



# **Eureka Child Project**

*Implemented by AID INDIA*

## **Half Yearly Progress Report (April-September 2008)**

### **1. Program Context**

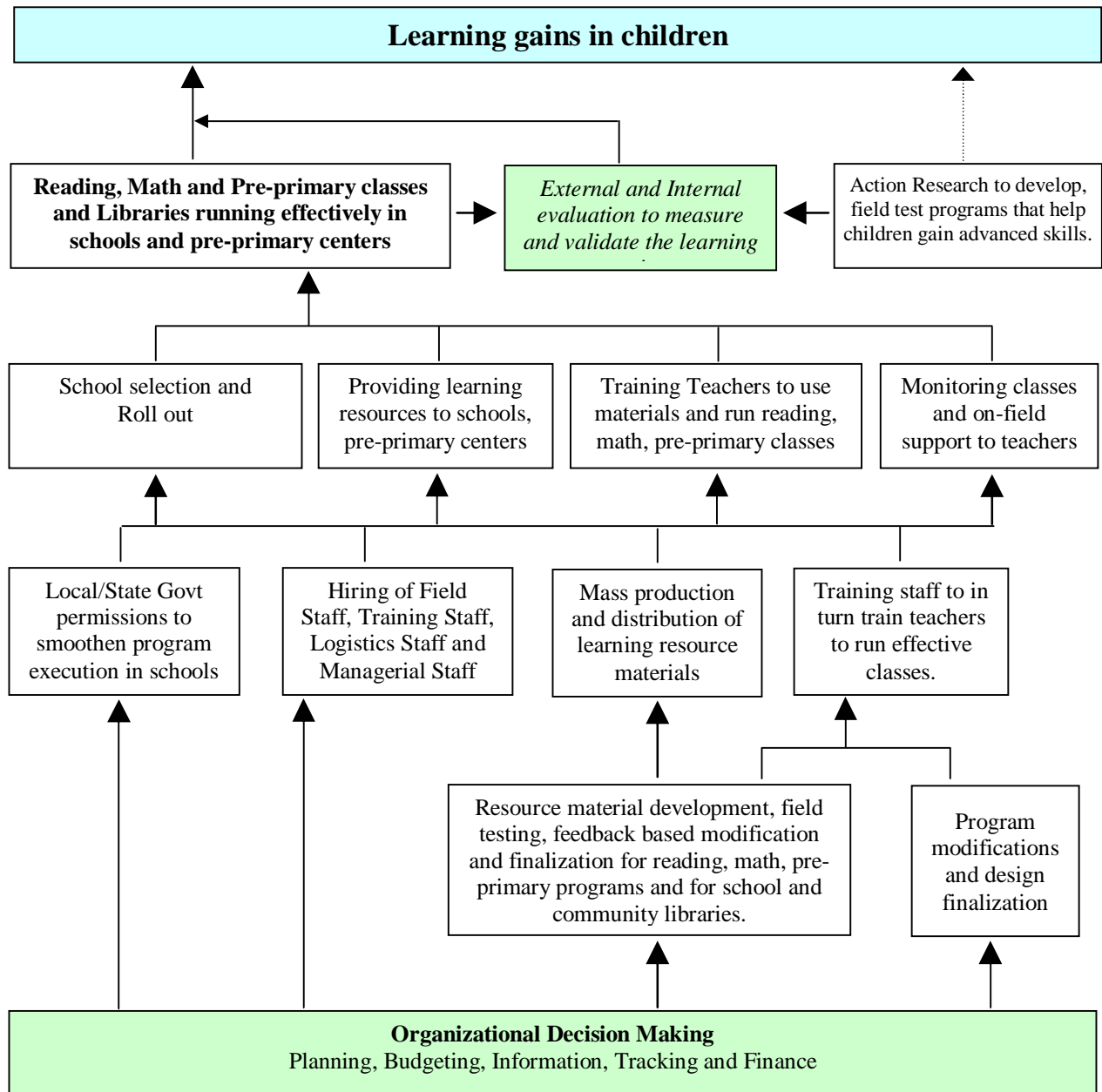
- 1.1 Reading and Arithmetic are two essential skills that lay the foundation for primary education. Without these basic skills, other subject skills become impossible to acquire. But studies like ASER (Annual Survey of Education Report) show that nearly half the children in 5<sup>th</sup> standard have not even acquired basic skills like reading and arithmetic. Recently the government has initiated some steps towards improving the classroom environment and making the classroom atmosphere child friendly. But a lot more is needed to enhance the learning levels of children.
- 1.2 AID INDIA has developed a set of programs that trains government school teachers and improves the reading and arithmetic skills of children using child centric activity based pedagogy. The program involves a combination of skill evaluation, reading and math group activities with specially developed resource kits. The program also envisions the development of pre-primary skills in government balwadis (pre-primary centers). Funding support from various partners has enabled AID INDIA to intensify and scale up these programs in 10 districts.
- 1.3 This is a semi-annual report April- September 2008 - of the project. The first quarter was a preparatory phase and the field programs were just being launched. The second quarter was devoted to a full roll out of the program and to handling the scaling up in all the districts. The baseline studies were completed, teachers were trained and materials supplied to schools, schools were visited and school performance was monitored and corrective actions were planned and taken. This report will cover the following topics in order:
  - Project Implementation Status
  - Organizational progress - structure, system and people changes
  - Achievement vis-à-vis Key Performance Indicators
  - Work Plan for the Third and Fourth Quarters
  - Annexures: Government and AID INDIA Organization Chart, Glossary

### **2. Project Implementation Status**

#### **2.1 Objectives, Targets and Roll Out**

- 2.1.1 In the first year, the program is expected to reach close to a million children in 7000 schools and 1000 balwadis and 1500 communities.

2.1.2 The main objective of this project is to ensure learning gains in children. To achieve this objective, the project envisions a number of supporting activities. The logic sequence that connects these activities to the main objective is illustrated in the flow chart below.



The above flow chart shows the linkages between the different activities and how they together lead to learning gains in children. In this report, we have broadly followed the above 'objectives-to-activities' logic in reporting the implementation status. For example, we first report the roll out status, and then report the school selection, material supply and teacher training, and after that on evaluation and government support and on action research and resource material development. In

the next section we report organizational developments, management and information systems set up, staff hiring and training and finally on the co-funding situation. The flow chart above places each of these activities in context and explains how they contribute to the ultimate ‘learning gains in children’ objective.

2.1.3 The table below shows the objectives, the program targets planned and roll out achieved so far.

**Table 1: Objectives, Targets and Roll Out**

| Objectives  | Program     | 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Program Scale Target | Program units started as on 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2008 | Children reached** |
|---|-------------|---|---|--------------------|
| Ensuring children learn to read                         | Reading     | 7000 schools                              | 7219 schools*   | 794,090            |
| Ensuring children learn to do arithmetic                | Math        | 1000 schools                              | 1005 schools  | 110,550            |
| Ensure children acquire pre-primary skills.             | Pre-primary | 1000 centers                              | 1015 centers  | 25,375             |
| Ensuring community participates in children’s education | CLC         | 1500 villages                             | 990 villages  | 30,750             |
| Ensuring children learn science experiments             | Science     | 1600 scholos                              | 1601 schools  | 240,150            |

\* Of these 6719 schools are in the 10 project districts. 500 schools are in Cuddalore district. Cuddalore was not part of the original 10 project districts, but because AID USA has approved additional Tsunami funding for it, we have started the project there as well.

\*\* The number of children is an estimate. The exact numbers will be available in the next quarterly report.

The reading program is slightly short of the 7000 school planned in the 10 project districts (but there is a compensatory addition in Cuddalore district). We felt that instead of increasing the school numbers at this stage, it would be better to focus on the existing schools. The CLC program roll out is still continuing and we expect to roll it out to all 1500 villages by end October.

## 2.2 School selection and roll out process

2.2.1 We had decided to roll out the program in 3 stages. The first stage schools were identified in the first quarter and the roll out had begun by July. In September, we additionally also rolled out the program to all the second and third stage schools.

2.2.2 The roll out plan was executed in 3 stages:

- **Stage 1:** Each BRP was allotted 20 schools and they visited the schools, established a rapport with the teachers and head teacher. They also started attending the cluster level meetings organized every month by the government and meeting all the teachers in their respective blocks. They also supplied the reading (and math) materials to each school and trained the teacher in the class on how to use the materials.

