

Chapter I

Administration for the Welfare of Scheduled Castes

A. Strategy for development of Scheduled Castes

According to the 2001 census, the number of Scheduled Castes was nearly to 16.66 crores. It constitutes 16.2% of the total population of the country. Only 20.2% of the scheduled castes of the country live in urban areas. Bulk of the urban scheduled castes of the country live without amenities like drinking water, link roads, sanitation, electricity, etc.

Till 5th Five Year Plan, the pace of the development of scheduled castes has been extremely slow. The 6th plan document identified the “lack of economic support” as the main cause of extremely slow pace of the development of scheduled castes during the earlier plans. It was thought that the normal development will trickle down to the weaker section of the society including the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. However, the experience of the planning process was found otherwise. This necessitated the search for a new strategy during the 6th Five Year Plan.

A new strategy was, therefore, evolved in the 6th plan. It was a combination of the following three instruments:-

- (i) The special component Plan of the States and Central Ministers (SCP)
- (ii) The Special Central Assistance (SCA).
- (iii) Scheduled Castes Development Corporation in the States (SCDC).

Special Component Plan (SCP)

The Special Component Plan (SCP) was designed to channelise the flow of benefits and outlays from the general sectors in the plan of the States and Central Ministers for the development of scheduled castes in physical and financial terms. These plans were envisaged to help the poor scheduled caste

families through composite income generating schemes during 6th Plan Period. Such family oriented programmes were meant to cover all the major occupational groups among the Scheduled castes. In addition, the SCP also sought to improve the living conditions of scheduled castes through provision of drinking water, link road, house sites, improved housing, establishment of such services as primary schools, schools, health centers, veterinary centers, Panchayat houses, community halls, nutrition centers, rural electrification, common society centers etc. in the scheduled caste bases under the Minimum Needs Programme. This would improve their access to social, educational and other community services by ear-making outlays for this purpose in appropriate sectors.

Special Central Assistance (SCA)

The Special Central Assistance (SCA) is additive to the States Special Component Plans and programmes for the development of scheduled castes. During the 6th plan, it was not tied to specific schemes on the schematic pattern. It was meant for the totality of the State effort for the development of scheduled castes. The only condition laid down was that the fund is to be used by the States only for income generating economic development schemes, such as directly relevant training, directly relevant back up services and arrangements for implementation, supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

Scheduled Castes Development Corporation (SCDC)

The Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDC) in the States are visualized as an interface between poor scheduled caste entrepreneurs and financial institutions in respect of bankable schemes of economic development. The government of India provides assistance to the States for investment in the share capital of these corporations. The share of the Central Government and state Government in the share capital of a Corporation is 49.51.

This then was a strategy for the economic development of the scheduled castes as devised during the 6th Plan. The same strategy continued during the 7th Plan and thereafter. The success or failure of any strategy for development depends to a great extent upon the administrative organization created for its implementation.

B. Administrative Machinery

Central level

In Government of India, the work relating to the problems of scheduled castes and tribes was first being looked after by the Home Ministry. However, on 25th September 1986, a large scale reorganization of the Ministries took place. At that time it was thought that to put proper emphasis on the welfare aspects of the administration of Harijan affairs, the subject should be transferred to a Ministry dealing with social welfare. A new Ministry of Social Welfare was created and the work relating to the Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes was transferred from the Ministry of Home Affairs to this Ministry.

From May 1998, this work is being looked after by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. In October, 1999, this Ministry was bifurcated and a separate ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted. The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is now entrusted with the welfare, social justice & empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalized section of the society viz, Scheduled Caste, Minorities, Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities, Aged Persons, Street Children and victims of Drug Abuse etc.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is responsible for all round development of Scheduled Castes and to bring them in the mainstream of national life and ensure their full participation in socio-economic development of the country. The basic objective of the policies, programmes, law and institution of the Indian welfare system is to bring the target groups into the main stream of development by making them self-reliant.

State Level

The State level machinery is broadly responsible for the decision making, planning and reviewing of the program for the development of scheduled castes. It is directly responsible to ensure that at the planning stage the Special Component Plans is qualitatively improved and at implementation stage it is successfully implemented. Since the

programmes under Special Component Plans fall within the jurisdiction of the various departments of the State Governments, the specific positions at different levels in the departmental machinery have got to be identified in each of the department from State to the district level. It has to be ensured that the decisions are taken at the highest level and passed on to intermediate/district level and ultimately to the field level for implementation.

While a number of Government departments are involved in the formulation of Special Component Plan, the specific responsibility of coordinating their activities (in Gujarat) falls on the Secretary of Social Justice and empowerment Department. In most of the States the work relating to the Welfare and development of scheduled castes is combined with that of the scheduled tribes.

District Level

Until recently the Collector was considered to be the chief coordinator of the district. Naturally the work of coordinating the implementation of the Special Component Plan should have fallen on him. Unfortunately, the position has changed in many of the States. Due to a variety of promotional/developmental activities and multifarious problems connected with them, the Collector has become a busy person. He may probably still handle the coordination work relating to the Special Component Plan, but vertical pressure of the departmental heads are now increasing. It is therefore, becoming increasingly difficult for the Collector to coordinate the development of scheduled caste in the district. There is, however, a general feeling that someone at the district level has to coordinate this programme. It is also understood that nobody except the Collector is probably in a position to perform this function.

Maharashtra and Gujarat have relieved the Collector of his responsibility in developmental field by appointing a Chief Executive Officer/District Development Officer in each district to look after developmental functions.

C. Some special Administrative arrangements

Prevention of Crime against Scheduled Castes

The problem of crimes against scheduled castes and the question of protecting them have been continuously engaging the attention of the Government of India and the State Governments. The problem stems out of the fact that the members of the scheduled castes are weak and vulnerable and deserve special consideration. A number of State Governments have taken special measures in this regard. Most of them have made a senior officer at the Police Headquarters responsible to monitor crimes against the scheduled castes. The State Government of Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have identified a total of 48 districts as sensitive from the point of view of crimes against Scheduled Castes. Both the Central Government and the State Governments are thus trying to evolve methods to protect the scheduled castes from crimes committed against them by others.

Commissioner for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes

The Special Officer, commonly known as the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is appointed under Article 338 of the Constitution. It is his duty to investigate all matters relating to safeguards provided for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under the Constitution and to report annually to the President of India upon these safeguards. The Commissioner submits his reports to the President, which are laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha and are discussed in both the Houses.

Schemes being operated by the Ministry

- SCA to SCP to Scheduled Caste
- Post-Matric School Scholarship for SC/ST Students
- Pre-Matric Scholarships for the Children of those engaged in unclean occupations
- National overseas Scholarship and passage grants for higher studies abroad

- Special educational development programme for Scheduled Caste girls belonging to low literacy levels
- Centrally sponsored scheme of hostel for Scheduled Caste girls and boys
- Book Banks for SC/ST students
- Upgradation of merit of SC Students
- Coaching and allied scheme for SC Students
- National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)
- National Safai Kamdar Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)
- Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs)
- Supporting Project of all India nature of SCs
- National Commission for Safai Karamcharis

SCA to SCP to Scheduled Caste

Special Central Assistance is an additive to States Special Component Plan intended for development especially the economic development of Scheduled Castes.

National overseas Scholarship and passage grants for higher studies abroad

Scholarships are provided under the scheme to meritorious SCs, STs (denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes), SC converts to other religions, and children of Agricultural Labourers/Traditional Artisans for post graduate, Ph D and Post Doctoral Studies in specific fields of science, technology and engineering. Selected candidates are allowed three years after the year of selection to obtain admission in foreign institutions. The scholarships are provided to the students by the Indian Missions during their stay abroad and cover the payment of tuition fees, maintenance and contingency allowance and travel expenses. The upper income limit for eligibility is Rs.12000/- per month. Passage grant is provided to students who are in receipt of a merit scholarship from a foreign government or institution, in case such scholarship does not include the cost of passage.

Special educational development programme for Scheduled Caste girls belonging to low literacy levels

To provide a package of educational inputs through residential schools for Scheduled Caste girls in areas of very low literacy and where traditions and environment are not conducive to learning amongst SC girls. This Scheme is implemented by the Zilla Parishads (Panchayats) of the concerned Districts.

Centrally sponsored scheme of hostel for Scheduled Caste girls and boys

The objective of the Scheme is to provide hostel facilities to SC Boys & Girls studying in middle schools, higher secondary schools, colleges and Universities. The Scheme provides for release of Central Assistance to State Governments on 50:50 basis, for construction of Hostels for Boys & Girls belonging to Scheduled Castes. The Union Territory Administrations receive 100% Central Assistance. The maintenance of hostels, boarding & lodging of students, however, rests with the respective States/UTs. The Non-Governmental Organizations also get assistance on the basis of 45:45:10 through their States/UTs, for extension of their existing hostels. The Centrally Controlled Universities can receive financial assistance upto 90% under the Scheme and the remaining 10% is required to be contributed by them. Likewise, the other universities can also receive central assistance upto 45% and the remaining amount has to be provided by their respective States (45%) and themselves (10%).

