

# **AIDE MEMOIRE**

**Third Joint Review Mission of Mahila  
Samakhya  
(7<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2011)**

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Section 1:

# PROCESS

## 1.1 TIMEFRAME

Schedule: 7th-24th February 2011

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location of/travel by Mission members</b>	<b>Activity</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	New Delhi & MS State capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefing by Government of India at MHRD (morning)</li> <li>Internal discussions, preparation for field visits and departure for States</li> </ul>
8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	MS SPO & district programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State-level discussions and briefings at SPO</li> <li>Discussion with other district and State-level organisations &amp; departments and State Team</li> <li>Travel to district</li> </ul>
9 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	MS district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field-visit in district</li> </ul>
10 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday)	MS district & State capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field-visit in district</li> <li>Travel back to SPO</li> </ul>
11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Friday)	MS SPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrival at SPO, and writing of first draft of State Report (i.e. consolidation of Mission's main findings at State-level)</li> </ul>
12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Saturday)	MS SPO & Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wrap-up at State-level with draft State Report/key findings of Mission to be presented to the State Education Secretary (Chairperson of EC of State MS)</li> <li>A copy of draft State report to be sent by fax/e-mail to NPO before departure from State</li> <li>Depart for home location</li> </ul>
14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission members to e-mail/fax the detailed (second) draft of State reports to NPO &amp; respective SPOs (within first half of the day)</li> </ul>
15 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vetting of draft State reports by NPO &amp; consolidation of comments for modification in the same</li> </ul>
16 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NPO &amp; SPOs respond to Mission members by fax/e-mail with comments (including suggested modifications to State reports)</li> </ul>
17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday-Saturday)	Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modification of State reports by Mission members (based on NPO &amp; SPO comments) and preparation of final drafts of the same</li> </ul>
20 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Sunday)	New Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrival in Delhi for those Mission members unable to travel the day before</li> <li>Sharing of final drafts of State reports by Mission members, with NPO – discussion and finalisation of the same (including any final modifications if</li> </ul>

		<p>required)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Mission Leader for finalization of core issues for National Report</li> </ul>
21 <sup>st</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core team writes draft National Report</li> <li>• Members other than core team depart during the day</li> </ul>
22 <sup>nd</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core team completes draft National Report and shares with NPO (by e-mail/fax, by lunch-time)</li> </ul>
23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with NPO representatives to discuss National Report (morning)</li> <li>• Modification and finalization of National Report accordingly by Core team (to be shared with NPO by e-mail/fax by evening)</li> </ul>
24 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of Mission Leader's presentation of key findings &amp; main recommendations of MS JRM 2010 (also incorporating any final comments by NPO) on National Report</li> <li>• Wrap-up (post-lunch) – including presentation by Mission Leader and discussion with MS SPDs, non-official expert members of MS NRG, State Education Secretaries (Chairpersons of MSS ECs), MHRD &amp; DFID officials</li> </ul>

### 1.2 Composition of Mission and six states traveled to:

Sl. No.	State MS programme visited	Name of GoI nominee on Mission	Name of DFID nominee on Mission
1	<b>Andhra Pradesh</b> Mahila Samatha Society	<b>Ms. Annie Namala</b>	<b>Ms. Supriya Pattanayak</b>
2	<b>Gujarat</b> Mahila Samakhya Society	<b>Ms. Sejal Dand</b>	<b>Ms. Anu Sareen</b> (as Observer for 2 days at SPO, DFID-India)
3	<b>Jharkhand</b> Mahila Samakhya Society	<b>Mr. K. Gopalan</b> (Finance & Procurement Specialist)	<b>Ms. Arundhati Roy Choudhry</b> (Social Advisor, DFID-India)
4	<b>Uttar Pradesh</b> Mahila Samakhya Society	<b>Ms. Anita Gorumurthy</b> (Mission Leader)	<b>Mr. Sanjay Valsangkar</b> (F&P Specialist, DFID-India)

### 1.3 List of materials provided to Mission members:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i) Agenda for MS JRM briefing (07.02.11)                        | ix) NPO contact information                    |
| ii) ToR for MS JRM 2011 (incl. JRM 2011 schedule/timeframe)     | x) Progress briefs from 10 State MS programmes |
| iii) XI Plan document of MS programme                           | xi) Aide Memoire - MS JRM '09                  |
| iv) Presentation by NPO, at briefing (07.02.11)                 | xii) Aide Memoire – MS JRM 2008                |
| v) Physical progress data, MS (up to 30.09.10)                  | xiii) Results Framework (Revised RF) for MS    |
| vi) Releases & AWPBs, financial information (2009-10 & 2010-11) |  |
| vii) State visit teams  |  |
| viii) State report framework                                    |  |

#### **1.4 Minutes of Briefing:**

The first briefing for the Mission members was held in the MHRD Conference Hall at Shastri Bhawan (New Delhi), on 7th February 2011. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Anita Kaul, AS (SE) and Ms. Anita Gurumurthy (Mission Leader), and continued from 09.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

Participants included: Mission members (8), Ms. Anita Kaul (AS, SE), Dr. Suparna S. Pachouri (NPD), Ms. Taranga Sriraman, Ms. Santosh Sharma & Mr. N. Subramanian (NPO Consultants), Ms. Jyoti Pahwa (US, MHRD), NPO staff, and other DFID officials (4).

Ms. Taranga Sriraman (National Consultant) made a presentation regarding the MS programme itself as well as its progress/action taken since the last JRM (2009). (Please refer annexure Section 4.2.)

The Additional Secretary made the opening remarks, requesting the Mission members and other participants to introduce themselves. She spoke about the uniqueness of the MS programme as the longest running programme for education and empowerment. Ms. Kaul pointed out the danger of dilution of such an agenda by the pressures for service delivery, and also that the bottom-upwards planning process in MS – whereby rural women prioritise their own needs – is perhaps the main reason for the programme's sustenance so long. She then invited Ms. Anita Gurumurthy to lead the Mission.

Ms. Gurumurthy thanked the MHRD for the responsibility, and said she looked forward to catching up with the overall MS programme that she has been associated with in various capacities over the years. She requested the Mission members to use the following time to raise any questions/concerns they may have prior to the State-visits etc. She herself pointed out the changing nature of MS' context and hence, the demands faced by the programme externally and within.

Ms. Annie Namala raised the issue of how within such limited resources is the programme ensuring a creative focus on sustained engagement with most marginalized women – i.e. SC, ST & Muslim and other minorities. She suggested that this needs to be looked at carefully in the States for fresh perspective, rather than be assumed - for example, while women from most marginalized communities may be part of the sanghas and MS' work with them based on the sanghas' needs, it is possible that most marginalized women's needs in particular are not necessarily forming the large part of resource utilisation in work with sanghas. Other Mission members concurred with her suggestion as an area to be focused on during the Third Joint Review Mission.

There was also discussion on the backlash against the programme, pressures from political entities and pressure for service-delivery on a programme essentially focused on facilitating women's empowerment. AS (SE) spoke of the envisioned role for MS-facilitated sanghas and federations to play a role in the monitoring and community mobilization for the effective implementation of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act.

Ms. Emma Spicer, Mr. Colin Bangyay and other DFID officials requested more details with regard to Mahila Shikshan Kendras (nature of intervention, beneficiaries and purpose etc.), actual process of forming & working with sangha on the ground, and autonomy of federations. NPO Consultants provided brief descriptions of the same – while also highlighting the diversity in &

debates around federations' autonomy, including issues of registration and strength, across the MS programme. Ms. Roy Choudhury and Ms. Pattanayak also wanted more clarity on federations' sustainability, and suggested this would be something that the Mission could focus on during the Review.

Mr. Bangyay and other DFID officials also requested a brief update on the progress under action taken against previous JRMs' recommendations & activities/projects taken up under the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF). In particular they wanted to know the status on the completion of the Financial Management & Procurement (FM&P) Manual for the MS programme, and the setting up of National Resource Centre (NRC) for MS. The same had been incorporated in the NPO's presentation as well, and DFID officials shared the hope that the Ministry would share the ToR for the NRC and MSK studies for discussion before finalization. Dr. Pachouri, NPD-MS, assured them of the same.

Mr. Gopalan and other Mission members as well as DFID officials also requested and received more details on the AWP&B appraisal and approval process that has been initiated by the NPO since the f.y. 2010-11.

While DFID officials had to leave a little earlier than other participants due to other official commitments, the discussion continued and included the decision to look at the linkages between expansion-consolidation-withdrawal and sangha & federation strength and autonomy, the impetus on MS to take up service delivery and State programmes' preparedness in the same context, and most crucially, the need for the JRM to gather impressions & make recommendations for MS programme (structure, strategy & policy) in the XII FY Plan Period.

Finally, logistics of the entire schedule were discussed, NPO contact information was shared, and after lunch, the Mission members left for the respective designated States for field-visits.



### **1.5 Minutes of Wrap-up meeting:**

The wrap-up meeting for the second MS JRM was held at the Hotel Atithi (New Delhi), on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Suparna S. Pachouri (NPD-MS) and Ms. Anita Gurumurthy (Mission Leader), and continued from 3 - 6 p.m.

Other participants included:

- i) Mission members – Ms. Annie Namala and Ms. Arundhati Roy Choudhury;
- ii) MHRD officials –Dr. Suparna S. Pachouri (NPD) and Ms. Jyoti Pahwa (US, MS);
- iii) Ms. Chandana Khan (Principal Secretary, Education Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh);
- iv) MS State Programme Directors and other representatives– Ms. P. Prasanthi (A.P.), Ms. Gita Rani Bhattacharya (Assam), Ms. Shubhraj Singh (Bihar), Ms. Trupti Sheth (Gujarat), Dr. Smita Gupta (Jharkhand), Dr. Seema Bhaskaran (Kerala), Ms. Kavitha D.L. (APD-MSKarnataka), & Ms. Alka (U.P)
- v) Non-official members of the NRG – Dr. Shatha Mohan & Ms. Vandana Mahajan;
- vi) DFID-I Officials – Ms. Emma Spicer & Ms. Taruna Sharma
- vii) NPO Consultants and staff.

In her opening remarks, the National Project Director welcomed all participants and declared the successful completion of the third JRM for MS, an important one give the focus on recommendations for the programme in the XII FYP as also the advent of the National Mission for the Empowerment of Women. She then invited the Mission Leader, Ms. Anita Gurumurthy, to make a presentation of the key findings at the National level. This included observations regarding Sanghas & federations, expansion of MS coverage, participation in formal & non-formal education, women's empowerment & quality of life, MS leadership & visibility, programme & financial management, Technical Cooperation Fund, and recommendations regarding preparing for the XII FY Plan Period. The main recommendations made by the Mission w.r.t. the XII Plan were as follows:

1. The need is to emphasise MS as a space for innovation and protect its processual nature in the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. The programme guidelines of other Departmental activities need to highlight MS for its niche contribution to curriculum design, expertise in training etc, and avoid positioning it as a convenient and readymade infrastructure for service delivery.
2. The organic growth of the MS philosophy will be a precondition for deepening democracy and building robust civil society organisations that deliver the promise of democracy for women. The ingredients are already there, but a capability approach is needed for an intensive galvanisation.
3. The need for a strong central node empowered with authority to undertake appropriately supportive functions in the decentralisation and democratisation of power to the edges/margins.
4. At this juncture, the weaknesses of the twin legacies of the programme i.e. its hybrid identity as a government-NGO, need to be re-examined. A closer look at the programme structure within the Department, with a visible and valued positioning that frames the clarity of its non-subsidiary, equal relationship with other schemes & departments is urgently needed.
5. Both at the state and national level, immediate discussions at the highest level of re-visioning need to be undertaken. It is recommended that such a process is not limited as an internal process alone, but external experts are also included in the process.

6. Some crucial elements of these could be:
  - a) The need for higher management costs given the programme's educational essence.
  - b) Strategies to invest more in institution building at the local levels for sanghas and federations.
  - c) Expansion methodology that preserves the core value, including a revisiting of coverage looking at the merits of population-based coverage rather than village-based.
  - d) Carving a distinctive niche within a wider environment of multiple women's programmes that use the SHG method. Given that the core constituency of MS are women engaged in wage labour and also since state programmes & civil society efforts are focussed on micro-credit needs, while large NRM & agriculture programmes have not made a dent on livelihoods, it would be very timely to focus on women's right to security, ownership & control over resources, political participation and access to knowledge & technology.
7. This would imply harnessing the collective capital of the MS sanghas through special focus interventions that are pan-Indian/MS with designated staff. MS may seek convergence with at least two important national programmes in which sangha members have large stakes - mainly the MGNREGS & the Women Farmers Fund.
8. Based on the above, a note on the revised MS programme needs to be inputted into the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan approach paper. It would be instructive to think of the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP as a space to make a paradigm shift in re-imagining MS for a systemic leapfrogging in methods and for more creative budgeting towards institutionalising the MS idea.

The Mission Leader also spoke in detail about the necessity to support the development of a concrete Knowledge & Communications (K&C) Strategy for the MS programme – especially a contemporary, democratic data and information system, a larger digital architecture for MS as it were, and the training & empowerment of sahayoginis with ICT resources. This K&C strategy would then link MS at all levels – national/pan-MS, State programmes and federations.

She went on to speak about the paradoxes of resources vs. focus on expansion and decentralization vs. democratisation, in the MS programme. There is the need to increase budget allocation for the programme overall, as also especially w.r.t the question of sanghas' strength & federations' autonomy and sustainability. At present only `50-60/- is being spent, on average, on a sangha member – which implies that women could effectively run the MS programme themselves. MS has been condemned to be a 'women's programme', similar to the status of a woman in a poor household – i.e. marginalized most in allocation of resources despite immensity of workload & expectations of responsibility. However, this needs to change as by the logic of social justice, those who are poorest are the most deserving of & should be provided the most cutting edge technology/praxis.

She also emphasized the need to balance the pressure to deliver services and dilute processes for women's empowerment in the face of vested interests, with the need for MS and M-facilitated sanghas & federations to be actively involved in other programmes and Departments for visibility & greater policy influence. To place sanghas at the 'assistance' of some government programmes is problematic, she felt. Instead, a national-level study of women sangha members' households, especially the impact of their education on their daughters wherever work with adolescents is on-going. Federations can and should be encouraged to help MS reach out to more women of most vulnerable populations.

Time and resource constraints under the XI Plan are affecting the strategy and quality of processes that are now directed by the impetus placed on physical expansion along with empowerment. The programme functionaries as well as the sangha and federations that they support – all require capacity-building and re-visitation of perspectives at various levels.

Ms. Gurumurthy then threw the house open for discussion.

Ms. Prasanthi, SPD-APMSS, suggested that regional resource centres would also be useful and perhaps more so than a centralized one at the national-level.

Ms. Chandana Khan, Principal Secretary (Education), GoAP, raised the issue women's need for income-generating activity (IGA) in the context of their extreme poverty. Thus, MS should run neither as a standalone nor a parallel programme, and should instead seek to resolve/work on synergies with IGA/livelihoods/economic empowerment programmes existing for the poorest of poor women. She further suggested that a study may be conducted on the overlapping of MS-facilitated sanghas' membership with that of other groups (e.g. savings & credit/SHG groups). She reiterated that it cannot be denied that it is a good thing for poor women to be paid to work for other government programmes.

Dr. Pachouri, NPD-MS, agreed with the JRM's recommendation that MS should have and clearly needs a full-time SPD. She also suggested that perhaps States should also have some/greater ownership of the MS programme if/through provision of certain percentage of the funding for the programme. She also agreed with Ms. Khan, and shared that it appeared from the JRM's report on visit to MS Gujarat that girls have been educated but are now finding it difficult to find jobs. Where they find work, their reactionary society does not see them as good marital prospects, and many remain unmarried/alone. This warrants a look at the impact of our educational processes/educational interventions generally on women's lives.

Ms. Gita Rani Bhattacharya, SPD-AMSS, responded that MS' on-ground experience shows that the latter issue arises as a result of patriarchal modes of societal response, and that in itself does not warrant re-visiting the need for education for women. Also, it has been seen that MS' work with men & boys is effective in changing such mindsets wherein educated and earning/working women are shunned for marriage. Other SPDs also concurred with her on this.

Ms. Emma Spicer, of DFID-India, added that it would be very useful to the MS programme to have a new funding contract – and this would help DFID, too. In response to the JRM's findings & recommendations, she shared that it appears important to build a structure for the MS programme that would give voice to all of its achievements. On expansion, she stated that DFID does not want the MS programme to expand geographically necessarily. She also felt that each State MS programme should interpret and create a convergence agenda of its own. Perhaps large events to help mobilise allies for the programme would help.

Dr. Shantha Mohan, NRG member, said that while speaking of 'envisioning at a national level' for MS during the XII Plan Period, it is necessary to figure out the non-negotiables across the programme/country, & Indicators need to be spelt out. She also felt that the Government needs to make MS part of its report in the writing, rather than the other way around (i.e. write the paper/report and decide about MS without involving the programme itself).

In conclusion, D. Pachouri thanked all the Mission members, NRG members and others present for their participation and contribution, observations and recommendations.

## Section 2:

# NATIONAL REPORT

# National Report of the Third Joint Review Mission for Mahila Samakhya

7<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011

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## **1. Introduction**

The third Joint Review Mission to review the overall implementation of Mahila Samakhya (MS), a national programme of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GoI, also supported by DFID, was undertaken in February 2011.

The MS programme works with socially and economically marginalised women (SC, ST, Muslim Minority women), a majority of whom are illiterate, across ten states in India. The programme has come through different phases since its inception in 1989 and has been unique for its approach to women's empowerment. It is anchored in the notion of life-long learning, a pedagogy aligned to citizenship education for social transformation. Therefore, the educational processes of MS are based in most part on the intangibles of social investment - the catalysation of women's social empowerment and their local leadership for gender justice through the creation of collective space for reflection & action. The programme is thus ingrained in the nebulousness of gender-related transformation, a signpost that becomes central to this Review.

There is intrinsic to the MS experiment a huge diversity and the Mission, being cognizant of this, submits its analysis and its recommendations based more on a broad-sweep approach, acknowledging the limited insight we were able to get through our exposure to some parts of the programme. However, our observations also reflect the belief that going forward, the potential of the programme to go beyond its scattered (even if positive) impact and to deliver on its vision & approach is predicated very much upon more fundamental reflections about its institutionalisation. In the run-up to the process of preparation for the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, we believe that reconceptualising the programme implementation for a contemporary response would be a necessary strategic exercise. This would need to involve a mapping of the MS niche in relation to the women's empowerment ecology in India, a clear stocktaking of what needs to be done to deepen the MS philosophy and also of what cannot be ignored in terms of socio-economic realities on the ground. Addressing effectively the questions of resource outlay, leadership and management are also intrinsic to design such a strategic shift.

In order to locate the MS idea within its historical genesis, it would be instructive to go back to the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986). The NPE asserted the need for “a well conceived edge in favour of women”, envisioning education as “an agent of basic change in the status of women”, and committing that the National Education System would play a “positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women” (NPE, Part IV). The Programme of Action (1986) elaborated on women's empowerment, describing it as a collective process for building a positive self-image, developing the ability to think critically, building and fostering group cohesion & action, ensuring women's equal participation in social change and providing the wherewithal for economic independence.

In pursuance of the NPE and POA, the MS Programme was conceived in order to create a mechanism whereby “women are given an opportunity to plan and monitor their own education” (MS programme document, 1988, 1.3), which would create for them the “space and time to launch on the path of critical reflections” (1.4). Thus the overarching strategy was to create the Mahila Sangha, the “nodal point around which the programme will revolve” (1.5), as a platform that would give poor, rural women an opportunity to counter the disabling constraints of their life (1.4 and 1.6). As a programme on “education for women's equality”, the objectives of MS included creation of a system of accountability, especially to the Mahila Sanghas (2.6) and setting up of a process whereby women address themselves to their everyday problems and initiate collective action to surmount them (2.7). The programme also took inspiration from the creative work of non-government agencies for women in the field of education (2.2).

The MS Programme thus conceived of women's education as much broader than literacy, and as a process of collective, critical reflection & active self-determination to change the conditions constraining women's lives. It brings social justice and gender justice agendas together, through a focus on the empowerment of socially and economically marginalised women.

Today, Mahila Samakhya, as an innovative model that has changed the lives of millions of women finds mention in the government's reports to the UN on its progress with respect to international instruments to which India is a signatory.



Under the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, the programme objectives have been defined as follows:

- To create an environment in which education can serve the objectives of women's equality.
- To enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women, thereby enabling them to recognize their contribution to the economy as producers & workers, and thus reinforcing their need for participating in educational programmes.
- To create an environment where women can seek knowledge & information and thereby empower them to play a positive role in their own development and in the development of society.
- To set in motion circumstances for larger participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education programmes.
- To provide women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structures and an informal learning environment to create opportunities for education.
- To enable Mahila Sanghas to actively assist and monitor educational activities in the villages – including elementary schools, AE, EGS/AIE Centres and other facilities for continuing education.
- To establish a decentralized and participative mode of management, with the decision making powers devolved to the district level and to Mahila Sanghas which in turn will provide the necessary conditions for effective participation.

The purpose of the current phase of the programme, as defined under the MoU between the Government of India (GoI) and United Kingdom's Department of International Development (DFID), is to consolidate and double the size of the programme in a total of 167 districts across 11 Indian states. DFID support to the programme is to the tune of £34 Million for a 7 year period from 2007-08 to 2013-14 and approximately £5 million per year. The GoI share of the project costs in the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP is 10%. In addition to this financial aid, DFID also funds a Technical Cooperation (TC) grant of £ 1 million to be used for establishing a National Resource Centre, undertaking JRMs, evaluations, research studies and strengthening learning linkages between MS & other initiatives for gender equality.

Under the MoU, the programme has five expected outputs:

- Expansion to form an additional 21,000 *Sanghas* in 420 additional EBBs;

- Raised confidence and capacity of over six lakh sangha and federation women members
- *Mahila sanghas* playing an active role in monitoring village level educational, health, rural employment and other relevant activities;
- Greater participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education;
- Women empowered to improve the quality of life of themselves and their families.

The objectives of this Review Mission were as follows:

- Review progress in overall implementation, particularly expansion and consolidation of the programme's coverage, especially through federations' autonomy and activities;
- Look at processes (at village/sangha, block, district and State levels) being adopted to achieve the objectives of Mahila Samakhya;
- Examine issues related to State and District implementation capacity – training, staffing/vacancies, infrastructure & security, etc.;
- Review financial management;
- Review TC Fund implementation;
- Make recommendations for XII Plan Document for MS programme.

The Mission visited 4 states – Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. Members included 3 nominees from DFID and 4 from GoI. Details of the Mission composition are attached in the annexure and the state reports are also appended to this national report.

The Mission wishes to thank the many people from the MS programme – women sangha members and girls being supported by the programme, the district, state and national teams – for the time and dialogue to enable this JRM. Our visits and interactions affirmed our conviction in the power of the MS idea and approach, kindling hope not only for the future of the programme per se, but also for the goals of inclusive development for the country at large.

## **2. Programme at a Glance**

The vision of empowering women is translated programmatically in MS through

- promoting women's literacy and girls' education,
- creating awareness on women's health & reproductive health, and building alternative models of health care,
- promoting women's participation in local self-governance as elected women representatives
- supporting women's asset building, access to entitlements and to natural resources,
- building women's leadership and creating federations as platforms for solidarity and resistance
- Nurturing gender sensitive and empowered next-generation women through work with adolescent girls.
- Institutionalising innovations in gender justice through Nari Adalats

Across the states, the programme has contributed to the creation of new models and approaches that have positively impacted girls' literacy levels, school enrolment and retention; as well as prevention of early marriage.

<b>TABLE 1. Programme Status – Mahila Samakhya</b>	<b>As on 30.09.2009</b>	<b>Upto December 2010</b>
Districts Covered	103	104
Blocks	473	495
No. of Villages	31678	33577
No. of Sanghas	35835	42211
No. of Sangha members	856528	1046435
Girls passed out from MSKs	11061	11785
No. of Kishori Sanghas	9845	9994
Nari Adalats Cases	13710	16022
No. of Sangha members elected to Panchayats	14000	9195

A quick reading of the growth of MS in the past year based on the above table, suggests encouraging trends. More blocks are being covered and kishori sanghas are almost touching 10000, sanghas women are also getting into local self-governance structures. -Panchayat. For a

programme like MS, these figures indicating expansion need to be read along with the more subtle and qualitative issues.

At the district level, initiatives like collective farming, grain banks, RTI campaigns, new rituals to replace old patriarchal customs, etc. suggest that MS also retains a distinctly local character. MS has also been at the forefront of social innovations like the Nari Adalat in some states, addressing the question of gender justice in relation to many issues including domestic violence, dowry harassment etc.

While work with girls through kishori sanghas is increasing and has become an important part of MS' effort in certain states, in other states sangha support groups of men have opened the doors for public dialogue with men on common concerns and women's specific concerns.

The MS programme has developed a new mechanism of Information centres at the block level in a couple of states to meet the information and follow up needs of women seeking entitlements. These entitlements-based centres are an important step to build legitimacy for MS' work and create greater visibility with the authorities at higher levels.

Below, we discuss some core areas of concern and make recommendations.

### **3. Programme Strategies – Addressing weak links and building innovations**

Garnering resources, especially technical and financial, from other state and central programmes - for the federations - has begun but it is ad-hoc and hugely varies by village/block/state. While MS federations do serve as a conduit in some places to reach public resources earmarked for the empowerment of marginalised communities to sangha members, this is not systematised. While the mobilisation on the ground through sanghas, emphasises access to public resources and claims-making, the lack of a concerted strategy on this has meant that MS is unable to meet the demand on the ground in terms of access to entitlements. This fact needs to be seen in juxtaposition with the next sections that describe some of the expansion and resource allocation-related challenges that MS is facing currently. In some states, the wider political environment has also placed severe limitations on sangha women's claims/efforts to access entitlements.

There is also insulation from local social movements or community groups. Coupled with the fact that there is no visible, concerted strategy on the ground to influence government policy, this inability to build alliances with other organisations has meant a lost opportunity to advocate at a systemic level for women's rights.

Convergence is getting extended to mainstreaming some of the initiatives of MS (such as Nari Adalats through the State Commission for Women) in some states, but this kind of effort is very ad-hoc and not pan-MS.

The relationship with the Education Department is defined mostly through personalised equations rather than programmatic mandates, MS seems to have a subsidiary role in the mutual arrangement with the Department whereby, many times it is required to provide its human and village-level infrastructure for the extension work of the Education Department, without choice. A shift towards women's co-option in development delivery was noted, which places increased demands on the time of women and the programme.

### ***3.1 Recommendations on Programme Strategies***

- The MS experience in terms of gender sensitive perspectives, pedagogy, curriculum etc. needs to be harnessed by the Education Department through a systemic strategy, with clear translation into programmatic guidelines for all programmes of the Department. While the programme component of MS in its 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document describes in detail its structures and process – educational services, support & convergent services, monitoring etc. (page 8 to 14. section 3) - these are highly unlikely to materialise with the requisite impact unless MS' role and position within the overall education strategy to address inclusion, literacy & quality are clarified clearly. The links with the Education Department may be strengthened by some involvement of the MS governance structures, like the state Executive Committees (E.C.), where the latter can play a facilitative role.

- Given that the 'MS network' – the total number of

women members across all sanghas - is over one million, there is a tremendous potential to undertake mobilisation both at state levels over specific issues or at a pan-Indian level around core issues of social and economic marginalisation. MS is well placed to define a larger agenda of social transformation. Leveraging the experience of Nari Adalats into a campaign can be one of the first steps in this direction. The access that the programme has to reach elected women representatives across the country to build their political capabilities and clout is also another important step.

- Nari Adalats do seem to need stronger and sustained inputs given recent changes to laws as well as to orient them to the human rights framework. Resource allocation and plans for legal & financial aid to survivors will enable Nari Adalats to take on cases where women face criminal acts of violence. Since such resource allocation would come to them as service providers under the PDVAW Act, it would be useful and also enhance MS' legitimacy to have the Nari Adalats enlisted as service providers or counsellors under the PDVW Act. Such affiliations at the state level with the family court and support cell for women in police headquarters & police stations can also be explored.
  
- MS needs a clear and coherent strategy in respect of active linkages and arrangements with other government Departments:
  - Given its niche in social empowerment processes, it can leverage the existing policy and legislative frameworks at state & national levels to negotiate spaces within governance structures and processes for women's needs; For example, MS can undertake to support women's training for the job of 'mate' in MGNREGS work sites.
  - MS has been undertaking capacity building for personnel of government departments in some states; this can be further strengthened and scaled up.
  - Sanghas and federations can run information centres at block levels.
  - MS' local innovations can be mainstreamed through

the SCW.

- It is crucial that MS can influence local governance processes, and sangha members (wherever present) can be part of the important governance structures from district planning committees to village level platforms for monitoring and redressal (like the School Management Committees, Village Health and Sanitation Committees, Vigilance committees for PDS & MGNREGS, and Water committees). These committees have mandates within various acts and some decision making powers along with resources under national missions/programmes.
- Activating and capacity building of committees on the prevention of sexual harassment at schools and hostels as well as the gender audit of schools by the SMC as mandated under the RTE can be undertaken by building capacities of the sangha members to understand and address issues of equity, social inclusion, discrimination & injustice.
- There is an urgent need to revisit MS' efforts for girl child education, given the Education Department's focus on this through other schemes (NEPGEL and KGBV). MS may be able to capitalise on its own experiences through better resourced MSKs and new projects with girl children on a pilot basis. Some of these could include: setting up of federation-owned information centres at block levels that are managed by older kishoris which could also act as career guidance & skill development information cells; and 'technical' MSKs that work with new ideas for vocational training of girls, job placements & their entrepreneurship. Active exploration of possible convergences with ITIs /vocational training institutes may also be relevant. Closer linkages of kishori sanghas with women's sanghas; their involvement in campaigns, conventions and state & national level consultations to envision shift in gender relations, are some possible areas of deepening the educational work already done with girls.
- The JRM recommends a pan-Indian MS study to trace the gendered impacts of women's sangha membership at the household level. Mapping how sangha women's educational processes may be influencing next generation ideologies on gender, with

a special focus on girls, would be valuable.

- Innovations in some states like the support group of men may be useful to replicate in all states. The rallying point for such alliances is the agenda of MS sanghas to address the governance deficit and to demand institutional accountability. From gender responsive governance to enlisting support for VAW campaigns, these groups can be potentially useful in also defining women's rights as issues of public concern.

#### **4. Risks in the current expansion approach to basic principles and approaches of MS**

As noted by the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan Document, MS seeks to abide by certain inviolable principles and emphasises that “every component and activity within must create an environment for learning” (2.2, ii, Philosophy and Principles of MS). Further, it directs the programme to be shaped in such a way that women's groups at the village level “set the pace, priorities, form and content of all project activities” (see page 4, 2.2, iii). This pace is not only about what women want ( in relation to what they see as the promise of MS for transformation), but also as much about going beyond articulated needs. Here, the basic principles and philosophical frames of reference that guide the programme become as important, so that women can then set the pace. The current context requires that the programme rearticulate these frames - what is learning and what kind of autonomy in the current context.

As it is poised to move into the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan Period, MS needs to guard itself against the 'scope creep'<sup>1</sup> that the Mission noted in the programme’s current expansion and consolidation trends. The space & time for critical reflection and self-directed learning by women for leading collective action & change, is being squeezed at the sangha level. The overall resource envelope is markedly inadequate for ensuring that expansion plans go with adherence to process quality.

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**From the wikipedia** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scope\\_creep](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scope_creep)  
**Scope creep** (also called **requirement creep**) in [project management](#) refers to uncontrolled changes in a [project's scope](#). This phenomenon can occur when the scope of a project is not properly defined, documented, or controlled. As a result, the project team risks drifting away from its original purpose and scope. For our purposes in this report, it may be described as the shift away from the basic philosophical orientation of the MS programme, which is a key determinant of its specific programmatic approaches and priorities.



Broadly, it was noted that the task of expansion – given the limited resource envelope made available to states, the constraints of unfilled vacancies (the underlying reasons for which are discussed later), absence of a well resourced National Project Office to facilitate on-going capacity building of state & district teams, lack of a resource strategy to support sanghas & federations and lack of shared clarity across the levels of the programme about what consolidation means – has led to rapidly shrinking space & time for reflection at the sangha level, routinisation in sangha establishment, and undermining of the sangha as the pivotal MS concept. In a rather mundane programmatic way that is undesirable and untenable for the MS philosophy, setting up sanghas is being cast more as a step in the expansion formula to creating federations. The why and how of these spaces were not understood across the programme cogently and even if they were, the financial & managerial wherewithal (as was very evident) were incongruous with the demands of intensive and qualitative groundwork of the MS process.

The 'scope creep' was thus visible inter alia, in an absence of explicit focus and enough debate in the sanghas on the ideologies & structures of exclusion responsible for marginality. For instance, the Mission found less than 2 percent membership of Muslim women in districts where there is about 10 percent Muslim population. The Mission also observed that perhaps in response to the overwhelming sweep of the SHG phenomenon, the sangha composition was shifting in favour of more dominant social groups in some districts in one of the states visited. The focus on SC, ST and religious minorities should remain a central priority for MS in the overall social context.

The direction and nature of service delivery needs some concrete rethinking. The use of sangha women for routine programme implementation may be lending credence and bringing greater legitimacy to the sangha. But these may also, as we noted in the case of KGBV implementation, steer the energies of the programme into narrow modes of activity with the risk of assimilation into dominant institutional cultures. The Mission found an overall expectation of volunteerism from MS sanghas including for an underwriting by sangha women, in some states, of services like child care centres to be provisioned through other schemes. There was also in the programme a rhetoric of roll back and withdrawal, with strong under-currents pushing federations to register as independent entities and come up with strategies for financial

sustainability (although there are some differences across states in grant support to federations). Federations were thus resorting to service delivery not so much out of informed choice but as a means of survival. Pressures have also edged out illiterate women from the Executive Committees of federations. There is a real risk of loss of spirit for collective action.

The programme seems to thus suffer from an overall dilution of quality and depth in terms of collective learning and action, a preoccupation with plans, with little room for a responsive and nimble-footed dynamism to back sangha- and federation-led agendas. Constraints coming from bureaucratisation of the implementation process were part of the reason for this. Further, capacity-related issues – owing to unfilled positions and lack of resources & attention to organisational capacity building – have resulted in a distance from the sanghas. Training of sanghas also seems routinised and status quo-ist, with cascading approaches contributing to dilution. The absence of a rights-based approach in the training programmes also was apparent in the articulation of the issues of health, law & governance. For example, in one of the states, under the MGNREGS training, the process of demanding work as a right, social audit, vigilance and monitoring committee mechanisms available under the Act and operationalised through the newly launched complaint helpline was not a part of their training/discussions. Greater emphasis on individual entitlements, individual leadership and less on collective processes to influence institutional responsiveness were also observed.

#### ***4.1 Recommendations – Redefining Expansion***

- The programme needs to retrace and take stock as it plans for its institutionalisation in the next phase. MS was conceived as an education programme, and the POA 1988 also defined the meaning of empowerment /autonomy in relation to lifelong learning. There is thus a need to revisit the programme's core strategies to bring back sangha women's lived experiences to the centre. Sangha processes need rejuvenation to reaffirm the meaning of collective strength and empowerment. The MS programme functionaries need to acquire new perspectives and specialised skills as well as enlist support from other agencies to build internal capacities for meeting challenges on the ground, so that training does not become an end in itself. All this requires a new architecture for the programme with appropriate investments.

- The place of the sangha in leading transformative change needs to be reinstated in the overall scheme of things. Federations need to be seen from an institution building perspective, and as a lab housing & nurturing innovation and leading collective action. Both sanghas and federations need to be resourced technically and financially. Annual grants to sanghas and federations are important. Grants enable autonomous agenda setting by sangha women and give them the resources needed to be part of CSOs/networks/events in their districts/ state. The relationship MS has with federations of sanghas needs to be reconceptualised. (See Annexure 1 for a suggested framework.) The early federations were painstakingly groomed by sangha women leaders and the threat of withdrawal may compromise these valuable investments.
- Roll back should be seen as a new role for the programme vis-a-vis its sanghas and federations. However empowered, sanghas will need continued access to skills, methodologies, new information & knowledge, new contacts etc., and programmatic support to be able to preserve & build on their strength, think, plan and act collectively at a wider societal level. The focus on financial sustainability alone defeats the very purpose of the creation of federations. Ongoing resource support for federations and sanghas needs to be reimaged, including through use of more contemporary digitally-supported mechanisms. Facilitating public land/infrastructure for sangha/federation structures and other resources for federations - through programmes meant for women's livelihoods & resources - needs to be done systematically.
- There is a need to reflect on what and why of service delivery by sangha & federations. Privileging those types of services that bring creative intermediation and social leadership – running information centres, becoming service providers under the DV Act – may be options more tuned in with the MS approach. Conversely, ensuring that the child care centres run by MS are supplementing the services of ICDS, and not substituting the scheme which is a universal entitlement (especially for the priority sections that MS works with) is another issue requiring clarity.
- Sensitivity to and identification of context specific vectors of exclusion is important as MS expands. It is equally, if not more important, to keep alive a commitment at the sangha level to address the nature of & issues specific to different kinds of exclusions. Functionaries

need to have a nuanced understanding of issues so that as outreach happens, the depth of analysis is not compromised. As occasions & opportunities to anchor perspective-building arise in the work of the sanghas, these will need to be used to sharpen analysis and guide action.

- Sanghas need to be encouraged to examine/move beyond comfort zones, to grapple with issues of discrimination and to democratise access to opportunities & entitlements for the empowerment of the most marginalised women and girls. (See Annexure 2 for suggested framework to operationalise inclusion). There is an urgent need to reaffirm commitment to engage with the wider agenda of social justice, examining gender justice issues specific to SC, ST, socially & economically marginalised women, and women in remote geographic locations. The capacity of functionaries to bring nuanced perspectives and depth of analysis needs to be built towards this task. Data systems, being introduced currently, need to capture exclusions arising from caste, religion, disability, marital status etc.

## **5. Resource Strategy**

The need for a resource strategy has been felt strongly in the programme in recent years and the idea of the National Resource Centre has found mention in the past JRMs. In the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP Period it has emerged as a critical need for building capacities and providing programmatic/ideational/technical resource support to State MS programmes. The main impetus for the idea comes from the need for leveraging 'collective capital' in the MS system to aggregate the wisdom both at state & national levels and build a pan-MS sense of momentum & vibrancy. Currently, learning processes are under-resourced & ad-hoc and the leveraging of internal knowledge for sharing models & for advocacy is very limited. Further, existing methods & tools of knowledge and communications (internal and external) are anachronistic.

The quality of a programme like MS is heavily dependent on how internal learning & knowledge systems are organised and maintained towards a high level of vibrancy & reflexivity. MS' sphere of influence also depends on how it is able to leverage its knowledge in an aggregated sense for impacting change for gender justice. This imperative for being led by the needs & of the sangha women, being responsive to their interests and staying relevant, in the evolving debates on

gender justice demands internal managerial capabilities that allow a back and forth between the big picture & the myriad small pictures.

The systems at the moment severely impede MS' ability to be a credible voice in civil society action and policy processes at local, state & national levels. There is a need for a coherent response to this gap. This response will need to address internal documentation & dissemination, training & capacity-building, development of resources & methods of reach to equip functionaries to support sanghas & federations (especially since intensive and physical presence of functionaries may not be realistic as the programme expands); and long term as well as quick turn-around research agenda & active policy advocacy.

The complexity and human intensity of social projects like gender equality need institutionalised methods for knowledge & communication that are reliable and efficient. It is important to note that there are rapid changes through technology-supported methods to knowledge systems in the social development sector and these are being deployed by many NGOs with extensive grassroots presence both for greater effectiveness as well as for greater democratisation & decentralisation. India is indeed an alchemist's crucible in this regard; many organisations have combined older methods with newer ones, harnessing new technologies for greater reach and impact.

### ***5.1 Recommendations – Knowledge and Communications Strategy***

Based on the findings of this JRM and the gaps & weak links that were perceived across the states in terms of information and knowledge processes, this Mission would like to recommend that a Knowledge and Communications (K&C) strategy be adopted by the MS programme that has a clear focus and visionary direction.

We suggest that the main goal of this K&C strategy be to galvanise MS into a new level of ongoing learning and reflection for higher effectiveness.

This K&C strategy needs to address the following objectives:

- a) Enable greater vibrancy and ownership of the MS idea at all levels
- b) Catalyse greater dialogue, collaboration, critical reflection, innovation and strategic networking within MS
- c) Resource the cutting edge functions of sangha & federation building, creatively and adequately
- d) Create data and informational systems for organisational management – reporting, planning, reviewing, etc.
- e) Develop research & communications capabilities for strong advocacy and credible policy expertise.

### **Recommendations:**

- An effective knowledge and communications system can become the lifeline of MS – reflecting its daily, lived reality and creating & expanding the space for a continuous shaping in a collective manner of MS' philosophy & vision for the empowerment of marginalised women. In order to address this very urgent need in MS for a systematic knowledge and communications strategy, the JRM recommends that within the coming year, a National Resource Centre (NRC) be set up.
- At a strategic level, the NRC reflects the institutionalisation of the MS wisdom. It requires commensurate attention, positioning and resourcing from the highest levels of the administration. In order for this activity to proceed with momentum and evolve in a robust manner, it would need to be anchored by a couple of NGOs, whose philosophy is aligned with the MS vision. The TC Fund, which has already been used for various ad-hoc K&C needs, must be channelled towards this purpose.
- The NRC should be resourced and mandated to :
  1. Develop a national K&C strategy plan and roadmap, grounded in MS' philosophy and non-negotiables and dynamic & flexible enough to address the multiple, complex & evolving

demands of MS as a learning organisation working for the empowerment of the most marginalised women.

2. A scoping study needs to be commissioned immediately with a twofold objective - to do a rapid mapping of MS K&C processes and needs across the organisational levels, and to study contemporary K&C strategies of a few networks & organisations in the development sector that comprise good practices. This is important in order to bring cutting-edge practices that already exist in the spectrum of K&C approaches that leverage different methods, including use of digital technologies, so as to avoid reinventing the wheel and to make appropriate choices.

3. Put in place a pan-MS digital knowledge architecture that inculcates and promotes a horizontal & democratic knowledge culture. Such a digital platform (website, email, shared workspace, calendar etc) accessible to all functionaries, enabled multi-lingually, should facilitate information & knowledge aggregation and seamless sharing across MS. It would not subsume the local character of each state; rather it will give space to every district & state and enable a global linking at the organisational level of the wide diversity through coherent framework. Digital capabilities (both infrastructural & human) at state and district levels need to be invested in. While the enormous opportunities of digital technologies need to be harnessed extensively, the K&C strategy must facilitate connectedness and trust in the MS network, which essentially is the human dimension.

4. Designate one functionary each at state and district levels as the K&C Associate (which role needs to be scoped out), who can be trained as the pool of champions who will help build a rejuvenated culture of knowledge to strengthen debate, discussion and dissemination of experiences & insights. The K&C Associates will comprise the decentralised nodes of the new system, keeping the information & knowledge flows alive and active as also enabling their harvesting for planning & action at all levels – from sanghas and federations to the national.

5. Migration to new methods is a socio-psychological process and needs organisational conviction and investment in capacity building. Training sahayoginis in the use of new technologies is an important priority and their contribution to the K&C culture holds much

promise for system leapfrogging<sup>2</sup>.

6. The NRC would need to initiate processes for creating and maintaining a digital repository. This would involve aggregation, archiving, translation and digitisation of existing learning/training resources; the development of protocols & processes for frequent and regular online reporting; and generation and real time sharing of information & knowledge products (e-newsletters, multi-media stories) at district levels that are then ploughed back into organisational processes of reflection, planning, review, & decision making. The state and district K&C Associates will support the operationalisation of these processes and their democratisation.

7. A critical function of the NRC would be to address breakdowns and crises in internal information & communication processes arising from leadership transitions, conflicts and other turning points. A loss of vision and motivation is likely at these moments; hence the NRC would need to step in to restore and reinforce constructive processes.

8. A research and policy advocacy unit needs to be built into the NRC. Both at state and national levels, there is often a need to push for gender perspectives that are evidence-based and coming from the long experience of MS in working with marginalised women. Research capacities within MS need to move from the current need-based, ad-hoc model into a systematised & strategic model that can proactively support state and national level advocacy as well as offer expertise to policy processes at national, sub-national & global levels.

9. The NRC will need to liaise and network with key agencies – within MHRD, the National Mission for the Empowerment of Women, other departments, women's rights groups, NGOs and donor agencies - to meet MS' information & knowledge needs as well as to communicate strategically, MS' perspectives.

1. Within a 2 year time frame, the NRC should aim to have a K & C infrastructure as also a design for supporting and enabling strong & autonomous sanghas and federations to meet sangha

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<sup>2</sup> Rather than through a linear path, digitally mediated knowledge processes offer radical possibilities for change that are non-linear and thus transformative. The notion of systemic-leapfrogging is used to capture this kind of change.



women's information & knowledge needs/interests at the village and block levels through a new institutional mechanism. Federations that are ready need to take on and run such village, block & district-level information centres to provide information services (based on information collected from local authorities and from the MS digital repository) need to be identified on an urgent footing and receive on-going support from the state & district information/K&C Associates. Such a new institutional infrastructure at the grassroots to democratise public information availability and access is being experimented in many places in the country (Dhan Foundation in Tamil Nadu, Abhiyan in Gujarat, Mission Convergence in Delhi). The Right to Information legislation provides a conducive context in this regard. Proactive disclosure of public information is mandated by the RTI law. Sanghas and federations need to become the supply side mechanism ensuring that the *de jure* provisions translate into the *de facto* rights especially of marginalised women.