- **Stage 2:** Each of the existing BRPs was given an additional 5 schools to cover and wherever necessary new BRPs were hired and trained to handle the additional schools. This phased roll out of schools allowed the BRPs to select schools where teachers were already demanding the program.
- **Stage 3:** In the other schools where teachers have been demanding the program (but we have not been able to expand as our plan and funding for this year was only for 7000 schools), we have started providing simpler low cost materials as part of our outreach strategy.

2.2.3 Table 2 below details the district wise distribution of schools and centers as on 11<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008.

**Table 2: District Wise School Numbers for Reading and Math, Pre-primary and CLCs**

| Districts      | Reading Schools | Math Schools* | Preprimary Centers | Community Learning Centers |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Thiruvanamalai | 905             | 210           | 120                | 120                        |
| Thiruvallur    | 600             | 0             | 120                | 120                        |
| Vellore        | 1235            | 270           | 210                | 150                        |
| Trichy         | 800             | 150           | 145                | 135                        |
| Sivagangai     | 764             | 120           | 120                | 45                         |
| Coimbatore     | 550             | 0             |                    | 150                        |
| Krishnagiri    | 590             | 105           | 150                | 120                        |
| Dharmapuri     | 300             | 0             | 0                  | 0                          |
| Kanchipuram    | 650             | 150           | 0                  | 150                        |
| Karur          | 325             | 0             |                    | 0                          |
| Cuddalore      | 500             | 0             |                    | 0                          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>7219</b>     | <b>1005</b>   | <b>1015</b>        | <b>990</b>                 |

\*Math schools are also reading schools, but not vice-versa.

## 2.3 Material Finalization, Distribution and Feedback

2.3.1 Along with selection of school the next most important step to ensure a successful roll out of the program was the finalization, production and distribution of the materials. We have spent significant efforts in customizing our materials to integrate them with the existing ABL system so that teacher uptake could be more easy. We sought detailed feedback from teachers which we then used to modify the materials - making it simpler and easier for teachers to use in the class. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter our focus was on reaching these materials to the schools and to ensure that teachers were trained sufficiently on the material usage. A few people also continued the focus on new material design based on further feedback from teachers.

**Table 3: Feedback received and modifications made to the reading and math materials**

| S.No | Material        | Feedback from              | Feedback   | Modification made  |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| 1    | Story Poster    | Teachers                   | Because ABL had painted blackboards on all the walls, teachers were not able to stick story posters on the wall. | We have provided transparent poster covers so that the posters could be hung from nails easily.                                      |
| 2    | Story Poster    | Field Test by program team | Some of the sentences were difficult for children who could easily read other stories.                           | Simplified the sentences in the story posters.   |
| 3    | Alphabet Poster | Teachers                   | The poster was difficult for children to read as it was far away.  | We have converted the poster into a big foldable card that children could keep on the floor, read and pick out the relevant letters. |

|    |                          |  |   |   |
|----|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| 4  | Letter and Number Cards  | Teachers                                 | Card size was very small.   | We have designed bigger and thicker letter cards.   |
| 5  | Sentence- picture game   | BRP                                      | Dark colour of background made it difficult for children to read the words.   | Background colour has been changed.   |
| 6  | Para Cards               | Teachers                                 | Teachers found these cards useful and wanted more numbers.  | We have now doubled the number of para cards.   |
| 7  | Sentence card            | Teachers                                 | Teachers found these cards useful and wanted more numbers.  | Added many more sentence cards.   |
| 8  | Number cards             | BRP and Field test by program team.      | It was difficult to combine 3 digit and 2 digit cards for activities because the cards were center aligned and so the place value was not clear.                | Cards were right aligned and sizes were adjusted so that the place value could be seen clearly.           |
| 9  | Number Recognition kit   | Teachers and Field test by program team. | Initial design expected one child to say a number and others to form it using 100s, 10s and 1s. But children were unable to come up with enough random numbers. | Added lot of random number cards to the number recognition kit.   |
| 10 | Arithmetic jigsaw puzzle | BRP and Field test by program team       | The puzzle was interesting but only children who knew the arithmetic operations well could do it.   | A simpler version with smaller numbers was added for children who were just learning to add and subtract. |

2.3.2 Apart from the above modifications to the existing designs we also added a number of new materials for the reading and math programs.

- **Reading Program Materials:**

- A word display poster, children's newspaper and I can read stickers to be given to children to motivate them
- One new set of materials were developed for children at each reading level: An alphabet chart for children who cannot even identify letters, rhyming words activity for children who are at letter level, picture & sentence cards for word level children, 52 para cards for sentence level children and story poster for story level children.
- A puzzle poster and an 'activity newspaper' that can be used by all the children have also been designed.

- **Math Program Materials:**

- An activity for number recognition and addition was developed.
- Addition poster, crossword type number puzzle, train puzzle and currency notes
- Number charts, Number step cards, Addition Strip base, Rupee note addition base and number strips were also developed.
- Based on teachers' feedback, new activities for addition and subtraction that are directly connected to the school-methods are also being developed.
- Preliminary feedback showed that many children are finding even simple subtraction difficult because they are counting down from the larger number instead of counting up from the smaller number. A study of how children are doing subtraction is also being undertaken to find out the prevalence of this and to develop materials to change this.

2.3.3 **Material Mass Production:** After going through the above modification process the material designed was field tested and finalized. Appropriate packaging for the materials was also designed keeping in mind the quarterly additions that have been planned. Using the final design our logistics team worked on the costing of the materials and packaging, got competitive quotations and finalized printing and procurement orders. A godown was hired. All the materials from printers and suppliers

were received at the godown. Our logistics team hired additional temporary workers and together they categorized, sorted, assembled and packaged the materials into kits. These kits were then sent to districts offices in trucks.

2.3.4 **Material Distribution:** Initially it is proposed that we could deliver the kits to the teachers at the block level teacher training camps that are organized by the government. But as we were only working with selected schools, it was felt that giving materials to some teachers and leaving others out may cause problems. Though this would imply more work and take a bit longer, we felt that it was better to give the materials with the training in the school directly as we could then demonstrate the activities and kit usage with the children directly. Accordingly, from the district offices our BRPs collected the kits for the schools allocated to them and visited every school to deliver the materials and to train the teachers on using them. They also supplied the evaluation booklets and the tools and trained the teachers on doing the evaluation. As on July 31<sup>st</sup>, the BRPs provided the kits and trained teachers in 2489 reading schools and 552 math schools. By 15<sup>th</sup> August, the stage schools were all completed and by 11<sup>th</sup> Oct all the schools had received the first set of materials. Material distribution is a continuous process and additional materials are being supplied to the schools every quarter as required.

2.3.5 **Material usage feedback:** Our state teams actively visited a large number of schools to collect feedback about the materials and to study which materials were useful and where the major gaps were. Below are some of the key points that provide an insight into the usage and usability of the materials as well as important areas of improvement.

- **Reading Program Material Feedback:**

- Across all the districts, we found that the modified materials had a great welcome from teachers. Teachers who were implementing ABL effectively said that these materials helped them get all children to read and so they could progress much better on the ABL system. Teachers who did not like the ABL system and found it difficult said that they liked our reading materials because they were much more easier to use and worked very effectively!
- Apart from providing feedback when our teams visited the schools, several teachers, headmasters and Govt Block Supervisors telephoned our office and our state teams and commended the quality of reading materials given for primary school students.
- Some specific feedback:
  - Teachers found the newer materials and the incorporation into the ABL structure easy to implement.
  - Many teachers appreciated the fact that we had taken their suggestions seriously and modified the materials - providing additional materials to help with their ABL classes, providing more activities for letter level children as well as increasing the size of the materials.
  - The 'word display' charts were extremely popular among teachers and children. Children were very eager to read words from the word display. Even children in 'letter' level were trying to join letters and read the words. Some teachers suggested that each school be given 3 word display covers, to enable them to display all the word cards at the same time. (We had asked them to display the cards in rotation.)
  - Some teachers requested alphabet charts for 'beginner' level children.
  - A few teachers felt that children in sentence level were not progressing to story level easily and wanted additional activities. So our state team has developed

new para cards to address this transition and is also conducting an action research study to understand further gaps in the activities for sentence level children and to develop alternative activities.