Book Banks for SC/ST students

The objective of the Scheme is to provide books to deserving SC and ST students pursuing Medical, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Polytechnics, Law, Chartered Accountancy, MBA and Bio-Sciences courses. The Scheme provides for sharing of text books by two students in respect of graduate level courses and separate set of books is provided to individual students at Post-Graduate level and for those pursuing Chartered Accountancy. A set of books costs between Rs.2,400/- to Rs.7,500/-, depending upon the courses. The provision of such sets of books also includes Braille books, talking books/cassettes for visually handicapped students. Towards storage of

these books, grant is also provided for Almirahs. The Scheme is implemented by respective States/UT's and the expenditure on the Scheme is co-shared on 50:50 basis between the Centre and the State Governments. The U.T. Administration receives 100% Central assistance.

Upgradation of merit of SC Students

The objective of the Scheme is to upgrade the merit of SC & ST students by providing them remedial and special coaching in classes IX to XII. While the remedial coaching aims at removing deficiencies in various subjects, the special coaching is provided with a view to prepare the students for competitive examinations for seeking entry into professional courses like engineering and medical disciplines. The Scheme provides for 100% central assistance to the States/UT's. A package grant of Rs.15,000/- per student per year is provided and the States/UT's are not required to bear any financial burden. The students with disabilities amongst SCs and STs, receive specified special allowances like readers allowance, transport allowance, escorts allowance etc.

Coaching and allied scheme for SC Students

Under the Scheme, free coaching facilities are provided to SC and ST students through pre-examination training centre, to help them to compete in various competitive examinations having all India recruitment character such as Civil Services Examinations (Pre & Main), Entrance Examination for Professional Courses, Subordinate Service Examinations and Lower Services Examinations, Banking Recruitment Service and Railway Board etc. The Scheme provides for stipends upto Rs.500/- per month to the outstation students and Rs.150.00/Rs.85.00 per month for local students for taking coaching at the pre-examination training centres. The agencies other than the State Governments (Universities/Private Institutions/N.G.O.'s) running such centres are given 100% grant-in-aid by this Ministry on contractual basis (per unit cost), which includes coaching fees per student as well as the advertisement charges. For the centres run by the respective State Governments, the expenditure is shared on 50:50 basis. Such SC and ST candidates, whose own income or of the

parents does not exceed Rs.44,500/- p.a, are eligible for assistance under the scheme.

National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)

The National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation (NSFDC) was set up as a Company under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 with the objective of financing income generating activities of SC beneficiaries living below double the poverty line limits (presently Rs.40,000/- p.a. for Rural Areas and Rs.55,000/- p.a. for Urban Areas).

Schemes and rate of Interest

S.No.	Scheme & Amount of Loan	Interest chargeable from SCA	Interest chargeable from beneficiaries
1)	Term loan up to Rs.5.00 lacs	3%	6%
2)	Term loan above Rs. 5.00 lacs	5%	8%
3)	Micro Credit Finance up to Rs.25,000/-	2%	5%
4)	Mahila Samridhi Yojana up to Rs.25,000/-	1%	4%

National Safai Kamdar Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)

National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) was incorporated on 24th January 1997 under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956, as an Apex Institution for all round socio-economic upliftment of the Safai Karamcharis and their dependents throughout India and to extend concessional financial assistance to the Safai Karamcharis beneficiaries for establishment of income generating projects. NSKFDC provides loans to the Safai Karamcharis and their dependents through the State Channelising Agencies.

Target group

The target groups of the Corporation are “Scavengers” which means persons wholly or partially employed for manual handling of human excreta and their dependents and “Safai Karamcharis” which means persons engaged in or employed for any sanitation work and their dependents.

No income limit is fixed for availing financial assistance. However, other things being equal, the Corporation accords, priority to the economic development and, rehabilitation of

- i) Scavengers, and amongst Scavengers, those whose income is below double the poverty line;
- ii) Women from among the target group and
- iii) Disabled persons among the target group.

Schemes and rate of Interest

	Scheme and Amount of Loan	Interest chargeable from	
		SCA	Beneficiaries
1)	Term loan up to Rs.10.00 lacs	3%	6%
2)	Education loan up to Rs.3.00 lacs	3%	6%
3)	Micro Credit Finance up to Rs.25,000/-	2%	5%
4)	Mahila Samridhi Yojana upto Rs.25,000/-	1%	4%

Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs)

Share Capital contribution is released to the State Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs) under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme in the ratio of 49:51 between Central Government and State Governments. There are in total 26 such State-level Corporations which are working for the economic development of Scheduled Castes, although some of these Corporations are also catering to the requirements of other weaker sections of the Society, e.g. Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, Minorities etc.

Functions

The main functions of SCDCs include identification of eligible SC families and motivating them to undertake economic development schemes, sponsoring the schemes to financial institutions for credit support, providing financial assistance in the form of the margin money at a low rate of interest, providing subsidy out of the funds made available to the States under the Scheme of Special Central Assistance to Special Component Plan of the States to reduce the repayment liability and providing necessary tie up with other poverty alleviation programmes. For facilitating loans to Scheduled Castes, the SCDCs tie up with the local banks, National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) and National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC). Thus the SCDCs are playing an important role in providing credit and missing inputs by way of margin money loans and subsidy to the target group.

Schemes

The SCDCs finance the employment oriented schemes covering diverse areas of economic activities which inter-alia include (i) agriculture and allied activities including minor irrigation (ii) small scale industry (iii) transport and (iv) trade and service sector.

Supporting Project of all India nature of SCs (Research & Training)

Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to reputed Social Science Research Agencies and Universities which have necessary expertise and are willing to undertake the purposeful studies and hold seminars and workshops preferably on the socio-economic programmes undertaken by Government bodies.

D. Schemes being run by NGOs

Aid to Voluntary Organizations for the development of Scheduled Castes

For Promotion of Voluntary Sector, 90% grant-in-aid for activities like education, vocational training, support facilities (crèches, medical units and balwadis), legal aid, client-services, human rights issues and environment related activities etc.

List of Projects under NGO schemes

S. No.	Name to the Project
1	Residential School
2	Non Residential School
3	Hostels
4	Mobile Dispensary
5	Dispensary/Ten Bedded Hospital
6	Centre for Training on Computers
7	Type and Shorthand Centre
8	Craft Centre
9	TV, VCR&Radio Repair Training
10	Balwadi/Creche Centres
11	Printing, Composing &Book Binding
12	Library

13	Carpentry
14	Commercial Arts and Painting
15	Coconut Coir Making and Agarbatti Making Training Programme
16	Scooter/Motor Cycle/Auto Rickshaw Repair Training
17	Training in Spray Painting and Denting
18	Motor Winding and Fitting Training
19	Training in Welding & Fitter Trades
20	Training in Hand Block Printing
21	Fruit Preservation Training
22	Dari Making training
23	Training in Leather Art
24	Gem Cutting Training
25	Training in Steel Furniture Making
26	Training in Rural Engineering
27	Diesel Pump Set Repair Training
28	Watch Repairing training
29	Spinning & Weaving Training
30	Electrician Training
31	Tie & Die Training
32	Auto Driving Training
33	Plumbing Training
34	Project for Control of Blindness among SCs
35	Ophthalmic Nurse Technician Course
36	Centre to Organize Back to School Programme for Dropout children
37	Photography Training
38	Motor Driving Training
39	Hair and Skin care Centre

Chapter II

Administration for welfare of Scheduled Tribes

The population of India has historically been made up of various racial and religious groups. In the process of political conquest, social and economic growth, all groups did not progress equally. Some of the ethnic groups retained their separateness by moving away into the remote hill and forest areas. They were also in many cases forced to do so. In either case, the result was their isolation from the mainstream of religious, cultural, technological and economic developments in the country. These groups now make up one section of the backward classes in India, namely, the Scheduled Tribes.

The tribal situation in the country presents a varied picture. Some areas have high Tribal concentration while in other areas; the tribals form only a small portion of the total population. There are some tribal groups, which are still at the food gathering stage, some others practice shifting cultivation, yet other may be pursuing primitive forms of agriculture.

According to the 2001 Census, the total population of the Scheduled Tribes in India is 84,326,240 persons, constituting 8.2 per cent of the total population of the country. 91.7 per cent of them lives in rural areas, whereas, only 8.3 per cent inhabit in urban areas. Though the scheduled tribes number over 250, they may be divided into seven principal Tribal Groups—the bonds, santhals, bhils, oraons, khonds, monads, and Kacharis.

