

**GOAL:2**

*ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL  
PRIMARY EDUCATION*

# 2 Achieve Universal Primary Education

**Target3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling**

2.1 India is committed to universalising access to basic quality education with greater emphasis on covering all the unreached segments and social groups, including minorities. This commitment is reflected in a substantial increase in the allocation of funds for elementary education by 56 per cent from Rs 57.5 billion in 2003-04 to Rs 89.8 billion during 2004-05, which has been further stepped up by 36 per cent to Rs 122.4 billion in 2005-06. The levy of an education cess @ 2 per cent of major Central taxes with the proceeds being paid into a non-lapsable fund, the Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh, is a concrete step towards providing assured funding for primary education. The long-term goal, as spelt out in the National Policy is to raise educational expenditure to 6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. The Government of India is committed to realising the goal of elementary education for all by 2010. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) [Campaign on education for all], launched in 2000, is the national umbrella programme that is spearheading the universalisation of elementary education for all children. SSA is partially funded to the tune of Rs. 4700 crore from 2003-04 to 2006-07 by the World Bank, European Commission and DFID of UK. The total outlay for the 10th Plan is Rs. 17000 crore. The process of appraisal and approvals of Annual Work Plans & Budget of States/Districts for 2006-07 was initiated in March 2006-07. AWP&B's of

## Free and Compulsory Education of Children ..... a Fundamental Right

The Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002, enacted in December 2002 seeks to make free and compulsory education a Fundamental Right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years by inserting a new Article 21-A in Part III ("Fundamental Right") of the Constitution. The new Article 21A reads as follows:

"21A. Right to Education

**The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine".**

28 States, 7 Union Territories and national component plans have been approved till 18.05.2006.

2.2 **The gross enrolment ratio (GER)** in primary education (Class I to V, age 6-11 years) for boys has tended to remain near 100%. In the case of girls, the ratio has increased by about 23 percentage points from 1992-93 to 2004-05. The limitation of this indicator is that, the figures tend to exceed 100% due to enrolment of children beyond the age group 6-11 years in the primary level education and, therefore, a decline in GER may not necessarily be interpreted as worsening educational attainment.

### PRARAMBHIK SHIKSHA KOSH

- This Department had proposed creation of a dedicated, non-lapsable fund called Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh (PSK), to receive the proceeds of the Education Cess imposed through the Finance (No. 2) Act, 2004 on all Central taxes, to finance Government's commitment to quality basic education.
- Cabinet in its meeting on 06.10.2005 approved creation of PSK in the Public Account which will be maintained by Ministry of HRD, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy. The amount therein will be non-lapsable and will be spent on SSA and MDM. Final order constituting Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh has been issued on 14th November, 2005.
- After presentation of Union Budget (2006-2007) on 28.02.06, Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh (PSK) is now a separate line item in Budget 2006-07. The estimated receipt of Rs. 8746 crore for the year 2006-07 will be transferred to the Prarambhik Shiksha Kosh after exhausting the funds provided by way of Gross Budgetary Support (GBS). The funds in the Kosh will be utilized exclusively for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (MDM scheme).

Table 2.1 Percentage of Enrolment in Rural Areas to Total Enrolment

Classes	All Category Schools			All Government Management	All Private Management
	Boys	Girls	Total		
2003					
I-V	83.38	83.69	84.05	88.79	47.00
VI-VII/VIII	77.81	74.33	76.28	88.36	52.08
I-VII/VIII	81.17	79.69	80.49	87.74	48.25
2004					
I-V	84.14	83.71	83.94	90.70	53.49
VI-VII/VIII	78.44	75.21	77.01	85.48	61.04
I-VII/VIII	82.87	81.99	82.46	89.77	56.07
2005					
I-V	84.69	84.50	84.60	91.08	55.97
VI-VII/VIII	79.14	76.67	78.03	86.34	61.57
I-VII/VIII	83.41	82.84	83.15	90.19	57.88

Source: DISE 2005

Table 2.2 gives the status of various indicators under MDG 2 for the country from 1992-93 to 2004-05:

2.3 The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), which is the proportion of students of official school age of 6-11 years enrolled in the Grades I-V to the population of children of age group 6-11 years, is the MDG indicator for primary enrolment. The official reports of the MoHRD, Govt. of India do not provide estimates for the NER. Moreover, NER figures as worked out from DISE results are found to suffer

from inconsistency due to coverage problems and incomplete reporting of school-age population in some of the States. In absence of NER data, the GER values are being used for monitoring the MDG targets for primary enrolment. The NER figures at the all-India level as per DISE data are 81.90 in 2004-05 as compared to 73.99 in 2003-04. The Corresponding GER figures based on DISE data are 97.82 and 89.83. State-level NER and GER figures are also available from the DISE data, but they are to be used with caution.

