without any delay, leading to more efficient developmental programmes. Each State has to set up a SLMA. The new SLMAs are now empowered to sanction continuing education projects.

### **2.1.4 Alignment of Policies and Implementation Strategies**

**2.1.4 (i) Convergence between different Ministries/Departments:** With other ministries like Health & Family Welfare, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, etc., convergence and linkages have been in the form of directives to include national concerns in adult education curriculum such as population and development education, HIV /AIDS, government

schemes for poverty alleviation, consumer and legal awareness, women development, and environment conservation.

At the State level, SRCs involved experts from different departments / ministries for designing curriculum and training on development issues and concerns other than literacy like health and hygiene, population & development education, environment, gender, vocational training and income generation, self help groups, Panchayati Raj.

More meaningful and diverse linkages and convergence happened at District and sub-District levels between adult education and other programme sectors. In most of the Districts practically every development department/programme was associated with adult education programme in one way or the other and in greater or lesser degree. Mechanism adopted to strengthen these linkages were through memberships of formal and informal bodies, sharing of programme resources as the clients of literacy and other development programmes were common at the grass roots levels.

**District with Maximum Number of SHGs under CE Programme  
Ajmer District (Rajasthan)**

Ajmer District of Rajasthan is a historically active socio-cultural hub. Ajmer was the first district in Rajasthan to start the TLC in 1990 and the CE Programme in 1997, which is still functioning very actively. With 97 NCECs and 970 CECs, Ajmer CE Programme could boast of:

- Unique monitoring network initiated by the District Collector, who took keen interest by instructing all development officers to visit CECs and discuss people's problems, and with his authorization, sort them out and file Action Taken Report immediately. This has helped in monitoring as well as convergence.
- The majority of CEC buildings are owned by ZSS or given by Panchayats and schools.
- The habit of reading books and newspapers has been inculcated among a large number of people. The CECs could be seen with a large number of people using the books and newspapers.
- 7000 SHGs with 91,800 members have been formed and income generation activities have been undertaken on a large scale, with marketing facility arranged by district administration through weekly fairs.
- Visible convergence with concerned development and technical departments.
- CECs have become the focal point of village life. People's problems are sorted out in the CECs as far as possible. Meetings of the Village Education Committee and SHGs are held in the CECs.
- In its 5<sup>th</sup> year of CE Programme, all the targeted 163,078 non-literates/semi-literates have been enrolled in literacy classes. An impressive 987,654 persons are taking advantage of NCECs and CECs, under its different Target Specific Programmes.

Excerpts from NLM, *Recognition of Literacy Initiatives*  
Directorate of Adult Education,  
New Delhi, 2007

## 2.2 Financing of Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes

### 2.2.1 Budgetary Provision during X Plan

**2.2.1(a):** The system for allocation of funds for literacy and continuing education in India is a part of the allocations for School Education and Literacy. At the Union or Central Government level, there is no other Ministry, which makes a separate allocation for literacy in respect of non-literate adults. During IX Five Year Plan (1997-98 to 2001-02) the approved outlay for literacy and continuing education programmes was Rs. 630.39 crore. An enhanced allocation amount of Rs 650.97 crores was made out of which an expenditure of Rs 521.19 crore was incurred. During the X Five Year Plan (2002-03 to 2006-07), an allocation of Rs.1241.50 crores was received for Adult Education. The expenditure incurred was Rs. 1148.04, as given in table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1: Year wise Allocation and Expenditure under the IX Five Year Plan**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Allocation</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
2002-03	233.00	216.29
2003-04	233.00	232.50
2004-05	250.00	236.47
2005-06	290.00	249.30
2006-07	235.50	213.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1241.50</b>	<b>1148.04</b>

As has been the practice, the allocation of funds was clearly earmarked for different components of adult education, as below (Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: X Five Year Plan Outlays for Adult Education Programmes**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name of Scheme</b>	<b>X Plan Outlay (Rs. in Crores)</b>
1.	Literacy Campaigns	95.00
2.	Continuing Education	826.00
3.	Jan Shikshan Sansthan	130.00
4.	Support of NGOs	110.00
5.	NLMA	10.00
6.	Directorate of Adult Education	70.00
7.	Population Education	8.00
8.	National Institute of Open Schooling	1.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1250.00</b>

As evident from the table 2.2, the allocation for CE programme was the highest, viz., Rs.826 crores, followed by the allocations for Jan Shikshan Sansthans - Rs. 130 crores and support to NGOs - Rs.110 crores, most of which were the allocations for the SRCs

#### **2.2.1(b): Contributions from other Sectors/Ministries for Literacy and CEP**

The target group of that National Literacy Mission addresses are also the same addressed by many other social welfare and development Ministries/departments and its agencies. Their contributions range from earmarking of funds, as part of their own programmes, for awareness and knowledge dissemination, life and livelihood skills imparting/training, releasing their professional/technical personnel to work for literacy and continuing education programmes, but paid by parent department. These agencies include university and college and school teachers both under State and Central Governments purview, professionals from banks and other departments/professional and research institutions, being released to work on secondment basis.

The institutional facilities and resource persons provided for training of literacy personnel at national and state levels constitute another instance of the contribution of other Ministries/departments and their agencies. The most important dimension relates to the extension activities to make clientele aware and give them the knowledge, and skills to avail their schemes. Some of these Ministries included Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Health, Social Justice, Tribal Development, Minorities, Women and Child Development, Agriculture, etc. Such a kind of involvement has been enjoined in education policy and NLM programmes and its implementation guidelines.

### **2.2.1(c): ALE in Decentralised/local bodies' budget**

The Constitutional Amendments (73 and 74) decentralized a large number of social sector, infrastructure and basic amenities related subjects to the elected local self-government bodies, both in urban and rural areas, known as the Nagar Palikas and Panchayats. Adult education, like formal school education, is one of them. But the extent of devolution of resources to panchayats varies from state to state. States such as Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, etc., do not only devolve funds directly to panchayats in respect of literacy and continuing education programmes but also accord a great deal of priority for the panchayats and urban local bodies to effectively utilize the funds.

### **2.2.1(d) & 2.2.2: Other Investments including Foreign bilateral/multilateral Agencies**

In the field of adult literacy and continuing education, there has not been any significant external funding, while in respect of primary education, there has been substantial external funding from many bilateral and multilateral agencies. UNESCO has been involved in encouraging and giving awards for innovations and best practices in programmes as well as by institutions engaged in ALE. It has also been involved in promoting research and documentation of innovations and best practices. UNICEF has undertaken a pilot project last year in four states viz., Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to involve college students enrolled in the National Cadet Corps in literacy programme in collaboration with the respective ZSS.

The recently held UNESCO Regional Conference in Support of Global Literacy at New Delhi on 29-30, 2007, and attended by delegates from 14 countries of South, South-West and Central Asian countries recommended that: International partners and donors should give high priority to adult literacy, and support programmes, capacity development, monitoring, evaluation and research; and, as an EFA financing and support mechanism, the EFA Fast Track Initiative should raise awareness of the possibility of using it to support adult literacy and increase its funding in this area.

### **2.2.3 Support to Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes from private/corporate sector**

Literacy and Continuing Education in India has predominantly been a government responsibility except for a very limited scale of NGOs involvement. There has been no tradition of private and corporate sector involvement in literacy programmes, as can be seen in the case of formal education system from pre-primary to higher and professional levels.

Of late, there have been a few cases of corporates entering the adult literacy sector using ICT especially computers for literacy. Computer Based Literacy Programme has been undertaken in many states on an experimental basis by the Tata Consultancy Services. In the State of Rajasthan, especially in Chittorgarh District, there are cases of Public Private Partnerships wherein corporates are engaged jointly with the ZSS in promoting literacy linked livelihood project on a pilot basis covering every single illiterate in the selected villages. There are also instances of corporates undertaking ICT capacity building of literacy and continuing education grassroots workers – Animators (Preraks) of the CE centers and Nodal CECs and also for imparting computer literacy to the neo-literates. Instances such as these are still limited and financially very miniscule in relation to the national budget for the literacy programmes.

#### **2.2.4 Civil Society and Individuals' Support for Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes**

Civil society support to adult literacy programmes in India could be said to have been one of the most distinguished facets of the whole venture. This has been more so at the level of basic literacy – TLC phase. It is reckoned that the NLM mobilized and brought under the literacy fold nearly 150 million non-literates. They were taught by 12-15 million literacy Volunteers. At least another 2 million academic Resource Persons provided training and other academic and managerial support on voluntary basis. Even at a conservative estimate of Rs. 1000 per Volunteer, and reckoning the average TLC duration to be 10 months (i.e., Rs. 10,000 per Volunteer), the cost to the government on 12 million Volunteers alone would have been Rs. 12,000 crores, if payment were made.

The civil society generosity during the Environment Building (EB) phase, especially for the performances of the cultural troupes, used to be in myriad forms – ranging from welcome arrangement, including arcs and gates, garlands, food for members of cultural troupes and its other staff, electricity, lights and sound system, stage arrangements and the like. Even on an average of Rs. 10,000 per performance and @ 200 villages per district, the cost of EB to the community in 600 districts would have been Rs. 120 crores. This is just for one cultural performance. There were many literacy meetings, rallies, conventions, cultural performances during the TLC, PLP and CE phases. The money value of community involvement must have been manifold more, leave alone the actual expenses they shouldered. Literacy activists used to vouch for the fact that the civil society generosity was greater among the poorer sections than among the better off sections.

**Development and Empowerment of Women  
The Quarry Initiative in Pudukkottai**

At about the same time as the TLC was sanctioned, the Pudukkotta district administration had taken an important initiative, viz., leasing the stone quarries under the DWCRA scheme to women quarry workers. For quarry DWCRA members, the literacy campaign provided a key input into strengthening group solidarity and also enabled them to establish wider contacts with dedicated activists of the literacy campaign.

Poverty, low levels of literacy and little social clout made these quarry workers easy targets for the unscrupulous quarry contractors. Hard labour, caste discrimination, low wages, and uncertain employment characterized the working conditions of some 40,000 quarry workers in Pudukkottai district. Economically and socially oppressed, these quarry workers were in virtual bondage to the contractors of quarries. Entire families worked in the quarries eking out a meager living. Women earn red about Rs. 5-7 per day, the mean around Rs. 15. The contractors made huge profits as there was a ready market for the materials mined. The profits accrued to the contractor mainly because of his ability to take the quarries on auction and not because he exercised much entrepreneurial or managerial ability. The process was clearly exploitative.

Vesting the lease rights of quarries with the labourers themselves could break the age-old bondedness of the labourers to the contractors. A conscious decision was taken by the district administration to give the un-auctioned quarries on lease to especially groups of women workers, as it was feared that many of the men were addicted to drink and could be pressured into submitting to heir old masters. A new experiment of social change was thus attempted by giving groups of women labourers the lease rights of the quarries they had worked in. Vesting the rights of mining quarries with the women labourers was to throw a challenge to decades of domination exercised by entrenched, vested interests that were not willing to surrender to easily. The initial breakthrough was possible because of the strong interest shown by the district administration. The process became sustainable, however, due to changes brought about in the social milieu by the TLC and the women leaders and activists who emerged during the process of the campaign.

Economically, the DWCRA quarry workers are better off than every before. While the economic transformation of the lives of the quarry workers has been remarkable, the change that the process had wrought in the psyche of these people has been even more so. Vasantha had learnt to cycle at the Kudimiyamalai training camp and she now goes whizzing past the erstwhile contractors, unmindful of their disapproval. She and her companions have done what would earlier have brought swift retribution.

Excerpts from Venkatesh B. Athreya and Sheela Rani Chunkath,  
**Literacy and Empowerment**, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1996.



### **2.2.5 Learners'/Individuals' Contribution to Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes**

Literacy Volunteers in most cases have been the youth – school/college students, and school/college pass outs or dropouts. Learners'/Individuals' contribution to literacy programmes in Indian context could more appropriately be counted as the family and civil society contribution. The socio-economic profile of the learners, almost as a rule, is one of deprivation. Not only they give their time for literacy and participation in literacy-related functions and events organized. But when the organizers approach the community for contribution, it is the learners whom they approach with greater liberty and expectation. And it is the learners who contribute whatever they could – some times in kind, in the form of time and labour, etc.

The Preraks, who manage the CE Centres almost on full time basis, receive only a nominal/token honorarium. Their counterparts in formal primary education level receive 3-4 times more. Thus, the money value of the Preraks' contribution to continuing education centres too is a significant parameter.

### **2.2.6 Direct and Indirect Financial Incentives in Support of Literacy and CEP**

One of the central features of the mass literacy campaigns, called TLCs in India, has been the principle of voluntarism. No payment of any kind was ever provided to the literacy Volunteers. This was also the case in respect of the learners. The system under the CE Programme has been different. As the Preraks were expected to man the CECs for at least 6 hours a day, an honorarium @ Rs. 500 since 1997 and Rs. 750 from 2007 has been given.

Of late, however, many state governments started experimenting payment to the literacy instructors as well. The first case has been Madhya Pradesh in the late 1990s, wherein a Guruji (teacher) identified by a group of learners, register themselves as a society called Padna Badna Samiti (Study and Progress Society). Upon their registration with Block Development Officer, learning materials were supplied to them besides

training to the Gurujis. The Guruji would receive Rs. 100 per person made literate at the end of the literacy campaign, as ascertained by actual testing by an external evaluation agency.

The second State to tryout this model has been Rajasthan. The consideration is that the literacy instructors are engaged in literacy camps which are day long engagements for more than a month. The learners are also supplied with tea and snacks during the camp.

In Karnataka, literacy instructors give nearly 3 hours a day for teaching literacy and they get Rs. 20 a day. The learners get Rs. 10 a day for their participation in the literacy camp. Karnataka also uses the students of IX and XI Standard in the Each One Teach Two programme where a student has to teach two non-literate adults, mainly their own kith and kin or neighbours and receive 10 and 20 marks respectively in their annual examinations.

### **2.2.7 Benchmarks in regard to Financing Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes**

There has been a policy consensus that 6% of GDP must be diverted to education. But there has been no separate benchmark in respect of resource allocation to adult literacy programmes. The notion about realistic benchmark within adult education circles could be seen generally in the recommendations of the Working Groups for Adult Education for the Five Year Plans. The Working Group on Adult Education for the Eleventh Five Year Plan suggested Rs. 34,000 crores against which only Rs. 6000 crores has been allotted for adult literacy and continuing education programmes in the Eleventh Plan.