A. Constitutional Guarantees

Keeping in mind the special problems faced by the Tribal people, the framers of our constitution have made explicit provisions enjoying upon the state to take special measures for the welfare and development of the scheduled tribals. For the protection, socio-economic and political development of Scheduled Tribes, the Constitution of India guarantees:

(i) Social Protection

Equality before Law (Article 14)

The State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes [Article 15 (4)]

Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State (Article 16)

The State to make provisions in matters of promotion to any class or classes of posts in the services in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Article 16 (4A))

A National Commission for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes to investigate, monitor and evaluate all matters relating to the Constitutional safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Article 338) ·

Appointment of a Commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in the States (Article 339) ·

Appointment of Commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations to remove such difficulties and to improve their conditions (Article-340) ·

To specify the Tribes or Tribal communities to be Scheduled Tribes (Article 342)

(ii) Economic Protection

The State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the

Scheduled Tribes and protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46)

Grant-in-aid from the Consolidated Fund of India each year for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes and administration of Scheduled Areas [Article 275(1)]

The claims of the members of the Scheduled Tribes in the appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State to be taken into consideration consistent with the maintenance of efficiency of administration [Article 335]

(iii) Political Protection

Through the Fifth Schedule, the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and the Scheduled Tribes in any State, other than the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram by ensuring submission of Annual Report by the Governors to the President of India regarding the Administration of the Scheduled Areas and setting up of a Tribal Advisory Council to advise on such matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes [Article 244 (1)]

Special provisions through the Sixth Schedule for the administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram by designating certain tribal areas as Autonomous Districts and Autonomous Regions and also by constituting District Councils, Autonomous Councils and Regional Councils [Article 244 (21)]

Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People [Article 330] · Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States [Article 332]

Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes for the Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat [Article 243D]

Extension of the 73rd and 74th Amendments of the Constitution to the Scheduled Areas through the Panchayats [Extension to the Scheduled Areas] Act. 1996 to ensure effective participation of the tribals in the process of planning and decision making.

In keeping with its obligations the State has over the years, been taking steps to ensure the welfare of the STs. Though the objectives remain essentially the same, the strategy has undergone several modifications over the years mostly dictated by experience.

In the first Five Year Plan period, the Community Development Programme was taken up, dividing the country into blocks for the purpose of administrative convenience. The programme applied equally to tribal areas, but since the problems of these areas were more difficult, special multi-purpose Tribal Development Projects were introduced in some blocks.

The approach was reviewed during the Second Plan and the concept of ‘Tribal Development Block Project’ to cover all tribal areas was evolved. Such a block would cover a population of about 25,000 in an area or about 150 to 200 sq. miles. 500 such blocks covered about 40% of the Tribal population by the end of the Third Plan period.

The Tribal Development Block strategy was no doubt an improvement over the Community Development approach. However, they were not very effective in ensuring development of Tribals because of lack of administrative framework and insufficient attention to the protective and anti-exploitative aspect of Tribal Development.

Therefore, in the 4th Five Year Plan. It was decided to take up special programmes in Tribal areas on a pilot basis. For this purpose, six (later increased to 8) Tribal Development Agencies were set up in MP, Bihar, Orissa

and Andhra Pradesh. These agencies were to avoid the shortcomings of the Tribal Development Blocks. For this purpose, they were to set up an administrative framework and to ensure implementation of protective measures besides programmes of economic development and infrastructure creation.

However, the Tribal Development agencies were also unable to make any significant difference in the approach to the problem of Tribal Development. It was observed that they confined themselves to economic programmes and construction of roads, small bridges etc.

Based on the experience of the previous plans, the planners who took a detailed and comprehensive review of the tribal problem and the Tribal sub-Plan strategy on the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan and took note of the fact that an integrated approach to the tribal problems was necessary in terms of their geographic and demographic concentration if a faster development of this community is to take place. As a result, a new strategy, known as the Tribal Sub-plan strategy was evolved. Under this strategy, the different sectoral departments of the various state Governments were required to set apart a fixed percentage of their budget for investment in TSP areas. Also, emphasis was laid on development of administrative infrastructure and taking measures to end exploitation of Tribals.

Under the TSP strategy, Tribal areas in the country were grouped into 3 broad categories as –

- (1) States and UTs having a majority ST population,
- (2) States and UTs having substantial ST population but majority in particular administrative units, and
- (3) States and UTs having dispersed ST population.

In the light of the above approach, it was decided that tribal majority States like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and U.Ts of

Lakshadweep and Dadra & Nagar Haveli may not need a Tribal sub-Plan, as the entire plan of these States/Union Territories was primarily meant for the S.T. population constituting the majority. For the second category of States and Union Territories, tribal sub-Plan approach was adopted after delineating areas of tribal concentration. A similar approach was also adopted in case of States and Union Territories having dispersed tribal population by paying special attention to pockets of tribal concentrations, keeping in view their tenor of dispersal. To look after the tribal population coming within the new tribal sub-Plan strategy in a coordinated manner, Integrated Tribal Development Projects were conceived during Fifth Five Year Plan and these have been continued since then.

During the Sixth Plan, Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) was adopted to cover smaller areas of tribal concentration and during the Seventh Plan, the TSP strategy was extended further to cover even smaller areas of tribal concentration and thus cluster of tribal concentration were identified.

Also, after the adoption of the TSP strategy, Central and State Governments have enacted protective laws to check exploitation of Tribals. These laws include laws regulating money lending, prohibiting transfer of Tribal land to non-Tribals and laws for acquiring monopoly rights in collection and marketing of Tribal produce.

Since TSP strategy also has twin objectives namely Socio-economic development of Schedule tribes and protection of tribal against exploitation, the Govt. of India in Aug., 1976 had decided to make the boundaries of Scheduled Areas co-terminus with TSP areas (ITDP/ITDA only) so that the protective measure available to Scheduled Tribes in Scheduled. Areas could be uniformly applied to TSP areas for effective implementation of the development programmes in these areas. Accordingly, the TSP areas have been made co-

terminus with Scheduled Areas in the State of Bihar, Gujarat, H.P., Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan.

The TSP strategy has resulted in accelerated infrastructure growth. There has been good growth in the number of primary schools, primary health centers, arterial roads, civil supplies shops etc. There has also been growth of administration in Tribal areas.

B. Administrative Framework

The administrative framework at the Central level has undergone change several times in the past. The matters concerning tribal welfare and development were dealt at Government of India level by the Ministries, as named below, at different point of time:

- (i) As a Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs known as Tribal Division since after independence up to September 1985.
- (ii) Ministry of Welfare: From September 1985 to May 1998.
- (iii) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment from May 1998 to September 1999.
- (iv) In October, 1999, The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted by bifurcation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with the objective of more focused attention on integrated socio-economic development of the most under privileged section of Indian society, the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in a coordinated and planned manner.

The process of the Constitution of National Level Tribal Development & Finance Corporation by bifurcation of National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was also completed in 2001.

Mandate of Ministry

The following is the mandate of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs:

- (i) Tribal Welfare-Planning, Policy formulation, Research and training
- (ii) Tribal development including scholarships to STs
- (iii) Promotion of voluntary efforts in development of STs
- (iv) Administrative Ministry with respect to matters concerning:
 - Scheduled Areas;
 - Autonomous districts of Assam excluding roads and bridge works and ferries thereon;
 - Regulations framed by Governors of State for Scheduled Areas and for Tribal Areas specified in part a of Table appended to paragraph 20 of Sixth Schedule to the Constitution;
 - National Commission for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes in so far as they relate to STs; and
 - Issue of directions regarding the drawing up and execution of Schemes essential for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the Nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes of development for Scheduled Tribes.

Initiatives of the Ministry

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has taken up the following initiatives for more focused attention on tribal welfare and development.

- Direction to States for adoption of Maharashtra pattern of planning and devolution of funds earmarked for Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) areas. In Maharashtra, the funds earmarked for TSP are placed with Tribal Development Department of State Government which releases funds to different line departments for execution of developmental works under TSP. This process ensures better utilization of TSP funds for tribal areas.
- Introduction of a new central sector Scheme exclusively for development of the most underdeveloped group among the tribal, the Primitive Tribal Groups.
- Promotion of more, Non-Governmental organizations [NGOs] in the field of tribal development.

- Enforcement of strict monitoring mechanism in performance of NGOs through the officers of the Ministry and also by involvement of State Government machinery to identify the non-performing NGOs and weeding them out.
- Identifying non-Governmental Organizations which have all India character and known for their selfless service. Such identified NGOs be known as Established Voluntary Agencies [EVAs].
- Setting up of a National Institute for research & Training in Tribal Affairs [NITA] as an apex body of state level Tribal Research Institutes.
- Revision of Schemes raising the cost heads to realistic and workable limits.
- Enlistment of more work programmes/activities mostly on income generation & skill development to the list of projects for Grants-in-aid to NGOs and also making provisions for cent per cent project cost as grants in most deserving cases.
- Enhancement of rates of fellowships, scholarships and grants for supporting projects, seminars and publications.