10. Also, a design with technical support to federations is much needed for the sustainability of MS' efforts. The role of federations as information intermediaries will be at the vanguard of mobilising and claims-making by MS sangha women for accessing their rights and entitlements. A certain portion of the TC Fund needs to be earmarked for this extremely crucial last-mile exercise. On a pilot basis, a few federations may be identified for running information centres this year and included within the NRC's K&C design and digital enablement.

11. States need separate resources to play their part in the new pan-MS knowledge and communications strategy, both to develop systems to feed into the former and to undertake planning & implementation of research and advocacy at state-level. A time-bound plan for operationalising State Resource Groups with District Resource strategies is needed. However, online, web-related investments can be maximised for impact only if there is a larger web strategy – rather than fragmented state-level web architectures.

## **6. Programme Management**

The overall programme management of MS needs a fresh orientation. Basically, for a programme of this size and scope, the organisational efficacy depends on the quality of human

resources and of processes. There are wide variances across the states in the quality, motivational levels and commitment of staff as noted by the Mission. Further, absence of systematised processes, like induction training, administration manuals, etc. reflect in a lack of the kind of standardisation that will benefit process cogency.

In terms of staff, there are two main issues – unfilled vacancies and low morale - on account of absence of appropriate remuneration, lack of tenure & social security. Despite some committed leaders across the organisational levels, these fundamental issues affect the day-to-day efficiency of the programme and the quality of its expansion.

While there are stray instances where the programme leadership in states and districts has failed in being able to uphold the integrity of office, by and large there is a commitment to the MS idea, even if some stagnation. Across the leadership, the programme's vision and methods are not perceived with the same clarity.

Fund transfer delays, it was found, impact implementation especially during the months of April-July when the programme has maximum capacity for absorption. These delays occur on account of the year-end closure of books, but the Mission was told that these are being addressed through new systems to encourage maximum utilisation till September so that during the RE exercise, a request for additional funds can be made.

Tracking the equitable inclusion, participation & leadership of marginalised women across social groups is an important priority as MS goes forward and consolidates its presence & mandate. An MIS system has been initiated for the use of a RBF and is beginning to be used by the states. The Mission noted that in the previous year, capacity building of the teams to revise and understand the results based framework through a series of workshops, followed by trainings up to the mahasangha-level in some states, had been held.

Regular data collection and use of the RRF is now being seen as useful to strengthen particular areas of the program in some states – for example, to concentrate on strengthening weak sanghas or increasing memberships of mahasanghas. Data collection, consolidation and documentation,

in themselves, are time-intensive activities which become tedious if they are not used for decision making at all levels. Data inconsistencies have been found in the states visited as there is no capacity at the district and sometimes even state-level to analyse the voluminous data. While these are rather normal for data systems, the focus in the future needs to be on using the MIS to serve the purpose of enabling decision making at local levels. The Mission felt that the existing tool may be too elaborate and at least initially, time intensive to use. However, this is something that may need to be revisited after a reasonable period of time. The Mission was also informed that the collective exercise of designing the new RF has resulted in some positive trends in actual documentation of on-going effort and impact

### ***6.1 Recommendations – Programme Management***

- A substantial increase in monthly remuneration and contracts for at least 2 years at a time that are also renewable, are needed. Lack of parity between the MS programme and others in the Education Department (w.r.t. staff compensation & benefits) is a matter of serious concern.
- Social security measures for its staff become even more vital in a women's empowerment programme. The MS programme needs to have provisions not only for maternity leave as per existing state & central government norms and for childcare support during trainings & workshops by way of payment for the accompanying caretaker's travel & logistics, but also as comparable incentives &/or allowances that contractual employees of other central sector schemes are /may be eligible for.
- Due attention to marginalised social groups is needed in the staffing pattern of MS at all levels. Vacancies in the existing teams at the level of RPs and JRPs need to be filled. For key management positions, aptitude and background of candidates in respect of MS' values is to be considered during appointments. Rotations at an informal level, after reasonable tenure periods (across states/districts as well as between districts/states & the earlier recommended state/national resource centres) if/when they are instituted, may be useful to re-infuse energies and to maintain necessary accountability at higher levels.

- Good practices in terms of HR & administrative policies need to be discussed and institutionalised. For example, flexibilities in recruitments and upward mobility of staff to higher positions with due consideration to capacity has been successfully tried out in some states.
- Formal Induction of new staff is necessary to ensure some kind of orientation to the MS philosophy and history. Staff at all levels needs to be supported for capacity and skill building, while visioning exercises are needed overall at regular intervals.
- As discussed in the previous section on resource strategy, there is a need to build the skills of the state and district teams to use the computer, internet & social networking tools. Also, given that critical information about state programmes as well as other knowledge/information is online, sahayoginis must be provided with laptops and internet connectivity. In addition to being a tool for effectively playing their role, ICTs become a resource for sangha & federation meetings and trainings. Programme investment in digitising and networking MS DIUs, sanghas & federations needs to be a well planned activity, with adequate time and resource investments.
- The MHRD/Department needs to consider an upfront transfer of 75% of the budget to the states by September. Balance 25% can be released after submission of audit report including audited Utilization Certificate, provided 60% budget utilization is achieved by then by the states.
- From the state to the DIUs, rather than multiple transfers, few & regular e-transfers may be explored. Processes for maintenance of buffer to meet expenses at least for 2 months need to be set up at the district-level. In view of the fact that a programme like MS needs to be quick on its feet to be impactful, smooth fund flows become non-negotiable. A mechanism at State level for cross-lending (for short terms not exceeding 60 days) may be explored with SSA in case of interim fund crunch.
- Streamlining processes through manuals may be useful. (The Mission was informed that one such manual is already being designed for financial management systems). These are necessary for operating procedures at state & district levels outlining clearly all details including

financial and administrative powers so that team members can operate efficiently.

- Statutory compliance at state levels needs to be monitored by the E.C. The E.C.'s role can be much more facilitative to help the programme at the state-level through quick decision making and also in requisitioning for funds without delay.
- MoUs would be desirable whenever DIUs/federations undertake longer term capacity building trainings for other state departments or programmes, and such an MoU can build into it an element of 'Institutional Fee' for the DIU/federation to retain for institutional development.
- In order to play its role as the strategic and technical apex body of the programme, the NPO needs to be much better resourced. As outlined in the previous section, the mandate and role of the NPO needs to be expanded for greater support to the states at one level, and efficient liaisioning with the Education Department & active networking with other Ministries at another, so that the programme's visibility and profile is enhanced. The NPO can also set up technical collaborations with research organisations/universities to use the programme's experience for systematic documentation & research. The stature of the NPO is critical for such facilitation especially at national, but also at state levels. The programme therefore requires a full time NPD and a good increase in its staff strength. A revamped NPO has been discussed in the previous section on resource strategy.
- The development of meaningful data systems that can track participation profiles of sangha women in order to ensure inclusion of the most marginalised would be useful. These may include data not only about caste, religion or ethnicity, but also age, physical disability, marital status etc. However, the emerging experience with the MIS suggests that a balanced approach may be needed with the collection & use of data so that overzealous tracking does not distract from the more fundamental enquiries that are much more qualitative in a decentralised and highly localised programme like MS.
- Since the work of MS does not lend itself easily to linear and simplistic tabulations for tracking outputs, there needs to be an active cognizance of hard-to-measure parameters. Thus a

balance is needed in the methods used for ongoing data management and information systems that allow for both quantitative as well as qualitative data. For example, given its influence at the level of deeper societal structures, MS' work needs to be tracked for shift in gender discourse. These shifts may be less visible in numbers but leave a mark in the local public sphere, and in the shift in local norms, practices & structures.

- The Results Framework must be read and deployed for decision making & planning always in relation to the hard-to-measure dimensions like shifts in women's own understanding & action towards gender equity, strategic shifts in the programme, shared vision across the team, quality of skills and depth of perspectives of the functionaries etc. Adequate focus on local capacity building is needed for appropriate analysis and to engage with data inconsistencies

## **7. The 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan**

The 12<sup>th</sup> FYP presents an opportunity to the Education Department/MHRD to resource and re-envision the role that the MS programme can play in inclusive, gender-just development for India in the coming years, bringing back women's own aspirations for development centred on planning from bottom up. MS is unique in that it does not meet its mandate through cash transfers or through an individual approach to entitlements, but through a pedagogic route that aims at social empowerment and structural transformation.

The need is to emphasise MS as a space for innovation and protect its processual nature in the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. The programme guidelines of other Departmental activities need to highlight MS for its niche contribution to curriculum design, expertise in training etc, and avoid positioning it as a convenient and readymade infrastructure for service delivery.

The organic growth of the MS philosophy will be a precondition for deepening democracy and building robust civil society organisations that deliver the promise of democracy for women. The ingredients are already there, but a capability approach is needed for an intensive galvanisation.

MS seems to be trapped in two paradoxes: the paradox of decentralisation and that of resource scarcity. The former signifies the need for a strong central node empowered with authority to undertake appropriately supportive functions in the decentralisation and democratisation of power to the edges/margins. The absence of such a strong centre is currently an impediment to effective decentralisation in MS. The programme's spartan allocations - £ 5.5 a year per member as per the estimate in the GoI-DFID MoU - speak of the latter paradox, where women's mobilisation in the name of empowerment is rendering more value to the economy & society rather than the other way around. The programme provides a huge social capital for the Education Department and its own resource scarcity results in viscous cycles of conservative planning, low estimations and lower achievements/fund utilisation. The monies are simply too unviable for making a dent in the lives of women.

At this juncture, the weaknesses of the twin legacies of the programme i.e. its hybrid identity as a government-NGO, need to be re-examined. A closer look at the programme structure within the Department, with a visible and valued positioning that frames the clarity of its non-subsidiary, equal relationship with other schemes & departments is urgently needed.

Both at the state and national level, immediate discussions at the highest level of re-visioning need to be undertaken. It is recommended that such a process is not limited as an internal process alone, but external experts are also included in the process.

Some crucial elements of these could be:

- The need for higher management costs given the programme's educational essence.
- Strategies to invest more in institution building at the local levels for sanghas and federations.
- Expansion methodology that preserves the core value, including a revisiting of coverage looking at the merits of population-based coverage rather than village-based.
- Carving a distinctive niche within a wider environment of multiple women's programmes that use the SHG method. Given that the core constituency of MS are women engaged in wage labour and also since state programmes & civil society efforts are focussed on micro-credit needs, while large NRM & agriculture programmes have not made a dent on livelihoods, it

would be very timely to focus on women's right to security, ownership & control over resources, political participation and access to knowledge & technology. This would imply harnessing the collective capital of the MS sanghas through special focus interventions that are pan-Indian/MS with designated staff. MS may seek convergence with at least two important national programmes in which sangha members have large stakes - mainly the MGNREGS & the Women Farmers Fund.

Based on the above, a note on the revised MS programme needs to be inputted into the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan approach paper. It would be instructive to think of the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP as a space to make a paradigm shift in re-imagining MS for a systemic leapfrogging in methods and for more creative budgeting towards institutionalising the MS idea.



## Annexure 1

### A framework to guide MS' relationship with women's federations<sup>3</sup>.

This framework, developed in the context of the JRM exercise for Gujarat can be instructive in building a suitable architecture of the programme with clear linkages between the sangha, federation and the programme.

<b>What can the federation do for MS?</b>	<b>What can MS do for the federation?</b>
Outreach: Inter and intra-village Sangha mobilization as per demand generated in the area for MS through their own network	In-depth: Concentrate on reaching out to the hitherto excluded categories of women and include them in the programme/sangha.
Orientation and Capacity building of new sangha members, assist with the induction of new recruits in MS to ideology & processes	Capacity building of Mahasangha members in management & conceptual understanding based on gender analysis of the issues raised by the Mahasangha
Gather reliable data for MS/give feedback on government programme delivery	Feed the data back to the mahasangha to plan action & take women's feedback to government programmes
Identify girls out of school or those who require support to stay in school	Provide opportunities for girls' education through MSKs/ KGBVs/vocational programmes/open universities etc
Provide support to the Sanghas to take up collective action and campaigns where action is needed at cluster/block-level	Providing networking and advocacy support to the Mahasanghas' efforts at district and state level.
Political voice for MS - Create forums and opportunities for Sanghas to interact with decision makers (executive, social leaders, PRIs at the local level)	Mainstream women's concerns in policy/programmes - Create forums and opportunities for Mahasanghas to engage with Government policies and programmes.
Mobilise community resources for MS agenda of continuing education	Mobilise financial and technical resources for Mahasanghas' core and innovative programmes.

<sup>3</sup>Submitted by JRM member Sejal Dand

## Annexure 2

### A possible framework to track and promote inclusion<sup>4</sup>

<b>Enabling inclusion</b>					
<b>To be tracked in a) Organisational structure, b) Organisational processes, c) Programme implementation, and d) Supply chain.</b>					
1	<b>Naming/Recognition</b>	Social Identities	Causes of Deprivation/inequality	Scope and Size of issue/problem	Special measures to address
2	<b>Representation</b>	<b>Formal spaces:</b> Committed for selection, functioning, monitoring,	<b>informal spaces:</b> consultations, brainstorming, casual relationships,	<b>Proportion of representation:</b> members in 'beneficiary' programmes, committees, monitoring bodies, decision making etc	<b>Nature of Representation:</b> concerns they represent, Representation from/in diverse locations - backgrounds, organisational structure etc.
3	<b>Participation</b>	Recognise the barriers in Participation	Articulation of issues	Engagement with the 'other'	Solidarity from the 'other'
4	<b>Affirmation</b>	Identity/Culture	contribution/participation	Dignity & Respect in programme designing/implementation/participation	
5	<b>Equitable Accrual</b>	Equity in Programme accrual	Building capacities of all	Inclusion	Add on effect or 'dead end'
6	<b>Policy Strengthening</b>	Access to other stake holders	Facilitate analysis and advocacy	Ability to mobilise support	Strengthen implementation, political will

<sup>4</sup>Sumbitted by JRM member Annie Namala

## Section 3:

# STATE REPORTS

(Section 3.1)

**JRM Report on Mahila Samakhya State report**

**– Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society**

**(7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2011)**

**Summary**

The Joint Review Mission (JRM) team of Annie Namala (Government of India nominee) and Supriya Pattanayak (DFID) began with participation at the briefing at the National Project Office (NPO) on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011 and followed with the visit to the state of Andhra Pradesh from **7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> February 2011**. The Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society (APMSS) state team did a briefing for the JRM on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> followed by field visits to two districts, Nizamabad and Srikakulam, meetings with senior team members from all districts, in-depth discussions with district/mandal teams and karyarthas (*sahayoginis* elsewhere in MS), discussions with federation leaders from autonomous federations and others, discussions with sangham members, visit to NPEGEL programme, and discussions with balasangams. The JRM team held two discussions with the Chairperson, EC-APMSS and Secretary (Education), GoAP, a discussion with one of the NRG members and a brief engagement with NGO partners. (The visit schedule is annexed to this report.) The team is thankful to APMSS for organizing opportunities for detailed discussions at all levels in different programmes. We thank the community leaders and children for sharing their experiences with, opinions of and aspirations from the programme. We are also thankful to the Chairperson, EC-APMSS, the NRG member and NGO partners for making time for our visit and sharing their insights into the programme.

1.1 Mahila Samakhya (MS) programme is a historical move to place women's empowerment in the context of education – hence it is linked to the Ministry of Human Resource development (MHRD) and the State Education Department, GoAP. The achievements of Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society (APMSS) - in terms of carrying the message of women's empowerment and bringing gender analysis into entitlements & services of the most marginalized women - are commendable. Over the years they have developed a systematic approach to sanghams and their federations, building confidence in women to articulate their knowledge & aspirations, engage

with authority and participate in the democratic process. The action-research undertaken by the APMSS' State Gender Resource Centre (SGRC) has informed and added value to its programmes and practice. The MS organizational structure is non-hierarchical, giving team members the voice & opportunities to act autonomously and to grow, which in turn have created greater solidarity in the team and commitment to the task.

1.2 Evolving over the past decade-and-a-half and with the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan now in the making, this is an opportunity to 're-vision' the MS context in the changed environment of social justice, inclusion and rights frame. It is also the right time to recognise the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and its relation to most marginalized women, who are the constituency of the MS programme.

1.3. The unique focus of MS on empowering the most marginalized women from SC, ST and MM communities, has - in the observation of the JRM - somewhat diluted in favour of BC & OC women in the process of engaging with the SHG movement. Despite similar population proportions of SC & ST communities across districts, the JRM found that the proportion of SC & ST membership had come down in the newer districts with the revised strategy of wada sanghams (in an attempt to align with the already formed SHGs) and issue-based committees towards building federations. The JRM also observed that there was minimal Muslim Minority membership in Sanghams in Srikakulam, though there was a larger representation in Bala Sanghams. MS needs to evolve new strategies to re-focus on SC, ST and MM women and the further marginalisations within these communities. In the growing urbanization process, there is also need to focus on the most marginalized women in urban and peri-urban areas which are being inhabited by increasingly larger proportions of marginalized communities.

1.4 While MS has invested greatly in collectivizing women, the strength of the collective has not been harnessed adequately to influence the efficiency of service delivery at large. The JRM observed that the programme has largely facilitated individual women/sanghas to access their entitlements and have not sufficiently engaged with advocacy, networking and campaigns. In the context of the state where there are existing networks and campaigns of and by the marginalized community, the programme would have earned great mileage by interfacing with these.

1.5 Considering the investment and long term engagement of MS in a particular mandal, the policy for selecting mandals for expansion should take into account larger presence of marginalized communities & lower MDG indicators even within the EBB.

1.6 The National Resource Group and the State Executive Committee have been the main support systems to MS in strategizing on various issues. It would be of benefit to bring in more consistent handholding support on specific issues to journey with MS on issues of equity, social justice and inclusion.

1.7 The MS team and other stakeholders have rightly recognized the need to invest better in documenting and disseminating their experiences and learning. This would also be a strategy to expand the vision and philosophy of MS. These in turn would create greater visibility for the tremendous work being done by MS which is the need of the hour.

## **II. 1 Expanding outreach of programme to reach more women of most marginalized groups**

### **II.1.1 APMSS' expansion in the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP Period**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Status in 2007-08</b>	<b>Status in Feb 2011</b>	<b>Changes noted</b>
1	No. of Districts	12	14	+2
2	No. of Mandals	70+1	106	+35
3	No. of villages covered	3109	4397	+1288
4	No. of sanghams	2256	4812*	+2556
5	No. of women covered	106056	171646	+65590
6	No. of SC women		72843	
7	No. of ST women		24821	
8	No. of BC women		59377	
9	No. of OC women		11469	
10	No. of Muslim Minority women		3136	
11	No. of Autonomous federations	7	26	+19
12	No. of Adult learning centres/learners	345/6951	618/16153	+273/9202
13	Women who are appearing under NOSS - Xth/Intermediate		1184/111	1184/111
14	No. of Sangham women who got elected under	1874		1874

	PRI in 2006			
15	No. of Nari Adalats/Nyaya committee members	4/273	246 (2009-10 rep)(check infor)	
16	No. of cases dealt	195	343	+148
17	Sustainable dry land programme	500 villages (pilot)	416 villages (contd.)	

A scanning of the programme implementation at present and in comparison to the 2007-08 report (to account for the current Plan period) shows extension of the project and expanded outreach in all indicators. The geographical expansion has been into two new districts - Vishakapatnam and Khammam- making a total of 14 districts, as well as extension into new mandals in existing districts, and the formation of new sanghas. Correspondingly, there has been expansion in the membership and thus, expansion of existing programme to more women. While there has been general progressive increase through the period of expansion, the Nari Adalat and NPEGEL programmes started in a small way in 2007-08 have increased substantively. It is also noteworthy that the sustainable dry land agriculture programme initiated with support from UNDP as a pilot during 2000-2005 was carried forward in 974 acres across 416 villages in 5 districts. While the number of acres per village is not much, they could be treated as pilot/models to expand the concept to others. It has also led to some awareness building on environmental issues.

II.1.2 Some new programmes were taken up during this period, significant being the engagement in the PRI electoral process where intensive capacity building programmes were planned for inputs to EWRs on their roles & responsibilities, need to improve literacy skills, need for proactive participation in Panchayat meetings and facilitating EWR networks for support, etc. This has in reality helped in increased number of elected women joining Sanghams, thereby taking the number of EWR in sanghams overall to 2522. The MS programme has focused on engagement in PRI process and the increased number of women elected to successive PRIs has been an example of this. However, there needs further thinking on making this a critical group to voice and influence PRI governance processes. Extensive voter awareness campaigns were taken up; women interested in filing nomination were supported in doing the same, followed by capacity building programmes for them. EWRs from Sanghams are also part of the Committees formed by PMEYSA (Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan). The process of promoting

elected women in the Panchayati Raj also helped in promoting women's participation in the traditional 'rai' panchayats of the tribal communities in Adilabad. The 'Gender-Just Families' action research project undertaken with the support of CARE India, A.P., was also a new initiative in 7 project districts that aimed at creation of an enabling environment for strategic shift in gender roles in mother and child care.

II.1.3 Disaggregated data about the reach and participation of the most marginalized women (SC, ST, MM) are not captured consistently across all programme aspects and at all levels. Disaggregated data in terms of membership, leadership positions, PRI members, balasangham membership, MSKs etc was available and presented in district visited (Nizamabad, Srikakulam, Vishakapatnam and Vijayanagaram). The same information however was not consolidated in the Annual Reports. It was also not reflected in the state overview. While disaggregated membership was captured in membership and sangham processes, it was not available w.r.t. programme specific coverage in terms of education, sustainable dry land agriculture programme, education etc. This made it difficult to capture the expansion of programmes in depth.

II.1.4 An additional issue in terms of expansion relates to the strategy of expansion.

a) The criteria and process of selection of mandals needs to be re-visited. Keeping the EBB mandals, it becomes important to go further in terms of additional criteria like higher population proportion of SC/ST/MM women, backwardness in human development/MDG indicators, low reach of state machinery etc. This is particularly important as the MS inputs are critical, long-term and provide an important base for women in the most EBB mandals to benefit. Here, concerns about staff security in Naxal-affected mandals, mobility etc. also emerge. It would still be important to explore creative strategies to reach the most marginalized sections and remotest locations.

b) Linked to this is the challenge of ensuring the predominance of the most marginalized sections within the project coverage. Under the new strategy to expand through existing SHGs, where the focus was not one of inclusion of the most marginalized, it was seen by the JRM that more women from the Backward Community (BC) have become members. The proportion of SC & ST women has gone down considerably. It would be critical to keep to the original goals of the project of empowerment of the most marginalized women. BCs being a very wide canvas, it is



important to do a more detailed analysis of the BC community in the district/mandal so that women from the more backward communities are identified and focused.

## **II.2. Facilitated increased information and access of women to their entitlements, through various methods of capacity building**

II.2.1 The basic philosophy of MS on education - as not merely acquiring basic literacy skills, but as a process of learning to question, critically analyse issues & problems and seeking solutions - has been internalized by all stakeholders in the programme. That women will learn at their own pace - and hence, all programmatic activities and processes will be based on respect for women's existing knowledge, experience and skills - was very evident. Empowerment of women as a precursor for the participation of women & girls in the educational process is core to the framework of operation of all staff at all levels. The centrality of all analyses through a gender lens and the aim to build solidarity among members of Sanghams are unique features of this programme.

The level of awareness of members of Sanghas and Federations on issues related to their rights and entitlements is borne out by their progressively increasing numbers in various literacy programmes and formal schooling programmes. Literacy camps (3 days to 30 days) both residential and non-residential, Learning centers, Short term MSKs (7-15 days), Residential programmes for federation committee members and special camps for elected women representatives are held for issue-based literacy, skills acquisition and convergence.

II.2.3 The Sanghas have identified five core areas along which most of the capacity building for women is undertaken. Members of Sanghas and Federations are therefore well versed in their entitlements in the areas of health, education, governance, natural resources and social issues. However, the next steps need to be strategised. MS - in being a catalyst - has probably missed an opportunity of ensuring women demand their rights and entitlements in a manner such that public service delivery is improved. Advocacy & campaign approaches and interfacing with existing networks would have given MS an added advantage.

II.2.4 Capacity of women to participate in the democratic process and get elected as representatives has been achieved, but how this achievement can be converted to greater benefits for women as a whole and for marginalised women in particular, is yet to be realised. The

observation of the JRM was that while a lot of emphasis was given to the Pre-Election Voter Awareness Campaign (PEVAC) and supporting women in being elected, there was scope to provide greater linkages for the elected women representatives with MS and other programmes and further them. The programme is yet to recognise the strength of 1874 EWRs at different layers and build synergy for influencing the PRIs towards social & gender justice, and this should be an important area of work.

Election Year	Districts	Mandals	Villages	Contested	Elected	General Seats
1995	2	6	158		63	
2001	7	32	1200		585	
2006	9	69		4278	1874	148
2001 – One all-women Panchayat formed – Mahagaon Village of Sirpur Mandal, Adilabad						
2006 – Two all-women Panchayats formed – Akunur (Karimnagar district) and Chadmal (Nizamabad district) Gram Panchayats (GPs)						

II.2.5 Our discussion with members of one Sangham at Nizamabad on the attainment of literacy skills confirmed the findings of previous JRMs on Adult Learning Centers – the efficacy of these centers is yet to be proved. Only two women of over 20 present said that they could read. The team also expressed that literacy centres by themselves are not adequate to promote women's literacy or education; rather they need other linked up processes like short term camps, open schooling systems, etc. It is interesting to note that about 2000 members have joined the open school system and are appearing for SSC & Intermediate exams. MS' experience of adult (women's) education reflected the need for providing multiple opportunities and support structures for women to educate themselves. The village centre provided space to learn as also support in the process of learning. An additional important role was to guide and provide the connection to open school system, open university systems etc. that facilitate women who are interested to move forward in their education to do the same. The decision to link these centres/women to the Saakshar Bharat programme is timely and MS' decision to engage with it is welcome. The opportunity to help shape the Saakshar Bharat programme in keeping with the long years of experience of MS with literacy would be mutually beneficial.

## II.2.6 Sangha-level Trainings

Particulars	MDK	MBNR	DHR	KNR	NZB	ADB	WRL	NLG	VZM	SKLM	PKSM	ATP	KNL	VSP	KHM	Total
No. of women trained (Sangham and Federation members)	1485	536	252	380	789	577	1699	1581	3431	2619	681	678	773			15481
Health	110	25	252	45	83	199		948	1028	1496	681	678	773			6318
Legal literacy	30	55		42	71	25	369	113								705
Gender	60	88				91	26	30		406						701
PR	1200	25		59	100		129		297	237						2047
Economic	60			46	82	32	90									310
Education	25	34		105	310		113			165						752
Leadership qualities		29		40		168										237
Natural Resources		49				62	187	490								788
Others		240		43	143				2106	315						2847

The trainings provided to Sanghams and Federations are fairly extensive and cover issues related to health, legal literacy, gender, panchayati raj, economics, education, leadership qualities, natural resources and others. In addition, training in herbal medicines, entrepreneurship, theater, communication, documentation has also been provided at village, cluster/ mandal and federation levels. Specific training has been provided to federations in proposal writing, financial management, managerial skills, convergence and networking and especially to the catering committees within those. A total of 15481 sangham and federation members have been trained during the past year. Further, a resource pool has been created from among Sangham members who have been trained to be trainers. Exposure visits have been a common form of capacity building. Every forum is perceived as a source of capacity building, reviews, reflection, analytical discussions, brainstorming, etc.

Literate women in Sanghams	37352
Sangham women appearing for higher studies	SSC – 1184, Intermediate – 111, Open

(Open Schools)	University – 24
Women in Open Schools	2010
Girls passed out from MSK's	4080
Girls appeared/ passed SSC	291/ 234

Extensive training resources have been developed internally. Existing training resources available with SCERT, Adult Education Department and NGOs are also drawn upon for capacity building at different levels.

II.2.7 The JRM observed that at times the efforts of the MS team were counter-productive. Every time a new issue came up during discussions at the Sangham level, the team believed in building their own capacities in the subject and then cascaded the knowledge to the rest of the team, when they could just as easily draw on resources already available in the form specialised institutions or organisations. Besides the training/capacity building efforts of APMSS were status quo-ist and not challenging of the existing social structures and functions. Most of the capacity building and training is done internally. Members of the State team train district teams and district teams train the levels below. There could be a greater germination of ideas if these sessions could be facilitated by external trainers. However, in so much as a resource pool has been created from among Federation members, other programmes benefit from this resource and this will contribute greatly to the sustainability of Federations.

### **II. 3. Facilitating increased participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education through sustained engagement with them (life-long learning/continued education)**

II.3.1 The trend is one of increasing demand for literacy and education, but with increasing number of children enrolled in school and the declining number of drop outs and never enrolled children, MS has to rethink its strategy in the future. Programmes such as Saakshar Bharat will also mean a declining role for adult learning centers within this and MS should proactively phase these out and integrate them with the above.

II.3.2 The State Education Department has recognised the potential role of APMSS in giving a fillip to girls' education & gender awareness and has requested the latter to undertake NPEGEL

in 3050 model clusters in their operational districts. This opportunity can be well utilized to create greater awareness on rights and social & gender justice issues in addition to information on health, nutrition, adolescence and protection against violence.

Sl. No.	Particulars	MDK	MBNR	DHR	KNR	NZB	ADB	WRL	NLG	VZM	SKLM	PKSM	ATP	KNL	VSP	KHM	Total
1	No. of MSKs	2	1		2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1			16
	No. of learners at present	66	31		69	56	41	56	38	29	27	38	29	52			532
	No. of girls mainstreamed into schools/hostels/KGBVs	26	46		31	68	22	46	33	9	25	26		48			380
2	No. of Adult Learning Centers	53	53	5	131	55	55	81	49	31	49	39	22	27			650
	No of learners	1465	1729	177	3398	2059	1295	1699	1042	572	861	1066	543	873			16779
3	No. of Bala Sanghams	83	114	5	84	90	120	192	172	201	122	37	72	95			1387
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>1639</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1418</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>5298</b>	<b>2985</b>	<b>2219</b>	<b>1526</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>1089</b>	<b>1497</b>			<b>22029</b>
	Boys	774	1225	57	813	712	930	4258	3508	1793	1085	357	747	1578			17837
	Total	1755	2864	113	2231	1675	2720	9556	6493	4012	2611	925	1836	3075			39866
4	No. of children enrolled <sup>5</sup>																
	Boys	809	290		103	198	391	823	89	213	924	33	140	567		26	4606
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>445</b>		<b>175</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>742</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>5482</b>
	Total	1721	735		278	432	793	1734	199	364	1939	129	415	1309		40	10088

A district-wise distribution of Sangha members and girl children from their families - in formal and non-formal education - is provided in the table above. In the various initiatives attempted, the number of girls mainstreamed in the last year is still very small. The figures pertaining to mainstreaming in the above table (380 out of 532) do not taken into account the number of girls mainstreamed/enrolled through other interventions like short term motivational camps, enrolment drives, etc. Short term motivational camps and MSKs with continued support from Adult Learning Centers are proving to be useful strategies to mainstream girls and women.

II.3.3 A review of the MSKs over the years (Annexure-1) reflects continuing predominance of SC & ST girls in the programme. Recognising that there are hard to reach/remote areas, gender & social barriers for girls to attend schools, and lack of facilities for elder girls in schools, MS

<sup>5</sup> Through various interventions across the year (excluding MSKs)

has the potential to provide education and skill development opportunities to girls of unreached communities and in unreached areas. In re-visiting the structure and strategies to be evolved, there is benefit in expanding the provisions under skill training and linking them to the National Skill Development Council for training and other entrepreneurial avenues.

II.3.4 The education committee within the village Sanghams visits schools and interacts with teachers on issues of student drop outs and poor performance. At the State-visit Wrap-up meeting with the Principal Secretary (Education), GoAP, we were informed that a more formal arrangement for Sangham women representatives to be members of the School Academic Monitoring Committee was also being proposed. The potential role of Bala Sanghams should also be explored in monitoring school functioning.

II.3.5 Undoubtedly the strength of MS is using a gender lens in education and therefore there has been concentrated effort to facilitate the participation of women & girls in formal and informal education. There has also been a focus on personality development which has led to increased confidence among adolescents and young women. Health and nutrition have been a focus. A new initiative in Nizamabad district is the establishment of Nutrition Centers at village and school levels to improve the nutritional levels of girls and address anemia. In addition to health and nutrition training to Bala Sangham members, the Center also provides to girls nutritious food prepared by Sangham women. Toward this each Bala Sangham member makes a voluntary contribution to build a sense of ownership and as a sustainability measure. The pre-cooked food is provided daily/weekly twice as per the needs and decisions locally articulated by the Bala Sanghams. One needs to consider the cost in the process and if any student faced difficulty in raising this from the family and thus was felt left out even unintentionally.

#### **II.4 Building leadership amongst/of poor, most marginalized women and autonomy of women's collectives**

II.4.1 The project focused on building leadership skills among marginalized women through supporting them to build their collective institutions, disseminating relevant and emerging information, and capacity building. From the negative experiences of leaders misusing leadership power vested in them and the corresponding attitude of members to not take ownership and responsibility, APMSS had taken a decision to not designate members as leaders. Thus the

process was termed ‘promoting leadership skills’ and not ‘promoting leaders’. At both sangham and federation-level a large number of women were promoted as issue-based committee members, resource group members, core group members, peer-educators etc., all of which had leadership roles. This in some ways also reflected a ‘dilemma’ that may still need further reflection in due course.

II.4.2 The Mission members used levels of engagement and roles played by different sangham members to assess their leadership building. The principles and strategies behind leadership building process in APMSS that emerged from the process were- i) the need for expanding leadership potential among large numbers of sangham women, ii) not viewing leadership abilities as rare qualities to be strengthened in a select number of women, iii) leadership building through roles and functions in the sanghams, iv) leadership building through participation in larger bodies, v) leadership building by being a resource person.

In Srikakulam District with totally 14317 sangha members, 796 were education committee members, 824 health committee, 667 Panchayati Raj, 548 social issues, 411 natural resource and 130 sustainability issue-based committee members.
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II.4.3 Six core issues were identified at the sangham/federation-level and large numbers of members were engaged as ‘issue committee members’. In Srikakulam district, visited by the JRM, it was reported that 3376 members out of the 14317 members were issue committee members.

Unfortunately the data was not disaggregated by social groups, and hence one could not assess the role played by the most marginalized women there. The JRM saw a training/discussion of the education issue committee in Laveru Mandal in Srikakulam district where the members analysed the need for upgrading the current middle school to high school level. The RTE Act was referred to and was the basis for the demand. The mandal Junior Resource Person (JRP) conducted the process. However, it must be mentioned that the level of information, analytical process and alternatives explored would vary depending on the interest of the members, skill of the facilitator and information available.

II.4.4 Obviously, women who took part in the process enhanced their information and knowledge, enhanced their skills for analysis & articulation and also benefited from the interface

they made with officials, visitors etc. Clearly the women were keen to gain more information to see how it could better their life and the opportunities for their children. At the meeting with the JRM meeting some members wanted to know about opportunities for the higher education for their children, some kept asking us to share whatever information could benefit them.

II.4.5 In Nizamabad, members were also identified as ‘resource pool members’ and ‘peer educators’ - which also provided additional roles for the sangham members to exercise their leadership functions. Socially disaggregated data was available in this district.

S. No.	Particulars	SC	ST	BC	MM	OC	Total
1	Core group members	1766	149	301	33	201	2450
2	Issue committee members	4823	3216	3952	289	757	13037
3	Resource Pool members	3284	2572	2242	52	819	8969
4	Peer Educators	150	20	35	3	2	210
5	Village level committees	228	27	104	23	49	431
6	Elected women reps. from sanghams	33	4	37	--	5	79
7	Account Holders	140	39	44	--	7	230

II.4.6 Members’ participation in other government bodies was also considered as an expression of leadership. 354 members from the sangham were reported to be members in Mother’s committees in schools, Van Samrakshana samithis, watershed committees, Lok Shiksha samithis and School monitoring committees. However, given the large membership base and the number of villages covered, this number cannot be considered significant and could have emerged through general processes. One cannot assume much from the membership as the functioning of these bodies depends very much on the government functionaries involved who by and large make these into ‘on-paper-only’ bodies and hence the need to support these representatives in their role in the committees.

II.4.7 The Nari Adalats (Nyaya committees at mandal levels) constitute another area of women building alternatives and affirming their leadership. They provide space and support for women who are called upon to address violence in their personal lives. APMSS had trained 246 women who provided legal counseling to women, took up fact finding in the cases, helped women to



negotiate with families and in a small number of cases supported them to access other formal legal mechanisms. 262 cases were received so far of which 211 had been resolved (Annual Report 2009-2010). The nature of cases showed to be predominantly family disputes and marital violence. Others were cases of rape, cheating, bigamy, dowry issues, and maintenance after separation etc. Cases of child marriage were also taken up. This certainly allowed women to bring their personal issues to a safe public space for its resolution. It expanded the relevance of the sangha and affirmed the leadership. However other inter-linked issues of discrimination, caste/communal violence were largely absent from its purview.

II.4.8 Child/early marriages being a considerably rampant phenomenon among some communities in MS' operational area, the sanghams have done commendable work in addressing it. Over the years 2514 child marriages were stopped or postponed (753 early marriages stopped and 1761 postponed to suitable age) and sangham members reported that the phenomenon has come down considerably. This is a reflection of members' understanding of negative gender practices and its impact on the women, as also their ability to address deep seated cultural practices - a reflection of the potential of the sanghams that can be directed towards a more gender-just society, once they have internalized the issue. (Annexure -2)

#### **II.4.9 Autonomous Federations:**

Sanghams have come together to form larger collectives at the mandal-level as federations. Further the process of bringing together federations at the district levels as 'mahasanghams' is also reported. Sustainability of the federations as means to ensure sustainability of the sanghams is under serious consideration in APMSS. Autonomy of a federation was conceived as a federation functioning independently as a registered body. There was clarity on the process through which sanghams can evolve into federations. There was common understanding and consensus among staff and sangham leaders about this process which was evident in discussions. It is noteworthy that 26 federations covering 979 villages were Autonomous Federations (AFs) and many of them were consolidated in the past two years. Three stages are recognized in the process of achieving/facilitating federations' autonomy – initial phase, consolidation phase and autonomy phase. At the initial and consolidation phases, APMSS staff is actively involved in

facilitating the formation & capacity building processes of the sanghams, as also building the various systems & processes. However, in the autonomous phase, there is no full-time MS staff with the federation. The district-level MS staff supports the federation in creating basic office space and infrastructure, fulfilling legal obligations, preparing project proposals, implementing

<p><b>26 Autonomous Federations</b> Medak -7 AF in 199 villages Mahabubnagar -7 AF with 259 villages Karimnagar – 7 AF with 279 villages Nizamabad – 3 F with 132 villages Adilabad - 2 AF with 110 villages</p>
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programmes etc. Discussions of the JRM with the autonomous federations showed that members were comfortable with the idea of autonomy and also confident of the support of APMSS when they needed it. They were concerned about building their own office and meeting spaces at the mandal & cluster-levels with support from APMSS. The federation leadership had the skill for & was engaged in monitoring their member sanghams and there was considerable enthusiasm in building the federation. A registered autonomous federation is equated with a registered NGO. In one case, APMSS is supporting the Makthal Utkur Mandal Federation (Mahabubnagar district) to promote sanghams in Dharur mandal. Herein, federation members are promoting sanghams and building their capacities with the objective of facilitating an autonomous federation in the latter mandal. APMSS resources the Makthal Utkur mandal federation to do this, in a way treating it as an independent entity for project implementation.

It must however be noted that the federations were not very clear or fore thinking about their financial sustainability. They did not have projections on the financial requirements of the federation, potential source of resources etc. This is an area of concern and will need much work even with the existing autonomous federations. While they have internal human resources for peer education and managing the sanghams, they will need support in extending their horizons in terms of programmes, networking and advocacy. Such a support unit needs to be planned in the process of forming autonomous federations and withdrawal by MS. There is also the need to budget for some corpus fund for federations (APMSS is providing some funds from their corpus now – Rs.1.5 lakhs per federation for building and basic infrastructure, and Rs.30,000 per sangham towards sangham/cluster kuteerams i.e. huts). The expected timeframe in which a federation can be made autonomous is 5 years (2 years initial phase, 1 year middle and 2 years final phase). 15 Autonomous Federations have built their offices at the mandal head quarters mobilizing resources from MS and others.

The decision to withdraw from the Autonomous Federations is a right strategy and creates the opportunity for these institutions to become community-based organizations. However, their independent functioning will be limited to their immediate issues with very localized scope. Hence the project needs to consider setting up of support institutions at the district/sub-district levels to continue some of the current supports provided by the project. One of the options might be for the State Gender Resource Center to play this role. The other options to be explored are to draw on resources with NGOs or to build convergences with existing programmes with a variety of available resources.

## **II.5 Facilitating women's agency to challenge social inequality/unequal social relations/and to break discriminatory social barriers/practices at individual, family, community and state levels**

II.5.1 The vision of empowering women is translated programmatically through 1) promoting women's literacy and girls' education, 2) creating awareness on women's health and reproductive health, 3) promoting elected women representatives, 4) support women in natural resource and asset building, 5) promote social and gender equity, 6) promote sustainable federations of women, and 7) create second-level of gender sensitive adolescents. The programme has raised visibility of various women's and girls' issues such as low literacy level, drop outs among girls, early marriage, reproductive health and women's body/nutrition, gender equality in families, violence against women, women's role in panchayats etc. Further the programme has also created interventions and convergence with various government departments - particularly education. Very clearly APMSS has been able to look through and analyse government programmes and services from a gender lens, analyzing the inequalities between women and men and strategizing for ways to promote equity and equality for women.

II.5.2 It is to the credit of APMSS that the above messages have been spread clearly across the organization to the sanghams. The team at all levels is conversant with the messages and their consistent engagement with the community have also cascaded this information to the communities, which was evident in the JRMs' interactions with them. The 'Nari Adalat'/Nyaya Committee programme has provided clear focus and opportunity to work on violence, more or less limited to domestic violence. Cases are referred to the sangham and the issue-based committee members come together regularly on how to address them. They have also gained

credibility with the community and the police machinery in their ability and concern to bring relief and justice to affected women. The message against child marriage has also reached the community and there is visible positive influence of the sanghas on it. There is however less analysis on caste-based violence on Dalit women and the violence & exploitation experienced by tribal or Muslim women.

II.5.3 Empowerment of the most marginalized women being the focus of the programme, the initial phase of APMSS exclusively built sanghams and federations among SC, ST and MM women. The JRM feels that the complexity of this intersectionality has not thereafter been sufficiently translated in the programme strategies and indicators that are general to all poor women, and do not now specifically reflect the identity-based exclusion and marginalization of the SC, ST and Muslim women in addition to gender disabilities. Analysis around identified issues like low literacy, child marriage, domestic violence, lack of organization, lack of assets do not take into account the historical and current forms of exclusion, stereotype and discrimination faced by them and hence also do not seek specific solutions to those contexts. Thus, there is also not a convergence with specific entitlements to these communities like scholarships, reservation, funds under TSP/SCSP or awareness about the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. While working against caste discrimination is said to be underlying in the programme strategy there was not sufficient articulation and tracking of the same in the project indicators. These gaps in the conceptual understanding and analysis on the intersectionality of gender and social exclusion need strengthening.

II.5.4 While marginalized women formed the majority of the sanghams and federations in the earlier districts, the more recently revised strategy resulted in greater presence in the programme of women from Backward Communities. This shift needs to be re-visited to ensure that the most marginalized women and their issues remain the core constituency of the programme. This is further discussed in a later section - 'Evaluating the Shift in Strategy'. Understanding of gender issues have been deepened in more recent times with additional theories of 'intersectionality and matrices of domination' –which analyse how different forms of domination differently impact the choices and opportunities of specific groups of women. This frame helps to bring greater specificity into the complex context of different groups of women - as in our context SC, ST, Muslim & BC - and develop intricate strategies to address their exclusion and discrimination,

engaging both gender and social exclusion frames. This would be essential to re-focus on the most marginalized women in the programme, and interrogate the current strategies & programmes to ensure adequate and effective engagement with them.

II.5.5 The JRM also reviewed the agency of the marginalized community women within APMSS at the staffing level as an indicator of building women’s leadership (Annexure-3). While APMSS should be commended for ensuring that women from all communities are agents of change in the organization, the presence of ST and MM women is minimal. Opportunities can also be further explored for how more women from marginalized communities can move up the ladder to positions with greater decision-making.

### II.5.6 Evaluating the Shift in Strategy

Mahila Samakhya aims at “empowering women from the most backward, marginalized and oppressed social groups through village-level collectives” (Annual Report 2007-08, pg. 9). From 2001 with state support to women forming self help groups in a big way, there was much discussion within APMSS on its own strategy of their primary focus on SC and ST women and ‘the village sangham model’. A revised strategy to work with SHGs as they were already organized into groups, albeit economic activity groups, was evolved. SHG and non-SHG members were formed into wada sanghams mostly comprising of women from homogenous social groups. Further core groups were formed at the village levels. This strategy needs some re-thinking in keeping with the initial and core objective of APMSS to ‘empower women from the most backward, marginalized and oppressed social groups’. The JRM had the opportunity to visit Nizamabad district that was organized through the initial strategy and Srikakulam district organized through the latter strategy. A comparison of the indicators between the two districts is given to analyse the membership and leadership of women from different social groups.

S.No.	Particulars	SC	ST	MM	BC	OC	Total
1	Nizamabad – Sangham Membership	6750	4773	459	5160	1276	18418
	Srikakulam – Sangham Membership	2612	78	06	10557	1064	14317
2	Nizamabad –Balasangham Members	638	415	48	428	146	1675
	Srikakulam –Balasangham Members	679	25	03	2149	156	3012
3	Nizamabad - Elected women	33	4	-	37	5	79

representatives						
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The programme in Nizamabad was started in 1997 in 3 mandals and gradually extended to 10 mandals. It covers 384 villages and has 564 sanghams. The Srikakulam programme was initiated in 2004 and covers 4 mandals with 411 sanghams. Nizamabad followed the initial strategy of focused mobilization of SC/ST communities and forming their village-level sanghams and additionally mobilizing BC and OC communities. Clearly the mobilization of the SC, ST and MM members in Nizamabad stands out in much higher proportion to BC and OC members.