## Chapter 3

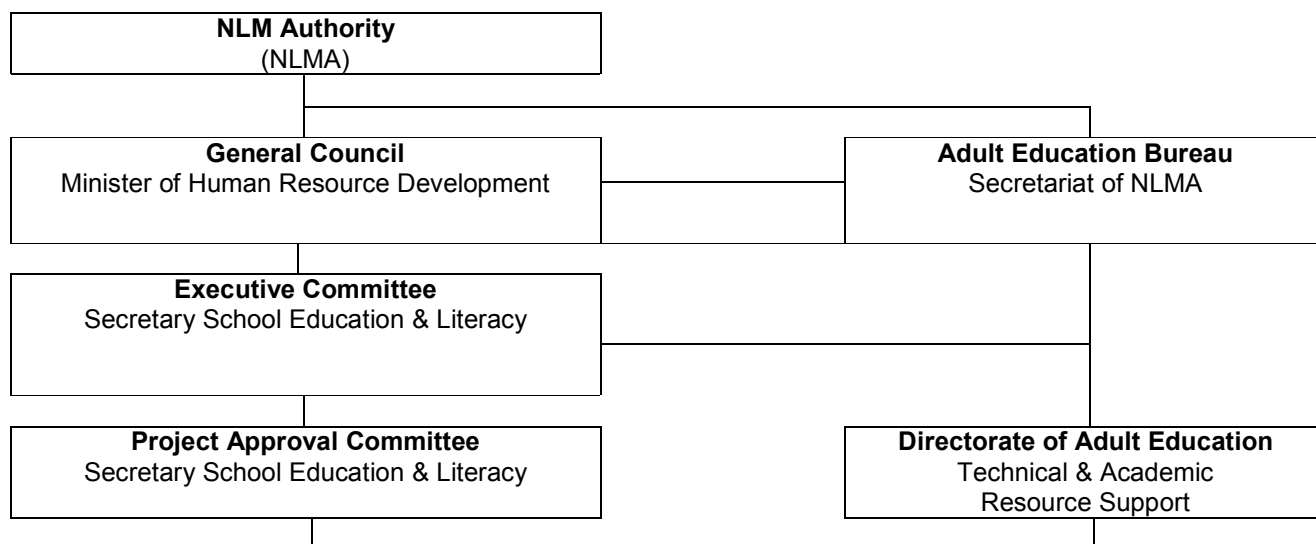
### **Quality of Literacy and Continuing Education: Provision, Participation and Achievement**

#### **3.1. Provision of Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes and Institutional Frameworks**

In India, there are institutional frameworks from national up to the district and sub district levels to manage adult literacy and continuing education programmes. Since 1997, these institutional frameworks have undergone several changes in terms of their numbers, composition, scope of work and financial allocations to align with the extension of the literacy programmes to almost the entire nation, and with more and more districts coming under the PLP and CEP phases as well as the special drives to deal with problem of illiteracy among women, residual illiteracy and low literacy districts.

**3.1.1. Institutions Managing and Coordinating ALE at National and Sub National Levels:** At the national level, the NLM Authority (NLMA), in the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, is the apex body to manage and coordinate adult literacy and continuing education programmes. The NLMA has a General Council, which takes all policy decisions in respect of the literacy and continuing education programmes in the country and is headed by the Minister of Human Resource Development of Government of India. There is an Executive Committee of the NLMA, headed by the Secretary to Government of India for School Education and Literacy to take decisions on matters pertaining policy, strategy and programme implementation, subject to its endorsement by the General Council. There is a Project Approval Committee of the NLMA, also headed by the Secretary, as above, to process and approve the programmes and projects. Under the same Ministry, the Bureau of Adult Education functions as the secretariat of the NLMA and Directorate of Adult Education provides technical and academic resource support to it (Diagram 3.1).

**Diagram 3.1: National Level Institutional Frameworks for Management of Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes**



Since 1997, the composition of the General Council of NLMA has undergone changes mainly on account of the transition of programmes to post literacy and continuing education phases which required convergence and to institutionalize lifelong education. Membership of the General Council was extended to several Ministries and Departments of Government of India to secure inter-Ministerial/Departmental cooperation and convergence at the national level. The present General Council has the members of Ministries/Departments of Panchayati Raj Institutions (local self government), Rural Development, Women & Child Development, Commissions for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Women and Child Rights, Planning Commission of India and University Grants Commission and representatives of political parties and NGOs.

On the pattern similar to the national level, NLM, as a matter of policy, has prescribed constitution of State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) to take policy decisions and manage and coordinate the programmes at the state level. The SLMA is a registered body having a General Council with Chief Minister or Education Minister as the ex-officio President; and an Executive Committee headed by the Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/Education Secretary of the State. The State Directorate of Adult Education (SDAE) functions as the secretariat of SLMA and its Director as SLMA Secretary-cum-Member Convener of both the General Council and Executive Committee. The SRC/s of the state provide(s) technical and academic resource support to the SLMA. Since 1997, most of the States have constituted their SLMAs. In 1999, under a policy decision, the NLM made provision for annual maintenance grants to the SLMAs (amount

varies with grade of SLMA – the grade determined by the size of non literate population the state). NLM has also empowered the SLMAs to approve the projects for Continuing Education with funds placed at their disposal (Source: AE Bureau, MHRD, GOI). SLMAs have also been advised to ensure adequate representation of PRIs in their General Council and Executive Committee.

The ultimate programme implementing agency is the Zila Saksharta Samiti ([ZSS] District Literacy Society) at the district level. The ZSS is also a registered body with a General Council/General Body and an Executive Committee. The District Magistrate/District Collector is the ZSS Chairperson and its General Body and Executive Committee has official as well as non official members representing various government sectors (education, social welfare, women and child development, rural development, and agriculture), and non government sectors (voluntary agencies, women, scheduled castes and tribes, minorities, journalists, writers, and academicians). The District Resource Unit (DRU) located in District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) provides the technical and academic resource support to the ZSS in addition to the SRC support on need basis. Jan Shikshan Sansthan, a district level institution placed in NGO sector, where available, works closely with the ZSS and provides vocational and life enrichment education.

In many districts, ZSS were constituted before the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments to The Constitution of India came into operation involving the three tiers Panchayati Raj system in the country. Thus, post 1997, districts in some of the states like Kerala and West Bengal have taken steps to involve Panchayati Raj Institutions in ZSSs at formal level and many more districts in some other states are involving these institutions at sub district levels. There are proposals in XI Five Year Plan for greater involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions at all levels.

### **CE Programme under Chairpersonship of an ex-Prerak Kollam District (Kerala)**

The Kollam CE Programme, launched in 1998, with 240 CECs and 34 NCECs has many interesting features:

- The Zilla Panchayat and other bodies of Local Self Govt (Block, Municipalities, Corporation and Village Panchayats) built an office multi-storied office building for the ZSS worth Rs. 5 million that would, besides the ZSS Office, house Information Centre, Reference Library, IT Centre, Self-Employment Production Centre, Career Guidance Institutions, Equivalency Centres and Model NCEC.
- Corpus funds of Rs. 5.5 million have been pooled in by the PRI institutions and through sponsorships and other resource mobilization mechanisms that would be used for sustainability of the CE programme once government funding ends.
- 174 CECs are housed in their own buildings.
- Resources in kind including TVs, computers, Radios, Trailing machines and furniture have been mobilized for the CECs.
- Blood and eye donation camps have been organized in every CEC.
- CECs work as the Office of Ward Members, Panchayat Presidents and other people's representatives.
- Some CECs have developed specialization and function as Marketing Centres, Career Advancement Centres and Training Centres.
- 31 women Preraks were elected as Ward Members in the Panchayat elections.
- The present Chairperson of ZSS has been a Prerak herself.
- Sneha Santhawna Sewa (Consolidation Force) was formed for emergency relief during natural calamities. Members of the team were pressed into action in December 2004 for Tsunami relief work in the coastal belt of Kollam.

Excerpts from NLM, *Recognition of Literacy Initiatives*  
Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, 2007

**3.1.2. Literacy & CEP - Providers, Areas of Learning, Target Groups, Cost and Funding Source:** The ZSS, a registered body, is the main implementing agency of literacy and CE programmes. There are also NGOs, funded by NLM for undertaking literacy and CE programmes on a limited scale. The SRCs and JSS serve as a techno-pedagogic and skill training as well as resource support institutions for different types of programmes undertaken by ZSS and NGOs. The areas that ZSS and NGOs address include: TLC, PLP, CEP and special literacy drives for specific target groups. The schemes of NLM are linked to the Five Year Plan for which the Planning Commission makes outlays. A brief overview of the programmes, providers and their nature, areas of learning they address, target groups they focus on, per unit rate and funding source are in the Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Literacy and CEP Provision System in India**

Programme	Provider	Area of Learning	Target Groups	Cost	Funding
Total Literacy Campaign	ZSS (Regd. Society)	Basic Literacy	Non Literates in 15 -35 age group	Rs. 90 – 180 per learner	Union & State Govts.
Post Literacy Programme	ZSS (NGO)	-Basic Literacy -Post Literacy -Knowledge & Awareness -Vocational Skills	- Neo literates - Illiterates - Women's Groups	Rs. 90 - 130 per learner	Union & State Governm ents
Continuing Education Programme	ZSS (NGO)	-Residual illiteracy -Sustaining and/or upgrading of literacy skills - Awareness building and participation in development programmes -Awareness and skill development through TSP	-Neo literates -Residual illiterates -School dropouts & clients of NFE - Members of community in general	Per CEC: Rs.25,000/year  Per NCEC: - Rs.45000 /year - One time non recurring expenses for each	Union & State Govts.
Jan Shikshan Sansthans	JSS (NGO)	-Literacy linked vocational training - Vocational Skill training -Life Enrichment Education	-Neo literates & illiterates -Migrant worker and slum dwellers -Weaker sections, esp. women, SCs, STs in rural & urban areas	- Category A: Rs. 35 lakh - Category B: Rs. 30 lakh - Category	Union Governm ent

				C: Rs. 25 lakh	
SRCs	SRC (NGO)	-Technical & academic resource support for skill sets mentioned in above categories	- Technical & academic resource support for client groups, as in above categories	- Category A: Rs. 60 lakh - Category B: Rs. 40 lakh	Union Governm ent

### 3.1.3. Linkages between Formal and Non Formal Approaches:

Linkages between the formal and non formal approaches do exist. At the national level, NLM and its bodies share a common Ministry i.e. Ministry of Human Resource Development and a common Department of School Education and Literacy with common Secretary for School Education and Literacy. Down the line, in several states, there is a common Directorate to deal with formal and non formal education including the adult education programme. These linkages get stronger at the district levels as large number of school teachers and volunteers participate in literacy and continuing education programmes. As a matter of fact, many literacy campaigns simultaneously ran school enrolment drives. The Centres/Departments of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension (CACEE/DACEE) in universities do have literacy and continuing education on their agenda and some of them offer certificate/diploma/degree courses in the subject. Lately, the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and a few State Institutes of Open Schooling (SIOS) have started offering equivalency programmes for neo literates and other client groups of the NLM. The revamped programme for imparting literacy to non literate adults under the XI Five Year Plan, has envisaged larger involvement of schools and the student community.



**Literacy and Health as Natural Allies and Essential Public Needs  
Total Sanitation as Midnapore CE's Core Agenda**

The instance of the largest district in India, Midnapore – until was bifurcated into two – is a case in point. With a population of over 10 million in 2001, the TLC began here in the early 90s, taking a target of over two million non-literates under different phase, Midnapore managed to reach 1.36 out of the 1.56 million enrolled, to the basic literacy level, registering a 25 percent increase in its literacy rate. Firmly committed to the idea of long-term sustainability, Midnapore began to explore the Continuing Education directions from 1996 itself, and began to figure out the approach and strategies necessary for the purpose. Integration of literacy with some of the life concerns of the people like health was perceived to lend relevance and make such an engagement as a sustained enterprise rather than a one shot affair.

Right from the beginning, and through the TLC and PLC phases, Midnapore posited literacy and health as natural allies and as essential public needs. It was postulated that in order to lend a mass movement character, literacy and health must become the shared commitment of “collective consciousness” especially of all political parties, their frontal organizations, the administration, the panchayats, the NGOs and the community at large. Certain crucial elements of quality of life improvement agendas were grafted on to the CE programme, like safe drinking water, rural sanitation and women empowerment through SHGs formation. The total sanitation programme, involving low cost latrines and smokeless chulas taken up in Midnapore is said to have been the most gigantic programme in India. The number of teams from other states visiting Midnapore to study its implementation has been an indication of its success. The fact that some non-tribal blocks in Midnapore have 100 per cent rural sanitation cover should speak of the effective channel of communication and the Prerak as the primary motivator and mobilizer.

Excerpts from A. Mathew, *Continuing Education in Midnapore: Experience of a Shared Commitment*, National Institute of Adult Education, New Delhi, 2002, mimeo

**3.1.4. Certification and National Awards:** There is both on-going and internal end evaluation as well as summative External Evaluation in TLC in relation to NLM prescribed norms/levels of literacy proficiency. However, there is no certification. This is also true in respect of PLP and CE. Of late, certification has been introduced via Equivalency programme by the NIOS/SIOS. The Equivalency at the end of TLC is Standard III of formal schools and the next level offered by NIOS/SIOS is equivalent to Standard V.

The NLM has two national awards i.e. Satyen Maitra Memorial Literacy Award, which has been given to 42 programmes (TLCs, PLPs and CEPs) since its inception in 1996; and NLM - UNESCO Award given 33 institutions (SLMAs, SRCs, JSSs and CACEE and other NGOs) since inception in 1998 (figures of awards as of 2007) to promote healthy competition among them. From time to time, mainly on the occasion of ILD, outstanding Volunteer Teachers and Preraks are also honored at the national level with certificates for their outstanding performance<sup>16</sup>. States, districts and sub district levels have their own systems of honoring and awarding the outstanding achievements.

It may also be mentioned that India has the distinction of having the highest number of winners of the UNESCO's International Literacy Prizes and their Honorable Mentions and Recognitions in comparison to any other country. Names of Indian entities, including that of the NLM (NOMA Prize of 1999), have appeared 28 times from 1969 to 2006, on UNESCO's list of literacy laureates<sup>17</sup>.