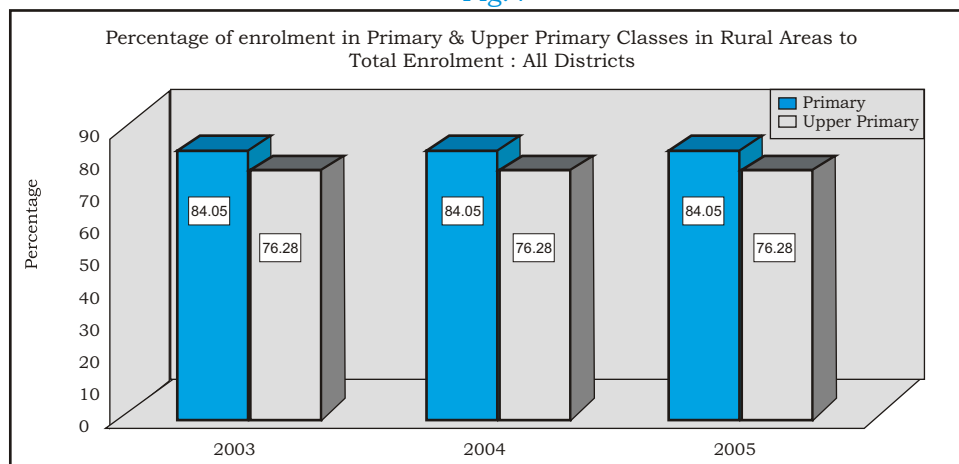
Table 2.2 Measure of Universal Primary Education

Indicator/Year		1992-93	2000-01	2004-05
Gross enrolment ratio in primary education	Total	84.6	95.7	107.80
	Boys	95.0	104.9	110.70
	Girls	73.5	85.9	104.67
Proportion of children starting Grade 1 who reach Grade 5	Total	55.0	59.3	71.0
	Boys	56.2		60.368.2
	Girls	53.3		58.174.6
Youth Literacy rate (15-24 years) *	Total	48.54@	76.43	
	Male	61.89@	84.19	
	Female	34.09@	67.75	

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, MoHRD, Government of India, DISE 2005

\* Census of India, 1991& 2001 @ relate to 15+ years

Fig. 4



Source: DISE 2005

2.4 The proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach Grade 5, known as the Survival Rate to Grade 5, is the percentage of a cohort of pupils enrolled in Grade 1 of the primary level of education in a given school year who are expected to reach Grade 5. The DISE data provides crude estimates of Survival Rate. The estimates do not use true cohort of pupils enrolled in Grade I. This survival rate for the country as a whole was found to be 67.15 in 2005