The JRM explored whether this could be owing to much lower population of SC & ST members in Srikakulam and higher population of BC members. However the social group-wise disaggregated population details in the two districts are not very different:

S. No.	Districts	Total Population	SC population	ST Population
1	Nizamabad	23,45,685	170201	83135
2	Srikakulam	2537593	230000	151000

Hence the high variation can - at a first glance - be attributed to the changed strategy. It is therefore important to re-visit the strategy to ensure that the membership, participation and benefit sharing of the historically marginalized and discriminated groups like SC, STs and Muslim Minorities are not negatively affected and they do not stand to lose out in the long run. This would also undermine the core purpose of the project.

Here it is also important to refer to the mention made earlier about re-visiting the expansion strategy in terms of new districts and new mandals, which again decide the interventions.

### **II.5.7 Spreading the Philosophy and Knowledge gained through the APMSS process**

APMSS expressed concern about spreading its philosophy and also scaling up the dissemination of lessons and best practices. Currently the programme had limited reach outside the MS frame and a few government departments with whom convergence activities were carried out. The APMSS programme can take considered strategies in this regard – i) taking up a campaign approach to disseminate messages to wider audiences in order to promote greater visibility of the

identity & collective strength of the organization and its members; ii) also strategising to build partnerships with networks from marginalized communities for mutual learning and greater impact ( - This will also provide for the sangham members from the marginalized communities to also connect to larger campaigns related to their issues; iii) with its long experience and growing recognition by the state, strategising to take up capacity building activities for more government departments. ( - It has already been doing this with IKP, Health, NREGS, etc.) APMSS has also documented some of the researches and lessons that can also be more widely disseminated.

### **III. MS Institutional Issues**

Other organizational changes whose potential have not been sufficiently explored is the roles of various committees; programme, finance, construction and purchase committees that have been constituted. The Programme committee has NGO representation; it would be useful to see if these can bring understanding and networking on the issues of marginalized and with the marginalized. They could also be of benefit to enhance analysis, build sensitivity and expand the philosophy and learning, as also for convergence and networking. The membership and roles and responsibilities of these committees are well laid out and documented.

Cluster kuteerams are perceived as a space to provide an ‘identity’ to the sanghams. While the Sanghams/Federations are to negotiate with the panchayat revenue officials for land, the resources are inadequate for the construction of the kuteerams.

#### **III.2 Coverage area of Mahila Karyakartha (sahayogini):**

Originally the programme envisaged one sangham per village and the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document recommends that 250 sanghams are formed in 250 villages in each district to provide a critical mass. In the context of A.P., the active role of the state in promoting self help groups through the Indira Kranthi Pathakam (IKP) has led to a major proportion of the women in each village to be part of a sangham. APMSS has used this opportunity to deepen women’s mobilization into sanghams and the current situation is that there are even more than two sanghams in a village. The workload of promoting and strengthening more than 10 sanghams as envisaged earlier is telling on the facilitation & support processes provided by the Mahila Karyakartha (MK) to the sanghams. It is hence recommended that the earlier concept of 10 sanghams per MK/sahayogini

is taken into consideration for her work area and not 10 villages as it is currently interpreted. The concept of sanghas as the basic unit is also reflected in the RRF where it talks of expanding to cover additional 21,000 sanghas.

3 The State Office has very well established systems and processes. There are different committees to account for various functions and the delegation of powers are specified. Accounting and audit systems are in place and capacity building for every new staff member is provided. Professional development is of utmost importance to staff and some external training has been provided, through NIRD and others. However, there are no training opportunities for the SPD, which is a great limitation. The functionaries at the State and District level seem adequate though if there is a re-alignment of karyakarthis to the region, then there will be a large gap for mahila karyakarthis in the future. The State Gender Resource Center also needs to be further strengthened if it is to play a greater role in the consolidation of the programme. The patterns for Accounting staff at the State and District level are similar with two Accounts personnel each. Audits, internal and external are conducted regularly including CAG audits. Annual work plans are prepared along with budgets and put before the EC for approval following which it is sent to the NPO. In as much as a ceiling is provided by the NPO, the programme is not operating at an optimum level.

#### **III.4 Team Distribution and Availability**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Vacancies</b>
Karyakartha (sahayogini)	275	217	58
CRP	18	16	2
JRP	60	54	6
DRP	40	37	3
DPC	14	12	2
Consultant	2	2	0
SRP	3	2	1
Resource centre		Coordinator -1, Consultants -2 Attender -1	Support team -2



APD	1	1	0
SPD	1	1	0

(As per APMSS presentation to JRM on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2011)

The biggest gap in the team is at the karyakartha level, which needs to be analysed. Over the years the programme itself has been able to create leadership through sanghams, and other government and non-governmental processes have also led to active women leaders. While it was reported that norms of qualifications were relaxed to ensure the engagement of karyakarthas from marginalized communities and in difficult-to-access (remote) areas, it still is difficult to understand why there is 21% shortfall in the availability of karyakarthas which constrains the programme considerably, not reaching the programme to some of the neediest women. The vacancies at the block-level also hamper the outreach of the programme.

Vacancies in the MSKs included 5/24 teachers, 2/12 Sr. Administration assistants, 3/16 Jr. Admin. Assistants, 4/13 Accountants and the lack of Accounts Officers altogether.

III.5 A break up of the team by social categories (Annexure-3) shows that out of 470 team members, 143 belong to SC, 12 to ST, 13 to Muslim Minority, 232 to BC and 70 to OC communities. While this reflects a fairly good distribution across different communities, there is predominance of members of BC/OC communities at the critical levels. All 12 DPCs come from BC/OC communities (4+8), 27 out of 36 District Resource Persons (18+9), and 32 out of 54 junior resource persons (28+4) belong to the BC/OC communities. It would be desirable to increase the members of most marginalized communities at the JRP and DRPs' level, as the programme caters to the most marginalized communities and increased agency will increase their self-confidence. APMSS has also been a forum where women have enhanced their educational qualifications and with proven capacity been able to move forward from one level of employment to another. During discussions, there were members who narrated their stories of employment mobility, to the extent that in some districts, this had led to shortfall of staff as employment mobility was associated with transfers (shift to other districts).

### **III.6 Recruitment, Motivation and Capacities of functionaries:**

The process of recruitment also needs to be inclusive. There are comparatively fewer field-level functionaries from ST and MM communities. In order to enable this, APMSS might need to

relax some of the requirements for different positions while also spending more time and resources on capacity building. There have been several staff members who have moved to senior positions although they have had to compete with external candidates. This has been useful in retaining talent within the organization while incentivizing and motivating staff to improve performance. By and large there has been an equal number recruited from outside as within. Feedback is provided to all candidates, successful and unsuccessful. Moving to another position has usually involved transfer (shift) away from their present posting. All staff members are required to stay away from their family; they usually take a room and stay near each other at mandal headquarters. APMSS has devised some valuable norms of functioning where the karyakarthis are encouraged to stay near the cluster headquarters providing a collective space for the JRP and Karyakarthis to work and learn together. Only married women stay in their homes. There are some levels of internal transfers and promotion is always accompanied with transfers.

### **III.7 Vehicle:**

The mobility for women's teams, particularly at odd hours to the field and difficult-to-reach (remote) areas necessitates the provisions for vehicles to the team. The provision of vehicles to new districts needs to be re-introduced and provisions made to replace old vehicles. This would remove much of the tension for women's teams in the field.

## **IV. Convergence and Policy Influence**

IV.1 APMSS is not working with KGBVs in the state as it was a government policy decision to run these through the Residential School Education Society. However, some of the adolescent girls have been mainstreamed into the KGBVs. The experience of MS in the state to enroll and retain girls in elementary programmes through the innovative programme of NPEGEL has been quite effective due to which the State Government has requested APMSS to expand NPEGEL in their entire operational area, that is, across 14 districts. In Nizamabad, the JRM saw the implementation of one NPEGEL centre where a teacher had been engaged to impart various vocational skills to the girls, such as tailoring, bag-making, making stuffed toys etc. The other teachers in the school were very supportive of this programme. Nutrition education is imparted through Balasanghams formed in schools, and a supplementary diet for adolescent girls to

address anaemia especially has been introduced. In many instances the Sanghams/Federations have undertaken implementation of the MDM programme in schools.

IV.2 A study and follow-up on hysterectomy in 225 villages from 5 districts was undertaken by APMSS in October 2008-June 2009, as it was a constantly recurring theme in various interactions with Sanghams. The study has captured details of socially disaggregated data and found that the hysterectomy operations are being carried out in both SC and BC communities and there are district-level variations. The findings were shared with sanghams and other stakeholders such as government officials, health department, D/o WCD, NGOs and NRG members. This led to sensitivity building among RMPs who were often referring women to private hospitals for the procedure. The D/o W&CD took it further to give guidelines in the Arogyasri programme to prevent unnecessary hysterectomy.

IV.3 However, that there is inadequate analysis regarding the health status of the region was quite evident. It was reported to the JRM in Srikakulam district that Sangham women had greater awareness of TB and are utilizing DOTS facilities, greater understanding of environmental and personal hygiene issues and have started using bathrooms (this was a stated problem of women who had to previously bathe in the open), greater awareness of and access to reproductive health & HIV/AIDS services, - but there were no comparators. However, the effectiveness of Sangham members in ensuring that marginalized women are not discriminated by the health services was not evident. There is also little interaction of the Sanghams with the RMPs, the first level of health care providers, either as a resource or to challenge some of their practices. Discussion with an RMP in Srikakulam revealed that women were sometimes over medicated by the RMP who is not equipped to prescribe medications. It is however significant to note, as stated earlier, that 163 adolescent girls had postponed their marriage as a result of MS' and sanghams' awareness creation work.

IV.4 APMSS has in the past implemented the Sustainable Dryland Agriculture Programme - Samata Dharini, supported by UNDP, GoI & GoAP, with the objective of addressing food security at individual, household and community levels. Although the Samata Dharini programme has concluded, the lessons from this programme can be a starting point to create greater awareness on dry land agriculture in the villages and mandals covered. APMSS is also

working closely with Sanghams in the implementation of MGNREGS to ensure that muster rolls are maintained well and that timely payments are ensured for works undertaken.

## **V. Resource Support**

V.1 In the past there were several networks of NGOs and activists working on women's issues, but of late this number has dwindled. Therefore, APMSS has to explore larger forums or establish alternate platforms for engagement on various gender and social inclusion related issues. There is however a need for APMSS to not recreate the wheel but to use resources already existent - this would be mutually beneficial to all stakeholders.

V.2 The State Gender Resource Center has reinvented itself and has started taking on some action research and piloting innovative programmes which can then be taken up to scale. The SGRC has engaged in material development, documentation and some training support. It would benefit further if it is resourced better, both in human resources (staffing) and finances. The State Gender Resource Center also assists in the regular monitoring/review of the MS programme in A.P.

V.3 The National Office has been supportive to a limited extent in the past year, especially in informing and training the state office on the Revised Results Framework. The E.C. has been also been supportive, especially in approving decisions that would facilitate easy operation. The E.C. has also helped in providing advice and strategising on various issues as and when required. The APMSS would benefit immensely with the support of an Advisory Group that could provide consistent handholding.

## **VI. Financial Management**

VI.1 Fund flow from GoI is through electronic transfer and is based on the approval of the draft annual work plan by the EC. Fund flow from State to district is also through electronic transfer and is done on quarterly basis. The provision of Sangham funds and Sangham kuteeram is based on an assessment by the field team and district core team regarding the strength of sanghams, and is paid into an account opened in the name of the sangham. All the various institutions are provided with training in accounting and book-keeping prior to the transfer of funds and the accounts are regularly checked and audited.

VI.2 Audits are done internally, externally and by CAG. The State accounts team visits the District Implementation Units (DIUs) every quarter for internal audits. External audits are also conducted by an audit agency appointed with approval of the E.C. The audit reports are approved by the E.C. following which they are forwarded to the NPO and CAG.

## **VII. Good Practices and Innovations**

VII.1 An example of best practice is the Autonomous Federation as an institution toward sustainability of Sanghams, with clarity around the meaning of autonomy for all stakeholders, though there is a need to engage with the issue of financial sustainability in the long run.

VII.2 Convergence with education programmes, NPEGEL, Saakshar Bharat, and the mainstreaming of adolescents and women into formal schooling.

VII.3 Nari Adalats/Nyaya Committees as a means of addressing issues of domestic conflicts and violence, land issues, child marriage and accessing entitlements.

## **VIII. Summary of Issues and Recommendations**

1. **MS is a unique programme:** MS is a historical move to place women's empowerment in the context of education. APMSS' achievements in terms of carrying the message of women's empowerment and bringing in gender analysis into entitlements and services are commendable. Over the years they have developed a systematic approach to sanghams and their federations, building confidence in women to articulate their knowledge & aspirations, engage with authority and participate in the democratic process. The action-research undertaken by the State Gender Resource Centre (SGRC) has informed and added value to its programmes and practice. The MS organization structure is non-hierarchical, giving team-members voice and opportunities to act autonomously and grow which has created greater solidarity in the team and commitment to the task.

2. **Key Achievements:** APMSS' work in the state has created visibility for marginalized rural women in the state and the potential of building their institutions. The consistent efforts have laid the frame for building human & financial resources and sustainability into sangham federations. This in turn has led to the formation of 26 Autonomous Federations. Over the years, they have expanded their engagement with various government departments, particularly education, health, rural development and Panchayati Raj. As a result APMSS contributed to highlighting gender concerns in their interventions (MGNREGS), are implementing programmes for women and girl children (NPEGEL), policy influencing (Arogyasri policy) and is called upon by various departments to contribute to their planning. The voter awareness programme during Panchayati Raj elections and supporting women candidates to enter into electoral process also creates an opportunity to strengthen women's role in decision making. It has also been very effective in developing materials and modules on women, girl children and gender issues that have wider application. Currently working in 14 districts, it has much potential to both expand and consolidate their work in the state.
3. **Ensure women from marginalized communities form the majority at the federation levels:** Evolve new strategies to re-focus and ensure that women from the most marginalized communities, viz. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslim Minorities together constitute the majority at the federation level. This should include special focus to identify and include women who are further marginalized even within these sections. The current mandal selection criteria need to be re-visited so that Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB) are further prioritized on their higher proportion of marginalized population and lower MDG indicators. Additional costs should be allocated to reach the hard-to-reach (remote) mandals and also those that pose security threats, by providing secure travel and communication facilities to staff members and by promoting Mahila Karyakarthas (Sahayoginis) from the same region and community, by relaxing recruitment norms and ensuring additional training support to them. Creative options for programme monitoring using mobile technology etc. can also be explored. A more detailed analysis of women from backward communities should be done so that the more marginalized among them are members of the sanghams and federations.

4. **Evolve more nuanced strategies to promote empowerment of the most marginalized women:** The gender analytical framework used by APMSS should be sharpened and made more nuanced by using the framework of ‘intersectionality and matrices of domination’ that can be used to analyse the complex and multi-layered forms of exclusion and exploitation of their marginalization. The analysis should include specific causes (caste/ethnicity/religion-based exclusion, stereotype and discrimination, hard to reach areas, language barriers, and the like) of their marginalization in addition to patriarchy. In addition, the project should analyse the additional barriers girls and women from these communities have in accessing their rights and exercising their participation. Disaggregated data of membership, leadership, representation, participation in the different MS programmes, access to equitable benefits from the different MS programmes should be planned, tracked and ensured. Tracking and monitoring discrimination in education and other government services should be addressed. Special provisions and entitlements, protective legislations (SCP, TSP, educational provisions, SC/ST POA, reservations and the like) should be specifically monitored by the project to ensure their access to rights and entitlements. Efforts for personality development, confidence building etc. for women and children from these communities should have special focus.
5. **Address discrimination through inclusive activities:** MS’ access to education and other government departments can be effectively used to promote inclusive activities in schools and other service delivery programmes. Long-term longitudinal discrimination should be tracked and Inclusive activities should be planned for the same. The processes should address both individual and institutional discrimination. Institutional discrimination can be tracked through the five areas of recognition, representation, participation, benefit sharing and influencing. A matrix is provided as a possible frame for use. Individual discrimination should be addressed by ensuring sensitivity building and overcoming stereotyped attitudes & behavior through debates and dialogue. Individual and institutional efforts should be recognized and rewarded. MS would benefit from additional expert handholding to take this effort forward in a systematic way.
6. **Expand the canvas of education:** Implementation of RTE and RMSA has the potential that all children in the age group 6-14 and even 6-16 would go through schooling in a

time bound manner. In this context it is desirable that MS can expand the canvas of education to promote their access beyond schooling into skill training, vocational education, and higher/professional education. Already sangham members have begun to enquire about these opportunities for their children. In addition, the demand would also come from the balasanghams and adolescent groups. MS should make available information on institutions providing these courses, how to make their choice on subjects, procedures for admission, linking to financial institutions for the costs to be incurred, available government and other provisions etc. Efforts should be made to link this second generation to emerging market opportunities and demands. There is an encouraging trend of sangham members accessing National Open School System to complete their X and XII standards. The strategies for the same needs to be strengthened to provide them information as well as support to do so. New opportunities for the MSKs to cater to the hard-to-reach (remote) areas and most backward social groups and to link them with the National Skill Development Mission should also be explored in this context.

7. **Convergence with Education:** MS has actively explored opportunities for convergence with the State Education Department. The opportunity to engage with NPEGEL across 3050 clusters is an example of this. It is recommended that these opportunities are used to promote a strong gender & inclusion focus in the programme, expand the educational opportunities for girls and promote sustainability among autonomous federations. Other opportunities for similar engagement should also be explored keeping in mind MS' own goals and purpose. A balance should be made between taking up large scale implementation of government programmes and other priorities of MS. The efficacy of Adult Learning Centers promoted has not been proved. MS is already attempting to converge this initiative with the Saakshar Bharat programme - which could be further strengthened.
8. **Autonomous Federations:** APMSS has already facilitated 26 federations to become autonomous. This has been a fairly lengthy and thought out process, and discussions with the members of the federations showed that they have very much been part of the planning and implementation of this process. These federations have the basic capability to provide routine support to their sanghams and to ensure basic requirement of training on peer education, management and accounts maintenance. In addition they need support



in understanding new issues, information, planning their programmes, raising and managing resources, linking to state and civil society, etc. Resource units to support this process should be established at the district and state levels. Some financial provision in the form of corpus to the Federations could also be made, the modalities of whose operation could be finalized following discussions with stakeholders.

9. **Staff remuneration, security, capacity building and facilities:** The current remuneration of the MS team at all levels is low and not comparable to other functionaries of the government or market. This makes it difficult to attract and retain capable team. Those who join MS also look for alternatives once they gain experience. This impacts the programme seriously. It is recommended that the staff recommendations in this aspect (already submitted) be reviewed and appropriate remuneration be worked out at all levels in keeping with the demands of the job. In addition the JRM recommends that social security measures be built into the provisions available to the staff at all levels, which was available to them earlier. There are no capacity building opportunities for the State Project Director (SPD), who is expected to learn on the job. This is counter-productive and it is suggested that a policy on capacity building of SPDs is built in. The nature of jobs demands high levels of mobility for the team in a secure and effective manner. It is recommended that four-wheeler vehicles be provided to all new districts as was done earlier and old vehicles be replaced. The revised strategy in A.P. in interfacing with the IKP has resulted in a situation where there are more than one sangham in many villages. This is different from the scenario envisaged at the planning stage. It has led to staff members not finding adequate time with the sanghams and hence it is recommended that sangham be made the unit of staff responsibility rather than villages, i.e. that 10 sanghams be considered the area of operation rather than 10 villages.
10. **Greater visibility for MS:** APMSS has many things to its credit. However these have not been adequately highlighted to create visibility for the organization, thereby also not creating the visibility for the agenda and strategies. It is recommended that MS engages in strategizing to make its work more visible, and learns by organizing network meetings, public discussions, dissemination of studies etc. In addition to creating visibility for MS it is also a means to disseminate and share the philosophy & principles of MS and to this end MS can develop an integrated communication strategy.

**11. Better harnessing the collective strength:** While the core principle and strategy behind MS is the collective strength of women in sanghams and federations, the collective strength has been used at the individual and sangham level to access entitlements and rights and to improve service delivery. There are several anecdotal incidents of this process on the various issues. However these have not been adequately used to influence service delivery institutions and their implementation in the larger context. The number of EWRs is another example where the larger collective can be supported to create/make positive changes for the benefit of marginalized women. There could be much more focus on advocacy and policy influencing efforts with both government and non government organizations to make changes at large. Networking with the existing networks of the marginalized should be explored in this context to provide women from these communities a larger canvas. There are also some examples as in the follow up of the study on hysterectomy and NREGA in this regard. However the work and experiences of MS provides many more opportunities.

**12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan:** The MS is a unique programme of the government combining the authority and reach of the government with the creativity and commitment of the civil society. It has created a unique space for women particularly women from the most marginalized communities, and given them an opportunity to develop their own vision and strategy for empowerment. The reach of the programme at present is in the collectivization of 4812 sanghams and 26 autonomous federations in 4397 villages in 106 Mandals of 14 districts. As there are no other similar interventions to bring a gender & social inclusion focus and with the ability to interface with both government and civil society, the programme should be extended, expanded and better resourced. It is recommended that the programme is given the recognition and mandate to bring a gender, social justice and social inclusion focus into the development and rights agenda.

**Annexure -1**

<b>Socially Disaggregated Data of girls in Mahila Sikshana Kendrams across Project Districts</b>							
<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of MSKs</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>OC</b>	<b>MM</b>	<b>Total</b>
1995-96	2	34	2	10	0	0	46
1996-97	2	48	0	10	2	0	60
1997-98	1	32	0	0	0	0	32
1998-99	2	28	2	7	1	0	38
1999-2000	3	86	1	9	1	0	97
2000-01	4	126	28	36	0	9	199
2001-02	5	107	46	44	9	0	206
2002-03	9	233	57	149	8	6	453
2003-04	11	256	80	115	14	14	479
2004-05	11	210	70	122	10	10	422
2005-06	11	235	60	95	19	6	415
2006-07	13	175	69	154	7	6	411
2007-08	11	175	57	150	7	8	397
2008-09	16	274	103	105	22	4	508
2009-10	16	231	158	127	14	2	532
2010-11*	15	212	111	194	12	2	531

**Annexure -2**

<b>Details of early marriages stopped/delayed/postponed</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of early marriages stopped</b>	<b>No. of early marriages postponed/delayed</b>	<b>Total</b>
1993-94	22	38	60
1994-95	40	16	56
1995-96	20	28	48
1996-97	36	15	51
1997-98	15	21	36
1998-99	57	108	165
1999-2000	62	78	140
2000-01	67	99	166
2001-02	71	140	211
2002-03	58	47	105
2003-04	64	64	128
2004-05	61	81	142
2005-06	52	89	141
2006-07	40	135	175
2007-08	32	369	401
2008-09	27	307	334
2009-10	29	126	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>1761</b>	<b>2514</b>

**Annexure -3**

<b>APMSS Staff Details – Disaggregated</b>							
<b>SN</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>MM</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>OC</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	SPD	-	-			1	1
2	APD			1			1
3	State Resource Persons	1	0	0	1	0	2
4	Consultants	1	0	0	0	1	2
5	Accounts officer						0
6	DPCs	0	0	0	4	8	12
7	District Resource Persons	8	0	1	18	9	36
8	Junior Resource Persons	21	1	0	28	4	54
9	Cluster Resource Person	2	4	0	0	1	7
10	Mahila Karyakartha	83	5	4	106	23	221
11	Sr. Admin.	0	0	0	6	4	10
12	Jr. Admin.	1	0	0	10	2	13
13	Accountant	0	0	0	6	3	9
14	Accounts Asst.	1	0	0	13	5	19
15	Driver	2	0	4	2	0	8
16	Messengers	6	0	3	14	4	27
17	MSK – Residential teachers	9	1	0	4	0	14
18	MSK teachers	3	1	0	11	4	19
19	Cook	4	0	0	9	0	13
20	Resource Centre Coordinator	0	0	0	0	1	1
21	Resource Centre Consultants	1	0	0	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>470</b>

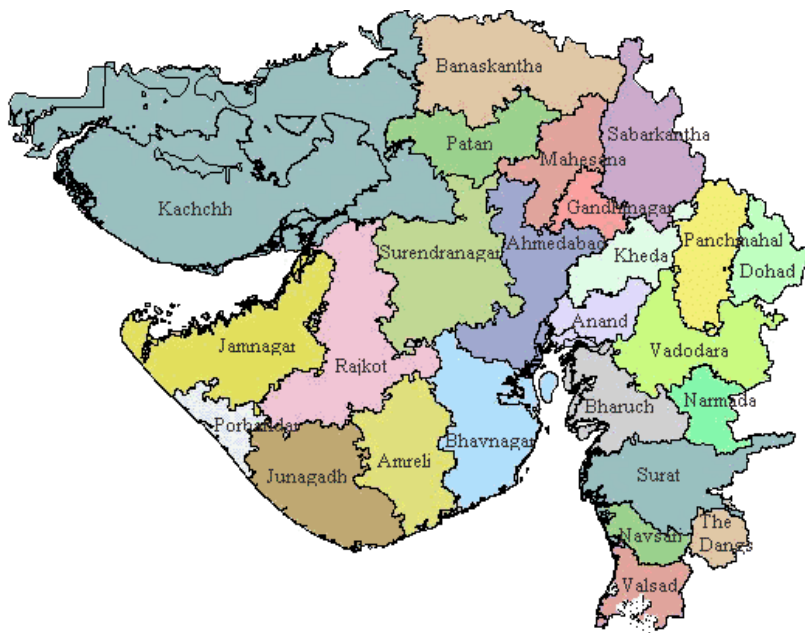
**(Section 3.2)**

Third Joint Review Mission  
Mahila Samakhya

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**7 February 2011 to 24 February 2011**

Report on Gujarat Mahila Samakhya Society



MS Districts in Gujarat : Rajkot, Surendranagar, Banaskantha, Sabarkanta, Dangs, Panchmahaals, Vadodara

The report covers a review of the progress of the programme, key achievements, challenges, opportunities and recommendations for Mahila Samakhya Gujarat.

## **Introduction:**

The GoI representative on the Third Joint Review Mission of Mahila Samakhya, Ms. Sejal Dand, visited MS Gujarat from 8th to 11th February 2011, and on 14 of February 2011 to make a presentation to the Chairman of Mahila Samakhya. Ms Anu Sareen- DFID representative - visited Gujarat on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9th February 2011.

The objective of the Mission was to review progress in the implementation of the programme with respect to the recommendations made by the previous JRM in 2009, objectives of the programme, processes, progress & institutional capacities at all levels. The purpose of the review was to be a learning mission & to discuss follow-up action with MS team whom the Mission interacted with in course of the visit. The programme review was set in the context of the current phase of the expansion and consolidation strategy of the 22 year old MS programme which seeks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as in the larger context of the forthcoming 12<sup>th</sup> Five year Plan.

The Mission member happens to be a member of the inception team of MS Gujarat programme from 1989 to 1992 and was instrumental in setting up the DIU, Vadodara. Although the programme needed no introduction to the mission members, the mission notices several changes in the programme over the course of the last two decades. Albeit such temporal changes in programme priorities and people that have take place, the overarching purpose and processes of MS remain unchanged from the time of its inception.

The Mission would like to thank the NPO/GoI for providing this opportunity to revisit and assist in strengthening the programme & the entire team of MS at the state and district level for the candid discussions. The Mission would like to thank State Programme Director Ms. Trupti Sheth, District Programme Coordinators Ms. Harsha Dave of Sabarkantha and Ms. Shanta Parmar of Panchmahaals who provided all the documents needed and accompanied the mission during the field visits.



The Mission thanks the women leaders from the Vijaynagar MahaSangha, Panam, Sakhi & Jagruti MahaSanghas of Panchmahaals district, members of the Nari Adalat and Mahiti kendras, Garmuda Sangha, Baleta Sangha & Shubhechak (men's support group) groups for sharing their experiences and journeys in course of the programme. It is, however, to the kishoris/daughters of the Sangha members that the mission met at Sangha meetings in person, the students at the MSK at Jambughoda, and particularly Rinku Rathwa, a bright student at the KGBV (Dhedhuki, Halol) who showed the mission around her school, that the mission would like to place its gratitude on record for rekindling hope not only for the future of the programme but for the goals of inclusive development for the country at large.

## I. Overview of State MS Programme:

Mahila Samakhya Gujarat was amongst the first states where the national programme was launched in 1989 starting with the three districts of Sabarkantha, Vadodara and Rajkot. Subsequently, four more districts were added in the following order - Banaskantha in 1994, Panchmahaals and Surendranagar in 1998 and Dangs in 2001. The programme has been covered in all the three JRM's in the years 2008, 2009 & 2011.

Mahila Samakhya in the state has evolved in the context of Gujarat being one of the most economically advanced states in the country, yet having low human and gender development indices. The focus of the state on improving its human development index (HDI) is by targeted efforts on the key measurement of HDI such as enrollment, retention in school, reduction in IMR's and MMR's. However, MS takes a much broader view of human development providing the most vulnerable with opportunities for learning, critical reflection and collective action. The programme reaches out to women from different educationally backward blocks belonging to socially and economically marginalised SC/ST and OBC communities<sup>6</sup>. Its outreach in the poorest belt of not only the state but within the country too has remained consistent as seen in the programme areas visited by the Mission.

This unique educational programme has provided opportunities for women's learning, mobility, information, and most importantly a positive self image which says "I can" in face of all the forces in society that tell women "you cannot". The value of this process was heard in narration after narration simply as "Now, I do not have fear" from women who had been associated with this programme for over two decades, towomen who had joined the sangha two years back, and from old experienced women leaders who had pioneered some of the alternatives being replicated across the state, to young literate women of a different generation who were the second line of leadership in the emerging MahaSanghas as Sahelis. It seemed like every woman there had felt a burden lifted from her, and they did not tire of repeating this, giving different

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<sup>6</sup> **NPO's Note:** The MS programme's outreach is also supposed to include Muslim and other minority women – and in the Gujarat State programme their overall membership in MS-facilitated sanghas is skewed.

examples of what this process had enabled her to do and be, without necessarily any major changes in her living condition or larger social environment.

The next step in MS is to enable women to form collectives for critical reflection and collective action. In Gujarat, this process is seen as providing a forum for women from these marginalised communities to negotiate collectively for access and accountability of basic human rights such as justice, food, work, water, education, health services at the community level and for realization of entitlements as an equal citizen. Today, the women have an additional support in the form of the MahaSangha forum at the block level which has several mechanisms such as Information Centres, Nari Adalats, Jasud Kendra for herbal medicine conceived as women's own alternatives to respond to their needs.

The programme is unique in the backdrop of the huge political-economic changes that the country has witnessed over the last two decades especially in the current environment of market-led development in the state, where it invests in & empowers women to question and challenge social inequities of caste & gender and to demand accountability of public resources within the geographical confines of the sangha/village.

Over the past two decades, the challenges of livelihoods for rural women have increased as have their aspirations, changing the very context of education for Sangha women. Shrinking access to natural resources like land, water and forests, new forms of violence against women, natural and man made disasters that have hit Gujarat in the last decade, food insecurity and the deficit in governance require the programme to re-equip itself to enable women to engage with the changing context. While the lack of stability in the MS Gujarat programme team and leadership may be one of the factors that affected the programme's capacity to respond to these changes, the more important factor might be the overarching lack of political will and architecture of the programme.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan presents the opportunity to resource and re-envision the role that this important programme can play in inclusive, gender-just development for India and the state in

the coming years bringing back women's own aspirations for development, central to planning from bottom up.

The Mission met with all the District Programme Coordinators, existing State Programme office team for a full day on the first day. Thereafter, visits were made to the blocks of Vijaynagar in Sabarkanta district & Jambughoda in Panchmahaals district for a day each. During these visits the mission met executive members of the federations, Nari Adalats, visited two sanghas, 1 Mahila Kutir, 1 MSK & 1 KGBV. Details of the visits are given in Annexure 1.

### **Highlights of MS in the State and districts visited**

The MS programme in Gujarat has been based amongst the socially, economically marginalised communities of SC, ST and OBC in EBB's. During the year focused efforts have paid off in increasing outreach in the existing villages & Sanghas. There is also a substantial increase in sanghas linked to Mahasanghas as seen from the data collected as per the results framework.

The capacity of the MahaSanghas to increase the outreach of the programme, strengthen Sanghas and manage their innovations such as Nari Adalats, Grain Banks, Savings and Credit Groups, Jasood Kendra continues to grow in strength. Development of the Nari Adalat toolkits & "Ugata Suraj ni Disha main" campaign material on the PDVWA, has helped the programme increase outreach, upscale the model within the state and in other MS states as well.

The programme's visibility within the state increased at the governmental/State-level with greater coordination with SSA & State Commission for Women. The capacity of the MS programmes at the district-level to engage with different departments of the government - such as Forest Department & Rural Development Department - has increased over the years, bringing in resources for the Nari Adalats and Sangha women. This has also led to the programme being invariably drawn to participate in all state-level campaigns set forth from Gandhinagar without always having the space to build in their agenda.

A similar increase was noted in the number of sangha members involved with the primary schools in their villages as members of MTA, PTA & VEC's. Referrals from the sanghas to the KGBVs and MSKs have increased bringing the enrollment in KGBV to 107% in the year 2011. All recruitment and training of teachers was completed for KGBVs, in all 910 girl children have been enrolled in the current year.

There is a clear understanding in the leadership at all levels of MS & federations of the core processes, purpose & value of formal and informal continuing educational opportunities that the programme provides to women from marginalized communities. The programme nurtures leadership at the grassroots and today has 502 sarpanches, 1065 members in panchayats from amongst Sangha members. The programme itself has benefited drawing on this pool with 3 of the 7 DPCs today being those who had joined the programme as Sahayoginis. Similar instances of Sahelis being drawn from the pool of Sangha leaders, JRPs and CRPs being drawn from the pool of the MahaSangha leaders - through open interviews - are a proof of the strength of the educational processes of the programme.

**Coverage:**

The programme reaches out to over 52,400 women directly in 2171 villages of 7 districts of Gujarat of which five districts are from the eastern tribal region of the State.

Subject	JRM-II	JRM – III Nov 2010	Increase in %
No. of district of Mahila Samakhya	7	7	0.00
No. of Blocks	39	40	2.6%
No. of villages under Mahila Samakhya	2122	2176	2.5%
No. of Sanghas	1827	2021	10.6%
No. of members in Sanghas	39969	52400	31.1 %
No. of Federations	24	28	16.7 %

No. of members in federation	18046	28399	57.4%
No of Kishori Sanghas	395	548	38.7 %
No. of members of Kishori Sanghas	6502	8556	31.6%
Mahila Shikshan Kendras	4	4	0 %
KGBV	11	11+4*	0%

**\*Sanctioned- but not yet started**

Alternative Structures promoted by MS	JRM 2	JRM 3	Changes
<b>Nari Adalat</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>31</b>	2
<b>Information Center</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	2
<b>Jasud Kendra</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	1
<b>Child Care Center</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>85</b>	6
<b>Saving Groups</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>868</b>	30
<b>No. of Seed bank</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>24</b>	-25 <sup>7</sup>
<b>Mahila Kutir</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	0

### **Major Highlights of the Programme in the districts visited:**

#### **Sabarkantha:**

Launched in 1989 in the district, the programme has a presence in 387 villages across five predominantly tribal blocks of the district, reaching out to 10378 women through 5 block-level federations and Sanghas in every village.

During the year, the programme focused on 93 sanghas/villages in the MahaSangha at the block-level through a method of grading sanghas<sup>8</sup> and concentrating on the weak ones. Sahelis and

<sup>7</sup> **NPO's Note:** The number of seed banks has decreased significantly from that of previous year. Reasons could have been illustrated please.

<sup>8</sup> **NPO's Note:** Annexing Sangha grading format and a brief description of the process adopted by GMSS, would have been useful here – to understand better whether the grading of Sanghas informs the capacity-building/training agendas of MS for Sangha/MahaSanghas?

federation members played a key role in mobilizing these sanghas through meetings & campaigns.

The programme gained visibility in the district and state through the girls at KGBV. In course of the celebration of Swarnim Gujarat in this year, a student of KGBV got the first prize at the block-level in the sports competition while another got the second prize in reading competition. At an Environment Day programme, the DFO enquired after the KGBV Delwada team performing confidently on the stage and later granted a special school nursery/plantation for the school. The DIU used this opportunity to invite the Minister of Education and the Prabhari (In-charge) minister of the district to the KGBV to acquaint them with the programme through interaction with 437 Sangha women and 40 parents of KGBV students.

The linkages with the Forest Department grew during the year bringing in ` 47400/- for health kits in RCH camps, 472 members trained for vermi-composting and bee-keeping training sanctioned in 5 villages and availing 6 saplings each for 1473 Sangha women. The programme also helped the department train women members of the joint forest management (JFM) committees in savings & credit and ensured that Sangha members were chosen on to these committees in the villages where MS had a presence.

Identification cards were issued to 44 members of the Nari Adalat <sup>9</sup>by the police department in the district to draw upon police assistance for cases, returning of Stree Dhan, and to provide security cover as women went into unfamiliar areas for follow-up of case.

The district has created support groups of men in 41 villages who support the sanghas' activities and campaigns. These men are often from the families of the Sangha members and sit in the meetings when issues pertaining to village development are taken up for discussion.

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<sup>9</sup> **NPO's Note:** This is quite a big achievement. However, not all the Nari Adalats have received same recognition. Examining the attributes of recognition to NA in Gujarat by police may help other NAs as well.

**Panchmahaals:**

Launched in 1998, the programme has a presence in 376 villages across seven blocks and reaches out to 6681 directly through 240 sanghas<sup>10</sup>, of which 131 are linked to the five block-level federations.

One new block (the only new geographical coverage in the state) Santrampur was added during the last year. Information centres have been started and function on the same days as the tribal *haats* in Ghoghamba and Morva; 2 new Nari Adalats & 1 Jasud Kendra were also initiated in the current year.

A total of 156 training programmes were conducted by the district team under the five focus areas of Mahila Samakhya Gujarat - education (30), local self governance (10), economic activities (14), health (44), legal issues (10), Sangha/MahaSangha (62).

Motivating and strengthening Sanghas, expansion in new villages that are difficult to reach, mobilizing kishori sanghas, and persuading parents to send their daughters to MSK & KGBV are all now primarily taken up by Sahelis and executive members of the Mahasanghas for the Sanghas linked to them.

The MahaSangha representatives are active and able to establish independent relationship with the block-level officials to follow up on the representations and the applications made for entitlements.

Sangha members in several villages led a campaign against alcohol, breaking pots, identifying the people brewing/selling alcohol in the village and registering cases against them with the police. The police support has been slow as expected and the women have decided to plan a major campaign in the coming year to put pressure on the administration for sustained action.

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<sup>10</sup> **NPO's Note:** The difference between number of villages and number of Sanghas is huge. It raises the question of whether it is that the members of a Sangha are drawn from more than one village.



The DPC had been able to mobilize investments for a garden and 2 computers from Aditya Birla Group for the Dinkhava KGBV and was looking for a sustained engagement with the CSR to partner in the forthcoming plans of construction of an outdoor kitchen shed, pest control at the site and additional incentives for the students.

### **Extent of Realization of Results (As per revised Results Framework)**

#### **1. Expanding outreach of the programme:**

The programme has not expanded to new districts in the current year due to constraints of funding and personnel but has concentrated on increasing outreach largely in the existing programme areas with the help of Mahasanghas. Using the results framework for data-collection provided a break-up of the sangha composition for the first time, and the results shared with the JRM are given below with the interpretation made by the Mission in the larger context of the state.

SC members in Sangha (% in Sanghas/ % of population in the state as per census 2001)	9016 (17% / 7.1%)
ST members in Sangha (% in Sanghas/% of population in the state as per census 2001)	23523 (44.9% / 14.8%)
Minority members in Sangha ((% in Sanghas/% of population in the state as per census 2001 )	956 (1.8%/ <sup>11</sup> 9.1%)
No. of members who are non-literate	26254 (50.1%)
No. of members who are neo-literate	9470 (18.25%)

<sup>11</sup> **NPO's Note:** It would have been useful to know the Mission's views on what (if any) are the particular reason/s cited by GMSS team for low participation of Muslim women in Sanghas? The share of OBC and general category women would be useful to compare in this context as well.

No. of members who have only primary educational achievement	6128 (11.7%)
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As seen from the table, the programme has a focused outreach in the SC, ST and OBC community in the state. As expected from the selection of the blocks & districts, the major focus of the programme is in tribal communities who are also its largest constituency - 44.9% of sangha members from ST community. The percentage of SC community in the state is 7.1% but the programme has 17.1% members from SC community reflecting a prioritization of including these members in the sanghas, as well as of strategically initiating the sangha in the Dalit habitations in villages from Saurashtra region where caste-based discrimination is high and Dalits still remain segregated by other castes.

However, programme outreach amongst the minority community is very poor – i.e. only 1.8% of Sangha members from Muslim minority community as against 9.1% of the population of the state from the same. In the backdrop of the intense violence against the community in the last decade in the state which has made them further vulnerable, it is important to bring in more diversity in the composition of the Sanghas.

There is no enumeration of other marginal groups such as Nomadic and Denotified tribes, or vulnerable households like single women headed households, or of disabled women who are amongst the most vulnerable within the household. For the purpose of education, it will be useful to identify and enumerate households where children are vulnerable if the adults are migrant labourers or infirm/destitute (as seen amongst the quarry workers of Panchmahaals), since they might need urgent attention and intervention.

### **Recommendations:**

- ✓ The programme should increase outreach in villages where there are larger pockets of Minority community population and make special efforts to include Muslim & Christian minorities even in the villages where there might only be a few households. The programme should also initiate work in Muslim relief colonies in Panchmahaals,

Sabarkantha & Vadodara where the community has been rehabilitated post-2002. The SPD has also identified (in the existing districts) blocks of Karjan, Modasa & Palanpur where there is a higher concentration of Muslim Minority populations, which should be included in the annual work plan for expansion.

- ✓ Discussions with Panchmahaals federations revealed that a large number of workers in the chemical industry and quarries in the region of Kalol & Halol were suffering from debilitating diseases resulting eventually in untimely deaths. Such specifically vulnerable populations should be recorded in the MIS and action taken to include the women & children in MS programmes.
- ✓ The JRM recommends that similar action be initiated for the NT-DNT communities who are also likely to live on the outskirts of villages, since many of the existing MS-covered villages will have presence of a few households. Habitations of NT-DNT may not necessarily fall in the revenue boundaries of the village but can be found with the help of their VSSM network in Gujarat.
- ✓ The MIS should be modified to capture other vulnerable categories such as disabled and single women to draw attention to these populations within the Sangha and programme.

## **2. Capacity building and trainings in the Sanghas**

**Mobility and participation:** The level of awareness of aSangha members on issues related to their rights and entitlements varied as per the observations of the JRM. A leader of the Baleta MahaSangha said, “*Fare te chare*” which literally translates as “Those who roam get to eat”. She explained that the women who participate in the meetings and take opportunities to engage with the block-level federations & government offices are more aware and know how to access

information, and to utilize that information to get their rights. But all women do not have the same opportunity due to their life cycle needs, circumstances or just their own pace of overcoming fears to move out of the home and participate in the trainings, exposure visits & at block-level forums.

**“Hands on learning”:** The most effective form of learning is learning by doing and such experiential learning is a process that Mahila Samakhya Gujarat keeps alive. This learning emerges whenever a Sangha takes up an issue collectively or a difficult case comes to the Nari Adalat when women engage with power - at the community, village or block-level. This calls for assistance from the senior programme team who rush to resolve the crisis and it is in the manner wherein which the issue is taken up that learning is enabled - by standing with the women, but letting them take the lead. This form of learning requires time and intensive engagement from experienced team members. Older staff of MS is well equipped to engage with this process, though given sufficient inputs many more of the CRPs/Sahelis/federation executive members could also be taught to handhold these processes at the aSangha level.

A large number of **training programmes** conducted<sup>12</sup> in Mahila Samakhya on four core areas of law, health, education and Panchayati Raj concentrated on providing information and awareness on these subjects. Much of the content in the training programme was of a generic nature without the rigour that would be expected to be put into a formal training programme with objectives and outcomes laid down. There was no systematic evaluation of the learning done in the trainings ostensibly because a large number of members were illiterate.

Most of these training programmes were conducted by CRPs in absence of the RPs, JRPs, although efforts are made to draw upon experienced organisations/trainers from the state. The constraint to bringing in outside training faculty was reported to be the limitations of trainer’s fees being set at Rs. 300/- per day within the district, and Rs. 1000/- per day for state-level training programmes.

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<sup>12</sup> **NPO’s Note:** It is unclear here as to which training programmes exactly are referred to herein by the Mission – i.e. those for Sangha members or those for MS functionaries. (No clarification from Mission team in time before issue of this Aide Memoire.)

<b>Trainings conducted by MS as per data maintained at State/district offices: March to November 2010</b>		
<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Trainings</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Law</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>791</b>
<b>Vocational and entrepreneur</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Government. Schemes</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>492</b>
<b>Nari Adalat</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>649</b>
<b>Literacy training</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>505</b>
<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>645</b>
<b>Panchayati Raj</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>Financial</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2121</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1911</b>

The trainings in MS do provide information but the absence of clear articulation of gender analysis and human rights framework in the content of the training does not contribute towards the goal of MS programme directly. The absence of a rights-based approach in the training programmes also was apparent in the articulation of the issues of health, law & governance as those who had attended trainings could not frame this in the context of making the information justiciable. The actions thus moved from the collective negotiation strategies to individual women availing resources as per their own strengths/access. The process therefore added little to the collective strength of the Sangha, but natural leadership qualities in individual women did flourish.