**Major Trends since 1997:** Some other major trends which emerged in provision and institutional frameworks since 1997 include the following:

1. Upward revision of unit rates of all programmes/schemes, first time financial provision for SLMAs, NIOS and sharing of experience with other countries, one time grant for SRCs and building grants for the JSS
2. Barring few, all states constituted SLMAs which were empowered by the NLM to approve the projects for Continuing Education with funds placed at their disposal
3. Against 417 districts covered under TLCs and 178 under PLP up to end of financial year 1996-97, by 2006-07, a total of 597 districts were covered under different programmes with only 95 districts still in TLC phase, 174 under PLPs and 328 under the CEP phase
4. Some larger states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh were provided with an additional SRC (an additional SRC passed over to Uttarakhand state carved out of Uttar Pradesh) and SRCs were established first time in some other states. The total number of Jan Shikshan Sansthan increased from 53 in

1996-97 (then known as Shramik Vidyapeeths) to over 200 in 2007-2008

These key trends indicate that since 1997, the institutional frameworks at all levels were strengthened, expanded and the scope of their functioning broadened to address the diverse needs of millions of persons made literate under TLCs and PLPs in pre 1997 period.

### 3.2. Participation in Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes

**3.2.1. Statistical Data:** In order to provide an overview of the overall participation, it would be important to bear in mind the magnitude of the target group based on the Census figures and monitoring data of the NLM. The age group addressed by NLM is generally 15-35. This segment, which numbered 281.5 million in 1991, increased to 347.67 million in 2001. Out of these, while 56.86% (159.86 million) were literate in 1991, the increase in the number of literates by 2001 was quite steep – 71.82%, numbering 245.93 million<sup>18</sup>. The comparative picture could be seen in greater details in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Population, Literates and Illiterates in 15 – 35\* Age Groups in India 1991 & 2001**

(In millions)

		1991**	2001
<b>Population</b>	<b>Persons</b>	281.15	347.67
	<b>Male</b>	144.21	179.18
	<b>Female</b>	136.94	168.49
<b>Literates</b>	<b>Persons</b>	159.86	246.93
	<b>Male</b>	100.32	145.22
	<b>Female</b>	59.54	101.71
<b>Illiterates</b>	<b>Persons</b>	121.29	100.74
	<b>Male</b>	43.89	33.96
	<b>Female</b>	77.40	66.78

\* In Census data referred to as 15 -34 which includes persons up to 1 day below 35 years of age

\*\*excluding Jammu & Kashmir where Census was not conducted

The NLM's own monitoring data indicates that from 1988 till March 2005, approximately a total of 120.34 million persons have been made literate under various schemes. Among the beneficiaries of literacy campaigns, 23% belonged to SCs, 12% to STs and 60% were women approximately. In addition to the literacy programmes, a total of 6.614 million persons have participated in vocational and life skills training and other awareness programmes of the JSS from 2000 to 2005. Among the JSS beneficiaries, 24% were SCs, 12% were STs and 65% were women approximately.

**3.2.2. Surveys/Studies on Non Participants and Difficult Groups:** The literacy initiatives of the NLM showed from the beginning that women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, other socio economically backward classes, tribal areas, low literacy and female literacy districts and people with disability are the non-participants and difficult to reach groups. There is adequate data from different sources/survey including the Census 2001 on these groups as mentioned elsewhere in the report. Resurveys conducted to identify the non-participants, dropouts and new entrants before launching of the next phase of the programme at district level also give comprehensive data on most of these groups. Special programmes/drives designed and implemented for such groups have also been mentioned elsewhere in this report. In Indian context, with rare exception of people with visual, hearing and speech disabilities, most of these other groups cannot be labeled as 'non participants' or 'excluded groups' as they have remained the priority target of the NLM and their participation has been encouraging in the past. The real issue with these groups is that they have had low literacy levels to begin with because of several reasons. There are proposals under the XI Five Year Plans to intensify the focus on these groups for improving their literacy situation. There is a separate proposal under the XI Plan for the disabled people also.

**3.2.3. Surveys/studies in Learners Motivation:** The environment building activities of the Campaigns in 1990s had successfully demonstrated the strategies, methods and media, which can be employed for motivation and participation of learners. Therefore, surveys or studies in this area were not felt necessary. To retain the interest and motivation of the learners during teaching-learning phase of TLC as well as PL and CE phases, innovations in teaching-learning methods such as recreational activities, joyful and play way methods of teaching-learning have been introduced by the Literacy Volunteers and organizers. There have, however, been no separate surveys and studies of such initiatives.

**3.2.4. Measures for Mobilization and Increasing Participation of Specific Groups:** As mentioned earlier, the literacy and continuing education programmes are designed by the district in the context of their socio-cultural reality. Therefore, each one of them takes its own measures for ensuring or increasing participation of specific groups. Some common measures include the involvement of the community leaders, selection of Volunteer Teachers or Preraks from within the community and organizing activity centres in their habitations, constituting women task forces/groups at district and sub district levels, to ensure women's participation and representation of women, SCs and STs in management committees. For example, on demand, Muslim communities were supplied literacy primers in Urdu language.

**3.2.5. Targeting Specific Groups:** Details have been given in other parts of the report.

**3.2.6. Benchmarks in Relation to Participation:** All programmes, having direct interface with the client groups, have specific benchmarks for participation. Selected benchmarks for different programmes are:

***Total Literacy Campaign:*** Covering all non-literates identified in door to door survey as per the age group specified in the project approved by NLM and making them literate as per the NLM's basic literacy norms. Similar benchmarks are also set up for special drives/projects for female literacy, residual illiteracy and low literacy districts.

***Post Literacy Programme:*** Coverage of all drop outs and left outs of TLC phase and new entrants in the age group, as identified in door to door resurvey, and making them literate under Mopping up Operation; and ensuring participation of all neo-literates, as identified in the re-survey, in post literacy classes and its other activities.

***Continuing Education Programme:*** Establishing CE Centres (CECs) as approved in the project and provision of continuing education programmes to meet the learning needs and interests of the CE beneficiaries to improve their economic condition and quality of life.

***Jan Shikshan Sansthan:*** Achieving targets as per their approved annual action plan with mandatory coverage of rural areas under the activities and 25% of its beneficiaries, to be among the neo-literates. There has been instruction in recent past to further scale up the proportion of women, non-literates and neo-literates in JSSs' skill up gradation programmes. All programmes mentioned above have standing instructions to accord priority to women, scheduled castes and tribes, minorities and other disadvantaged sections in the district.

### **Literacy Campaign Led to Religious Harmony Total Literacy Campaign in Kishanganj District (Bihar)**

Kishanganj district of Bihar has a mixed population, shares borders with the States of Assam and West Bengal as well as Bangladesh. It is one of the most backward districts of the state with high illiteracy and poverty. Kishanganj district was among the lowest literacy districts in the country with only 31.02% literacy rate (2001 Census), with female literacy being 18.49%.

Out of the 281,414 surveyed non-literates in the 15-35 age group, more than 95% were reported to have completed the Primer-III, and 80.6% achieved National Literacy Mission literacy norms.

The campaign was very vibrant. The entire community was involved. The special feature of the campaign was the association of the Muslim minorities through appeals by the religious leaders, and the active involvement of the panchayat members. The people's ownership of the programme, the keen interest taken by Muslim, special schemes initiated to motivate good Volunteers like Scholarships, Golden Identity Cards and priority in the selection for Para Teachers as well as regular teachers in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Universal Elementary Education Campaign), were other salient facets of the campaign.

The TLC had impact in areas like increase in school enrolment, decrease in caste differences, increase in religious harmony and health and hygiene consciousness, participation of women in decision making and in social activities. Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other deprived and disadvantaged sections took active part in the campaign. Kishanganj experienced a virtual social revolution the process of education contributing to women's empowerment and social harmony.

Excerpts from NLM, *Recognition of Literacy Initiatives*  
Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, 2007

### **3.3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessing Learning Outcomes**

**3.3.1. Assessing of Learning Outcomes and Methods:** The focus of TLCs is the acquisition of basic literacy as per the stipulated level, besides awareness of larger social objectives of NLM. TLC evaluation is concerned with the assessment of literacy learning levels, which also includes awareness levels. At the PLP level, the evaluation brings out the extent of continuation and up gradation of literacy skills to a self-reliant level has been accomplished, besides the achievement in respect of the skills for improving quality of life and economic condition.

As regards the assessment of learning outcomes, there are two types with respect to TLC, viz., internal and external evaluation. The three graded primers used in TLC have 9 tests, each at the end of every 3 lessons.<sup>19</sup> By doing these tests the learners and organizers would know the learning progress. There is also an external evaluation, by an accredited agency from outside the state. The External Evaluation follows the NLM guidelines in respect of sample design, to represent the social and geographical profile of the learners, and size – at least 5% or 10,000 learners. It tests the Reading, Writing and Numeracy skills against NLM specified norms/levels of proficiency. The achievement rate then is projected against the total enrolment and the district's target.<sup>20</sup> The similar procedure is followed to assess the learning achievement at the PLP level as well.<sup>21</sup>

### **3.3.2. Tools and Mechanisms of Programme Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Monitoring:** Among the many social intervention programmes initiated since 1990, NLM has been one of the first agencies to develop a Monitoring Information System (MIS), to keep a tight leash the programme tempo and effectiveness and based on which it used to bring out the Annual Status Reports. It used to be a four tier exercise -- data in respect of every literacy center flowing to the Block level; Block level data compiled at district level; and a consolidated state report with district-wise data, forwarded to the NLM. While the data flow to the state is monthly based on which the Monthly Monitoring Meetings take place to review the programmes in different districts. But SLMA report to NLM used to be on a quarterly basis. Based on the Quarterly Progress Reports, NLM used to bring out its Annual Status Reports. Besides the MIS generated through progress reports, the Executive Committee Members of NLM, journalists, literacy consultants, departmental officers and some non-official members also visit ongoing programmes from time to time. The visit reports

received from such officials and non officials also form part of the monitoring system.

The SRCs and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) also have in-built systems of compiling and sharing of quarterly and annual reports of programmes and other details. There are prescribed monitoring formats for these organizations also. The Governing Bodies and Programme Advisory Committees of the SRCs and JSS discuss their quarterly and annual reports in their periodic meetings. In addition to this, Annual Progress Reports and Annual Action Plans of SRCs and JSS, are reviewed in the Annual Conferences of Directors of SRCs, and JSS respectively, organized by NLM.

**Evaluation:** NLM has a highly developed professional and objective system of evaluation for each sector of the adult education programme to evaluate learning outcomes and ensure quality. There are separate guidelines for evaluation of TLCs, PLPs, CEPs, SRCs and the JSSs. These guidelines have been developed through several rounds of regional workshops, meetings and consultations with adult education experts, selected representatives of concerned stakeholders and premier research and evaluation organizations/institutions in India. The officials of the NLM and DAE were involved through out the process of development of the evaluation guidelines.

Guidelines concerning TLC<sup>22</sup> and PLP<sup>23</sup> pertained to on-going and end internal, and a single round of External evaluations. Whereas for CEP, two rounds of appraisal by SLMA/SDAE and three rounds of external evaluations, each in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> project years have been prescribed. While greater weightage is given in the 1<sup>st</sup> External evaluation to infrastructure facilities, it shifts to quality of programme delivery and sustainability features in the second and final external evaluations.<sup>24</sup> All guidelines contain common features such as:

- Objectives and outline of the programme
- Objectives of evaluation
- Aspects to be covered under evaluation
- Sample specifications and sampling method
- Data collection tools and methods
- Essential data / data tables (with illustration) to be included in the reports
- Format of executive summary

The guidelines for evaluation of SRCs<sup>25</sup> and JSSs<sup>26</sup> are also standardized and equally comprehensive and contain similar details as those in TLC, PLP and CEP guidelines. The AE Bureau has a panel of external evaluation agencies carefully selected by the Evaluation Core



Group and coordinated by the DAE to handle the external evaluation studies.

On receiving the request from ZSS directly or through the SLMA/SDAE for evaluation of TLC or PLP or CEP, names of three empanelled agencies, having familiarity with the language of the district, are forwarded by A.E. Bureau at the national level. For the concurrent evaluation, the empanelled agencies from the same state but outside the concerned district are suggested. Thereafter, through a bidding process, the ZSS or SLMA/SDAE selects the agency and assigns it the external evaluation as a contractual assignment. Financial provision to meet the costs of evaluations is an in built component of the approved district project.

### **3.3.3. Use of Monitoring and Evaluation Information**

The data regarding coverage, participation in TLC, PLP and CE and other special literacy drives does indicate the areas and segments of the target group that remain un-covered. This also would be the case with respect to learning achievement. The special focus areas and special drives for literacy, as describe in other parts of the report, like SFLP, AFLP, PRIs, and many other literacy drives represent a policy response to the results of the programmes.

Emulation of innovations and best practices in respect of innovative approaches to literacy and in the area of CE programmes, described later, are also instances of the uses of innovations that come to notice through monitoring and evaluations. The objectives of monitoring and evaluation of the programmes are aimed at providing: information essential for financial and programme audit; assessment of target achievement and factors responsible for the same; identification of structure, systems and programme gaps; review and revision of existing strategies; feedback to the implementation and decision making levels; planning of new strategies, programmes, systems and designs; and support to policy formulation level. Bringing out national level reports is also part of the efforts to strive for total transparency of the programme, public accountability and wider social audit.

