Promising Practices and Implications for Scaling Up Girls’ Education

Report of the UN Girls’ Education Initiative
South Asia Workshop held in Chandigarh, India, 20–22 September 2004

Organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in partnership with UNICEF India
Hosted by the Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre

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Workshop Coordinator
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### Acronyms

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<tr>
<td>AKESP</td>
<td>Aga Khan Education Services, Pakistan</td>
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<td>BACE</td>
<td>Bangladesh Association for Community Education</td>
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<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</td>
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<td>DPEP</td>
<td>District Primary Education Project</td>
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<td>ECCE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Education</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EGS</td>
<td>Education Guarantee Scheme</td>
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<td>FAWE</td>
<td>Forum for African Women Educationalists</td>
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<td>GCE</td>
<td>Global Campaign for Education</td>
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<td>GEMS</td>
<td>Gender Education Monitoring Scheme</td>
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<td>GER</td>
<td>Gross Enrolment Rate</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>KGBV</td>
<td>Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NPEGEL</td>
<td>National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>QAS</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Regional Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Sector Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAHE</td>
<td>Society for the Advancement of Education</td>
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<td>SEWA</td>
<td>Self-Employed Women’s Association</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</td>
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<td>SSHE</td>
<td>School Sanitation Hygiene Education</td>
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<td>TIC</td>
<td>Team-in-Charge</td>
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<td>UEE</td>
<td>Universalisation of Elementary Education</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>UNGEI</td>
<td>United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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Executive Summary

Two historic meetings took place at the beginning of the 21st century which called on the international community to work for Education for All (EFA) – the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal and the United Nations Millennium Summit. Countries in the South Asia region account for the largest numbers of poor people in the world and have the highest number of children who do not attend school – 46 million, more than half of whom are girls. Girls are generally the last to be placed in school and the first to be taken out. South Asia also has the largest number of women in the world who are unable to read and write.

While these challenges persist, many interesting interventions by governments and by international and national organisations have brought about significant progress in the region in furthering the education of girls. As part of this process, more than 45 senior government officials, researchers, academics, development professionals and leaders of civil society from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka attended a workshop to review ‘Promising Practices and Implications for Scaling up Girls’ Education’ at the Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre, Chandigarh, India on 20–22 September 2004. Representatives of the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNICEF India also took part in the workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to discuss what lessons could be learned from innovative practices that encourage the education of girls through promoting girls’ access to primary and secondary schooling, and their retention and achievement in school. The focus of the workshop was on analysing innovative practices and ‘scaling up’ – what it means and what conditions are needed for it to be effective.

The workshop addressed factors that contribute to promising practice on gender and education, particularly in promoting access by girls and their continued attendance and achievement in schooling. It also assessed the implications of good practice for the institutionalisation, mainstreaming and scaling up of gender equitable education.

Twelve case studies were presented to the workshop. These represented some of the best work that has been done on advancing girls’ education in the sub-region. Each case study demonstrated a specific aspect of the work of various organisations, representing a diverse range of approaches that reflect local specificities and needs. The case studies were on themes such as working in complex urban environments; mobilising communities to support girls; the link between university professionals and schools in fostering school improvement; and on sustainable intervention for gender equality in education through focusing on the content and process of education for girls.

Other studies demonstrated how to organise and empower women teachers; put in place programmes on early childhood care for teenage mothers; set up
residential schools for girls; and provide secondary school scholarships for girls. The role of NGOs in implementing strategies to promote the education of girls; gender-sensitive approaches to universal elementary education and distance education to support girls’ education were also the subjects of case studies.

Some more general studies were also considered. These were on the use of data; the role of appropriate pedagogy; how to focus on quality education; the role of sanitation, health and hygiene in the school environment; and the importance of reaching excluded groups through sensitive inclusive policies, in this case mother-tongue education for tribal peoples. Others dealt with educational reform and social mobilisation, and with gender budgets for gender equity in education.

Inputs from Africa were facilitated by the participation of Professor Penina Mlama, the Executive Director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), which convened a meeting in June 2004 to consider similar issues in relation to sub-Saharan Africa. Policy perspectives from representatives of the governments of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Maldives and India helped the workshop to take stock of changes in policy that are already creating an enabling environment for innovation and acceleration.

This report of the workshop provides a synthesis of key points from the case studies of promising innovations in South Asian countries. It attempts to articulate the workshop’s exploration of lessons, commonalities and differences across diverse initiatives in local communities which are attempting to provide access to education for girls and to promote quality schooling for all. The report further articulates the workshop’s evaluation of the impact of these initiatives and of the lessons which can be drawn from them. It considers what factors need to be taken into account if attempts at scaling up are to make a meaningful inroad into gender inequality in South Asia. The full case studies will shortly be available on a CD-Rom.
Framework for Action

A statement of consensus from participants at the workshop on scaling up girls’ education in South Asia

Two historic meetings marked the beginning of the 21st century promise to ensure Education for All (EFA) – the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal and the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. A key interim objective is to accelerate progress towards achieving gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolment by 2005 – which is rapidly approaching.

However, to date countries in the South Asia region account for the largest numbers of the poor of the world and have the most out-of-school children, i.e. 46 million – more than half of whom are girls. Girls are generally the last to be placed in school and the first to be taken out. Furthermore, South Asia as a region has the largest number of women in the world who cannot read and write. While these challenges persist, many interesting interventions by both Government and other international and national organisations have seen some significant progress made in the region towards progressing girls’ education.

Consequently, over 45 senior government officials, researchers, academics, development professionals and civil society leaders from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka came together with representatives of the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNICEF India in a workshop to review ‘Promising Practices and Implications for Scaling up Girls’ Education’ at the Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre in Chandigarh.

The participants in the workshop identified a number of systemic, programmatic and policy barriers which operate to keep some countries in South Asia in a ‘negative equity’ scenario for girls’ education.

Persistent barriers to girls’ education include:

- cultural biases such as son-preference, which continue in some of the poorest countries in the region;
- deep-rooted views about women’s appropriate roles that keep girls working at home;
- lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure such as latrines, and unfriendly schooling environments;
- lack of gender-friendly community involvement to ensure girls are safe at school;
- lack of positive role models for girls;
Deliberations at the workshop placed a resounding emphasis on the need for clarity on several points that are necessary in assessing and scaling up best practices in girls’ education in Asia. These include the following:

- Defining gender equality and what it consists of in education;
- Key elements for advancing girls’ education, such as the presence of quality data; indicators of gender equity; multi-sectoral approaches; and creation of a common dialogue space among and within institutions;
- Adapting the core principles only of the innovations, including their processes and partnerships;
- Political convergence of interests, which must be backed by budgetary allocations, continuous awareness-raising with political leadership and strong evidence-based policy advocacy;
- Building ground level support among the women’s and people’s movements and involvement of the community;
- Ensuring that conflict resolution is an inherent component of the negotiation of processes of social change, and creating an enabling environment for recognising and acting on the diversity of needs and interventions.
Case Studies

Twelve case studies from across the region were presented to the workshop. They included the following:

- Adhyapika Manch, Lok Jumbish, Rajasthan, India
- Community-based schools, Aga Khan Education Services, Pakistan (AKESP)
- The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Education Programme, Bangladesh
- Female Students Scholarship Project, Bangladesh Association for Community Education (BACE), Bangladesh
- Open and Distance Learning, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia
- CINI-ASHA Urban Unit, Calcutta, India
- Urban Community Learning Centres, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh
- Residential Bridge Schools, Government of Andhra Pradesh, India
- Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Government of Assam, India
- Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Decentralisation, Government of Madhya Pradesh, India
- Community-based School Programme for Girls, Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE), Pakistan
- Udaan, CARE India, Uttar Pradesh

Additional papers were presented on:

- Gender-disaggregated data
- School sanitation
- Accelerated learning
- Gender budgets
- Quality education
- Language policies for tribal education
- The Sri Lankan experience of universalising education
- Policy perspectives from the Maldives, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
Opening Remarks

Nancy Spence
Director, Social Transformations Programme Division
Commonwealth Secretariat

I bring greetings from the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. This is a special occasion for us as it brings together as hosts two parts of our Commonwealth family – the Social Transformation Programme Division, housing our programme on Gender, Education and Health, and our Commonwealth Youth Centre Asia, one of our few outreach departments and an external manifestation of the Commonwealth. What better way – when we are looking at girls’ education issues – than to have our Commonwealth Youth Centre host this event.

We are delighted to share this occasion with UNICEF India, one of the most active agencies in the region dedicated and committed to girls’ education. I welcome today the esteemed representatives from the UNICEF Asia offices. I would also like to welcome our Commonwealth government officials. We are so pleased to have with us senior representatives of the Ministries of Education from India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. This is indeed a special occasion when we have representatives here from the governments of all the South Asian Commonwealth countries. We look forward to your inputs.

It was in fact from the Commonwealth Education Ministers, at their meeting held in Edinburgh in October 2003, that we received a mandate to assist member states to achieve universal primary education by 2005, reduce gender disparity by 2005 and achieve equality in education by 2015.

Ministers went even further in assigning to the Secretariat’s Education Section plans to collect good and best practices in terms of innovative policies and strategies in both South Asia and in Africa and disseminate these widely across the Commonwealth.

We have made a beginning here and we have also held a workshop in Africa, hosted by the other members of the UN Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) Advisory Committee, notably the Forum for African Women Educationalists, UNESCO and UNICEF, and the World Bank. We are pleased to welcome here today FAWE’s Executive Director, Dr Penina Mlama, who will share with us the lessons learnt about good practice in Africa and tell us about that most innovative organisation, FAWE, and the tremendous work that it has done to boost girls’ education in Africa. At that workshop we realised the need to take prom-
ising practice and discover its special ingredients so that other countries can be helped to scale up their efforts and make educational opportunities available to young girls on a much bigger scale.

So we are eagerly awaiting this deeper understanding of policy measures that have been innovative and successful. We need to devise catalytic interventions by the family, the community, government and broader civil society, which can confront the range of issues that must be addressed if we are to meet our goals of gender parity and equality.

I look forward to being part of this sharing of experiences and ensuring that the Commonwealth Secretariat and its Commonwealth Youth Centre are seen as active players in the dissemination of these promising practices across all the countries of the Commonwealth.
Opening Remarks

Suzanne Allman  
*Chief, Education Section*  
*UNICEF, New Delhi*

This workshop on ‘Promising Practices and Implications for Scaling up Girls’ Education’ brings together government officials, development practitioners, representatives of multilateral and bilateral agencies, academics and researchers from South Asia and beyond.

It provides us with a golden opportunity to critically assess successful interventions and strategies in girls’ education to ensure greater access, retention and completion in basic education in South Asia and to discuss how we can further consolidate our gains – as quickly as possible.

Our common belief in the transformatory power of girls’ education is the foundation of the partnership between the Commonwealth Secretariat and UNICEF.

We firmly believe that improved access to learning for girls can help break the poverty cycle between one generation and the next, and serve as a catalyst for human development. And we are committed to working towards achieving the Education for All and related Millennium Development goals.

UNICEF’s work has actively addressed gender concerns in general and girls’ education in particular to uphold the rights of all children.

- UNICEF has been accorded the role of ‘lead agency’ for the UN Girls’ Education Initiative – a 10-year programme to help governments meet their commitments to ensure a quality education for all girls everywhere.

- Girls’ education is also one of UNICEF’s corporate priorities and the thrust is on ‘accelerating’ progress in girls’ education to achieve the EFA goals.

- UNICEF has launched an ‘acceleration campaign’ – ‘25 by 2005’ – to make substantial inroads into achieving education for girls. At the core of the campaign is UNICEF’s initiative to intensify efforts in 25 priority countries to maximise the number of girls in school by 2005. Of the 25 countries, six are in South Asia (India Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan and Nepal).

- The campaign is committed to encouraging critical interventions in the selected countries. The lessons learned during this period will be applied to accelerating girls’ education in other countries until all the world’s children enjoy their right to quality education.
UNICEF India supports the Government of India’s Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a national programme for universal elementary education, as well as the National Programme for the Education of Girls at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL) to ensure that all children have access to quality education and complete a full course of elementary schooling.

Last year, both UNICEF’s The State of the World’s Children, and the Education for All global monitoring report highlighted the importance of girls’ education in meeting the EFA goals and larger development objectives within the context of a rights-based framework.

