UNIT 2 EXISTING POLICIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we have learnt about the significance of gender-aware Planning. In this Unit, we will review the development plans in India. The Indian Constitution guarantees equality for both men and women. But in reality, women lag behind men in several aspects. As we have already seen in MGS-003, a range of development indicators confirm that women do not enjoy equality with men socially, economically and politically. For example literacy rate of males is 82.14 whereas female literacy rate is 65.46 according to the 2011 Census (Provisional data). To address the inequality, Government of India designed, developed and implemented women-targeted programmes in the first five year plan onwards. But formal allocation of funds for women in the Government of India budget started in the eighth plan period (1992-1997) onwards. The international conventions paved the way for incorporating gender concerns in the Indian budget process. This Unit analyzes existing policies and programmes of Government of India from a gender perspective.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- analyze five year plans and programmes of Government of India;
- describe the role of the Ministry of Women and Child Development; and
- distinguish plans and programmes related to women and child development of the Government of India.
2.3 POLICIES FOR WOMEN: A REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN INDIA

Policy planning for women involves formal and informal channels of planning which concern government. The formal channels are legislative, executive and political. The informal groups of policy making are the political parties and NGOs. In India the instrument of planning has been a positive indicator of policy formulation for women. Over the last decades, the planning process has increasingly recognized the need to address gender inequalities. This is clearly reflected in India’s Five Year Plans. Let us study the First Five Year Plan onwards.

Historical Trajectory of Indian Planning: Transition from Women's Component Plans to Gender Budgeting

Over the last two decades, India’s planning process has increasingly recognized the need to address gender inequalities. Formal earmarking of funds for women began with Women’s Component Plans in 1997-98. However, gender sensitivity in allocation of resources started with the Seventh Plan. The plan documents have over the years reflected the evolving trends (Table 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Focal areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Five Year Plan (1951-56)</td>
<td>Welfare of women was focused on along with the welfare of disadvantaged groups like the destitute, disabled, aged, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second to Fifth Five Year Plans</td>
<td>Welfare approach, besides giving priority to women’s education, improved maternal and child health services, supplementary feeding for children and expectant and nursing mothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)</td>
<td>Shift in the approach from ‘welfare’ to ‘development’ of women. Multi-pronged approach with thrust on health, education and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90)</td>
<td>Aimed at raising women’s economic and social status and bringing them into the mainstream of national development. The thrust was on generation of both skilled and unskilled employment through proper education and vocational training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)</td>
<td>Emphasis on the development of women, continued with its strategy of empowering women as agents of social change and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)</td>
<td>Significant changes in the conceptual strategy of planning for women’s development. Attempted a focus on ‘empowerment of women’. The Plan also aimed at ‘convergence of existing services’ available in both women-specific and women-related sectors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Existing Policies, Plans and Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07)</th>
<th>Continues with the strategy of 'empowering women’ as an agent of social change and development through social empowerment, economic empowerment and gender justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12)</td>
<td>Emphasis on gender equity, gender budgeting and creation of an environment free from all forms of violence against women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** A.K. Singh, S.P. Singh & D.S. Sataria (Eds.) Gender Budgeting and Women Empowerment in India, Serials Publication, New Delhi.

Table 2.2 summarizes key perspectives in “gendering” development planning from conceptualization of problems and solutions to identifying specific types of development invention.

**Table 2.2: Perspectives in “gendering” development planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Project Goal</th>
<th>Concept of Problem</th>
<th>Concept of Solution</th>
<th>Type of Developmental Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>Women’s poverty, women’s special needs, women as vulnerable groups, women’s lower socioeconomic status</td>
<td>Provision of support services of health, nutrition, child care</td>
<td>Build maternity clinics, health clinics, immunization, health education, nutrition education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic self reliance</td>
<td>Women as under-employed, unproductive, dependent, lacking in skills</td>
<td>Promote self reliance and interdependence, provide productive skills, encourage women’s productive enterprises</td>
<td>Income generating projects for women, women’s clubs, soap making, school uniform making etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Women as previously overlooked resource in development planning, women as underdeveloped human capital</td>
<td>Identify actual productive roles of women, support women with skills, training and improved technology, invest in previously overlooked resource</td>
<td>Integration of women in development planning, mainstreaming of women’s development, extension advice for women farmers, appropriate technology for women, increase women’s access to factors of production.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equality</th>
<th>Structure of inequality, discrimination against women in schooling, credit, access to land</th>
<th>Equality of opportunities for women in schooling, access to factors of production</th>
<th>Affirmative action to promote equal opportunity, revise development planning so that women are equal partners and beneficiaries in the development process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Unequal gender power relations, combating patriarchy, patriarchal resistance</td>
<td>Conscientization, mobilization, solidarity, collective action</td>
<td>Grassroots projects, support for women’s collective action, project concerned with democratization and political action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.3.1 First Five Year Plans to Fifth Five Year Plans (1951-79)

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) does not say anything about the share of women in development policy. The planners laid stress on promoting education of women through enrolling a larger number of girls in schools. However, in small and village industries, handicrafts and handlooms or even in agriculture nothing was recommended regarding measures to promote women’s participation. In the First Plan women were not considered as an economically productive human resource. The Community Development Programme (CDP) was implemented in the First Five Year Plan. The extension system was provided for addressing special issues of nutrition, health and hygiene. In the CDP women extension workers like mukhiya sevikas and gram sevikas and mahila samajams were organized for welfare and training activities.