### **3.3.4. Benchmarks in Relation to Outcomes**

NLM has clearly specified the learning outcome in respect of TLC. The outcomes in respect of PLP and CE, by way of life skills and functional literacy skills related to the world of work have been spelt out in the NLM guidelines. These serve as the benchmark for evaluation of the outcomes. A brief overview of the benchmarks in relation to the outcomes of each programme/scheme incorporated in the external evaluation guidelines could be seen in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Final Benchmarks in Relation to Outcomes**

<b>Programme/Scheme</b>	<b>Final Outcomes Benchmarks</b>
Total Literacy Campaign	- Percentage Achievement of NLM norms of literacy by the District Target of Non-literates (Number of persons made literate as percentage of non literates identified in the door to door survey) <sup>27</sup>
Post Literacy Programme	- Score obtained on Quality Index (having 12 performance parameters with different weightages, rated on a scale of 1-5) - Quality Index score ranges between 0-100) <sup>28</sup>
Continuing Education Programme	- Weighted Score on two main performance indicators, viz., (i) Infrastructure; and (ii) Quality of Delivery of Programmes  - Weightages for Infrastructure are 60%; 30% and 0% in I, II, and III Evaluations. Similarly, weightages for Quality of Delivery of Programmes are 40%; 70% and 100% in I, II, and III Evaluations.  - Each performance indicator also has sub indicators to be rated and weighted  - Total weighted score could range between 0 -1000 <sup>29</sup>
Jan Shikshan Sansthan	- Score obtained on 12 performance indicators with different weights. - Total score ranges between 0 -100 and classified in broad categories - Placement of JSS in appropriate category is done on the basis of total scores obtained on performance indicators <sup>30</sup>
State Resource Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scores obtained on six performance indicators (with different weights)<sup>31</sup></li> <li>• Average total score ranges between 0 – 100</li> <li>• Category to SRC is assigned on the basis of average total score obtained on indicators</li> </ul>

### **3.4. Adult Educators/Facilitators' Status and Training**

**3.4.1. Educational Qualifications and Training:** In TLCs and PLPs a large number of animators, popularly known as VTs (Volunteer Teachers) who work purely as volunteers without any remuneration or other monetary incentives, are required to conduct the teaching learning transactions. At district and sub district level a number of factors come in to play when it comes to the choice of VTs such as caste, class and gender comfort, physical location of learners and VT, common timings convenient to both, and motivational level to work on voluntary basis. There are variations of educational levels also. Therefore, NLM does not prescribe any qualifications for the VTs of TLCs and PLPs and decision is

left to the wisdom of district and/or sub district level programme managers. However, in practice, those who have 8 or more years of formal schooling

are engaged to work as VTs. Secondary, Senior Secondary and College students used to be drafted as VTs for literacy teaching in most of the TLCs. In CEPs, NLM has given guidelines for educational levels for the animators called 'Preraks'. Desirable minimum educational qualifications for Preraks and Assistant Preraks range from high school to graduation. Here also, there is no rigidity in general and these are especially relaxed in cases of candidates who have worked as VTs in TLC or PLP, women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In cases of Instructors of JSSs' vocational training courses also, there are guiding norms of educational qualification and professional competencies. But here also, these are flexible for master craftsmen of traditional trades.

The SRCs established at the state level by the NLM in NGO sector are primarily responsible for the training of literacy personnel. However, given the large number of VTs needed for each TLC or PLP, cascade model of training has been adopted. The SRCs train Key Resource Persons (KRPs) deputed by the ZSS. The KRPs in turn train the Master Trainers (MTs) at the block or district levels who then train the VTs. There are prescribed duration for induction and refresher training programmes for each category of trainers and VTs and core contents for various types of training. A minimum of 10-12 days training used to be insisted for the training of VTs – an initial training for 6-7 days and 1-2 days before the commencement of Primers 2 and 3 in TLCs. Besides the methods of teaching the primers, VTs' training used to emphasize on ways and means of sustaining learner motivation, making T-L process interesting and providing awareness and knowledge inputs about the larger social objectives of NLM. This aspect remains a running thread in the training at PLP and CE stages as well, besides PL and CE programme specific components. In PLP and CE phases, the training lays emphasis on convergence and liaison skills where life and livelihood skills become a major focus of the Preraks' functions. The NLM strongly prescribes use of participatory methods in all training programmes.

### **TLC in Muzaffarpur District (Bihar)**

The target for Total Literacy Campaign in Muzaffarpur District of Bihar was 320,091 non-literates in the 15-35 age group, and the External Evaluation found 89.26% of the target learners achieving National Literacy Mission norms of literacy level.

The TLC in Muzaffarpur made tremendous impact and increased awareness in the district regarding education, health, family welfare, drinking water and environment. The district also registered improvement in school enrolment especially in respect of girls due to the momentum created by the TLC.

As discerned by the External Evaluation, the attributes that contributed to the impressive success of the TLC in Muzaffarpur included:

- Organisational and Management structure and very well constituted people's committees from district to village levels
- Excellently organized environment building activities
- Systematically conducted survey of non-literates
- Very effective monitoring and supervision
- Properly selected functionaries at various levels, committed to the campaign
- Well organized training and refresher courses
- A high standard of teaching and learning materials
- Good support of the media to the campaign
- Active involvement in the TLC of State Directorate of Adult Education, State Resource Centre, Primary School Teachers, NGOs and Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Excerpts from NLM, *Recognition of Literacy Initiatives*  
Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, 2007

**3.4.2. Adult Education as Specific Profession:** Adult education is yet to establish itself as a specific academic profession in India. A beginning had been made by some of the Centres of Adult and Continuing Education/Extension in Universities becoming the Departments and offering Certificate, Diploma and Degree Courses in adult education. Adult education as a profession also does not enjoy an independent identity. There is also no separate cadre of adult education functionaries in most of the States, it being serviced by personnel of formal education system. There are those who teach in Centres/Departments of Adult, Continuing/Extension Education in Colleges and Universities. There are about 70 such Centres/Departments in Indian universities. Those who are involved in planning and implementation of adult education programmes are AE functionaries. There used to be a separate state cadre of District Adult Education Officers, prior to NLM, which is now filled by mainly from personnel of formal school education system or from other departments on deputation. These are two different layers and no comparison is possible either in respect of academia or in the state or district level administration.

At the national level, the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) offers a Diploma in Educational Planning and Administration where some dimensions of the Literacy and CE programmes get covered in the course and one or two trainees take up topics in this area for their dissertation. There is no other institution at national or state level for capacity building for professional up gradation of AE functionaries.

The VTs in TLC and PLP have been drawn from different walks of life although the majority of them used to be students of secondary and collegiate education level. It is only at the CE phase, the Facilitators, called the Preraks, were to receive training in respect of target specific programmes (TSP). For want of sanction of TSP, the recurrent training initially envisaged has not been taken up.

**3.4.3. Adult Educators/Facilitators Proportion to Teaching Personnel:** Working out proportion of adult educators/facilitators and teaching personnel in the country is neither possible nor desirable. The literacy programmes especially the TLCs and PLPs are of specific duration unlike schools or other teaching institutions in formal sector which are not time bound. Also, the number of animators required for each TLC and PLP depends on the number of non-literates in the district. Moreover the animators of TLCs and PLPs are pure volunteers. In CEP, which is not a time bound programme, the Preraks and their Assistants are honorarium paid whereas the teaching personnel are salaried persons in most cases. For these reasons, comparison has been avoided.

### **Huge Assets Endowed by Panchayats Idukki's Vibrant CE Programme (Kerala)**

Idukki is the land of hills and water falls and is known as the Kashmir of the South. Its CE Programme, launched at the end of 1988 and still being vibrant, could boast of many distinctions:

- Majority of its 23 Nodal and 168 Continuing Education Centres and 23 Nodal CECs are housed in government provided permanent buildings
- Assets worth Rs. 70 million were contributed by the PRIs at village, Block and District levels.
- Equivalency programme for Standard IV and VII levels started for neo-literates and the pass outs found employment.
- Under Income Generation Programme, trainings in a wide variety of trades were organized and the income generated from the IGPs were used to sustain the CES and created a Corpus Fund.
- Quality of Life Improvement Programmes in areas like health, HIV/AIDs, family life education, family and society, safe drinking water, sanitation, environmental and social/community harmony were organized.
- Yoga, dance, and coaching classes in different handicrafts, music, sports and other activities were organised under Individual Interest Promotion Programme
- Village Education Committees took active part in the CE Programme implementation and supervised the activities of the Preraks (Animators)
- A Prerak Welfare Fund was started.
- With NIOS accreditation, 7 permanent well-established training institutes were started for Equivalency in vocational trades.

Excerpts from NLM, **Recognition** of Literacy Initiatives  
Directorate of Adult Education,  
New Delhi, 2007

**3.4.4. Terms of Employment and Remuneration:** In TLCs and PLPs the VTs are engaged on voluntary basis for specific timings and periods and no remuneration is paid. Under CEP Preraks and Assistant Preraks of CECs are honorary workers and paid honoraria of Rs. 700 and Rs. 500 per month respectively and these amounts in case of Nodal CECs are Rs.1200 and Rs. 700 per month respectively. In practice, Preraks are expected to keep the CECs functional for 5 to 6 hours per day and 6 days a week with or without community volunteers' support. At ZSS and SDAE levels full time staff are engaged either on deputation or 'secondment' (salary paid by the parent department) basis from other departments or on contractual basis against consolidated salaries. In the cases of SRCs and JSSs full time staff are recruited on contractual basis against consolidated salaries and the holder NGOs are directed to design social security packages(mainly the provident fund) for their full time staff. Trainers for vocational training and resource persons for other activities are engaged by JSSs against specified rate of honorarium per session. Occasionally, the SRCs also invite resource persons for specialized activities against the specified honorarium and travel expenses. At the national level, the A.E. Bureau and the DAE have full time regular staff with permissible pay and allowances and other service benefits.

## Chapter 4

### Research, Innovation and Good Practice

The Agenda for the Future `adopted at 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Adult Education, held at Hamburg, Germany in 1997, sought the commitment to carry out interdisciplinary research in all aspects of adult education; promotion of national and cross-national studies and supporting the evaluation of adult education provision and participation, especially in relation to the needs of all groups of society; and developing an enhanced capacity for research and knowledge dissemination by encouraging national and international exchanges of information, innovative models and best practices.<sup>32</sup> Some achievements of India in this area, since 1997, have been outlined here.

#### **4.1. Research Studies in the Field of Literacy and Continuing Education**

The NLM does not rely on a single data or information source for informing its policies and practices. Instead, it banks on multiple sources and employs varied methods of information gathering and sharing for taking informed policy decisions and evolving practices. Besides, an overview of the sources and methods used by the NLM, examples of policies and practices influenced by these data sources and methods are highlighted in the following pages.

The schemes of adult literacy programmes in India under the aegis of NLM are sponsored by the Union Government and linked to the Five Year Plans formulated by the Planning Commission of India. The Planning Commission conducts Mid Term Appraisals of each Plan sector-wise including Adult Education. At times, the Planning Commission also asks NLM to commission independent evaluation studies of its schemes for their revision/review and continuation under the next Plan. The data on literacy is also generated in the form of decadal Census of India by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Sample Surveys conducted periodically by the National Sample Survey Organization of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and the National Family Health Surveys carried out by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The research based data generated by these national agencies, also feeds into the national level policy formulation and planning. The NLM commissions studies at its own initiative also, to assess the performance and impact of the schemes and programmes and to take policy and programme decisions. In addition to these measures, NLM has separate financial provision for sponsoring research studies. The Directorate of Adult Education (DAE) under the Department of School Education and Literacy, as part of its regular activities, commissions research cum evaluation



studies besides other allied activities like documentation, publication and dissemination of literature related to literacy.

Under NLM, there is a strong system of evaluation in place with well-defined guidelines for each component. In respect of field programmes like Total Literacy Campaigns (TLC), Post Literacy Programme (PLP) and Continuing Education Programme (CEP), there is an in-built system of External Evaluation at the end of each phase/cycle. The baseline surveys, conducted at the beginning of each programme, at the district level, are a norm. The other institutions supported by the NLM such as the SRCs and the JSS, are also externally evaluated periodically. Some other activities which inform policies and practices include national level review meetings and workshops, reports of the experts/experts groups and exercises like SWOT Analysis of the programme by the State Directorates of Adult Education.

At the state levels, the SRCs are encouraged to undertake research studies as part of their annual action plans or studies sponsored by other agencies such as UNESCO and UNFPA. Findings of these studies also have their bearing on macro and micro decisions.

To take stock of research in the field of adult education, abstract of studies conducted from 1988 to 2000 were compiled through different SRCs and published. The NLM is supporting three Documentation Centres for exchange of information related to the research and allied activities.

The Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), New Delhi brings out the quarterly Indian Journal of Adult Education containing research based and scholarly articles on adult education. The Departments/Centres of Adult and Continuing Education and Extensions of some of the Universities also undertake research studies as part of the degree or diploma courses. Research initiative by IAEA and Universities are not supported by the NLM.

**Adding Women Mobility to NLM's Literacy Objectives  
Case of Puddukotai District (Tamil Nadu)**

Puddukotai, a backward district in Tamil Nadu, began to “pulsate with confidence” because of the enthusiastic fall out of the TLC. A fifth component was added to NLM's usual four components of literacy, numeracy, functionality, social awareness – that of mobility. An enormous campaign was launched to give instruction to women in cycling and mass cycle rallies were organized. The rural countryside, being transformed into a large cycle track was something that left great visual impact and had far reaching effect in terms of social mobility.

No longer at the mercy of the quarry contractors, the people of the region for their part were determined to seize life with both hands to alter their destiny. Classes were held in modes of self-defense and quarry contractors were hard put to deal what was perceived as a mass mobilization or threat.

Excerpts from Alka Raghuvanshi, ed., *Literacy for Empowerment*,  
National Literacy Mission, New Delhi, no date

#### **4.1.1. – 4.1.3. Key Studies, Issues Addressed and Key Findings**

**Mid Term Appraisals of IX and X Five Year Plans:** The schemes of NLM, as mentioned earlier, are linked to the Five Year Plans, and therefore, come under the purview of Mid-Term Appraisals of Plans carried out by the Planning Commission. The major issues addressed by the Appraisals are the performance and progress of programmes against the goals/targets set for the Plan, the areas of concerns and directions for the future.

The Mid Term Appraisal of the IX Five Year Plan (1997 – 2002), made following observations:<sup>33</sup>

- The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was set up in 1988 with the target of making 100 million persons in the age group of 15-35 literate in a phased manner. Through its main strategy of special projects for eradication of illiteracy, commonly known as Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) and Post Literacy Campaign (PLC) it has been able to achieve a coverage of 72.56 million persons, of which 60% are women, 23% SCs and 12% STs. 556 districts are now covered under Literacy Campaigns – 182 under Total Literacy

Campaign, 259 under Post Literacy Campaign, 30 under Rural Functional Literacy Programme and 85 under Continuing Education Programme.

- The Programme of TLC and PLC has been faced with some difficulties in the low literacy States mainly due to the absence of voluntary organizations and other socio-cultural barriers.
- There is growing awareness that the Continuing Education Programme requires qualitative up gradation in order to make it relevant, contextual and acceptable. Meaningful initiatives in this respect are visible in various parts of the country.
- As a result of concerted efforts made in the area of primary education, non-formal education and adult education, there has been a significant step up in the literacy rates prevailing in our country. The NSSO has recently collated and released figures indicating a substantial growth in literacy percentage recorded in our country.
- Yet India is the country which houses the largest population of non-literates who constitute one third of the total non-literates in the world today. Gender disparities are sharp and the wide differences in inter-state and intrastate literacy rates a cause for major concern.

In addition to the above, the Mid Term Appraisal also noted the new initiatives proposed by the NLM for remaining period of the IX Five Year Plan to further consolidate the schemes/programmes on subjects of: Literacy Campaigns and Operation Restoration, Scheme of Continuing Education, Support to Non Government Organizations in the Field of Adult Education and Jan Shikshan Sansthan. Policy decisions taken subsequently on these subjects have been mentioned in later part of this section.