- **Math Program Material Feedback:**

- The Govt had provided a few schools in each block with ABL SLM materials. Schools that had not got the ABL SLM kits were very happy they had at last got some math materials. But interestingly even schools that had received the ABL SLM materials felt that our materials were much more useful as they were lot more dynamic.
- A school in Trichy told us that the former State Project Director and the current State Project Director who had taken over had made a surprise visit to their school and saw our math materials in use. They were very impressed with the materials and asked the teachers where they had got them from. The teacher told them that AID INDIA had given the materials. They both told the teacher that it was very good material and she should use it well!

- Feedback on Specific Materials:

- The currency notes were extremely popular among teachers and children.
- Many teachers also felt that the 'number strips' were very useful in teaching addition. But a few teachers found the number strips for addition a bit difficult to use. The key problem was explaining to children to break up addition problems in 10's – for example, breaking up  $8 + 4$  as  $8 + 2 + 2$ .
- Some teachers have started finding additional uses for our materials – for instance, they are using our 'addition' materials to also teach 'place value'! We are now identifying such 'morphed-uses' to see whether these ideas should be promoted more widely as well.
- Some of the children found a few number recognition activities difficult - for example they found it difficult to represent the number '15' as a '10' and a '5'.

- In a few schools, children had difficulty with the activity for addition with number strips. For instance, if the child is expected to do " $15 + 6$ ", then the child keeps the strips as shown (which are the correct way of doing it). However, while adding, instead of arriving at 10, 20 and 21, the child arrives at 10 and then proceeds to counting the remaining numbers, such as 10, 11, 12, etc. up to 20 and then 21 - which makes it very long and cumbersome.

|          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |           |    |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|----|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10        |    |
|          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | <b>10</b> | 10 |
|          |   |   |   | 5 |   |   |   |   | 5         | 20 |
| <b>1</b> |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |           | 21 |

- A important feedback from our other teams was that in addition and subtraction, most of our materials were focused on conceptual understanding. It was felt that there was also a need to introduce more materials that help children learn the 'school procedures' for addition and subtraction.
- Preliminary feedback showed that many children are subtracting the long and cumbersome way. For example for  $18-7$ , they are first counting up all the way from 1 to 18 and then subtracting 7; instead of starting with 7 and then simply

counting up to 18. This becomes a major problem in 2 digit subtraction as each problem becomes much tougher. We are undertaking a study to find the prevalence of this and if needed, to develop a program to change this quickly.

## 2.4 Training of Teachers

- 2.4.1 Our reading and math BRPs visited each school and trained teachers directly at the school level. After the first round of training at the school level, they also provided additional training at the block level. Our BRPs also visited many of their school 2-3 times each month to ensure the teachers had understood the training and to ensure the teacher had started the classes<sup>1</sup>. In a typical school the BRP would spend about 3 to 4 hours demonstrating the materials with children, training teachers on how to evaluate children's reading/math levels, how to conduct the group activities for the reading/math classes. After a school has been visited 3 or more several times, the BRPs also begin the grading of the school - to identify how well schools are adopting the program and to also identify what additional support is required. The details of the schools monitored and the grading is given in the next section.
- 2.4.2 Till mid Aug our pre-primary BRPs visited the Balwadis to provide an orientation to teachers on using the pre-primary kits. At this stage it was not expected that the Balwadi teachers would run their own classes. In September, all the Balwadi teachers were given a formal round of training and were also supplied the materials to start their independent classes. After this, our BRPs visited each Balwadi and provided the kits and again trained the teacher on the field to start the classes.
- 2.4.3 In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, a number of training sessions were held to ensure that the BRPs, Zonal Coordinators and District Coordinators were well trained on the methodology, the materials and the evaluation. The details of the various training camps organized in this period are given in the table below:

**Table 3: Training of Field Trainers - BRPs, Zonal and District Coordinators**

| Program      | Month | Number               | Training Purpose  | Duration | Participants                    |
|--------------|-------|----------------------|---|----------|---------------------------------|
| Reading      | Aug   | 23 Zonal Trainings   | Zonal wise second round training for BRPs on the materials, teacher training                | 1 day    | 25 participant in each zone     |
| Reading      | Sep   | 25 Zonal Trainings   | Training BRPs on categorizing schools   | 1 day    | 25 participant in each zone     |
| Math         | Aug   | 3 Regional Trainings | Training BRPs in Vellore, Tiruvanamalai and Krishnagiri districts on the new math materials | 1 day    | 30 participant from 3 districts |
| Pre Primary  | July  | 8 District Trainings | Training BRPs in all the districts on the materials and program                             | 1 day    | 63 BRPs participated            |
| CLC          | Aug   | 2 Regional Training  | Training CLC BRPs on reading and math activities  | 1 day    | 45 people participated          |
| CLC          | Sep   | 1 Regional Training  | Training CLC BRPs on reading and math activities  | 1 day    | 20 people participated          |
| All programs | Aug   | 1 State Training     | Training all zonal cords and district admin on information books and formats.               | 2 day    | 43 zonal cords + dist admin     |

\* Reading has more training sessions because it has a much larger scale

<sup>1</sup> The key question is teacher acceptance of the program - ensuring the teacher translates the training into classes in the school. We have found from earlier phases of our program that the acceptance is better if we do the training individually for the teacher and in the school with her students rather than in a camp mode (which is also useful in other ways). We use the school visits to check acceptance rate by grading schools (based on how well they are running daily classes as expected).

## 2.5 Monitoring

2.5.1 **BRP Monitoring of Schools:** All the BRPs have been visiting schools and balwadi to monitor the progress of the reading, math and pre-primary classes. In September, we asked the BRPs to use a set of parameters to categorize schools as A, B, C and D. These are process based measures and not result based measures. They are useful in understanding level of uptake and also in understanding modifications needed in the program. These categories are also used by us to provide differential inputs to different categories of schools.

- **A Category School:** Where the teacher allocates a separate time for running our reading or math class and runs it every day and does all the activities correctly.
- **B Category School:** Where the teacher runs the class everyday - some days by allocating special time and some days by incorporating our materials and activities into her regular class.
- **C Category School:** Where the teacher does not allocate special time but incorporates our activities and materials into the ABL class and runs the classes weekly.
- **D Category School:** Where the teacher is irregular in implementing our program.

Our BRPs have completed the categorization of 3805 reading schools and 900 math schools (most of the schools selected in the first phase) and the category information is given below in the tables:

**Table 4: School Categories**

| School Category | Reading     | Mathematics |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| A Category      | 2270 (60%)  | 407 (45%)   |
| B Category      | 1007 (26%)  | 372 (41%)   |
| C Category      | 411 (11%)   | 96 (11%)    |
| D Category      | 117 (3%)    | 25 (3%)     |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>3805</b> | <b>900</b>  |

As the above table shows, 86% of the reading and math schools are running the classes daily and 11% of the schools have adopted the materials but not the entire methodology. 3% of the schools are not executing the program. From our earlier program experiences, these uptake numbers for teachers are much higher than what is normal at the beginning of the program. Usually we expect at least 25%-30% schools at C and D category. Towards the middle of the year, the uptake increases as more schools are convinced. One reason for the higher uptake right at the beginning is possibly the fact that in the first phase we selected many of the schools who had already implemented some of our program components last year and were eager to take up the full program. Also the reason could be because we have retro-fitted our materials to fit into ABL. We are doing the categorization for the second phase schools now and once the numbers for these come in, we will have a more accurate uptake picture. But anyway, from both field level feedback and from visits by state teams, it looks like our uptake percentages do seem to be better than what we used to have earlier.

2.5.2 **State Team Monitoring Visits:** The state teams have been visiting districts to observe teachers' classes, to assess BRP effectiveness and to train BRPs to undertake school categorization. Some of the factors taken into consideration for assessing effectiveness of BRPs include understanding of program content, estimation of school categorization and frequency of visits. They have also been

visiting districts to cross check and validate the schools categorized by the BRPs. The reading and math state teams have been covering over 100 schools each month.

## 2.6 External and Internal Evaluation

2.6.1 To assess whether the program is reaching its learning gain objectives in children, a systematic external and internal evaluation of the project has been planned. These evaluations will both provide quantitative and qualitative impact assessment of the project.