In the federation and in the Sangha, the JRM met many such women leaders who were now mobile, articulate, had increased their own access to public facilities and were able to participate in public forums with confidence. This in itself is an adequate return for the programme's investments in the area. But, the question is whether MS should be satisfied with meeting practical needs of women or is there an opportunity to meet strategic needs of women?

For example, in the Baleta mahila Sangha, over 20 women present there had worked on NREGS sites in the village which they kept referring to as “relief works”. Of these, at least 3 women had completed 100 days of work in the previous financial year, and many more expected to complete their 100 days if the “work was started” in the village. The woman sarpanch of the village herself was a very articulate and enthusiastic candidate nominated by the Sangha. The issue of delayed payment of wages in MNREGS came up during the meeting and it was learnt that these had been pending for over 3 months. During discussions, one of the active leaders of the Sangha narrated an incident with the engineer (S.O.) at the site, whom the women had confronted in the previous year when he had obliquely asked for a bribe in return for taking measurements of the work done. After this the S.O had threatened the women that they would not get their full wages and eventually on that work-site, women had just got Rs. 40/- on an average per day. When asked whether the Sangha had taken up the issue with the panchayat or knew where to take this complaint, or knew how the wages were calculated for works done under MGNREGA, the women said that they did not know of these nor were measurements ever taken in their presence. The entire process of demanding work as a right, social audit process, vigilance and monitoring committee mechanism or redressal mechanisms available under the Act and operationalised through the newly launched complaint helpline was not a part of their training/discussions on MGNREGA. These mechanisms are themselves not fully functional or responsive, but it takes pressure from below to make a shift in the accountability of state. The women showed immense interest in learning how to measure and calculate wages in the next programme and the sarpanch too assured them that she would henceforth be present on the site to monitor measurements being taken.

This example illustrates how training agendas can be built from women’s own learning needs as also the need to incorporate the rights-based approach & technical skill training along with information for it to serve a means of continuing education. But more importantly, it points to the immense opportunity for education that women in the Sanghas seek from the programme, as well as the opportunity for MS to make educational material & develop training programmes from the unique vantage point it has.

**Information centres:** The programme has developed a new mechanism of Information centres at the block level federation offices to meet the information and follow up needs of women seeking entitlements. These centres are run by MahaSangha women representatives with the assistance of the CRP. In tribal areas, the JRM was told that these centres are run on the days which are market days so that women outside the Sangha too can access the centres. Data on the centres across various districts is shown in the table, pointing to the fact that on an average each centre assisted 100 women to seek their entitlements during the course of a year.

<b>Name of district</b>	<b>No. of information center s</b>	<b>No. of beneficiaries</b>
<b>Sabarkantha</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>Banaskantha</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Vadodara</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>553</b>
<b>Dang</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Surendranagar</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>Rajkot</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>832</b>
<b>Panchmahal</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>691</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2836</b>

### **Campaigns and Events:**

An effective way of generating awareness on issues by MS Gujarat was theme based campaigns. MS Gujarat participated in various campaigns held by the government during the year – such as School enrollment campaign, Environment campaign and Krishi Rath Yatra to name a few. In such campaigns it was not always possible to set the agenda or the campaign material based on MS’ needs. In other campaigns which were designed and implemented by MS Gujarat themselves like “Ugata Suraj ni Disha main” as part of the Swarnim Gujarat celebrations with the support of the SCW - designed to disseminate information on the PWDVA act - the programme was able to effectively reach out to a large number of women to create awareness on the forms of violence against women & to share information about the Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism of Nari Adalats run by the MahaSanghas.

## Recommendations:

- ✓ The number of training programmes, workshops and activities undertaken at the district and block level should be curtailed, providing time for adequate planning, design and evaluation of the training programmes to enable concentration on a few areas with a rigorous gender analysis.
- ✓ MS Gujarat has to collate the learning from its own community of practice to be used as training material in programmes, workshops, lateral exchanges and regular forums like the federation, district and state level review meetings.
- ✓ A more systematic engagement with capacity building requires greater outlays from the programme or the Sangha funds so that Sangha women can participate and learn from other CSOs/networks/events in their districts/state.
- ✓ The JRM recommends investment in creating a pool of trainers at the district and state level from within the MS team on training and facilitation skills. In every team there also needs to be trainers who specialize in subject areas instead of each trainer doing all the trainings. Subject specialists can be anchored from within the team on a rotational basis and mentored by involving CSOs specializing in the respective areas.
- ✓ A systematic orientation training of 7-10 days at the minimum - incorporating understanding of gender and development, basic skills of communication, facilitation, group dynamics and documentation – should be mandatory for all the new staff joining the programme. This



training might be better organized by the National Office bringing in participants from different states together.

- ✓ Regular refresher trainings on gender & development and advocacy are also required for senior team members working in the field for a long time. Write-shops (writing workshops) may be useful for senior team members to work together to document their learnings with the help of University-based Women's Studies/Research Centres.
- ✓ The information centres are evolving as a potential alternative to assist women to realize their entitlements. The information centre currently runs in the federation offices, but may be better placed, effective and accessible if the centres are run at a space in the block development office. The programme may seek assistance of the EC to partner the Commissionerate of Rural Development at the state level for such services to women.

### **Facilitating increased participation of women and girls in formal and non formal education through sustained engagement with them**

#### **Adult Literacy:**

MS Gujarat has found the camp method to be the most effective tool for imparting literacy to adult women. In these camps, free from domestic responsibility, women are able to concentrate on their literacy skills and over a period of time acquire skills in the classroom which they take back home. There are no standard formats or time frame for such camps and they are held as per the needs of women. Material used for adult literacy camps was drawn from the adult literacy programme of the government. There is no material developed by the programme for neo literates which may affect the retention of newly acquired skills.

### **Participation in School monitoring:**

13437 Sangha women participated in the annual school enrollment drive undertaken by the Department of Education wherein they mobilized 1162 girl students for regular schools and whereby another 534 girls were enrolled in Alternative Schools<sup>13</sup>. 1320 girls were successful in continuing their education due to the efforts of the Sangha. A large number of women have now become MTA & PTA members, and can now be equipped to play a central role in promoting the goal of social and gender equity in schools if taken forward in a campaign mode.

	Details	JRM II	JRM III
1	Sangha Members in MTA	1543	5667
2	Sangha Members in PTA	1117	2678
3	Sangha Members in VEC	1054	2443

### **Sangha Women’s Mobilisation for KGBV and MSK and Participation in their Management**

Anand Yatra was a village-to-village campaign undertaken to spread information about the centres and identify girls who would benefit from enrolment in MSK/KGBV. The enrollment in KGBVs shot up to 107% during the year, though the enrollment in the MSK fell as many of the girls enrolled in MSK preferred to go to KGBV. KGBV now has better resources, in terms of space, teachers and nutrition than a MSK<sup>14</sup>.

### **Mahila Shikshan Kendras:**

MSKs are designed to be a one year intensive residential bridge school programme and accommodate a batch of 30 girls at one time to help them rejoin regular schools. There are 4 MSKs in Gujarat, covering 91 girls of whom 75% are from the tribal community.

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<sup>13</sup> **NPO’s Note:** It is entirely unclear which/what type of schools are referred to herein by the Mission team. (No clarification on this from team member before issue of this Aide Memoire.)

<sup>14</sup> **NPO’s Note:** These should not be seen as competing entities, as their mandate and target groups are different. MSKs are residential bridge courses for a specific duration (9-11 months, and vary from state to state); whereas KGBVs are formal/mainstream schools. Hence, also, the difference in resource allocation.

The JRM visited one MSK in the Panchmahaals district after school hours, which had 18 children enrolled of whom 16 were present on that day along with their two teachers. Delay in receiving funds during this year, led to the MSK restarting only in September, by which the programme had shifted many of the MSK girls to Ashram Shalas or KGBVs. The MSK was situated in a quiet residential locality and had three rooms which doubled up as classrooms during the day. The premises were kept clean by the children and all the girls were playing outside in the evening. The teaching and curriculum at the MSK is the one that is followed at the regular school. Efforts to link every MSK to the nearest school are required so as to enable the students to participate in the school functions/events/use other facilities of the secondary school - as the MSK itself is a small space in a rented house. There was a broad timetable set out for the day, but no lesson plans drawn up, for the children in MSK. The children of both MSK and KGBV had been given uniforms, stationery, books & sweaters from the respective programme funds of MSG and SSAM. From observations during the visit, it was clear that the District programme staff was intensively engaged with the MSK, knew where each of the girls had come from and were in touch with their parents during Sangha meetings.

It was however difficult for the short staffed programme team to bring in girls for enrollment in the MSKs. MSKs are most needed where there are first generation learners but it is this that makes enrollment and retention in MSK a challenge. The Panchmahaals team shared the problem of retaining the girls in the school as parents migrated out and took the children with them.

#### **KGBV:**

The resources available to MSKs and KGBVs vary significantly as 9 of the 11 KGBVs had their own buildings, children in the KGBV had furniture, separate classrooms, a lot of learning material, play equipment, computers etc. The KGBV at Dheduki visited by the JRM was an A type KGBV accommodating 100 students lodged in a new building made during the year and a walled compound. It also had a small garden developed with the help of a CSR programme of the Aditya Birla Group, where the girls were doing yoga under the guidance of teachers when the JRM visited in the evening. The children were shy but from the random sampling were confident and read fluently. There were a list of activities for vocational training and the material produced

during this training using locally available material was displayed in a room. It had a separate sleeping area equipped with cots, beds, linen and trunks for the girls to keep their belongings in. Two computers had been donated to the KGBV by the same company and were yet to be made operational.

The MahaSangha/federation of Jambughoda had taken up the food contract for this KGBV. Three women cooks were employed by the federation and the supplies were bought by the federation, which also looked after the accounts. The JRM sampled a meal - of *rotlas*, *dal* and a green vegetable - that the girls were to have in the evening. The meal was simple, tasty and nutritious and made to the local tastes of the girls. The women said that we cook like we do at home for our families since many of these girls are a part of our extended family of Sanghas, away from their own families.

There is no financial support available<sup>15</sup> to MS for management cost of monitoring/running KGBVs from SSA. Hence, MS staff took time - in turns - to visit the KGBV for supervision and interaction with the girls. The DPC said that running a KGBV did take up some of the time from the programme staff, and having additional staff - who could concentrate on the KGBVs and assist with building special activities for children over & above management of KGBV - would be useful, once there is more than one KGBV for supervision in the area. The SPD shared that this was a central scheme and there was already a proposal to put in the management costs for KGBVs in the next financial year.<sup>16</sup>

No data on the number of girls from KGBV<sup>17</sup> or MSK who had been mainstreamed was available in the report given to the JRM for the last year. MS Gujarat has taken up 3 additional

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<sup>15</sup> **NPO's Note:** It *is* available i.e. provided as per KGBV & NPEGEL norms, but it is obviously not being received here. Would have been best for Mission team to place on record what was learnt during its State visit as to why the prescribed monitoring/management cost is not being received from SSA. (No clarification/modification from Mission team in this regard in time before the issue of this document.)

<sup>16</sup> **NPO's Note:** Unclear as to where exactly the Mission suggests 'to put in the management costs for KGBVs in the next financial year'. Not received rewording/clarification from Mission team in this regard.

<sup>17</sup> **NPO's Note:** KGBV is a formal school. Those enrolled in KGBVs (including those who are enrolled post-MSK) are considered as part of mainstream schooling system itself. Hence, it is not technically possible to 'mainstream girls *from* the KGBV' onwards.

KGBVs and these are expected to start in the current year<sup>18</sup>. MS Gujarat has not taken up any NPEGEL programmes.

Coordination with SSA has improved over the year since the present SPD was previously with the SSA, Gujarat. A total of 158 15-day training programmes for KGBV teachers were undertaken by MS during the year and included teachers of KGBVs run by MS as well as by SSA.

### **Kishori Sanghas:**

The MS programme has put in considerable effort in mobilizing daughters - in the villages where Sanghas are active - including adolescent girls and young single women, bringing two generations of women together on one platform at the village level. There are presently 548 kishori Sanghas having a total membership of 8556 girls. During the JRM's visits to the villages, most of the kishoris met during the meetings were literate and were keenly interested in exploring options for future studies/vocation. In fact, in the Baleta Sangha, the JRM came across one XII-pass girl who had accompanied her mother on the MGNREGA work site as she could not afford to continue with her education, while the other young girl was the Sarpanch "Dikri" - a pleasant surprise since one normally comes across the locally coined term "Sarpanch pati". She is bright and articulate, had finished her PTC exams in the previous year but was unable to find a job and was looking for other courses to do in the meantime as she wanted to start contributing to the family kitty.

In this village, it was the girls who were now making it to college, and not boys - since the girls were performing better in school and the boys dropped out as soon as they failed their first attempt to clear the board exams. Having spent a couple of summers in their teen years accompanying other youngsters & elder family members on masonry jobs, the boys aspired to become skilled masons/plumbers/electricians as they apprenticed in the holidays. The boys thus

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<sup>18</sup> **NPO's Note:** Unclear as to how this is possible – given that end of current financial year was almost here at time of writing of this report. Did not receive any clarification/correction on this from Mission team in time for incorporation in this document before its issue.

got some vocational training on-the-job and became wage workers, while in the same families girls were either working on the farms or awaiting jobs as teachers/nurses.

Although it is a tribal area which has lesser restrictions on girls' mobility, the aspirations of these girls and their mothers was so different from many others in the similar milieu. Mahila Samakhya needs to explore the impact of the exposure and education that Sangha women get on the environment they provide for their children, especially daughters. Was the local team of MS able to dissect these trends clearly? Were they aware of how these choices are shaped and hence could help the women and girls reflect on what else they wanted to see in their futures?

In Garmula Sangha, the JRM again came across the kishori Sangha members in proxy. Here the girls were first generation learners, and had gone to a village nearby to attend the secondary school. Their parents were very anxious that the girls be provided with support for English teaching/learning - since the school had a (English teacher) vacancy for 2 years - and they did not know how to support their wards in learning the language that was also a compulsory subject. Amongst the Sangha having its meeting in the Mahila Kutir, was a widow who was unable to support her daughter's education and the Sangha had first tried persuaded her to admit the girl in the KGBV and then to an MSK. In the matter of education, both these villages are an exception - not the norm - in the area, though aspirations for children's education were high everywhere.

MS Gujarat had also conducted a series of training programmes for the kishoris on health & law along the patterns of the training programme for Sangha women. The JRM was unable to assess whether the contents of the programme or the methodology for the training programmes was different for these two groups. There were no specific issues/goals/visions for the kishori Sanghas articulated in the MS Gujarat documents, which has led the JRM to draw inferences for action from the limited interactions with the kishoris during the visits.

## Recommendations:

- ✓ MS Gujarat should develop a differentiated strategy for MSKs' and KGBVs' focus areas depending on the needs of specific clusters/regions/community groups - on the lines of MS Kerala, or as residential schools/camps for young illiterate women in MSK. Apart from literacy, the MSK curriculum should have essential life skills education component introduced in the curriculum.
- ✓ Some specific material on gender sensitization and visioning needs to be developed specifically for use of girls in these centres and in the kishori Sanghas.
- ✓ Management costs of running the KGBV<sup>19</sup> should be provided to MS from SSA programme to enable MS to hire competent teams to monitor and provide resource support the KGBVs.
- ✓ MS Gujarat has a special opportunity of engaging with kishoris from deprived communities. MS may consider a series of consultations/campaigns with kishori Sanghas resulting in a state and national convention of kishori Sangha representatives to enable them to participate in the process of envisioning the shifts in gender relations that this new generation of Sanghas would like to work towards.
- ✓ In the short run, MS may consider conducting career guidance camps for the members of Kishori Sanghas. In the medium term, convergence with vocational training initiatives taken by the Government of Gujarat - with PPP's - for building technical capacities, partnerships with ITI's, developing new vocational courses for girls, initiating specific studies in assessing the market needs for skills, will all meet this to bring together the formal and informal processes of education, within

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<sup>19</sup> **NPO's Note:** This provision is already there in KGBV/SSA guidelines. Why GMSS has not been provided with monitoring costs needs further exploration – detailing of which was not received from Mission team in time for incorporation in this document before its issue.

two generations of the same family. We may then be able to say that the programme has met its goals and can now move to other areas, leaving the leadership of these villages/Sanghas in their own hands.

### **Building leadership amongst poor, most marginalized women and autonomy of women's collectives:**

There are in all 28 block-level federations formed from amongst the 40 blocks that the programme has presence in, spread over six districts of the seven districts that MS has a presence in. During the year, concerted efforts have been made to increase the membership of the Sanghas in the MahaSanghas using the data that flowed in from the Results framework-based MIS.

In a note (prepared as a part of planning for the future) on the role of the federations/collectives, the MS Gujarat team states that the federations require the support of MS for the following purposes: 1. Trainings & workshops<sup>20</sup>, 2. Resource Person<sup>21</sup>, 3. Salaries for staff<sup>22</sup>, 4. Resource management, 5. To establish coordination with government programmes and departments, and 6. As a guide and counselor.

But the question that the MahaSanghas have not asked as yet - and which begs asking – is: What is it that Mahila Samakhya needs from the MahaSangha? In the past, wherever the programme has fallen short of team members or funds, it is the older Sanghas (who laid the foundation of the MahaSanghas) who have assisted the programme to not only stay afloat but continue to grow its outreach as well as impact. MahaSanghas are valued in the programme for the leaders that made it and who continue to guide & inspire many of the young team members of the programme

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<sup>20</sup> **NPO's Note:** A detailed list of the areas in which capacity-building/handholding is required for the federations/MS functionaries working with the federations, might have been useful here.

<sup>21</sup> **NPO's Note:** Not clear whether Mission is indicating that resource persons are needed for specific trainings/inputs or on continued basis as functionaries.

<sup>22</sup> **NPO's Note:** *Not clear what the Mission team is proposing here. Why do federations need MS' support for salaries for HR department? Whose/which/what HR department? It is unlikely that federations which do not have regular income streams would have structured departments to handle HR issues. Salaries for such a department appear an unrealistic proposition considering the size & nature of operations and turnover of these federations. Which projects are we indicating at? Those run by Govt., or by MS? (Did not receive clarification on this from Mission team in time for incorporation in this document before its issue.)*



towards its processes & core values. The vision of the MahaSanghas promoted by Mahila Samakhya has to be in line with goals of the programme. MS Gujarat is struggling with how to provide support to these federations for the very role that they were formed. There is a need to critically look at the institution building processes in the MahaSanghas, to enable them to play the role of supporting the Sangha initiatives with a broader look at the area. Planning is also needed to ensure that initiatives of the Sanghas collectively currently housed in the MahaSanghas - such as Nari Adalats, Information centers & Jasood Kendras, in Gujarat - are resourced adequately to compensate for women's skills & time.

The programme impact measurement, however, requires that records of these be maintained properly and the emphasis on this had led to edging out the illiterate from the executive body of the MahaSanghas. In the Vijaynagar MahaSangha for instance, although the overall membership has more than 70% women who are non-literate or neo-literate, the executive body has all literate members. Even amongst the sahelis, the skill of literacy is a non-negotiable, and not leadership or facilitation skills. The MahaSanghas in Gujarat are all registered bodies and with the constant handholding by the accounts staff of MS, CRPs have managed to get their annual accounts audited.

Going forward, the MahaSanghas may lose their essential spirit and purpose of facilitating women's collective action for gender equity, and become just another small NGO implementing/doing service delivery for various government programmes.

Withdrawal from any of the areas has not been a priority of Gujarat Mahila Samakhya and the need for continued programme support was reiterated in all federation and Sangha meetings, albeit in a different role. The alternative structures that evolved from women's needs - namely the Nari Adalats which were documented as a best practice in the last year, Jasood Kendra programme providing for indigenous medicine especially in the context of women's reproductive health problems, savings and credit groups and the Dhan golas/ grain banks – are all now managed by federations in several districts with support from the local staff<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> **NPO's Note:** Did not receive clarification from Mission team whether district/block-level MS functionaries are being referred to herein.

The alternate conceptualization is that both MS programme and MahaSangha could eventually work in partnership to further the larger goal of MS to empower women through education and to mainstream gender concerns in education and government programmes/policy. In conversation with the MahaSanghas, the JRM tried to draw out what they perceived their role to be and what they would like MS to support. Below is a table based on what the mahaSangha thought were their strengths and areas in which they seek the support of MS:

What can the federation do for MS?	What can MS do for the federation?
<b>Outreach:</b> Inter and intra village Sangha mobilization through their own network, as per demand generated in the area for MS	<b>In-depth:</b> Concentrate on reaching out to the hitherto excluded categories of women and include them in the programme/Sangha
Orientation and <b>Capacity building of new Sangha members</b> , assist with the <b>induction of new recruits in MS</b> to ideology and processes	<b>Capacity building of Mahasangha members</b> in management & conceptual understanding based on gender analysis of the issues raised by the MahaSangha
Gather <b>reliable data for MS</b> / give feedback on government programme delivery	Feed the data back to the <b>mahaSangha to plan</b> action & take women's feedback to government programmes
<b>Identify girls out of school</b> or those who require support to stay in school	Provide <b>opportunities for girls' education</b> through MSKs/KGBVs/other vocational programmes/open universities etc.
Provide support to the Sanghas to take up <b>collective action</b> and campaigns where action is needed at cluster/block level	Provide <b>networking and advocacy support</b> to the MahaSanghas' efforts at district and state level
<b>Political voice for MS</b> - Create forums and opportunities for Sanghas to interact with decision makers i.e. executive, social leaders, and PRIs at the local level	<b>Mainstream women's concerns in policy/programmes</b> - Create forums and opportunities for MahaSanghas to engage with governmental policies and programmes
Mobilise <b>community resources</b> for MS	Mobilise <b>financial and technical resources</b> for

agenda of continuing education	MahaSanghas' core programmes and innovative programmes
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There have been no Mahila Kutirs built in the current phase of MS, and overall 24 (approximately 0.01%) Mahila Kutirs have been constructed. This is mainly due to constraints of inadequate resource support of Rs. 30,000/- earmarked in the programme. However, MahaSanghas and Sanghas are very interested in and have taken a lot of initiative for building their own space at the village and block level. This activity, if taken on in a campaign mode, can be an important educational tool for women's resource rights, increased visibility of the MS work and would also be a step towards Sangha/MahaSangha autonomy.

### **Recommendations:**

- ✓ There is an urgent need to reflect on the role of the MahaSangha vis-a-vis the MS programme and questions of the former's autonomy. The focus on financial sustainability alone defeats the very purpose for its existence. The role of MS has to change in places where the federations are active. This can only happen when the federations are provided space for collective planning & reflection and adequate technical & financial resources to plan independently.
- ✓ MS should partner the existing resources in the state such as Women's Study Resource Centres & feminist scholars, and draw upon the National Resource Group (NRG) of MS to reflect with the team on the challenges for gender equity in this changed context.
- ✓ The mission recommends that the EC facilitate & expedite public land/infrastructure being made available for the Mahila Kutirs at village level and MahaSangha offices at the block level. The MS money is inadequate at current prices, but may be considered as

committed seed support for Mahila Kutirs.<sup>24</sup> Convergence should be established with other programmes for women's resource rights/ livelihood support to supplement the funds available for Mahila Kutirs apart from the Sanghas/Mahasanghas mobilizing community support.

- ✓ Garnering resources - especially technical and financial (funds) - from other state programmes for the federations/Mahasanghas has begun, but is unable to meet the demand on the ground to support and expand to newer areas the best practices evolved over years in the programme.

MS must mainstream the innovations of the MahaSangha - like information centres and Jasood Kendra - like it has done with Nari Adalats, drawing support from the SCW.

- ✓ Lack of resources for the MahaSangha is leading to it being a service delivery mechanism for survival. The threat of withdrawal from the areas where MahaSanghas are strong, without creating institutional support, might destroy what has been painstakingly built and accomplished after years of investment. Greater resource support for federations from MS has been recommended by all previous JRMs - which is necessary but not sufficient. In the interim, the EC of MS Gujarat may consider taking the lead to assist the federations garner resources for their programmes from other state programmes<sup>25</sup> by issuing the necessary directives/requests/incorporating the resources required.
- ✓ Reconceptualise the role of MS vis-a-vis the federation as an equal partnership where both have complementary roles to play. To begin with, initiate involvement of federations in the education department programmes for community mobilization, outreach for the vulnerable populations and community monitoring initiatives.

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<sup>24</sup> **NPO's Note:** *Greater clarity for readers is required, as to what is meant here – esp. as there is provision for other funds to the Sangha and Mahasangha from MS (grant-to-NGO for Mahasanghas, and Sangha fund of Rs. 6000/- p.a. for 3 years, as also funds for procuring dhurries, musical instruments, stationery etc.). No rewording/clarification was received in time in this regard from Mission team.*

<sup>25</sup> **NPO's Note:** Would have been useful to have been given examples here of which programmes/schemes, so as to enable more concrete action.

Subsequently, the MS programme in Gujarat developed another survey to build a data bank of the Sangha women. Each of the district teams chose to administer these forms in varying degrees depending on the availability of human resources, with the ones in Rajkot taking on 100% of the Sanghas, while the MahaSanghas in Panchmahaals chose 10 Sanghas each. The survey was an intensive exercise and in the first round, data from 1121 Sanghas of the 2021 Sanghas was collected by January 2011. The data bank is expected to be completed by next year; though there was no clear plan as to how exactly the data is to be used - since it has more details than the data collected for the baseline using the Results Framework<sup>26</sup>. Data compilation is to be done at the state level.

### **Women's agency to challenge social inequality**

In Gujarat, the MS team shared that the initial processes of Sangha formation lay the ground for understanding and building a mandate for challenging social inequities. Discussions around equality and justice are not done in the abstract but are discussed in the context of women's lived experience. Illustrating this fact, DPC Surendranagar narrated the incident of Moti Maldi village wherein the Sangha had used its own strategies to challenge social inequities.

Moti Maldi village Sangha had selected a Dalit woman as a Bal Sakhi (Child care centre worker) to run the child care centre (CCC) in the village on basis of her abilities and affability with children. But trouble began when the centre started as some non-Dalits objected to the Dalit Bal Sakhi cooking the food served to the children in the CCC. Several parents opposed it on the grounds that the act of their children eating food cooked by a Dalit would "hurt their diety" and also result in the larger community ostracizing these few children's families. They stopped sending their children to the centre, asking for the Bal Sakhi's removal from her position. The irrationality of the practice was discussed several times with the community members and the Sangha women questioned them, saying, "Do we know the caste of cooks in the hotel when we

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<sup>26</sup> **NPO's Note:** It is unclear how exactly the State programme's own baseline (using the Results Framework) has more details than the data collected for the data bank at present. Did not receive any further elaboration on this point from Mission team before issue of this document.

eat out? Do we have a different blood from that of Dalits? Did we all not together select her for this job because she was the most suitable for this job?" But the situation worsened as the village community was not ready and the Dalit worker was barred from fetching water from the village well. The sangha women opposed this move of the community of reintroducing this practice of untouchability and called for a meeting with the men in the village, at the panchayat. Seeing the strong support that the Bal Sakhi had from the Sangha women, her access to the public water facility was restored. Temporarily, a decision was taken to allow the Bal Sakhi to continue at the CCC with the condition that only serve dry snacks be served by her there. The Sangha agreed and asked the parents who had opposed the move to volunteer at the CCC to cook for the children, while the Bal Sakhi would handle the responsibility of the children's early childhood education.

In the weeks following this new arrangement, the Sangha members used every opportunity to break the social code by eating together with the Dalits in their homes to <sup>27</sup>challenge the age old practice of untouchability and in order to keep the dialogue on the issue ongoing within the community. In the CCC, the Bal Sakhi's competence and growing rapport with the children eventually wore down the resistance of the non-Dalit parents. It was after several months following this incident that the problem was resolved completely and eventually fresh cooked meals made by the Bal Sakhi were restarted at the CCC. Today, children of all castes sit together and eat meals prepared by the Bal Sakhi.

The above incident is proof that sustained education on gender and social justice helps to build the political will demonstrated by the Sangha women & enables the changing of discriminatory social practices. How can such interventions be used bring change in practices in the area? Can the wide network of Mahila Samakhya Sanghas be used to monitor the MDM programme as decided in the 44th EC meeting and use the opportunity to create awareness on the hidden caste discriminatory practices, create enabling conditions for dialogue and reflection in the VECs?

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<sup>27</sup> **NPO's Note: This implies that none of the sangha members themselves are from the Dalit community. Is this correct/what was found? What implications does this have for our core aim of working with most-marginalised women then? No elaboration on this was received from the Mission team in time for the issue of this document.**

The issue of violence against women (VAW) is discussed more widely in the Sanghas aided by the expansion of the Nari Adalats. This women-led alternative dispute resolution mechanism (ADRM) arose as an alternative to the completely male-led traditional jati (caste) panchayats in rural areas accessed as the first point of adjudication by the rural poor due to the lengthy & expensive access of the justice system in country. The Nari Adalat has evolved as a women-owned mechanism designed on the strength of the programme to support the survivors of violence, wherein women leaders from the Sangha meet twice in a month in at a fixed place where survivors of violence who require assistance beyond the reach of the village come with their problems. There are 32 Nari Adalats run by a core group of 488 trained Sangha members.

Nari Adalats: Status from April to November 2010					
District	No. of Nari Adalats	No. of Nari Adalat Members	No. of cases registered	No. of cases solved	No. of cases in process
Surendranagar	3	51	33	21	12
Panchmahaals	4	46	23	9	14
Rajkot	11	203	46	29	17
Banaskantha	3	15	12	0	12
Vadodara	7	118	36	15	21
Sabarkantha	4	55	89	10	79
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>Average no. of cases per month</b>			<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Average no. of cases per Nari Adalat in 8 months</b>			<b>7.5</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>4.8</b>

The data collected using the Revised Results Framework for the period April to November 2010 shows that in all 288 cases were registered during this period, of which 84 were solved and 155 were still under process. This translates to approximately one new case per month for each Nari Adalat. While the number itself might not seem significant, each case taken up by the Nari Adalat involves engaging with the larger community for a gender just conflict resolution, thereby not only visibilising the violence against women at a much larger societal level but also

educateing the community on women's rights and building support for peace at home & in society at large.

The Nari Adalats are largely dealing with cases of desertion, domestic violence & custody of children and protect the women's right to a violence-free life. Unlike in the Family Counseling Centres supported by the different government departments, successful case resolution by Nari Adalats does not necessarily mean that marriages are saved, but that it follows the principle of supporting the woman in the choices she makes for her security and dignity.

On perusing the registers of the Nari Adalat maintained in the Vijay MahaSangha the JRM noticed several cases where they were listed as that of 'superstition'. A discussion with the members of the Nari Adalat revealed that these were cases of witch hunting where usually a woman is accused by her neighbors/extended family members of being a witch. The JRM would like to draw attention to the articulation of this severe form of mental & physical violence against women as simply 'superstition' rather than as a case of violation of women's right to security of life & livelihood (since a woman accused of witch hunting not only faces continuous harassment, but is often ostracized and hounded out of the house/village). In extreme forms of witch hunting, women in this district have also been physically attacked and in rare cases killed.

Further, this begets the question whether the articulation was reflexive of the framework which the non-tribal community uses to dismiss the particular forms of violence that women in tribal societies are victim to. In another case cited earlier in the highlights of the Sabarkantha district visit, the Nari Adalat had not given the deserted woman the choice of making the case justiciable using the sections of law on bigamy or seeking compensation under the maintenance act.

During the interaction with the JRM during the block-level meetings with the Nari Adalats and in the representations Sangha members made during a public hearing on the 10 December, 2010 on the occasion of the human rights day in Panchmahaals where the JRM member was present, they vociferously complained about the apathy of police in taking cognizance of cases of VAW & implementing the prohibition law. They also wanted the presence of the police during some cases being heard by the Nari Adalat for the security of the victim. All the above lead the JRM to



conclude that there is the need for the MS programme to support the Nari Adalats in analyzing the cases from the human rights framework and in planning for legal & financial aid to survivors, which will in turn enable the Nari Adalats to take on cases where women face criminal acts of violence.

### **Recommendations:**

- ✓ The experiences of Sanghas' work on gender equity and social justice can feed into learning for other educational programmes of the government. Documentation of such experiences can be used for developing appropriate training tools for the other programmes.
- ✓ There is a need for capacity building of Nari Adalats to recognize and intervene in different forms of violence against women such as sexual harassment, violence at the work place etc.
- ✓ Sangha members/Nari Adalat members can be given training to make functional the committees for prevention of sexual harassment at schools to be constituted according to guidelines of the Hon. Supreme Court of India. The committees have been constituted at every school/ashram shala but are currently dysfunctional.
- ✓ Data from the Nari Adalats can be used to build specific state-level campaigns on VAW, on the lines of the campaign done by MS on the PDVWA.
- ✓ Nari Adalats can be listed as a service provider and also as counselors in the family court/support cell for women in the police headquarters/police stations.

### **MS' Institutional processes:**

#### **Recruitment & Retention of functionaries**

Appointment of a full-time State Programme Director in April 2010 following the last JRM has been a first step towards strengthening the MS team. Yet, Mahila Samakhya Gujarat continues to have a 50% vacancy at key positions in the state and as well as in the districts. A similar concern

was expressed in the last JRM, after which only the post of the State Programme Director was filled. The current staff position is as follows:

<i>Summary of Positions vacant at the district level - 7 districts</i>			
<i>Position</i>	<i>Sanctioned posts</i>	<i>Posts filled</i>	<i>Posts Vacant</i>
District Programme Coordinator	7	5	2
Resource Person	22	7	15
Junior Resource Person	37	5	32
Cluster Resource Person	111	88	23
Assistant	7	3	4
Data Entry Operator	7	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>81</b>

The entire accounts operations have been outsourced in Gujarat to Ingit Mody & Co. who have posted accountants in the district offices and the state office.

<i>Summary of Programme Positions vacant at the State level-</i>			
	<i>Sanctioned posts</i>	<i>Posts filled</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
State Programme Director	1	1	0
Assistant Programme Director	1	0	1
State Resource Person	2	0	2
State Consultants	4 <sup>28</sup>	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

(As per data provided by MS Gujarat)

This delay in recruiting field teams was attributed to the guidelines on appointment which restrict the state and district offices to fill in the positions at their end. The guidelines for appointments communicated vide a letter from the GoI dated 05/04/2004 state the powers and procedures for

<sup>28</sup> **NPO's Note:** Only 2 consultants have been provided for in the budget under the 11<sup>th</sup> FY Plan Document for MS.

recruitment and include the authority & extent of powers for appointments for all positions subject to approval of the Appointments Committee which is formed containing nominees of the State office, EC, NRG and GoI. The JRM noted that the reason for the continued vacancies were beyond the control of the MS Gujarat programme team. During the year, procedures for inviting applications for the positions at the State and District level were completed four months ago, but the actual interviews could not be held due to lack of availability of the Nominees of NRG/GoI & EC on the day interviews were scheduled and advertised.<sup>29</sup>

The recruitment of CRPs - which is within the authority of the District Programme Coordinator - was done at the district level in Panchmahaals by setting up an interview panel comprising of DPC, State consultant and a DPC from another district following the procedure of issuing an advertisement in the local newspaper. Six candidates were selected on the spot, but approval letters for these candidates came only after 2 months by which time 3 candidates had found a job elsewhere and of the 3 who showed up, two were unwilling to move to the block they had been recruited for. Hence, the positions remain vacant six months after the whole process had been initiated and completed.

Other reasons stated by the programme team as challenges for retention are due to exits from the programme as the salaries/compensation packages in MS programme are lower than in other government programmes, while this programme has higher expectations from staff such as extensive travel and extended periods of stay outside the allocated work area during training programmes, meetings & workshops. Further, the appointments are initially made only for 3 months and extended later for 11 months which in itself is a deterrent for qualified staff to join.

The JRM noted that the MS programme in Gujarat offers the following social security measures for its staff - maternity leave of 3 months (which is less than the existing state and central government employee norms) and child care support during the trainings & workshops by way

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<sup>29</sup> **NPO's Note: This is incorrect, in that NPO has not received any confirmed interview/selection meeting invitation – after one was cancelled by GMSS itself, in 2010-11. Also, in case of unavailability of NPD or NRG members, NPO always nominates alternate representatives without affecting the scheduled date for selection process. (No correction of this was made by Mission team before issue of this document.)**

of paying for travel and logistics of the accompanying child care taker. However, there is no life, accident or medical insurance. There were no incentives in form of soft loans for housing, vehicles or education or study leave which may enable women employees towards securing their future.

### **Orientation, Capacity building of team & Capabilities of the team**

MS Gujarat has developed some clear processes for orienting new field staff joining the programme through a process of induction followed by field exposure for a period of 2-4 weeks during which time the member is paired with a more experienced colleague having similar responsibilities. After this time, the new members become a part of the regular monthly meetings held at block, district and state level providing space for sharing and learning. However, no such process is laid down for the State Programme Director's position - which would help new incumbents be better equipped for taking on the responsibility of this challenging position.

Absence of institutional history due to frequent changes in leadership in the programme at the state level has led to substantial loss of time as each new incumbent SPD then relies upon the Chairperson (who also might be unfamiliar with the MS programme) and who in turn refers to the guidelines issued by GoI from time to time.<sup>30</sup>

The new SPD was also able to initiate a series of reflections and training for the team on the core programme values and organized two vision building workshops for the team. MS Gujarat also found the cross-learning opportunities in the workshops held on best practices at National level and the workshops held by ERU helpful in providing inputs to the DPCs.

The State of Gujarat is now IT-enabled up to every Gram Panchayat and has been using the platform successfully for a range of educational programmes/lateral learning, directly engaging with citizens through website, video conferencing, SATCOMs programmes & GSWAN to name a few. However, the opportunity of including poor rural women in this platform through

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<sup>30</sup> **NPO's Note:** Unclear as to which guidelines in particular are referred to here. Clarification would have helped as there are no particular existing GoI guidelines on SPD orientation.

MS/MahaSanghas' capacity building & resource support is still to be realized. The MS staff at the district-level were unable to use computers or access internet for seeking information or even networking amongst themselves, although desk tops were installed in each of the DIUs. The State Programme Director reported to the JRM that the DPCs were promised laptops as and when they learnt to operate computers. The District staff showed willingness to learn but had simply not found the time to take on a course given their work burden.

### **Recommendations:**

- ✓ Fill vacancies in the existing teams at the level of RPs and JRPs.
- ✓ Powers for making appointments should be decentralized, and appointments committee be formed at the state & district-level drawing in local expertise from the SRG/DRGs/EC.
- ✓ Appointments of all project staff to be made for the project period or at least up to the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan and thereafter till the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.
- ✓ It is desirable that Mahila Samakhya Gujarat uses the capacities developed through the programme to fill vacant positions from bottom up, giving leadership opportunities to marginalized constituencies as it has been doing with good results so far. For this, MS may consider recognition of years spent in the programme in lieu of formal educational norms for JRPs/CRPs. Incentives - such as support for higher studies, enrollment in graduate and postgraduate programmes of open universities such as IGNOU, SNDT etc. - for such recruitment, will ensure that team members will get opportunity for their own enhancement and eventually meet the academic requirements set out in the guidelines.
- ✓ Induction programme for all new team members should be done within the first three months to build conceptual clarity and skills required for facilitation.

- ✓ It is necessary, in the coming year, to empower & enable MS teams at district and block-levels to use computers, to provide Mahila Samakhya Gujarat & federations access to GSWAN websites, dedicated time on KU band & SATCOMs, and to invest in developing a bilingual website for MS Gujarat to gain greater visibility.
- ✓ All appointments at the village-level (such as Mahila Sangha coordinators<sup>31</sup>, Child care centre coordinators/workers, NFE/AE instructors, Nari Adalat members) should now be handed over to the MahaSanghas wherever they are formed. The MahaSanghas may be assisted by the DPCs/nominees of the District Resource Group as may be present. This will also increase the ownership of the programme for the supportive mechanisms and build the federations' capacity for becoming autonomous.
- ✓ Orientation training and manuals for operating procedures for State Programme Director and District Programme Coordinators clearly laying down financial and administrative powers will help new team members to operate efficiently and without fear.

### **Capability and efficiency of functionaries, understanding of revised Revised Results Framework (RRF)**

The major inputs in the previous year for capacity building of team were done in revising and understanding the results framework through a series of two workshops by the National Project Office (NPO) at the state office, followed by trainings up to the MahaSangha level. As per the SPD, the exercise helped in establishing the need for regular data collection and has improved the quality of data collected. The data from the RRF was found to be useful in drawing attention to the specific areas which needed strengthening in the programme in Gujarat - for instance the entire drive to concentrate on strengthening weak Sanghas and increasing memberships of MahaSanghas has come from the results of data-collection based on the Revised Results Framework. Greater segregation of data at the district and cluster-level and undertaking

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<sup>31</sup> **NPO's Note: Not clear who are referred to here as 'mahila sangha coordinators'. This is not a post in MS, hence requires clarification – which was not received from Mission team.**

qualitative study from the trends seen in the quantitative data will help the programme strengthen its strategic interventions.

The MS Gujarat team has initiated an exercise of creating a data bank of the individual Sangha women. Data from 1121 Sanghas has been collected in the first phase. The state expects to complete the exercise by next year. As of now, there were no clear plans for the use of data collected thereby.

Another pilot tool for discussion in the Sanghas on five key areas was developed participatorily with representative members of the federation. The tool has been used in 54 villages, and the results from the pilot will be compiled to refine the tool further.

Data collection, consolidation and documentation by themselves are time intensive activities which become tedious if they are not used for decision making at all levels. Data inconsistencies have been found throughout the report as there is no capacity built at the district level to analyse the voluminous data. Thus the MIS for now does not serve the purpose of enabling decision making but has largely been used to project the impacts of the programme in various forums. JRM noted that the MIS based on the RRF in its current form was limited to capturing outputs not outcomes. It does not capture changes in the women's own understanding and action towards gender equity or the shifts in strategy employed.

The existing team of MS is committed and efficient in delivering programme components and activities; but most of their learning 'comes by doing'. However, there are no tools or institutional mechanisms to record these learnings systematically and sharing of the learnings is limited largely to the district teams through their lateral forums of cluster, federation and district meetings. The senior team members of MS Gujarat have had little time or opportunity to develop their own understanding and skills in the last few years; they will benefit from participating in training programmes on the themes of their interest in the broad spectrum of available trainings on gender & development, communication and participatory training methodologies offered in the country by various organizations of repute. Participation in national and state-level workshops in the five key focus areas will also keep the team updated on the new

developments & concepts, and it would be relatively less resource intensive than a training programme.

### **Annual Work Plan and Budget formulation and MIS**

The Programme undertook a detailed exercise of bottom-up planning for the Annual Work Plan beginning with discussions at the Sangha level. The plans were then consolidated at the federation level, with the stronger federations drawing up detailed budgetary plans, too. During its visit to the federations, the JRM saw some of the plans made by the federation which were based on MS programme guidelines. Most of the plans were focused on activities and monitored closely for the outputs. There is systematic documentation in place and the Gujarat state team is able to generate voluminous reports quantifying right from the various issues discussed in the Sangha & no. of participants in different types of training programmes to the no. of members who coordinated with different government departments. The JRM could not see the use of this data in the field for improving programme delivery.

The monitoring of budgets and activities is done regularly from the village to state level through a well-established system of record keeping introduced by the new State Programme Director in line with the Results Framework. The districts were also able to track budgets on a monthly basis, but uncertainty of funds availability disrupted the plans drawn out in detail for the programme activities.

The team is also under a lot of stress holding multiple responsibilities and needs to have the space for reflection & relaxation. There is also a trust deficit in the team as a fall out of the manner in which action was taken against a DPC by the SPO,<sup>32</sup> as well as between the accounts

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<sup>32</sup> **NPO's Note: This statement is factually incorrect and inappropriate, legally. Should have been re-worded by Mission after request by NPO, as it was not just a random action against a DPC by the SPD. It was action initiated by SPD as per decision of the EC and order of the Chairperson in particular, to ensure investigation of irregularity in DIU Rajkot. Mission team was asked to but did not elaborate the observation on reasons of a trust deficit being caused by such action, when it is only as per procedure and principles of transparency and accountability in programme, especially financial management.**



team and the programme team. Some reflections with an outside person will help the team consolidate its strength and improve the work environment.

### **Feedback, reflection & monitoring processes, and internal assessments**

There are regular forums for feedback at the state and district-levels that meet in the first week, respectively. No sub-committees were formed at the state level for Grant-in-aid, programme or financial monitoring. The team follows a 180-degrees performance appraisal method and detailed assessment forms have been developed for the same.

The programme has a core of committed programme staff at the district levels but has gone through several changes in leadership at the state-level in the last five years. This has impacted the morale of the team as each new incumbent has shaped the programme for a brief period without having the time to invest in the capacity building of the team or building a strategic plan for the programme in the state. The motivation of the entire team of MS Gujarat from the SPD to the CRPs was high in spite of the frequent disruptions in the programme. Most of the team members worked well beyond their office time and had continued with MS not for the lack of opportunity

### **Convergence:**

MS Gujarat has invested in networking with other government departments during the year, mainly the Women & Child Department & the SSA at the state level, and with different line departments such as forests, police, Rural Development & Revenue at the district and block levels. The Department of Women and Child Development provided support for the Nari Adalats through the State Commission for Women to the tune of ` 4.14<sup>33</sup> for the year 2009 and 2.69 lacs<sup>34</sup> for the year 2010. The WCD Ministry was keen to showcase the Nari Adalats in the Swarnim Gujarat celebrations this year and a proposal was invited from MS for establishing the

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<sup>33</sup> **NPO's Note:** Crores or lakhs – not specified nor later added/clarified by Mission team.