The Mid-Term Appraisal for the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002–2007), surveyed the coverage of NLM's programmes – TLCs, PLPs and CEPs and its impacts. It suggested, among others, that.<sup>34</sup>

- The adult education programmes covers 596 districts thus creating a favourable climate for universalisation of education.
- The Continuing Education Programme in 276 districts provides a thrust to the NLM by linking literacy with upgrading of skills and improvement in the quality of life.
- In 2003-04, the TLC (for teaching the 3Rs) and PLP (application of literacy skills by the neo-literates) were combined for continuity, efficiency and convergence.
- So far, 158 Jan Shikshan Sansthans have been sanctioned out of which thirty have been identified for extending their activities to the neighbouring districts. Efforts should be made to bring down the administrative expenditure of the Jan Shikshan Sansthan scheme, which is unsustainable. Some of the JSSs not functioning need

urgent remedial and corrective steps to improve their activities. The quality of NGOs and their performance under JSS should be regularly monitored and an accreditation process evolved by the Central or state governments to weed out those who have not performed.

- The literacy schemes like TLC, PLP and CEP should be transferred to the State Governments along with funds to ensure better participation/ involvement and effective monitoring.
- Literacy programmes cover illiterate / neo-literate persons in the age group of 15-35 only. There are about 31 crore illiterate persons as per Census 2001 and a very sizeable proportion is in the age group of 35 years and above and remain uncovered under literacy programmes. Considering significant improvements in the life expectancy, a new scheme should be launched as a part of literacy programmes operated through NGOs to impart functional literacy to 35 plus age group to eradicate illiteracy.
- About 26 SRC have been set up to provide resource support, including teaching-learning material for adult education and other programmes. These SRCs are not mandated to monitor and evaluate adult education programmes run by state government and NGOs. Their role should formally be extended to cover monitoring and concurrent evaluation of adult education programmes

**Studies on Evaluation of the Schemes:** In addition to conducting the Mid Term Appraisals, the Planning Commission, at times, requests the NLM to get evaluation studies done of the schemes by independent external evaluation agencies. As a matter of fact, many of the NLM schemes are currently under evaluation.

**Census of India:** The Census is another major source of authentic data on literacy which informs policy planning and practices of adult literacy and continuing education programmes, conducted on decadal basis by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India. In addition to the several other parameters of population, the Census provides comprehensive information on literacy scenario from national to the village level. It provides literacy data by gender, geographic background and regions, social groups, age groups etc. The data of last Census conducted in 2001, revealed that<sup>35</sup>:

- The number of illiterates dropped by 24.77 million during the 1990s, the first time when a decline in absolute number of illiterates since Independence was observed
- The overall growth in literacy of 12.63 percentage points (from 52.21% to 64.84%) between 1991 and 2001 was also the fastest decadal growth ever

- Growth in female literacy was higher (14.38 percentage points, from 39.29% in 1991 to 53.67% in 2001) than for males (11.13 percentage points, from 64.13% in 1991 to 75.26% in 2001) and the trends of literacy among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were on the similar lines
- The rural-urban literacy differential has also decreased during the decade 1991 - 2001
- All states have registered an increase in literacy rates and male literacy rates are above 60 per cent in all states and union territories (UTs), except for one state as of 2001

The Census 2001 also brought out the disparities in literacy rates of gender, regions, and social groups<sup>36</sup>:

- 47 districts in the country still had a female literacy rate below 30% and there was still a gap of 21.59 percentage points in male – female literacy rates with male literacy rates being higher
- 150 districts had lowest literacy rates in the country (around 55% or less)
- In spite of showing the marked improvement, the literacy rates among scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs) were still less than the national average (64.84%). The literacy rate among the SCs was 54.69% and even lower at 47.10% among the STs.
- The literacy rate among Muslims, viz., 59.1% was also lower than the national average and this was also true in respect of their female literacy rate.

Some policy decisions prompted by the findings of 2001 Census have been mentioned later.

***National Sample Surveys and National Family Health Surveys:***

Though the Census provides the most comprehensive data on literacy, it has a limitation as it is conducted once in 10 years. Therefore, in the period intervening between the two Censuses, the National Sample Surveys and the National Family Health Surveys are relied up on as alternate sources for literacy data.

The NSS in its 53<sup>rd</sup> round in 1997 had taken the trouble to process literacy information and format it in usable and coherent terms although it has been collecting raw data since its inception in 1950. The data of 53<sup>rd</sup> round (with projections up to the end of 1998) had shown a quantum jump of 10 percentage points in literacy rates over the Census 1991 rates and had projected the 12 percentage points increase up to the end of 1998.<sup>37</sup> The most recent NSSO data available and used by adult education policy makers and planners is the 61<sup>st</sup> round (2004 -2005) wherein the literacy rate for 7 plus age group has been observed as 67.3% and 61.7% for 15 and above age groups.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, National Family Health Surveys (NFHS), also periodically provide data on literacy.

### **Supreme Emphasis on Literacy at the level of District Collector TLC in Agra District (Uttar Pradesh)**

Achievement of TLC has been much slower in the states of Rajasthan, MP, UP and Bihar. The conditions are different and do demand innovative approaches. However, the essence and spirit of the campaign remains the same. TLC can be as successful in the Hindi belt as anywhere else. Agra is one such example of success.

Agra had an illiterate population of above .5 million and achieved a success rate of over 70%. The campaign succeeded because of the exerted effort by all government agencies and social workers and members of the panchayati raj institutions, revenue, development and education department officials who participated wholeheartedly in the programme. They were all oriented about TLC and were made responsible for a particular village, block or Nyaya Panchayat. They visited their area regularly and held meetings of volunteers, solved their problems, visited centers, spoke to learners, supervised distribution of books and material, sent reports and even organized environment building efforts at the local level. This did not in any way mean that they were neglecting their other duties.

In fact the year TLC was implemented, Agra district was amongst the best in the state in national savings, family welfare and twenty-point programme. Actually literacy was not treated as something separate or divorced from the development process and the needs of the people. Officers were instructed to encourage the people to come out with their grievances and problems and they duly communicated these instructions to the appropriate authority. The district administration took immediate steps to redress these grievances voiced at literacy meets. Close monitoring about this was done. The result was credibility getting attached to the literacy meetings. Even those who did not have belief in TLC began to participate. Organized village visits by government functionaries were something new for the people. Every week a government official or group would meet them to talk about their problems. This set a process of mutual trust in motion and involvement in literacy was the result.

Alok Ranjan, "Agra – Literacy Offensive in the Hindi Heartland",  
in UNESCO and NLM, A Decade of Literacy, New Delhi, no date.  
Alok Ranjan was District Magistrate who implemented the TLC in Agra.

**External Evaluation Field Programmes and Support Institutions:** As mentioned elsewhere in the report, NLM has a scientific and objective system of evaluation of its schemes/programmes. These evaluations are primarily directed at measuring the outcome but they also go in to academic issues and have findings on aspects like the quality of teaching learning material, assessment of training contents and quality, impact of programme on the clients, equity for different groups and innovations. Such findings of the evaluation studies serve as an important source for national level policy and planning related to programme design and contents; and are also used by the concerned district/state/institution for future plans. Specific number of evaluation studies conducted have been given in earlier part of the report.

**Studies Commissioned by the Directorate of Adult Education:** A major study on 'Impact of Television and Radio Programmes on Literacy and Adult Education' was conducted by Media Research Group, New Delhi in 2003 on behalf of the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE). The main objective of the study was to obtain scientific feedback on the reach and effectiveness of television and radio programmes on literacy and adult education. Covering a sample of 2094 respondents including illiterates, neo-literates and the general audience from four states in different regions of the country, the study found that: 84% of the respondents were aware of adult education; and awareness about adult education was higher among respondents exposed to radio and TV programmes in comparison to those not exposed. The study also incorporated recommendations about the media approach, contents, presentation, selection of the channels/stations and timings for telecast/broadcast.<sup>39</sup>

Besides, DAE also commissioned and completed several other studies from 2004 to 2006. Some of these were on subjects like: status of continuing education programme, literacy among Tea Tribes of Assam, present and potential role of NGOs in adult literacy programmes, feasibility of information technology in NLM activities, impact of adult education programme in Bilaspur district, convergence under CE Programme, and strategies for revitalizing literacy programmes in low female literacy districts (15 low female literacy districts spread over 11 states).

**Reviews by Experts and Expert Committees:** Reviews by experts and expert committees have also been the methods employed for informing policies and practices. A recent example is the experts' workshop for review of books for CE Programme produced by SRCs organized by DAE. In last five years, a total of 2780 CE books in 15 different languages were reviewed against the parameters prescribed in NLM guidelines like language, contents, format, reading value, current relevance of information, and suitability for different reading abilities. Feedback on each

title was provided to the concerned SRCs for retention, review or revision of the title or dropping the title from the publication list.

**SWOT Analysis of Literacy and Continuing Programmes by States:**  
On the advice of NLM, SWOT Analysis of literacy and CE programmes were conducted by 14 states in 2006 and 2007. The purpose of the exercise was to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the programmes and devise state specific strategies to appropriately deal with each aspect. Broadly, the states were classified into two categories (7states each) i.e. those in pre or early CEP phase, and those in advanced CEP phase. The overview of these SWOT Analyses has been presented below:<sup>40</sup>

#### **Pre or Early CEP Phase States**

##### **Strengths**

- Network of trained literacy functionaries/ human resource/machinery up to village level
- Involvement of literacy activists/network in other development programme like Pulse Polio/ Immunization, Health, Sanitation, SSA etc.
- Active resource support agencies (SRCs, JSSs, and DIETs) & groups available

##### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of political & administrative will or literacy yet to come on State's priority
- Low literacy rates & more so in the case of women
- Campaign fatigue -- waning voluntarism due to prolonged campaign phase
- Less than desired involvement of Govt. officials at District & sub-District levels
- Lack of association/involvement of social groups, PRIs & NGOs
- Frequent transfers of District officials
- No special strategy to cover thin & scattered population clusters (Himachal Pradesh)



### **Opportunities**

- Existence of non-literate population specially women, SCs & STs & availability of trained/educated manpower to teach them
- Possibilities of further linkages with other development programmes
- Involvement of SHGs & their members
- Literacy coming on State priority (Bihar) /becoming a political necessity (HP)

### **Threats**

- Loss of interest or drop outs of learners & volunteers if there are further delays on any account
- Other competing priority programmes
- Literacy volunteers sifting their organizations due to voluntary nature of the programme

## **Advanced CEP Phase States**

### **Strengths**

- Priority & support of State Government (including financial, manpower & infrastructure support )
- Involvement of PRIs (in Karnataka & Kerala) or other statutory bodies in programme implementation & management e.g. CE Committees constituted under AP School Education (People's Participation) Act 1998 in Andhra Pradesh
- Formation/Involvement of SHGs in CEP
- Emergence of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in CEC, ICT for literacy and Literacy - linked livelihood programmes
- Convergence with other programmes/departments, like NREGP, ICDS, Social Welfare, Women & Child Development, Agriculture, NRHM, SGSY, JSSs, Rural Sanitation, & TSC
- Innovative initiatives such as:
  - Equivalency Programme with large number of beneficiaries (e.g. Rajasthan & Kerala)
  - Programmes for Residual Illiteracy: Camp Approach, 'Each One Teach One' through students, & specific interventions for special population groups
  - Vocational Skill Development Camps for women & Income Generating Programmes in CECs

### **Weaknesses**

- Low honorarium for Preraks
- High expectations from Preraks considering their low educational qualifications
- Problems in funds flow from NLM: cumbersome & time consuming accounts settlement process, delays in release of installments, amount of installment too little to meet the liabilities/expenses
- Inadequate or no provision in CE budget for: Target Specific Programmes, management/ administration, monitoring, data management etc.
- No permanent & independent physical structure for CEC/no provision for building grant
- Same population norm for sanctioning CECs even for desert or hill areas

### **Opportunities**

- Increased awareness & demand for literacy & education among the people
- Use of ICT for imparting literacy
- Consolidation & continuation of initiatives like Equivalency Programmes alternate approaches for residual illiteracy etc.
- State's vision for literacy/support to literacy
- More scope for convergence with other development programmes/ departments

### **Threats**

- Lack of clarity about source of funding/transfer of Programme local bodies after 5 years
- Taxing time of Preraks for other government programmes
- Preraks forming Association, agitations for demands, association with political part (Karnataka)
- Low and/or irregular payment of honorarium to Preraks.

The SWOT Analyses were presented at joint meetings of the states convened by the NLM thus providing the opportunities to the states to learn from others' experiences and plan future strategies.

**Publication of Research Abstracts:** On the initiative of the NLM, abstracts of studies conducted on adult education from 1988 to 2000 were compiled by different SRCs and published in consolidated form by the State Resource Centre of Delhi.<sup>41</sup> The publication contains abstracts of 109 studies including Ph.D. theses, M.Phil. and Post Graduate level dissertations, reports of research projects and evaluation studies. The subject- wise classification of the abstracts is as given in Table 4.1:

**Table 4.1: Subject wise Number of Abstracts**

S. No.	Subject	No. of Abstracts
1.	Training	10
2.	Material	07
3.	Media	02
4.	Population and Development Education	12
5.	Women's Literacy	06
6.	Total Literacy Campaign Evaluation	50
7.	Miscellaneous Subjects	22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

**Documentation Centres:** The NLM has set up three Documentation Centres on Literacy and Population Education and the one is located with the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA) in New Delhi. In addition to other documentation activities, the Centre at Delhi publishes a quarterly 'Indian Journal of Population Education'. The Journal contains research based articles on population education. The Journal has a wide circulation. From its own resources, the IAEA, (parent body of the Documentation Centre) also brings out the Indian Journal of Adult Education on quarterly basis, containing research based articles related to adult education.

**Studies by SRC:** At the state level, the SRCs (set up by the NLM with NGOs and Universities), undertake research and evaluation activities also, either with sponsorship or out of their grants received from the NLM. These include action research, programme feedback, pretest and post test research, concurrent and external evaluations, impact and feasibility studies of proposals and programme appraisals. As illustration of action research, in the financial year 2005 – 06, 10 SRC conducted the audience impact studies, commissioned by Directorate of Adult Education on production and broadcast of radio programmes on continuing education.

Research studies on adult education are also conducted by the Departments/Centres of Adult and Continuation Education and some other Departments of Universities and research organizations.