2.6.2 **External Evaluation:** The purpose of the external evaluation is to validate the program outcomes and provide an independent quantitative and qualitative impact assessment of the project – both on direct program objectives like reading and math learning gains as well as on other child well-being indicators like confidence, learning habits, enrolment, nutrition, health, etc. The external evaluation will also provide a reference for achieved versus expected outcomes as well as qualitative process assessment of the project implementation. After a review of several external agencies, New Concepts (NCIS) was hired by CIFF to do the quantitative assessment of the project.

2.6.2.1 AID INDIA district and evaluation teams provided logistics support and organized government permissions and facilitated the external evaluation in all of the project districts. Our team has been constant communication with the NCIS team and provided support to handle minor gaps and field problems to ensure that the evaluation was completed smoothly and quickly.

2.6.2.2 In the 2008-09 academic year, it was decided that NCIS will conduct 2 quantitative assessments – a ‘Baseline assessment’ at the start of the project and a ‘Year 1 assessment’ at the end of the first year. The baseline assessment by NCIS has been completed in all the 400 schools and village in the 10 project districts and also in 2 of the non-project control districts.

**Table 5: External Baseline Evaluation Status as on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

| District                 | Schools and Villages Baseline Planned | Schools and Village Baseline Completed | District Baseline Status |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Project Districts</b> |                                       |  |                          |
| Kanchipuram              | 32                                    | 32                                     | Completed                |
| Vellore                  | 54                                    | 54                                     | Completed                |
| Tiruvannamalai           | 48                                    | 48                                     | Completed                |
| Krishnagiri              | 22                                    | 22                                     | Completed                |
| Tiruvallur               | 87                                    | 87                                     | Completed                |
| Dharmapuri               | 15                                    | 15                                     | Completed                |
| Sivagangai               | 25                                    | 25                                     | Completed                |
| Trichy                   | 28                                    | 28                                     | Completed                |
| Coimbatore               | 70                                    | 70                                     | Completed                |
| Karur                    | 19                                    | 19                                     | Completed                |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>400</b>                            | <b>400</b>                             |                          |
| <b>Control Districts</b> |                                       |  |                          |
| Salem                    | 20                                    | 20                                     | Completed                |
| Villupuram               | 20                                    | 20                                     | Completed                |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>40</b>                             | <b>40</b>                              |                          |

2.6.2.3 We are currently awaiting the baseline evaluation report from NCIS.

2.6.3 **Internal Evaluation:** In addition to the external evaluation, we have also being conducting an internal evaluation of the program. The purpose of the internal evaluation is to measure the program

outcomes quantitatively, validate training effectiveness and outputs and provide on-going feedback to improve program design and implementation. Two kinds of internal evaluations have been planned and conducted:

- **Teacher’s Evaluation:** This was done by the school teachers themselves and validated by our BRPs. The purpose of this evaluation was to get teachers to understand the reading and math levels of the children so that they could conduct appropriate support activities to improve the reading and math skills of their children. The evaluation was also planned as a feedback to the teachers on the learning gains of their children through the program.
- **Internal Evaluation by our Evaluation BRP:** In a sample of program schools, our evaluation team has been conducting an independent internal evaluation of children’s skills (planned every 6 months). An evaluation team was selected and trained and apart from collecting, validating and consolidating the teacher’s evaluation, has also been involved in conducting their own independent sample evaluations in schools.

2.6.3.1 To ensure that the Teacher’s evaluation and Internal evaluation is done effectively and accurately, a lot of time was spent on carefully preparing the tools (and making several different versions of the tools to prevent children from quoting from memory). The BRPs were first trained on the tools and then teachers were trained on evaluation tools, formats and methodology. Teachers were also provided special Reading and Math evaluation booklets to keep a record of the evaluation in the school. In this quarter, the tools for internal BRP evaluation were also field tested and finalized and evaluation BRPs trained on doing the internal evaluation as well as validation of the teacher’s evaluation.

2.6.3.2 We have collected Teacher’s Evaluation forms from 3328 reading schools and 738 math schools. The teachers in the remaining schools (including Phase 2 schools) are also being asked to do the initial evaluation (as it would be useful to them), but we will not be collecting the forms from them as it would be too late to use these as accurate evaluation estimates. Data entry of the forms collected is in progress. Our state evaluation team visited 21 schools in 9 districts to observe and validate the evaluation done by teachers. The evaluation BRPs also validated the teacher’s evaluation. The table below provides the data on the evaluation formats collected from teachers. The data on the internal evaluation is also being consolidated and this will be compared with the results of evaluation at the end of the first year.

2.6.3.3 Our internal evaluation team is also just completing a random sample evaluation in schools. The table below shows the status of the internal evaluation by our BRPs. We expect the internal evaluation to be completed by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Table 6: Status of Internal Evaluation Completion as on 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2008**

| District       | Teachers’ Evaluation Collected |              | BRP Internal Evaluation Completed |              |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
|                | Reading Schools                | Math Schools | Reading Schools                   | Math Schools |
| Vellore        | 415                            | 178          | 40                                | 27           |
| Trichy         | 320                            | 61           | 51                                | 18           |
| Kanchipuram    | 382                            | 136          | 54                                | 28           |
| Tiruvannamalai | 455                            | 189          | 57                                | 26           |
| Krishnagiri    | 233                            | 65           | 62                                | 22           |
| Coimbatore     | 275                            | -            | 72                                | 0            |
| Dharmapuri     | 7                              | -            | 30                                | 0            |
| Sivagangai     | 478                            | 109          | 67                                | 0            |
| Tiruvallur     | 373                            | -            | 0                                 | 0            |
| Cudalore       | 390                            | -            | 0                                 | 0            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>3328</b>                    | <b>738</b>   | <b>433</b>                        | <b>121</b>   |

## 2.7 Garnering Government Support

We have planned different kinds of government support for different purposes. To run the program we have sought state, district and block level government permission. We also seek an MOU with the state government. So far we have obtained permissions from all the districts involved in the program. We met with the State Director for Elementary Education with regard to the program. He was very impressed and has promised his full support. Recently, a letter was sent from the State Directorate to all district officials not only providing AID India permission to run the program, but also directing them to monitor the progress and to report the status back to the State Director. This letter has provided a strong state level legitimacy and support to our work in the schools.

We are currently in discussions at various levels of the state government to obtain a MOU to seek government ownership of the program and its statewide scale up. We expect the results of the first year to further strengthen our case that the EurekaChild program adds to the quality of school learning and strengthens the government's existing efforts to improve quality. At this stage we have also requested CIFF to help us in this by directly engaging with the Government to look for larger partnership opportunities.

## 2.8 Resource Material Development

2.8.1 The resource material development team has focused on 3 kinds of materials:

- **Roll out Program Materials:** These are materials developed for mass replication and use in the reading, math and pre-primary program roll out and the process adopted in developing them were described in Section 2.3 and so will not be repeated here.
- **Action Research Program Materials:** These materials are designed for use by the Action Research teams. They are produced in smaller quantities and frequently undergo modifications. The details of materials developed for these programs are given in Section 2.10, along with the program description.
- **School and Community Library Materials:** These are non-program materials that will be used in the school and community libraries. In the first quarter report, we listed a large number of materials that had been developed by our resource team. This quarter, the materials developed by the team are listed in the table below:

**Table 7: New materials designed for school and community libraries by our resource team**

| Type of material         | Names of Materials         | Remarks   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Story Books for Children | Chitterumbuin Maraivu      | Story by K. Rajanarayanan - a famous children's writer                            |
|                          | Ratchasanum kullanum       | Collection of folk tales  |
|                          | Malayiliruthu kathai aruvi | Compilation of 60 stories from teachers and children from Tiruvannamalai district |
|                          | Pathimondril Ondru         | Story about the difficulties of a student from a poor dalit family                |
|                          | Palli Maruthirapu          | School stories  |
| Biographies for Children | Louis Braille              | Inventor of Braille script for the blind  |
|                          | Rosa Parks                 | US Civil Rights Activist  |
|                          | Velu Nachiyar              | Tamil freedom movement activist   |
| Bilingual books          | Elephant                   | Nature Series   |
|                          | Butterfly                  |   |
|                          | Desert                     |   |
|                          | Peacock                    |   |

|                                       |                         |   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
|                                       | Deer                    |   |
|                                       | Cock and Crow           | Story   |
| Story cards for reading comprehension | 30 Advanced story cards |   |
| Advanced Readers                      | Read to Solve Cards     | Advanced reading cards that require reading comprehension and applying math skills. |
| Math Booklet                          | Birth of numbers        |   |

## 2.9 Action Research Programs

2.9.1 As part of our overall goal of improving learning levels of children in all subjects, we have a small but significant Action Research component that is part of this project. Under this component, we have initiated work on 3 Action Research programs in the first quarter itself – English, Advanced Math and Basic Science.