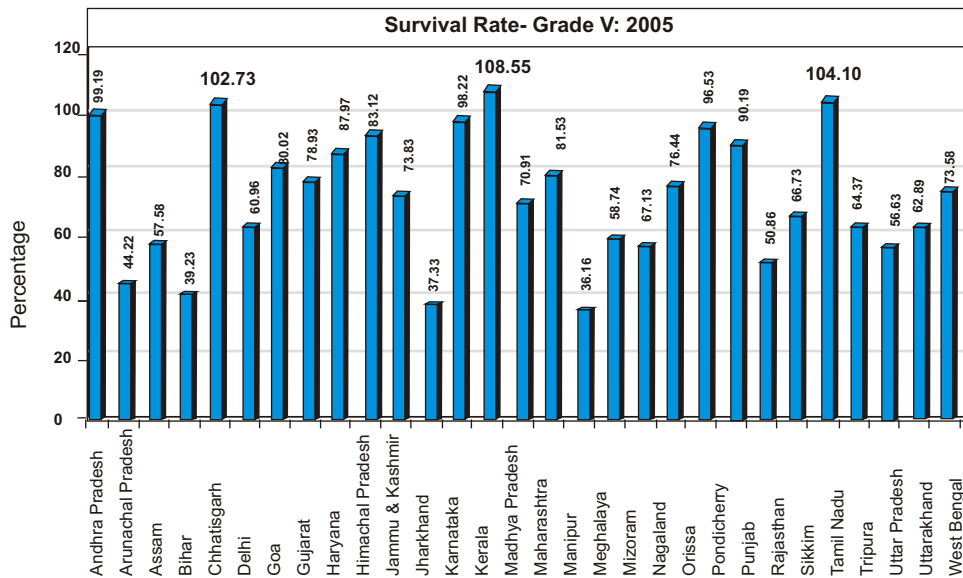
against 63.21 in 2004. The all-India dropout rate for primary schools fell by about 13 percentage points from 41.96% in 1991-92 to 29.00% in 2004-05. However, based on common schools for the years 2003-04 and 2004-05 and with 2003-04 cohort, the drop-out rate estimated from the DISE data for 2004-05 is 10.64% only. Thus, it is very clear that there has been a significant improvement in the survival rate to Grade 5.

2.5 The enrolment drive launched during the second year of Tenth Plan to bring all children in the age group of 6-14 years into schools and other efforts taken up under SSA have resulted in a reduction in the number of out-of-school children from 42 million at the beginning of Plan period to 13 million in April 2005. The Education for the entire decade of the 1990s witnessed a massive countrywide exercise for achieving the commitment of universalisation of basic education.

recent years has been the passage of the Constitution 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 2002, which makes free and compulsory education a fundamental right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years.

2.7 SSA includes several components for special groups of children. The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level is a component of SSA that provides region specific strategies to enable girls to come to school, including

Fig.5



Source: DISE 2005

2.6 Government of India has, in accordance with its Constitutional mandate, taken several initiatives in the form of enabling policies, legislations and interventions to spread literacy, promote educational development and bridge gender disparities. An enabling policy framework has been provided in the form of the National Policy on Education, 1986, as revised in 1992, and the Programme of Action, 1992, that have given an impetus to universalising elementary education. One of the most significant developments in

remedial teaching through bridge courses and residential camps. It targets the most educationally backward blocks in the country, where the female literacy rate is below the national average and the gender gap is above the national average. The component includes interventions for enhancing girls' education like development of a 'Model Cluster School' with facilities like teaching-learning equipment, library, sports, etc., and gender sensitisation of teachers.

### FINDINGS OF DISE 2005

As per DISE Data for 2005, of the total 1.04 million schools that impart elementary education in the country, 86.90% are located in rural areas whereas the percentage enrolment in elementary classes (1-VII/VIII) was found to be only 83.15. The corresponding percentages in the previous year (2004) were 87.12 and 82.46 respectively.

All Govt. Schools together had enrolment percentage as high as 90.19 compared to only 57.88 in case of private schools. In a few States, the percentage of elementary enrolment in rural areas to total enrolment has been even higher than 90%. Assam (90.90%), Bihar (93.10%), Himachal Pradesh (91.88%), Jharkhand (91.44%), Sikkim (90.64%) and Uttar Pradesh (90.59%) have made significant progress in elementary enrolment of children in rural areas. On the other hand enrolment in rural areas is conspicuously lower in Karnataka (68.95%), Maharashtra (62.88%), Mizoram (58.91%), Nagaland (69.64%), Tamil Nadu (66.66%).

91 percent of the 6,93,030 primary schools are located in rural areas. However, of total enrolment in primary classes, only 84.60% (against 83.94% in 2004) was found to be in schools located in rural areas.