The administrative framework at the state level includes the Secretary and/or Commissioner in charge of Tribal Welfare. The Secretary or the Commissioner is assisted by Director Tribal Welfare and Additional Commissioners. Certain states like MP and Bihar have created Regional Tribal Development Agencies.

At the ITDP, in all States/UTs, there is a Project Officer/Administrator who has above him project level committees for planning and overseeing the implementation

The Project Officer's function and powers vary from State to State, but it has generally been found that he lacks adequate financial and administrative authority and his role has been reduced to that of a mere coordinator.

At the MADA and Cluster levels, there is no separate administrative structure. The line departments of the State Governments have to implement development projects at MADA level under the supervision of the District authorities.

The Voluntary Agencies also have an important role in the field of Tribal Welfare. It must be realized that however well intentioned the Government may be, it simply cannot cope with such a task on its own. The working group of the Planning Commission realizing this, has emphasized that Voluntary organizations should not only be encouraged but consciously built up in the field of Tribal development. Organizations like the Ramakrishna Mission, Bharat Adijati Sevak Sangh, Akhil Bhartiya Adivasi Parishad and Servants of India Society have been doing good work in the field.

The Government had formulated a Central Scheme for grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations.

C. Brief Overview of the Schemes

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs implements various Schemes and Programmes aimed at welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes. An Overview of the activities of the Ministry is as follows:-

Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan: (SCA to TSP)

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs extends special central assistance to the TSP States and Union Territories and also to North Eastern States of Assam, Manipur and Tripura as an additional grant to these states/UTs. These grants are basically meant for family oriented income generating Schemes in various TSP areas to meet the gaps, which have not otherwise been taken care of by the State Plan.

Grants Under First Proviso to Article 275 (1) of the Constitution

The Ministry provides Grant-in-Aid to TSP and tribal majority States under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution to meet the cost of such projects for tribal development as may be undertaken by the State Government for raising the level of administration of Scheduled Areas therein to the level of the rest of the state.

Girls Hostels

The Scheme for construction of Girls Hostels for STs is a useful instrument for spreading education among tribal girls whose literacy

is only **18.91% as per 1991** census. Under the Scheme funds are provided to all the TSP States and Union Territories having tribal population for construction of hostels on sharing basis 50:50 to States and 100% to UTs.

Boys' Hostel

Like the Scheme for Girls Hostel, under this Scheme funds are provided to states on sharing basis (50:50) and 100% to UTs for construction of Boys Hostel for STs.

Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas

The Ministry under the Scheme provides funds to all the States and UTs having tribal population for establishment of residential schools for STs in an environment conducive to learning near their habitations on sharing basis (50:50) to States and 100% to UTs.

Vocational Training

The main aim of this Scheme is to develop the skill of the tribal youth in order to get employment or to avail opportunities for self-employment. Under this Scheme cent percent grant is provided to States/ UTs/. State Government as well as registered Non Governmental Organizations run institutions or organizations for establishment of Vocational Training Centres with the capacity of 100 students at each centre.

Educational Complex in Low Literacy Pockets for Women in Tribal Areas

This Scheme provides cent percent financial assistance to NGOs, organization established by government as autonomous bodies, educational & other institutions like Cooperative Societies, to establish educational complexes in 136 identified districts of erstwhile 11 states (now 13) where tribal female literacy is below 10% as per 1991 census. Educational complex is meant for girls studying from class I to V with strength of 30 students in each class. The grants are provided to meet non-recurring as well as recurring expenses on

building (hiring or maintenance) teaching, boarding, lodging and also for medical and health care of students.

Grants-in-aid to State Tribal Development Cooperative Corporations and Others

This is a Central Sector Scheme, with 100% grant, available to the state Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation (STDCCs) and other similar corporations of State engaged in collection and trading of minor forest produce (MFP) through tribals. Grants under the Scheme are provided to strengthen the Share Capital of Corporations, construction of Warehouses, establishment of processing industries of MFPs etc. to ensure high profitability of the corporation so as to enable them to pay remunerative prices for MFPs to the tribals.

Price Support to TRIFED

The Ministry provides Grants-in-aid to its corporation, TRIFED to set off losses on account of fluctuations in prices of MFPs being marketed by it for ensuring remunerative prices to tribals engaged in collection of MFPs either directly or through STDCCs and other such Cooperative Societies.

Investment in Share Capital of TRIFED

The Ministry is the largest shareholder of TRIFED with over 99% contribution in its Share Capital. Under this Scheme, the Ministry provides funds to TRIFED as its contribution in the Share Capital.

Village Grain Banks

This Scheme provides Grants for establishment of Village Grain Banks to prevent deaths of STs specially children in remote and backward tribal villages facing or likely to face starvation and also to improve nutritional standards. The Scheme provides funds for building storage facility and for the purchase of initial stock of one quintal of food grain of local variety for each family. A Committee under Chairmanship of village Headman runs the Grain Bank thus established.

Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations

As many as 27 types of projects with focus on tribal education, literacy, medical & health care, vocational training in agriculture, horticulture, craftsmanship etc., are being supported by the Ministry under this Scheme through registered Non-Governmental Organizations.

Research and Training

Under the Scheme "Research & Training" the Ministry provides financial assistance under three components:-

- (i) Grants to Tribal Research Institutes on 50:50 sharing basis for conducting Research & Evaluation Studies, Seminars, Workshops etc.
- (ii) Award of Research Fellowship to Tribal Students on 100% basis registered in Indian Universities.
- (iii) Supporting projects of All-India or Inter-State nature on 100% basis to NGOs/Universities etc. for conducting research on tribal matters, Travel Grants and for Publication of Books on tribals.

Development of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)

Under this Scheme cent per-cent assistance is provided to NGOs and other institutions for under-taking projects on development of PTGs on activities mainly focusing on their food security, literacy, agriculture technology up gradation, etc.

Post Matric Scholarships, Overseas Scholarships and Book Banks

The post-matric scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to all ST students for pursuance of post-matric studies in recognized institutions within India. The Scheme provides for 100% assistance from the Ministry to State Governments and UT Administrations implementing the Scheme, over and above their respective committed liabilities. The Ministry also gives financial assistance for setting up

Book-Banks in institutions running professional courses like Medicine, Engineering, Law, Agriculture, Veterinary, Chartered Accountancy, Business Management, and Bio-Sciences. Annually, Ministry provides financial assistance to 9 meritorious ST students for Post-graduate, Doctoral and Post-Doctoral studies in foreign universities/institutions of repute.

Upgrading of Merit and Coaching

These Schemes provide 100% central assistance to State/UT Administrations. The up gradation of merit Scheme is for arranging coaching classes in reputed colleges for developing competence among ST students for their better performance in competitive examinations conducted by various universities institutes for admission to Medical and Engineering courses while the Scheme for coaching is for conducting Pre-Examination Coaching for tribal students for various examinations conducted by UPSC, SSC, Banking Services Recruitment Boards etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Efforts on Tribal Development

The Constitution of India guarantees not only the social-economic upliftment of tribal people but also provides for objective evaluation of the administration and control of the Scheduled Areas and the Scheduled Tribes in any State other than Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura (for which there are separate provisions) through the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. Article 244 (i) ensures submission of Annual Reports by the Governors of the States to President of India regarding administration of the Scheduled Areas and setting up of Tribal Advisory Council to advise on such matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs being the Nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes for the development of tribals, monitors the progress and achievement made by various Ministries/Departments for 22 TSP States/UTs under Point 11(b) of the 20 Point Programme. The Ministry monitors the achievements made under various developmental programmes by engaging State Tribal Research Institutes/Universities/other institutions and also through field inspection by Officers of the Ministry.

D. Governors' Reports

The Governors' Report is an objective evaluation of the development efforts undertaken by the State Government in Scheduled Areas of the State with regard to administration. The Scheduled Areas have been declared in ten States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Orissa and Rajasthan. Governor's Report provides an unbiased assessment of the situation in Scheduled Areas of the State, inter-alia, various measures taken for up gradation of administration of such areas, implementation of protective laws, matters referred to the "Tribal Advisory Council" (TAC) and their recommendations etc.

The States are required to send the Governor's Report within six months of the closing of the financial year i.e. by 30th September of each year. The latest position of receipt of the report is given in table below:-

E. Tribal Advisory Council (TAC)

Ten States having Scheduled Areas, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Orissa and Rajasthan and two Non Scheduled Area States, namely, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have constituted TACs. The TACs consist of not more than twenty-five members of whom as many as three-fourth members are Scheduled Tribe representatives of the State Legislative Assembly (ST-MLAs). The Governor of the State may refer matters concerning to administration of welfare of tribals to the TACs for recommendations.

The Ministry issues guidelines for TACs. As per latest guidelines the TACs should meet at least twice a year and discuss the issues concerning tribal interests and making appropriate recommendation for protection of tribal interests.