2.9.2 **English Action Research Program:** Functional knowledge of the English language has become increasingly important to avail opportunities for higher education & employment and also to access information in everyday life. Children who are unable to understand and speak English feel that they are in some way inferior to those who do. In Government schools, the medium of instruction is Tamil. English as a subject is taught by the teacher for one hour in a day. In class, there is not much scope for the child to actually speak in English. Most parents of children from poor economic backgrounds would not have even completed high school and hence, would not know English. Hence the child gets no help at home either. Our English Action Research program has set as its goal the improvement of spoken English. This program has been initiated at a pilot scale in 50 schools in 2 Blocks with 4 Block Resource Persons (BRPs). In the second quarter the following activities have been completed:

- Initial evaluation of basic English skills completed in 50 schools in 2 blocks
- Initially our staff ran the classes and then the teachers were trained and given the materials and are now running classes.
- The materials are grouped into specific modules - each module covering a set of conversational situations - all teachers have completed 3 modules and are being trained on the 1<sup>st</sup> revision module.
- Apart from spoken English (which was the primary focus), we have also started piloting an English Reading Program in a few schools.

2.9.3 **Advanced Math Action Research Program:** Mathematics evokes fear in most children. Mathematics learning can be made fun and exciting for children through activities, puzzles and games. The two main goals of the Advanced Math Action Research Program is to improve conceptual understanding in mathematics through hands-on activities and games and to create excitement and curiosity in mathematics through simple, yet intriguing puzzles. The program has been initiated for the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> STD students in 45 government schools in 3 blocks with 5 BRPs. Games and activities are being developed for Fractions, Ratio, Decimals, Percentages, Measurement, Algebra and Data Handling. In the recent quarter the following activities have been completed:

- Pre-test and post-test for ‘negative numbers’ and fractions has been completed
- BRPs have been trained on negative numbers and fractions and are running focus classes in schools.

- 4 new activities have been developed and have been field tested. The team has also developed more activities for field testing.

2.9.4 **Science Action Research:** Today, most children look at science as a subject with no link to reality. This makes science irrelevant and unexciting. In order to understand that science is real, children must be made to do experiments that are both easy to do and have stunning & surprising results. Moreover, to understand that these experiments are scientific and not magical, children must be able to explain these experiments. The child must develop an underlying mental visualization of the phenomenon, which leads to the result. Therefore the goal of our Science Action Research program is to communicate the reality, excitement and relevance of science by getting children to do and explain simple science experiments. The program has been in development for sometime and has now been expanded to 1601 schools in 43 blocks in 9 districts with 58 BRPs. In the past three months the following activities have been completed:

- Developed experiments on mechanics and field tested them.
- 56 BRPs and Teachers from 1581 were trained on mechanics experiments and provided kits. Teachers have been running these experiments in class. 43 school visits were made by the State team to observe teachers' classes in 'mechanics' in 6 districts.
- In Krishnagiri district, on request from the district government officials, 59 Govt BRTs were trained on "mechanics" experiments and they in turn trained all the science teachers in 10 blocks in Krishnagiri District.
- An experiment kit and module on heat and water has also been developed. BRPs have been trained and this is being field tested through focus classes by our BRPs. Once finalized, teachers will be trained on these modules as well.

2.9.5 **Action Research Program Materials Developed:** A number of resource materials have been generated as part of our action research programs. Many of these are still being field tested as part of the Action Research. In the previous report, we had listed the materials developed in the first quarter. The table below gives the details of materials developed in the past few months.

**Table 8: Action Research Program Materials Developed**

| <b>Program</b> | <b>Materials Developed</b>          |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| English        | Magic Box - Story Poster            |
|                | Flashcards on Animals               |
|                | Flashcards on Fruits and Vegetables |
|                | Flashcards on Shapes and Patterns   |
| Advanced Math  | 3 Activities on negative numbers    |
|                | 2 activities on fractions           |
| Science        | Mechanics experiment kit and manual |
|                | Heat experiment kit and manual      |
|                | 10 experiments in "water"           |

### 3. Organizational Progress

- 3.1 In the long previous section we highlighted the implementation status of the various program components – in particular about the roll out status of the reading, math, pre-primary and CLC programs, internal and external evaluation status, preparatory activities for the school library, status of materials produced and the action research programs initiated. This rapid scaling up of the programs would not have been possible without a corresponding progress on the organizational front.
- 3.2 **Organizational Re-structuring:**
- 3.2.1 The scale up that has been slowly happening in the last 1 year and now much more rapidly, and the consequent increase in the number and kinds of people working with us has increased the complexity of decision making and its implications. Earlier we had a management committee of 13 people who would make policy decisions as well as day to day executive decisions. We found that this committee was too small to reflect the different levels of people and perspectives in the organization accurately. At the same time we also found that we were forced to take a lot of executive decisions quite frequently and getting all the 11 people together on a weekly basis was also getting difficult. To address both of these issues we have constituted a 2 tier decision making structure.
- 3.2.2 We now have an expanded 30 member ECCG (Eureka Child Core Group) which has representatives from all state and field teams as well as people with the longer organizational experience. This group will meet once every two months to review the progress of our programs, status of people and organization and also to frame larger policy decisions which will form the framework for day to day executive decisions. Because the ECCG represents a larger collective the expectation is that the ECCG will be able to incorporate multiple perspectives and will be able to come up with good larger policies. Additionally being a larger representative body the task of consensus building on policies also is expected to become easier.
- 3.2.3 To handle the need for quicker and larger number of day to day executive decisions a smaller MC (Management Committee) consisting of 6 people has been constituted. This committee is responsible for handling day to day decisions and reporting to the ECCG. This MC meets every week and works within the policies framed by the ECCG. Whenever larger decisions or policy issues come up the MC will re-direct these to the ECCG.
- 3.2.4 Both the MC and the ECCG are ultimately responsible to the AID INDIA executive committee and Office Bearers which is the formal legal body responsible to the external world. There have been no changes in these and all the re-structuring has been only internal.
- 3.2.5 As we scale up we are also recognizing the need for a wider range of inputs. To get this on a regular basis we are identifying mentors and advisors with the experience in the relevant fields to guide different branches of our work. We have also discussed but not yet arrived at a conclusion on formation of an Advisory Board for the organization.

### 3.3 New Systems and Teams Created

3.3.1 Along with re-structuring the decision making process the scale up has also necessitated the setting up a number of new teams and systems. Some of the major changes are given below:

3.3.2 **Finance System:** Our finance advisor helped our finance team identify a number of gaps and efforts to address them have been put in place.

- To reduce the amount of cash transactions we have opened bank accounts in every district and also for state teams. This has ensured a substantial reduction in cash transactions.
- We have set up a quarterly planning and budgeting system. Every team submits a plan with its budget for the quarter. This is consolidated, compared with the overall project plans and previous expenditure and approved with modifications. Every month the planning and budgeting team also tracks the expenditure and variations from the budget.
- We have also set up an internal audit team that visits districts periodically to check the validity of accounts submitted, HR details, to independently validate material distribution and other organizational requirements. This team also audits the accounts process and state teams periodically. The audit report is submitted to the Managing Committee for appropriate action.
- We also have a statutory external auditor who periodically verify our accounts, ensure legal compliance and provide external audit reports and certificates.

3.3.3 **Human Resources System:** We now have put a formal contract system for hiring project staff. We also have put in place a detailed reporting system that maintains a centralized HR database, assigns staff id and tracks staff hired or terminated at all the levels. Our district hiring strategies were already quite effective but our state level hiring system was a bit weak. We have now started strengthening this as well. We have so far been a very flat organization with very little hierarchy this has been very useful in maintaining an egalitarian organizational culture ensuring fearless feedback and self correction mechanisms. As the scaling up is happening we would like to keep this flat structure intact but still have a disciplined work force. We feel this can be achieved with sufficient space for widely discussing and reviewing organizational directions and decisions. We also feel that by building a stronger ideological understanding of our work and by continuously training our staff, we will be able to achieve a flat but disciplined people structure. Keeping this in mind, to handle hiring, training, conflicts, benefits, etc., we have set up HR committees that involve people from many different levels. We have also put in a formal recruitment system with records of people given contracts and renewal of the contracts, etc. The HR team will also be focusing on providing non-program training and skills to the staff (speaking skills, management and planning skills, report writing skills, etc).