Both reports also highlighted the fact that, despite considerable efforts, many countries will fall short of the 2005 target for gender parity in primary and secondary education – the first credible test for the EFA and MDGs – if nothing is done now to accelerate change. ‘Without the foundation of gender parity … any achievements towards the later goals will not be sustainable.’ Both reports also raised the issue of falling investment in the sector – despite the increased focus on education and girls’ education. ‘The willingness of donor governments to invest in an idea at a critical time … means a huge difference in the lives of scores of thousands of girls, and in the lives of their families.’

Because of its huge numbers, as well as because of its complex socio-cultural dynamics, South Asia remains a challenge as well as an opportunity. According to the monitoring report, 22 of the lowest Education Development Index countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, but they also include most of South Asia – India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

However, the dynamism of the region is also reflected in its positive innovations and success stories: the case studies presented at this workshop bear testimony to these efforts. The majority of these often remain localised and have only limited outreach, so it is important to document them, learn from them and consolidate their gains by scaling them up. This will be the main focus of this workshop.

In order to achieve EFA by 2015 and gender parity by 2005, we need a clear vision and a strong commitment supported by action, resources and partnerships. This forum provides us with the space to engage with these essential issues in order to move ahead.

We are looking forward to three days of intense dialogue and sharing of experiences. We will take stock, learn and plan how we can accelerate progress in delivering the promise reaffirmed in Dakar and New York on the threshold of the new millennium – that all children, especially girls, have a right to quality education within an acceptable time-frame.
Keynote Speech

Kumud Bansal
Secretary, Elementary Education, Department of Education,
Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

It gives me great pleasure to participate in the Commonwealth South Asia region workshop. The focus on looking at promising practices in girls' education and taking these to scale is both timely and necessary. I look forward to the deliberations of the workshop as this will further inform our efforts in addressing girls' education issues.

The Policy Framework

The Government of India's educational policies and programmes have built on the constitutional provisions that enable the state to take affirmative action in favour of educationally marginalised groups.

The National Policy on Education, 1986, as revised in 1992, is a path-breaking policy document which articulates the Government of India's unequivocal commitment that 'Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralise the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women ... This will be an act of faith and social engineering ... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive over-riding priority, through provision of special support services setting time targets and effective monitoring ...'

In the new millennium, India has consolidated its earlier education reforms with increased resources and stronger policy commitments to achieving elementary education for all children, particularly girls. The national commitment to provide free and compulsory education for all children in the 6–14 years age group has received a further impetus with the passing of the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act in December 2002.

Adult Literacy

During the decade of the 1990s, the absolute number of illiterates declined for the first time in India, a decline that was posted by six states, including some of the most educationally backward such as Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. From a low threshold of 18.33% in 1951, the literacy rates for the country as a whole have increased to 65.38% in 2001. What is particularly encouraging is the improvement made in female literacy. Female literacy has
gone up from 39.2% in 1991 to 54.16% in 2001. The growth rate in female literacy at 14.87% has been higher than for males at 11.72%. Further, the gender gap in literacy has declined from 24.84% in 1991 to 21.70% in 2001. These very significant gains notwithstanding, there are still regions where female literacy rates are below the national average.

**Mahila Samakhya**

The Mahila Samakhya programme has been designed to concretise the policy commitment that education will serve as a basic tool to bring about a change in the status of women. It recognises that women’s empowerment is an essential and necessary precondition to be facilitated if women’s education is to be ensured. Consequently, the programme endeavours to create an environment that would enable women’s empowerment, leading to their learning and education. Mahila Samakhya has been particularly effective in reaching out to rural poor women who are generally left out of educational processes. The principal strategy has been to mobilise and organise women into sanghas (women’s collectives). Sanghas have recently been in the process of being federated at block/district levels thereby consolidating lateral and vertical solidarities. The sanghas/federations have begun to play a critical proactive role not only in their own education programmes, but also in interacting with the education system as well. Sangha women have been elected to panchayat institutions as well as school committees. Women have gained knowledge of their rights and entitlements; have begun to emerge as leaders in their communities; are addressing violence against women; have taken decisions to advance the age of marriage; and are ensuring that girls in their communities have a right to education.

The success of the programme in enabling women’s empowerment and education and the consequent impact this has had on girls’ education is now well recognised. The Mahila Shikshan Kendras (residential learning centres) set up under Mahila Samakhya have proved to be specially effective in addressing the educational needs of 10+ girls, by addressing not only academic needs, but also through imparting life skills education. Mahila Samakhya is currently being implemented in 61 districts in nine states of the country and runs 35 Mahila Shikshan Kendras. The lessons from Mahila Samakhya have informed recent initiatives for girls’ educations.

**Basic Education Programmes and Girls’ Education**

Reaching out to the girl child has been central to all our efforts at universalising elementary education. The Programme of Action 1992 clearly acknowledges that ‘rural girls are doubly disadvantaged by non-availability of educational facilities and by the work they have to do related with fuel, fodder, water, sibling care and paid and unpaid work, and coordinated efforts with other Departments/Ministries need to be made to provide the necessary support services to enhance their participation and performance. Provision of support services and childcare facilities should be seen as a necessary and integral adjunct of UEE.’
Basic education programmes such as the District Primary Education Project (DPEP) and Lok Jumbish have adopted a holistic approach to reduce gender and social disparities and to universalise access, retention and achievement. The Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish programmes have developed effective strategies for the education of girls. Teacher absenteeism has been addressed through selection and training of local youth to teach primary classes. A range of alternative modes have been evolved for girls, such as Sahaj Shiksha Centres (non-formal centres for girls engaged in domestic work), Balika Shikshan Shivir (short-term residential camps for adolescent girls) and low cost hostels for children of migrant families. These experiences have also informed national strategies.

Gender sensitivity underpins all activities of educational processes, be they planning and management, school improvement, pedagogical renewal, strategies for community mobilisation and participation and specific interventions for girls’ education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the national flagship programme for the Universalisation of Elementary Education, has now taken the learning of the earlier genre of projects across all districts in the country.

Ensuring girls’ education requires changes not only in the education system but also in societal norms and attitudes. A two-pronged gender strategy has therefore been adopted to address both the systemic as well as social barriers. In order to make the education system responsive to the needs of girls and serve as a pull factor, a range of interventions have been introduced such as ensuring access to schools, increasing the number of women teachers, enhancing gender sensitivity of teachers through training, developing gender sensitive and relevant teaching and learning materials, providing supportive structures such as ECCE centres, alternative modes of learning and ensuring basic facilities such as toilets and water at schools.

At the same time, efforts are being made to generate a community demand for girls’ education and to create the right conditions for people’s and women’s participation and the push factors necessary to guarantee girls’ education. Motivation and mobilisation of parents and the community at large, enhancing the role of women and mothers in school-related activities and participation in school committees, as well as strengthening the linkages between schools, teachers and communities, are some of the ways in which these conditions are being created.

Outcomes

The impact of these integrated strategies is just beginning to be evident in terms of increased enrolment, decrease in drop-outs and improved learning achievement and overall reduction in the gender gaps. Recent estimates show a sharp increase in enrolments. The figure of 23 million out-of-school children at the beginning of 2003 dropped to 7 million by the end of the year. This number had fallen much further by January 2004 when the number of out-of-school children is estimated at 62 lakhs. This is a very significant and heartening trend.

Lower drop-out rates among girls and the reduction in the gender gap are
equally encouraging. At the primary level the drop-out rate among girls has fallen from around 70.9% in 1960–61 to 33% in 2002–2003, and the gender gap has now been eliminated. A similar trend is evident at the upper primary level as well, where the drop-out rate has fallen from 85% in 1960–61 to 53% in 2002–2003 and the gender gap is below 1%.

**Moving Towards a Targeted Approach**

Though the last decade demonstrated the potential and possibilities of foregrounding gender concerns in educational initiatives and the ground was laid for addressing girls’ education, several challenges remain. The participation of girls, tribals and other disadvantaged groups such as minorities continues to be low and is a matter of concern.

In order to reach these difficult groups, a strategic shift has been made in educational planning to target unreached geographic areas and sharpen the focus on social groups that continue to be outside the educational process.

The Government has launched two focused intervention, the National Programme for Education of Girls at the Elementary Level and the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) specifically to reach out to out-of-school girls, working girls, over-age girls who have not completed elementary education and girls from marginalised social groups. These two programmes will be implemented in districts and blocks that have been identified as educationally backward and will draw on the experiences of the Mahila Samakhya programme. Based on the 1991 census, 2656 educationally backward blocks have been identified; this is subject to revision once the 2001 census data becomes available.

Looking to the past decade, it is clear that gender equality and equity in elementary education can be achieved only through adopting a synergistic approach. Systemic renewal and improvement, complemented by the creation of a gender-sensitive community, will ensure the rights of girls to education.
Report of the Workshop

Ramya Subrahmanian
Workshop Coordinator
PART 1

The Workshop Framework

1 Gender Equality and Education in the Sub-region

South Asia is a region marked by gender disparities in access to and participation in education. In absolute terms, South Asia as a sub-region has the highest numbers of out-of-school children of any region. Countries in the region also account for the largest numbers of poor people in the world. Socio-culturally as well, the region is marked by practices that continue to keep women in positions of relative disadvantage and inequality. Cultural biases such as son-preference continue, resulting in the continuing unfavourable sex ratio for girls. The co-existence of modernisation processes with entrenched social biases, and often the intensification of bias against females despite great economic and technological advances, are peculiarities that characterise this region. In many ways, the countries of the region can be seen to constitute part of a ‘patriarchal belt’, where opportunities for women lag way behind those for men.

Yet South Asia also inspires much in the world in terms of innovation, social experimentation and dynamic approaches to development and change. Countries like Maldives and Sri Lanka have led the way with remarkable progress and achievement in the field of girls’ education. Learning from these two experiences will be valuable for the area as a whole.

The other countries of the region have made rapid progress in the last decade in reducing the gender gap, and this seems to be a trend that will continue. Progress has been measured particularly in terms of the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER), yet this indicator, it has long been argued, is an inadequate measure of both gender parity and gender equality in education. However, in terms of comparable international indicators, movements along these indicators provide important measures of change over time. In this context, the countries of the sub-region have demonstrated greater commitment to girls’ education since the 1990s than in previous decades, and have put in place more effective programmes for change.

While data paint an important picture, in this workshop we seek to explore more qualitative accounts of change. We seek to animate the statistical story with ‘real world’ accounts of the approaches and efforts that have contributed to change in the statistical picture of the region over the last decade and more.
Most importantly, we seek to understand how the change has been achieved, and how we can take it forward, to learn from those who are engaged in action and to try to build more systematic approaches that build on change.

Attitudes to female education are changing, and this is an important dimension of the progress achieved, but the central question facing us all is how to accelerate this process. While a variety of important factors have contributed to this story, recent history shows that change is possible and that it can be achieved at a faster rate if purposive actions are taken to take forward positive lessons. While the commitment to purposive actions has increased, the need to plug information and knowledge gaps about the implementation, design and management factors that foster successful approaches is critical. Moreover, the need to plug these gaps for key decision-makers – the political leadership in particular – is important. This workshop’s importance is particularly underlined by the fact that it takes place at the specific request of Commonwealth Ministers of Education.

Learning lessons from the past and the present, however, while an essential part of the process of taking stock as we move forward, is also fraught with difficulties of attribution, methodology and interpretation. The role of different political, historical and developmental trajectories, and varied rates of change in the context of more contemporary development experience within the sub-region, tell us that there is much that can still be learned from attempts made in the past decade, if not longer, to contribute to progress on gender equality in education. Nonetheless, this process of taking stock is an essential requirement at the present time, as new processes and measures are put into place to accelerate progress towards the achievement of internationally agreed goals and targets. What have we learned from what has happened so far and how does this help shape where we go from here? The structured presentations at this workshop are designed as a mix of contemporary and retrospective case studies.

There are apparently contradictory trends at play – a growing consensus about international priorities and commitments that unites, at the very least, international donors and development agencies, and at the same time the recognition of tremendous complexity mediating local processes, relations and outcomes, resulting in uneven processes and experiences of development and progress. Simplicity in the statement of goals and priorities encounters complexity in understanding what promotes social change and what explains why some investments yield results in some areas and not in others. Strengthening the conversation that is taking place at these two levels – global and local – and also looking at the mediating role of national policy and educational reform is the focus of this meeting.