F. Point 11(B) of 20 Point Programme

The point 11 (b) of 20 Point Programme is to provide economic assistance to the Scheduled Tribe families to enable them to rise

above poverty line. The ST families are assisted through various Schemes implemented by Departments of Agriculture, Rural Development, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sericulture, Forestry, Small & Cottage Industries etc.

The Ministry fixes the targets for 22 States/UT s and also monitors the progress of achievements on monthly basis. The officers of the Ministry inspected more than 75 projects in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

Chapter III

Administration For The welfare of Women

No country can progress if half of the population is left with residuary functions and subsidiary status in work participation. It is sheer wastage of human resources. Subordinate status for women with low level literacy, skills and income earning capabilities is a base in society that seriously hampers economic growth and overall progress of mankind. Still worse, when bulk of their activities go unrecognized and under-estimated in the man's world. Denial of equal participation, access and control of productive resources had placed women as unequal partners in developmental process. Despite enactments of several socio-economic legislations and the Indian Constitution declaring gender equality, the patriarchal values and normative structure established some two thousand years ago hindered women's emancipations and empowerment. Although the problems were well recognized and better appreciated, it took about three and a half decades of Independence to design policies and programmes that placed women as active partners in developmental activities from the 'dependent beneficiary status'. The progress, no doubt grossly inadequate, yet had shown impact of women involvement in decision-making process and occupying prominent positions in different form like Legislature, Panchayat Raj and educational institutions.

Welfare of women living in rural areas, slums and tribal areas, women who had been divorced/separated and migrant women, physically and mentally handicapped women, widows and destitute constitute the hardcore of the problem.

According to the 2001 census, the number of women in India was 496.453 million which constituted 48.3% of the total population of the country. The Sex ratio, i.e. the number of women per 1000 men, increased from 927 in 1991 to 933 in 2001. The literacy rate of women in 2001 was 53.7% compared to 75.3% for men and 64.8% for the nation as a whole. The above figures confirm the continued validity of the conclusion of the Committee on the States of women in India that almost in all spheres, social, economic or

political; women enjoy a status inferior to men. In spite of the disadvantaged position of women, not much attention was paid to implement special programmes for their development. It was probably thought that the general development programmes should benefit the women also. It is only since the VI Plan that women's development programmes have acquired a separate and distinct focus. It was realized, rather too late, that the trickle down effect of general programmes has not benefited the women. Such of the programmes for women as existed earlier did not touch even the fringe of the problem. They were confined to providing some financial assistance to voluntary organizations which were supposed to run some welfare institutions for women. The VI Plan for the first time realized that any improvement in the low status of the women in India would require some concerted effort and attention and some special development programmes for women.

A. Existing Set Up at the central Level

Ministry

At the central level the programmes connected with women welfare are looked after by the Ministry of Human Resources Development. The Department of women and children Development within the Ministry is entrusted with this particular task. The department has further been divided into two bureaus:

- (i) Nutrition and Child Development
- (ii) Women Welfare and Development

The Secretary is in charge of the whole department. There are two joint Secretaries who look after the bureaus. Naturally they are assisted by the usual contingent of Directors/Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries besides the clerical staff.

Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB)

Apart from the Ministry, there is a Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), a pioneering agency set up by the Government in 1953. The Agency is directly concerned with the welfare of children and women. The general body of the Board consists of 45 members including the Chairman and the Executive Director. All states are represented in the

general body of the Board. Apart from these, there are 3 representatives in the Board from Union Territories. The Board has eminent social workers, social scientists, social welfare administrators, members of Parliament and representative of different departments concerned with the programmes of the Board. The members of the Board are nominated by the Government of India.

The administration of the Board is carried out by the Executive committee consisting of 12 members including the Chairman and the Executive Director.

B. National Commission for Women

The U.N Commission on Status of Women in its 25th report had recommended that all countries establish National Commissions or similar bodies “with a mandate to review, evaluate and recommend measures and priorities to ensure equality in men and women; and the full integration of women in all sectors of national life”.

In addition, the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (1974) recommended the establishment of a commission at the Centre. In 1988 the National Perspective Plan for Women recommended the setting up of the office of Commissioner for Women’s Rights.

Accordingly, The National Commission for Women was set up as a statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (Act No. 20 of 1990) of Govt. of India, to review the Constitutional and legal safeguards for women; recommend remedial legislative measures, facilitate redressal of grievances and advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.

Functions of the Commission

The main functions of the Commission are:-

- (i) To review the provisions of the constitution and various laws relating to women and suggest remedial measures to meet any lacunae in such legislation.

- (ii) To take suo moto notice to look into complaints of violation of laws, or non-implementation of policies.
- (iii) To undertake or get undertaken studies or investigation into specific problems arising out of discrimination and atrocities against women so as to identify constraints and suggest remedies.
- (iv) To undertake promotional and educational research to suggest ways to increase the representation of women in various sphere of life.
- (v) To participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of women.
- (vi) To evaluate the process of development of women under the Union or any State.
- (vii) Inspector or cause to be inspected, remand homes, women's institutions and other places where women are kept.
- (viii) To find litigation involving issues affecting a large body of women.
- (ix) To send to the Central Government annually and such other times as the Commission may deem fit report on the making of safeguards for women.
- (x) To make periodical reports to the Government on any matter pertaining to women.
- (xi) Any other matter that may be transferred to the Commission by the Central Government.

C. National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001)

Introduction

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.

Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, Plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards there has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women

has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.

The Mexico Plan of Action (1975), the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985), the Beijing Declaration as well as the Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome Document adopted by the UNGA Session on Gender Equality and Development & Peace for the 21st century, titled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action" have been unreservedly endorsed by India for appropriate follow up.

The Policy also takes note of the commitments of the Ninth Five Year Plan and the other Sectoral Policies relating to empowerment of Women.

The women's movement and a wide-spread network of non-Government Organizations which have strong grass-roots presence and deep insight into women's concerns have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women.

Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious being the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the population in the last few decades. Social stereotyping and violence at the domestic and societal levels are some of the other manifestations. Discrimination against girl children, adolescent girls and women persists in parts of the country.

The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal and formal norms, and practices.

Consequently, the access of women particularly those belonging to weaker sections including Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/ Other backward Classes and minorities, majority of whom are in the rural areas and in the informal, unorganized sector – to education, health and productive resources, among others, is inadequate. Therefore, they remain largely marginalized, poor and socially excluded.

Goal and Objectives

The goal of this Policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. The Policy will be widely disseminated so as to encourage active participation of all stakeholders for achieving its goals. Specifically, the objectives of this Policy include

- (i) Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential
- (ii) The *de-jure* and *de-facto* enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres – political, economic, social, cultural and civil
- (iii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation
- (iv) Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.
- (v) Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
- (vi) Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.
- (vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.

- (viii) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and
- (ix) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

D. Set Up at the State Level

At the Secretariat level the department of social welfare is looked after by a Secretary to the State Government. The Secretary of the Social welfare also looks after the women welfare programmes for physically handicapped, mentally retarded etc. In most of the States, even the department of Social Welfare is not an independent department. It is combined with a number of other departments like Panchayat or Rural Development. Very often the welfare falls to the lot of Deputy Secretaries or at least a Special Secretary/Additional Secretary.

Even at the Directorate level, most of the States do not have a full-fledged department of women welfare. The work is looked after by the Director of Social Welfare who looks after the welfare programmes in general.

Set up in Gujarat

In Gujarat, The Women & Child Development Department has been established vide Government Notification dated 31st December 2001 and the following subjects have been allotted to this Department:

- 1) Nutrition Programme
- 2) Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1986
- 3) Gujarat Women's Economic Development Corporation Limited (GWEDC)
- 4) Financial Assistance to the Organizations which empower women
- 5) Documentation and Recommendation for Women Empowerment
- 6) Central and State Welfare Board – All connected activities
- 7) Dowry Prohibition Act – 1961 amended in 1985

- 8) Coordination of various activities related to women and children welfare being implemented in different government departments
- 9) Correspondence with Govt. of India and other concerned institutions regarding immoral behaviour with women and children
- 10) Planning, Research, Evaluation, Monitoring, Designing projects, training and statistical information regarding women and children activities
- 11) Correspondence with UNICEF and other concern organizations working for the welfare of women and children
- 12) State Women's Commission and its activities
- 13) Balkier Samruddhi Yojna
- 14) Sexual Harassment of Women
- 15) Syayam Siddha Yojna
- 16) Widow Pension Scheme and its related activates

Departments under Women & Child development Department, Govt. of Gujarat

- 1 Commissioner, Women and Child Development, Gandhinagar
- 2 Joint Commissioner (Women's Programmes)
- 3 Joint Director (ICDS)
4. Gujarat Women's Economic Development Corporation (GWEDC)

The Gujarat Women Economic Development Corporation (GWEDC) is a Govt. of Gujarat undertaking, registered under the Companies Act with authorized Share capital of Rs.10 crores and paid up equity capital of Rs.7.02 crores.