### **Literacy Contents Igniting Anti-Arrack Movement From Nellore District to Entire Andhra Pradesh**

Literacy as a means towards an attainable and desirable end of an empowered people, needs to focus on its linkages with ‘form’ and ‘substance’ in the foreground of the literacy initiative. As a form, it emphasizes the learning of skills to control the written mode of language, and its substance or content promotes self-awareness, understanding of socio-cultural surroundings and helps improve conditions of living by addressing problems encountered in the day-to-day existence. Literacy primers all over the country have tried to incorporate some of the problems of daily life and not merely concentrate on inculcating the three R’s.

The anti-arrack agitation in Andhra Pradesh (AP) in the early 90s is a case in point. It raised possibilities of meaningful linkages between literacy acquisition and mass repudiation of social evils like alcoholism. The “Seethamma Katha”, a story in Reader II in the literacy primer, was used in literacy campaign in the state of AP, which highlighted the plight of women whose husbands were addicted to liquor and spent a large part of their daily wages on arrack. They returned home drunk and violence against women and girl children followed. The women in the story approach Seethamma, a literate, and other educated women in the village and they collectively resolve to fight the situation. Seethamma organizes the women and they force closure of the arrack shop in the village.

The women of Dubagunta village in the Kalikiri Mandal in Nellore district reacted to an incident in the village, which had taken place at that time. Three men had consumed liquor from an arrack shop, and on their way home they drowned in the village tank. The women marched down to the arrack shop, forced its closure by blaming the shop own for the death of the three members of the village. The word spread to the surrounding villages and more shops were forced to be closed in the process. The political parties moved in and articulated demand for total prohibition in the state. The protest swelled into an agitation and became a people’s movement forcing a change in public policy.

The unique example of social mobilization around the anti-arrack movement had profound impacts. Poor rural women have gained a measure of control over their everyday lives and transformed relations with their men. By mobilizing themselves within their villages, they not only enforced the closure of the arrack shops but also effectively confronted the state and to that extent destabilised the economy by targeting the excise department. In developing unique forms of struggle and resistance, women never involved with politics redefined the meaning of the world. Directly related to the deep-rooted desire of the women to accept literacy into their lives, the agitation took such deep roots in the countryside that arrack auctions were not held in Nellore for years.

Excerpts from Alka Raghuvanshi, ed., *Literacy for Empowerment*, National Literacy Mission, New Delhi, no date

#### **4.1.4. Some Key Policy Decisions and Practices Informed and Influenced by Different Data and Information Sources**

1. Early and mid 1990s, had witnessed the peak of TLCs in different parts of the country, These Campaigns were designed on the figures of Census 1991. Therefore, the NLM was eager to know the impact of the Campaigns on literacy rates and the number of people made literate. The next Census was still far away. The data of 53<sup>rd</sup> Round (1997) of NSSO revealed impressive growth in literacy rates and the number of literates.<sup>42</sup> This data influenced the historic policy decisions taken by the Union Cabinet of the Government of India in its meeting on 30 November 1999. Some key decisions taken in this meeting were: higher financial allocations for different programme sectors having implications for upward revision of certain unit costs leading to strengthening the SRCs and SLMAs, strengthening and expansion of JSS and its scope of work of these institutions to take care of the needs of neo literates emerging out of the literacy campaigns; and making allocation for certain components not focused earlier like Equivalency Programme for the neo literates by National Institute of Open Learning for designing Equivalency Programme for the neo literates and for sharing of experiences with other countries.<sup>43</sup>
2. The findings of the Mid Term Appraisals of the Planning Commission are considered for making mid course corrections and alignment of strategies and also for developing Working Paper for the next Five Year Plan. The Mid Term Appraisal of the X Five Year Plan (2002 – 2007) had suggested covering the illiterates in 35 + age groups.<sup>44</sup> This recommendation has been included by NLM under the XI Five Year (2007 -2012).
3. The Census 2001 revealed that out 47 districts were low female literacy rates (<30%) and 150 districts with about 55% literacy rates, far less than the national average of 65%. Based on these findings, NLM launched the Accelerated Female Literacy Programme (AFLP) in 47 districts in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. The Council of NLMA in its 8<sup>th</sup> meeting on April 5, 2005, decided to take up a special literacy drive in 150 districts, which had the lowest literacy rates in the country. The special drive for reduction of residual illiteracy aimed to cover nearly 36 million illiterates from 2005-07 and so far, 134 districts in different states have been covered under these special drives.<sup>45</sup>
4. Information gathered from the evaluation reports, baseline surveys and the Census 2001 data, indicated that in many cases the campaigns languished due to a number of reasons including natural calamities, lack of political will and the frequent transfer of District Collectors. Despite the completion of the campaign, large

number of illiterates remained un-reached. Projects for Residual Illiteracy (PRIs) were launched in these areas after the conclusion of TLCs to cover the remaining illiterates.<sup>46</sup>

5. Under the XI Five Year Plan there are proposals to accord priority to low literacy/low female literacy rate districts and to those districts having concentration of non literates belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and other deprived sections of the society. Here also, the Census 2001 data is being used to set targets and select the districts.
6. The standardized external evaluation systems laid down for different programme provide valuable information for comparisons of results of different districts or institutions in the same category. Some of the evaluation studies especially related to the PLPs, CEPs, JSSs and SRCs do have components on impact of the programme activities which have implications for future practices.
7. The studies commissioned by the DAE, New Delhi, and the SRC help in many ways including review, revision or continuation of the specific activities or evolving future programme designs and strategies.

#### **4.2. Innovations and Examples of Good Practices**

The NLM, when launched in 1988, had the mammoth task of eradicating illiteracy in a country with democratic federal set up and with tremendous diversities -- diversities in culture, languages, and geographic terrain; having inter and intra regional disparities in literacy situation; marked gap in overall literacy rates as well as in respect of women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and minorities. Above all, there was an urgency to deal with the problem of illiteracy especially due to the slow pace in the rise of literacy rates in the past decades. Therefore, the 'Mission' was conceived to ensure people's participation and tap resources from all sections of the society to meet the challenges and to ensure the success of illiteracy eradication efforts.

After trying out different strategies in regard to the programme formats, duration, and implementation methods, NLM came to adopt the Mass Campaign approach that proved to be a great success. It started with the Total Literacy Campaign in Ernakulum District in 1989-90 and soon adopted in all districts of Kerala and many other states. Seeing its success, the NLM adopted the TLC as the national approach to literacy.

***History of Innovations and Good Practices Recalled:*** The TLC approach had certain core aspects such as its time bound duration,

voluntarism in teaching the non-literates, district as the basic unit and covering in one go all the non-literates in the selected – generally the 15-35 – age group, an administration-civil society partnership with organizational-management structure from district to village level, strong on NGO and civil society presence and say in the planning and management of the TLC, district specific primer and a campaign for social motivation and mobilization with a view to creating a positive environment for literacy, and the like. Given the massive nature of the Campaigns, these required support of the government machinery. This prompted several state governments to depute staff of other departments to work for literacy on 'secondment' basis at state as well as district levels. Some other state governments introduced the systems of awards and incentives for the better performing literacy functionaries, organizations and the districts. Similar awards are given at the national level also.

Innovations and good practices at district and sub-district levels are far too many, and just a few are being mentioned here.

The literacy campaigns provided a platform for the people to discuss and innovate strategies and interventions for social and developmental issues directly affecting their lives and this continued even in the post campaign period as well. The issue of distribution of unequal wages to women quarry workers taken up in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu<sup>47</sup> and the united fight of unorganized laborers against coal mafia for implementation of minimum wages programme in Dhanbad district of Bihar were innovations crafted by people and supported by the campaign managers against exploitation.<sup>48</sup>

The anti-arrack movement (a prohibition movement), initiated by the women of Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh<sup>49</sup> and dealing with Devdasi system (a practice of dedication of women as servants of God to Hindu deities, idols, objects of worship and temples) in Belgaum district of Karnataka<sup>50</sup> were the examples of linking literacy with social evils affecting the lives of people especially women. Formation of 'Didi Banks' (sisters' banks) and 'Bhaiya Banks' (brothers' banks) – thrift groups -- in Durg district of Madhya Pradesh<sup>51</sup> or in Dumka district of Bihar<sup>52</sup> were the interventions devised to link literacy with economic life of the people. Mobilization of 60,000 women of Pudukkotai with cycles and mopeds to spread message of literacy across the district was not only an innovation in social mobilization and motivation, but was also a powerful instrument in catalyzing mobility and empowerment of women. This led to tremendous people's participation and high achievement rates of TLC target.<sup>53</sup>

Towards the mid and late 1990s the programmes gradually started moving towards the Post Literacy and Continuing Education phases. By the end of the X Five Year Plan, 321 districts had come under the CE phase. In PLP

and CEP phases also, in many cases, the programmes retained its initial dynamism and continued to devise innovative strategies, methods and practices with respect to the PLP and CE objectives, and also in addressing residual illiteracy. A few recent developments by way of innovations and good practices could deserve notice.

### **Bridging the Gaps in Literacy: Innovative National Response**

***Accelerated Female Literacy Programme (AFLP):*** As per the 2001 Census, 47 districts in the country had a female literacy rate below 30% with most of them located in States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand.<sup>54</sup> In order to bridge gender gap in literacy, innovative programmes were taken up in some districts in the four states.

Two different approaches were adopted for AFLP implementation – one by the NGOs and the other under the auspices of the ZSS. In Uttar Pradesh, AFLP was launched in 2002 in 8 districts by involving around 100 NGOs to make literate 2.5 million illiterate women in the 15-35 age groups in a period of five months. The implementing agencies were given block-wise responsibilities on a geographical basis. AFLP of Uttar Pradesh was innovative on several counts including exclusive focus on women non-literates, shorter programme duration, use of special primers relating to women empowerment issues and implementing agencies being the NGOs.

In Bihar, the Special Female Literacy Programme (SFLP) was implemented in 13 low-female literacy districts in the first phase to cover 2.403 million women learners in the 15-35 age-groups. The projects were implemented by the ZSS along with the ongoing TLC or PLP programmes, from January to December 2003. The innovative aspects of the SFLP included formation of 'Mahila Samitis' (Women's Committees) at district and sub district levels with representation of women from amongst teachers, social workers, NGOs representatives, PRIs, officials of Women and Child Development and other departments in the districts. In minority concentration areas, the Imams (religious heads) were urged to promote literacy among the Muslim masses.

The AFLP in Orissa covered nine districts and targetted 1.043 million non-literate women in the 15-35 age groups. The SRC, Bhubaneswar was the nodal agency to oversee the project's implementation executed largely by NGOs.



The SFLP in Jharkhand covered five low literacy districts and around 500,000 women illiterates in 15-35 age groups. The programme was implemented by the ZSSs with active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions and women social workers. A special Resource-cum-Support Group was constituted under the aegis of Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), Patna, to provide resource support and monitoring of the programmes.

**Projects for Residual Illiteracy (PRIs):** In many cases, TLCs languished due to several reasons including natural calamities, lack of political will and the frequent transfer of District Collectors. Despite the completion of the campaign, a large number of illiterates remained un-reached. Projects for Residual Illiteracy (PRIs) were launched in these areas after the conclusion of TLCs to cover the remaining illiterates. PRIs have so far been taken up in 53 districts in 8 states.

**Special Literacy Drive in 150 Low Literacy Districts:** In 2005, a decision was taken to launch special literacy drive (for tackling of the residual illiteracy) in 150 low literacy districts, to cover nearly 36 million illiterates between 2005-07. So far, 134 districts in different states have been covered under the Special Literacy Drive under on-going TLC, PLP or CEP.

Never before in the history of the NLM, had projects with exclusive focus on literacy of women initiated and massive drives to deal with the issue of residual illiteracy been launched, and in that sense, the programmes, projects and drives outlined above, have been innovative interventions to deal with the special situations.

### **Selected Innovations in Literacy and CE Programmes: State Experiences**

**Andhra Pradesh: State Support, Community Ownership and Sustainability of CE Programme** - Andhra Pradesh was among the first states to cover all 23 districts under TLC from 1991 - 94 and transit to the CE phase as early as 1996. In addition to the core team of 450 full time employees of Adult Education Department, the state has deputed around 1150 teachers on full time basis as Mandal Literacy Organizers (Block Literacy Organizers) to oversee the adult education programmes at Mandal level.<sup>55</sup> Andhra Pradesh has conceived the CEP as people's programme. By virtue of the Andhra Pradesh School Education (People's Participation) Act passed in 1998, the statutory four-member committees elected by the general body composed of neo-literates, known as Akshar Sangam, run the CE programme in the villages. Grants were released to

these committees for running the CECs. The elected President of the committee and the Convener, who is the local primary school head master, operate the bank account jointly. They organize various activities in CECs and furnish reports to the ZSS. A system of corpus fund has been created for long term sustainability of the CECs and an amount of Rs. 8 crores has been collected as corpus fund and membership fee in the state.<sup>56</sup>

***Karnataka: Alternative Approaches for Literacy–Livelihood Linkage and Combating Residual Illiteracy:*** In order to deal with the residual illiteracy and improve its literacy rates Karnataka has undertaken some innovative interventions. These include Rapid Learning Camps for the Marginalized and 'Each One Teach Two' programmes.

The SLMA has organized Rapid Learning Literacy Camps of 18 days duration for the marginalized women and men with people's participation. In these Camps learners were enabled to learn for five hours a day. Primers developed for this programme had 16 lessons related mainly to general health, gender, empowerment and income generation. Working lunch was also provided through local sponsorship. The Camp approach created a competitive learning environment and it created such an atmosphere that programme turned into a movement. As a result, against the target of 7.5 lakhs learners and 15000 camps, 11,800 camps were organized covering 3.44 lakhs learners. Among these learners, 86% were women. An urge for further learning and linkage with the Nodal/Continuing Education Centres developed among the participants.

The Each One Teach Two programme has been implemented with the help of students of 9th and 11th standard. The selected student volunteers of the local school teach non-literate adults identified by Zila Saksharta Samiti (ZSS), each student teaching 2 non-literates. Training to student volunteers is imparted at the local level by the Resource Persons. On successful completion and verification, IX and XI Standard students are given 10 and 20 marks respectively. 10 lakh non-literates in the age group of 15-35 are to be benefited under this programme in 2 years. Student volunteers who achieve their targets receive certificates signed by Chief Minister and Minister for Education at Taluk/District level felicitation function.