In order to locate these international goals within the specifics of national, subnational and local strategies and experiences, this workshop has been designed to inform the international arena about the reality of progress, much of which is exciting and promising, but also to create channels of communication between innovators and those who study them from the South Asian region and beyond.
At this workshop we have a mix of governments, NGOs, academics, and donor and multilateral organisations, as well as people working in different countries and contexts for education. It is our hope that this combination of people, with their different experiences yet common commitment, can enrich our learning on advancing gender equality and promoting girls’ education.

The purpose of the workshop is to promote action towards scaling up lessons of good practice by facilitating discussion between different actors with the potential to take action to scale up the best/good practices.

The aim will be to discuss documented cases of good practice from interventions that have been tried and tested over a reasonable period of time, drawing on evidence to pull out lessons and implications for scaling up.

For the workshop to achieve these aims, we need also to unpack each of the elements that constitute the title – ‘Promising Practices and Implications for Scaling up Girls’ Education’. One is to understand what it will take to advance girls’ education, and to pay attention to the qualitative dimensions of this challenge. The second is to focus on how to identify promising practices, how to learn and disseminate lessons and build such identification, learning and dissemination processes more systematically into discussions of education reform. The third important element is to understand how to accelerate progress on the basis of these lessons, and how to create appropriate institutional structures and policy environments to support acceleration. All these elements – conceptual, learning, managerial and operational, and policy visioning – are critical dimensions and the workshop structure is designed to maximise our discussions on these issues.

2 Interventions in Gender and Development

In the last few years some significant international reviews of gender and education have been carried out with a view to capturing the possibility of meeting the first of the Dakar goals which focuses on eliminating gender disparities in primary education by 2005. Four international reviews have been conducted:

- The Global Campaign for Education’s report A Fair Chance for All;
- UNESCO’s global monitoring report on Education for All, entitled Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality;
- UNICEF’s The State of the World’s Children;
- The UK-based project ‘Beyond Access: Gender, Education and Development’, which is organising a series of international seminars and publishing papers on the current state of knowledge on gender and education.

All these initiatives have entailed significant discussion about broad trends as viewed through a variety of prisms – statistical analysis, policy, funding, programmatic intervention and outcomes ‘in the field’ – which provide an overview of current trends in gender, education and development. Many of these initiatives point to the continued disadvantages faced by girls relative to
boys, and for the need to understand how social relations in different contexts can be reshaped to create sustained opportunities for girls and women in all spheres of life, with education providing a crucial trigger.

The following broad points may be characterised as representing current ‘conventional wisdom’ in the field of gender, education and development, and have a bearing on the workshop discussions.

- **The importance of distinguishing between gender parity as an indicator of progress and gender equality as an important outcome.** There are two inter-related challenges at stake – the need to accelerate progress on access to education for girls and the need to animate this access with a concerted effort to promote greater equality between men and women more generally. Global measures focus on promoting girls’ education by trying to achieve gender parity goals (equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age groups in the population). As a snapshot of outcomes in education, measuring progress towards gender parity offers a valuable insight into the achievements of girls relative to boys in a given context. However, there is increasing concern that gender parity alone is not a sufficient account of what access to education means to girls, particularly in terms of gender equality (ensuring educational equality between boys and girls). A focus on gender equality in education takes us beyond measuring the progress of girls’ access to and participation in education to asking how access to education can contribute to transforming the conditions within which that progress is being achieved, and whether these conditions will change sufficiently to ensure that these gains are sustainable. Thus, in order to consider progress, both quantitative (gender parity) and qualitative (equality) assessments need to be made, suggesting that advancing girls’ education needs some attention to changing the underlying conditions under which access and participation in education are being promoted. Achieving gender parity is just one step towards gender equality in and through education. An education system with equal numbers of boys and girls participating, who may progress evenly through the system, may not in fact be based on gender equality. Further, a qualitative approach will also help us understand the sensitivities of working on girls’ education within a wider understanding of other complex social issues, recognising that all women are not disadvantaged in the same ways (Subrahmanian, 2003).

- **Need for more comprehensive packages:** While much progress has been made, largely because of the considerable push given to this field by scholars and practitioners on gender and development, most of these efforts remain piecemeal and project-based. The Global Campaign for Education’s report calls for ‘a comprehensive package of interventions backed by clear policy aims’ (GCE, 2003: 4).

- **Paying attention to pathways, not just linear relationships between input and outcome:** Gender inequality in education, like broader societal gender inequality, has multiple causes, which emerge with varying effects in
diverse contexts. The pathways between these tend to be varied and defy generalisation. However, this also means that interventions have to be based on understanding contexts, analysing gender relations and their intersections with other forms of inequality and deprivation, and allowing for flexibility to meet the needs of particular contexts and particular women.

- **Recognising and addressing ‘the totality of factors’**: Interventions also need to be oriented to the ‘totality’ of factors that raise barriers to female access to and participation in education. The *UNESCO Global Monitoring Report* develops the framework of ‘rights to education’ (access and participation), ‘rights within education’ (gender-aware educational processes, environments and outcomes) and ‘rights through education’ (meaningful education outcomes that link education equality with wider processes of gender justice) to show the linkages between out-of-school and in-school experiences, and between different phases of the female life-cycle. A holistic approach recognises these linkages, and takes account of them, even if it is not able to address all aspects simultaneously.

- **A social relational approach is important**: These rights are fundamentally embedded in social relations, and hence play out in different ways in different contexts. Evolving ‘equity’ oriented responses (with a focus on evening out inequalities through redistributive mechanisms) implies that women and men are not seen as distinct social categories, but as members of society whose lives are often intertwined in ways that render highly individualistic approaches to well-being problematic to execute. Seeing women and men as bearers of feminine and masculine identities that are shaped in multiple and dynamic ways enables us to recognise not just the interdependence of women and men as social actors, but also the importance of working with both men and women in all social settings.

- **Recognising interdependence and hence the importance of partnership**: The importance of partnership between different actors has also been noted in many reports. In many countries with well-established education systems, the role of peer educators, feminists, social psychologists and university faculties has been critical in bringing structural and systemic changes to the education system.

- **Impact of broader reform on gender inequalities**: More work needs to be done to understand the impacts of broader education reforms on gender inequalities. What kind of analysis enables us to understand and demonstrate the impact of increased privatisation on gender inequalities? How can we assess the potential for and impact of decentralisation in education, for example, on gender inequalities? Further, how can such policy analysis be translated into policy advocacy or policy advice?

- **The importance of understanding policy processes and the spaces where gender analysis and expertise can be most usefully focused**: and also the spaces where it is most likely to ‘evaporate’ also needs to be emphasised. This form of analysis and knowledge are particularly important to
ensure that lessons of ‘good practice’ translate into institutionalised practices where relevant, or are filtered up systems in ways that expand the knowledge base of policy-makers and institutions.

As this brief review of themes shows, many broad lessons have already emerged over the last decade to help guide future directions. The points noted above are intended to serve as a reminder of some of the significant challenges that remain. The identification of lessons needs, as far as possible, to take us forward from the agenda identified above, to reflect on ways to meet these new or continuing challenges. Consolidation of these lessons within specific sub-regional contexts needs to take place with a view to helping us understand more specifically what lessons can be taken across from one context to another. These lessons, if analysed and reflected upon, can serve as invaluable guides for all actors involved in promoting gender and education in different settings.

3 Learning about Innovation: Promising Practices and ‘Scaling Up’

The field of gender, education and development has evolved considerably over the decades, and incorporates a wide range of strategies aimed at removing gender inequalities or, at the least, narrowing them down considerably. The range of interventions can be categorised in different ways in terms of:

- **Who they target** – policy-makers, educators, communities, parents and girls/boys;
- **What they seek to change** – policies, institutional environments, particularly schools, funding priorities, curriculum and pedagogy, community norms, household decision-making, women’s and girls’ self-perceptions, boys’ behaviour and schooling environments;
- **How they seek to create change** – through removing economic barriers to participation, creating political institutions, training, incentives, changing mindsets, challenging socio-cultural norms, improving wider development and infrastructure and improving health or economic conditions.

These specific accounts of interventions need to be placed against wider contexts and backgrounds.

1 Different interventions arise for different reasons and reflect different opportunities for action. There is no blueprint, just as there is no one set of explanatory variables explaining gender differentiation in all contexts. Innovations represent different institutional mandates, capacities or contexts of operation. More fundamentally, they may also reflect different ways of thinking about gender, education and development. Mapping these different underlying ways of thinking is also important to understand the diverse ways of conceptualising and acting upon gender inequality. In order to understand the contexts that give rise to effective practices in relation to gender equality in education, these factors need to be discussed and made explicit.
Different enabling conditions allow certain practices to be more effective than others, and these conditions need also to be factored into the analysis of effective action for change. The Global Monitoring Report identifies, among other factors, changes in employment and other economic opportunities brought about by globalisation, demographic changes, including the rapid decline in fertility experienced globally, and political changes, including the trend towards greater democratisation and an emphasis on human rights. These provide the backdrop to changes in society, economy and polity, which in turn have a bearing on gender and education policy and practice. Particular crises, such as ethnic conflict and health pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, also provide a wider backdrop to the more specific interventions that are being put in place. We need to assess their impact more broadly to really understand what drives change.

The workshop brought together lessons of 'good practice' from a range of settings. There are several factors which can help to explain why a particular action or intervention can be identified as 'good practice'. While we may not necessarily identify 'good practice' in terms of quantifiable impacts on gender and education, there are several reasons why an action may be identified as 'good practice', small or large, carried out at the 'micro' or 'macro' level. These practices may be innovative, successfully demonstrated or replicated good practices which show one or more of the following:

- **Creativity** of the means chosen, actors targeted or approaches used;
- **Effectiveness** in motivating a change within a system or within people who constitute a system;
- **Impact** demonstrated on one or more of the barriers that prevent girls from participating equally in and benefiting from education;
Responsiveness to the needs and interests of women and men in relation to removing gender inequalities;

Sustainability in terms of the processes used, the institutional mechanisms developed or the capacities built.

In particular, good practices are required to cover the widest range of actions possible to facilitate meeting international goals on gender and education. Acknowledging that every type of intervention is likely to have a range of good practices associated with it, the presentations represent the widest range of well-established interventions from the widest representation of actors possible.

4 Aims of the Workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to focus discussion on lessons from innovative practices that promote girls’ education through promoting access, retention or achievement in primary and secondary schooling.

The focus of the workshop was on ‘scaling up’, what it means and what conditions are required for scaling up innovative practices, drawing on analyses of these practices. The concept of scaling up raises many questions and also many potential contradictions – for instance, innovative practices may thrive only in carefully selected sites, within particular conditions and under close supervision and management. What practices or interventions merit scaling up? What enabling conditions need to be created to facilitate scaling up? What is the nature of the ‘system’ or ‘institution’ into which innovative practices or approaches can be ‘integrated’? What strategies have been attempted and help scaling up efforts that are already in place?

The workshop focused both on understanding what factors contribute to promising practice on gender and education, particularly in promoting girls’ access to, survival in and achievement in schooling, and also on assessing the implications of such practices for institutionalisation, mainstreaming and scaling up of gender-equitable education.

5 About this Report

The report of the workshop provides a synthesis of key points from the case studies prepared and presented at the workshop from promising innovations in South Asian countries. The aim of the workshop was to explore lessons, commonalities and differences, across diverse innovations that are working in local communities to provide access to girls and promote quality schooling for all.