3.3.4 **Logistics System:** This was a new team and a new system put in place. The team quickly got its act together and managed to streamline the logistics. They not only got the production completed, but also assembled the kits and transported these to the districts quickly. One area of gap discovered was in receiving and handling of the materials at the district level. An additional person responsible for materials has now been appointed in each district to handle this and is being trained by the logistics team.

3.3.5 In the first quarter, our focus was on building up our team to handle the scaling up. In the second quarter the focus was on actual roll out of the programs. We have also now started thinking more about outsourcing some of our non-core functions and also creating a longer-term structure that can deliver better on the core outputs. This quarter we will think and plan more on how this can be done.

### 3.4 Hiring and Training of staff

**Table 9: Summary of People on Rolls**

| People Hired              | First Quarter | Second Quarter |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| BRPs Hired                | 404           | 469            |
| Zonal Coordinators        | 33            | 30             |
| State Admin and Logistics | 11            | 16             |
| Other State Teams         | 77            | 76             |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>525</b>    | <b>591</b>     |

- 3.4.1 **Training:** The direct program related training details were given in section 2.4. As we had hired a large number of new people, this quarter was devoted to training and orienting them. We started the quarter with an orientation for district and zonal coordinators to help them understand the vision, scale and intensity of the project. Immediately after promoting a number of the BRPs into the state teams we had a 5 day intensive training for them not only on the program content but also on training and monitoring techniques. Apart from these we also organized a number of training sessions on program content, material usage, external and internal evaluation, planning and budgeting. The details of these sessions are given in the table below:

**Table 10: Special State level Trainings organized in the second quarter**

| Training on                 | Details  | Participants  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Monitoring field execution  | Training on how to run focus classes, how to monitor field level implementation            | State program team members  |
| Innovative use of materials | How to conduct reading melas using materials provided in the kit                           | State program team member   |
| Art of Project management   | What does project management mean and how to do it well by Business Management Consultants | 2 people from project management team                               |
| Basic design principles     | Workshop by a National Institute of Design student   | Resource group & material designers from program teams              |
| Designing with colour       | <i>Design workshop</i> by a design consultant Preetha.                                     | 8 people from the resource group & program teams                    |
| Story telling               | 2-day residential workshop by Ms. Gita from Kathalaya                                      | 30 coordinators and selected BRPs from pre-primary and CLC programs |

### 3.5 Fund-raising and co-funding status

- 3.5.1 With the help of various organizations and foundations, we have successfully been able to raise the required co-funding amount for the 1<sup>st</sup> year. The amount of \$266,000 was raised through ASHA (various chapters), Vibha, Indian's for Collective Action (ICA), ILP and Kalvi Foundation, Bridgeway Foundation, Aspire Systems (Chennai) and AID USA. Most of these organizations are

supported by individual donor contributions. The rest of the matching support was provided by CIFF.

**3.5.2 Fund-raising for other on-going programs:** Pratham is supporting our non-intensive reading campaign. But we still require additional funds for that. In addition, we have our on-going model schools and learning centers program that needs funding. MSDF is supporting a large part of our urban education quality program, but we still need to raise co-funding for this as well. Our fund-raising and management teams are contacting a number of different donors to raise funds for these smaller scale projects as well.

## 4 Achievement vis-à-vis Key Performance Indicators

4.1 The implementation status (section 2) and the organizational status (section 3) have been written from the KPI perspectives and provide the progress on the KPIs. In the table below, we have listed the KPIs and the main achievements in this quarter vis-à-vis the KPIs. We have also provided links to the relevant sections that describe the activities leading to the KPI in more detail.

**Table 11: KPI and Achievement**

| Key Performance Indicators |  | Achievement Summary   | Section Reference for Details        |
|----------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Outcome Indicators         | Learning Gains in children                                     | Reading classes in 7219 schools, math classes in 1005 schools, pre-primary classes in 1015 centers and CLCs in 990 villages started. External Evaluation Baseline completed. Internal evaluation almost completed.                  | Sec 2.1, Sec 2.6                     |
|                            | Library Usage  | <i>NA - component not yet started</i>   | -                                    |
|                            | Govt adopting project ideas                                    | Govt has spent about \$75,000 and printed 40 of our graded story cards and provided it to 37000 schools all across the state!<br>Govt has also accepted our school library idea and provided books to all the schools in the state. | Sec 2.8                              |
|                            | Teacher's Innovations  | <i>NA - too early to see impact</i>   | -                                    |
| Output Indicators          | Number of children reached                                     | 577,520 children reached for reading program, 80,400 children for the math program, 25,375 pre-primary children and 30,750 children in CLCs in villages   | Sec 2.1                              |
|                            | Number of schools running classes                              | Reading classes in 7219 schools, math classes in 1005 schools, pre-primary classes in 1015 centers.   | Sec 2.1, Sec 2.2<br>Sec 2.3, Sec 2.4 |
|                            | School Grading   | Done for 3805 reading schools and 900 math schools. Shows 86% schools have good teacher uptake of the program by teachers.  | Sec 2.5                              |
|                            | Usage of Materials   | Feedback on usage collected. Most places materials are being used very effectively. Some gaps in materials also found. Details in Sec 2.3.4   | Sec 2.3.4                            |
|                            | Community Centers Running                                      | CLCs in 990 villages started.   | Sec 2.1                              |
|                            | Widening base for advocacy                                     | Met and interviewed Vijaykumar and the Minister for our magazine. Participated and conveyed our views on ABL in 3 NGO meetings. Helped organize a press meet by educationists on ABL study.   | -                                    |
| Input Indicators           | Schools that have received all the materials for each quarter. | All the reading and math schools have received the first set of materials and are being provided the second set of materials. All the pre-primary and CLCs have been supplied the first set of materials.                           | Sec 2.3.3                            |
|                            | Teachers who have received training.                           | 7219 teachers received reading training, 1005 teachers have received math training and 1015 have received pre-primary training.   | Sec 2.4                              |
|                            | School visits by all BRPs                                      | BRPs have visited all the 7219 schools more than thrice - in most blocks, the BRPs have been visiting schools at least twice a month.   | -                                    |
|                            | Staff Efficiency   | See Sec 3.3   | Sec 3.3                              |

|                   |                                  |  |          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--|----------|
|                   | Government Support for Execution | State permission letter received. Focus now is on getting MOU and government's scale up plans. | Sec 2.7  |
|                   | Co-funding support raised        | Details given in Sec 3.4   | Sec 3.4  |
| <b>Extra KPIs</b> | New Resource Materials Developed | A number of books for library developed. Details in Sec 2.8                                    | Sec 2.9  |
|                   | New Programs Designed            | 3 action research programs - English, Advanced Math and Science - initiated.                   | Sec 2.10 |
|                   | Books Distribution Network       | <i>NA - component not yet started</i>  |          |

## 5. Work Plan for the Third and Fourth Quarter (Oct 08 – Mar 09)

### 5.1 Program Focus will be on:

- Focus on children lagging behind in each school and strengthen the program at the school level.
- Strengthening of the pre-primary centers
- Completing the roll out of and strengthening of the community learning centers
- Complete the library needs study and develop a new strategy for school libraries.

### 5.2 Government Support Strategy Focus will be on:

- Getting state government approval for the pre-primary program
- Getting evaluation results and other studies ready for meeting with the Govt again.

### 5.3 Evaluation Focus will be on:

- Completing analysis of all the baseline evaluations.
- Comparing the various baseline evaluations
- Completing the final internal and external evaluations and comparing them with the baseline.