Drop out rate of 10.64% has been observed among primary grades. This shows that during 2003-04 to 2004-05 as many as 10.64% children enrolled in Grades I to V dropped out from the system before completion of primary grade. The corresponding percentage during 2002-03 to 2003-04 was 11.27%. The percentage enrolment in the formal Grades I-V in the recognized schools to total 6-11 year child population projected in 2005 (GER) comes out to be about 97.82% (against 89.83% in 2004). The enrolment of age-group 6-11 year in Grades 1-V (NER) has been observed to be 81.90% (against 73.99% in 2004). It has been observed that NER in a good number of states is much higher than the average of all districts (81.90%). A few states are almost near achieving the goal of universal primary enrolment. For instance, Chhatisgarh (90%), M.P.(90%), Nagaland (93%), Orissa (86%), Sikkim (81%), Tamil Nadu (94%), U.P.(90%), Uttarkhand (83%) and West Bengal (86%) have above 80% children of age group 6-11 years enrolled in Grades 1-V in the formal recognized schools as per DISE data. However, DISE data suffers from incomplete coverage in some of the States, as a result of which the NER figures for 2004 and 2005 are not comparable for those States.

#### Youth Literacy

2.8 Literacy rate of the youth or 15–24 year-old is the percentage of the population 15–24 years old who can both read and write with understanding of a short simple statement on everyday life. As per the Census of India, a person aged 15 and above who can both read and write with understanding in any language is to be taken as literate. A person who can read

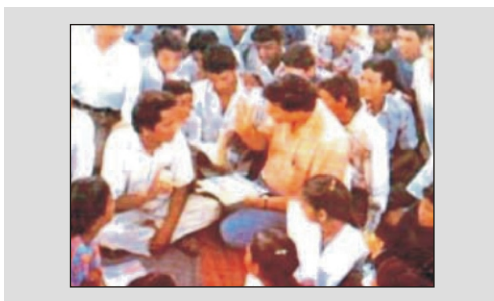
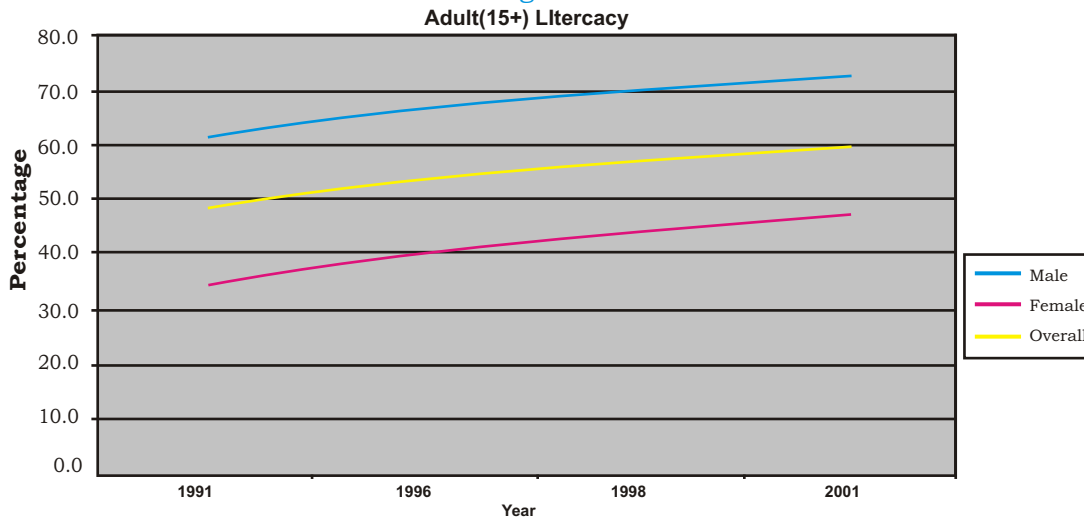
but cannot write is not literate. Pupils who are visually impaired and can read in Braille are treated as literate. Literacy rate is basically computed on the basis of the census data of the Registrar General of India at an interval of ten years. In the years between two censuses, it is also estimated on the basis of data collected by the National Sample Survey Organization or the National Family Health Survey.

### National Literacy Mission

The National Literacy Mission was revitalized to attain full literacy for which a sustainable threshold literacy rate of 75% by 2005 had been targeted. The Mission seeks to achieve this by imparting functional literacy to non-literates in the age group 15-35 years. Measures have been taken under to NLM to strengthen its partnership with NGOs and to evolve both institutional and informal mechanisms to give voluntary organizations active promotional role in the literacy movement.