Our purpose was not so much to seek to ‘evaluate’ the impact of these initiatives, but rather to learn about strategies and lessons from which we could draw some understanding of the factors that scaling up processes would need to take into account in order to make meaningful inroads into the gender inequality that exists in South Asia. The full case studies will shortly be available together with this report on a CD-Rom.
6 About the Case Studies

The case studies presented at the workshop represent some of the best examples of programmes that have advanced girls’ education in the sub-region. The studies each describe specific elements of the work of organisations, representing a diverse range of approaches that reflect local specificities and needs. Case studies from Dhaka Ahsania Mission in Bangladesh and CINI-ASHA Urban Unit, Calcutta provide insights into how to work in complex urban environments as well as with groups that are often stigmatised. The work of SAHE in Pakistan shows how communities can be mobilised to support girls; this is a feature shared by almost all the case studies described. The study of the Aga Khan Education Services initiative in Pakistan focuses on the link between university professionals and schools in fostering school improvement. CARE India’s work in Uttar Pradesh provides an insight into a critical aspect of sustainable intervention for gender equality in education through focusing on the content and process of education for girls. Lok Jumbish’s Adhyapika Manch is a case study of organising and empowering women teachers and provides a crucial account of an often overlooked issue – how to resource and support women educators. These six case studies, presented on the first day of the workshop, laid the basis for thinking about practices that contribute to change at the micro level.

On the second day, the workshop discussed examples of good practice that are already operating to a degree of scale. The role of government is crucial here as the studies of Early Childhood Care and Education in Assam and residential schools for girls in Andhra Pradesh demonstrated. Policy initiatives such as the provision of secondary school scholarships for girls in Bangladesh show the important role of NGOs such as the Bangladesh Association for Community Education in developing implementation strategies that allow policies to have a positive effect. BRAC in Bangladesh is a famous example of developing gender-sensitive and girl-centred approaches to universal elementary education, a model that is already widely replicated in diverse country contexts. These ‘scaled-up’ innovations offer important lessons about scaling up, what it means and how it can be capacitated. The case study of distance education also alerted participants in the workshop to the challenges, as well as the potential, of harnessing technology in support of girls’ education.

The case studies were supported by a discussion of the systems reform and policy approaches that are needed to help the process of acceleration. The panel coordinated by UNICEF on the second day of the workshop built on the case studies to develop broader approaches that are essential building blocks for acceleration. These include the use of data, the role of appropriate pedagogy, a focus on quality education, the role of sanitation, health and hygiene in the school environment, and the importance of reaching excluded groups through sensitive inclusive policies, in this case mother tongue education for tribals.

On Day Three, the workshop focused on systemic change. Sri Lanka’s experience of education reform coupled with social mobilisation has contributed to impressive achievements in female education. Madhya Pradesh’s use of decen-
nalisation to promote greater equity is a celebrated case of reforming governance systems to bring about change. In this selection, we also learned about the role that gender budgets can play in demonstrating how government expenditure can be analysed for gender equity, serving as a guide to accelerating progress through macro-level reform in resource distribution.

Building on these insights, the workshop also heard inputs from Africa, facilitated by the participation of Penina Mlama of FAWE, which recently convened a similar workshop in sub-Saharan Africa. Policy perspectives from representatives of the Governments of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Maldives and India helped us to take stock of shifts in policy that are already creating enabling environments for innovation and acceleration. Finally, we drew on the expertise of some of our participants to reflect on what these lessons demonstrate and how we can meaningfully take both our understanding, as well as some of the practical lessons, forward.
PART 2

Lessons Learned from Promising Innovations

The case studies presented at the workshop offered a wide range of examples of promising practices in promoting gender equality in and through education. These included:

- Setting up schools targeting girls from disadvantaged groups and communities that are flexible and responsive to their needs;
- Innovations in the curriculum aimed at improving the self-esteem, confidence and skills of girls and women;
- Community mobilisation and engagement to discuss improvements in the availability, access and accountability of education;
- Empowering women teachers;
- Working with mothers, and improving adult women’s participation in community fora and decision-making;
- Gender-sensitive education monitoring;
- Early childhood education to free elder girls from sibling care and to create an enabling environment for pre-school-age children’s orientation to education;
- Scholarships for secondary schooling, with important knock-on effects for universalising primary schooling;
- Decentralised planning, bringing education planners closer to the needs of local communities, and responsive to changing circumstances on the ground;
- Open learning as an approach to bringing innovative learning methods to adult and young women.

1 Transforming Education towards Equity and Quality

(a) Gender-sensitive Targeting

A crucial dimension of gender-aware educational intervention and innovation is the targeting of those sections of the population who most require attention. Most of the innovative projects presented at the workshop targeted particular
sub-sets of groups, giving preferential focus to girls in order to balance social distortions in the allocation of resources and opportunities. This type of targeting helps to focus attention on these groups of girls in a way that enables their families and communities to view them in a new light, and to see the value of investing in their futures.

The Society for the Advancement of Education in Pakistan works in the poorest communities and admits only one child per household. The majority of those admitted are girls, with exceptions in communities where there are no schools for boys or where the quality of teaching in the boys’ school is very poor. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee targets the children of poor and landless families who have not enrolled or have dropped out of formal primary school. Within that target group, they focus on girls, who tend to dominate the group. More than 65% of BRAC school students are girls. The Adhyapika Manch in the Indian state of Rajasthan targets women teachers for special focus and for building collective action. CARE India’s Social Learning Programme targets girls from disadvantaged communities enrolled in a residential programme, UDAAN, to enable young girls to develop the critical thinking and confidence skills that can help build their self-esteem and self-awareness. NGOs like the Bangladesh Association for Community Education have pioneered and then helped to implement an ambitious programme for female secondary education which targets girls for secondary scholarships, enabling Bangladesh to make rapid progress in universalising girls’ access to secondary schooling.

The community-based schools run by Aga Khan Education Services in rural Sindh in Pakistan have taken the concept of targeting further by insisting on a minimum of 50% enrolment of girls as a pre-condition for opening schools. Other conditions include the appointment of young women as teachers and the provision of training.

(b) Deepening Understandings of Gender Equality

The Lok Jumbish programme in Rajasthan (1992–2004) based its project on a deeper interpretation of gender equality in line with India’s National Policy on Education (1986). This involved the following principles:

- treating the education of girls as a priority;
- involving women at all levels of education management;
- treating education as an agent of social change, neutralising the accumulated distortions of the past and playing an interventionist role in the empowerment of women.

Adhyapika Manch, or Women Teacher’s Forum, which formed a part of the Lok Jumbish intervention, drew on this commitment by focusing particularly on empowering women teachers. The separate focus on women teachers enabled them to handle the factors that may inhibit women’s participation even within clearly targeted strategies such as affirmative action or preferential recruitment.

Deepening the focus on gender equality is often at odds with target-based
approaches to development – because the strategies involved often do not show tangible, measurable results. The more visible aspects of focus on gender parity – the demand for girls’ education – may mask underlying social resistances to gender equality. The same parents who queue up to enrol their daughters in Lok Jumbish residential camps often see the purpose of girls’ education as being shaped by their potential roles as brides and wives. To be serious about fighting gender stereotypes, is to ‘attempt the longer, more arduous route’ (Sharada Jain, case study of Adhyapika Manch) and requires greater investment of time and effort.

(c) Reconceptualising Learning

Invariably, as all the cases in our workshop showed, innovation entails addressing the concept of ‘education’ quite fundamentally. Failures of state systems largely represent failures to deliver modes of learning that are attractive, relevant and important for the diverse communities and individuals that make up a society. Different programmes address this in different ways. BRAC schools encourage
children to play games, sing, dance, tell stories and draw, encouraging children to exercise articulation, observation skills, coordination of different parts of the body and clarity of speech. These form part of teachers' lesson plans. Similarly, ‘Mukulikas’, the early childhood education centres of the District Primary Education Programme in Assam, developed a curriculum based on play and songs for the two years of pre-school, based on a decentralised process where the selection of themes for the curriculum is undertaken by the workers at each centre.

In the case of the Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh, the low attendance of girls in school triggered a debate within government about the curriculum. Equity began to be looked upon as a value as well as an instrumental issue. Issues impacting on rural life were taken up within the curriculum. Selected schools participated in a programme called *Aas Paas ki khoj*, where children were helped to construct their local history, geography and ecology with the assistance of the local community. Discussions between children and their communities enabled teachers to use local resources and community interaction as a pedagogic tool. An activity-based curriculum was introduced. The curriculum began to be seen as principally about the transaction site, challenging some of the colonial constructs that underpinned the existing curriculum.

Udaan's Social Learning Curriculum is a similar example of an approach to education that emphasises learning which is related to the everyday lives of children, reflecting everyday experiences, issues and problems. Underpinning this was the need to help young children reflect on issues of diversity and tolerance – key issues in the context of India's complex social structures.

Open learning offers an important approach that allows for different learning models to cater for different types of need, although the target group is older. Various approaches have evolved in different countries, adapted to the needs and possibilities arising from the context. Organisations such as the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the Deccan Development Society have pioneered learning through technological innovation, based on the development of materials by women themselves. In these contexts new technologies of learning based on information and communications technologies (ICTs) have been put into the hands of women learners, enabling them to learn the skills involved in deploying these technologies, as well as bringing the technologies within their reach. Such approaches reverse the 'top-down' nature of most conventional approaches that invest in hardware based on the assumption that hardware is the most important component. These conventional projects invest in buildings and equipment, and usually fail the communities they seek to reach. In contrast, projects set in villages where people's needs and requirements are put first show positive results.

Lessons from open learning and distance education approaches have much to offer the more formal modes of education based in schools and other educational institutions, largely because of the diversity of learners whom they must reach. Experience in Pakistan highlights the importance of learner centredness, a multiple media approach to reduce dependence on the written word, a variety
of presentation techniques, collaborative learning and the relating of new ideas to local and individual circumstances. All these offer important cross-lessons for pedagogy and curriculum development within formal schooling.

The importance of viewing education as a process that links to larger processes in life also ensures that education is seen as relevant to a wider constituency than the narrow audience to which the curriculum is currently oriented. For example, BACE’s intervention in implementing female secondary school scholarships ensured that girls would open bank accounts into which the stipend was paid. By directly putting the entitlement in the hands of girls, the intervention empowered the girls by viewing them as the direct beneficiary, prevented girls from being used as conduits for monies that families could utilise for other purposes, and also enabled the girls to learn skills relating to the management of bank accounts.

(d) Making Schooling More Responsive to Local Needs

Meeting the needs of diverse learners requires a reconceptualised approach to schooling. For example, BRAC has flexible schooling – classes are held for three to four hours a day on six days in the week on 270 days in the year. Class time is agreed between parents and teachers, making allowance for seasonal work and other family needs. Schools are located in the neighbourhoods where the target groups live to reduce distance-based drop-out.

CINI-ASHA’s intervention with of sex workers’ children illustrates the importance of flexible schooling. The children of sex workers had been excluded from education partly because of social discrimination and partly on account of their specific needs and circumstances. A series of meetings were held with the mothers of the children where it emerged that the children were at most risk during the evenings when the mothers were entertaining clients. Therefore, the intervention was planned to take place in the evenings, when the children were unprotected. The mothers looked for a place to begin with and the intervention began with 1 2 girls and 1 9 boys in 1 992 in a centre provided by the mothers. Local school authorities were also sensitised to help in admitting these children to school so that they did not ask for fathers’ names, which are usually mandatory on the admission forms.

The Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh allowed for both managerial and pedagogical flexibility. Communities could decide the timing of schooling and the holiday calendar. Pedagogical flexibility meant that there was an attempt to introduce learner-paced, non-graded, group-based learning. Because children were allowed to progress based on their learning, groups of faster learners could complete their schooling earlier, and others who needed more time could take longer to finish their schooling. By breaking down age categories and moving towards learning criteria for progression, no child was ever failed and children of different ages were able to learn together.

Flexible schooling options are particularly relevant for the older age group of 10–1 4-year-olds, who may find it difficult to join mainstream schools following
participation in a residential bridge school, as the experience in Andhra Pradesh reveals. For them, transiting from the bridge school to the workplace is a necessary alternative to ensure that they do not drop out and disappear totally. Working in urban areas, the Dhaka Ahsania Mission has established alternative training programmes for young children who are too young to leave a learning environment and too old to pursue schooling in the formal system.

A feature of many of the case studies is the emphasis on ‘no homework’, bearing in mind the home circumstances of many children, where parents are unable to help children with their work and tutors are unaffordable. BRAC, for example, offers more contact hours within the school, to ensure that children’s learning is school centred.