GWEDC is implementing various schemes for the economic development of women, more specifically poor, illiterate and semi-literate women of the State to achieve the overall objective of the women empowerment.

Following schemes are run by the Corporation

- GHAR DIVDA Scheme (Micro Enterprise Scheme)
- Shibir & Exhibition
- SWAVLAMBAN Scheme (NORAD Scheme)
- SWA-SHAKTI Project (Ended in 2005)

5. Gujarat State Social Welfare Board (GSSWB)

The Gujarat State Social Welfare Board was established since 1960 jointly by State of Gujarat and Central Social Welfare Advisory Board, New Delhi, to start welfare activities of women and children in the State.

The GSSWB is working under Women and Child Development Department (WCDD) since 2002. 17 Family and Child Welfare (FCW) Projects are operational with 100% funds from WCDD. Govt. of Gujarat.

The Board also implements many women welfare activities through voluntary organizations such as family and children welfare scheme women associations, crèches, working women hostels, helpline, leadership training seminar, short stay home and family counseling centers.

For the field visit, Counseling and guidance, Monitoring of the Aided and unaided NGO, Central Social Welfare Board has posted Field officers in the State

6. Director of Social Defense

Social Defense department works for the shelter, protection and rehabilitation of circumstantial victims especially women. Over and above such activities, it supports those women who are in economical difficulties by extending economic assistance, vocational guidance and training to be self reliant. These activities are implemented through various schemes, residential and non-residential institutions. Various social statue and schemes related to women and child are being implemented under the guidance and supervision of Women and Child Department by statutory provisions.

With a view to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following social Acts also exist:

- Financial Assistance to Widow
- Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956
- Dowry Prevention Act 1961, amended in 1985

Gujarat State Commission for Women (GSCW)

Adhering to its commitment of empowering women, providing them with adequate opportunities for development and creating enabling environment for a gender equitable society, the Gujarat Government has constituted the State Commission for Women vide Gujarat State Commission for Women Act 2002. It aims at ushering the development of Women in the State of Gujarat. The Commission will act or function:

- to examine all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women under the Constitution of India and other laws;
- to present to the State Government annually and at such other times as the Commission may think fit, reports upon the working of such safeguards;
- to make in such reports recommendations for effective implementation of such safeguards for improving the conditions of women by the State;
- to review from time to time, the existing provisions of laws relating to women and recommend amendments therein for the purpose of providing remedial legislative measures to meet with inadequate provisions of such laws;
- to take up the cases of violation of the provisions of the Constitution of India and of other laws relating to women with the appropriate authorities;
- to look into complaints and take suo moto notice of matters relating:
 - a. deprivation of women's rights;

- b. non-implementation of laws enacted to provide protection to women and to achieve the objects of equality and development;
 - c. non-compliance of policy decisions, guidelines or instructions aimed at mitigating hardships and ensuring welfare and providing relief to women, and to take up the issues arising out of such matters with appropriate authorities;
- to call for special studies or investigations into specific problems or situations arising out of discrimination and atrocities against women and to identify the constraints so as to recommend strategies for their removal;
- to undertake promotional and educational research for the purposes of:
 - a. suggesting ways, of ensuring due representation of women in-all spheres;
 - b. identifying factors responsible for impeding their advancement, such as, lack of access to housing and basic services, inadequate support services and technology for reducing drudgery and occupational health hazards and for increasing their productivity;
- to participate and advise on the planning of socio-economic development of women;
- to evaluate the progress of the development of women under the State,
- to inspect or cause to be inspected a jail, remand home, women's institution or other place of custody where women are kept as prisoners, or otherwise, and to take up with the concerned authorities for remedial action, if necessary;
- to provide fund for litigation involving issues affecting a large body of women;

- to endeavour to promote through the media a more positive image or balanced depiction of women in society and continuously to interact, and try to educate the public opinion through media to enhance sensitivity to gender issues and bring about gender parity;
- to any other matter which may be referred to it by the State Government.

E. Major Women Welfare Programmes

In the field of social welfare, most programmes for women are supporting measures for various other sectoral development programmes. Some of the department's own programmes are:

- (i) Assistance given to voluntary agencies and local bodies for construction of working women's hostels for working women with children up to 6 years of age.
- (ii) A scheme for the rehabilitation of women in distresses and other children through residential course so that these women could become economically independent.
- (iii) A scheme for Integrated Child Development Services (IDPS) for providing a package of nutritional health and pre-school services to children below 6 years of age and expectant mothers.
- (iv) A scheme of financing literacy for adults for providing non-formal education within the format of ICDS.
- (v) A scheme of short stay homes for women and children who are in social and moral danger.
- (vi) A scheme for crèches for children of working women. The most popular programmes in most of the States are:
 - (i) Working Women's hostels;
 - (ii) Home for destitute;
 - (iii) Providing funds for voluntary agencies for promoting women's welfare.

The more crucial activities such as training programmes, production centers, employment schemes, vocational sources and marketing

centers etc. aiming at improving income generation potential of the women are not organized on any large scale.

Hostels for Working Women

Under the Scheme of `Construction /Expansion of Hostel Building for Working Women with a Day Care Centre implemented by the Department of Women and Child Development , financial assistance is given to voluntary organizations, local bodies and cooperative institutions engaged in the field of women's/ social welfare/ women's education, Public Sector Undertakings, Women Development Corporations, Educational Institutions and State Governments for the construction of hostels for working women in order to enable women seek employment and participate in technical training. The objective of the Scheme is to provide cheap and safe hostel accommodation to employment women living out of their homes. The target beneficiaries are single working women, widows, divorcee, separated and working women whose husbands are out of town. Women getting training for employment and girl students studying in post school professional courses are also to stay in the hostel.

Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls

The Government of India launched a programme in 1969 in the Central Sector called the Short Stay Homes for Women & Girls to protect and rehabilitate those women and girls who are facing social and moral danger due to family problems, mental strains, social ostracism, exploitation or other causes. The services extended in these Homes include medical care; occupational therapy; education-cum-vocational training and recreational facilities.

The need for providing Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls has been due to the changing pattern of life, rapid urbanization and industrialization and the resulting migration from rural to urban areas. The breakup of social institutions like the joint family, contributes considerably in creating problems of adjustment for women and young girls. Cases of marital conflict and emotional disturbance occur. This effort is made to help the women to rehabilitate themselves within a short period of time. These Short Stay Homes have been established by voluntary organizations.

The implementation of the scheme has been transferred to the Central Social Welfare Board.

Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY)

The IMY is a scheme aims at organizing women at grass root level to facilitate their participation in decision making and their empowerment. The Scheme was launched in 1995 on pilot basis in 200 blocks over a strategy to coordinate & integrate components of sectoral programmes and facilitate their convergence to empower women.

Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)

The programme of STEP launched in 1987 aims to upgrade the skills of poor and asset less women, mobilize, concentrate and provide employment to them on a sustainable basis in the traditional sectors of agriculture, small animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries, handlooms, handicrafts.

Employment and Income Generation-cum- Production Units (NORAD)

Under the scheme, which is assisted by Norwegian agency for International Development (NORAD), projects of skill development and training of achieving self-reliance through income generation for women are supported. These projects of training for income generation are in the nontraditional trades of electronics, watch manufacturing/assembly, computer programming, garment making, handlooms etc.

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)

The National credit Fund for Women is an innovative mechanism for reaching credit to poor women. Through access to credit, it aims to raise the capacity of women by enhancing through productivity and economic self-reliance. It encourages formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) for promotion of thrift and credit leading to income generation activities.

Education Work for Prevention of Atrocities against Women

Linked with social advocacy and legal literacy issues, this programme started in 1982, provides financial assistance to voluntary organizations working for the upliftment and betterment of women for the prevention of atrocities against women for items such as propaganda, publicity and research work. Various items of education work such as production and publicity materials like pamphlets, booklets, hoardings, posters, slogans, surveys/studies on particular aspect of violence/atrocities against women qualify for financial assistance under this scheme.

Eradication of Child Prostitution

The public concern on the issue of child prostitution originated in a landmark judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 1990. In response to Public Interest Litigation (PIL) on the subject, the Court ruled that the States and Central Government should initiate comprehensive measures for the rehabilitative care of such children and elimination of this social menace. The Court directed the Government to form a Central and State Advisory Committees. As per the directives of the Supreme Court, a Central Advisory Committee was constituted to eradicate child prostitution. Further a Sub Committee has been set up to frame recommend actions/ plan of action for the rescue and rehabilitation of all child prostitutes. The Sub Committee has submitted its report.

F. National Commission for Women

The National Commission for Women, a statutory body, set up under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 has a mandate to safeguard the rights and interests of women. The Commission continued to pursue its mandated activities, namely review of laws, interventions into specific individual complaints of atrocities and remedial action to safeguard the interests of women, wherever appropriate and feasible. The Commission has accorded highest priority to securing speedy justice to women.