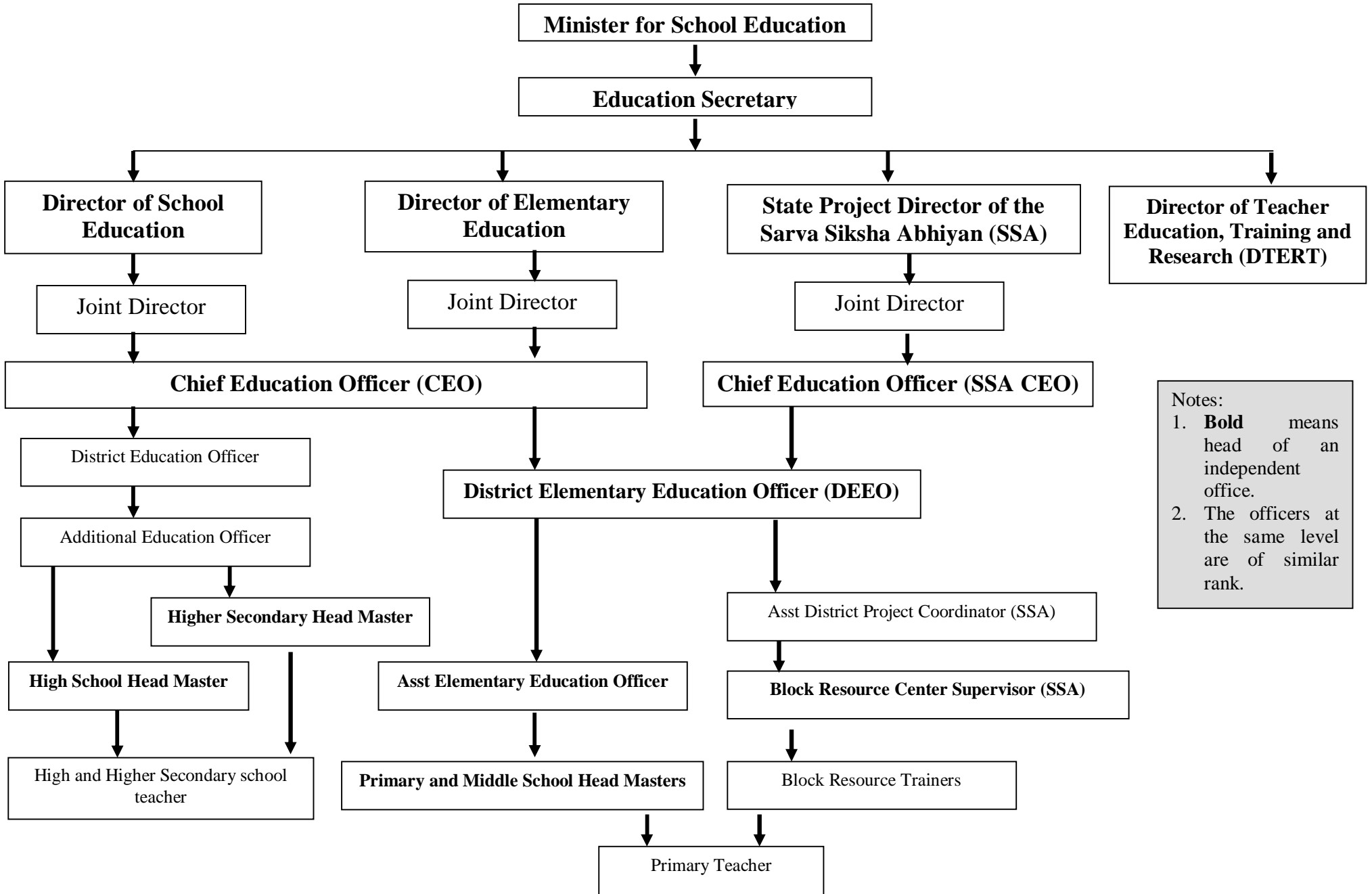
### 5.4 Action Research and Material Development Focus will be on:

- Continuing the English, Advanced Math and Science Programs - developing and testing newer components.
- Development of books and reading comprehension story cards for the school and community libraries.

### 5.5 Organization Development Focus will be on:

- **Internal re-organization:** Thinking about different functions and which of these can be outsourced, how the work can be re-organized and whether we need to hire additional people to handle the day-to-day operations.
- **Training:** Training of district coordinators and state level people on management and information and also on a deeper understanding of the larger purpose of our programs.
- **Information system:** Developing a database for school level data. Continuing the monthly data collection system.
- **Fund-raising:** Getting the co-funding funds on hand in time for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters and finalizing the co-funding proposals sent for Year 2 of project.

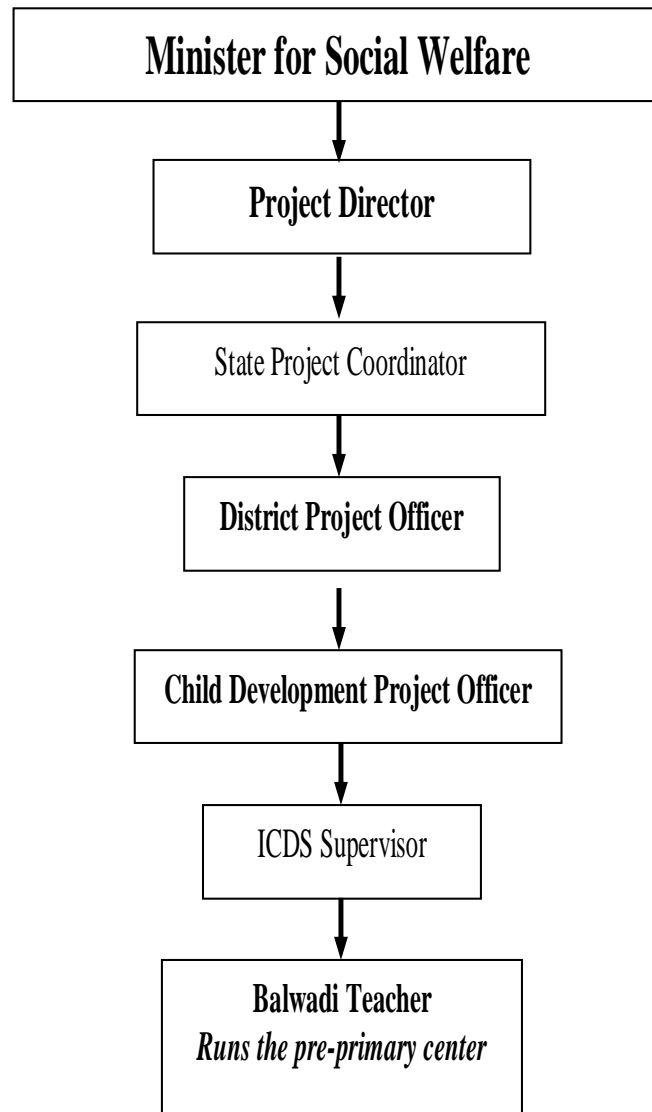
# Annexure 1a: Government Organization Chart - Education Department