(e) Child-centredness and the Empowerment of Girls

Putting children at the centre not only means giving them responsibilities and involving them in school decision-making processes, although these are important elements of child-centred schooling. It also, importantly, requires that teachers and parents are involved in the education process in a way that makes them recognise and value the principle of child-centredness. For example, in Udaan’s Social Learning Curriculum programme, the need for a curriculum that helps to challenge social processes that reproduce gender inequality was identified as critical. Girls, in particular, were seen as requiring a curriculum that would give them the necessary skills, information and confidence to negotiate with a society which accords them a subordinate status. The social learning curriculum was devised to develop critical skills in young girls that would give them the courage to develop into self-confident individuals. The central principle was that children should be able to fully participate and engage themselves in the learning process, and the curriculum linked key themes to the everyday realities of children’s lives.

The children in the Udaan programme were organised into committees dealing with school issues such as cleaning, managing the library, managing sports materials and looking after food and health. These committees rotated, giving all children an equal share in responsibilities such as cleaning toilets. Teachers were also attached to committees and were expected to participate so that they could serve as role models.

Child-centredness, in the broad sense of keeping in mind the needs of diverse groups of children, also requires putting in place additional resources to help children deal with the adverse consequences of social prejudice and judgement, where this is needed. In CINI-ASHA’s intervention with the children of sex workers in Calcutta, counsellors were used to help children, and their mothers, deal with, rather than evade, stigma. The children often tried to hide their identities, and especially those of their mothers. Following the view that stigma is a key barrier to children’s education, and that rather than avoiding dealing with it, it would be better to accept it, the programme provided counsellors who helped the children to accept and move ahead.
Udaan’s focus on teaching girls to cycle also strengthened girls’ independence, allowing them to carry on their education even where schools were further away from the home. Teaching young girls new skills enhances their ability to negotiate with their families to postpone marriage, enabling them to advance in their schooling. Girls identified several areas of change in their lives, including involvement in domestic economic activities, changed work distribution practices at home, leadership and increased mobility.

BRAC schools organise children into small groups, with a leader in each group, in order to help foster leadership skills. Most of the small group leaders are girls.

The work of the Government of Andhra Pradesh in promoting residential bridge schools identifies two important features of a child-centred approach: the ability to individualise (that is, see each child as important, different and requiring special attention) and the ability to empathise (that is, view the child’s basic needs and learning needs as integrated, and relate the child’s past with current learning situations, enabling her to feel confident of pursuing education).

### Phases of an Intervention

- **Building connections with community, parents and teachers**
- **Building confidence**
  - In parents that children are going to be better off in school, rather than at work
  - In the community that even older children can join the mainstream if they are given an opportunity
  - In children that they are capable of learning well and faster, and that they can join their peers
- **Building commitment**
  - In volunteer activists to sustain efforts to convince parents and children
  - In parents that they can make sacrifices by foregoing wages
  - In teachers that they will provide support to these learners once they re-enter school
- **Building competence**
  - In volunteers to respond to special learning needs of first generation learners
- **Building continuity**

Efforts to be sustained till children are fully integrated into mainstream by effective follow-up of each child.

Source: I. V. Subba Rao, Workshop Presentation on Residential Bridge Schools in Andhra Pradesh
Involving Mothers in Decision-making

Mothers play a key role in all the interventions, and particularly in community decision-making bodies. BRAC encourages mothers to participate in committees and in all activities in its programmes. In SAHE, women play a key role in community-based schools, arranging meetings with teachers on school premises, keeping a watch on teachers’ performance, checking irregularities and drop-outs. The ECCE programme of the Government of Assam involved the formation of mothers’ groups to support and monitor the ECCE centres. These groups became the nucleus of a large number of other activities relating to children’s education in the village.

Mothers have been consistently identified as key drivers for change, especially for improving their daughters’ educational prospects, and so most projects target them. The reasons for targeting mothers are not just about drawing on their roles as home-makers and carers; most innovative projects see the involvement of mothers as a way of improving women’s capacities and skills in making service delivery accountable. With this in mind, interventions such as Udaan hold separate community seminars for women, recognising that women often feel inhibited about speaking in mixed audiences, and seeing these separate spaces as essential for developing their collective ‘voice’.

Intervening in Social Spaces to Influence Change

Interventions which take place only at the level of the school are bound to leave untouched the many forms of discrimination that arise outside. SAHE in Pakistan involves teachers as social mobilisers, especially for interacting with mothers, and a pool of eight teachers has been formed for this purpose in each area. Udaan’s community seminars evolved because of parental opposition to non-Dalit girls cleaning school toilets. With teachers in the vanguard, community seminars allowed parents to debate and discuss with the project staff the importance of shared responsibilities including toilet cleaning, which ultimately won their approval. Creating a common platform for local project managers, parents, teachers and children provided a medium for the discussion of expectations and aspirations for girls’ education, problems and the experience of change.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission’s work in urban slum communities in Dhaka focuses on the entire community’s approach to the education of daughters through involving them in the Urban Community Learning Centres, providing life-oriented information through reading materials and reorienting their perspectives on education as a long-term, life-changing process. Social awareness raising campaigns in the communities have aimed to shift the deeply embedded culture of son-preference and discrimination against girls. The 60 community learning centres run by the organisation are now maintained and managed by the local communities.
Empowering and Resourcing Teachers, Especially Women Teachers

It is striking that most women who become teachers do so because their families see teaching as an ‘appropriate’ profession for women, as the work involves children, allows regular vacations, does not involve much investment in training and is seen to be relatively easy in terms of the time and effort involved. Yet, for the very same reasons – the accommodation of women’s dual responsibilities as home-makers and earning family members – women teachers are highly constrained in the effective fulfilment of their professional roles. Women teachers are often constrained in terms of moving to take up teaching jobs in different areas, particularly away from urban centres, as the husband is often seen as the primary earner determining where the woman works. Even where women work hard, they shy away from taking on responsibilities (and equally, from getting credit) for what they do. Concerns about security in more remote areas deter single women teachers from professional mobility. Despite the fact that they are recognised as key actors in universalising girls’ education, women teachers’ needs and interests are rarely addressed.

Several of the interventions in the case studies for this workshop have reversed this neglect, putting women teachers and women managers at the heart of the process of change. BRAC provides its women teachers with motorcycles and bicycles to improve their mobility and improve their confidence. EGS has tackled the concern that the recruitment of local teachers with no professional qualifications may affect the quality of education provided through setting up a large-scale diploma certificate course in education through correspondence for those EGS teachers who have not received this training. SAHE also provides teachers with opportunities to improve their educational qualifications. By encouraging and recruiting large numbers of women teachers, SAHE has developed an environment in local communities whereby families that were initially reluctant to send their girls to teach in schools are now filing applications with the regional office.

The Adhyapika Manch initiative of Lok Jumbish evolved out of a realisation that women teachers had low rates of participation in teacher training programmes. Residential programmes were not suitable for women teachers with young children; the dominance of men as both participants and trainers in the training programme was intimidating to most; family members resisted their participation; and women were reluctant to seek and develop professional skills. The initiative therefore sought to work with women teachers to understand their constraints and inhibitions in a more holistic perspective, and to work with their families to mobilise support for them. It also tried to identify the facilities that women needed at the training centres. Through the forum, women teachers found collective solutions to what were hitherto considered to be personal problems, and developed a support structure that helped women stay on in their jobs through practical solutions.

Udaan’s introduction of a Social Learning curriculum rested heavily on the ability and willingness of teachers to use the new approach to learning. As teachers
themselves are products of a socialisation and education process that has hitherto neglected issues of equity, diversity and tolerance, getting teachers to discuss these issues required intensive teacher training. The process of curriculum development accompanied an intensive year-long training process, which involved making teachers conscious of unequal and differentiated practices in society, building their commitment to equity, developing the required skills and competence to undertake the desired activities, and raising their confidence about their capacity to deal with these issues with young children. Investing in teachers’ capacities was an important first step to evolving the social curriculum for children.

For BRAC, female teachers represent a revolution in Bangladeshi society. Female teachers reverse the stereotypical view of the male teacher or ‘master’. BRAC teachers are locally recruited and often have only a few years of schooling. By recruiting women otherwise based in the home, BRAC has helped rural women find new respect within their societies. Women project staff are provided with bicycles and motorcycles to improve their mobility. The safety of women staff is paramount, and BRAC has guidelines for working conditions for all staff that deal with physical assault or harassment. BRAC allows women three days of desk work in every month and four months maternity leave with pay, and provides them with semi-furnished residential facilities.

(i) Building Traditions that Celebrate Learning

In Sri Lanka, social custom has given importance to education. A literate woman is considered to be a blessing to all mankind. Auspicious events include one where a child reads his or her first letter, in the presence of elders. Tradition has thus encouraged literacy and learning. The ‘invention’ of traditions that can help promote the value of girls’ education may be an idea whose time has come in societies where there are no customs that make learning for women and girls socially and politically desirable. Dhaka Ahsania Mission has instituted special days that celebrate education and learning in the communities within which they work.

(j) Using Research to Identify Problems and Hear the Voices of Stakeholders

In most of the innovations, particularly those spearheaded by government departments, research is used to identify problems, see patterns and seek solutions. For example, in the ECCE initiative in Assam, a study discovered that 20% of children enrolled in schools were under-age. Similarly, in Madhya Pradesh data on girls’ attendance revealed that there was a problem, leading to debate and discussion within government about how best to tackle it.

The roots of the Education Guarantee Scheme lie in extensive data collection and efforts to map issues of access to schooling at local level. In 1996, participatory problem mapping, drawing panchayat representatives into loose coalition with teachers, resulted in data on the participation of 10 million children in education. The household survey, or Lok Sampark Abhiyan, revealed that 30%
of the state did not have access to primary schools, and these were primarily tribal habitations. On all indicators, girls were the worst off. Local data collection also prompted local solutions for specific issues.

(k) Expanding Opportunities for Learning: Linking Innovations to the Mainstream

The case of the EGS suggests the importance of building links between different types of educational interventions, those within the mainstream and those outside it. This is particularly important to expand the options for children from disadvantaged groups whose needs are likely to vary over time. Residential bridge schools in Andhra Pradesh offer options to child labourers to enter schooling

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**BRAC: Gender Equity within the Project Environment**

In line with BRAC policy, an increase in the number of female staff in front-line management was proposed. The same issue was raised by RMs (Regional Managers) during the RM planning workshop (mentioned in ‘Towards Gender Equity’, output 6). At present, eight out of 42 RMs are female (19%). An initiative is underway to increase the number of female staff in bottom-line management (team-in-charge) to ultimately impact on the front line.

Nearly 66% of students in BRAC primary schools are girls. In order to have more female project officers at the supervisory level, BRAC has made changes to its recruitment policy. Female staff will now receive motorcycles within three months of the start of their employment, whereas a male staff member at the same level receives one after one year. In addition, potential female project officers will now be promoted to team-in-charge status within six months, whereas male staff receive the same opportunity after two or three years. These decisions have been made to increase the number of female TICs, Quality Assurance Specialists (QAS) and Regional Sector Specialists (RSSs) in the future.

In the head office, the ratio of males to females is 42:46: 55% of unit managers are female.

There are 15 (34%) females out of 44 QASs. The policy is to increase this number gradually. The male to female ratio in the EDU Unit at the Head Office is 50:50 and the Unit Manager of EDU is a woman. Almost 98% of the teachers at BRAC schools are female. The average class ratio of girls to boys is 65:35. The group leaders in each class are girls.

This is all designed to work towards BRAC’s goal of empowering women. The BRAC curriculum is gender sensitive. It has been designed in such a way that the traditional role of women, commonly practised in our society, has been broken down to foster respect between the sexes for their mutual roles. The books used show both girls and boys working in the field as well as doing household work.

The message that is being passed on to students is that the work done by women and men is complementary. This has been set up as a model to create awareness of gender sensitivity among students who comprise the future generation of the nation.

Source: Nazrul Islam, BRAC Case Study
later in life and catch up with opportunities. EGS schools offer links to the schooling system, enabling girls to transit to middle schools, and also enabling children to move easily between primary schools – EGS and non-EGS – a step that particularly helps families that migrate with children. Rigidly organised schools may force children to drop out, whereas flexible options allow children to resume their education when it has been disrupted by family circumstances.

SAHE's community-based schools also function wherever possible in dysfunctional government school buildings in collaboration with the district education department. When government schools improve as a result of the collaboration, SAHE withdraws from that community. Thus SAHE plays the role of a catalyst in improving government schools through community mobilisation and capacity building. For example, teacher training and the mainstreaming of materials developed by SAHE are interventions aimed at building sustainability. Partnership with district governments is critical.