The Commission has been instrumental in introducing fresh ideas, innovative model, training, packages and model for speedy justice etc. The Commission has, before it, apart from looking into the law and legislation for effecting improvement to ensure speedy justice, thrust areas in the realm of:-

- (a) Organizing through NGOs Parivrik Mahila Lok Adalats throughout the length and breadth of the country on a continuous basis.
- (b) Launching of programmes on Legal Awareness;
- (c) Sensitization programmes for police, NGOs, officials for better implementation of safeguards and laws for the benefit of women;
- (d) Release and rehabilitation of women prisoners;
- (e) Rehabilitation of prostitutes and their children;
- (f) Rehabilitation of widows and land support to anti arrack movement
- (g) Custodial justice for women prisoners;
- (h) Participation of women in the electoral process; and
- (i) Issue of violence on women
- (j) Dahej Mukh Abhiyan
- (k) Technological Empowerment of Women in Agriculture
- (l) Rights of minority Women.

The Commission maintains the Complaints Cell/counseling Cell which is a "Core" Unit of the Commission and processes various categories of written/oral complaints and also take suo-moto notice of matters relating to deprivation of women's rights, non implement action of laws enacted to provide protection to women, non compliance of policy decisions, guidelines or instructions aimed at mitigating hardships to women and taking up issues arising out of such matters with appropriate authorities. The complaints received relate to harassment for dowry, dowry deaths, torture, desertion, bigamy, rape, refusal to register FIR by the police, discrimination in employment, domestic violence, incest and cruelty by husbands and in-laws.

Eradication of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women & Children

The Government has finalized a Plan of Action to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of women and children. The State Governments and UT Administrations have been requested to implement the Plan of Action. The Central Advisory Committee on Child Prostitution proposed certain amendments in the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act to make it more stringent and effective, which was referred to the Department of Legal Affairs who have concurred with the same. A draft Cabinet Note on the same lines has been prepared and will be sent to the Cabinet Secretariat after circulating it to concerned Ministries/ Departments.

India has drafted a Regional Convention on prevention and combating trafficking of women and children for the purposes of prostitution. The Convention seeks to take measures and encourage cooperation among the SAARC member countries to prevent the incidence of trafficking; this is specially relevant because Nepal and Bangladesh are the major source areas.

A Work Plan under the GOI-UNICEF MPO has been finalized. Funds have been earmarked for various activities such as projects for rehabilitation of victims of prostitution, preparation of manual for sensitization of police officers, building of a data base on the subject matter of prostitution and trafficking, holding of regional level meet for interaction with State Governments close to source areas and NGOs.

Implementation of the Guidelines Contained in Supreme Court's Order in the Case of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace and other Institutions

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 13.8.1997 has passed an order laying down the norms and guide lines to be followed by the employers for tackling the incidents of sexual harassment of women at workplace and other institutions. The guidelines issued by the Supreme Court included setting up of a complaints redressal forum in all work places and amendment of the disciplinary/conduct rules governing employees by incorporating the norms and guide- lines.

The Department has circulated the Supreme Court's order to all Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India, Women Development Corporations and National Commission for Women for compliance. A Complaints Committee for handling the complaints regarding sexual harassment of women at workplace has been constituted in the Department in compliance of the directions of the Supreme Court.

G. National Policy for the Employment of Women

As a follow up action to the commitments made by India during the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing during Sep. 1995, the Department has drafted a National Policy for the Empowerment of Women after nation-wide consultations to enhance the status of women in all walks of life on par with men and actualize the constitutional guarantee of equality without discrimination on grounds of sex.

Review & Amendment Of The Legislation Relating to Women

The Department of Women and Child Development is reviewing the following four Acts with which it is administratively concerned: with a view to make the provisions more stringent and to remove the lacunae:

- a. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1886.
- b. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
- c. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.
- d. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987.

The Department of WCD had entrusted the work of reviewing the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 and Immoral (Traffic) Prevention Act, 1956 to the National Law School of India, University (NLSUI), Bangalore. The reports received from the National Law School in this regard were been sent to NCW for comments. On the basis of the comments received from NCW with regard to the amendments suggested by the National Law School of India in the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, the Department has prepared a draft Cabinet Note, which will be circulated to the concerned Ministries/ Departments after formation of the new

Government. The comments of NCW with regard to the NLSUI's report on the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 has been received and the matter is under examination. In respect of the other two legislations, namely, Dowry Prohibition Act and Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act inter-ministerial consultations are being held to bring about the amendments.

Women's Component Plan and Gender Focal Points

The Planning Commission, with a view to converge the benefits in the social and economic development sectors for women in the 9th Plan had requested all the Secretaries of the various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India to draw up a women's component plan to identify allocation in all the sectors at the Centre by aggregating them in an integrated manner. In this context, the Minister for Human Resource Development had requested all the Ministers for their personal intervention in the matter of inclusion of an identifiable women component plan in the programmes of the respective Ministries/Departments right from the planning process and thereafter to monitor allocations and implementation of programmes to ensure the reach of benefits to women. The Cabinet approved one of the recommendations of the National Perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000), which says that the Planning Commission and all the Ministries/ Departments should have a women cell and the annual Reports of all the Ministries/ Departments at the Central and State levels should document and review the work done concerning women. The Department, accordingly, requested all the Ministries/Departments to set up advisory committees for women in each sector to help in the preparation, monitoring and implementation of the women component plan, to set up a women's cell, to set up gender focal point and to include a chapter on women component plan in their annual reports.

Rehabilitation of Marginalized Women of Vrindavan

The Central Government has set up a Committee under the Chairpersonship of Minister of State for Women and Child Development to co-ordinate the efforts of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal Governments and Central Government organizations for rehabilitation of the marginalized women of Vrindavan, to monitor

flow of benefits of Central Schemes to the target group; to recommend a plan of Action and implementation schedule for their rehabilitation etc. The Committee consists of Chairpersons of NCW and CSWB, Secretaries of the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Department of Youth Affairs & Sports, Director General of Nehru Yuvak Kendra Sangathan, Joint Secretary (WD), Department of Women and Child Development, Chief Secretaries of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, besides representative of voluntary organizations and activists in the field. Under the programme of Rehabilitation of marginalized women of Vrindavan, "Meera Shabhagini Uddhar Abhiyan was launched on 16.06.1999.

Balika Samriddhi Yojana

The scheme of Balika Samriddhi Yojana was launched on 2nd October 1997 with the objective of raising the overall status of the girl child and bringing about a positive change in family and community attitudes towards her. The scheme covers up to two girl children born on or after 15th April 1997 in a family living below the poverty line as defined by the Government of India in any rural or urban area.

During 1997-98 and 1998-99, the mothers of the newborn girl children covered under the scheme were given a grant of Rs.500/- each in cash. The benefits and means of delivery were redesigned in the financial year (1999-2000). The post- delivery grants of Rs.500/- are now deposited in an interest- bearing account in a bank or post office in the name of the girl child. In addition, the girl child is now entitled to receive scholarships for each class of study successfully completed by her, ranging from Rs.300/- for class I to Rs.1,000/- for class X. The scholarship amount is also deposited in the above account. The accumulated value of the deposits in the account are payable to the girl child on her attaining the age of 18 years and having remained unmarried till then.

The benefits can also be utilized to pay the premium on an insurance policy in the name of the girl child under the Bhagyashree Balika Kalyan Bima Yojana and for purchase of textbooks or uniforms for the girl child.

The scheme, under which releases were made by the Department to district-level implementing agencies in 1997-98 and 1998-99, is now implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme and funds are released to State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for execution of the scheme, largely through the ICDS infrastructure.

National Plan of Action for SAARC Decade of the Girl Child, 1991-2000 AD

A National Plan of Action for the Girl Child is under implementation since November 1992. The implementation of the Plan of Action is an inter-ministerial effort. The concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government are responsible for implementing the points of the Plan of Action through their girl child specific or girl child related programmes. In other words, targets/goals laid down in the NPA are to be achieved by different Ministries/Departments like Health, Education, Labour, etc. An inter-ministerial coordination committee which was constituted in 1993 to review the progress of implementation meets at regular intervals for the purpose.

Beijing Plus Five Review

The Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in Beijing, China during September 1995 had adopted a 'Beijing Declaration' and a 'Platform for Action' (PFA) as an agenda for women's empowerment. The PFA calls upon the Governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to take strategic action in twelve critical areas of concern, namely, women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and natural resources & environment and the girl-child.

The Department has initiated the process of review of the progress made in the country in the implementation of the PFA. Besides collecting information from various other Ministries/Departments of the Government and the State Governments /Union Territory

Administrations, a feedback questionnaire was sent to NGOs active in the field of gender justice and women's empowerment to obtain information on their work in the field and their perception of the scenario.

Haryana Integrated Women's Employment and development Project

The Project has been under implementation since July 1994 with financial assistance from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). As per the project agreement signed with UNFPA, the Department is the executing agency for the project while the Department of Women and Child Development, Haryana is the implementing agency.