<sup>34</sup> **NPO's Note:** Same as above; also not specified whether in Rupees

Nari Adalats to other blocks. The investments required were of a minimum three years based on MS' experience of bottom-up planning and capacity building, and the proposal is on hold for the period. The Ministry has also written to all the District Collectors to allocate space at the block-level for the Nari Adalat to operate from. The DPCs and the state office are following this up closely with the district administrations and expect to see some developments in the coming year.

Non-financial linkages with the Department of Education in SSA and MDM programmes have also been initiated during the year as per the minutes of the 44<sup>th</sup> E.C and reports of the state office.

**Other issues of concern:**

The child care centres (CCCs) supported by MS are not supplementing ICDS services to mothers and children but in practice are substituting services in some of the most vulnerable ST and SC habitations. This deprives children of the essential health, nutrition and early child care education services through the ICDS which are now extended and accepted as universal services with relatively much more resources than the resources provided for CCCs under MS.

- ✓ All the Children in the CCCs should be covered by ICDS through an existing Anganwadi centre and where none exists in the SC/ST hamlet, the demand made of the WCD Department to start one in the hamlet at the earliest.
- ✓ The CCC should provide supplementary services for child care to mothers at different times than an Anganwadi's timings or at different work sites or from amongst the CCC models developed by Dr. Rajlaxmi of MSU in Baroda for MS, Gujarat.

## **Resource Support**

### **Networking with NGO's, women's groups, research institutions**

MS Gujarat has links with the women's groups and campaigns at the field-level where Sangha women participate in various events. But programmatic links with the women's movement, campaigns and research institutions have not been actively pursued. The new SPD reportedly expects to follow this up in the coming year.

### **Role of State Resource Centre in supporting MS**

There is no State Resource Centre per se in MS Gujarat. The State Project Office has initiated the compilation and dissemination of various resource material to the CRPs at the block-level to strengthen programme interventions. These were reported to be: Posters on VAW, Educational films – Star girls , Girija, Araman, Meena puppet film and animation films , Swachh Dudh (on Amul federations) , Baheno E Karyo Balvo (a docu-drama on Anti-Arrack Movement in Andhra Pradesh), Keri (on women's issues), Sanshodhan (on Panchayat amendment, by UNICEF), Kali Kem Mari (on maternal mortality, by Drishti), Gam nathi Koi nu, Ek Bik Nu potlu (on MS, by Drishti), Panchayati Raj (by SPIPA), 60 books of the National Book Trust on various issues of women and development, compilation of various gender sensitive stories of various languages. The SPO has also developed two modules – one for the campaign on PWDVA and another on leadership, a primer on RTE, as also a module on para-legal issues.

The JRM notes that apart from the Nari Adalat toolkit developed with the help of TCF by BPF, MS also has the opportunity to document and develop learning material based on the rich experiences in the field. The NRG members have not been to the state during the entire year as they did not attend E.C. meetings. The SPDs of SSA & the (State) Gender Resource Centre have been part of the E.C. and have extended cooperation to the programme from time to time. The Chairperson of the E.C has little time for day-to-day engagement with the MS programme, but has been supportive of it by giving the SPD space to operate independently.

## **Recommendations:**

- ✓ The E.C. in consultation with the state and district team should draw up a list of resource organisations that can support the programme team in capacity building as members in the SRG and DRGs.
- ✓ Avail of the wide range of programmes and workshops in the state for capacity building of the team.
- ✓ MS is a unique programme in its conception, methodology and tools that it uses for education. As a community of practice it can contribute to significant learnings to other programmes in the state. For this, technical collaborations need to be set up with research organisations/universities to use the programme experience for systematic documentation and to undertake studies to contribute to the body of knowledge.
- ✓ The SPD & DPCs should be empowered to enter into year long Technical Cooperation MOUs to engage with resource organisations/people by drawing in external resources to strengthen the programme.

## **Financial Management**

The MS Gujarat programme has a total approved budget `347.88 lakhs for the financial year 2010-11, of which 68.32% was for Activity cost, while 31.68% was for Management cost. The realisation of funds up to 31.01.2011 was `186.47 lakhs which is 53.66% of the total budget. The expenditure up to 31.01.2011 was of `178 lakhs which is 95.5% of the funds received, but only 51.16% of the total budget. During the JRM's state-level meeting, the reason for under-spending was reportedly due to unavailability of funds during April-May and November-December which were the months when a series of programmes had been planned. Lack of timely funds results in losing opportunities for implementing programme activities at a time when women have the time to invest in their training/education on the ground.

During extensive discussions of the JRM with the SPO and NPO, it was shared that the NPO office takes a minimum of 4-8 weeks after the grant request documents are sent from the state with the unaudited Utilisation Certificates. The NPO tries to ensure that funds for April-May are

requested in the month of March itself since there are more delays at the beginning of the new financial year and the available funds at the state can be used to continue the programme activities without break. Lack of documents and compliances received from the states delays the release of grants to the state offices.

**Fund flow From NPO to MS Gujarat SPO (Ahmedabad) during the period 1/4/2010 to 31.1/2011**

(Rupees In Lakhs)

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Grant Request Amount &amp; Date</b>	<b>Grant received Amount &amp; Date</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>175.00 lacs on Dt.05.05.10</b>	<b>101.47 lacs on dt.18.06.10</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>200.00 lacs on Dt.01.11.10</b>	<b>85.00 lacs on Dt.04.01.11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>375.0</b>	<b>186.47</b>

However, from the table above it is seen that the total availability of funds at the NPO also is inadequate as only 50% of the total requested funds were released by January 2011, leaving the programme little time to complete all the planned activities in the last quarter.

The funds received at the state offices are transferred to the districts within a period of one week as seen in the data given for the last tranche of funds received by the State office, but are given in different tranches on basis of requests and statements available for 2 months.

**Panchmahaals district (Rupees In Lakhs)**

**Rajkot District (Rupees In Lakhs)**

<b>Date Disbursed</b>	<b>Grant Disbursed</b>	<b>Date Disbursed</b>	<b>Grant Disbursed</b>
15.04.10	3.00	15.04.10	3.00
25.05.10	1.50	31.05.10	1.75
28.06.10	7.00	18.06.10	3.50
01.10.10	2.50	28.06.10	6.00
25.10.10	2.50	27.08.10	2.00
01.12.10	0.68	17.09.10	4.00

05.01.11	6.00	<b>25.10.10</b>	<b>3.00</b>
Total	23.18	<b>05.01.11</b>	<b>2.50</b>
		<b>24.01.11</b>	<b>5.00</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>30.75</b>

The financial rules and systems were reportedly in place. The districts send monthly reports to the State Office every month within seven days of the next month in the prescribed format. Accounts are maintained in the double entry system, Accounts Consultant/s ensure correct classification of expenditure, and queries are cleared on phone/in writing or during the monthly state-level joint meeting with the accountants and DPCs.

The Accounts Consultant and the SPD are signatories at the state-level, while the Accountant and the DPC are signatories at the district-level. Inter-district transfers were done by RTGS through the Canara Bank network.

#### **Status of audits and compliances:**

The audit report of the year 2009-2010 was prepared by Pramod Nahar & Associates and submitted only on the 25/01/2011.

MS Gujarat has a system of Internal Audit, and the last internal audit was done by Sudhir Shah & Co. for the period April-November 2010 and the report was awaited at the time of the JRM's visit.

The E.C. of Mahila Samakhya Gujarat has met twice after the last JRM in November 2009. The 43<sup>rd</sup> E.C. meeting was held on 26/02/2010, after which the E.C. met only on 7/09/2011. There is representation of the MS DPCs, invitee members from the state team and field teams in the E.C., in addition to the SPD who serves as the Member Secretary.

## **Recommendations:**

- ✓ MS Gujarat should develop a financial process and powers manual in order to ensure that the processes are clearly understood at all levels, and the timelines for the requisition and release of grants are adhered to.
- ✓ Statutory compliances of the State MS Society must be monitored by the E.C.
- ✓ EC meetings should be held on quarterly basis to enable the programme to be reviewed and supported. Quarterly financial statements should be submitted to the E.C. to ensure that the programme receipts and utilization are in order so that delays in requisition/allocations can be dealt with in time.
- ✓ The Chairperson of the Executive Committee of MS must be entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that the programme has the funds it requires in advance for every quarter at the state and district levels according to their approved Annual Work Plans, by borrowing from SSA/other state programmes or by taking a loan from the bank.

## **Good Practices and Innovations**

MS Gujarat has a lot of strength at the Sangha level due to sustained engagement of Sangha women with the programme. It is from this bedrock of Sangha leadership that MS Gujarat has been able to sustain the alternative institutional mechanisms such as Nari Adalats, Jasood and Information centres.

The programme flexibility is visible in the variety of local initiatives that have evolved at the district-level such as collective farming in Dangs, Grain Banks in Sabarkantha & RTI campaigns in Panchmahaals. The programme has also, this year, taken concerted efforts to carry out some campaigns on common themes across the state such as Sangha strengthening & the PDVWA, which build visibility of the programme in the state.

Initiating work with men by forming support groups of men for Sanghas has opened doors for public dialogue with men on common concerns and women's specific concerns. Many of the

issues taken up by the Sangha members locally are to do with governance deficit and it is important that men too are part of the negotiating for gender responsive governance. In the future, these groups could also play an important role in raising the voice against VAW as a public issue of concern.

Convergence has been now extended to mainstreaming some of the initiatives of MS such as Nari Adalats in the state through the SCW, and in building a module on the same, it has been able to share its knowledge across different states.

## **Summary of Key Issues in and Recommendations for the State MS Programme**

### **Major Highlights of the Programme in the state and districts visited:**

#### **Achievements**

- The programme has made substantial gains in increasing outreach to women and girls from marginalized communities in the existing villages sanghas. There is also a substantial increase in sanghas linked to Mahasanghas.
- There is a large increase in the number of sangha members in the primary and schools in their villages as members of MTA, PTA & VEC & referrals from the sanghas to the KGBV's and MSK's.
- There is a clear understanding in the leadership at all levels of MS & federations of the core processes, purpose & value of formal and informal continuing educational opportunities that the program provides to women from marginalized communities.



- The capacity of the Mahasanghas to increase the outreach of the program, strengthen Sanghas and manage their innovations such as Nari Adalats, Grain Banks, Savings and Credit Groups, Jasood continues to grow in strength.
- The program visibility within the state increased in the Government with greater coordination with SSA, State Commission of Women at the state level. The capacity of the MS programme at the district level to engage with different departments of the government such as Forest Department & Rural Development department has increased over the year bringing in greater resources to poor women & their households.
- Development of the “Nari Adalat” tool kits, “Ugata Suraj ni Disha main” campaign material on the PWDVA has helped the program increase outreach, upscale the model within the state and in other MS states as well.
- Enrollment of 107% in KGBV in the year 2011. All recruitment and training of teachers completed for KGBVs, in all 910 girl children enrolled
- Appointment of a full time State Programme Director following the recommendations of the 2 JRM has been a significant step towards strengthening the MS team and most of the administrative staff is also in place.
- The programme has nurtured leadership at grassroots, with 3 of the 7 DPC’s today being those who had joined the program as Sahayoginis. Similar instances of Sahelis being drawn from the pool of Sangh leaders, JRPs and CRPs being drawn from the pool of the Mahasangh leaders in open interviews are a proof of the strength of the educational processes of the programme.

## Challenges & Opportunities: *Recommendations*

- Absence of Institutional history due to frequent changes in leadership in the programme at the state level has led to substantial loss of time due to MS programme having different approach than a standard government programme for financial and administrative processes & powers. These have led to delays in filling up 50% vacancies lying at the state and districts level teams in key programme. This has a direct impact on the existing team's work burden as well as core programme of capacity building of women in the villages.
- ✓ *Administrative and financial powers including extent of powers for making appointments should be made clear. Requisite support should be provided by the EC, NPO to the MS team to enable them to recruit the programme team at the State and District level at the earliest.*
- ✓ *It is desirable that Mahila Samakhya Gujarat uses the capacities developed through the program to fill vacant positions from bottom up giving leadership opportunities to marginalized constituencies. For this, MS may consider recognition of years spent in the program in lieu of formal educational norms for JRPs/ CRPs. Incentives such as support for higher studies, enrollment in graduate and postgraduate programmes in open university such as IGNOU, SND, etc., for such recruitment will ensure that team members will get opportunity for their own enhancement and eventually meet the academic requirements set out in the guidelines.*
- The large number of activities taken up by the federations/ sanghs without the accompanying inputs for education, gender analysis dilutes the programme purpose of empowering women & furthering gender equality through critical reflection and action.

- ✓ *The MSG Programme has made substantial gains in outreach in the current year. It is recommended that the programme consolidates its team, builds capacities with the help of resources available in the state before expansion of program or activities at the village/mahasangha level. MSG may seek additional support from the NRG to design the inputs for the team & from TCF fund in the forthcoming year for resource support.*
- There continue to be a shortage of funds in key months of April, May & November, December due to administrative delays at state and national level. This may result in programme underspending inspite of a huge demand for the programme resources at the ground level.
  - ✓ *EC of MS needs to ensure that there is no break in fund flow or enable the program to borrow resources from SSA/government financial institutions for approved programme budgets.*
- Garnering resources from the large pool of expertise and innovations available at the state level within civil society organisations to build capacities of the MS team in absence of formulation of the State, District Resource is a constraint.
  - ✓ *The EC in consultation with the state and district team draws up a list of resource organisations that can support the program team capacity building for SRG's and DRG, empowers SPD, DPC to enter into Technical Cooperation MOU's to engage with resource organisations/people.*
- Garnering resources, especially technical and funds from other state programmes for the federations/ Mahasanghs has begun but is unable to meet the demand on the ground to support and expand the best practices evolved

over years in the programme to newer areas. Mahasanghas and sanghas have also expressed the need and interest in building their own offices/ mahila kutirs with seed support from MS.

- ✓ *Greater Resource support for federations from MS has been recommended by all previous JRM's which stands. In the interim the EC of MS may assist the federations to garner resources for its programs from other state programmes by issuing the necessary directives/requests/incorporating the resources required & involvement of Federations for community mobilization, outreach for the vulnerable populations, community monitoring initiatives to begin with in the education department programs.*
- ✓ *The new annual plan must budget for mahila kutirs and federation offices. Convergence be established with other programmes for women's resource rights, livelihood support to supplement the funds available for mahila kutirs. The EC could also help expediate public land being made available for the mahila kutirs at village level and mahasangha offices at the block level.*
- The resources available to MSKs & KGBVs vary significantly.
  - ✓ *MS Gujarat should develop a differentiated strategy for MSK and KGBV's focus areas depending on the needs of specific clusters/regions/community groups on the lines of Kerala/as residential schools for adult illiterate women MS.*
- The child care centres supported by MS are not supplementing ICDS services to mothers and children but in practice are substituting services in some of the most vulnerable ST and SC habitations. This deprives children of the essential health, nutrition and early child care education services through the ICDS

which are now extended and accepted as universal services with relatively much more resources than the resources provided for CCC's provided in MS.

- ✓ *All the Children in the CCC's should be covered by ICDS through an existing Anganwadi centre and where none exists in the SC/ST hamlet, the demand be sent to WCD to start an Anganwadi in the hamlet at the earliest.*
- ✓ *The CCC should provide supplementary services for child care to mothers at different times than an AWC or at different work sites or from amongst the CCC models developed by Dr Rajlaxmi of MSU in Baroda for MS, Gujarat.*
- There is a visible demand for information & knowledge amongst women to participate in development processes, vocational and life cycle education guidance demands from the youth in kishori sanghs are an opportunity for the program to make a substantial shift in furthering gender equality in a state.
  - ✓ *Special consultations be done with the Kishori sanghas to send recommendations for the XII plan to the Planning commission. MS may consider a series of consultations/ campaign with kishori sangh resulting in a state and national convention of kishori sangh representatives to make participate in the process of planning for themselves.*
  - ✓ *In the short run, MS may consider conducting career guidance camps for the members of Kishori Sanghs. In the medium term Convergence with vocational training initiatives taken by the Govt of Gujarat with PPP's for building technical capacities, partnerships with ITI's, developing new vocational courses for girls, initiating specific studies in*

*assessing the market needs for skills will all meet this need of new generation of MS.*

- ✓ Lastly, Gujarat state is now IT-enabled upto every Gram panchayat and has been using the platform successfully for a range of educational programs/ lateral learning , directly engaging with citizens through website, video conferencing, satcoms programs, GSWAN to name a few. However the opportunity of including rural poor women in this platform through MS/Mahasanghas capacity building and resource support is still to be realized.
  
- ✓ *Empower and enable MS teams at district and block levels to use computers. Provide Mahila Samakhya Gujarat and federations the access to GSWAN websites, dedicated time on KU band, satcoms in the coming year. Invest in developing a bilingual website for MS Gujarat in the coming year to gain greater visibility within Gujarat and within state government's different departments.*

**Annexure 1**

**Schedule for the JRM –MS Gujarat**

Sl.No.	Date	Location Of /Travel By Mission Members	Traveling time	Activity	Total Spending Time	Remarks
1	8/2/11	MS SPO & District Programme		State -level discussion and briefing at SPO, Discussion with the district officials and state level organizations , and state team ,travel to district	10.30 to 5.30	
2	9/2/11	Vijaynagar , Sabarkantha	from 8.00 to 10.30 total 2.30 hours for traveling	Meeting with federation and Nari Adalat members, Visit of Federation Resource Center,	total time two hours	
3	9/2/11	lunch	1 .00 to 2.00	Lunch		
4	9/2/11	Baleta , Vijaynagar,	2.15 (DT)to 2.45 (AT) total traveling time-30 min	Meeting with the members of Sanghas, visit of Dhan gola , meeting with the members worked on Save the Environment campaign ,Visit of the vocational training camp	total time one and half hour	
5	9/2/11	Himatnagar, Sabarkantha	4.15 (DT)to 5.30 (AT)- total traveling time- one hour and thirty min	Convergence with the government department –meeting with District Forest officer and other officials of the forest dept.	one hour	return to Ahmedabad
6	10/2/11	Bl-Jambughoda ,Dis-Panchmahal	7.30 (DT)to 11.30 (AT)- total traveling four hours	meeting with the members of Jashood Health Center, Information center ,meeting with the federation members	total 1.30 hours	
7	10/2/11	Vill-Dinkhava, Bl.Halol , Dis-Panchmahal	1.00 (DT)to 1.15 (AT)- total traveling four hours	Visit of KGBV and Parents meeting at KGBV	total 30 min	
8			1.45 to 2.30	lunch		
9	10/2/00	vill.-Garmula , Bl-Jambughoda, Dis-Panchmahal	2.30 (DT)to 2.45 (AT)- total traveling fifteen min	Meeting with Kishori Sanghas, Meeting with members participated in the RTI Training and campaign, Meeting with members of Well wisher group, Discussion with the members of Sanghas	total two hours	
10	10/2/11	back to Ahmedabad		Arrival at state office		
11	15/2/11			wrap up at state –level draft of state report /key finding of Mission to be presented to the state Education Secretary		MS ,Gujarat to fix the appointment with the chairman of MS

**Annexure 2**

**Dt. 8-2-2011 State Level Meeting Participants**

Sr. No.	Name	Designation	Dist.	MS Association
1	Ms. Trupti Sheth	State Programme Director	Ahmedabad (SPD)	Joined in April 2010
2	Dr. Sunita Kalariya	State Consultant I/c. DPC Vadodara	Ahmedabad	2003- State consultant, 2011 -I/C Vadodara
3	Ms. Ramila Pargi	State Consultant	Ahmedabad	2008-2010 State consultant
4	Ms. Varsha Bhatt	DPC	Surendranagar	1994 R.P 2005-DPC S.K 2007- DPC Surendrangar
5	Ms. Harsha Bhatt	DPC	Sabarkantha/ I/c DPC Rajkot	89-93 Sahayogini Rajkot 93-97 JRP Rajkot 2005-07 DPC SN 2007-2010 DPC SK 2011-I/C DPC Rajkot
6	Ms. Nayna Joshi	DPC	Banaskantha	
7	Ms. Shanta Parmar	DPC	Panchmahal	2005- R.P 2007 -DPC PMS
8	Ms. Laxmi Ninama	DPC	Dang	1989- Sahayogini SK, 1998 JRP SK 2009 DPC B.K 2010 DPC Dangs
9	Ms. Sejal Dand	JRM Member	Ahmedabad	
10	Ms. Anu Sarin	DFID, APO	Delhi	
11	Mr. Umesh Acharya	Account Consultant	Ahmedabad	
12	Mr. Kirtibhai Dave	Accountant	Ahmedabad	
13	Ms. Falguni Gurjar	Administrative	Ahmedabad	
14	Mr. Darshan Bhatt	D.E.O.	Ahmedabad	
15	Ms. Hetal Bhavsar	D.E.O.	Ahmedabad	



**(Section 3.3)**

**MS Jharkhand: Key Observations and Recommendations**

**I. Structure of the field visits of Joint Review Mission**

The Joint Review Mission team comprising of Mr. Gopalan (Government of India representative) and Ms. Arundhuti Roy Choudhury (DFID), visited the State between 8-12 February, 2011. The mission included field visits to Khunti district and within it the Banda block. The team interacted with JMSS functionaries (state and district offices), federations and sangha members, visited two Mahila Shikshan Kendras (MSKs) and interacted with the girls and teachers, the sanitary towel production unit, observed the economic activities the women sangha members are engaged in such as masonry and sanitary napkin production under the UNICEF-supported Total Sanitation initiative. The team also interacted with the State Resource Center advisory members. The observations of the Joint Review Mission (JRM) were shared with the Principal Secretary, Department of Education, Government of Jharkhand.

The JRM team wishes to thank the State, District and sub-district functionaries of MS Jharkhand as well as the external partners for the support and cooperation extended during this period. The team also thanks women members of Sanghas and Federation for making the visit an insightful experience.

**II. Programme Back ground**

Mahila Samakhya programme in Bihar (undivided) was launched in the year 1991 in four districts namely: West Champaran, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur and Rohtas under the banner “Education for All”. In 1992, Ranchi and East Singhbhum were also included. The entire Mahila Samakhya Programme was led by the State Project Director (SPD) of Bihar Education Project (BEP) till the bifurcation of Jharkhand state.

In 2000, when Jharkhand was established as a new state, Mahila Samakhya Programme continued as usual under Jharkhand Education Project Council (JEPC) department of Human

Resource Development, Government of Jharkhand. Initially, the programme had to face great difficulties due to infancy of the state and also there were other social indicators and issues which were of greater priority for the newly formed state. However, the team at the state level managed to continue the Mahila Samakhya Program covering 3308 villages (since the undivided Bihar) of 37 blocks of 4 districts i.e. Chatra, Ranchi, West Singhbhum and East Singhbhum. The idea to register Mahila Samakhya as “Jharkhand Mahila Samakhya Society” a separate society was pursued rigorously and finally on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006 a separate society got registered under Societies Registration Act 1860. In June 2007 JMSS started working independently. When they started working there were two options for JMSS;

- **The 1<sup>st</sup> was to start working in a fresh way.**
- **the 2<sup>st</sup> was to work with the existing coverage and functionaries**

They decided to continue with the existing coverage and functionaries at village level as a lot of efforts, energy and resources were invested for Mahila Samakhya programme since 1992 and till then the programme had achieved great achievements in terms of empowerment and coverage. When they decided to work with the existing structure, they had to face a tough situation as they had to work in 3308 village. They also decided to revive the existing Sangha rather than forming new Sanghas.

### **III. Programme Geographical Expansion and Scale.**

The programme now is present in 11 of the total 24 districts (45%), covering 71 blocks of the 211 (33%) and working in 4098 villages of the 32620 in the state (13%). Over the past year the programme has expanded its reach to 9 new villages and formed 17 additional sanghas. Currently, the total number of sanghas is 9234 reaching 141367 women of which 57% are ST, 15% SC, 18% OBC and 6% Muslims. There was no expansion of districts or blocks as the numbers are in line with the 11<sup>th</sup> plan targets.

Table -1

Particulars	Coverage undertaken in 2006-07	Expansion till Dec. 2010	Expansion by JMSS till Dec. 2010
Districts	4	11	7
Villages	3308	4107	799

% social groups coverage of the 11 MS districts		
Particulars	Census 2001	MS covered
ST	30%	57%
SC	10%	15%
Minority	15%	6%
others	45%	22%

**Clearly, Review Team's Recommendations:**

The programme has been in operation for over the years the Mahila Samakhya programme which started as a pilot project in four districts and 37 blocks has grown into a full-fledged programme. The Joint Review team was pleased to see that the programme had expanded (district and block) as per the 11<sup>th</sup> year targets. Engagement with the Sangha women during the field visit at the sangha-level reflected:

- A strong sense of self-image and confidence among the sangha women.
- A strong sense of solidarity and mutual understanding within the sangha women. However, there seem to have been some cases of women withdrawing from the sangha for various reasons. However, these are relatively few in number.
- An overall environment where women are eager to seek more knowledge and information for more positive role in their own development
- Increasingly government programmes are reaching out to the sangha women to provide and monitor services such as Mid-Day meal, MGNREGS, etc. This is increasing their visibility and also access to entitlements.
- The sangha women spoke of greater power and autonomy at the household level.

- The MS programme has given opportunities for a large number of women with little education, exposure or work experience to move into positions of decisions making thereby ensuring their empowerment. Grassroots level workers (the sahayogini who actually mobilises and organises at the village level) have moved into management positions at the district levels.

However, changes within the household either in terms of lessening of the work load, greater participation in decision making, a more equal status in the household are issues that have not been easily articulated or captured in documentation. As the sanghas have matured there is a clearer exploration and articulation of these areas. Perhaps this is an area that needs more focused research.

### **Review Team's Recommendations:**

- The programme has no plans for district expansion. Which is fine; however, the programme needs to develop innovative and new strategies to deepen and consolidate its engagement in the existing areas. This would mean relooking at the role of the sangha women in the community. Also the programme needs to rise above the sangha ambit and look at broader development processes.
- The coverage of Muslim women is low in proportion of their total share in state population (14%) which the programme needs to address. This could be because the Muslim population is low in the blocks the MS programme is currently working. In that case the programme may need to explore ways to engage in blocks with high concentration of Muslim population. The programme also needs to identify the most excluded and marginalized women among the SC, ST and Muslim women and look for ways to address their issues.
- The programme also needs to ensure that the Sangha's in remote and hard to reach areas get adequate resources and attention.
- Districts have to strengthen their data base so that they can compare their achievements with the secondary data (eg. Growth in literacy rate, increase of women's income etc)

**C) Federations:** In the last year 3 new federation have been formed and 9 are in the progress of becoming federations. Currently, there are 10 registered federations covering 22 blocks and 26784 women. Formation of Federation is an important indicator of empowerment of the sangha women. This shows the willingness of women to intervene in the social, educational and political issues at regional level. The Federations are expected to sustain the activities of women empowerment and awareness in the rollback area.

Table 2

<b>FEDERATION PARTICULARS</b>	<b>Up to March 10</b>	<b>April 10- Dec 11</b>	<b>Total</b>
Registered federations	7	3	10
Federation under process	4	5	9
Blocks covered by federations	13	9	22
No. of federation sanghas	1558	125	1683
Members in federation group	25034	1750	26784

### **Status of the Federations**

The federations are in varied stages of development. Field discussion showed that the federations have the basic capability to provide routine support to their sanghas and ensure basic requirement of peer education, management and accounts maintenance. But, they need to rise above the sangha level to become leaders for change and gender equality in policy and programme implementation at the macro level (e.g. effective planning and monitoring of government programmes like Education, Health, laws such as RTE, RTI at block level. On the whole, the leadership in the federations is still nascent, with JRPs and CRPs providing constant support and guidance.

The federation's financial autonomy and capacities to be independent are long way to go although they are implementing a variety of activities to generate resources to become economically viable. Federation's autonomy, with small savings and small number of villages needs examination. Sustainability to be independent of MS requires serious resource mobilization strategy vis-à-vis its role. Federations' own income through various sources such as (membership fees, etc.) continue to be limited in relation to its expenditure.

## **Recommendations**

Prepare a concept note in consultation with the NPO and other states on what it would take in technical, financial, legal and administrative terms for federations to evolve as institutional entities. Time bound expansion and consolidation of Sangha (as per 11<sup>th</sup> plan guideline) has badly affected the quality of the programme. It needs to re-looked at. According to the MS state team federations need technical and financial support from MS for at least 5 more years.

- Develop strategic plan to build capacities of the federations to work as independent and self-sustainable entities. The federations need support in understanding new issues and information, planning their programmes, raising and managing resources.
- There is an urgent need to link with other civil society groups and networks. This will increase the programmes exposure to new ideas, strategies and ways of working. The programme has to learn to absorb new ideas without compromising their basic principles
- Develop a clear business plan to ensure financial independence of the federation.

## **IV Programme Strategy: Need to Expand Horizon**

The Review team was pleased to see that the sanghas and the federations are engaged in building awareness and improving capacities of the members for accessing welfare programmes and schemes. They are also engaged in monitoring government programmes like MGNREGS, Mid-Day meal. There are attempts to address gender issues in forest management, drought mitigation migration which are critical for a state like Jharkhand.

However, the participation of the sanghas and federations is yet to grow to demand policy changes and to seek removal of structural constraints for women's empowerment e.g. demand improvement of schools in tune with the growing enrolment rates and upgradation from the elementary level to high schools for absorption of girls into high schools, designing of MGNREGS activities that improve the productive resource base of the community.

Sanghas also lack adequate perspective and capacities to challenge and demand gender sensitive implementation of laws, polices and programmes e.g., corruption in MGNREGS, application of

RTI Act to demand accountability of public services for women and girls, quality education in schools, improving standard of services of PHCs. e.g. MS has led to more women being selected as Sahiyas and improved institutional deliveries, but their role has not extended to challenge malpractices in services of JSY.

### **Recommendations:**

- The programme needs to infuse new ideas and innovations into the programme. Over the years a number of outstanding innovations have been developed for effective activism. For example, use of mobile phones for monitoring service delivery in fields such as education, health care, banking and agricultural information.
- As the programme is progressing, new areas such as policy debate and analysis, policy influencing skills, knowledge of government programmes, planning, budgeting, and financing etc. needs to be undertaken

### **A) Education**

The field visits confirmed and demonstrated the active participation of the Sangha and federation women in promoting formal and non-formal education. It also confirms the active participation of the Sangha women in the village-level education committees. Education constitutes the major area of training oriented towards both school and non-school empowerment. Interventions in education range from pre-school teaching, mainstreaming through camp schools and kishori manchs for adolescent girls (Kishoris), MSK for 15 to 35 years old females. There are also educational programmes for children and women in Jail.

The Mahila Shikshan Kendra (MSK) is a very important component of the programme. It is a residential centre providing education facility to deprived women and girls who due to difficult circumstances have left their studies or were not able to study. The beneficiaries get another opportunity to involve themselves in studies. The curriculum is in condensed form so that they enjoy the study. Apart from education, they are also given skill development training for taking

up livelihood opportunity once they stand on their own. These women and girls are also taken as role models in their villages -- a cadre of trained, educated and responsive change agents are created in the villages.

Table 3

<b>STATUS OF MSK</b>			
<b>ENROLLMENT PARTICULARS</b>	<b>Enrolled</b>	<b>Mainstreamed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Upto 2007-2008	1800	416	416
2008-2009	283	185	185
2009-2010	323	179	179
2010-2011	325	0	0
<b>Status of EX-MSK</b>			
<b>PARTICULARS</b>	<b>Up to March 09</b>	<b>April 09-March 10</b>	<b>Total</b>
Continuing education	466	60	526
Matric pass	117	3	120
Inter pass	44	0	44
Graduate and above	4	0	4
Self employed	331	18	349
In Private and Govt. service	8	0	8
MS functionaries	29	6	35
Note: It has not been possible to track all the ex-MSK trainees.			

The JRM observed that the programme has largely facilitated girls to access MSK and helped enroll children in to school, but has not sufficiently engaged in addressing the inefficiency of the schooling and education systems. The programme also needs to build greater focus on motivating villagers & parents in monitoring and making all government schools functional - at least in the MS villages. During one of our visits we observed most of the schools closed without any teachers. The programme also needs to look at issues of classroom practices, quality of teaching, etc.



It was heartening to see that a number of tribal children have reached the higher education level. To support their further growth the programme needs to provide information to children in higher education on making their choice on subjects, procedures for admission, linking to financial institutions for the costs to be incurred, available government and other provisions etc. Efforts should be made to link this second generation to emerging market opportunities and demands. New opportunities with the National Skill Development Mission should also be explored in this context.

However, while focusing on adolescent girls' education, the programme should not neglect building sangha women's literacy skills. Our field visit confirmed that the sanghas have begun to recognize the need to be fully literate. However, as a result of withdrawal of the jagjagi kendra this process seems to have slowed down. This could be overcome by building linkages with the Saakshar Bharat programme. Also, practically all sanghas have at least 1 or 2 younger women who are fully literate who could be of help

### **Recommendations:**

12. Develop strategies to track and monitor discrimination in schools and class rooms.
13. Develop strategies and framework for effective implementation of the Right to Education and RMSA which have the potential of making all children in the age group 6-14 and even 6-16 go through schools in a time bound manner.
14. The Sangha women expressed desire to further advance their learning and literacy level. The programme should speed up the process of building convergence with the Saakshar Bharat programme.
  - Districts have to keep records of all Ex-MSKs in terms of enrolment, mainstreaming, present educational status, social status etc.

### **B) Health**

Health Core Committees are performing their duties like spreading awareness and knowledge on health and sanitation. The members also help in facilitating health camps in the villages.

Department of Health and Family Welfare, and Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, have introduced many schemes for the rural community, but still the progress in health and sanitation is very low. Lack of awareness and ignorance are the main reasons for slow development.

MS-facilitated sangha members have made efforts to make the community, especially women, realize the importance of good health and are responsive towards their rights & entitlements under all schemes of the government. They are engaged in running sanitation campaign in the village managing health camps at village level, ensuring the access of villagers to all the health services, motivating women for institutional delivery, Participation in Village Health Committee, ensuring prevention and cure of seasonal diseases in the village, making aware the villagers against superstitious beliefs in health, creating awareness in the village on healthy practices through BCC activities, promoting herbal medication for both acute and chronic diseases, creating awareness of women and adolescent girls on adolescent health.

The Sangha members are involved in forming health committees at village level. The members also guide the committee.

**Table – 4**

**Components under Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)**

S. No.	Component	Districts engaged in
1.	Production of household sanitary toilets	Ranchi, Chatra, Saraikela, East and West Singhbhum
2.	Repairing of hand pumps	East Singhbhum and Ranchi
3.	Vermi-composting	Ranchi, Chatra, Saraikela, East and West Singhbhum
4.	Water testing	Ranchi, Chatra, Saraikela, East and West Singhbhum
5.	Production of Sanitary napkins	Ranchi

6.	BCC for key hygiene behaviour	Ranchi, Chatra, Saraikela, East and West Singhbhum
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**Table 5**

**TSC profile under MS**

S. No.	Particulars	Total number
1	No. of women masons at Panchayat-level	219
2	Women hand pump mechanics	229
3	Toilet beneficiaries	1246
4	Defunct hand pumps repaired	428
5	Trained Motivators at village level	275
6	Women trained in vermi-composting	305
7	Total production of vermicompost	9378 Kg.
8	Women involved in production of sanitary napkins	15
9	Total production of sanitary napkins	5112 Pkts
10	Samooch (sangha) members trained in key hygiene behaviour	526
11	Health committee members trained in key hygiene behaviour	202
12	Kishoris trained in key hygiene behaviour	926
13	Kishore (adolescent boys) trained in key hygiene behaviour	342
14	Women trained in water testing	124
15	No. of ponds/wells/hand pumps tested for quality of water	630

**Recommendations:**

- The programme on health needs to build awareness of women and men on issues of reproductive rights, modern methods of spacing and delaying of children especially of young women in addition to the overall health education.
- Ensure ways to improve women's easy access to quality contraceptives and legal abortion services
- Under the total sanitation campaign the community women should be motivated to build complete toilets along with doors and roof. This can be done through use of local and

more cost effective building material. Only then will these become meaningful and be used by the community.

- The programme on health needs to build awareness of women and men on issues of reproductive rights, modern methods of spacing and delaying of children especially of young women in addition to the overall health education. . This will increase educational and employment opportunities for women. Also to ensure that the different spacing options are made available to the women by the ICDS and health centers.
- Ensure ways to improve women's easy access to quality contraceptives and legal abortion services
- Under the Total Sanitation Campaign the community women should be motivated to build complete toilets along with doors and roof. This can be done through use of local and more cost effective building material. Only then will these become meaningful and be used by the community.

### **C) Economic Empowerment**

The Review team was pleased to see that economic independence has been identified as an important element of women's empowerment in Jharkhand. The first step it took was to build capacity of the Sangha in savings. The importance of saving was delivered to them in orientation classes.. Given that Jharkhand is one of the most poverty stricken states it is not easy for poor women to do savings activities - given their economic condition - despite which they have taken up income generation works. Most of the women's groups have taken up small employments like dairy, poultry, agriculture work, vegetable sale etc. They also take loan from Sangha savings on less interest and take up livelihood work which today is helping them in educating their children, repairing their homes and at times meeting their health needs too. The members are also doing transaction with the banks like taking small loans under government schemes and starting collective business. This change in the women has also given them respect in the community as well as in their own homes. They are now participating in the decisions taken in their home and are now acting as role models for other women. For example the Sangha women have greater say in sending girls to schools, they are now much more mobile, they take greater care of their health and food intake, cases of domestic violence has reduced etc

However, these need to be systematically tracked and documented. Also there is need to capture how economic activities have enabled women to move out of the poverty trap, or reduce economic exploitation, or enhance women's skills and capabilities in marketing and management at local levels.

**Table 6**  
**Saving Groups**

PARTICULARS	Up to March '09-'10	April '10- December '11	Total
Saving groups	2792	48	2840
Women in saving groups	31718	8725	40443
Total saving amount	11763118	11542	11774660

Women groups engaged in Income Generating Activities		
Categories	Activities	No. of Sanghas engaged
▪ Agriculture & Animal husbandry	poultry, fishery, cooperative cultivation, vegetable cultivation, herbal garden, piggery, goat rearing, flower garden, mushroom cultivation, cultivation on lease	168
▪ Other consumable and non consumable products	soap, detergent powder, candle, stitching, knitting , Furniture, brick, jewellery, lac bangles, bamboo craft, terracotta etc.	83
▪ IG through TSC	toilet construction, hand pump repairing, auto driving, production of sanitary napkin, vermi-composting, masonry, water testing etc	91
▪ Saving & loaning	Groups do saving and take loan for the purpose of Health Treatment, Education, Business, Agriculture, Marriage, or any other emergency work.	2840

▪ Group business	Tent house, PDS, grain bank, general store, business of <i>Mahua</i> , vegetables, paddy etc.	187
▪ Herbal products	Women groups are making the herbal medicines for gastric, cough and cold, skin disease, paralysis, fever, anaemia, infertility, debility.	13
▪ Access to government Schemes	Women's groups take the contract for constructing pond, well, bridge, check dam, Panchayat building etc. under MGNREGS <sup>35</sup> , and also take loans under SJGSY to start group business. This year strong Samoohs (sanghas) got Rs. 10000/-each from the Minister's quota <sup>36</sup> .	178

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop systematic and strategic planning for entrepreneurship development which includes conducting cost benefit analysis, strategies for marketing, packaging, etc.
- Develop systems to document and track the economic activities are helping to improve the economic conditions and income of the women and their family. This can be done through the new MIS system the state had developed.
- Draw up strategies to hand hold and provide support and financial backing for the vocational trainings to become economically viable as a source of livelihood for those trained.

### D) Women in Local Decision Making

In Jharkhand Panchayat election were held after 32 years. MS has for long been engaged in building women's awareness on Panchayati Raj institutions and its importance. Once the elections were declared they became the first priority of the programme. As MS already had strong women's collectives in all the districts it become possible for them to mobilise women to take part in the three tiers of Panchayat elections.

<sup>35</sup> We did not get a clear picture on the impact MS is having on improving the governance and implementation of MGNREGS – in fact it will be good to try and understand that. Also the programme could start using more modern technology to monitor such programmes.

<sup>36</sup> There is no number available with JMSS – maybe the new MIS will provide the number.

Table 7

**Nomination filed by MS Sangha Members in 11 districts**

Districts	Mukiya	Ward member	Zila parisad	Panch.
Saraikela	11	7	1	7
Sahaibganj	-	6	-	-
Khunti	18	29	2	3
Giridihi	2	15	-	3
Ranchi	43	34	-	6
Garhwa	7	8	-	1
Chaibasa	35	29	4	2
Pakur	1	2	-	4
Chattra	27	14	-	2
Godda	2	-	-	2
E.Singhbhum	38	40	2	-
Total Nominated	184	184	9	30
Total Elected	25	161	2	28 <sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Not available with the JMSS State office – they said the new MIS will be collecting the social group data.

Prior to filing of nominations, MS held a series of orientation workshops and established information centers. Following the elections they are developing a module to train the elected women members of sanghas to enable them function within the institutions. They also plan to provide computer literacy to the elected members.

Recommendations:

- MS needs to develop clear strategies and plans to provide long term handholding and support systems to the elected members. This should go beyond the sangha women and include other elected representatives, too.
- The programme needs to develop clear strategies on ways of establishing the proposed mechanisms of coordination and communication between the Panchayats and the inter/intra-sectorial Departments.
- MS also needs to plan how the community women in areas where no women from the Sanghas either got nominated or got elected are going to benefit from the Panchayats.
- The programme needs to start documenting how the elected women are performing within the Panchayats.

**E) Violence against Women and Nari Adalat**

Nari Adalat is a mechanism developed at village level which is headed by women of the federation. The mechanism is developed to support the victims of gender discrimination and also other social evils prevailing in the society. Nari Adalat is an alternative to the traditional judicial system, which is time taking, unaffordable and complicated in many ways. Sangha -initiated Nari Adalats are very practical, less expensive and accessible to every woman who wishes to take the support. It is neither expensive nor complicated. There are 11 Nari Adalats in JMSS' coverage area. These Nari Adalats are operated completely by MS-facilitated federations' members themselves.

Table 8

<b>PARTICULARS</b>	<b>Up to March '10</b>	<b>April '10-Dec. '10</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dowry	5	3	8



Sexual Harassment	0	1	1
Rape	0	0	0
Domestic violence	65	24	89
Bigamy	6	7	13
Child marriage	18	2	21
Unmatched marriage	1	0	1
Pseudo-marriage	13	2	16
Witch hunting	1	0	1
Trafficking	0	0	0
Molestation	0	0	0
Eve-teasing	1	0	1
Inter caste marriage	10	0	10
Miscellaneous	6	3	9

Despite the Nari Adalats and the related pressures it has created it is not yet clear how and to what extent the women have been able to address issues of violence at the household level. At what stage do the women approach the Nari Adalats? Is it only when they fear real physical danger? There is some anecdotal evidence to say that over a period, the cases of violence against women have reduced in the MS areas, but this needs to be systematically documented.

**Table 9**  
**No. of child Marriages stopped/prevented**

S. No.	District	No. of child marriage stopped				Total
		2007 - 08	2008 - 09	2009 -10	2010-11	
1.	Ranchi	79	11	7	4	101
2.	Khunti	29	6	3	1	39
3.	W. Singhbhum	54	8	5	-	67
4.	Saraikela	29	5	2	1	37
5.	E. Singhbhum	56	9	7	2	74
6.	Chatra	217	13	9	2	241
7.	Giridih	-	-	-	1	1
8.	Garhwa	-	-	-	2	2
9.	Pakur	-	-	-	-	-
10.	Godda	-	-	-	-	-
11.	Sahebganj	-	-	-	-	-
					<b>Total</b>	<b>562</b>

## Recommendations:

- There is a need to capture and document the impact of the Nari Adalats and sanghas' action on incidents of violence against women at the larger community level.
- There is a need to explore ways in which Nari Adalats can be replicated into the government structures – police and other judicial systems
- The programme needs to maintain record of cases coming from non-MS areas, non-MS women, inter-federation and intra-federation case referrals and from males - at all levels.
- Nari Adalat is required to be trained on CEDAW (the Convention on Elimination of any form of Discrimination Against Women), SC and ST/Prevention of Atrocities Act, etc.
- SPO is required to develop linkages with national-level forums like Lawyers' Collective & PLD.

## V) Networking and Convergence

Liaison, networking and convergence are very important part of the strategy from village to state level. So far the programme has made good attempts and these linkages seem to have proved to be significant factors that have helped it define the organizational strength, capacity and urge for providing better services to the target community. These associations are providing platform to solve issues like domestic violence, unemployment, illiteracy, migration, adolescent health etc.

Table 10

<b>Liaison/Networking/convergence at a glance</b>		
<b>Department</b>	<b>Issue working on</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>
Health department	Health camp and health check up	Students of MSK and Camp school
Prakalp	Household and Anganwadi Toilet construction	Women of Mahila Samooh , Anganwadi children and villagers
Police station	Nari Adalat	Women suffering from domestic violence
Women Help Line	Women against domestic violence	Women suffering from domestic violence

JEPC	Education	Illiterate, domestic worker, dropout girls
Block office	Place for meeting, running office	Federation Samooh
Dist. Administration	Govt. building for federation office, PDS	Federation Samooh
PHD	Drinking water	Federation Samooh, Mandar, Students of Camp School
DWSD	Health and sanitation	Women of federation
DRDA	PDS shop, social audit	Samooh women
Ministry of Minority Affairs, GOI through TCDC	Manufacturing of lac bangles with federation in Ranchi	Women of federation
PHED	Hand pump repairing in East Singhbhum	Federation women and Samooh women
Department of fishery	Fish culture	Federation women and Samooh women
Ministry of Home Affairs	MSK & in jails	Women prisoners
UNICEF	Health, sanitation, education	Federation women and Samooh women
C. Change	Adolescent reproductive health	Samooh women and adolescent forum
Ratan Tata trust	Education	Samooh women and adolescent forum

### Recommendations:

- Building convergence with different State Departments is a time-consuming task. Accordingly the programme needs to identify two or three key areas and departments it would build convergence with.
- Convergence with other civil society organisations and networks working on issues of women's rights is an area that the programme needs to explore seriously.