(1) Ongoing Monitoring – Critical for Innovation

Ongoing monitoring enables innovations to develop new responses to new situations and requirements. Reviews of the functioning of the ECCE programme in Assam, for example, revealed that the midday meal scheme in the state was encouraging under-age children to go to school to benefit from the free meal. Rather than ignore this problem, the recommendation to government was to create a separate grade for children who could not really participate in Grade 1.

BACE project staff visit each school in the different project areas to monitor attendance of girls who have received scholarships, on the basis of which future payments are made. Examination results are also monitored. Each project area is monitored by a programme officer who verifies reports and accounts, goes to the banks to make sure that correct procedures are being followed, visits the schools and evaluates programme performance. Layered monitoring systems create checks and balances in the system.

EGS is established as an 'evolving' scheme, because it perceives the EGS school as an evolutionary structure. Arising out of needs identified through research and review, the EGS schools have been evolving to acquire more attributes as demand, capacity and resources grow. Continuous review processes have revealed the importance of strengthening community management committees, and have resulted in removing the block and village panchayats' role in controlling the school budget, leaving sole control to the local EGS committee. Over time, the programme has evolved from setting up a small school with one grade started each year, to providing grants to a fully-fledged school with a budget on a par with that of a government primary school, while still retaining its community character. Remuneration to teachers is now comparable with that paid to the new cadre of government schoolteachers. These are all examples of changes brought in over time to respond to changes in demands and needs experienced on the ground.
BRAC has introduced a Gender Education Monitoring System (GEMS) which measures the learning achievements of boys and girls on a 4-point grading scale. This enables staff to monitor the learning levels of boys and girls and make interventions as necessary.

Monitoring is necessary not just within interventions but also across interventions. SAHE works to strengthen Education Watch, which focuses specifically on influencing policy-making based on grassroots realities through collating information, conducting surveys and identifying successful models for replication, as well as networking with other organisations to analyse government programmes and projects.

(m) Legalising ‘Rights’

In Madhya Pradesh, an Act was formulated to strengthen community management of education on the principles of state-community partnership and making the public system accountable to the community for the quality of education. While the law was yet to be fully implemented, at the time of writing and pending the decisions of a new state government, the principle of having ‘an architecture of legal, financial and administrative resources’ remains important. Rights are important, even if they are not legally based. Dhaka Ahsania Mission’s work in urban slum communities has helped to address the issues of eviction and the rights of slum dwellers living in what are otherwise seen as illegal settlements that can be denied infrastructure such as schools.

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**Group Discussion**

What are the key elements that make a difference for the achievement of gender equality in education?

Who are the key drivers of change for advancing girls’ education?

What do we mean by gender equality in education?


- Rights to education (the indicators could be participation rates, completion rates and other similar quantitative indicators).

- Rights within education (the indicators could be in terms of experiences within schools, processes in the schools and choices that are available in terms of subjects, courses, etc.).

- Rights through education (the indicators could be on the post-schooling opportunities – in labour market, in political participation and so on – and the change in the relations at various levels).

What inhibits girls’ participation in education?

- Inadequate availability of schools and physical facilities in schools (toilets, etc.).
Absence of legal frameworks and rights

Gender disadvantage existing in every walk of life and an adverse social environment

What creates a social environment which will enable girls to participate in education?

- When parents start having higher aspirations for their daughters
- When economic opportunities encourage parents to view education as beneficial
- When education becomes and is perceived as relevant to their lives
- Demonstrated success showing relevance of intangible benefits of schooling (e.g. small projects)
- Role models (women teachers, other cases of success at local level)

What is needed to bring this change about?

- Redefining education to expand the role of schools and teachers as agents of change in the social environment.
- Making the curriculum more relevant
- Using schooling as process for transformation (e.g. social learning in the case of CARE India)
- Understanding general gender disadvantage and its impact on low participation, and having appropriate education initiatives (e.g. secondary fellowships linked to preventing early marriage and the empowering process of opening bank accounts in Bangladesh)

How can this be brought about?

- By having well-documented pathways for bringing this change by analysing successes.
- Through activism (advocacy, research based)

Who are the key players?

- The State
- The community/parents
- Children/girls
- Civil society

The discussion remained inconclusive regarding who are the most important players. It was agreed that different combinations are more critical in different circumstances and at different levels.
Good Practices in the Education of Girls in Africa

Penina Mlama, the Executive Director of FAWE, joined the workshop and made a presentation drawing from a similar workshop on 'Scaling Up Girls' Education in Africa', held in Nairobi in June 2004. The following is an extract from her presentation.

The last decade has seen concerted efforts towards improving the participation of girls in education. Government ministries of education, NGOs, civil society groupings and development partners have joined hands in attempts to increase girls' access to education and improve their retention and performance.

Although the challenges have been phenomenal, these efforts are bearing fruit in the form of some obvious good practices which have shown tangible results in improving access, retention and performance.

Good practices in girls' education can be seen in a number of areas.

One is at the level of policy. Gender-responsive policies have been put in place that have made it possible for more girls to access education, and complete their courses and transit to higher levels.

For example, the policy of free and compulsory primary education for all children, now adopted by many countries, has forced parents who do not believe in educating girls to send their daughters to school.

The policy on re-entry into the school system for schoolgirls who become pregnant has also given a second chance to girls who were previously cast out once they became pregnant.

The policy of giving scholarships to poor girls has also opened the door to education for many girls who would have been kept out by the cultural attitudes which give preference to the education of boys. These scholarships have also greatly benefited HIV/AIDS orphans, both boys and girls.

The other level is that of practical interventions to address the gender constraints to girls' education. Much effort has gone into interventions to get girls into school, to make them stay in school and to make them perform well.

For example, at a meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, where various partners consulted on how to scale up good practices in girls' education in sub-Saharan Africa, good practices were tabled in the following areas:

- Transforming an ordinary school into a gender-responsive environment: FAWE Centres of Excellence model (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Senegal)
- Re-entry into school of adolescent mothers (Zambia)
- Empowerment of girls (Tanzania)
- Child-friendly schools (The Gambia)
- Positive emergency as a model for rapid expansion of access to education (Burkina Faso)
- Complementary basic education (Tanzania)
- Girls’ education movement (Uganda, South Africa)
- Peer education to protect school girls from HIV/AIDS infection (Ghana, Kenya)
- Addressing sexual maturation in relation to girls’ education.
- Providing education for girls in a conflict situation (Sierra Leone)

There are many other examples of good practices in girls’ education arising from the work of various organisations engaged in improving girls’ education.
Lessons for Scaling Up

I Mainstreaming and Scaling Up Promising Practices

Scaling Up Requires Greater Localisation

The case of decentralisation in Madhya Pradesh, through the implementation of the Education Guarantee Scheme which has been operating since 1997, is an example of an intervention which has sought to bring education to disadvantaged children through catering for the needs of the communities where these children were living. Local surveys of patterns of access to schools revealed the limitations of centralised planning. Centralised planning is based on norms that are concerned with the disbursement of administrative resources, rather than understanding community needs. For example, the criteria used by centralised planning to decide where to site schools is population size rather than the distance of communities from resources. Scattered tribal habitation patterns mean, therefore, that tribal communities are neglected.

In Andhra Pradesh, an initiative was undertaken to allow tribal communities to choose whether teaching should be in their own language or in the dominant language, Telugu. The initiative involved the identification of eight major tribal languages and textbooks were written in them. The aim was also to preserve languages that were in danger of extinction and to produce literature in those languages in a way that would help support the self-esteem of the groups who spoke them. Teams were deputed to the tribal areas, where they recorded conversations with tribal people. Rather than developing new scripts for these largely oral cultures, the mainstream language script was used, to facilitate their mainstreaming into the education system. Some of the illustrations in the books were done by members of the tribal communities themselves. Communities were asked to choose whether they wished to have learning materials in their own language. About 500 communities chose not to do so.

Vision and Positive Leadership are Critical

The catalyst for decentralisation in the state of Madhya Pradesh in India was the vision and commitment of a group of officers who believed that their powers should be transferred to community level. With the help of seed money to fund
their ideas, they were able to put this vision into practice by setting up innovations that led to a new model for decentralisation, breathing life into state policies on decentralisation.

Key drivers of change can also be found outside the education sector; politicians, in particular, can speak out in favour of girls’ education.

**A Policy Environment which Makes an Explicit Commitment**

Sri Lanka has had a policy of universal education since the 1960s and 1970s and has made free primary, secondary and tertiary education available since 1945. Parents are able to invest equally in their daughters and sons – because there are no direct costs they do not have to place differential values on their children based on their gender. A package of measures including midday meals, subsidised public transport, free textbooks from Grades 1–11 (since 1980) and free materials for school uniforms (since 1993) all contribute to making education accessible to all children.

Government programmes that are not backed by explicit policy commitments will struggle to raise the budgets required to sustain their work. ECCE in Assam, despite its success at a micro level, was not included in the Education Act/School Code. Programmes that remain outside the mainstream will struggle for resources to fund adequate numbers of teachers, unless they are placed at the centre of policy initiatives. Despite being a powerful demonstration for the validity and importance of ECCE, the programme struggled to be considered a legitimate part of the universalisation of elementary education (UEE) approach.

**Structural Tools to Support Positive Leadership**

Leadership is not enough; there also needs to be an agenda of structural change to help reform move down the line to where people are putting policies into practice. As the case of decentralisation in the state of Madhya Pradesh shows, the growth in the rate of literacy in the state, as revealed by the statistics of the 2001 national census, can be attributed to the transformation of government policy which fostered better convergence of services at the local level. In targeting children on the periphery of the system, the need for a thorough review of existing managerial and academic processes was revealed. The importance of embedding reform within communities and creating a legal framework for accountability became seen as crucial for sustaining expansion.

The role played by intermediaries in implementing major scaled-up programmes such as the Female Secondary Scholarships Scheme in Bangladesh also highlights the importance of efficient implementation. BACE’s management systems meant not only that girls who had been awarded scholarships received their funding on time, but that schools received tuition fees and teachers their salaries. Effective intermediaries can resolve problems faced by students and also help keep up the profile of the innovation, providing a constant reminder of its rationale and importance.
Rigorous Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are necessary to keep the spirit of learning and evidence-based formulation alive. In Udaan, there is a continuous process of evaluation for all subjects, and teachers and managers keep records of progress based on their observations. Evaluation is necessary to establish the relevance and utility of the innovations introduced, especially in a large system, and to maintain a focus. Lack of focus resulted in the Adhyapika Manch’s activities with women teachers being neglected once the programme was scaled up.

Transparency of Information

Innovations that seek to change the structures of resource allocation invariably run up against power structures that have captured resources and prevented their redistribution. In Madhya Pradesh, these problems were encountered in the attempt to decentralise education provision. As soon as the EGS was announced, vested interests became vocal, as it meant that there would be new jobs and political benefits. Conflicts over where the EGS schools should be located became rampant. To deal with this, accounting procedures had to be changed to make them more transparent, and to reflect more closely what was happening at the local level.

Building Alliances Outside Government Systems

Conflict permeates policy-making, as the needs and interests of the different groups who are affected by the policy may not coincide. In the case of the EGS, conflict within government was managed by creating external alliances, for example with politicians, in order to push through the commitment to decentralising core decision-making around school availability and management.

The EGS model of decentralisation also brokered partnerships between the state government, local bodies and local communities.

‘Scaffolding’ Support Required

For most innovations to succeed, a structure that supports the day to day actions of key players such as teachers, parents and children is required. In Udaan’s Social Learning programme, teachers were provided continuous support by local managers of the programme, thereby reinforcing the inputs received by teachers during training programmes. Further, processes of interaction were built with parents, extending the curriculum discussions into the social arena, by bringing parents together in a ‘Community Seminar’ where similar issues to those in the classroom were discussed.

Making Central Principles of Intervention Clear

The EGS approach had the following components: demand guarantee, time-bound action, local ownership, government-community partnerships and an evolving structure for the school. Principles of management included a focus on partnership. For partnership between bodies with diverse interests to succeed,
a set of defined values that constitutes a normative framework for functioning is needed.