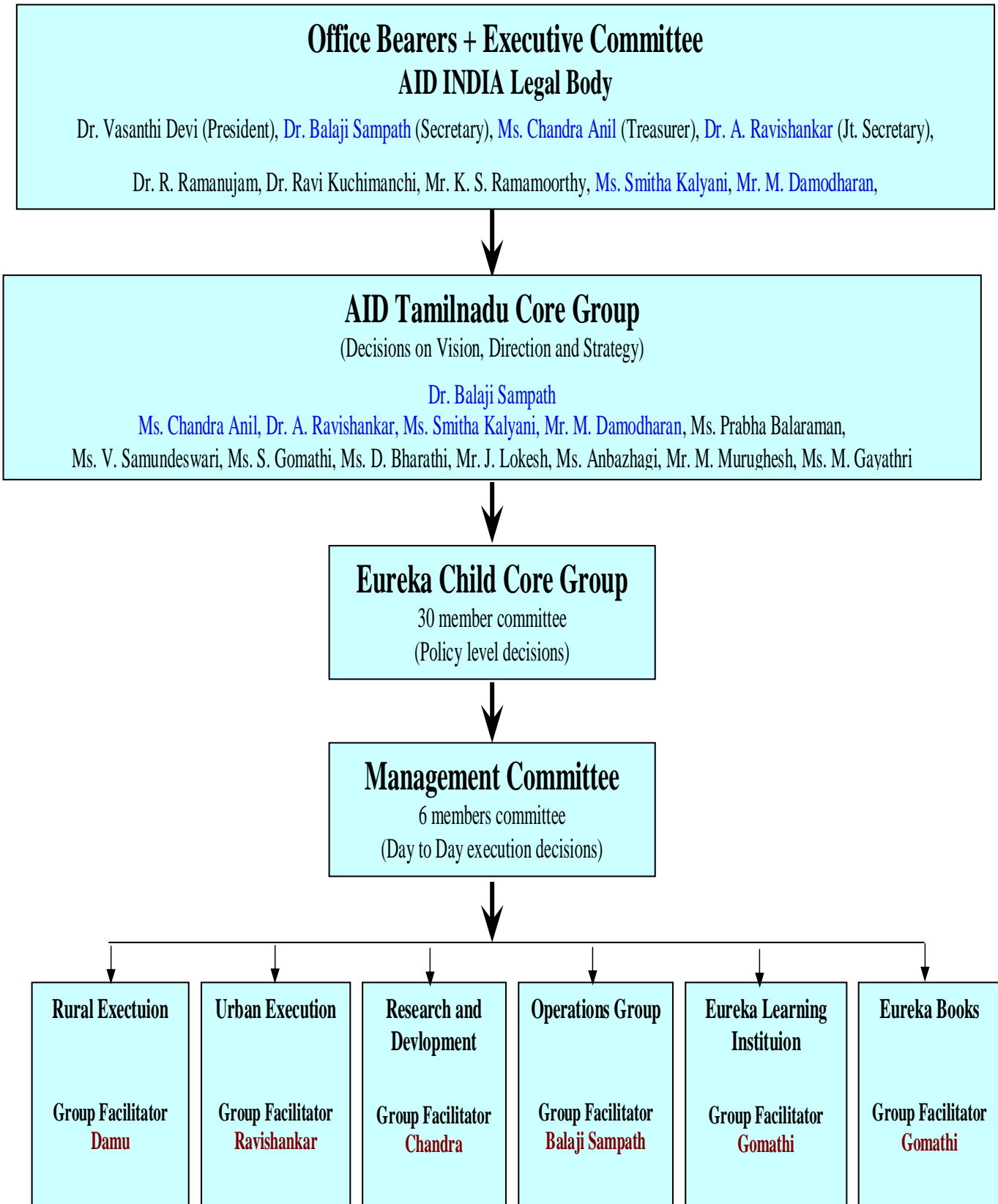
Notes:

- 1. Bold** means head of an independent office.
- 2.** The officers at the same level are of similar rank.

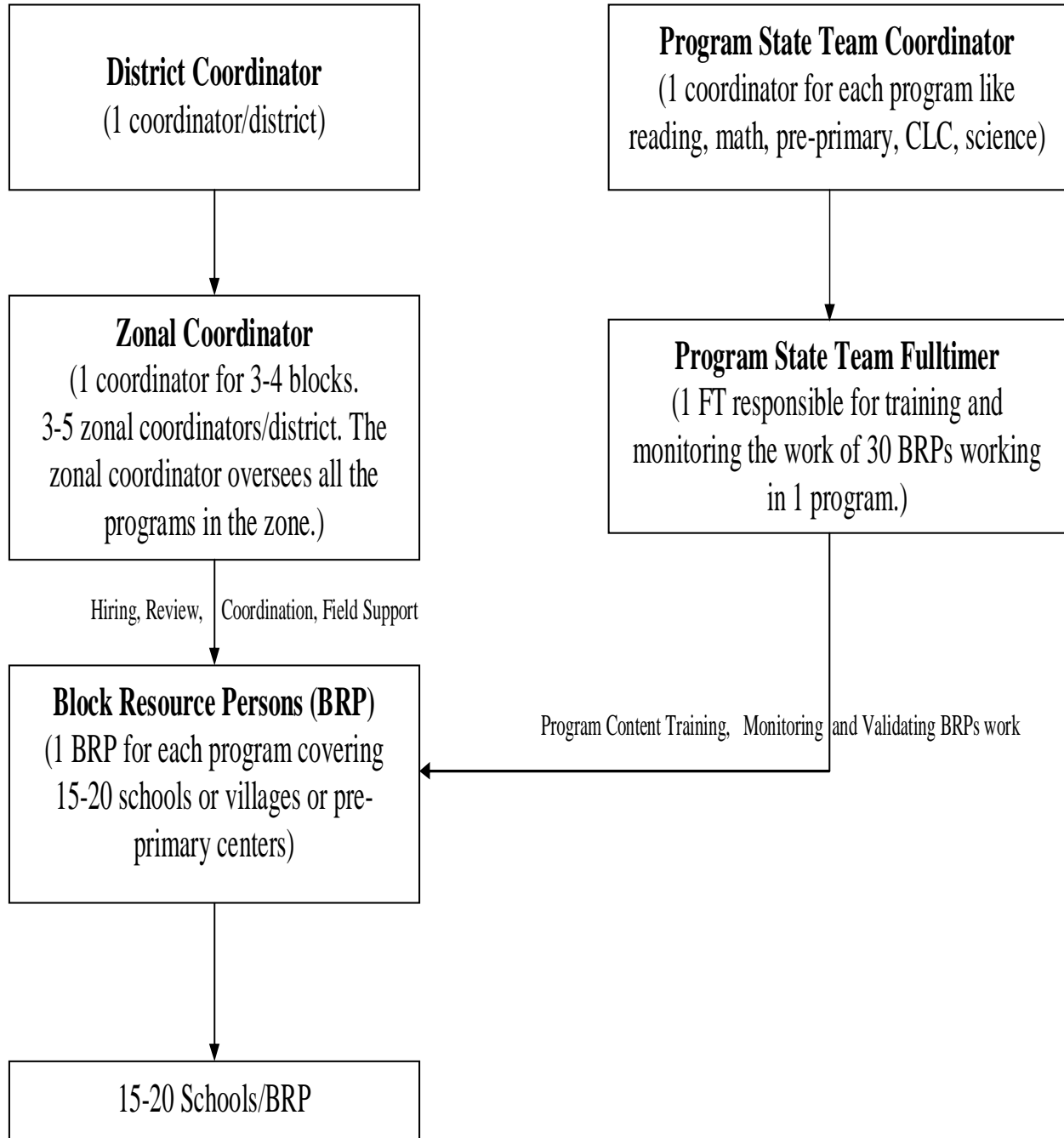
**Annexure 1b: Government Organization Chart - Social Welfare Department**  
(Pre-primary Centers run under the Integrated Child Development Scheme)



## Annexure 2a: AID INDIA Organization Chart



## Annexure 2b: AID INDIA Project Staff Structure



### Annexure 3: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

| <b>Term used</b> | <b>Expansion/Meaning</b>               | <b>Context</b>               |
|------------------|--|------------------------------|
| AA               | Ariviyal Anandam                       | AID India Program            |
| ABL              | Activity Based Learning                | Government Education Program |
| AEEO             | Assistant Elementary Education Officer | Education Department         |
| AEO              | Assistant Education Officer            | Education Department         |
| ALM              | Active Learning Methodology            | Government Education Program |
| ANGANWADI        | Pre School Children's Centre           | ICDS Department              |
| ASER             | Annual Status of Education Report      | Survey Report                |
| BALWADI          | Pre School Children's Centre           | ICDS Department              |
| BRC              | Block Resource Centre                  | SSA                          |
| BRC Supervisor   | Block Resource Centre Supervisor       | SSA                          |
| BRP              | Block Resource Person                  | AID India Staff              |
| BRT              | Block Resource Trainer                 | SSA                          |
| CEO              | Chief Educational Officer              | Education Department         |
| CGM              | Core Group Members                     | AID India                    |
| CLC              | Community Learning Centre              | AID India Program            |
| Coord            | Co-ordinator                           |                              |
| CRC              | Cluster Resource Centre                | SSA                          |
| DEEO             | District Elementary Education Officer  | Education Department         |
| Dept             | Department                             |                              |
| Dist             | District                               |                              |
| ECCG             | Eureka Child Core Group                | AID India                    |
| FT               | Fulltime Staff                         | AID India                    |
| HM               | Headmaster/Headmistress                | School                       |
| ICDS             | Integrated Child Development Scheme    | ICDS Department              |
| JD               | Joint Director                         | SSA                          |
| KP               | Kanakkum Pidikkum                      | AID India Program            |
| KPI              | Key Performance Indicators             |                              |
| MC               | Management Committee                   | AID India                    |
| NCIS             | New Concepts Information Systems       | External Evaluation Agency   |
| PI               | Padippum Inikkum                       | AID India Program            |
| SLM              | Self Learning Materials                | Government Education Program |
| SPD              | State Project Director                 | SSA                          |
| SSA              | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan                  | SSA                          |