## **VI. Resource Support Systems**

### **Role of State Resource Centre in supporting MS**

JMSS' State Resource Centre (SRC) has started functioning from 2008 with an infrastructure of a separate building with meeting and workshops rooms and 2 guest rooms, with the accommodation facility for 40 participants. SRC has been developed as a Gender Resource Centre to be used as a platform for sharing of best practices, conducting research & surveys, documentation, module & IEC material development. Currently it is mainly used for MS training, reflection, workshops, vocational trainings for all levels of staff and functionaries associated with JMS. A small unit of library has also been set up where state-specific books have been collected and the process of indexing and cataloging is in progress. The technical and physical infrastructure of the SRC has been utilized by C-Change, SSA, VLP-RCH leaders and UNICEF for their programmes.

The SRC has the advantage and the flexibility to develop its scope and create its niche as a gender resource centre in a state which has no strong gender resource organisations. It also has the challenge to lift itself from being a training centre to play the role of a catalyst agency in advancing the research and advocacy to address the second generation perspective building for MS.

**Support from the NRG** members is seen as a major source of strength by JMSS SPO. Recent trainings for all the SPOs which were conducted centrally by ERU were considered to be useful in refreshing the core values, processes and approaches to be followed by the M.S functionaries who have been there with MS for 10-20 years. However it was also voiced by the JMS team that much more support and guidance and interactions could be provided from the NRG and NPO office. The need for a national resource centre was raised during the discussions with the JRM team.

### **State recommendations:**

- There should be regular monitoring of the state programme and system by NPO

- In EC meetings NPO representative are required to visit state at least 2-3 days before for their field visits
- Frequent interaction between NPD and state HRD secretary about the progress of the programme
- Separate files to be maintained at the state HRD office for Mahila Samakhya
- MS should be invited in the departmental review meeting organized by state HRD department.

## **VII. Staff Remuneration, Security, Capacity Building facilities:**

The current remuneration of the MS team at all levels is low and not comparable to other functionaries of the government or market. This makes it difficult to attract and retain capable team. Those who join also look for alternatives once they gain experience. This impacts the programme seriously. It is recommended that the staff recommendations in this aspect (already submitted) be reviewed and appropriate remuneration be worked out at all levels in keeping with the demands of the job.

In addition the JRM recommends that social security measures be built into the provisions available to the staff at all levels, which was available to them earlier. There are no capacity-building opportunities for the State Project Director (SPD) who is expected to learn on the job. This is counter-productive and it is suggested that a policy on capacity building of SPDs are built in. The nature of jobs demands high levels of mobility for the team in a secure and effective manner. The long distances and travel time has led to staff members not finding adequate time to focus on sangha in remote areas. It is recommended that four wheeler vehicles be provided to all new districts as was done earlier and old vehicles be replaced. Also, there is need to relook at the phasing out of the Sahayogini in three years' time.

## **VIII. Financial Management and Procurement**

A) Fund flow from GoI and status of releases to district.

The status of fund position during 2010-11 is given below: -

Rupees

Opening Balance as on 01-04-2010*	- 47,60,271.69
Funds received from GOI	4,86,43,000.00
Other receipts	71,465.00
Total Funds available	4,39,54,193.31
Releases made to districts	3,83,99,230.00
Expenditure incurred	3,82,33,409.00
Unspent Balance	57,20,784.31

`47.60 lakh was shown as a minus opening balance on account of excess expenditure incurred out of the fund lying under the head provision of honorarium in 2006-07 amounting to `49.36 lakh. This was brought to the notice of MHRD who advised to carry out re-appropriation after obtaining the approval of EC. Accordingly, The EC's approval for the re-appropriation was obtained on 25-09-2010. Since MS fund was used for the payment of Honorarium, this should not have been shown as a minus closing balance in the annual accounts. MS fund was used for the payment and no other fund was involved. In such case, how would a minus entry be made? It seems there is an accounting error in this transaction. State needs to rectify this error. In case the money was borrowed from other funds, the minus entry was possible. Here, the money was available in MS account and the same was meant for some other activities.

Against an approved outlay of `655.84 lakh, an expenditure of `382.33 lakh was incurred up to 31-01-2011. This works out 58.3% of the approved outlay. Against the fund available, the expenditure works out to 86.98%. While the funds from GoI received in 3 installments during the current year, the releases to the districts have been made in more than 10 installments.

### **Status of Audit and compliance**

#### **Statutory audit**

Statutory audit for 2009-10 was completed and the final audit report issued on 25-10-2010. However, based on the draft copy of the audit report furnished by the Chartered Accountant firm

on 20-09-2010, the approval of the E.C. was obtained on 24-09-2010. The audit report was submitted to GoI on 22-01-2011.

The Annual Report for 2009-10 was submitted to GoI on 18-11-2010.

All the audit objections/observations for the previous years have been settled and no outstanding audit issues pending for settlement. The Mission observed that the audit objections are not noted in an audit objection settlement register for monitoring.

#### Internal Audit

M/s N. K. Kejriwal & Co., a CA firm was engaged to carry out internal audit on quarterly basis with a fee of `2,000/- per quarter per district/SPO. The internal audit for 2009-10 has been completed and the firm has been engaged further for 1 year to carry out the internal audit of 2010-11. The internal audit is in progress. The Mission appreciates this initiative. Follow-up action on the internal audit objections/observations are being taken up by State Project Office with the DIUs for settlement.

All the internal audit objections/observations for the previous years have been settled and no objection is pending for settlement.

#### **Financial Rules and Delegation of powers, procurement systems**

##### Financial Rules

The Mission noted that the development of the manual on financial management and procurement at National Level due to be disseminated by June 2010 has not yet been completed. However, the Mission is happy to note that the State is following its own Finance Regulation which covers the following subjects: -

- i) Introduction
- ii) Definitions

- iii) Budget formulation,
- iv) Delegation of power of SPD and DPC,
- v) Purchase receipts and custody and accounting of stores,
- vi) Opening of bank accounts, its operation and investment of fund,
- vii) Grant-in-aid to NGOs,
- viii) Maintenance of accounts and audit,
- ix) Travelling Allowance Rules.

Delegation of powers:

The delegation of financial powers of SPD and DPC is given in the financial regulations and the Mission is noted that the same is strictly being followed.

Procurement systems:

The method of procurement and procedure are prescribed in the financial regulations. Any item of value of Rs. 1 lakh and above is to be purchased under open tender system. All purchases of the value of less than 1 lakh is made under limited tender system. Single tender and invitation of quotation system are also permissible.

A purchase committee is to be constituted for any purchase above `25,000/- at SPO level and `10,000/- at DIU level. The Mission noted that this is invariably being followed by the State and District.

No open tender system was followed during the current year. Computers and their accessories, equipment etc. of the value of less than `1 lakh per contract was purchased at State Office level on DGS&D Rate contract basis. Procurement of stationery items, printing etc of less than `1 lakh per contract was carried out on limited tender method.

The Mission noted that the State MS Society is following the procurement procedure prescribed in the Finance Regulations. The Mission also observed that in some cases for



small items, a written request seeking the quotation was not made but quotations were obtained personally from the suppliers which should be avoided in future.

#### 1. Accounting and Record Maintenance:

Separate accounts are being maintained for Mahila Samakhya, UNICEF, MS training-cum-production centre, MS general account and NPEGEL.

Double entry system of accounting on standard accounting software is used at SPO and in all DIUs. Manual double entry system of accounting is used at MSK level.

Standard accounting software (Tally ERP 9.0) is being used in SPO and all the DIUs. The Mission is happy to note that the State is planning to introduce on-line system by next financial year. The staff is trained on the operation of Tally system.

#### Books of Accounts:

The books of accounts i.e. cash book, ledger, journal, advance register etc are being maintained in the Tally system. The print outs of the cash book are taken out daily, signed by Accountant, Accounts Officer and SPD/DPC and kept on record.

The print out of the Journal, Advance Register is taken out on monthly basis. The print out of the ledger is taken out on annual basis.

Other books of accounts like cheque issue register, stock register and assets register are maintained. The Mission observed that the annual physical verification of stock and asset was not carried out at SPO, DIU and MSK visited by the Mission.

The Mission is happy to note that asset identification numbers have been allotted to all assets.

#### Advances:

`3.51 lakh is outstanding for adjustment, oldest date being 07-10-2010 at SPO. The State needs to take immediate action to settle this outstanding advance.

Bank Account:

Separate bank account is opened for each scheme. Joint signatory savings bank account is opened with Canara Bank for all the schemes.

The Mission observed that for the remittance of TDS recovered a second cheque for `1,642/- was issued to SBI, Doranda Branch, Ranchi, on the written request of the bank stating that the earlier cheque was misplaced. However, the MS account was debited twice for the same amount which has resulted in an excess payment of `1,642/-. The State needs to take immediate action to get the refund of this excess payment from SBI.

Bank reconciliation statement:

The Mission is happy to note that the bank reconciliation statement is being prepared regularly on a monthly basis at SPO, DIU and MSK level.

However the Mission observed that a stale cheque dated 31-03-2010 was present in DIU, Khunti. The DIU needs to cancel this cheque and credit the amount to MS account.

E-Transfer of Funds:

While the funds from GoI are transferred to the State Society on e-transfer, the State is transferring funds to districts also on e-transfer/ RTGS system.

Staff Position of Account Staff:

While one Finance and Accounts Officer and one Accountant is posted in SPO, one Accountant each is available in all the DIUs and MSKs.

### Capacity Building of Accounts Staff:

A special training of 5 days was organized from 17-21 August 2010 for the accounts staff. Resource Persons from SSA and Chartered Accountant have imparted the training. All the Accounts staff from SPO, DIU and MSK have attended the training.

### Review Meetings:

A monthly review meeting of DPCs is held regularly to review the progress of implementation of programme including financial matters. In addition, a quarterly review meeting of all accounts staff from DIU and MSK is held regularly at State level. The Mission noted that the minutes of these review meetings are prepared and disseminated to all concerned. The Mission suggests that these minutes may be uploaded in the State Mahila Samakhya Society's website.

### Key issues and Recommendations:

#### Key issues:

- i) The release of funds to districts needs to be made as per the releases made by GoI.
- ii) In some cases for small items written request inviting quotations have not been issued.
- iii) Annual physical verification of stock and asset not carried out at all level.
- iv) Advance of ` 3.51 lakh with oldest date 07-10-2010 is outstanding for settlement.
- v) All stale cheques need to be cancelled.

#### Recommendations:

- Releases to district should be made as per the releases made by GoI.

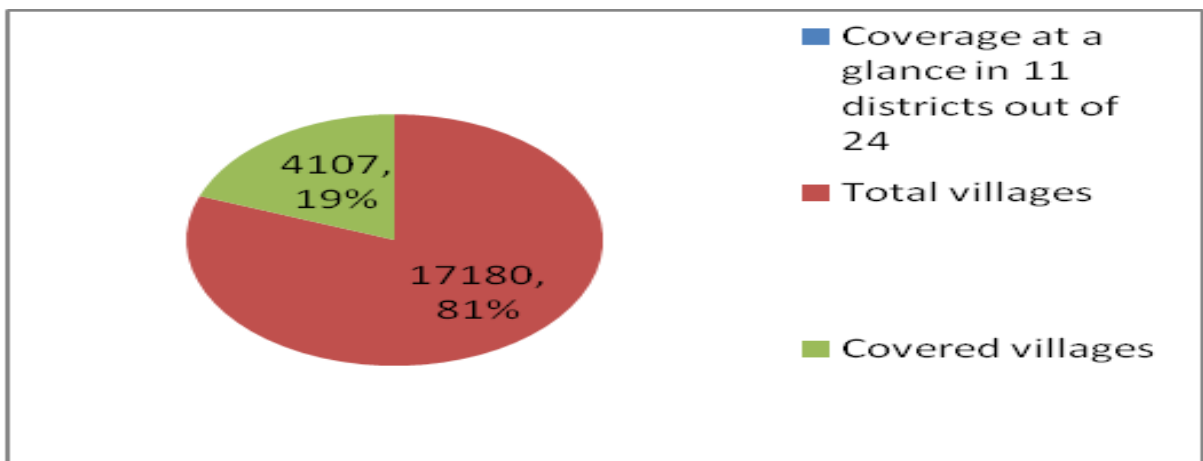
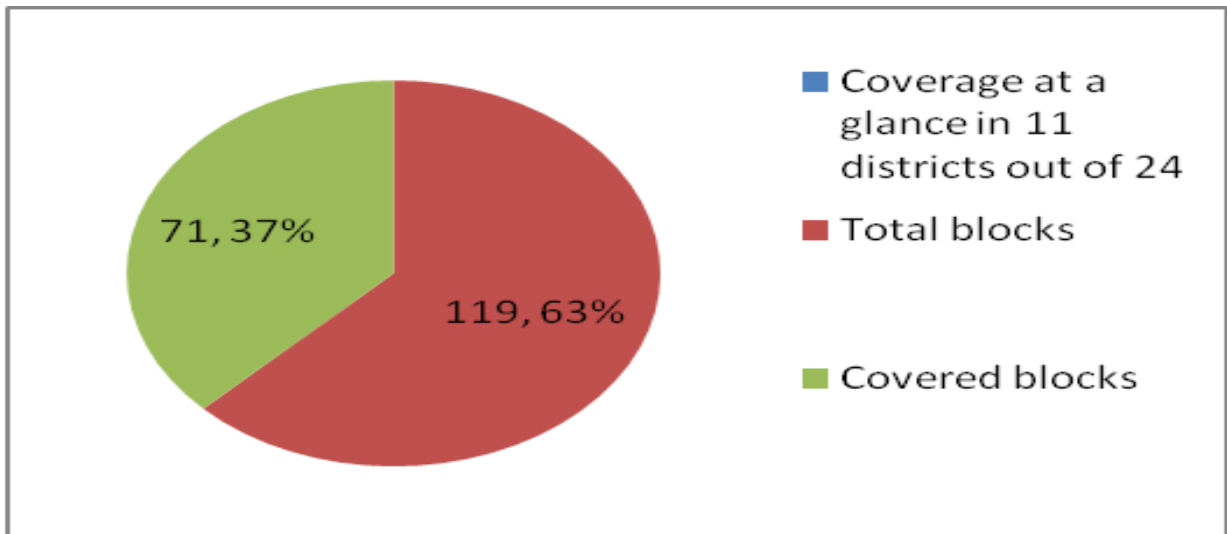
- A written request inviting quotations indicating technical specifications, quantity required, date of delivery etc should be made for all items of procurement through quotations and limited tender.
- Annual physical verification of stock and assets is to be carried out on regular basis at all levels and the result recorded in the stock/asset register.

Annexure-I:

<b>JMSS' coverage in 11 districts out of 24</b>					
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of district</b>	<b>Total blocks</b>	<b>Covered blocks</b>	<b>Total villages</b>	<b>Covered villages</b>
1	Ranchi	16	12	1319	593
2	East Singhbhum	10	10	1782	900
3	Chatra	12	12	1479	1202
4	West Singhbhum	16	7	1709	212
5	Saraikela (bifurcated from West Singhbhum)	9	3	1223	462
6	Khunti (bifurcated from Ranchi)	6	6	769	456
7	Garwha	14	5	974	50
8	Giridih	13	4	2552	59
9	Pakur	6	4	1250	95
10	Godda	8	4	2310	37
11	Sahebganj	9	4	1819	41
<b>Total</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>17186</b>	<b>4107</b>

<b>Coverage at a glance in 11 districts out of 24</b>	
Total blocks	119
Covered blocks	71

<b>Coverage at a glance in 11 districts out of 24</b>	
Total villages	17180
Covered villages	4107



**Annexure-II: People the Review team met during the Joint Review Visit**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place visited</b>	<b>Persons/groups met</b>
<b>8-2-11</b>	<b>SPO</b>	<b>DIU and SPO staff</b>
<b>8-2-11</b>	<b>SPO</b>	<b>SRG and partners</b>
<b>9-2-11</b>	<b>DIU Khunti</b>	<b>DIU Khunti functionaries</b>
<b>9-2-11</b>	<b>Federation office at Binda</b>	<b>Federation Sangha and EC members</b>
<b>9-2-11</b>	<b>MSK Khunti</b>	<b>MSK learners and staff</b>
<b>10-2-11</b>	<b>Kumardih</b>	<b>6 federation Sangha</b>
<b>10-2-11</b>	<b>Village Siankel</b>	<b>Women masons and toilet beneficiaries</b>
<b>10-2-11</b>	<b>Village Godatoli</b>	<b>Adolescent forum and Sangha</b>
<b>11-2-11</b>	<b>SPO</b>	<b>DPCs of DIU</b>
<b>11-2-11</b>	<b>Hotwar Jail</b>	<b>MSK in Jail</b>
<b>11-2-11</b>	<b>Ratu DIET</b>	<b>MSK learners Ranchi, Sanitary napkin production unit</b>
<b>12-02-10</b>	<b>Secretariats</b>	<b>Interaction with Chairperson, EC-JMSS</b>

(Section 3.4)

**Mahila Samakhya Uttar Pradesh – State report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> JRM**

Anita Gurusurthy and Sanjay Valsangkar

**An Overview of State MS Programme**

MSUP is one of the oldest states in the MS programme. The programme now covers 17 districts and reaches over one lakh women from socially and economically marginalised sections. The programme has also phased out in one fifth of its total coverage, with 34 federations as Table 1 below indicates. Further, as the table suggests, the programme has also set up special projects such as the Nari Adalat, Kishori sanghas and in addition to the Mahila Shikshana Kendras, also runs KGBVs in the districts. Out of the 5000 odd villages where sanghas exist, the programme has supported over 500 sangha women to come into power in the local Panchayati Raj institutions. This is one indicator of the impact of the MS idea; bringing women out into the public domain into institutions of power is an important achievement.

Table 1

<b>Programme At A Glance</b>			
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Programme Particulars</b>	<b>Annual Progress</b>	
		<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
1	No. of Districts covered	17	17
2	No. of Blocks covered by the programme	62	67
3	No. of Villages	4,878	5,208
4	No. of Phased out villages	1,095	1,303
5	No. of Federations	27	34
6	No. of Cluster Sangha	364	420
7	Total No. of Sangha	4,878	4,918
8	No. of Strong Sanghas	2,186	2,290
9	No. of Medium Sanghas	1,428	1,419
10	No. of Weak Sanghas	1,026	962
11	No. of New Sanghas (one year)	238	247
12	Total No. of Sangha Members	105,146	106,289
13	No. of Sanghas receiving grants	672	705
14	No. of Literacy Centres	74	95
15	No. of Health Centres	41	40
16	No. of Nari Adalats	21	31
17	No. of Saving Groups	952	1,112
18	No. of Contributory Sanghas	831	806
19	No. of Thikanas	25	25
20	No. of Adolescent (girls) sanghas	619	645
21	No. of Kishori Sangha Members	9,809	11,330
22	No. of Kishori Kendras	115	49
23	No. of Mahila Shikshan Kendras	16	17
24	No. of KGBVs	33	33
25	No. of Sangha Women in Panchayat	604	539



The Mission was able to visit one district in addition to the State Office. In this district we interacted with women from Mishrikh block where the programme has rolled back, visited Pisawa as well as spoke to federation members from Parsendi block who had come over to the district office. Although it would have been useful to visit a second district, we needed to spend more time understanding issues in greater depth and hence decided to focus on one district. We met with the district office team in Sitapur, which incidentally is a phase 2 district in MSUP - where activities under the programme began prior to DFID funding. We were able to interact with women members of 3 federations (one of them that was established in the current expansion phase, i.e. in the past 5 year time period), met with girls in 2 MSKs, visited one KGBV and met with women from 2 Nari Adalats.

In Sitapur, the programme has set up 5 federations and works with over 14000 women from 400 sanghas. Some of the achievements of the programme in this district are in setting up strong Nari Adalats and strong federations. Particularly, between November 2009 and January 2011, the programme has made strides in certain key issues:

- After the launch of the RTE Act, 480 women from 120 (out of a total of 400) villages have taken up the issue of the setting up of School Monitoring Committees (SMCs) and are also beginning to work with other provisions of Act.
- Women's literacy camps have generated considerable interest, and women have been demanding inputs that are in depth and for longer duration.
- Sangha members are using the tool of RTI and leveraging benefits of government schemes. Pradhans, the local power elite, in certain instances have approached women sangha members to enable them to avail of jobs under the MGNREGS.
- With women's sustained monitoring and local action, the PDS implementation is improving.
- Cases of VAW are being filed under the PDVW Act.
- Women in the district - as has been a long standing tradition in the state - have challenged retrograde traditions, creatively replacing traditional rituals with new ones that subvert gender orders. Women have actively endeavoured to replace the practice of beating dolls during Nag Panchami with the new practice of rocking dolls (*gudiya jhulana*). These steps challenge some very deep seated norms that undervalue women.
- Registration of marriages is being promoted and seen as a tool to deal with the problem of desertion.
- Women have begun to make choices in important areas very meaningful to their immediate lives, like investing in getting an LPG gas connection.
- Federations support sanghas in the implementation of the Mid-Day Meal scheme, by lending them the financial support needed to cover delays in the release of budgets from the government (e.g. conversion costs for a cooked meal, which basically includes costs for spices and condiments that make the meal wholesome and tasty).
- Women are approaching line departments to access information related to their needs.

On the basis of our visits and interactions across the levels of the programme, meetings & participatory exercises with functionaries, and visits to the field where we interacted with women from sanghas, we are presenting some key findings with discussions below. The discussion is organised more or less along the Results Framework shared with us. Needless to say, overlaps on issues are bound to be there.

## **Findings and Recommendations**

### **Achievements of the MSUP programme**

Overall, the programme's achievements in U.P. need to be placed in context, vis-a-vis what was described often by women and functionaries as dominated by 'dabang' (all-powerful/dominant) men. Progress thus must be assessed in light of this 'starting-line' handicap (entrenched, patriarchal and exploitative social structures) - something that functionaries in the programme repeatedly urged us to do. The programme's work in Nari Adalats and Nari Sanjeevani Kendras is commendable for its vision of the alternative. These local innovations address access to justice and health, respectively, from a non-mainstream standpoint, filling the gap that dysfunctional local institutions create through their apathy and prejudice. These efforts of the programme reach mostly those from the class and caste backgrounds that sangha members come from, and this does raise larger questions about the arduous path of change relative to wider cultural phenomena that are tilted in favour of the powerful. Despite inroads in enabling women's participation in local political institutions, the unshakable place of money, caste and political affiliations in power struggles hijacks social justice agenda and denies gender issues their rightful place in public debate. Some sanghas and federations across districts also do run small enterprises with varying degrees of success but MS has been unable to respond to the visible and clearly expressed need of women for employment and livelihoods. The debate within MS on this has also been more open-ended and hence efforts are ad-hoc and vary across states. The work that MSUP has done in mainstreaming girls into the formal school system has been tremendous - from its 33 KGBVs, 660 out of 667 girls went back to school. The programme facilitates nearly 700 kishori sanghas.

### **Expansion, Outreach and Impact**

The expansion of the programme is both important and necessary. Larger, autonomous social change processes and efforts by the government have impacted women's empowerment in the country no doubt, but the MS programme is a unique approach that unequivocally addresses structural exclusion. MS does not meet its mandate through cash transfers or through an individual approach to entitlements, but through a pedagogic route that creates time and space for women to be aware of their rights. Building upon philosophies that affirm learning-action cycles for deep and lasting change towards social justice, MS seeks to bring about women's empowerment. The organic growth of the MS philosophy will be a precondition for deepening democracy and building robust civil society organisations that deliver the promise of democracy for women.

The expansion of MS, envisaged by the 11th Plan Document, shows a need for rethinking and for strategic shifts. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan process brought into the strategic progress of MSUP, as also the pan-Indian MS context, an imperative for programme expansion. Annexure 1V (f) of the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan Document envisages expansion of about 250 villages per district each year, with an overall aim of 141 districts for the plan period.

The push for expansion as is currently discernible comes at a time when the programme seems to need many systemic inputs to consolidate the gains so far and to avoid slippages in quality. The 'roll back' or withdrawal of the programme does negatively impact the quality of MS-induced change, since there is hardly any strategy in place that is a concerted and systemic effort to implement a resource strategy, which women can leverage with satisfactory

outcomes. What exists is extremely ad-hoc, and combined with the unfilled vacancies, difficulty to recruit good people and a cap on the overall budgetary availability, the scenario suggests a high risk to MS' impact on the ground. Women and functionaries do show resilience under these circumstances and there are efforts that have paid off. Federations that have taken birth in the prescribed 5 year time period, but the staff did express concerns about the overall maturity of the sanghas and mahasanghas that have come up more recently, in terms of the latter's capabilities to interpret the core value and meaning of MS for empowerment. The use of the word 'depth' in relation to the grasp of these new federations, which have not had a chance to grow roots and evolve into a socially credible & safe space for women, as well as a voice for the most marginal and a vehicle for justice, suggests the qualitative nature of what may be lacking. Older staff bemoaned the fact that the block resource unit idea was there in the initial plans but disappeared in the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. This was seen as an important node in the resource strategy.

A fallout of the focus on planned expansion is that the sangha space and time has slipped into a less important programme aspect. The sangha as the pivot of change and the local community as the context of change do not seem to emerge with unequivocal clarity. This invisibility of the sangha as an identity and solidarity-related platform within the programme process was seen in the articulations of the sangha, and the district team. Many aspects of the social processes of sangha establishment have become easier, but also somewhat routinised. The sangha seems to be a means to move towards the predetermined end of the mahasangha. Not all members attend the fortnightly sangha meetings and while information about schemes & entitlements are shared sometimes by the staff and sometimes by the EC members of the mahasangha, the latter is by default the space where programme strategy is designed. While this cascading model for the transfer of information and knowledge within the context of limited resources may be a pragmatic expansion method, it does compromise deeper learning & reflection processes and the need for the programme to be able to allow sanghas to be at the vanguard of change as was originally envisaged.

While interdependencies are recognised between the two spaces, the resource support to the sangha to engage in locally relevant and collectively empowering activity for gender & social justice is rather limited, despite the guidance of the sahayogini and the training support offered by MS. The weakening of focus in sangha-building - as highlighted by functionaries - has implications for solidarities in the long run.

As noted by the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan Document, MS seeks to abide by certain inviolable principles and emphasises that “every component and activity within must create an environment for learning” (2.2, ii, Philosophy and Principles of MS). Further, it directs the programme to be shaped in such a way that women's groups at the village level “set the pace, priorities, form and content of all project activities” (see page 4, 2.2, iii). This pace is not only about what women want, which may be dependent on many a variable - including the perception of poor women hemmed in by vulnerabilities, about the promise of MS for some transformation - but also as much about the conceptual and ethical frames of reference that guide the programme, so that women can then set the pace. The bottom line is that the programme needs to rearticulate these frames - what is learning and what kind of autonomy - in the current context. If indeed the programme is designed to enable women to “seek knowledge and information to make informed choices” (page 3, 11<sup>th</sup> plan document, 2.1.1), then the process must deliver on this part.

We did feel that women do not seem to have enough real options in the way they are making choices. For example, sarpanches still push women away from the job site, even when women have fought him and a host of others to get a job card done under the MGNREGS; and the 'shaasan' or wider governance was seen as an impenetrable wall. There have been instances of Panchayat meetings held by excluding erstwhile sangha members who are now elected to the Panchayat. Janani Suraksha Yojana applications have been denied to sangha women by the sarpanch precisely because they are seen to be 'trouble makers'. Local elite structures are powerful gatekeepers regulating women's access to entitlements. The closest were seen to be the most challenging adversaries - officials in the Education Department who are unable to give MS its due place.

This scenario is suggestive of a larger reality. It is not to paint a homogeneous picture of some kind of static systemic homeostasis. While women have been able to address their social "isolation and lack of self-confidence" (page 3, 2.1.1), the "oppressive social customs" and "struggles for survival" (page 3, 2.1.1) do continue and have morphed with the context, acquiring new contours in the era of globalisation and privatisation, and in the U.P. context, evidenced in increased out migration for work in some districts, an overall consumption culture that valorises power & money power, particularly, a wide-spread culture of opportunistic gatekeeping of people's entitlements & rights, and pervasive gender-based violence inside the home & outside.

The most marginalised need a strong buffer in this overall context. Depth of outreach and inclusion of the most marginalised pre-supposes effective information delivery, continued communications, quick response time, monetary and expert resources to solve serious emergencies on the ground and a viral connectedness between sanghas so that they can take forward what previous JRMs have referred to as 'the need to go towards a movement building'. The stakes are high, especially since the sweep of the forces of change is powerful and in many ways, reinforcing structural exclusions. On these counts, the programme may be said to be wanting in visionary, conceptual, budgetary and we dare say, even ethical terms. This deficit in the programme overall (especially in newer states where the programme's history of evolution has been different from the older states), arises partly because of the lack of committed time & resources to build a shared perspective and the lack of on-going efforts needed to nurture internal capacity to analyse the pros & cons of specific developments for planning & decision making. Even in a state like U.P., where the programme is old, there has been a loss of institutional memory and hence we see an absence of a shared vision, perspective & ethos. Therefore, on the ground, women's collectivisation willy-nilly ends up with approaches that do not adequately interrogate the volunteerism expected from women, and women's contribution through time and labour. The programme does seem to lack sufficient commitment and imagination to enable women to make the 'informed choices' that it talks about. It is mired in more mundane issues and is less focussed on a strategic goal. Partly, the overall budget is to blame. However, it is also because the organisational energies have run into fatigue, and the resource support strategy has not been constructed carefully, with ingenuity and zest.

A high price is perhaps being paid on account of expansion in a programme conceived as a means to enable self-awareness, agency and access to rights. The issue is not really of numbers as much as it is of quality and depth of nurturing solidarities, clarifying what collective process means and putting into place a solid resource strategy that does not link expansion with withdrawal.

It may be instructive in this discussion to note that the Results Framework (even though the U.P. team is yet to use it) needs to be revisited periodically to see how the parameters/goals may not measure the qualitative and less-easily-amenable-to-measurement aspects. How, for example, expansion in numbers is also accompanied or not by an across-the-board shared vision, or how, for example, skills & perspectives of the sahayogini is or is not commensurate with the demands of expansion.

## Recommendations

- There is - within the Education Department - a need to look at MS' work and to mainstream within its programmes the contributions of MS-developed models. While the programme component of MS in its 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document describes in detail its structures and process – educational services and support and convergent services, monitoring etc. (page 8 to 14. section 3) - these are highly unlikely to materialise with the requisite impact, unless MS' role & position within the overall education strategy to address inclusion, literacy & quality are not clarified clearly. The need is to emphasise MS as a space for innovation and to protect its processual nature in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. The programme guidelines of other departmental activities need to highlight MS for its niche contribution to curriculum design, expertise in training etc., and avoid positioning it as a convenient and readymade infrastructure for service delivery.
- The sangha-level activities can go into the next gear in terms of a MS network or movement that can grow in a self-determined way, only if the resource strategy idea can be designed with a vision and imagination concomitant to the demands & challenges of the times in dealing with structural exclusion & marginality - so that hand-holding is not just an empty word. A library with resource material is only one part of this strategy, and it is clear that it does not even sit in any privileged place at this juncture within MS implementation. Thus, expansion itself as a managerial target must be accompanied by clearer blueprint/design of how the expansion can happen and what it needs, a good set of internal systemic changes, an overhaul of the learning and hand-holding architecture of the MS way of empowerment and of how the expansion can leverage the learnings in the organisation without depleting/reducing resources for existing work. A knowledge and communications strategy is necessary, such that it looks at (a). internal skill and knowledge needs; (b). intermediation and liaisons capabilities that enable the sangha to present an alternate model as fair and just brokers of information and knowledge for the community and for women; and (c). a more robust mechanism for roll-back by providing the social capital for a movement to emerge.
- A focus on marginalised 'women' is the MS programme's core mandate. The work with girls needs to be strengthened as it has emerged from the context of programme's ground level reality, but the nature, scope and balance on this count needs revisiting. There is a strong case to focus on boys as well given that gender-sensitisation training for men is more or less a voluntary activity and work with boys can also gain greater traction through mainstreaming. It needs to be noted that there is a huge opportunity cost to running programmes like KGBV since it renders the energy & time to build models (what has been MS' forte) scarce. It also places on a not very mature institution - embedded in the governmental bureaucracy and its cultures - greater managerial demands, and pulls it in undesirable directions of further entrenchment in the ailings of the wider system.

- Expansion requires also a rethinking of the socio-economic nature of wider change. Economic security has emerged as a serious concern for the poorest and socially marginalised. The MS staff we met also said that some sanghas take on MDM implementation just to be gainfully employed. The technical MSK we went to was a one-off effort and not particularly gender sensitive in its approach. It was training girls in basic computer literacy, with the standard gender biases in its curriculum. What is necessary is a well thought through, pilot-based & well-resourced strategy that is properly supported in terms of technical expertise for micro-enterprises that are locally viable. This may be a necessary direction for MS, and more aligned to its overall vision for women's work.

### **Increased access to information and to entitlements, awareness of rights, quality of capacity building**

The programme has managed to make a small but significant dent in the wider hyper-politicised context of U.P. in enabling women to come out, access information and emerge as leaders in the public-political milieu. However, some of the official statistics that are available at the state-level do point to an impact deficit. These statistics for the last year, do beg the question - for a programme that reaches over a lakh of women, where is MS making a difference through greater awareness building? Does awareness about rights automatically bring enjoyment of the same?

- 129 sangha members helped 261 women to get benefits of Janani Suraksha Yojna
- 875 adolescent girls and 376 pregnant women were immunized against tetanus toxoid
- 1790 women members of 310 sanghas got their job cards made
- Members of 84 sanghas demanded for work under MGNREGS
- 11 women of Fulwari Mahasamiti completed a survey in 7 villages under MGNREGS in Chitrakoot at district and block levels
- 5531 children were enrolled into schools
- 340 sanghas are managing MDM scheme implementation in 571 schools

Source – MSUP state office

These not so encouraging outcomes might well be a result of lack of good data collection methods, but our concern is not so much about programme failure to address its mandate as much as the very real dead-ends for women. What has emerged is a repeated assertion by functionaries that the political class and the bureaucracy in the context of their work are a force that they simply cannot counter; all the knowing and the training do not seem to be enough to move towards bringing women de facto enjoyment of their rights.

There are some critical insights from this picture presented by the statistics that we cannot ignore:

- Change cannot be assumed to happen by strengthening civil society institutions alone; in fact as was pointed out to us by the MSUP team, it is sad that we expect the most vulnerable women to struggle the most to fight discrimination and exploitation. The programme's impasse in delivering on its promise cannot be solved at the level of organisational tactics. It may be certainly useful to build upon the current repertoire of

resistance to dysfunctional institutions, but much depends on the local governance and its responsiveness.

- The teams from across the districts in U.P. also said that they had been unable - owing to the delays in budgetary transfer at the start of the financial year which result in a crunch during the months when sangha women are more free to attend trainings, and to the shortage of personnel to reach the sanghas - to rapidly train many sanghas in the past year on the vital instruments of change from the policy & legal side that have come about recently, e.g. the RTI Act, RTE Act, DV Act, entitlements in MGNREGS etc. Skills and resources within MSUP are not adequate to meet training needs; outsourcing is a possibility, but it may not always be needed nor desirable where MS must build knowledge and skills to address its core mandate.
- Training can end up becoming an end in itself in the current shape that the programme is taking as it changes course with pressures to roll back and expand to new villages. The task of setting up sanghas and doing meetings & trainings seem to leave no time for the programme to privilege action-learning endeavours which can bring pressure on the establishment. As the district staff in Sitapur pointed out, it is only with action that the sangha can become mature and its analysis on empowerment, become deep. The two processes cannot be unhinged and the cherished process aspect of the MS idea can lead to transformation only when employed in loops of self-directed learning. The mandate for expansion has unhinged these twin processes: learning is not first-hand (it is often based on diluted content), action depends less on inputs and more on chance variables that make for a strong sangha, and reflective processes are pretty much out of the programme given the fact that sangha meetings happen once a month (and often times on their own where the programme has withdrawn) & once a fortnight in all villages, but with varying attendance. Strong sanghas in older areas of operation are strong because they have been built on mutually reinforcing characteristics like trust, identity and a shared history of collective action & resistance. Taking charge of the functioning in terms of holding meetings, planning local action, and seeking counsel when needed may all be quite easy for such sanghas. However, meeting challenges in the emerging socio-economic scenario, needs different inputs - new skills and methodologies, new information and knowledge, new contacts, money and space etc., which, however autonomous, sanghas and federations do require through constant programmatic support to be able to preserve & build on their strength. The context of the current expansion modality has not given adequate thought to such a redefined role for the programme.
- The long and short of this programmatic roller coaster is that there seems to be an inadvertent laissez faire approach, even with the sahayogini and her occasional visit, where sanghas are left to their own to be purveyors of change, assert their voice and make claims. Indeed there have been events planned at district levels and thus a visibilisation of gender issues in the local public sphere. However, this has been insufficient in light of the change desired and the urgency needed to build what has been described as a “critical mass” (page 9, 3.1.8) in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document of MS to move towards an “exit strategy” (page 11, 3.3.1) The issue of critical mass is also one not just of numbers, but of the platform which can give identity and build solidarity, and here, MSUP seems to need some strategic direction.

- The growth of the programme into this current phase has seen a strong, even if, tacit validation of sanghas and federations supporting or engaging directly in service delivery. Sanghas at the village level have been running the MDM scheme, and more recently, have tried to benefit from the honorarium for the position of cook, and this has had mixed outcomes. While bringing much needed survival money to the sangha representative who cooks and some contribution to the sangha, this practice has also led to conflicts within the sangha as to who may be most deserving. Sangha members also help the cook and use sangha resources to tide over budget delays for conversion costs of the meal. These transactions are sought to be seen as positive, and may well be so for marginalised women who struggle for some affirmation from the community. But they also raise the question of specific contexts that frame choice and autonomy. The participation of women as employees of schemes seems to put them in a fix many times as per the reports we heard from sangha women and village level functionaries – e.g. women from MS are picked on by local authorities for the smallest mistake in their work as cooks reportedly 'because' they are from MS. For the sangha, benefitting from schemes is a legitimate aspiration; it is one way after years of struggle to claim such village-level resources coming from government, but it also squeezes out time and energy for women & the sanghas to claim the space and time that the programme set out to offer. This latter reality of reduced time for balancing different priorities was reported by functionaries at all levels. It is a veritable catch-22 situation where jobs are hard to come by and access to entitlements is a distant dream. The programme has also stopped giving sanghas their grants for the past 2 years.
- MSUP bears the management cost for KGBV fully; it also bears the cost of managing/facilitating the MDM and NPEGEL. MS staff maintains books for the sangha, shares the cost of stationary purchase, organises meetings with/of Education Department officials for procurement of school bags & uniforms under NPEGEL, organizes planning meetings with sangha & federation members for distribution of these bags and uniforms etc. The point here is not just the money as such but the cost of human resources and their time invested in this. The impact of such a scope creep<sup>38</sup> that reduces time and energies for the core mandate needs a close look.
- The apathy of the Education Department to the programme and scepticism about its value at the higher levels reduces MS often to a state of orphanhood; on the ground there is no special privilege from other departments and schemes to access entitlements, the political class is rather miffed because women constantly challenge them and thus they manipulate sangha women - sometimes giving them access to benefits, but also extracting their pound of flesh by enlisting women's labour for implementation - and as pointed out by other NGO representatives we met, MS on the ground is not perceived by local NGOs & CBOs as a ready ally. During discussions, this was really clear why, but was attributed to lack of involvement on MS' part with other local groups. Alliance-building with new and old movements leading social change is an important agenda for MS; even here, there is always the risk that gender justice may be side-lined, but that is a task that needs to be anticipated and countered.

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scope\\_creep](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scope_creep), in [project management](#) refers to uncontrolled changes in a [project's scope](#). This phenomenon can occur when the scope of a project is not properly defined, documented, or controlled. It is generally considered a negative occurrence, and thus, should be avoided.



The above discussion was not intended to paint MSUP's efforts to get women their entitlements in poor light. Statistics also show that for example, in the area of health, active intervention by sanghas has led to positive change. For example:

756 sanghas have taken steps to make health services accountable  
4157 pregnant women have been registered  
3707 pregnant women have been immunized  
2835 women have availed of 'Janani Suraksha' scheme  
273 child marriages have been stopped  
Regular visit by A.N.M. has been ensured by 1545 sanghas

The idea of the above discussion was to throw light on the need for renewed effort by the programme to think through the barriers to the MS approach so as to give women a voice, and enable them to make claims & monitor the accountability of public service delivery. Evidently, there are gaps in this; some may be plugged by the programme and some do depend on the nature of governance itself.

## **Recommendations**

- The one-time grant to the sangha that has been discontinued may be a useful sum of money for local-level collective action. The availability of the grant will encourage debates around its meaningful use and can be leveraged as a means to kindle thought & action on a local agenda for claims-making by sangha women.
- The quality of MS staff and their morale depends on their skills & knowledge, and their ability to be true facilitators. Government websites today have much data on entitlements and schemes. The access to such online information of relevance and value is not just a job privilege, but in the sahayogini's case it is the basic that can empower her and the sanghas she caters to so as to challenge the local power elite. Learning resources that address a range of sangha & federation building needs are much needed; older resources need to be digitised and shared, new ones created, as also systems put in place for women's knowledge & perspectives to be captured and disseminated. We live in an era where multimedia content assaults our senses and has been deployed extremely effectively for community programmes across the world. MS needs to step up in this direction and enable its functionaries to migrate to new capabilities.
- Subverting local power structures requires that MS go back to the basics to deepen sangha perspectives on collectivisation, what collective power is and what it means for gender justice. The federations are first and foremost an invaluable platform building process, a means to build collective identity & solidarity - so that action for change can happen beyond the slings of MS themes and in terms of critical perspectives about democracy & social justice. The urgency of this task cannot be over-emphasised. Nevertheless, it cannot also be executed without simultaneous attention to the resource strategy.
- While the MS programme becomes a useful vehicle for village entry for governmental programmes that use sangha women's volunteerism, the perpetuation of this role - however much it helps women gain visibility - will fall short of giving them access to their rights. At the highest level, policy linkages with the Education Department and

with the Departments of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj are needed to bring about a shift in the profile of MS sanghas and federations. It was suggested during our presentation to a wider audience of friends of MSUP that sanghas & federations can apply to be service providers under the PDVW Act, which may give them more power in the local context. This may need to be examined more closely for its potential. The experience of many local organisations in the country also suggests that when women become brokers & intermediaries of local development processes, they gain legitimacy as leaders. If sanghas can serve as resource centres and links to block and district level offices, a shift of power in their favour is possible. This, of course, requires thinking from two ends: engineering the governance end for such possible roles, and also preparing sanghas & federations to play a wider community role, which brings them the power and legitimacy to address gender justice as well.

- MS needs to be repositioned within the Education Department's overall scheme of things, whereby its contributions (without which the goals & objectives of not just SSA and its components like NPEGEL, KGBV, but also of the effective impact of the RTE itself may not be realised) as a critical programme are recognised. Such a repositioning will then automatically give the programme its due status.
- The Education Department also needs to see MS as an innovator - a social net that lays the foundations for women & girls to not be left behind in the opportunity that education creates for individuals and social groups to be equal citizens. This means enough attention to and learning from the models that MS puts up, as well as its mainstreaming in the Department's other mandates.

### **Formal and informal education, monitoring by sanghas, quality of MS educational processes**

Much of what has been said already addresses the issue of the MS 'education for empowerment' model. We have discussed the impact of the absence of timely fund transfers & the limited resource envelope, dilution of learning processes because of the current exit strategy & impact of roll back on personnel, the unfilled positions, a stagnation & inadvertent bureaucratization and risk of information dilution & distortion in downward flows, as roadblocks to the programme's outcomes and how these also impact sanghas & federations. Further, we also discussed how, as some functionaries put it, the learning process of how to make institutions work in gender responsive ways, is a huge drain and a struggle for women, that it is a one-step-forward-two-steps-back exercise. We noted earlier that these complex way in which women seek their empowerment, beginning with the space & time that the sangha gives them is a long process, where women lead social change for their communities investing their time & resources and risking their health & dignity. The broad conclusion was that the informal learning processes of MS are being threatened by the current directions of the programme.

The MS programme in U.P. has kept the flag flying for adult women's literacy. The sanghas also participate in enrolment drives and the mainstreaming results in the MSUP-run KGBVs and MSKs is nearly 100 percent. On the formal educational front, from April 2009 to December 2010, across all MS districts of U.P., nearly 50000 women have been to literacy camps and nearly 18000 women undertook more intensive training through the Mahila Sakshartha centres. However, here the issue is that MSUP is unable to meet the demand from

women for more such camps and centres. Functionaries also pointed to how Mahila Saksharata Kendras are a better strategy than camps, given their location in the village and the daily routines in literacy & numeracy, but budgetary constraints have forced them to replace these kendras/centres with quick turn-around camps. An in-depth assessment of the quality of both these methods is, of course, needed, but it is likely that the literacy effort through only camps runs the risk of being less effective and more tokenistic.

The Kishori sanghas and the work with adolescent girls in the KGBVs and MSKs have been a very unique contribution of MS, not only for the enrolment of girls who would have missed formal education if not for the persuasive zeal of sangha members, but also for the consciousness raising about gender justice that is built into these spaces. There are dilemmas, of course, in this: how much to orient a young girl on social ills like dowry and child marriage without making her feel victimised? The functionaries do feel that the 'spark' that they see lit up in getting a girl to find her voice, and the occasional but reaffirming fallouts of this effort, such as girls taking up cudgels for to prevent child marriage of their siblings, make the effort worthwhile. MSUP has also tried its hand at a technical MSK, which is more job-oriented. This effort seems to be relevant to the local communities where access to decent jobs, even if only within the ITES and sales sectors, is a vital need.