Setting Up of a Parliamentary Committee for Employment of Women

The Parliament has constituted a committee on the Empowerment of Women consisting of 30 Members, 20 Members to be nominated by the speaker from amongst Member of Lok Sabha and 10 Members to be nominated by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha from amongst Members of Rajya Sabha. The functions of the Committee include, inter- alia, considering the reports submitted by the National Commission for Women, and to report on the measures taken by the Union Government for improving the status / condition of women.

Training for Women's Empowerment Project in Maharashtra

Since the existing Indira Mahila Yojana does not have funds for capacity building and training input, it was decided by the Department to formulate an independent project called 'Training for Women's Empowerment', and implement it on pilot basis in 21 blocks of Maharashtra, with the assistance of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The strategy would, thereafter, be evaluated and reviewed for implementation throughout the country.

This Project is mainly aims at operationalising the first phase of IMY, viz. Awareness building and sensitization amongst women's groups. The crucial activities to be undertaken as a part of this project include:

- Formation of women's groups;

- Awareness generation amongst these groups;
- Micro-finance activity;
- Intensive capacity building through training at the group level;
and
- Establishment of Mahila Mahiti Kendra (Information Centre for Women).

Distance Education Programme

Self-Help Groups have emerged as one of the major strategies in group formation and various schemes of the Govt. of India have shown that strong women's groups could contribute substantially to the development and convergence of services and activities. Experience with various programmes and projects have highlighted the benefits of formation of women's groups for building confidence and focusing on developmental tasks. Different groups in various states all over the country have focused on skill development and awareness generation, promoting economic development through income generation activities, inculcating thrift, credit management activities among poor women.

The experience of running these schemes had shown that the sustainability of the majority of these groups was a major problems and one of the prime reasons for that was lack of a proper training strategy. Because of incomplete or ineffective training, full potential of women's groups formed in different states could not be realised. Many of the women's groups are neither homogenous nor sustainable. The vast geographical canvas also impedes transmission of messages in time and without distortion. The project called "Distance Education for Women's Development & Empowerment" aims to address some of these critical areas of concern. It is the first such programme of its kind in the country.

The Scheme proposes to launch a certificate course by IGNOU to train a large mass of trainers from amongst village level implementers of the projects, their supervisors and district level functionaries. Such trainers after their successful participation in the project would be able to guide sustainable group formation work in their areas. Such an

approach will also speed up the whole training process since as large number of centres could be activated simultaneously and the grass root level trainers could be directly accessed.

The implementation of the project is being jointly undertaken by the Department of Women & Child Development, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Indian Satellite Research Organization (ISRO).

Gender Sensitization and awareness Generation

Assistance is extended to research and academic institutions including Women's Studies Centers for production of materials of education and publicity as well as research studies.

Government attaches great importance to those efforts which trigger change in societal attitudes towards women. An integrated media campaign projecting the positive image of both women and girls through electronic, print and film media is the most important component of Government's communication strategy. A number of training programmes on gender issues are being organised. The participants of these programmes include Government officials, representatives of voluntary agencies and women panchayats members. Besides orientation programmes for police personnel and awareness generation programmes are also organised.

H. National Resource Centre for Women (NRCW)

A National Resource Centre for Women as an autonomous body with the objectives to orient and sensitize policy planners towards women's issues, facilitating leadership training and creating a national data base in the field of women's development is being set up with DANIDA assistance.

Monitoring of Women Beneficiary Oriented Schemes

The Department monitors the implementation of 27 Beneficiary Oriented Schemes for Women implemented by different Central Departments and sends progress reports to the PMO every six months.

Rural Women Development and Empowerment Project

The Department has been exploring for some time past, the possibility of a women's development project, with assistance from the various aid agencies. The overall objective of the project is to launch a programme which strengthens the processes to promote the social and economic development of women & raise an environment for social change to improve their quality of life. The project is proposed to be taken up as a Central Plan Scheme for a period of 5 years. International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and International Development agency (IDA) will jointly fund the project cost.

Respective Roles of Centre and States

Social Welfare is not mentioned as such in any of the three lists in Schedule VII of the Constitution. From this some have inferred that the social welfare may be taken as a Central subject, because the residuary powers vest with the Central Government. However, there are a number of items pertaining to social welfare have been included in the State list while several others are included in concurrent list. For example, prisons, reformatories, public health, sanitation, hospitals and dispensaries, relief for disabled and unemployable are included in the State list. Vagrancy, lunacy and mental deficiency, welfare of labour etc., are included in the concurrent list. The most important is entry 20 in list III. According to this entry, economic and social planning is a concurrent subject. The entry is broad enough to include different aspects of social planning including social welfare. The subject may, therefore, be treated as concurrent subject and is the responsibility of both the State Government and the Central Government. The clarification is essential not because there is a great deal of competition in claiming the subject, but because neither the Central nor the State Governments appear to be giving it the attention that it deserves. Of Course, the situation appears to have changed over a period of time.

Role of Union Government

From the interpretation given above, the basic function of the Centre flows from its essential role as leader, innovator, technical guide,

disseminator of information, planner and evaluator. Although these functions were not very well performed earlier, but recently the Central Government has started playing the role of the leader by providing necessary guidance about the strategy to be followed in the field of women welfare. A National Committee on Status of Women in India was formed which made several recommendations, in various fields like demography, religion and culture, law economics, education, politics and welfare and development programmes. The committee has made the recommendations about the action to be taken in various fields. The Government of India has forwarded the recommendations to the State Governments.

The Planning Commission had processed a specific strategy for women Welfare and Development in the Sixth Five Year Plan and in the Seventh Five Year Plan also. The strategy and programmes are based on the report of the National Committee and some other committees set up by the Planning Commission. It also took note of several other publications of ISSR and UN organizations.

The Union Government organized many seminars and provided opportunities for the exchange of information through various conferences of the Ministries and Department of Social Welfare and relevant officials and non-officials. It has also compiled and published a statistical profile of women in India. In this way, the Union Government is fulfilling its role as researcher, planner and disseminator of information. It may again be emphasized that it is only, during the last decade or so that the Central Government has started playing this role a bit more effectively. In fact, the declaration of 1975 as the International Women's Year by the United Nations triggered off this activity on the part of the Union Government. Apart from the Department of Women and Child Welfare mentioned above, the main agencies of the Central Government in the field of planning and implementation of the women's welfare programme are:

- (i) Planning Commission;
- (ii) Department of Education;
- (iii) Ministry of Health and Family Planning; and
- (iv) Department of Rural Development.

Of course, the Department of Women and Child Welfare has been declared as the Nodal point for the coordination of the activities of the order departments. Besides, the Board which has already been described above. The Board handles the Government grants-in-aids and routes them through the State Social Welfare Boards to voluntary organizations for administering the social services relating to women and children State Boards, as local representative bodies, recommend and advise the Central Board regarding grants-in-aid to the voluntary welfare agencies. The welfare extension programmes, Family and child, integrated child welfare project, training programmes, etc., are a few examples of such schemes and programmes. The procedure followed by the Central Board is the same that of centrally sponsored schemes and central schemes. It is assumed that when the Union Government evolves such model schemes and lays down general policy and guidelines and runs schemes at Central level on model lines, the States will be inspired to draw up or continue such activities on their own.

Role of the States

It has been observed that the State Government has a general disinclination to shoulder responsibilities for women welfare programmes. In fact, they have no clear policy on women welfare. Only a few scattered schemes are implemented without any particular policy or direction. In many states, non-plan expenditure on social welfare schemes is more than the plan expenditure. This happens because the State Governments undertake many schemes to avail of the Central assistance from the Central Social Welfare Board. After a period of time, the Central assistance ceases and the schemes become the responsibility of the State Governments. Many of the State Governments is not able to take up this burden. A number of such schemes therefore, get dropped out in due course of time.

I. Women's Development Corporations

As the normal development corporations do not give adequate attention to the needs for women a new scheme was drawn up in 1986-87 to set up Women's Development Corporation in the States. The Central Government was to provide 49% of the share capital of

the Corporation while the remaining 51% was to be contributed by the State Government. The main function of the Corporation is to identify the areas where the women can be gainfully employed. The Corporation is supposed to prepare a shield of viable projects which can either employ women or provide the women opportunities to self employment. The Corporations were supposed to provide assistance to the women directly or through voluntary Non-Governmental Organizations. Apart from identifying projects, the Corporations are supposed to identify women entrepreneurs, encourage entrepreneurial talent among them, help the, select proper projects; help them arrange finance from the Banks, provide them technical guidance. In short the Corporations are supposed to do every thing that will improve the economic status of the women by making them economically productive.

As many as twelve State Governments have set up such Corporations so far with the assistance of the Government of India. Of course, the scheme has now been completely transferred to the State Governments who are to provide funds for the same.