The demonstration of literacy and livelihood model emerged from Raichur district in Karnataka where the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) was in operation. Under the NREGS, there are provisions for 100 days of paid manual work to a family in a year, employing an educated person to supervise the work and a tent for the workers to rest during leisure. In spite of the checks and balances, rural

workers were being exploited due to their illiteracy and ignorance. Therefore, the provisions and conditions of the scheme were converted into an opportunity for the Prerak who could gain the benefits of the programme and teach the workers during the lunch break for 100 days, thus, preventing exploitation of the workers also. This literacy and livelihood programme proved successful in Raichur, with 13,070 persons being made literate and liberated from ignorance and exploitation. Looking at the success, this intervention has been extended to four other districts covered under the NREGS.<sup>57</sup>

***Rajasthan: State Will Supporting Literacy and Women Empowerment***

- Rajasthan was once among the lowest literacy states. The sheer will of the State, people's participation and innovations in the 1991 – 2001 decade has drastically changed its literacy scenario. In 2001 Census, it recorded an impressive growth of 21.85 percentage points over its 1991 literacy rate which was higher than the national average. Rajasthan has continued to demonstrate its will and its potential to innovate. In this regard, two initiatives deserve special mention, viz., Ashikshit Mahila Shikshan Shivirs (Female Literacy Camps) and Camps for Vocational Training of Women.

With the financial support of the State Government, SLMA Rajasthan, in 2003–04, launched an innovative programme called 'Ashikshit Mahila Shikshan Shivirs' for imparting literacy to women through camp based approach. Camps of 21 days duration (with 6 hours per day) inducting 15 to 25 non-literate women in each camp were organized in all 32 districts of the state. In addition to transacting literacy primers (by Preraks and 2 Resource Persons per camp) talks and discussion on issues affecting the quality of life of women and other cultural and recreational activities were also organized. Some camps received community sponsorship beyond the stipulated duration. On conclusion of the camps, and completion of first two specially designed primers, participants were linked with CECs for completion of the curriculum and equivalency programme. In all 22,063 such camps benefiting 5,51,858 women and 5988 weeks of voluntary contribution were organized by 2006-07.

Vocational Training Camps with similar support of the State Government were also organised to equip women with occupational skills for better livelihood opportunities. Making a beginning in 2004-05, 1053 vocational training camps in all 32 districts benefiting 52,601 women were organized with ensured backward and forward linkages and several participants joining the Self Help Groups.<sup>58</sup>

***Chhattisgarh: Record in Making – Book Reading Programme*** - A Book Reading Programme on a massive scale was organized throughout the State of Chhattisgarh on 8th September 2007, to celebrate International

Literacy Day (ILD). Preceded by the meticulous and elaborate planning, putting systems and resources in place from village up to the state levels for more than a year, the Programme was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of the State on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2007 at 8 O'clock in the morning. The Honorable Governor of the State himself participated in the Programme. A total of 2,01,27,600 books were read by 80,54,395 people in the State up to 8 O'clock at night. The Book Reading Programme of Chhattisgarh was a history in making as it entered the Limca Book of Records.<sup>59</sup>

### **Selected Innovations and Good Practices – District Experiences in CEPs**

There have been a number of district level innovations and good practices especially in CE programmes. A few are indicated below:

- In CEP Dhanbad (Jharkhand), a household survey, covering 4.37 lakh households and interviewing 702533 people, was conducted in December 2006, to know the learning interests of the CE clients. A whopping 40% of the respondents (260825 out of which 92701 were women) expressed desire to learn computers. The survey findings revealed that even people living in rural areas feel the pulse of the Information Technology revolution and they do not wish to remain left out.<sup>60</sup>
- In Chittorgarh district (Rajasthan), Hindustan Zinc Limited, a corporate entity, entered into collaboration with the ZSS and provided computers for 50 CECs with software to teach illiterates and has provided training to its Preraks for running the computers.<sup>61</sup> In a similar PPP venture, the Tata Consultancy Services, another major corporate body, donated 450 computers for CECs in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh which have been used to impart computer based functional literacy.<sup>62</sup>
- Panchayati Raj Institutions are playing an active role in the CEP in Kollam District (Kerala). The PRI funded the construction of ZSS office – a multi-storeyed building worth Rs. 50 lakhs. The Panchayats have also constructed buildings for 174 out of the total 205 CECs in the district; and a corpus fund of Rs. 55 lakhs has been collected by the PRIs from different sources for long term sustainability of the CECs.<sup>63</sup>
- The CEP Thoothukudi District (Tamil Nadu) is a shining model of convergence. The Nodal CECs have been connected with the National Informatics Centre and RASI (Rural Access Services through Internet) and 250 women including NCEC Preraks and neo-literates have been trained, with financial support of the District Rural Development Agency, to use the facility. Buildings for 50 CECs with the help of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojna funds have been constructed; 1872 women and 882 men SHGs have

been formed with linkages with the Tamil Nadu Women Development Corporation; and similar linkages were established with several other development programmes including Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan.<sup>64</sup>

### **Equivalency Programme – Kerala and Rajasthan Showing the Way**

Given the increase in the number of neo literates and realising the growing awareness of importance of education, two states viz., Kerala and Rajasthan have taken the lead in offering Equivalency Programmes for the neo literates.

### **Innovations by SRC**

The primary role of SRCs is to provide academic, training and technical resource support to literacy and continuing education programmes of the NLM including the JSS. The SRCs shoulder the task of preparing the primers, training manuals and other learning materials appropriate to the different phases of the programmes, viz., TLC, PLP, CE and other special literacy drives. For instance, the literacy needs of the non-literate disabled persons have not received in the past the attention it deserved. The SRC, Kerala converted its Primer into Braille for the people with visual impairment.<sup>65</sup> A literacy programme using the baraille was undertaken in Malappuram district. The Barkat Ali 'Firaq' State Resource Centre of Delhi (with the sponsorship of UNESCO, New Delhi Office) has developed pilot material for literacy programme on Disaster Risk Management which is an emerging area of national concern.<sup>66</sup> The SRC Rajasthan in Jaipur has entered into collaboration with the National Rural Health Mission for the training of ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists).<sup>67</sup> SRC West Bengal has taken up an experimental counselling programme on HIV/AIDS<sup>68</sup> and SRC Indore has developed the Mahila Padhna Badhna Andolan primer which concentrates on issues relating to women's rights.<sup>69</sup>

### **Jan Shikshan Sansthan : Offering Demand Driven Vocational Courses**

The Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSSs) are unique institutions which provide literacy linked vocational training and life enrichment education to neo literates and other target groups. Based at the District level, they design vocational training courses in trades having demand in the district. Some of the JSS are extra sensitive to the requirements of the market, and in seeking the expertise of other organizations for introducing new courses on collaborative basis and/or for post-course placement tie-ups. The JSS

R.K.Puram, New Delhi in collaboration with an NGO working for the welfare of domestic workers imparts literacy linked vocational training to them<sup>70</sup> and such trained domestic helpers are quite in demand in Delhi.

The JSS Paryas in Delhi initially started a bakery unit with the support of Rotary Club, South End. After making the beginning, on request of the JSS, Taj groups of Hotels in Delhi provided one month quality training at one of their hotels in New Delhi. All the trainees of first batch were absorbed in the newly set up bakery unit of Paryas and since then the bakery has turned into a full fledged business providing employment to 50 persons.<sup>71</sup> The JSS Tehri Garhwal in Uttarakhand has devised a programme for Angora rabbit rearing and Angora spinning given the high demand of this high quality fibre.<sup>72</sup> The JSS Angul under the supervision of scientists from Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology has imparted training in scientific cultivation of Mushroom to more than 1000 beneficiaries and more than 800 women are now earning their livelihood through mushroom cultivation.<sup>73</sup>

In conclusion, it may be said that there were creditable data/information sources and systems in place for informing the policies and influencing the practices related to the adult education programmes. The informed policy decisions and carefully crafted programmes and strategies in post campaign periods have sustained and carried forward the NLM's legacy of innovations and evolving or adopting good practices under the CEP phase.

## Chapter 5

### Adult Literacy

#### 5.1. Adult Literacy as Defined under the NLM

The National Literacy Mission has conceived literacy, as an active and potent instrument of change and for creation of a learning society. Instead of bare literacy, the NLM aims to impart 'Functional Literacy' to non literate adults in 15 - 35 age groups and it defines 'Functional Literacy' as:

- achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy;
- becoming aware of the causes of their deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition through organization, and participation in the process of development ;
- acquiring skills to improve economic status and general well being;
- imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality and observance of small family norms, etc.<sup>74</sup>

As may be gathered from above description, the definition of functional literacy is all encompassing. It has components of literacy, awareness, organization and action for change, skills for improving working and living conditions, and concern for national and global issues. The definition has the dynamism to accommodate present as well as future literacy and learning needs of the individuals and the society and thus implying literacy as a process of lifelong learning. For an entry into the lifelong learning, NLM does prescribe for all its clients the minimum levels of competencies in reading, writing and numeracy, asunder:

#### Reading

- Reading aloud with normal accent simple passage on a topic related to the learners at a speed of 30 words a minute.
- Reading silently small paragraphs in simple language at a speed of 35 words per minute.
- Reading with understanding the road signs, posters, simple instructions and newspapers for neo literates.
- Ability to follow simple written messages relating to one's working and living environment.

### **Writing**

- Copying, with understanding at a speed of 7 words per minute.
- Taking dictation at a speed of 5 words per minute
- Writing with proper spacing and alignment.
- Writing independently short letters and applications and forms of day-to-day use to the learner.

### **Numeracy**

- To read and write 1-100 numerals.
- Doing simple calculations without fraction involving addition and subtraction up to three digits, and multiplication and division by two digits.
- Working knowledge of metric units of weights, measures, currency, distance, area and unit of time.
- Broad idea of proportion and interest (not involving fractions) and their use in working and living conditions.<sup>75</sup>

As already mentioned, the lifelong learning is inherent in the definition of functional literacy therefore no change was required in it since its prescription in 1988. However, since 1997, there has been an expansion in institutionalized continuing education programme and literacy linked vocational and vocational education programmes in order to address the needs of millions of neo literates coming out of the TLCs and PLPs. Also, some of the emerging concerns such as HIV/AIDS, Adolescents Reproductive and Sexual Health, Environment, Water Management, Rural Sanitation have also been on the agenda of functional literacy in post 1997 period. More details of these initiatives have been given in earlier parts of the report.

### **4.2 - 4.4 New Policies, Effective Practices and Innovative Programmes, and Focus on Gender and Other Target Groups**

The focus of the National Literacy Mission has been exclusively on 'adult literacy' and in this respect the new policies adopted and implemented, effective practices and innovation and focus on women and other target groups since 1997, have been outlined in preceding as well as succeeding parts of the report.



#### **4.5 Extent Policies and Programmes Aim at Building Literate Environment**

Enough facts and figures have been provided in earlier parts of the report and some more in forthcoming parts in support of policies and programmes succeeding in building literate environment. For a matter of recall, a few facts are selectively being presented below:

- There was a growth of 12.63 percentage points in literacy i.e. it went up from 52.21% in 1991 to 64.84% in 2001 and this was also the fastest decadal growth ever recorded.
- Female literacy recorded a higher growth of 14.38 percentage points (from 39.29% in 1991 to 53.67% in 2001) as compared to males (11.13 percentage points - increased from 44.13% in 1991 to 55.26% in 2001) and the trends of growth of literacy among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were also on the similar lines
- For the first time since Independence, drop in absolute number of illiterates was observed during the 1990s (number dropped by 24.77 million)
- The number of persons made literate under different programmes/schemes of the NLM went up to 125.76 millions since 1988 with 60.95 millions made literate from 1997 -98 to 2006 -07 (data awaited from most state for 2006 – 07 not included)
- Out of 600 districts 597 covered by different phases of literacy programmes and 328 districts reached the CEP phase
- Special female literacy drives implemented in 47 low female literacy districts across 4 states
- Projects for Residual Illiteracy taken up by 53 districts of 8 States
- Special literacy drives covered 134 districts out of 150 low literacy districts identified in the country
- Coverage of Jan Shikshan Sansthan exceeded 200 districts

The will at national and state levels has been the primary driving force for building the literate environment. Evidence of it may be gathered from figures of increasing allocations for adult literacy programmes in successive Five Year Plans at the national level and some states making more than their prescribed contributions towards the programmes.

## Chapter 6

### **Expectations of CONFINTEA and Future Perspectives of Literacy and Continuing Education**

#### **6.1 Future Perspectives of Literacy and Continuing Education in India**

As elaborated in the previous chapters India has made great strides in combating illiteracy in the country. The literacy rate of 18.33% (for 5 and above age groups) in 1951, when the first census of the country after independence was carried out, has risen to 64.84% (for 7 & above age groups) as per the census of 2001. The regional and gender disparities also decreased during this period due to the whole hearted community mobilization and implementation of the various literacy programmes of the National Literacy Mission. However a lot more ground remains to be covered. Even in the more progressive States, pockets of illiteracy among the SCs, STs, women and / or minorities still remain disturbing. More than half of the country's non literates are found in the northern belt.

According to 2001 Census, there were 304 million non-literates in the country. Nearly 100 million of these non-literates are in the 15-35 age group and another 159 million non-literates are in the 35+ age group. 150 lowest literacy districts, spread over 17 states alone, account for 86.80 million non-literates in the 15+ age group out of which nearly 38.40 million are in the 15-35 age group. In addition, 47 districts of the country have a female literacy rate below 30%. The low literacy rates of SC, ST and minorities and especially of women also call for immediate redressal. The number of non-literates in the 15-35 age group amongst scheduled castes is 21.47 million and amongst scheduled tribes is 13.15 million. Further, out of the 88 Muslim concentration districts, 69 districts have a literacy rate below the national average.

The primary objective of the schemes of the National Literacy Mission since inception has been to impart functional literacy to the illiterates in the 15-35 age group. The Planning Commission of India has fixed a target of achieving 80% literacy rate (7+ age group) for the XI Five Year Plan period with a simultaneous reduction of the gender gap to 10%. The implications so far as it concerns female literacy are enormous. Female literacy rates would have to be raised to at least 70% by 2012 from the present 53.67%. Hence the focus of the XI Five Year Plan is based on low women literacy districts of the country. Study of available population and literacy data shows that this approach would simultaneously address the literacy needs of the other disadvantaged sections of society. It is not a coincidence that the incidence of low literacy coincides with the poverty ridden areas of the country. Literacy is one of the three determinants of the Human Development Index. Hence renewed efforts

must be made to improve literacy of the country which would result in a dramatic increase in its ranking which at present is a dismal 122 out of 177 countries.