The running of KGBVs (for nearly two years now), however, may need to be re-examined for not only the costs being picked up by MS, but also for how it seems to be propelling the whole programme towards a more negatively politicised culture, bringing external interference from vested interests and a corruption & conversion of the MS programme into/as a new territory to capture. In as much as it brings mainstream education of girls a bit closer to MS ideals with MS inputs, the KGBV efforts still don't seem to be as qualitatively good as the Mahila Shikshan Kendra effort. Neither does it seem to have excited the SSA in any meaningful way to assimilate a gender-informed strategy into their roll out overall.

## **Recommendations**

- The focus on girls could dilute the programme's commitment to women. Therefore the catch-them-young methodology needs to be balanced appropriately with the much more demanding effort with women. It may perhaps be a useful way forward to focus on technical MSK pilots, which get more attention and resources. New pilots that are more focussed on marketable skills and vocations that also break gender stereotypes & open up new pathways may be meaningful.
- The literacy efforts of the programme need adequate budgets and quality personnel. A thorough assessment of the outcomes and impacts of the Sakshartha kendras and literacy camps is necessary. This will also throw light on how the programme can support the real needs of sanghas and federations for literate women members.
- The risk of scope creep discussed earlier is relevant also to the running of KGBVs. MS must focus on the MSKs and perhaps run no more than a couple of KGBVs to demonstrate gender-sensitive models.
- Gaining legitimacy as experts in the eyes of the Education Department is needed. MS will need to get invited into and participate actively in relevant meetings of the Department as well as proactively make material & modules available to the SSA.

- The efforts with kishoris and at the technical MSK need vigilance. Rather than an age-inappropriate gender analysis of society, it may be valuable for MS to bring childhood back into the lives of these adolescent girls, celebrating their identities. With the technical MSK, the content of computer education must be monitored for inappropriate and gender-biased curriculum & training material. (Currently, this is based on the outsourced agency's syllabus. We noted how a job application covering letter template being used to train the girls on keying in such a letter used sentences like – “I am a young girl with attractive features”.) The technical MSK needs higher level expertise to steer the idea into directions that can break gender stereotypes. These are also perhaps to be undertaken on a smaller but resource-intensive scale initially.

### **Building leadership of marginalised women, federation-related details, autonomy of sanghas & federations, interrelationships, MS’ support to federations & their sustainability, and recommendations**

The testimony of MS' success is perhaps most visible in the enthusiasm of sangha women we met who in their repeated assertions of “not being anything” (hum toh pehle kuch nahin thae) prior to their joining MS-facilitated sangha, now acknowledged unequivocally the space & time that the programme has created for their being able to break out of the confines of their highly restrained everyday realities. Even some rather new federations have the energy, leadership potential and easy grasp of gender injustice that makes a strong case to build upon the programme's gains.

But the programme seems - in parts - to be yet another unintended burden in the lives of women. While their coming together, greater awareness of entitlements and the assertion of rights as well as active agency (especially in monitoring service delivery), do suggest a vibrant, bottom-up women's empowerment scenario, the flip (and less visible) side needs more exploration at the highest levels of the programme.

The linking of the programme to other programmes that leverage the sangha as a readymade platform for delivering development is serious reason to revisit the basics. This issue here is of the blurring of boundaries – between the role of a free & active social agent and that of free labour. The programme got into the implementation of the MDM not out of its desire or willingness, but because of the 'instruction' that required that the MS apparatus be mobilised for the immediate service of the government.

The personal narrative of one federation member – who said that when she needed to, she woke up at 4 a.m., did the work at home and then went to the local school to cook for the MDM, and then further went on to an MS/sangha meeting, indicates the pressures the programme is putting (even if with the active connivance of the women concerned) on women's health & labour for social & economic development. Women in MS-facilitated sanghas & federations seem to have a way by which they rationalise their work within the MDM programme as an 'opportunity' to 'come out of the four walls of their confined existence'. They situate themselves as social change agents and as volunteers in public service delivery who enjoy the affirmation they did not have hitherto.

We could argue that women 'want' to be cooks in MDM and assist the Panchayat & the Education Department in development delivery - even if *we* think they are being appropriated

by the system as free labour. However, the Mahila Samakhya vision urges a different kind of framing of the issue. **What seems to be at stake here is not so much what the women want versus what we may feel is unjust; but what kind of society and what kind of empowerment we and the women want.** The framing therefore must not be in terms of the opportunity cost for women, their relegation to the private sphere and their social invisibility if not for the sangha and its work, but in terms of the vision we have of their relationship with the state as rights-bearing citizens. All the staff across the programme lamented the unfortunate impact of dysfunctional institutions, exploitative local structures & intractable household cultures upon women's livelihood rights, well-being and dignity. So, while it is indeed true that women want to be visible and seen, the programme must pause and re-examine what kind of visibility & credibility we desire for the most marginalised women.

The need at this juncture - when there are innumerable studies in the country of the nature of co-optation of the women's movements by institutionalised programmes as well as is the exhortation in multiple MS studies of the need to become a movement - is a serious thinking as to the boundaries that separate women's roles as agents of change in civil society (who use a range of modalities to assert their rights through engagement, negotiation, protest & dissent), from their roles as co-opted, disempowered workers within the system (at the mercy of its whims, patronage & exploitation, which denies them their rightful place in the economy as aspiring job seekers, and in the society as aspiring citizens). Foremost, this whole issue is not of what women want versus how we may dare decide for them, but of what vision the programme has for women in terms of their economic & social rights and dignity.

Related to the above discussion and is pertinent the question of the federations and their autonomy. The institutionalisation processes which bring sanghas together within an overarching structure corresponding to the relative powers of the administration - from village to district - has been seen by the programme as desirable and necessary. Federations however seem to also be caught in the prescriptive norms that become tied to an expansion mode. The federation agenda seems to be caught within the MS programme overall, with a huge value bias, linked implicitly to the performance aspects of different states. Federations, we were told are also goaded to move towards registering as NGOs - a process that functionaries reported as the logical steps they have been told to prescribe to the women as ways to become sustainable and attract resources for implementing schemes, when MS withdraws. This came out in a participatory exercise we did (during the Mission's visit) with functionaries as well as federations members and it may need deeper interrogation. The women we met from a block where MS has withdrawn, still wait for MS functionaries. Their risk taking capabilities are completely dependent on their confidence in how far the MS support can go. This places upon the programme at the highest levels a responsibility to be more cognizant about the risks of becoming what one functionary referred to as "chhutku thekedars" or small time brokers, and more imaginative in helping federations move towards their role as a resource support space.

## **Recommendations**

- Depending upon the strategic directions of the MS programme as a whole, the role of federations needs to be evolved. Federating from smaller membership bodies into larger mass-based political constituencies is not a new technique in democratic struggles, but for this process to be relevant to the issues on the ground and to retain the original vision, enormous effort and leadership is needed. For MSUP and MS as a

whole, it would be important to remember here that this issue is as much about conceptual frames as about the choice of different states or different sanghas. Some points that can serve as a touchstone in this bigger discussion are – the role of the federation in the resource strategy for sangha support, the federation's credibility with local organisations for future alliance building and taking up agenda for change, the federation's credibility with local government as an institution representing the interests of marginalised women.

- The Mission recommends that the programme, at its highest levels, have an exercise to think through its experiences and evaluate its future vision based on deeper enquiry of the following-
  - 2.If indeed federations are to be the back bone infrastructure of marginalised women's rights and entitlements, what models of sustainability should federations move towards?
  - 3.What kind of independent and autonomous existence does the programme envision for its federations?
  - 4.What would be the on-demand support that MS can provide to meaningfully support the federation?
  - 5.Can federations manage the boundary blurring between implementation and social audit roles?

### **Facilitating women's agency to challenge structures & norms, sangha-level capabilities, MS' support, women's participation in PRIs, livelihoods & health improvement, and recommendations**

It has been discussed at great length how women's awareness and action do not help them escape the tyranny of unaccountable institutions. “What next, after asserting rights?” is a big question and the rather low numbers of entitlements accessed under schemes is a reflection of the arduous path of struggle to extract accountability out of a notoriously obdurate system.

Households project a mixed picture and as women put it – “samajhdar ho toh samjhega” i.e. if he is capable of understanding, he understands - while describing the process of role shifts in their own homes. Household-level change is a painfully slow process even though women do challenge ideological structures within their private lives.

While the programme has expanded, there is a wider coverage & a sense of a wider branding of the MS idea, with impacts in the areas of health, political participation and access to entitlements & rights, the rootedness of the programme in terms of sangha robustness may need a closer look. Instead of being able to stay tuned and have a finger on the pulse of each sangha - so as to further be able to give backing and lend extra power to emergent needs on the ground - the federating structures are able only to do a 'downward' transfer of information. While upward articulation and agenda setting may be occurring, strong evidence of the same was not available in the programme. On the contrary, a routinisation and work plan implementation mode (with its concomitant inflexibilities to respond to an idea or exigency on the ground) was noted.

As mentioned earlier, the district team told us that because of lack of budgets and time committed to other things, training on RTE, RTI and MGNREGS were not able to be delivered to all women. These particular issues were seen as very important for MS' overall

mandate. The state team was also of the opinion that owing to delays in fund transfer, and lack of adequate budgets, of allocation for contingencies & of fungibility, they were not able to respond to the large numbers of women who got elected late last year from sanghas into the Panchayat nor to sangha members with training modules on decentralisation and PRIs. The programme seems to move towards the idea of federations more and more rapidly without the commensurate systemic vision, creativity & design, and not towards resources to lend support as it were, to the last woman.

### **Recommendations**

1. The programme needs a new strategy on the following fronts - staff capabilities, communication and information systems commensurable to the programme's ambitions, and ability to creatively operationalise resource support, moving it from an access paradigm to effective reach paradigm.
2. The idea of convergence needs more formal modalities to leverage resources like loans, skill training etc., from other government departments. However, this also presupposes informal and formal steps by the Education Department to proactively acknowledge the place MS deserves within the profile of the Department - which functionaries, women's sanghas & federations can then use to seek entitlements & rights for women with legitimacy and confidence.
3. The programme needs to take more creative routes into addressing norms and structures. Working with boys would be a good strategy to integrate and a direct way by which MS' wisdom can be mainstreamed into the education process.

### **Some thoughts on the culture of the programme in MSUP**

Paradoxes are bound to be present in a programme that is situated within government and dealing with political agenda. In the MS context, these also acquire localised forms and colours across the states, as well as differences in historical trajectories, leadership and human resource characteristics. It may be pertinent for the programme to be cognizant of some of the more important contradictions at this stage of moving into the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan period.

By virtue of its structures, the MS programme transfers the burden of gendered inquiries onto the choices and actions of the women it seeks to serve, often times prising open, but not always being able to do enough about, their deeply personal lives. On the other hand, the issue of staff accountability towards women's lives & self-reflection about personal values is nebulous within the programme. MSUP is also not immune from the influence of politicking and power brokering reflective of the wider governmental & social institutional culture. This embedding of the programme within government and its working methods as a quasi-NGO, is no guarantee against, and in fact reinforces the worst of state *and* NGO sector maladies – i.e. a culture of competition, non-transparency, distrust, individualism, one-upmanship and lack of accountability.

The pulls and pressures of consolidation & institutionalisation are bound to require greater attention to questions of internal culture and its consonance with the programme's ideals & goals. Consolidation would mean a systemic preparation for dealing with this.

The very real issues of class, caste and religion need to be reflected upon within the programme for their evolving social content in relation to the ideological vision of the programme. Inclusion of religious minorities in the sangha membership may be relevant and needs greater focus.

It is also desirable for certain key positions that are open to aggrandisement of power within the structure that their contracts do not go beyond 5 to 6 years.

### **Resource Group – state and national**

MSUP does not seem to be leveraging enough the State Resource Group (SRG) even though its value was acknowledged.

It was felt that the design and operationalising of a resource strategy will be a useful peg to define the involvement of the SRG. Interestingly a couple of functionaries of the programme mentioned that they thought of the resource strategy not as a centre that was like an 8 feet by 10 feet room, but a new blue print or architecture for knowledge, information & communications within the programme and for the sanghas & federations. It was also felt that such a strategy would benefit women's groups as well as facilitate advocacy-related activities.

Although the programme does have some connections with the National Resource Group (NRG), it was felt that a more active NRG is needed - so that sharing of ideas and dilemmas can be facilitated, as also cross learning.

### **Financial Management**

1. There is a mixed approach to budget preparation. Functionaries from all levels are involved in the preparation of the annual work plan and budget. Thus, the budget reflects the felt need of the programme. The Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) proposals are approved by the E.C. and presented to the PAB for confirmation. However, the limitations of the overall MS resource envelope do influence the final amount approved, depending on the actual release of budget funds as per annual allocations under the Plan.

2. The following table depicts the aggregate position of budgets, funds released to and expenditure by MSUP over the last five years:



Year wise fund position of GOI Funding.											
(Amount in Rs.)											
SN	Year	Approved Budget	Opening Balance	Funds Received from GOI	Interest earned	Total	Expenditure during the year	Balance at the end of year	Fund Rec. as % of Budget	Exp. As % of Budget	Exp.As % of Fund rec.
1	2005-06	65134000	4528423	47500000	165484	52193907	52108674	85233	72.93	80.00	99.84
2	2006-07	89660000	85233	60000000	195197	60280430	61288516	-1008086	66.92	68.36	101.67
3	2007-08	88000000	-1008086	73500000	173213	72665127	69232297	3432830	83.52	78.67	95.28
4	2008-09	130937530	3432830	85500000	221776	89154606	84121043	5033563	65.30	64.24	94.35
5	2009-10	160531728	5033563	85382000	289430	90704993	87556610	3148383	53.19	54.54	96.53
6	2010-11*	88339230	3148383	63020000	224478	66392861	50113441	16279419	71.34	56.73	75.48
	Source : MSUP										
	* Spend figures up to January										

As can be seen, the utilization of approved budgets is between 54% and 80% but expenditure as a percentage of funds received is as high as 101% in one of the years. Some of the reasons that were reported to the Mission for underutilization of budgets are as follows:

**Late receipt of Funds:** This issue has been reported by past JRMs too. In the past five years, funds released as a percentage of approved budget varies between 53.9% (in 2009-10) to 83.53% (in 2007-08). DIUs, federations and sanghas are unable to implement their activities in full due to paucity of funds. The following table for 2009-10 shows that it is always the activities that have suffered when there was paucity of funds. While utilization of management budget is between 66% and 98% (average 74%), the utilization of activity budget is only between 20% and 73% (average 47%).

District wise Fund Position of GOI Funding F.Y. 2009-10									
SN	Name of District	Approved Budget	Mang. & Act. As % of total	Opening Balance	Funds Received during the year	Interest earned	Total	Total Exp. during the year	Exp. As % of budget
1	Saharanpur	8,156,450		206,756	5,108,639	10,183	5,325,578	5,320,918	65.24
	Management	1,813,600	22.24					1,720,649	94.87
	Activity	6,342,850	77.76					3,600,269	56.76
2	Chitrakoot	8,701,900		53,008	4,546,380	11,882	4,611,270	4,640,547	53.33
	Management	2,090,600	24.02					1,410,737	67.48
	Activity	6,611,300	75.98					3,229,810	48.85
3	Varanasi	8,260,692		27,431	6,395,053	6,935	6,429,419	6,373,637	77.16
	Management	2,140,600	25.91					2,073,007	96.84
	Activity	6,120,092	74.09					4,300,631	70.27
4	Allahabad	9,071,029		37,018	6,056,021	7,689	6,100,728	5,372,279	59.22
	Management	1,989,600	21.93					1,956,765	98.35
	Activity	7,081,429	78.07					3,415,514	48.23
5	Sitapur	7,129,787		31,924	6,260,162	3,231	6,295,317	5,697,693	79.91
	Management	1,796,600	25.20					1,779,678	99.06
	Activity	5,333,187	74.80					3,918,015	73.46
6	Auraya	8,797,200		175,440	5,197,500	5,720	5,378,660	4,972,999	56.53
	Management	1,825,600	20.75					1,654,265	90.61
	Activity	6,971,600	79.25					3,318,734	47.60
7	Gorakhpur	7,639,565		234,911	5,031,262	9,964	5,276,137	4,858,222	63.59
	Management	2,157,600	28.24					1,810,199	83.90
	Activity	5,481,965	71.76					3,048,023	55.60
8	Jaunpur	7,722,725		191,026	4,326,674	14,323	4,532,023	4,505,904	58.35
	Management	1,869,600	24.21					1,234,888	66.05
	Activity	5,853,125	75.79					3,271,016	55.88
9	Pratapgarh	8,889,800		386,918	5,340,593	6,859	5,734,370	5,728,952	64.44
	Management	2,155,600	24.25					2,016,472	93.55
	Activity	6,734,200	75.75					3,712,480	55.13
10	Mau	6,609,700		265,152	5,240,542	7,880	5,513,574	5,512,082	83.39
	Management	2,046,600	30.96					1,928,301	94.22
	Activity	4,563,100	69.04					3,583,780	78.54
11	Mathura	9,321,330		391,888	4,091,191	16,885	4,499,964	4,427,075	47.49
	Management	1,931,600	20.72					1,492,183	77.25
	Activity	7,389,730	79.28					2,934,892	39.72
12	Muzaffarnagar	8,026,600		386,742	4,476,932	13,561	4,877,235	4,863,998	60.60
	Management	2,254,600	28.09					1,528,977	67.82
	Activity	5,772,000	71.91					3,335,021	57.78
13	Balrampur	5,666,600		57,711	3,549,728	7,869	3,615,307	3,521,636	62.15
	Management	2,031,600	35.85					1,597,376	78.63
	Activity	3,635,000	64.15					1,924,260	52.94
14	Srawasti	8,726,700		767,603	1,754,286	12,583	2,534,472	2,478,054	28.40
	Management	2,053,200	23.53					1,131,162	55.09
	Activity	6,673,500	76.47					1,346,892	20.18
15	Bahraich	7,627,100		172,998	3,169,603	8,017	3,350,617	3,341,372	43.81
	Management	1,960,600	25.71					1,244,839	63.49
	Activity	5,666,500	74.29					2,096,532	37.00
16	Bulandshar	6,382,400		234,457	3,447,548	10,355	3,692,360	3,675,977	57.60
	Management	1,908,400	29.90					1,438,500	75.38
	Activity	4,474,000	70.10					2,237,477	50.01
17	State office	25,901,750		1,768,472	11,389,888	135,494	13,293,854	12,265,266	47.35
	Management	8,459,200	32.66					6,474,249	76.54
	Activity	17,442,550	67.34					5,791,017	33.20
		152,631,328		5,389,455	85,382,000	289,430	91,060,885	87,556,610	
18	Bud. for 4 New Distict	7,900,400							
	Management	3,430,400	43.42						
	Activity	4,470,000	56.58						
	Total Budget	160,531,728		5,389,455	85,382,000	289,430	91,060,885	87,556,610	54.54
	Total Management	43,915,600	27.36					32,492,247	73.99
	Total Activity	116,616,128	72.64					55,064,363	47.22

**Non-implementation of planned expansion:** In 2009-10 a budget of `79 lakhs approved for a planned expansion of the project to four new districts remained unutilized as the planned expansion was put on hold because of ground-level difficulties in mobilising women in new districts. Utilization is, therefore, particularly low in this year.

3. Sangha members as well as MS functionaries informed the Mission that they are not able to implement a full range of activities due to lack of budget in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan and lack of timely receipt of funds owing to funding cycles that may not match with expenditure needs on the ground. The Mission noted that MSUP's budget was reduced from `15.2 crores (for existing districts) in 2009-10 to `8.8 crores in 2010-11. While outlays, as discussed, are influenced by the overall resource envelope, utilisation is influenced - among other things - by a practice of adaptation to funding cycles and an anticipation of fund crunch at specific times of the year. Further, as stated above, the planned expansion of the project to four new districts of the state has been put on hold.

4. Further, funds are released as per district AWP&Bs to the districts and are expected to be spent accordingly, under specific budget heads. Within heads like training, technically speaking, there is fungibility between the thematic areas. For example, amounts designated for Panchayati Raj training may be appropriated for education-related training. However, the demands of programme expansion leave little scope in the budget for proactive or quick response to the emerging needs from the field. Also, any authorisation for re-appropriation between budget heads beyond 25 percent cannot be made by the SPD and requires the approval of the state E.C. Effectively, the programme is unable to allow for quick-footed, opportunistic reallocations in the interest of the overall objectives.

5. The Mission noted that some MS activities are being funded by other agencies such as the technical component of vocational MSK is being funded by UNICEF. The MS machinery in U.P. is also being used to manage implementation of KGBVs, NPEGEL and MDM schemes. Sanghas are implementing these schemes, whereas they require hand-holding in book keeping, procurement and other functions. The Mission feels that lending such support to government programmes may be done by MS' District Implementation Units (DIUs) but only after careful debate at the state & national levels by the E.C. as to the implications of this for the overall vision and the core processes of the sanghas and federations. Where sanghas implement these schemes, the administrative costs incurred by the DIUs will require to be underwritten by the concerned Department whose scheme is being implemented.

6. The State MS Society has a set of financial rules that it follows. The rules also provide the extent of financial delegation at various levels. A new manual for greater standardization and effective compliance is being prepared. The statutory audit report for 2009-10 has made a comment that delegated powers are not being used diligently at unit level, to which management has responded by saying that instructions will be issued to district units to properly comply with delegated financial authority. Internal audit reports of the districts for this year suggest a need for more rigorous compliance with delegated authority and the same has been communicated to the districts. Irregularities were highlighted from different districts and point to some system lapses – absence of quotation for purchases, cash payment of honoraria and purchases, authorisation by the district to engage consultants for days beyond delegated authority, payment to vendors without supporting evidence, and inconsistency between expenses charged & availability of physical purchases. Some of these are also in

relation to the KGBVs. The Mission also feels that the running of KGBVs does put strain on the system's overall management capabilities, also given the existing need for greater streamlining of financial rules.

7. Maintenance of accounts is up to date both at the state as well as district levels. All districts have submitted their monthly statements of expenditure and the state is submitting its six monthly statement of expenditure to the MHRD. However, in the current context, there is certainly a case for looking at the possibility of introducing a system wide MIS that generates real time information which can be universally accessed.

8. Bank reconciliation as on 31<sup>st</sup> January was produced for our verification. There are no long outstanding entries. Value of advances outstanding is not material and those outstanding are not old. However, the Mission noted that Bank reconciliation is not taking place on a monthly basis and recommends that it be done.

9. The State MS Society has a system in place for internal and external audit of its accounts. External audits have been completed for and up to the f.y. 2009-10. The statutory audit report for 2009-10 makes a comment that Internal Audit is not commensurate with the size of the society and its activities. It is done once in four months and the account of the State Office is not covered. No internal audit has been done in 2010-11. The Mission would like to advise MSUP to complete the pending internal audits and to set up the same for the State Office.

10. The post of Accounts officer at the State Office is currently vacant as is the position of Accountant in two districts. The Mission was informed that the process to fill these is on.

11. MS functionaries at all levels raised the issue of their remuneration and social security. This is an important issue that has been raised in the past two JRMs also. Inadequate compensation and lack of benefits is affecting the morale of the functionaries. They are also given the added responsibility of managing other government programmes. The overall work for staff has also increased with enhanced coverage of the programme.

## **12. Key issues and recommendations:**

- The government must examine the case for higher budgetary allocation to Mahila Samakhya, and within that, to MSUP as well, towards the consolidation and expansion of the programme.
- Fund transfers from the Centre to the State must be done in a timely manner; inadequacy of timely transfers results in direct impacts on programme quality.
- Greater flexibility for reallocation of funds between budget heads through greater powers at the state office level is needed.
- Quarterly E.C. meetings for budgetary re-appropriation and other facilitative steps to smoothen functioning need to be held regularly
- The provision of contingency funds is necessary to be responsive to field realities that are bound to arise in a programme of the nature of MS that grapples with social change, challenging the status quo. Not only do opportunities arise that need to be invested in, (we were given the example of the inability to provide training to elected women representatives from the sangha in the recent U.P. Panchayat elections, because of lack of funds), but risks abound for functionaries & sangha women who may need monetary backing for legal or serious health implications arising from their association with the programme.

- Position of Accounts officer at the State office and of Accountant in the two districts should be filled up expeditiously.
- Bank reconciliation should be done on a monthly basis by the State MS Society.
- Internal audits need to be undertaken at the State Office with frequency commensurate with the size of the programme. Pending audits in the districts need to be completed. Though compliance with audit recommendations is being followed up, there is a need to develop a systematic approach to monitor outstanding audit observations, such as through maintenance of a Register for Outstanding Audit Observations.
- Expenditure should be made strictly within the financial norms delegated to district authorities as stated in the financial rules. Compliance with financial norms as stated in the rules needs to be regularly monitored through future audits.
- Given the challenges of implementing a programme like MS, the Mission would like to back the recommendation made by the last JRM that there is a need to relook at the compensation of the functionaries/staff and create mechanisms for addressing social security considerations that are possible within the framework of the programme. In addition to boosting morale, increased compensation would also have a positive spin-off effect on the stature of the programme.
- Streamlining the accounting and programme management through a digitally networked pan-MS system is much needed not only for efficient reporting and upward accountability, but for overall managerial effectiveness and for a culture of transparency. Software applications at the state level for this purpose would be redundant if a system-wide digital architecture can be put in place.

## **MS institutional processes**

### **1. Nature, types, and quality of orientation/ capacity building programmes; extent of external training resources tapped:**

There is no staff development plan for office staff at state and district level. Despite the felt need for more intensive training on MS fundamentals, the shortage of funds in the past 2 years has been a road block. Programme staff carries out training for the sangha members. Systematic evaluation of these trainings is not done. Time and budgetary constraints also compromise the quality and frequency of such training. External resources in terms of films & other audio-visual material is used, but in a more ad-hoc manner. Given the potential of the programme to absorb such material, and the fact that there is a huge proliferation of digital resources, a cost reduction in their reproduction and distribution, as well as the new technological capabilities for very cost-effective indigenising and co-creation of learning resources along with the community, the programme needs to move to modalities that are more appropriate in the information society era. The reading on external training resources suggests that there is a need to share the available connections and resources across the board throughout the state and where possible, across states as well. The Mission also feels that a trend towards too much outsourcing of trainings and preparation of learning resources can reduce MS into a less proactive agency. The training materials that we were able to peruse, though in the limited time we had, did not specially indicate creative resource generation at the MS-level in recent times. Staff capacities in this regard need to be deployed effectively and upgraded at all levels.

### **2. Functioning of State Office - systems and processes:**

Accounting is done on Tally both at state and at district levels. Financial rules are being followed for authorisation of payments. A fixed asset register is maintained to record the value and location of fixed assets in the office. Staff attendance is monitored through an

attendance register. Leave record is maintained in individual files. Salaries are paid by bank transfer. Progress reports are sent to the NPO usually on demand and half yearly. The programme does not have a Management Information System (MIS) that systematically tracks physical & financial progress at output and outcome levels. Such a system needs to be deployed at 2 levels – one for the core, substantive learning areas – which can also allow for transparent and open reporting across all the levels of the programme, and the second, for the financial & accounting aspects.

### 3. Recruitment system, adequacy of functionaries including for accounting and budget:

Recruitments are done as per government procedures. Status of approved positions and those filled up as of January 2010 and January 2011, respectively, is as follows:

Sl. No.	Post	No. of Approved Posts	Status of employees working in Jan 2010	Staff strength as on Jan 2011
1	State Programme Director	1	1	1
2	Senior Resource Person	1	1	0
3	Resource Person State Level	3	2	1
4	Account Officer	1	0	0
5	District Programme Coordinator#	16	12	8
6	Consultant State Office	2	2	0
7	Resource Person (DIU)	50	27	27
8	Accountant	18	17	16
9	Junior Resource Person (JRP)*	80	65	63
10	Office Assistant	18	9	9
11	Data Entry Operator	17	17	15
12	Driver	14	14	14
13	Cluster Resource Person (CRP)^	48	57	68
14	Messenger	36	33	33
15	Sahayogini~	280	268	146

\* Data includes both case of JRP not granted extension and one who quit.  
# Contract with two DPCs not extended. There have

been charges of financial irregularities against one of the two.

^ CRPs: Though, as per norms CRPs should roll back from a given area after 2 years of input, since federations may not be mature enough, they continue to be working. In certain areas, selection of Sahayoginis could not take place with too much waiting time, and so CRPs were recruited instead. Data also indicates a couple of resignations by Sahayoginis who could not meet the demands of the job.

~ Sahayogini: As per norms, Sahayoginis work for 3 years in a given area, after which period, their 'roll back' is built-in.

Recruitment to fill up vacancies is one concern. The other is also of the quality of functionaries, and in a state which has had the programme for close to 2 decades, the risk of plateauing is also higher.

#### **4. Annual work plan & budget formulation and tracking system:**

Annual work plans are prepared through a consultative process. Budgets are set in accordance with the annual work plans subject to the overall available resource envelope. No serious exercise for dividing district AWP&B into more micro units like quarters, takes place, given the delay in receipt of funds. An annual utilization statement is also prepared. It seems that overall activity & financial tracking, as already indicated above, needs to be strengthened especially, with clear and operational reporting structures.

#### **5. Objective-achievement capability of functionaries and understanding of Results Framework:**

While functionaries are aware of the aims and objectives of the Mahila Samakhya programme, individual motivation was found to be varying. In terms of overall efficiency, the system was found to be wanting in respect of consistent and quality talent needed to effectively support the goal achievement of the programme, across all levels. As mentioned earlier, in addition to personal motivational issues, lack of processes for peer-to-peer and cross-organisational transparency related to work and the absence of regular reporting by district & state staff to reporting authority seemed to suggest the need for new systems & processes for a vibrant culture of contributing to programme effectiveness. The Mission also felt that especially at the field level, lack of adequate learning opportunities to upgrade knowledge needs to be addressed. The Results Framework is still not used by the team.

#### **6. Staff turnover:**

Staff morale is not very high even though turnover is not such a serious issue. Most staff members are not happy with their compensation package and absence of other benefits. Staff performance management system does not exist. Job objectives are loosely defined; regular feedback is given, but formal mechanisms for on-going review are not in place. The Mission was informed that the management is working to introduce a routine reporting system. The system of annual performance appraisal needs to be more structured so as to be able to support staff development as well as for performance.

#### **7. Monitoring:**

The Mission was not able to see a formal monitoring mechanism in MS. Programme monitoring happens through ad-hoc field level visits.

#### **8. Key issues and recommendations:**

- For strengthening institutional processes, the Mission strongly recommends two-way horizontal & vertical accountability, for which an entirely new approach to reporting and cross-learning processes may be needed, along with skill up-gradation and the introduction of digital methods of communication & collaboration across all levels.
- There is a need to develop a formal performance management system to systematically track employee progress.
- Staff Development Plans should be developed and implemented to address key skill gaps.

- To support the SPD in decision making, the Mission feels that the establishment of Standing Committees in respect of certain functions will facilitate both programme management and general administration.
- There is a need to introduce digital technologies at a system-wide level, not only for computerising & standardising accounting and bringing in financial system efficiencies, but as (if not more) importantly for the programme's goal of meeting the needs of marginalised women's empowerment. Content platforms are today an intrinsic part of all key social change organisations. Modalities for content creation, sharing & dissemination have altered dramatically and allow for peer-to-peer collaboration, openness, & creative indigenisation. In a programme that is run for illiterate and marginalised women, this need is even more striking.



## Summary of Conclusions

MSUP is one of the oldest MS states. The findings of this JRM may not only be relevant for the future of the U.P. programme per se, but also somewhat suggestive (despite variances across the states) of the overall opportunities, threats & risks to pan-MS programme consolidation and its objective-achievement capabilities.

Undoubtedly, MSUP's contribution to the education of the most marginalised women is a phenomenal achievement. By giving women the most precious resource – time and space, and enabling their agency and voice through a collective process, the programme has also created for itself a very unique & meaningful niche in the Education Department, addressing not just literacy needs, but education needs that empower women who would otherwise have been unable to cross the threshold of powerlessness, to engage with civil-public life. This is no mean achievement in U.P., where the wider institutional cultures are entrenched in constant power contestation, weak governance and violence.

The programme is a scaffold that supports the Education Department to meet challenges in implementation at the grassroots with regard to many imperatives - from enrolment drives to school monitoring, monitoring the Mid-Day Meal scheme, the identification of girls who drop out for the KGBV programme, to the actual running of the KGBV & NPEGEL centres in addition to the Mahila Shikshan Kendras and adult literacy endeavours. The women's sanghas & federations are also intermediaries who bring to other women and girls the entitlements from government, thus filling the governance deficit at local levels. It is imperative that the contribution of the programme be acknowledged, and cooperation be extended in a spirit of mutuality for the core activities of the sanghas & federations so that their visibility and legitimacy at the local levels can be enhanced.

The Mission found that the labour, time & financial resources of women expended on these efforts to bring women out into the public sphere and challenge oppressive norms, practices & structures does dilute the space and time needed for being true to the core mandate, and to be a programme at the cutting edge of innovations for changing social order through women's public participation and action. This underwriting by women's sanghas of the social costs for transformation is often buried and the top-down pressures to mobilise the programme for development delivery are sometimes couched in the language of opportunities & free choice. This squeezing out of women's learning-action time & space is a serious concern also for the programmatic wherewithal of MS in the state and districts.

The withdrawal of support to sanghas and federations in the current manner in which withdrawal is visualised by the programme seems to have a negative impact on the quality of outcomes. Although federations do keep up the meeting and training routines, the routinisation itself seems to be a threat to the programme's vibrancy. There is hardly any strategy in place to implement a resource strategy, which women can leverage for on-going information needs and to build a platform wherein critical mass is much more than the power of numbers, and also comprises the platform of shared vision & agenda for change. Further, sanghas and federations need much more back-stopping, through the provisioning of all kinds of resources for enhanced outcomes that are deeply transformative.

The task of setting up sanghas and doing meetings & trainings seem to leave no time for the programme to privilege action-learning endeavours which can bring pressure on the establishment. As the district staff in Sitapur pointed out, it is only with action that the sangha

can become mature and its analysis of/on empowerment become deep. The two processes cannot be unhinged. However, the Mission was disconcerted that across all levels, critical reflection and the time & space for this process has almost disappeared.

In an education programme, where the sanghas & federations are learning units, the vision of institutionalisation requires an approach that follows a social investment and capability building approach. There is no easy nor desirable path here for financial independence, without the risk of shift from the education-for-empowerment process. There is a need to be more cognizant about the risks of becoming what one functionary referred to as “chhutku thekedars” i.e. small time brokers, and instead to be more imaginative in helping federations move towards their role as a resource support space.

What exists in terms of the resource strategy on the ground is ad-hoc, and also compromised by the dwindling numbers of staff in blocks where staff has been rolled back. Combined with a moratorium on the overall budgetary availability, the scenario suggests a high risk to MS impact on the ground. Just when resources and a renewed commitment are needed for enabling women to spring board into the next threshold, the context seems to be unheeding on this count. If indeed the programme is designed to enable women to “seek knowledge and information to make informed choices” (page 3, 11<sup>th</sup> plan document, 2.1.1), then the process must deliver on this part, and the quality of expansion must conform to these ideals.

Depth of outreach and inclusion of the most marginalised pre-supposes effective information delivery, continued communications, quick response time, monetary & expert resources to solve serious emergencies on the ground and a viral connectedness between sanghas so that they can take forward what previous JRMs have referred to as the need to go towards a movement building. The stakes are high especially for the marginalised.

Sangha members as well as MS functionaries informed the Mission that they are not able to implement a full range of activities due to lack of budget and lack of timely receipt of funds. The delay of funding is a serious issue flagged by earlier JRMs as well, subsequent to which the NPO has initiated changes. The AWP&B appraisal process initiated by the NPO - to support financial planning & management by State programmes - is important, but the issue of the limited financial outlays for the MS programme as a whole remains, as also the need for some immediate GoI-level procedural changes to remove barriers to fund flows for implementation.

It is of some concern that delegated powers are not being used diligently by district units in properly complying with delegated financial authority. Internal audit reports of the districts for this year suggest a need for more rigorous compliance with delegated authority.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

The need is to emphasise MS as a space for innovation and to protect its process oriented nature in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan Period. The programme guidelines of the MHRD's other departmental activities need to highlight MS for its niche contribution to curriculum design, expertise in training etc., and to avoid positioning it as a convenient and readymade infrastructure for service delivery.

A knowledge and communications strategy is necessary such that it looks at (a) internal skill and knowledge needs, (b) intermediation and liaisons capabilities that enable the sangha to

present an alternate model as fair & just brokers of information and knowledge for the community & for women, and (c) a more robust mechanism for roll-back by providing the social capital for a movement to emerge.

The programme in MSUP needs to explore and creatively invest in pilots that address innovations coming from the programme. One such area to pilot - through additional budgets and partnerships - is a well thought through & well-resourced strategy for vocational MSKs, and perhaps a locally viable micro-enterprise strategy for girls graduating from the vocational MSK.

Skills and resources within MSUP are not adequate to meet training needs in relation to the policy & legal provisions for marginalised women to access rights. While outsourcing training is a possibility, this may not always be needed or desirable, and a solid focus on MS staff's skills & knowledge as an on-going activity to address its core mandate is much more necessary.

Learning resources that address a range of sangha & federation building needs are much needed. Older resources need to be digitised and shared, new ones created, and also systems put in place for women's knowledge & perspectives to be captured and disseminated. An MIS is only part of a learning-system model, and while digitised financial systems for management are needed, more important is a digital architecture that will make a pan-MS knowledge, information & communication strategy a reality. It needs to be noted that such a system is not for top-down control but for horizontal & peer processes and structures that can alone strengthen the impact of MS. MSUP can also begin to use video/s more systematically and run community radio initiatives.

Alliance building with new and old movements leading social change is an important agenda for MS. However, this needs MS to step out of static and plan-based inflexibilities. There is a need to engage with and be responsive to local civil society.

Gaining legitimacy as experts in the eyes of the Education Department is needed. MS will need to get invited into and participate actively in relevant meetings of the Department as well as proactively make available material & modules to the SSA.

The programme at its highest levels needs to have an exercise to think through its experiences and evaluate its future vision based on deeper enquiry of the following:

- 6.If indeed federations are to be the backbone infrastructure of marginalised women's rights and entitlements, what models of sustainability should federations move towards?
- 7.What kind of independent and autonomous existence does the programme envision for its federations?
- 8.What would be the on-demand support that MS can provide to meaningfully support the federation?
- 9.Can federations manage the boundary blurring between implementation and social audit roles?

While the programme in U.P. has been delivering gender sensitization trainings to men, the clear impact of this may be hard to measure. It will be very worthwhile to work with boys not only as a strategy by which MS' wisdom can be mainstreamed into the formal education process, but also to be responsive to gender relationship norms and structures.

Internal culture and work ethos in MSUP mirror its embedding in a hyper-politicised environment. This needs some rebuilding.

Fund transfers need to be done through web-based methods from state to district levels to avoid delays; in most other states fund transfers are now electronic and instantaneous which eliminates delays in transfer.

MS functionaries at all levels raised the issue of their remuneration and social security. This is an important issue that has been raised in the past two JRMs also. Inadequate compensation and lack of benefits is affecting the morale of the functionaries. They are also given the added responsibility of managing other government programmes. The overall work for staff has also increased with enhanced coverage of the programme.

Streamlining the accounting and programme management is much needed not only for efficient reporting and upward accountability, but for overall effectiveness and for a culture of transparency. However, the financial function must not be seen as a separate platform, but one that is integrated into the knowledge and communications systems design.

**Annexure**  
**List of Participants present for JRM Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2011,**  
**at the MSUP State Office, Lucknow**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>District</b>
1	Ms. Rajbul Nisha	District Programme Coordinator	Bahraich
2	Ms. Nisha Chaudhary	District Programme Coordinator	Mathura
3	Ms. Ranjana Tiwari	District Programme Coordinator	Jaunpur
4	Ms. Ranjana Khare	District Programme Coordinator	Bulandshahar
5	Ms. Safia Zameer	District Programme Coordinator	Sitapur
6	Ms. Shagufta Yasmeen	District Programme Coordinator	Gorakhpur
7	Ms. Kiranlata Jaiswal	District Programme Coordinator	Allahabad
8	Ms. Saroj Singh	District Programme Coordinator	Pratapgarh
9	Ms. Vineeta Tripathi	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Muzaffarnagar
10	Ms. Wafiya	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Varanasi
11	Ms. Poonam Singh	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Shrawasti
12	Ms. Sharda Pandey	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Mau
13	Ms. Chandrakanta	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Chitrakoot
14	Ms. Shikha Rana	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Saharanpur
15	Ms. Priyanka Saxena	Incharge District Programme Coordinator	Auraiya
16	Ms. Rajeshwari	Sangha member	Auraiya
17	Ms. Brahma	Sangha member	Auraiya
18	Ms. Sumitra	Sangha member	Auraiya
19	Ms. Sarojini	Sangha member	Auraiya
20	Ms. Malti	Sangha member	Varanasi
21	Ms. Pushpa	Sangha member	Varanasi
22	Ms. Shanti	Sangha member	Mau
23	Ms. Suman	Sangha member	Mau
24	Ms. Noorjahan	Sangha member	Gorakhpur
25	Ms. Phoolmati	Sangha member	Gorakhpur
26	Ms. Ramrani	Sangha member	Sitapur
27	Ms. Sushma	Sangha member	Sitapur
28	Ms. Madhuri	Sangha member	Allahabad
29	Ms. Bela	Sangha member	Allahabad
30	Ms. Alka	State Programme Director	Lucknow
31	Ms. Ganga Sharma	Resource Person, State Office	Lucknow
32	Ms. Anju Rathor	Stenographer	Lucknow

**List of Employees at Mahila Samakhya State Office, Lucknow  
JRM 2011**

•	Ms. Alka	State Programme Director
•	Ganga Sharma	Resource Person
•	Mridul Kumar Tiwari	Accountant
•	Yogesh Kumar	Accountant
•	Pankaj Tiwari	Stenographer
•	Anju Rathor	Stenographer
•	Priti Srivastava	Data Entry Operator
•	Dolly Khanna	Librarian
•	Anil Mishra	Driver
•	Mata Prasad	Driver
•	Ravishanker	Messenger
•	Vipin K Verma	Messenger
•	Saeed	Messenger
•	Raju	Messenger
•	Santosh	Messenger

### **MS JRM State-level Wrap-up Meeting held on 11.02.11**

Serial No.	Name of Participants	Designation	Name of organization
1	Ms. Lili Singh	Ad. Project Manager	ICDS
2	Ms. Maya Shukla	Specialist	S.S.A.
3.	Ms. Sehba Hussain	Ex. Director	Beti foundation
4.	Mr. K.j Rajeev	State Manager	Pacs India
5.	Mr. Manoj Tiwari	Advocate	Advocate,High court
6.	Mr. Abhay p Singh	Advocate	Advocate,High court
7.	Mr. Samir Kumar	Coordinator Trg	MDM
8.	Ms. Sushila Singh	Asstt. Commissioner	Gramya Vikas
9.	Mr. Sanjeev Sinha	Gen Secretary	BGVs-UP
10.	Mr. S.C. Suresh	Dy. Commisioner	Rural development
11.	Ms. Rubina Maiti	Education Officer	UNICEF
12.	Ms. Shalini Mathur		Suraksha
13.	Ms. Nishi Mehrotra		State Education Consultant
14	Ms. Anita Gurumurthy		JRM Mission Leader
15.	Mr. Sanjay Valsangkar		DFID nominee for JRM
16.	Ms. Alka	SPD	MS
17.	Ms. Ganga Sharma	RP (State)	MS
18.	Mr. Mridul Tiwari	Accountant,	MS
19.	Mr. Yogesh	Accountant,	MS

JRM 2011 MSUP: District and Block Visits Itinerary

Timings	Activity	Place visited
9:30-10:00 a.m.	DIU presentation (DPC, RP, JRP, CRP and other office staff)	DIU office
10-10:00 a.m.	Travel to block Mishrikh	
10:3—11:00 a.m.	Observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and class rooms</li> </ul> Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> </ul> Mtg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and non teaching staff</li> </ul>	KGBV Mishrikh
11:00-11:30a.m.		
11:30-12:30 a.m.	Mtg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federation members</li> <li>• Nari Adalat members</li> </ul>	MSK, Mishrikh
12:30-12:45	Tea	MSK, Mishrikh
12:45-1:30p.m.	Observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• class rooms</li> </ul> Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> </ul> Mtg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching and non teaching staff</li> </ul>	MSK, Mishrikh
1:30-2p.m.	Lunch	MSK, Mishrikh
230-3:30p.m.	Mtg. and discussion on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federation, Nari Adalat and about MNREGA in block Pisawa</li> </ul>	Inspection house ground , block Pisawa
3:30-4:15p.m.	Travel from Pisawa to Sitapur	
4:15-4:30p.m.	Tea	
4:30-5:30p.m.	Mtg. and discussion on Federation and about MNREGA in block Parsendi	



## Section 4:

# ANNEXURES

(Section 4.1)

**Terms of Reference**

**Third Joint Review Mission (7<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011), Mahila Samakhya**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Mahila Samakhya Programme was initiated in 1989 to translate the goals of NPE and POA into a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalised groups.

The critical focus in MS is recognising the centrality of education in empowering women to achieve equality. To move towards this objective, MS has adopted an innovative approach that emphasises the process rather than mere mechanical fulfillment of targets. Education in MS is understood not merely as acquiring basic literacy skills but as a process of learning to question, critically analysing issues and problems and seeking solutions. It endeavours to create an environment for women to learn at their own pace, set their own priorities and seek knowledge and information to make informed choices. It seeks to bring about a change in women's perception about themselves and the perception of society in regard to women's "traditional roles". This essentially involves enabling women, especially from socially and economically disadvantaged and marginalised groups, to address and deal with problems of isolation and lack of self confidence, oppressive social customs, struggles for survival, all of which inhibit their learning. It is in this process that women become empowered.