Fig. 6



2.9 The literacy rate (age 15 and above) at all India level according to Census 1991 was 48.5%. The male literacy rate was 61.9% whereas the female literacy rate was much lower at 34.1%. The literacy rate, increased to 61.0% in 2001 from 48.5 in 1991 at the national level. For males, it has increased from 61.9% to 73.3% and for

females, from 34.1% to 47.8%. The literacy rate had grown by 47% or by an average of 9.4% per decade during the last five decades, despite the fact that during major part of the last five decades population increased exponentially at nearly 2% per annum.

### Education Promotion Programmes

2.10 There are several programmes of Early Childhood Care and Education which include the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services), Crèches, Balwadis, ECE centres, Pre-Primary schools run by the State and the private sector, and many experimental and innovative projects like Child to Child programmes, Child Media Lab, Mobile Crèches and Vikas Kendras.

2.11 The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education erstwhile known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme was started in 1995 to give a boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance, and simultaneously impacting upon nutritional status of students in primary classes. The programme was expanded to cover the entire country in 1997-98, and to cover children studying in

Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) Centres in October 2002. The Mid Day Meal Scheme has been revised with effect from September 2004, to add new components of Central assistance, including assistance for meeting cooking cost, management cost and provision of mid-day meal during summer vacations in drought affected areas, and now covers nearly 120 million children.

#### National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education

- It aims to increase enrolment and attendance, retention and improve the nutritional status of children in primary stage.
- The programme provides cooked meals to children through local implementing agencies. The Central government provides food grains (wheat and rice) free of cost at the rate of 100 grams per child per school day. In addition, Central Assistance is also being provided to meet cooking cost and transport subsidy. The Programme is also implemented in Summer Vacation in areas declared as drought affected.
- 112 million children got the benefits during 2004-05 and now it reaches 120 million children. 25 States and all Union Territories have been fully covered.
- The scheme has converged with ongoing rural and urban development schemes for meeting the infrastructure requirements and with the involvement of local community, Self-Help Groups and Non-Governmental Organisations.





### Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) Scheme

The KGBV scheme envisages setting up to 750 residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities in difficult areas. The scheme is being coordinated with existing schemes Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Mahila Samakhya (MS).

The scheme is applicable in those identified Educationally Backward Blocks where, as per 2001 census the rural female literacy is below the national average and gender gap in literacy is more than the national average. In these blocks, schools are set up with concentration of tribal population, with low female literacy and/ or a large number of girls out of school; Concentration of SC, OBC and minority populations, with low female literacy and/ or a large number of girls out of school; Areas with low female literacy; or Areas with a large number of small, scattered habitations that do not qualify for a school. Rs 1202 million have so far been released to the States for setting up these residential schools.

2.12 These efforts have borne fruit, with the overall literacy rate rising to 64.84 per cent in 2001 (67.30% in 2004-05 by the 61<sup>st</sup> round of NSS). For the first time, the number of illiterates declined in absolute terms by 25 million, from 329 million in 1991 to 304 million in 2001. According to provisional estimates of the Seventh All India Education Survey, enrolment in the primary stage increased from 114 million in 2001-02 to 122 million in 2002-03. Dropout rate also declined significantly during this period. Due to awareness programmes, rate of improvement for women is faster.

- The literacy rate in the country has increased to 65.38%, which reflects an overall increase of 13.17%, the fastest decadal growth ever. This is the highest rate since independence.
- The male literacy rate has increased to 75.85%, which shows an increase of 11.72%. On the other hand, the female literacy of 54.16% has increased at a much faster rate of 14.87%.
- The male-female literacy gap has reduced from 24.84% in 1991 to 21.70% in 2001. Mizoram has the smallest gap (4.56%) followed by Kerala (7.45%) and Meghalaya (8.27%).
- All States and Union Territories without exception have shown increase in literacy rates during 1991-2001.
- In all the States and Union Territories the male literacy is now over 60%.
- For the first time since independence there has been a decline in the absolute number of illiterates during the decade. In the previous decades, there has been a continuous increase in the number of illiterates, despite the increase in the literacy rates, but now for the first time the total number of illiterates has come down by 31.96 million.
- The number of literate persons has increased to 562.01 million in 2001 thus adding an additional 203.61 million literates in the country.
- Rajasthan has recorded the highest increase in the literacy rate among the States/UTs of India. Literacy rate of Rajasthan in 7+ population in 1991 was 38.55% which has increased to 61.3% in 2001.
- The state also recorded very good increase in the female literacy. It was 20.44% in 1991 which has increased to 44.34% in 2001.