**Devolving Powers to Local Communities**

In the EGS, decentralisation as a management principle was both vertical and lateral – from the state to the district, sub-district, school cluster and school level; and from bureaucratic government institutions to local bodies and community governments, either structured or in loose coalitions. Specific aspects of decision-making authority that were devolved to communities included whether or not to open schools, how many schools and where, the choice and selection of the teacher and control over her/him, the right to decide school timing and weekly holidays. The structure of community decision-making through which these powers were exercised included a local committee of parents of children at the school, with a parent as the chairperson and the teacher as the secretary. Finances for each EGS school were paid in the form of a school grant deposited in a school account to be jointly operated by the chairperson and the secretary of the local management committee.

**Disaggregated Planning**

In the EGS, it was found that disaggregated planning helped to make explicit the need for women teachers, and to identify training needs and infrastructural requirements. Building on a detailed computerised MIS, the programme was able to identify specific issues, according to which plans could be developed.

**Determining an Appropriate Level of ‘Process’ Intensity**

This is an important lesson from the ECCE programme in Assam, where in the process of scaling up, the intensity of the initial ‘innovative’ phase was found difficult to sustain as the programme expanded. Consciously defined and achievable levels of process intensity, as well as flexible components beyond fixed programmes, are lessons for innovations which are being scaled up.

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**Group Discussion: Implications for Scaling Up**

**What kinds of practice are amenable to scaling up?**

Some of the best practices/innovations take place on a small scale, often in almost laboratory-like situations.

- It is important to identify the challenges when an intervention is being considered for scaling up.
- Not all interventions can be scaled up or be effective in a system that works on a larger scale.
It is not likely or necessary that all elements of an innovation should be scaled up. Careful consideration of the core elements/content can help in making a decision on what needs to be scaled up.

Defining non-negotiables, especially in relation to the pedagogical aspects, is also important.

Scaling up depends on the degree of autonomy the process allows.

Mechanisms for scaling up will be required, i.e. who will take the initiative and responsibility for creating the mechanisms and addressing structural issues. For example, in the District Primary Education Project, the programme was designed to absorb, transform, adapt and integrate innovations and upscale them.

Innovations/interventions addressing special/specific groups can be replicated in similar contexts.

Essential pedagogical changes, such as the social learning curriculum, can be scaled up, depending on government acceptance of the innovation.

What conditions need to be in place to support innovation and sustainability?

Scaling up has to be seen as a dynamic process, especially in the context of technological changes.

The mechanisms and process of scaling up must ensure preservation of the principles of quantity and quality inherent in the practice.

An analysis of the key principles of the innovation is necessary before scaling up is attempted.

The larger system, i.e. the government, should have a declared policy of being receptive to the analysis and research findings.

The necessary conditions can be culled out of the NGO’s experience and the sufficient conditions can be derived from the context of the practice.

Enabling conditions are required for sustainability of the scaled up practice with in-built risks.

Sustainability requires commitment from government to take risks in supporting innovations.

Sustainability issues in scaling up an innovation relate to cost effectiveness, institutional capacity, social acceptance and credibility.
2 Good Practices in the Education of Girls in Africa

Penina Mlama, Executive Director, shared with the workshop some perspectives from Africa on scaling up good practices in girls’ education. This is an extract from her presentation.

For several years now, there has been a lot of discussion on how to expand the benefits of good practices to wider education systems in order to reach larger numbers. Many challenges have been cited in relation to scaling up and mainstreaming such good practices. These have included the following:

- Many of the interventions have been conducted on a small scale and often as single projects with a short life span;
- The projects have in many cases been carried out by NGOs and civil society outside mainstream education systems;
- The projects have been carried out with funding specific to the projects, which may not be available to governments for use on a larger scale;
- The civil society organisations and NGOs undertaking these interventions often have not sought meaningful partnerships with Ministries of Education in the implementation of the projects, which causes problems of ownership when the stage is reached for scaling up and mainstreaming;
- Good practices are often not systematically documented;
- Information on these good practices is not widely disseminated and shared.

In presentations and discussions at the Nairobi workshop, the following issues were emphasised as critical to the process of scaling up and mainstreaming of good practices in girls’ education:

- Political commitment and a rights-based and equity-oriented policy environment;
- A social marketing strategy to create the necessary receptivity to educational change and to combat resistance, including at the implementation level;
- An awareness that education initiatives for girls also benefit boys as shown by the outcomes of the 16 good practice case studies;
- Partnership at community, provincial national and international levels;
- Careful monitoring and evaluation from the baseline of the pilot through the process of scaling up;
- Intensified human, financial and material from all partners if scaling up is to be accelerated to meet the MDG and EFA goals of 2005 and beyond;
- Special attention to be given to multifaceted interventions since many gender and education problems lie outside the education sector;
- All these issues should be viewed through a gender lens and attended to from a gender perspective.
PART 4

Reforming Policy from a Gender Perspective

1 Critical Issues in Girls’ Education: Perspectives from India

The panel, coordinated by UNICEF, India, marked a change from earlier presentations on promising practices and scaled-up interventions. Based on the Indian experience, the presentations identified key cross-cutting thematic issues which not only inform planning and implementation for accelerating girls’ education in India, but also resonate across the region. These include:

- Generation and use of gender-disaggregated data
- Accelerated learning strategies targeting older out-of-school girls
- The role of quality education
- School sanitation and hygiene
- Multilingual education

The presentation on the ‘Literacy and Education Scenario in India’ made a case for interpreting quantitative data in a nuanced manner (as opposed to the generation of descriptive statistics) as an integral part of project planning and evaluation. It argued for understanding the limitations of current data as well as tapping their potential as an objective standard against which planning decisions can be measured. It also highlighted the fact that data which are valid and comparable across the country and are also gender-disaggregated are rare. In addition, it argued that in most educational research, gender is seen as a discrete variable and rarely disaggregated by social and economic groupings.

The paper critically examined literacy data and other educational indicators (including enrolment and attendance) to indirectly assess the impact of educational policy and schemes in the last decade and to identify gaps where further effort is required. For instance, analysis indicates that most of the increase in literacy rates can actually be attributed to swelling of the ranks of literates between the ages 6–19. On one hand, this indicates the success of the educational schemes and policies of the last decade. On the other, it also illustrates
the limited impact of earlier adult literacy programmes and at times the myopic orientation of current policies that fail to make systemic links between girls’ education and adult literacy.

When data are available on gender and other social groupings, as in the National Family Health Survey Data, it is also useful in identifying who are most excluded from the benefits of education. In order to reach out to these marginalised groups, innovative measures are required that are context specific and localised interventions – as opposed to scaled-up interventions in the traditional geographical sense. Within the Indian context, girls and children belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged groups like the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other minority groups are the ones who are excluded.

The presentation on ‘Accelerated Learning’ presented issues regarding the education of out-of-school girls in India, the majority of whom are between the ages of 11 –18 – too old to enter Class 1 and at the same time too young to participate in adult education programmes. The presentation reviewed several key education initiatives implemented in the last decade to reach out to out-of-school girls and young women through accelerated learning programmes, both residential and non-residential.

The magic of the condensed residential programme lies in the holistic methodology of accelerated learning, which strives to create a balance between the cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions of learning. The common thread that runs through these programmes is the unique role of the teacher – not as a disciplinarian but as a care-giver, a person who nurtures and helps children grow at their own pace. The motivation of these girls, who have always wanted to go to school, but have been denied the opportunity, is also a significant factor. Having got the chance – almost all girls want to turn their world upside down – packing in almost 16 hours of activities in one day. Another important element of
this approach is that it enables children to set their own learning pace. The proactive involvement of children in their own learning sets these residential programmes apart from conventional schools.

The review indicates that evidence on the ground regarding the impact of the interventions is rather mixed and fragmented. These programmes provide girls with an opportunity to learn as well as to increase their self-confidence and well-being. However, the programmes are often unable to forge effective multiple linkages with the formal education system, which is essential to sustain the learning effort of girls as a continuous process. Hence care needs to be taken to ensure that these interventions do not emerge as a desirable alternative to regular school attendance of girls and that they remain a transitional strategy to strategically address the educational needs of out-of-school girls.

The presentation on ‘Quality Education’ built on the earlier presentation on accelerated learning and asserted that girls’ education is necessarily quality education, and that there is a need for the current discourse on girls’ education to move beyond issues of access and enrolment. This is particularly urgent given the highly differentiated landscape of educational provisioning in India (government schools, alternative schools and private schools); and the emerging ‘hierarchies of access’ as to who goes to which school. It is observed that most of the children who attend government schools and alternative learning centres are girls, first generation learners and children from marginalised groups. In addition, the majority of these schools are poorly equipped and have only one teacher. Research indicates that repetition and academic failure is linked to school withdrawal for many children; it also suggests that girls who fail are more likely to be withdrawn by their parents than are boys.

While recognising that the term ‘quality’ has multiple meanings, the presentation sought to identify critical elements of ‘quality education’ from a gender perspective. These dimensions, though seemingly commonplace, when implemented as part of a holistic strategy, hold the key to quality education for girls. These include but are not limited to:

- Making the classroom experience child-centred, relevant to the local community and in the local language;
- Training teachers and other stakeholders to be more sensitive to gender issues – leading to a change in behaviour;
- Employing many more women teachers who can act as role models for girl students;
- Locating schools closer to children’s homes: this makes schooling more accessible to all children but particularly encourages girls (and their families) to enrol;
- Providing early childhood care schemes: all children benefit from this kind of pre-school care and stimulation, but girls’ staying power in primary school seems to be increased by it;
- Involving the local community;
- Ensuring that schools are safe places, with clean water and separate toilets;
- Rooting out gender bias from textbooks and materials.

In practice, most reforms made in the name of making schools more girl friendly will also make them more boy friendly. Introducing gender-sensitive practices in the classroom encourages participation by all students and creates more dynamic classrooms. Gender-sensitive materials and training benefit all students by showing realistic role models. Exposure of boys to female teachers as contemporary role models is also important in addressing systemic gender biases in society.

The discussion which ensued acknowledged that while the quality of education is very important, it is difficult to measure. Educational quality is an outcome of a complex system of interaction: all components of the educational system – curricula, teachers, administration and assessment – interact uniquely in specific contexts to determine the overall quality of schooling. Hence what is essential for scaling up quality is an enabling policy framework for institutionalising and expanding the quality improvement package, as well as political will.

School Sanitation Hygiene Education (SSHE) appears in the commitments and investments of government as well as in those of international agencies and is relevant to international charters such as the Millennium Development Goals, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Education for All. The presentation highlighted the significance of SSHE in creating a safe, secure and healthy environment in which children can learn better. In particular SSHE contributes to:

- Improved health, nutrition and learning performance of children;
- Increased school enrolment and attendance of all children and particularly girls;
- Sustained good practices with regard to hygiene and sanitation.

The SSHE experience in India has not been consistent across the country because insufficient priority has been given to the issue in some states. It has generally been the hardware component of the interventions, primarily toilets, that have taken precedence, while the software intervention of hygiene education has been ignored. In addition, in most places, the technology and design used in the construction of toilets are not child friendly, and especially have not been adapted to the needs of girls. Further, the issue of physical security for girls in relation to availability of toilets is a concern that is rarely addressed in a constructive manner.

Emerging lessons indicate that it is essential to balance the hardware and software aspects of SSHE in a step-by-step approach, and that the planning and implementation should be contextualised and responsive to local reality. Further, it also illustrates that it should be a participatory process, involving local government leaders, community members, parents, teachers and all children.
Hygiene education should also be viewed as an essential part of the overall school health curriculum. It is desirable to promote a life skills-based health education which seeks to develop a range of cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills, as opposed to an education that focuses too narrowly on the provision of information alone.

Based on a project in Andhra Pradesh, India the final presentation addressed the issue of mother tongue instruction as an effective and rapid strategy for children belonging to tribal communities in India to achieve initial literacy. It has been observed that even when bilingual instruction is not the official practice, evidence suggests that hiring local teachers often provides children with the space to engage with teachers and have a better chance to learn.

While Article 350A of India’s Constitution states that ‘facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage shall be provided by state’ and the fifth Five-year Plan further reiterates that as far as possible ‘tribal dialects should be used for imparting instruction in the first two classes in areas where tribes have their own dialect’, the reality on the ground is dismal.