Women's collectives under the MS scheme, called Mahila Sanghas, play an active role in working towards removal of barriers to the participation of girls and women in education at the community level and play an active role in school management/running of alternate schooling facilities where needed.

1.2 The purpose of the current phase of *Mahila Samakhya* is to consolidate and expand of the programme and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in a total of 167 Districts across 11 Indian states<sup>39</sup>. The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- To create an environment in which education can serve the objectives of women's equality.
- To enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women and thereby enabling them to recognize their contribution to the economy as producers and workers, reinforcing their need for participating in educational programmes.
- To create an environment where women can seek knowledge and information and thereby empower them to play a positive role in their own development and development of society.
- To set in motion circumstances for larger participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education programmes.
- To provide women and adolescent girls with the necessary support structures and an informal learning environment to create opportunities for education.
- To enable Mahila Sanghas to actively assist and monitor educational activities in the villages – including elementary schools, AE, EGS/AIE Centres and other facilities for continuing education.
- To establish a decentralized and participative mode of management, with the decision making powers devolved to the district level and to Mahila Sanghas which in turn will provide the necessary conditions for effective participation.

1.3 MS is a national programme funded through national resources with additional external funding by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). The duration of DFID funding is from the year 2007-08 to 2013-14. The programme provides for monitoring mechanisms including provision for an annual Joint Review Mission (JRM) each

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<sup>39</sup> The programme is currently operational in 104 districts and 492 blocks in ten states: Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh will be added to the ten existing states in the programme during the period of DFID support, of which half the XI Plan period has passed.

year. The JRM will include visits to four of the eleven states participating in the programme. This will be the third MS JRM and it is scheduled from 7<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

## **2. Mission Objectives and guiding principles**

2.1 The main objective of the JRM is to review progress in the implementation of the programme with respect to programme objectives and to discuss follow-up action, including capacity issues.

2.2 The guiding principle is one of a Learning Mission: (a) learning of progress made against agreed indicators and processes, as well as (b) cross sharing of experiences that highlight strengths and weaknesses with a view to strengthen implementation capacities.

2.3 The Mission will:

- (i) Review progress in overall implementation, particularly expansion and consolidation of the programme's coverage, especially through federations' autonomy and activities;
- (ii) Look at processes (at village/sangha, block, district and State levels) being adopted to achieve the objectives of Mahila Samakhya;
- (iii) Examine issues related to State and District implementation capacity – training, staffing/vacancies, infrastructure & security, etc.;
- (iv) Review financial management;
- (v) Review TC Fund implementation;
- (vi) Make recommendations for XII Plan Document for MS programme.

2.4 During their visits to the four states, the Mission would enquire, in detail, into the following aspects:

- Assess progress against the objectives and key indicators included in the MS Results Framework (Annexure 1);
- Quality of programme interventions, particularly those for education;
- Programme management: staffing, training, participatory functioning;
- Financial Management: accounts staffing, post review of sample procurements, audit arrangements etc.

2.5 The third JRM for MS will make recommendations centered around the following issues based on the States visited:

- Assessment of progress towards MS goals and objectives, in particular: consolidation of work through strengthening/building autonomy of old sanghas & federations, expansion of programme coverage, increased participation of women & girls in education, and empowerment of most-marginalised women as reflected in their accessing of rights & entitlements (especially fighting violence against women & social discrimination);
- Assessment of programme management and implementation arrangements (including financing & procurement);
- An assessment of State, district and sub-district management and monitoring systems in place;
- Specific blocks, districts and states and/or strategic (programmatic/financial) areas requiring focused attention in remaining Plan period;
- Any other areas requiring attention.

2.6 The Joint Review Mission for MS will provide brief State reports on each State visited and one overall (National) report. All of these will be compiled together as an Aide Memoire.

### **3. MISSION PLAN**

3.1 The Mission would comprise of 8 members. Members would be chosen in such a way that expertise would be available for all the major functional areas with, as far as possible, particular specialisation of Mission members matched to the priorities of the MS Programme. The Mission would visit four States viz.: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh. Each State team will comprise 2 members (one GoI nominee and one DFID nominee on the Mission).

3.2 The Mission composition would be as follows:

GOI: 4 members including Mission Leader and one financial management and procurement specialist

DFID: 4 members including financial management and procurement specialist

3.3 Each State Team would submit a draft State Report (compilation of key findings of the Mission) on the State visited by them and obtain feedback on the same during a State level wrap-up with the Secretary, Education Department before departure from the State.

3.4 GoI will provide the leadership and coordination of each JRM. A core team of 5 members led by the Mission Leader will be responsible for compiling the overall (National) report of the Review Mission on MS.

#### **4. TIME FRAME**

As per feedback of nominees on previous MS JRMs, this third Review Mission will be held in two parts – allowing more time for writing of detailed State reports – within the dates of 7<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011. (For details of schedule, refer Annexure 2.)

## **5. Documents and information required**

1. A brief report from each MS State programme outlining: (a) progress since last JRM, (b) key achievements and challenges/issues faced in implementation, (c) action taken against previous JRMs' recommendations, and (d) data reflecting programme status as against Results Framework;
2. State and district-wise approved work plans and budgets 2009-10 & 2010-11;
3. Information on Release of funds to states – 2009-10 & 2010-11;
4. An update on the use of the TC funds; including Documentation of Best Practices, Baseline Survey, FM&P Manual, etc.;
5. An update on National Resource Centre

The Government of India will make the above documents available to the JRM by 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.

## SUGGESTED MS STATES SELECTED FOR THIRD JOINT REVIEW MISSION

STATES	JRM
1. Andhra Pradesh	√
2. Assam	
3. Bihar	
4. Chhattisgarh	
5. Gujarat	√
6. Jharkhand	√
7. Karnataka	
8. Kerala	
9. Madhya Pradesh	
10. Uttar Pradesh	√
11. Uttarakhand	

**Annexure 1: Results Framework**

**Annexure 2: Schedule**



## Annexure 1: Results Framework

Narrative	Output	Measurable Indicators	Means of objective verification	Assumptions	Outcomes
<b>Goal</b>					
1. Women and girls of most marginalised groups empowered through education and accessing their rights and opportunities					
2. Education is key to enabling women's full and equal participation as agents of change					
<b>Purpose</b>					
1. Expanding outreach of the programme to reach more women of most marginalised groups	MS coverage expanded to an additional 21,000 Sanghas.	<p>1.1 Sangha membership (EBB &amp; district-wise), disaggregated by social group (caste, community)</p> <p>1.2 Decentralized and participatory mode of establishment of MS programme in new EBBs</p> <p>1.3 MS Programme Management structures delivering timely &amp; relevant support to staff</p> <p>1.4 Existence of a systematic and effective plan of expansion</p>	<p>1.1 <b>Sangha, DIU, SPO, NPO records (MIS data on membership)</b> disaggregated by social group, age, class, educational status of household etc</p> <p>1.2 a) <b>Sangha records (minutes of meetings) and final work plans</b> - to reflect Sangha members' setting of agendas according to their priorities                      (b) <b>SPO &amp; DIU records of planning process (minutes of planning meetings) &amp; final AWPBs</b> (formulated first at DIU, then SPO)</p> <p>1.3 <b>DIU, SPO &amp; NPO records – esp. training reports &amp; workshop minutes</b> (to reflect No. of perspective &amp; skill-based trainings held for MS staff in the past working year/annually)</p> <p>1.4 a) <b>Annual reports of State MS programmes</b>                      b) <b>Sangha, federation, DIU &amp; SPO records on expansion (minutes of meetings)</b> wherein discussion centred on logistics &amp; planning of expansion &amp; consolidation/physical, phased withdrawal– including autonomous federations' role in expansion/withdrawal                      c) <b>National-level overview (MIS figures/analysis) of expansion and consolidation patterns across the MS programme</b></p>	<p>a) MS processes receive support in a wider programmatic &amp; political context. Policies &amp; programmes facilitate the processes of gender equality.</p> <p>b) Effective &amp; timely support to staff</p>	<p>a) Impact on sangha women leads to a wider impact on non-sangha women</p> <p>b) creates a pool of women who are oriented for non-hierarchical management styles &amp; respect for transparency and abilities to work with rural women of most marginalised groups</p>
2. Facilitate increased information and access of women to their entitlements, through various methods of capacity building	<p>a) Enhanced information on issues concerning women's lives</p> <p>b) Women's proactive efforts and action on these issues, and creating supportive structures for the same</p>	<p>2.1 Articulated demand increases for knowledge and services to resolve issues concerning women's lives, and address felt needs</p>	<p>2.1 a) <b>Sangha records and documentation of discussions (minutes of meetings)</b> – disaggregated by issues/thematic areas                      b) <b>Sangha, federation, DIU &amp; SPO records/documentation (e.g. minutes of planning meetings)</b> of process of planning training calendar                      c) <b>Sangha, federation, DIU &amp; SPO (MIS) data for no. of trainings held/organised for sangha/federation</b></p>	<p>a) MS provides training (perspective/skill) support to women</p> <p>b) MS functionaries are trained and equipped to provide this training for sangha members</p>	<p>a) Marginalised women realise their rights &amp; entitlements, leading to change in their status</p> <p>b) Enhanced transparency</p>

	<p>c) Linkages with other programmes &amp; departments to achieve this</p>	<p>2.2 Women's mobility increased</p> <p>2.3 Increased awareness amongst other programmes &amp; departments at village/block/district level about MS programme and/or sangha/federation</p> <p>2.4 MS support in creating, and sanghas'/federations' running, of alternative structures.</p> <p>2.5 MS' support in building capacities of sangha members, &amp; influencing accountability in implementation of</p>	<p>members, disaggregated by theme/issue/skill and issue/needs-based demand thereof in sangha/federation</p> <p>2.2 a) <b>Findings of Baseline Survey</b> (of section on women's individual mobility)  b) <b>Sangha records (incl. minutes of meetings)</b> – esp. documentation/case studies reflecting increase in women's collective mobility and reasons/purposes thereof (e.g. collective accessing/outreach on issues of concern or to institutions like markets/banks/govt. service-delivery institutions etc., for protest actions, representation at federation level, etc.)  c) <b>Case-studies</b> in qualitative documentation maintained by DIU/in annual reports of State programmes (examples as in 2.2 (b) above)</p> <p>2.3 a) <b>Findings of Baseline Survey (data from interviews with key village informants)</b>  b) <b>Sangha &amp; federation records (MIS data, minutes of meetings) about members' participation in and work in influencing/networking/advocating with other govt. programmes/departments</b> (disaggregated by department &amp; type of interaction)  c) <b>Minutes of meetings/other records of offices/committees of govt. programmes/departments at various levels, as also invitations and/or certifications of collaboration/participation in the same by sanghas/sangha members</b></p> <p>2.4 a) <b>Sangha, federation, DIU and SPO records on alternative structures (educational, legal, health or other) – i.e. MIS data on no. of centres/structures, no. of people accessing &amp; benefiting disaggregated by social group, age, gender, class, location etc.</b>  b) <b>Sangha, federation, DIU and SPO-level process documentation (esp. minutes of meetings, registers, annual reports etc.) of administration, esp. of financial aspects, service-provision/interventional process &amp; achievements/success stories therein, of the above alternative structures</b></p> <p>2.5 a) <b>Sangha/federation and DIU records (minutes of meetings) of sanghas' discussion about and demand for perspective/info./skill training for issue-resolution actions</b></p>	<p>c) Support from administrative &amp; programmatic bodies at various levels</p>	<p>&amp; accountability of State to deliver rights &amp; entitlements to marginalised women</p> <p>c) Articulation of marginalised women's own notions of equity &amp; equality</p>
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		programmes through participation on formal/institutional Committees.	(protest/advocacy/networking/legal methods/RTI etc.) b) <b>DIU &amp; SPO-level MIS data</b> (disaggregated by type, nature & participation by sangha members of different areas/social groups) on <b>no. of advocacy and other issue-resolution centric trainings held/organised for sangha members by MS</b> c) <b>Sangha/federation, DIU and village issue-based committees' MIS data regarding membership of sangha women in various committees</b> like VECs, MTAs & PTAs, VHCs, Pani samitis, van samitis etc. (socially & geographically disaggregated data) d) <b>DIU &amp; SPO records – including Annual reports – esp. case studies of advocacy/protest actions and successful interventions by sanghas &amp; federations to influence accountability in implementation of other govt. programmes/departments</b> e) <b>State &amp; National-level MIS data/Baseline Survey findings – for disaggregated data on above actions and success-stories</b> (type/nature, forms of success/change influenced, programmes/departments by issue/thematic area etc.)		
		2.6 Benefits accrued & realised by women individually & collectively (e.g. schemes).	2.6 a) <b>Sangha, federation and DIU records (minutes of meetings, lists of beneficiaries of MS/sangha/federation actions/interventions, registers etc.), as also SPO &amp; NPO (MIS) data</b> – to reflect the accessing of specific rights & state-provided benefits by sangha members (e.g. job-cards under NREGA), through socially disaggregated data b) <b>Sangha, federation, GP, village committees' records (incl. registers, minutes of meetings, beneficiary lists), &amp; also case studies/other documentation of SPO/DIU like annual reports etc.</b> – to reflect access of rights and benefits/entitlements by non-sangha women/other sections of community through sangha/federation intervention/advocacy		
3. Facilitating increased participation of women and girls in formal and non formal education through sustained engagement with them (life long learning/ continued education).	a) Mahila Sanghas enabled to and actively assisting & monitoring/interfaces with all educational programmes in the villages including primary schools, Alternative and Non-formal Education facilities,etc	3.1 Promotion of real and thematic literacies made available to girls and women	3.1 a) <b>DISE &amp;DIU/SPO (MIS) data for village-wise literacy rates of girls &amp; women</b> (preferably disaggregated by social group) b) <b>DIU &amp; SPO-level records (MIS data) of no. of literacy-centric interventions</b> (ALCs, phased literacy camps, etc.) for women and girls by MS and/or sangha/federation, as well as <b>data on participation and learning achievements of both sangha &amp;</b>	a) MS continuously upgrading skills of MS personnel to work with higher levels of capacity building of federations and Sanghas b) Education department works	a) The creation of a learning society that values education b) MS (including Sanghas and federations) becoming



		<p>3.5 Impacting education institutions and influencing curriculum of the same (Sangha's participation in VECs, MSS' collaboration with State edu. Deptt/ SSA)</p> <p>3.6 Formal and non-formal learning centres run by MS, functioning to full capacity</p> <p>3.7 Increasing capacities/importance to document and disseminate learnings from women's own learning</p> <p>3.8 Converting women's life experience to influence teaching learning materials/methodologies at different levels (including ToTs)</p>	<p>within/by MS in context of MSKs, adult education (ALCs, literacy camps, trainings etc.), and also KGBVs &amp; NPEGEL (life-skills education etc.)</p> <p>3.5 <b>a) Same as 3.4 (a)</b> <b>b) Same as 3.3. (b)</b></p> <p>3.6 <b>SPO records (incl. MIS data)of:</b> a) <b>no.</b> of MSKs, ALCs, NFLCs (e.g. jagjagis, balamitra Kendras etc.), also MS-run KGBVs &amp; NPEGEL centres b) <b>Capacities of these centres and actual attendance</b> (in numbers, and disaggregated by gender, age, social group, class, administrative unit etc.) c) <b>Administrative &amp; financial records</b> of the centres d) <b>Minutes of all meetings, and work plans/budgets etc. of the same</b> – with respect to planning, administration, financial management &amp; implementation/functioning of the centres</p> <p>3.7 a) <b>Sangha and federation minutes</b> – esp. of issue-base discussions &amp; thematic trainings, programmes etc. – to reflect perspective, conceptual clarity, quality of articulation b) <b>SPO/DIU &amp; National-level records of training/workshops for building &amp; strengthening documentation capacities of MS staff at various levels:</b> - <b>no.</b> of trainings, disaggregated by exact <b>topics</b> (skill/perspective) covered &amp; <b>resource</b> person/facilitator (in-house or external), - <b>participation</b> (disaggregated by position &amp; length of experience in MS) in these trainings, c) <b>Minutes of discussions in above documentation trainings/workshops</b> – to reflect conceptual clarity etc. and change in the same over time for various levels of MS staff</p> <p>3.8 a) <b>TLMs (for training of staff, trainers, sangha members, etc.) developed/collaborated in designing by MS</b> – esp. case-studies and language/vocabulary/situations from lived reality of most-marginalised women b) <b>Minutes of meetings (at SPO</b></p>		
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		3.9 Harnessing local/popular media, cultural forms to enhance learning	<p><b>&amp;/or DIU levels) for planning/design of TLMs</b> (incl. for TOT) – to reflect discussion on incorporation of approach that centres/bases TLM on women’s life-experiences</p> <p>3.9 a) <b>Minutes of meetings (at sangha, federation, DIU &amp; SPO levels) for planning/design of educational/formal &amp; non-formal learning interventions &amp; activities</b> – to reflect specifically discussion on &amp; incorporation of popular media/local cultural forms in implementation strategy (e.g. kala jathas, street plays, writing &amp; composing songs, poster-design etc.)</p> <p>b) <b>SPO &amp; DIU level data (MIS) of no. of above activities/events</b> (disaggregated by location, type of activity/event with corresponding type of intervention/strategy/issue, target audience/benefiting group/participation by social group and in numbers, etc.)</p>		
4. Building leadership amongst/of poor , most marginalised women and autonomy of women’s collectives	<p>a) Democratic processes and consensual decision-making within Sangha/federation</p> <p>b) Active participation of Sangha members in developmental activities &amp; decision making at village and other levels</p> <p>c) MS enabling marginalised women to participate in electoral processes and facilitating inclusion of gender issues in local developmental agendas of elected representatives, especially PRIs</p> <p>d) Development of leadership in different domains ( and second line leadership) within Sanghas and federations</p> <p>e) Sanghas and federations expanding outreach to more women, newer areas, and to other programmes/spheres in various capacities</p> <p>f) Sanghas and federations developing</p>	<p>4.1 Distributive (i.e. opportunity to all members) leadership in the Sangha and federation</p> <p>4.2 Sanghas and federations’ self-reliance in programme management and planning</p> <p>4.3 Signatories for Sangha and Federation accounts limited to membership of these groups only, i.e. no external stake in managing/accessing accounts</p> <p>4.4 Reduced dependence on MS for financial support</p>	<p>4.1 a) Extent of <b>Sangha/ federation EC members involved in roles and responsibility as per minutes register, documentation/ reports of functioning of various committees</b></p> <p>b) Socio-economic profile of members of general body and EC of the federation as per <b>membership registers and other books maintained by federation</b> - as also disaggregation by social group, age, economic status</p> <p>c) Rotation of EC and thematic-committee membership as leaders as per: <b>Sangha/federation rules (written), minutes of meetings</b></p> <p>4.2 a) No. of instances in which the groups have taken initiative in dealing various issues as per : <b>minutes register, copy of applications/ complaints, FIRs, govt/ court, protection officer, Panchayats decree, orders, penalties, relief to victim women.</b></p> <p>b) Meeting regularity along with proportion of meetings held without MS support as per the <b>minutes register</b></p> <p>4.3 <b>Sangha/federation meeting minutes register, Books of accounts, financial statements</b></p> <p>4.4 <b>Sangha/federation meeting minute register, books of accounts, and financial statements</b></p>	<p>a) MS identifies &amp; works on different aspects of leadership both within MS and in Sanghas &amp; federations</p> <p>b) There is programme support to counter backlash against women emerging as leaders/taking leadership positions</p> <p>c) Programme support for political participation and representation of women at different levels</p>	Changing modes of expression and practice of leadership by women/ women’s collectives

	<p>autonomous identity</p> <p>g) Federations/Sanghas breaking ground in entering new areas of work/interventions</p>	<p>4.5 Increase in women's election and participation in PRIs</p> <p>4.6 Issue-based mobilisation and organisation of women (modes and numbers) by Sanghas and federations on their own, including issue-based membership</p> <p>4.7 Sangha and federations efforts in physical expansion into new areas (even within older districts/blocks)</p> <p>4.8 Changing nature of role and responsibilities between Sangha, federation and MS</p> <p>4.9 Mechanisms (process/procedural) to ensure democratic &amp; consensual decision making</p> <p>4.10 Sanghas &amp; federations work with regard to governance (influencing</p>	<p>4.5 a) <b>Attendance in Gram Sabha and PRIs in all levels as per GP/PRI attendance register, minutes and other records</b></p> <p>b) <b>Membership in Panchayat committees</b> (Social Justice Committee, Finance committee and Programmes committee) and Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads</p> <p>4.6 <b>Minutes of various meetings, pattern of distribution of benefits (lists etc.) as per minutes register, records of other committees set up at village level, records of related line departments, and orders, local media reports</b></p> <p>4.7 a) <b>Minutes register of both old (involved in expansion) and newly formed sanghas</b></p> <p>b) <b>Minutes of federation EC meetings</b> indicating decision and allocation of responsibility of expansion to Sanghas/ federation – and to reflect specific discussions/reasons for federations' prioritisation for expansion work</p> <p>c) <b>Data on coverage maintained by federation/DIU</b></p> <p>d) <b>SPO and DIU planning meetings' minutes</b> – to reflect reasoning/thought behind involving federations in expansion process</p> <p>4.8 a) <b>Minutes of federation EC meetings</b> indicating decision and allocation of responsibility of expansion to Sanghas/ federation – esp. to reflect levels and kinds of support sought from MS programme (hand-holding, on-call training support, crisis intervention, planning facilitation etc.)</p> <p>b) <b>SPO &amp; DIU records (MIS data) on no., nature and types of interactions between MS programme &amp; federations</b> (to reflect as above)</p> <p>4.9 a) <b>Minutes registers both at Sangha and Federation</b> - to reflect consensus-building/taking processes in particular</p> <p>b) <b>Proceedings / minutes/ reports of Nari Adalats, various committees run by federations/ Sanghas</b></p> <p>c) Rotation of EC and thematic-committee membership as leaders as per: <b>Sangha/federation rules (written), minutes of meetings</b></p> <p>4.10 <b>Sangha minutes register, federation EC meeting minutes, records and action taken reports by various thematic committees</b></p>		
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		accountability within govt. programmes, mobilising resources, negotiation and conflict resolution)	<b>working at Federation, copy of govt. orders, circulars, benefits etc.</b>		
5. Facilitating women's agency to challenge social inequality/unequal social relations/ , and to break discriminatory social barriers/practices (at individual, family, community & State levels)	<p>a) All interventions or programme processes geared towards inclusion</p> <p>b) MS functionaries as well as Sangha members, breaking social barriers in personal lives/practice</p> <p>c) Increase in women reporting violence against women, social discrimination</p> <p>d) Women's increased control over resources &amp; decision-making power</p>	<p>5.1 Mixed membership of Sanghas and of general body of federations</p> <p>5.2 Women's voices/own articulations of identity (as agents of change)</p> <p>5.3 Cases/incidents taken up/ intervened in – e.g. VAW, prevention of child marriage, enrolling child labour back into school, rescue &amp; rehabilitation of trafficked and dedicated children (i.e. of Devadasi/Jogini committees), inter-community/ caste marriages</p> <p>5.4 Cases dealt with/resolved by Sangha/federation (Nari Adalat) - data segregated by type, social group, involvement of sangha/non-sangha woman, etc.</p> <p>5.5 Increasing incidence of women's assertion of rights to services &amp; entitlements (as individuals &amp; collectives)</p> <p>5.6 Sanghas and federations acting as</p>	<p>5.1a) <b>Sangha membership register</b></p> <p>b) <b>List of families in the village with their socio-eco profile</b> including their marital status, physical ability, social group, economic status etc.</p> <p>5.2 a) <b>Sangha and federation EC meeting minutes</b> – esp. for federations' vision formulation process</p> <p>b) <b>Minutes of GS and Panchayat's proceedings</b> as per various documents</p> <p>c) <b>Reports at PRIs, different departments</b> such as DRDA, Health deptt, Schol edu. deptt, food supply deptt, (NREGA, NRHM, PDS, MDM) , police and judiciary</p> <p>d) <b>Local media reports, State programme's annual reports/other documentation</b>– regarding action taken by women/sanghas/federations or case-studies of sangha women as emergent/established new leaders</p> <p>5.3 a) <b>Reports, case studies, and minutes register of Nari Adalat</b></p> <p>b) <b>Minutes book of social justice committee of Panchayats, records</b></p> <p>c) <b>Case files of protection committee on VAW/DV, copy of FIRs and FRs</b></p> <p>d) <b>Data from MSK and KGBVs, school enrolment registers,</b></p> <p>e) <b>Certificate of appreciation</b> by concerned departments/ institutions , <b>data from child helplines, Circulars / notices regarding nomination on protection committee</b></p> <p>5.4 a) <b>Socio-economic profile of women / girls seeking help from Nari Adalats and federations as per case files</b></p> <p>b) <b>Sangha membership register</b></p> <p>c) <b>Cases reported to protection officer, police, etc. as per their records and minutes books of federation and Nari Adalat</b></p> <p>5.5 a) (Individually) <b>Savings and internal loaning patterns at Sangha as per cash book and loan ledger</b> maintained at Sangha level</p> <p>b) Initiatives by Sanghas or federations to facilitate members access to insurance services as per <b>various records maintained at federation level</b></p> <p>c) <b>Discussions with selected beneficiaries of these services</b></p>	<p>a) Development of critical thinking</p> <p>b) Support from MS programme for development of women's agency to challenge social inequality</p>	<p>a) Mapping social change &amp; diverse ways of women affecting the same</p> <p>b) More gender-just, responsive socio-political environment</p> <p>c) Conditions for full expression of women's citizenship (linking the personal and socio-political) through the prevalence of equality in all spheres</p>



		<p>pressure groups and the variety of strategies used (e.g. campaign, advocacy, networking, protest)</p> <p>5.7 Increased asset-ownership &amp; access to financial services - savings mechanisms, credit sources, insurance etc. (individually and as collective)</p>	<p>d) (collectively) <b>Records and agreements with Banks and other Govt. departments for credit and other financial support</b></p> <p>5.6 a) <b>Sangha minutes register, federation EC minutes register, Nari Adalat's proceedings – no. &amp; types of actions disaggregated</b>  b) <b>Records and documents maintained at Nari Adalat and Federation</b>  c) <b>Copies of press releases, coverage by print and electronic media</b>, case-studies in annual reports of MS state programme  d) <b>Records of Panchayat, Samities and Parishads</b></p> <p>5.7 <b>Books of accounts at Sangha and federation level, Bank linkage records, Individual pass books, and loan ledgers at Sanghas and federation level, Loan ledger and cash books for details of loan usage patterns</b></p>	
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### **Annexure 2: Timeframe/Schedule (two-part):**

The Joint Review Mission would take place between 7<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011 as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location of/travel by Mission members</b>	<b>Activity</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	New Delhi & MS State capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefing by Government of India at MHRD (morning)</li> <li>Internal discussions, preparation for field visits and departure for States</li> </ul>
8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	MS SPO & district programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State-level discussions and briefings at SPO</li> <li>Discussion with other district and State-level organisations &amp; departments and State Team</li> <li>Travel to district</li> </ul>
9 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	MS district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field-visit in district</li> </ul>
10 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday)	MS district & State capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field-visit in district</li> <li>Travel back to SPO</li> </ul>
11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Friday)	MS SPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrival at SPO, and writing of first draft of State Report (i.e. consolidation of Mission's main findings at State-level)</li> </ul>
12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Saturday)	MS SPO & Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wrap-up at State-level with draft State Report/key findings of Mission to be presented to the State Education Secretary (Chairperson of EC of State MS)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A copy of draft State report to be sent by fax/e-mail to NPO before departure from State</li> <li>• Depart for home location</li> </ul>
14 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission members to e-mail/fax the detailed (second) draft of State reports to NPO &amp; respective SPOs (within first half of the day)</li> </ul>
15 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vetting of draft State reports by NPO &amp; consolidation of comments for modification in the same</li> </ul>
16 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPO &amp; SPOs respond to Mission members by fax/e-mail with comments (including suggested modifications to State reports)</li> </ul>
17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday-Saturday)	Mission member's home location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modification of State reports by Mission members (based on NPO &amp; SPO comments) and preparation of final drafts of the same</li> </ul>
20 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Sunday)	New Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival in Delhi for those Mission members unable to travel the day before</li> <li>• Sharing of final drafts of State reports by Mission members, with NPO – discussion and finalisation of the same (including any final modifications if required)</li> <li>• Meeting with Mission Leader for finalization of core issues for National Report</li> </ul>
21 <sup>st</sup> February, 2011 (Monday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core team writes draft National Report</li> <li>• Members other than core team depart during the day</li> </ul>
22 <sup>nd</sup> February, 2011 (Tuesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core team completes draft National Report and shares with NPO (by e-mail/fax, by lunch-time)</li> </ul>
23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 2011 (Wednesday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with NPO representatives to discuss National Report (morning)</li> <li>• Modification and finalization of National Report accordingly by Core team (to be shared with NPO by e-mail/fax by evening)</li> </ul>
24 <sup>th</sup> February, 2011 (Thursday)	-do-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of Mission Leader's presentation of key findings &amp; main recommendations of MS JRM 2010 (also incorporating any final comments by NPO) on National Report</li> <li>• Wrap-up (post-lunch) – including presentation by Mission Leader and discussion with MS SPDs, non-official expert members of MS NRG, State Education Secretaries (Chairpersons of MSS ECs), MHRD &amp; DFID officials</li> </ul>

## (Section 4.2)

### NPO's Presentation on MS at JRM briefing meeting of 07.02.11

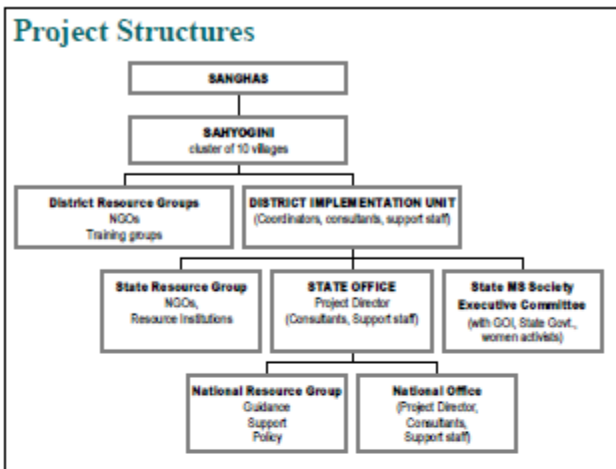
#### History and Genesis

- Launched in 1989; only programme of the Central Government to have sustained for over 22 years
- Direct outcome of the commitment for affirmative action for women's education mandated by NPE, 1986/92

#### Key objectives

- Create an environment where women can seek knowledge & information and thereby be empowered to play a positive role in their own development & development of society
- Enable women's collectives (Sanghas) to actively assist and monitor educational activities in villages
- Set in motion circumstances for larger participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education programmes, and to create an environment in which education can serve the objectives of women's equality

#### Programme structure



#### Growth trajectory

- Launched as a pilot project in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka in **1989**
- Extended to Andhra Pradesh (**1992**), Bihar (**1992**), Assam (**1995**) and Kerala (**1998**)
- With bifurcation of States, programme presence in Uttarakhand (**2003**), Jharkhand & Chhattisgarh (**2006**)
- MS Society registered in Madhya Pradesh (**2007**)

- Expansion in Rajasthan initiated (**2010**)

### **Coverage & Outreach**

- **33,577** villages in **495** EBBs spread over **104** districts in **10** States
- **41,507** Sanghas with **1.04** million women members from most marginalized groups of society
- **185** federations, autonomous federations **42**
- **212** Nari Adalats/Rai centers/ counseling centres
- **140** KGBVs, **2088** NPEGEL centres/clusters
- **97** MSKs with **11,786** girls enrolled as of September, 2010
- **8985** girls (who passed out of MSK) enrolled in formal schools
- **16,890** alternative centres for learning and literacy
- **9845** Kishori & Bala Sanghas with **2,24,394 lakh** members

### **Review & Monitoring mechanisms**

- Annual work plan preparations at Sangha, federation and DIU level
- Annual work plan and budget meetings at NPO
- Bi-annual progress report to NPO
- Annual Joint Review Missions
- Follow up systems on JRM recommendations with States
- National Resource Group

### **Progress on Results Framework**

- Results Framework first initiated in 2007-08
- Reworked by sub-group members in January 2010
- Workshops to disseminate/share RRF in all States
- Follow-up consultations in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Kerala
- 500 MS functionaries participated in dissemination and follow-up workshops
- RRF-based reporting helped in integrating existing programme performance and monitoring systems

### **Action taken on previous JRM recommendations:**

- 1) **Strategic integration of MS learning with other CSS**
  - a) **NCW** – research related convergence initiated
  - b) **SSA** – sharing from MS in JRM, State Education Secretaries' conference, Gender Coordinator workshops
  - c) **BP toolkits/ case studies** – to be shared with other stakeholders: WCD, Education Departments, NCW etc.
  - d) **MS PAB** meetings conducted back to back with SSA

- 2) **MS programme should reconnect with other national/state level movements and advocacy groups**
  - a) APMSS & KMSS part of State networks fighting for women's reproductive health rights (against forced hysterectomy, indiscriminate use of oral contraceptives amongst Adivasi women etc.)
  - b) MS Karnataka's work with strong federations: 'We and our votes are not for sale' campaign for good governance & corruption-free elections;
  - c) JMSS has led group of organizations in the State to draft a State-level Policy on Women,
  - d) KMSS & UMSS registered as service providers under the PDVWA
- 3) **MS should not become a service delivery agency**
  - a) Reiterated in all meetings with State Education Secretaries and other departmental officers
  - b) Clearly needs further reinforcement
- 4) **Financial sustainability of Federations**
  - a) NPO working with States on federation strengthening;
  - b) Need for developing a strategic vision for autonomy, consolidation and withdrawal etc.
- 5) **Socially segregated data** on participation, leadership and decision-making roles of Sangha members  
States have started restructuring their data-collection systems to maintain and collate data
- 6) **Studies:** Impact of MSK on Girls' Educational Outcomes; Evaluation and Documentation of MSK Methodologies  
Being processed
- 7) **Finalize Financial Management & Procurement Manual**  
Draft complete; inputs from external consultants invited
- 8) **National Resource Centre**  
New ToR drafted, tender invitation process to be started

#### **Progress Under TCF:**

- 1) **Induction and Refresher Training by ERU**
  - a) One Induction Training; three Refresher Trainings conducted
  - b) 200 functionaries participated
  - c) Reports submitted by ERU; NPO using feedback for State specific action plans
- 2) **Documentation of Best Practices**
  - a) Best Practices Foundation commissioned to conduct study
  - b) National consultation to identify Best Practices and Tool Kit areas was held
  - c) Documentation and dissemination of Case Studies and Tool Kits complete
- 3) **Baseline Survey**
  - a) Feedback & inputs from NRG members on Baseline Inception Report
  - b) Survey completed, key findings shared with NPO, NRG by ORG Nielsen
- 4) **Recruitment of additional personnel at NPO**

Two consultants (Financial, and Gender & Social Inclusion) recruited and placed at NPO

### Outlay and Utilization

Year	AWP&B of States	B.E. (GIA)	R.E. (GIA)	Releases to States	Rs. (Lakhs) Utilization Incl C/f amt.
2008-09	5964.32	3775.00	3775.00	3765.50*	4154.71
2009-10	7417.75	3775.00	4175.00	4175.00	4348.53
2010-11	5463.47	4573.00	4573.00	3900.19# 85% of RE	-----
*Remaining 9.5 lakhs paid to IIPA for NRC # As on 31.01.2011					

### Update on JRM recommendation on Financial Management

- Consultant to design FM&P Manual engaged by DFID recently in January 2011; work to commence shortly
- Standardization of accounting systems and reporting formats to be pursued vigorously once FM&P Manual ready

### Priorities for 2011-12

- 1) 12th Plan Document
  - a) Setting up a working group
  - b) Review of the funding patterns of MS Programme
  - c) Review of HR policies ( remunerations, social securities and other benefits)
- 2) Policy on expansion & consolidation
  - a) Review of targets set for 2011-12
  - b) Policy on federation, withdrawal of MS support
- 3) Formulating Guidelines on:
  - a) Relationship between MS Societies and State Governments
  - b) SPD recruitment, appraisal and extension processes
  - c) Recruitment, appraisal and extension of functionaries at all levels

### Joint Review Mission

- As per the MoU, MS Joint Review conducted annually
- Team of two Mission members (one each from DFID & GoI) nominated to visit identified States for joint review
- Two JRMs already conducted in 2008 and 2009 visiting 6 states each
- JRMs conducted in two phases:
  - First phase: Field visits & state report writing
  - Second phase: Consolidation & national report writing including sharing of the key findings

### **Joint Review Mission, 2011**

Based on the feedback from Mission members, the current JRM is planned over three phases with increased number of days both in the field and for writing state reports:

- Briefing at NPO, State visits (Feb. 7-12)
- Writing state reports ( Feb.14-19)
- Consolidation, writing and sharing of National report (Feb. 20-24)
- Deliverables: State reports (4), National Report

### **Suggested Framework for State Reports**

- Overview of MS programme
- Extent of realization of the results (as per RRF):
  - Expanding outreach and consolidation
  - Facilitating increased information and access of women to their entitlements
  - Facilitating increased participation of women and girls in formal and non formal education through sustained engagement with them
  - Building leadership amongst/of poor, most marginalized women and autonomy of women's collectives
  - Facilitating women's agency to challenge social inequality/unequal social relations/and to break discriminatory social barriers
- Institutional processes and programme management
- Financial management
- Resource support
- Convergence
- Good practices and Innovations
- Conclusions

**(Section 4.3)**  
**Physical progress up to/status as of 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2010**

Sl. No.	States →	Andhra Pradesh	Assam	Bihar	Chhattisgarh	Gujarat	Jharkhand	Karnataka	Kerala	Uttar Pradesh	Uttarakhand	Total
	Particulars↓											
1	No. of Districts covered	14	12	14	5	7	11	15	3	17	6	104
2	No. of Blocks	103	48	72	6	39	71	60	9	62	25	495
3	No. of villages covered	4,248	2853	6,459	395	2311	4098	3140	2588	4918	2567	33577
4	No. of Sanghas	5,071	3279	8,530	343	2048	9243	4983	1229	4918	2567	41507
5	No. of women members of Sanghas	178108	163806	158,207	8129	50329	141367	158407	31041	103588	53454	1046436
6	No. of trainings for sangha members	1,902	3461	145,243	-	265	1891	2872	-	22560	3033	181227
7	No. of trainings for federation leaders, EC & other committee members	448	391	6,862	-	48	53	945	-	14	157	8918
8	No. of trainings for MS functionaries	584	228	1,176	19	10	315	101	-	26	49	2508
9	No. of trainings for federation leaders	-	265	746	-	43	29	-	-	10	157	1250
10	No. of Federations formed	28	24	6	-	27	9	41	14	27	9	185
11	No. of autonomous federations	24	5	-	-	0	-	-	-	9	4	42
12	No. of sanghas under autonomous federations	704	401	-	-	0	-	-	-	380	312	1797
13	No. of herbal medicine centres/sanjeevani kendras	-	19	-	-	6	3	47	-	41	28	144
14	No. of information centres/mahiti Kendras/telecentres	-	-	-	-	26	8	5	-	-	-	39
15	No. of Mahila Shikshan Kendras	16	9	22	-	4	12	4	8	15	7	97
16	No. of girls who have passed out of MSKs	3,373	789	4,391	-	0	2406	65	139	463	160	11786
17	No. of girls passed out of MSKs who have been enrolled in formal schools thereafter	3,015	789	2,422	-	0	2052	63	120	450	74	8985
18	No. of Kishori Sanghas	1,661	1229	1,309	102	547	1149	1930	1100	601	366	9994



19	No. of Members of Kishori Sangha	53,487	32187	34,833	1462	8990	14379	54777	27448	11330	5602	244495
20	No. of Nari Adalats/Rai centres	18	11	6	-	32	11	41	54	27	12	212
21	No. of cases dealt with by Nari Adalats	150	1403	4,988	-	3210	467	3278	479	1651	396	16022
22	No. of counseling centres	1	6	645	-	0	11	-	3	-	1	667
23	No. of cases dealt with by counseling centres	72	487	-	-	0	-	-	26	-	8	593
24	No. of Sangha members elected to Panchayats	1,874	503	470	-	1249	-	845	81	604	3569	9195
25	No. of alternative centres for learning & literacy (incl. adult learning centres/literacy centres/literacy camps/Jagjagi centres/short-term MSK/ bal jag-jagi etc.)	2,694	3905	1,520	-	3571	2018	1596	-	1318	268	16890
26	No. of ECCEs (e.g. palna Kendras etc.)	-	0	-	-	82	12	-	-	-	-	94
27	No. of KGBVs run by MS	-	0	67	-	11	-	29	-	33	-	140
28	No. of NPEGEL centres run by MS	96	55	963	-	0	802	108	-	-	64	2088
									-	-		

(Section 4.4)

**Suggested State Report Format for MS JRM 2011**

(Max. 25 pages)

**I. An Overview of State MS Programme**

1. Background of MS in the State and districts visited
2. Coverage (data disaggregated by social category)
3. Major highlights of the programme in the districts visited
  - a. Achievements
  - b. Key issues, concerns
4. Summary of recommendations
5. List of persons/ organizations interacted with by Mission members

**II. Extent of realization of the Results (as per Revised Results Framework)**

1. Expanding outreach of the programme to reach more women of most marginalised groups
  - a. Pace of growth of the programme during XI FYP -year on year growth in terms of physical expansion (no. of villages, blocks, women members, Sanghas, federations, etc.)
  - b. Extent and depth of Outreach to women from most marginalised sections - (coverage disaggregated by social category)
  - c. Factors and forces facilitating and hindering inclusion; and adequacy of processes adopted for inclusion
  - d. Recommendations on improving the situation
2. Facilitate increased information and access of women to their entitlements, through various methods of capacity building
  - a. Level of awareness of members of Sanghas and Federations on issues related to their rights and entitlements
  - b. Level of access of Sanghas and Federations of rights and entitlements
  - c. Appropriateness and quality of training modules and other capacity building efforts
  - d. Quality of trainings faculty
  - e. Other observations and recommendations
3. Facilitating increased participation of women and girls in formal and non formal education through sustained engagement with them (lifelong learning/continued education)
  - a. Awareness and ability of Sanghas and federations in generating demand for literacy and education
  - b. Inclusion of Sangha members and girl children from their families in formal and non-formal education efforts

- c. Involvement of Sanghas and federations in monitoring of functioning of schools
  - d. Quality and adequacy of MS efforts to facilitate participation of women and girls in formal and non-formal education
  - e. Recommendations
4. Building leadership amongst/of poor, most marginalised women and autonomy of women's collectives
    - a. Understanding of MS team on need and role of the collectives (Sanghas and federations)
    - b. No of federations, Sanghas affiliated with federations
    - c. Extent and quality of support provided to Sanghas by federations
    - d. Quality of process of formation of federations; quality of capacity building modules and efforts
    - e. Quality of federations – autonomy, internal processes, extent of achievement of objectives, ability to represent members' issues in various forums
    - f. On-ground/real process-based factors facilitating &/or affecting withdrawal from federation blocks within 5 years, and appropriateness of this policy
    - g. Sustainability of federations - programme wise, financial and resource support to federations from the MS States
    - h. Key issues and recommendations
  5. Facilitating women's agency to challenge social inequality/unequal social relations/and to break discriminatory social barriers/practices (at individual, family, community & State levels)
    - a. Awareness of Sangha members on issues of social inequality, discrimination and violence
    - b. Ability of Sangha members to deal with discrimination and violence at various levels especially on issues such as child marriage, female foeticide, female infanticide, violence against women etc.
    - c. Quality of facilitation and capacity building by MS functionaries of the Sangha members in dealing with discrimination and violence
    - d. Participation in Panchayati Raj/local self governance
    - e. Livelihood improvement and work on health and nutrition (esp. women's health, indigenous medicinal systems etc.)
    - f. Key issues and recommendations

### **III. MS institutional processes**

1. Nature and types, and quality of orientation/ capacity building programmes; extent of external training resources tapped
2. No of functionaries provided above mentioned inputs
3. Functioning of State office – systems and processes
4. Recruitment system, adequacy of functionaries including for accounting; and budget ,
5. Annual Work Plan and Budget formulation and tracking systems
6. Capability and efficiency of functionaries; understanding of results framework

7. Retention efforts, challenges – esp. turnover issues/causes
8. Feedback, reflection and monitoring processes in MS
9. Sub-committees established at level of State programme – Grant-in-Aid, programmatic & financial
10. Quality of performance appraisal processes, internal assessments
11. Motivation and capacities (knowledge, perspectives, skills) functionaries
12. Key issues and recommendations

#### **IV. Convergence**

1. Convergence mechanisms and coordination with other education programmes especially Sarva Siksha Abhiyan regarding KGBV and NPEGEL
2. Participation in/implementation of other Government programmes (health related programmes/schemes, MGNREGS, SSA etc.)

#### **V. Resource Support**

1. Networking with NGOs, women's groups, research institutions
2. Role of State Resource Centre in supporting MS
3. Role of NRG and E.C. members as support group
4. Key issues and recommendations

#### **VI. Financial Management**

1. Fund flow from GoI and status of releases to districts from State
2. Status of audits and compliance
3. Financial rules and delegation of powers; procurement systems
4. Accounting and record maintenance
5. Key issues and recommendations

#### **VII. Good Practices and Innovations**

#### **VIII. Conclusion/s:**

1. Summary of key Issues in the State MS programme
2. Summary of recommendations of JRM for State