- The female literacy rate of Chhattisgarh in 7+ population in 1991 was 27.52% which has increased to 52.40% in 2001. Thus the rise in female literacy rate in Chhattisgarh has been to the extent of 24.88% which is the highest among all the States/UTs of the country.
- Madhya Pradesh also recorded a good increase in female literacy rate. In 1991 the literacy rate of females was 29.35% which has increased to 50.28% in 2001.

### Integrated Approach

2.13 The Government has decided that an integrated approach to literacy would be followed now. This means, the Total literacy Campaign and the Post Literacy Programme will now operate under one literacy Project. This approach would enable the enormous illiteracy problem to be tackled in a holistic manner. By treating the imparting of functional literacy as a continuum rather than as a one off benefit for the illiterate person, progress of literacy efforts would be made goal-directed. Literacy campaigns would continue to run in those areas where there are large pools of residual illiteracy. At the same time, for those who have crossed the basic learning phase, programmes of consolidation, remediation, vocational skills, integration with life skills and such other aspects would be considered the basic unit.

2.14 In effect, the task of making a person actually literate in a sustainable and meaningful way can be said to have been modestly discharged only after the Post Literacy Campaign actually constitute two operational stages on the learning continuum and now under the same scheme will operate in smooth progression, drawing their financial sustenance from one single and same budgetary provision.

2.15 It is proposed that a district, while submitting their initial project, would also submit their strategy for Post Literacy on

the basis of their anticipated target and projections of achievements. The per learner financial norms of Total Literacy Campaign and Post Literacy Campaign would be the same as approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee. The structures and strategies would also remain unaltered providing closer linkages.

2.16 The integrated proposal seeks to effectively bring the activities of literacy campaigns under one 'Literacy Project' to achieve continuity, efficiency and convergence and to minimize unnecessary time lag between the two. The existing funding pattern of literacy campaigns is proposed to be continued. The funding ratio between Center and State Government for normal districts is 2:1, whereas for districts under Tribal Sub-Plan the ratio is 4:1. The per learner cost for a Total Literacy Campaign will now be in the range of Rs 90-130.

2.17 In many cases for reasons such as natural calamities, absence of political will, frequent transfer of collectors, etc., a number of campaigns have stagnated. The restoration of such project would be continued as was approved by the cabinet in 1994. For this purpose, an additionality of 40-50% on the original project cost will be admissible.

### Continuing Education

2.18 The structure of the continuing education programme, launched in 1995 as a fully funded centrally-sponsored scheme, will be retained and further strengthened and expanded in scope and content. A continuing education center will be set up for a population of 2,000-2,500 so that it caters to the need of at least 500-1000 neo-literates. A nodal continuing education will be set up for a cluster of 10-15 continuing education centers.

2.19 The function of imparting basic literacy and transaction of literacy primers would be continued in the continuing education phase. The activity of teaching-

learning for basic literacy would be available not only dropouts and left-outs but also to new illiterate entrants in the age group 15-35.

2.20 The scheme will continue to be implemented by the Zilla Saksharata Samiti headed by the Collector. However, the Zilla Saksharta Samiti may also be headed by a democratically elected chairman of the Zilla Parishad in states where a full-fledged Panchayati Raj system has been established. The implementing agencies-voluntary agencies, mahila

mandals, panchayati raj institutions, Nehru Yuva Kendras, etc., for continuing education centres or nodal continuing education centres will be identified by the ZSS. The scheme also envisages convergence with the programmes of Nehru Yuva Kendras, National Service Scheme, National Service Volunteer Scheme, etc., at the grassroots level. The infrastructure of these institutions will, as far as possible, be utilized to facilitate the functioning of the scheme.