It is evident that the mother tongue literacy issue has not been adequately addressed as part of a larger strategy to improve educational quality. This is also a gender issue because girls are usually more restricted within the domestic sphere and are generally less exposed to the dominant language of instruction than boys. Thus girls from families which do not speak the dominant language often have a greater linguistic handicap than boys when they enter school and are more likely to drop out.

The Andhra Pradesh experience in preparing textbooks for Classes I–III in tribal languages clearly illustrates the potential of mother-tongue literacy in building an effective bridge between the home and school environments, reducing
absenteeism, minimising the drop-out rate and improving literacy levels, as well as in protecting tribal languages from extinction and enhancing the self-esteem of tribal groups. It also clearly indicates the key role played by decentralised and participatory planning in ensuring the initial success of the project in a local context defined by multiple languages and cultures.

2 Policy Perspectives from Selected Governments

Unleashing Demand

In many countries of South Asia, demand for education for girls has been encouraged by supply-side actions. For example, Pakistan has started a programme of providing cash incentives for girls who wish to study further. Supplementary reading material, school bags and stationery are also provided. In India, free textbooks are given to all children. Where savings arise, they may be used to provide stationery, free escort services and other items that encourage the enrolment of children.

Unleashed demand puts substantial pressures on the provision and supply of education, which forces governments to act. In Pakistan, it was soon realised that demand-side incentives expose the inability of the system to provide adequate space, teachers and infrastructure.

Retaining Children

In Maldives, there is a retention policy to ensure progression through school. An automatic promotion policy is aimed at retaining children. Although teachers have raised objections with regard to quality, the policy perspective is that repetition of a grade does not help children. Instead children who do not meet the required standard are given the option of studying a limited curriculum.

The reform of teaching methods is another policy initiative in the Maldives, aimed at preventing teachers from using a ‘preaching’ style to learners. A student-centred learning approach is being introduced, with an attempt to change the teaching culture. Teachers are important partners in the attempt to increase student participation.

Partnerships with NGOs

In Pakistan, decentralisation has meant that district-level government can enter into agreements with NGOs and build public-private partnerships. Both NGOs and the private sector are involved in such partnerships with governments. Education Foundations have been established to channel funds from government to communities through local NGOs. The non-formal education sector programmes of government are implemented directly by NGOs. In India also, the involvement of NGOs in the non-formal sector is significant. The range and type of partnerships between governments and NGOs varies, with NGOs serving not just as implementers but also as resource agencies for government.
Group Discussion: Policy Environment for Accelerating Girls’ Education and Advancing Gender Equality

How can policy reform best support girls’ education?

What kind of policy environment is necessary to support scaling up, innovation and advancing gender equality?

- The policy environment and the context of implementation/instruments of putting the policy into action must go hand-in-hand.
- There is a need to synchronise policies on education, health and sanitation, welfare and protection.
- The policy environment needs to create much-needed space for flexibility so that it can reach out to children at risk and those living under challenging circumstances, particularly girls. This includes space and flexibility for allocation of financial resources and research.
- It is pertinent to bear in mind that a policy is an evolving process and does not stand alone. There is therefore a need to involve stakeholders so that the lessons of the implementation of the policy at various levels are taken into consideration while revisiting the policy and making it more pragmatic.
- It is important to decentralise the process of policy-making and reform which should to be accompanied by discussion about the issues, so that it is not limited to being a top-down process but becomes an inclusive one.
- The tools of policy implementation are separate from the policy. The experiences of the means (plans, schemes, programmes, etc.) need to be continuously fed into the policy, so as to make it implementable and ensure that it does not just remain a written document.
- The influence of politics on policy and vice versa is important for the development and creation of an enabling policy environment. The role of legislation is also crucial in policy formulation and implementation.
- Lastly, the policies of funding agencies vis-à-vis the policies and basic principles of the country must complement each other in order to ensure smooth and effective progress.
PART 5

Scaling Up for 2005 and Beyond

The case studies revealed that although girls are a target group, there has been a wider effort to deal both with the societal constraints that prevent girls from having access to meaningful education and also the environment and structures that produce schooling and lead to education. This suggests an important lesson: that all children will benefit if the overall approach to education provision is sensitive to social diversity and if there are attempts to redistribute resources towards the most disadvantaged. Girls in South Asia deserve a far better deal.

Targeting girls, without putting other policies in place, is not the solution for moving towards the goals of 2015: gender equality and the empowerment of women. Education can only contribute to the achievement of these goals if the way in which access is facilitated, and the kind of learning environment that is created, really make a difference for the future. This was one of the key outcomes of the workshop discussions. However, none of the programmes featured, although many operate on a significant scale, work within the mainstream of their countries' education programmes. For 2005 and beyond, the challenge is clear: how to take these lessons forward so that the formal schooling system in all our countries can learn from them. For countries that have universalised education and achieved gender parity, the challenge of how to achieve greater gender equality remains. These countries also are still grappling with the issues, and learning lessons within the region from their experiences is a critical component of the future agenda.

Scaling up is a desirable process, but it is hard to define. It is usually sought both to accelerate progress and to make the best use of limited resources – i.e. achieve ‘economies of scale’. Scaling up is also seen as important for ‘grounding’ reform by drawing on local experiences to inform the reform of macro-level service delivery. It is considered necessary to support innovation – even if innovation often occurs in situations of ‘crisis’ or in response to specific problems, failures and exclusions; in most cases actors and actions are interdependent. Projects do not work in isolation but create ripple effects that affect diverse stakeholders. Scaling up should not therefore be seen as just seeking to replace innovative projects with one large system. Projects serve as an important ground for experimentation, providing crucibles of learning that are necessary to deal with diversity.

More importantly, ‘scaling up’ should be viewed in terms of enabling and sup-
porting change in a way that maximises the potential of resources to achieve an impact – in particular, looking at how innovation can be supported through developing institutional and systemic capacity and how policy directions and visions can be informed by this rich experience. Such an approach recognises that, firstly, not all innovations that are successful in driving change are amenable to scaling up – i.e. they may succeed only because they operate in micro contexts; in addition, what may best help is not the replication of specific elements of a programme, but the conditions that allowed the programme to succeed and the local roots that can sustain the change (Samoff and Sebatene, 2001).

In the South Asian context, scaling up is not just a quantitative concept. Most of the case studies looking at here deal with impressive numbers. More importantly, in the context of the complex inequalities of class and gender, and the ethnic, religious and other diversities that make up South Asian societies, scaling up also refers to finding more widespread ways to make systems respond to diversity, and to find more effective ways to target resources.

1 Scaling Up: Concerns and Challenges

- Scaling up implies a process of ‘making routine’, but routine may be the death knell of innovation. Going to scale shifts the approach from one of innovation and learning to one of implementation. The assumption becomes that what succeeds has been ‘learned’ and now the issue is to implement it in a routine way. Strategies must become mainstream but not trivialised. Scaling up often just scales up the formula and sometimes the processes are forgotten.

- Does scaling up mean ‘one size fits all?’ There is a danger when talking about scaling up, that the concept is seen to imply the need for ‘one large project’ managed by government. The need for other options – such as multiple initiatives running simultaneously on the micro level that would create a macro impact – should be emphasised. It is not necessary to have one overall management system.

- Linkages between innovative pools and the wider mainstream of provision need to be forged. While targeted interventions are critical for giving equity considerations a launch pad, they are likely to be unsustainable if links with the formal system of provision are not made at an early point. For example, ECCE in Assam underwent a change of strategy when the DPEP programme that it was a part of came to an end. One of the weaknesses identified was the inadequate linkage with the formal school. This is particularly a challenge where equity-oriented programmes work as ‘special schemes’ which then do not receive attention from the mainstream which may see these programmes as time-bound add-ons to the formal system. The Government of Andhra Pradesh’s work in setting up residential bridge schools identified as a challenge the need for an approach which sees bridge schools as part of a concerted, networked action, not as isolated institutions set up wherever children are out of school.
Further, once children join the educational mainstream, they may encounter education processes that run counter to the dynamic, child-centred, quality-based approaches that were available to them in the alternative programme. Both the targeted mechanisms, as well as the universal schooling system, need to have similar values and approaches to learning, so that all children can benefit.

- Innovative approaches usually create a force field of change, provoking resistance that has to be understood and dealt with consistently over time. Very often the change happens because it is allowed to happen quietly, without attracting too much attention. Scaling up runs the risk of putting these processes of change under a ‘spotlight’, and becoming subject to the danger of politicisation.

- Is scaling up just a numerical concept? Discussions at the workshop highlighted the need to see scaling up as a qualitative concept, focused on processes and not just replicating outcomes. Good outcomes depend on the closeness of fit between planning, on the one hand, and local realities, on the other.

- Who takes responsibility for scaling up? Is it the responsibility of government alone? How can all stakeholders be brought into the scaling up process, so that their rights, as well as their mutual responsibilities, are identified and supported?

- Balancing rights and scaling up: does upscaling run the risk of taking away the autonomy of concerned communities? Most innovations that succeed do so because they engage local communities in deeper processes of change, building ownership and support from within. Scaling up will risk taking away these rights to own and manage processes of change from communities, thereby losing a citizen-centred focus to educational reform and change.

2 Important Issues for Scaling Up

- **Adaptation to context** is critical.

- **The entire approach** within which promising practices and innovations to be scaled up are located should be framed as innovative, in order to allow for flexibility and context-specific variations to be reflected.

- **Key principles of quality need to be identified and adopted**, and widely disseminated and shared by all actors

- **Credibility of the innovation and its social acceptance** are key components of a scaling up process.

- In the face of resistances to and lack of widespread public support for girls’ education, scaling up is likely to encounter challenges. For scaling up to happen, the capacity of the innovation and its champions to negotiate and advocate must be strengthened, so that more space is generated for innovation within the public system, which is otherwise closed to change.
Problems and Challenges in Scaling Up

Government policies can undermine innovation and success and prevent sustainable change and scaling up. An example of this offered in the case study of community schools in Sindh, Pakistan, which shows that the introduction of user fees makes government schools inaccessible to the poorest, undermining the effects of the successful intervention. Dependence on project funding also makes interventions dependent on the availability of funds for their success, which makes success time-bound and often not lasting.

Government procedures and structures do not allow for sustained innovation – ‘creating ownership across different levels and types of functionaries in a large and hierarchical system is ... one of the most difficult things to achieve’ (Jha and Gulati). Standardisation squeezes out the space for autonomy that is required for teachers and local agents of change to carry out their work. Similarly, communication challenges in large systems can give rise to confusion and misleading information being transmitted across and between levels.

Lack of understanding of the principles underlying the intervention that is being scaled up can become a significant obstacle when programmes are scaled up. When innovative practices become small components of large programmes, there is a tendency for project managers to communicate ineffectively, or not at all, about the underlying principles that made an innovation succeed. In the Adhyapika Manch, the commitment to the space for women teachers was diluted as the programme went to scale, and both managers and women teachers resisted the forum in some areas.

The ‘next great idea’ is always bigger and better: New ideas are continually evolving, but can displace older ones, especially if the older initiatives have been running effectively but quietly. In Lok Jumbish, the shift to Balika Shivirs as a major part of the gender strategy displaced the attention paid earlier to the women teacher forums. Continuous nurturing is necessary for specialised gender interventions, as the nature of change is long-term and often ‘silent’. However, policies and programmes are continuously seeking new challenges and solutions, which may result in displacing these ‘silent revolutions’.

- **Research** needs to be a significant aspect of the scaling up process. A commitment to create space for revision and analysis needs to be clearly made on the part of larger systems, and sensitive and extensive research must be encouraged to create those lessons and learning processes.

- **Decentralisation of management and accountability structures** is critical to minimise the risks of innovations being ‘lost’ within large-scale bureaucratic systems

- Individuals make all the difference – many innovations thrive because there are committed individuals at all levels of the system managing the innovation. In bureaucratic systems, too, this is the case. In the context of scaling up, a system of incentives and rewards for innovation (non-monetary in particular) would help to create incentives for personnel to work towards a positive change.
The governance of education – like all sectors of development – needs key focus. In South Asian bureaucracies, the frequent and often arbitrary transfers of key personnel makes sustaining of sensitive change processes difficult, and dependent on the inclinations of a vast range of people.
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