The major component in the revamped strategy of the literacy programmes is the amalgamation of the earlier separate programmes namely TLC, PLP, PRI and CEP. This was felt to be imperative since more and more districts (328 at present out of 603 of the country) were graduating to the continuing education phase. The gaps which often cropped up between the sanctioning and launch of successive programmes were seen to be a cause of some relapses occurring. Hence it was thought prudent that the schemes be clubbed together to iron out implementation issues and pave the way for a uniform programme to be tailored to suit the local needs of the area.

The focus of the Mission would be on the low literacy areas particularly those having low literacy rates for women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities etc. Special emphasis is being placed on building up a data base of the non literates and regular updating based on the evaluation tests so that the target individuals are always in view. The basic literacy phase of the earlier programmes was largely based on volunteerism and that too with a good amount of success. However with changing scenario and many more developmental schemes being launched, it is being felt increasingly that the instructors of the literacy centres should be paid suitable remuneration with incentives for good performance linked to the number of persons made literate.

The basic literacy phase in the revamped programme would be for duration of a year, to be followed up immediately by testing in association with the local school. A certificate of equivalence with the primary level will be awarded to learners who pass the examination. The still unsuccessful learners would be mopped up by the same instructors so as to minimize, if not eradicate, the incidence of illiteracy in the area. The ensuing continuing education programme would provide follow up and lifelong learning opportunities to the neo literates through library and reading room facilities in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of the campaign. Skill development has been an inextricable component of the literacy schemes in consonance with the NLM objective of imparting functional literacy. However this finds a renewed focus in the XI Plan by the renaming of the amalgamated scheme as Adult Education and Skill Development. The Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) will play a critical role in imparting skill development and vocational training programme to neo-literates.

In keeping with the persistent view of NLM that literacy programmes cannot and should not be implemented in isolation and exclusion of other developmental programmes, a renewed initiative has been taken to make

literacy as an integral component of the developmental schemes of other Ministries especially those in the social sector namely Ministries of Rural Development, Women and Child Development, Social Justice & Empowerment, Youth Affairs and Sports, Minority Affairs, etc. The Panchayati Raj Institutions or the local self government bodies would become important partners in each stage of implementation of the literacy initiatives to instill a sense of community ownership and to enable taking over the after the completion of the 4 year schedule of NLM. This convergence and synergy for the betterment of literacy in India received an across the board consensus and go ahead during the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of the National Literacy Mission Authority held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008. NGOs with good track record would be invited to take up innovative projects, vocational training, academic and technical resource support for the Mission.

With a basic strike on basic literacy, without undermining the need for continuing education to the neo literates, it is estimated that a significant impact of the concerted efforts would be visible in the form of literacy rates of the country during the next decadal census scheduled to be held in 2011. Literacy programmes are to be implemented in the mission mode so that more and more people are able to comprehend, demand, question and fight for their rights and benefits not only from various development programmes meant for them but also as knowledgeable, empowered citizens of India.

## **6.2 Expectations from CONFINTEA VI**

There is a growing consensus globally that the effort and initiatives that are required to gear up the literacy rates, especially for adult education, are not forthcoming. The priority that should be accorded to the sector, though acknowledged at various fora, is still not visible both at national and international levels as well as government and within civil society. Literacy is one of the most crucial and paradoxically the most neglected stream in education. Literacy which had figured high in the global agenda during the 1990's has slipped off the national and international radar subsequently. Most glaring of course is its omission in the Millennium Development Goals which are silent on the issue of literacy.<sup>76</sup> The emerging efforts and new partnerships emerging in the formal (elementary) school sector should be extended to adult education too. Though studies have proved again and again that educating the mother has far reaching spin off benefits, oft these revelations have been relegated to refereed journals and reports only. Again, the corporate social responsibility has been growing in the formal school system. However they are not much visible in adult education, though a large proportion of their unskilled / semi skilled work force remains illiterate.

Hence the first recommendations of the CONFINTEA VI should be:

1. To step up efforts towards bringing back adult education to the forefront of international and national agenda.
2. The cross sectoral linkages between different stages of education, right from the early childhood and care, elementary and secondary education with adult education should be emphasized.
3. Though it is amply proved that illiteracy and poverty have a direct correlation, more effort needs to be channeled to strengthen convergence and synergy between poverty amelioration and rural development programmes by making literacy an integral component
4. International donors should be exhorted to include a literacy as an integral component in all community based and community driven programmes viz. health, rural development, environment, agriculture, etc to enable truly holistic empowerment and participation of the communities in the programmes.
5. Funding for adult education should see a proportionate rise in both national budgets as well as international funding of such programmes.
6. UN agencies should enhance their cooperation in literacy as part of their common programming
7. Establish an institutional mechanism for sharing of best practices and innovations among the member countries
8. Documentation is weak in adult education due to the dispersed location of the participants as well as the temporary nature of literacy centres. A sound system of monitoring and evaluation should be developed for improved documentation and dissemination.

## ***Glossary of Indian Terms***

**Akshar Sangam** - A four-member committee elected by the general body composed of neo-literates to run the CE programme in the villages of Andhra Pradesh

**Anti-arrack movement** - A prohibition movement against 'Arrack' which is an alcoholic beverage that is distilled mainly in South Asia and South East Asia from fermented fruit, grain, sugarcane, or the sap of coconut palms.

**Ashikshit Mahila Shikshan Shivirs** - Camps for imparting literacy to non literate women.

**'Bhaiya' Banks** - Thrift groups formed by men.

**Block Development Officer** - Officer in – charge responsible for the development of 'Block', which is an administrative division of the districts for the purpose of development in rural areas

**Census of India** - The Census of India is the largest single source of a variety of statistical information on different characteristics of the people of India. With a history of more than 130 years, this reliable, time tested exercise has been bringing out a veritable wealth of statistics every 10 years, beginning from 1872

**Centre for Adult and Continuing Education & Extension** - Centres established with the universities by the University Grants Commission as part of the Third Dimension of Education. Apart from developing the academic resource base for adult education programme, they are required to run adult, continuing and extension education programmes in the specified neighborhood of the university.

**Concurrent Subject (or Subject under list)** - Subjects defined and enlisted under the List - III of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, which form the joint domain of both the State Governments and the Union territories of India as well as the Central Government of India.

**Commission for Scheduled Castes** - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes is an investigative, monitoring and advisory body for matters related to Constitutional and legal provisions for protection, welfare, development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes

**Commission for Scheduled Tribes** - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes is an investigative, monitoring and advisory body for matters related to Constitutional and legal provisions for protection, welfare, development and advancement of the Scheduled Castes

**Commission for Women** - The National Commission for Women is a statutory body to review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women; recommend remedial legislative measures; facilitate redressal of grievances and advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.

**Commission for Child Rights** - The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is a statutory body for providing speedy trial of offences against children or violation of child rights and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

**Continuing Education Centre** - An institutional mechanism at village and ward levels for the delivery of adult literacy and continuing programmes.

**Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension** - Some of the Centres for Adult and Continuing Education and Extension later became the Departments offering certificate/diploma/degree courses in addition to their original mandate (see 'Centre for .....', in glossary).

**'Devdasi' system** - A practice of dedication of women as 'Devdasis' (servants of God) to Hindu deities, idols, objects of worship and temples for religious institutions etc.

**'Didi' Banks** - Thrift groups formed by women

**Directorate of Adult Education** - The national directorate under the Ministry of Human Resource Development of Government of India for providing academic, training and technical resource support to literacy and continuing education programmes

**District Institute of Education and Training** - Institutes responsible for academic, training and technical resource support to education programmes at the district level (managed by the state governments with sponsorship of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India).

**District Magistrate/District Collector** - The District Magistrate/ **District Collector** is the administrative head of the district and looks after the administration of the entire district.

**District Resource Unit** - district level unit of training and technical resource support for adult literacy programmes (located invariably in District Institute of Education and Training)

**District Rural Development Agency** - These are district level agencies for professional and effective management of the anti poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development and interact effectively with other agencies.

**'Guruji'** - An honorary teacher under the 'Padhna Badhna

Andolan', a programme of non formal and adult education of the State Government of Madhya Pradesh

**Improved Pace & Contents of Learning** – An approach adopted by the NLM for designing and delivery of basic and post literacy curricula

**Integrated Child Development Scheme** - A Central Government sponsored scheme for holistic development of children in age groups 0 – 6 years.

**Jan Shikshan Sansthan** - People's Education Institutes supported by the National Literacy Mission for vocational skill development training and life enrichment education.

**Key Resource Persons** - Trainers and main technical support persons at the district level in literacy and continuing education programmes.

**Literacy Linked Vocational Training** - Vocational training programmes for non or semi literate persons with in built components of literacy and numeracy.

**'Mahila Samitis'** - Women's Committees

**'Mahila Padhna Badhna Andolan'** - A programme of adult and non formal education (of Government of Madhya Pradesh) for girls and women

**Mandal Literacy Organizers** - Organizer of literacy and continuing education programmes at the Block level (Block is the development/administrative unit next to the district in India).

**Master Trainers** - Trainers and main technical support persons at the Block/Panchayat level in literacy and continuing education programmes.

**Mopping Up** - A component of Post Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes an to make literate the left outs and drop outs of the earlier phase and the new entrants

**NLM - UNESCO Award** - An award instituted by the NLM and UNESCO jointly, to encourage the institution(s) and to recognize their distinctive contributions to the field of literacy and adult education institutions in India.

**Nagar Palika** - Municipal Corporation

**National Cadet Corps** - The National Cadet Corps is a statutory organization which enrolls and trains the youth especially students to create a human resource of organized, trained and activated youth, to provide leadership in all walks of life including the Armed Forces and always available for the service of the nation.



**National Informatics Centre** - It is a unit of the Department of Information Technology, Government of India providing network backbone and e-Governance support to Central Government, State Governments, UT Administrations, Districts and other Government bodies.

**National Institute of Open Schooling** - An autonomous organization offering a wide range of subjects in comparison to any other formal school including equivalency programmes for neo literates through Open and Distance mode

**National Family Health Surveys** - It is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India to provide essential data on health and family welfare and emerging issues in these areas for policy and programme purposes.

**National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme/Scheme** – A programme/scheme (of the Ministry of Rural Development of Govt. of India) to provide for enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of Guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

**National Rural Health Mission** - A Mission (2005-12) which

seeks to provide effective healthcare to rural population throughout the country with special focus on states, which have weak public health indicators and/or weak infrastructure.

**National Sample Surveys** - It is a nation-wide, large-scale, continuous sample survey operation conducted in the form of successive rounds to collect data for socio-economic planning and policy making.

**National Sample Survey Organization** - An organization of the Government of India under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation responsible for conducting the national sample surveys.

**Nodal Continuing Education Centre** - An institutional mechanism at village and ward levels for the delivery of adult literacy and continuing programmes with higher financial allocation and additional responsibilities including supervision and monitoring of a cluster of 10 Continuing Education Centres under it.

**Padna Badna Samiti** - Literally meaning a 'Study and Progress Society', wherein a group of learners identifies a 'Guruji' (teacher) and register itself as a society with Block Development Officer for the purposes of adult literacy and non formal education.

**Panchayats** - The local government bodies in rural areas

**Panchayati Raj** - The local self governance

**Panchayati Raj Institutions** - The bodies of local self government

**Planning Commission of India** - It is an institution in the Government of India, which formulates India's Five-Year Plans, among other functions.

**Prerak** - The honorary worker in-charge of Continuing Education Centre at village level

**Primers** - Books designed specially for imparting basic and post literacy skills under the NLM sponsored programmes

**Projects for Residual Illiteracy** - Projects to provide the opportunities of basic teaching learning activities for left-outs/mid-way drop-outs/non-achievers in the areas where literacy programmes (TLC and PLP) have been completed or the CEP has commenced.

**Rural Access Services through Internet** - A project of State Government of Tamil Nadu aimed to bridge digital divide between urban and rural areas by setting up Internet kiosks through public-private partnerships in rural areas.

**Residual illiteracy** - The left over balance of illiteracy (illiterates) in

areas where the TLC or PLP has been concluded or CEP has commenced.

**Resource Persons** - Trainers and main technical support persons at the district level in literacy and continuing education programmes.

**Rupees** - A unit of India Currency

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** - It is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right.

**Satyen Maitra Memorial Literacy Award** - An award instituted by the National Literacy Mission in 1996 to encourage healthy competition among the Districts for distinctive performance on the programme objectives (TLC, PLP and CEP).

**Scheduled Caste** - Communities that are explicitly recognized by the Constitution of India as requiring special support to overcome their disadvantaged condition due to centuries of discrimination

**Scheduled Tribe** - Tribes that are explicitly recognized by the Constitution of India as requiring special support to overcome their disadvantaged condition due to centuries of discrimination

**Secondment basis** - A facilitating provision wherein an employee of some organization or department is deputed to work full time for literacy and continuing education programmes but continues to draw salary from the parent organization or department.

**State Directorate of Adult Education** - The department /unit of the state government responsible for overseeing the implementation of literacy and continuing education programmes in the state and serves as the secretariat of State Literacy Mission Authority

**State Institutes of Open Schooling** – Institutes at the state level providing schooling opportunities including equivalency programmes for neo literates through Open and Distance mode

**State Literacy Mission Authorities** – These are state-level autonomous bodies, often registered as Societies, for formulating policies, plans, and strategies for the implementation, management, and monitoring of NLM supported Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes, within the overall policy and programme guidelines of the NLM.

**State Resource Centres** - Institutions established by the NLM mostly in non government sector to provide academic, technical, training and research

resource support to literacy and continuing education programmes at the state level.

**Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojna** - A scheme of Government of India directed at creation of additional wage employment, food security and village infrastructure

**Shramik Vidyapeeths** - Institutes for vocational training and life enrichment education now known as Jan Shikshan Sansthan

**Taluk** - An administrative division next to the District in India

**Total Sanitation Campaign** - A campaign to accelerate sanitation coverage in rural areas for bringing about improvement in general quality of life.

**Target Specific Programmes** - Five classes of programmes promoted under the continuing education programme namely Equivalency Programmes, Income Generating Programmes, Quality of Life Improvement Programmes, Individual Interest Promotion Programmes and Future Oriented Programme

**Union Territories** - These are sub-national administrative divisions of India ruled directly by the federal national government.

**University Grants Commission** - A statutory body of the Government of India for the coordination, determination and

maintenance of standards of university education in India.

**Volunteer Teachers** - Village level voluntary worker for conducting literacy classes

**Zila Saksharta Samiti** – District Literacy Committee responsible for implementing literacy and continuing education programmes.

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