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) did not enunciate any new goals of development for women. The Plan contained discussion on the activities of the Central Social Welfare Board and its achievements. The need for promoting girl’s education through educating parents, employing women teachers and discussions on maternal and child health was mentioned. However, there was no mention of women’s involvement in the industry and credit facilities for women in the cooperative or banking sector. In the field of labour a view was expressed on the physical and “biological disabilities” of women at the work place while allotting types of work.

The Third Plan (1961-66) continued to lay emphasis on the welfare aspect of women. Maternal and child welfare services were to be linked up with general health facilities and referral institutions. The adoption of the oral pill, a new method of family planning, was recommended. The Plan advocated the adoption of several recommendations made by Council for Women’s Education for accelerating girl’s elementary education and placed special emphasis on the recruitment, training and housing of women teachers. The plan also emphasized the need to give women special scholarships at the university level and also grants to women’s colleges. However, there was no mention of any special schemes for women in agriculture. The introduction of ‘Ambar Chakras’ for spinning khadi created employment...
opportunities for women of about two hours a day for 200 days a year. The Fourth Plan (1969-74) did not innovate or offer any schemes meant only for women.

In the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), there was a shift in the approach to women’s development as a part of social welfare. The new approach aimed at a proper integration of welfare and development services. Yet, no initiative or policy statements favouring women were presented in the plan.

2.3.2 Sixth Five Year Plan (1981-1985)

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1981-85) was a watershed for women’s development since a separate chapter on women and development was included in the plan document for the first time. It was a landmark in the history of women’s development since women’s development was recognized as one of the development sectors. Taking into consideration the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women, the Plan adopted a multi-disciplinary approach with a three pronged thrust on education, health and employment. The plan reviewed the situation and status of women in general and came to the conclusion that despite legal and constitutional guarantees, women lagged behind men in almost all sectors. The Plan clearly spelt out that economic independence would accelerate improvement in the status of women and suggested the setting up of cells at the district level for increasing women’s participation through self-employment. The Plan stressed that science and technology, research and survey were to be instruments for assessing women’s participation. It referred to the need for increasing enrollment of girls at the elementary level, promotion of functional literacy and encouraging women’s education in backward areas. In the health sector, the Plan suggested the improvement of maternal and child welfare services. Women were also extended skill support and training for employment. The Plan’s insistence on abolition of contract labour and ameliorating the conditions of construction workers was also due to employment of a large number of workers in these sectors.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: a) Use this space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit.

1) “The First and Second Five Year Plans emphasized welfare of women”. Do you agree? Explain briefly.

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2) Which five year plan has incorporated a separate chapter on Women and Development? Give the emphasis areas.

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Gender Awareness

3) Comment on the contributions of the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans in the area of women’s development.

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2.3.3 Seventh Five Year Plan (1987-1992)

The Seventh Five Year Plan (1987-1992) continued with the multi-disciplinary approach evolved during the Sixth Plan. Efforts were made to inculcate confidence among women and to bring about an awareness of their own potential for development and also their rights and privileges. A significant step in this direction was the identification of ‘beneficiary-oriented programmes’ in different development sectors which provide direct benefit to women. Accordingly, 27 beneficiaries-oriented schemes were identified by the Prime Minister’s Office and were specially monitored by the Nodal Department of Women and Child Development (this department is now a ministry). The Plan stressed a greater integration between health and family welfare and strengthening of primary health care which benefitted women. However, the plan did not mention any new programme for women in agriculture and industry but recommended the need for the generation of more skilled and unskilled employment for women through vocational training and proper education for women. Women’s corporations for promoting employment through skill training were planned for every state with centre and state equity participation at 50:50 funding. In rural development, the Plan stated that women had not benefitted from the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) to the extent that they should have. The Plan recommended the need for the expansion of the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas programme (DWCRA). It also commented on the setting up of Krishi Vigyan Kendras and involving more women in them.

2.3.4 Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)

The strategy in the Eighth Plan (1992-97) was to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors do not bypass women and special programmes are implemented to complement the general development programmes. The latter, in turn, should reflect greater gender sensitivity. The flow of benefits to women in education, health and employment need to be monitored. Women must be enabled to function as equal partners and participants in development and not merely as beneficiaries of various schemes. Panchayati Raj institutions will be involved in the designing and implementation of women’s programmes. The erstwhile programme of Maternal and Child Health services was recast as the Child Survival and Safe Motherhood (CSSM) programme and launched in 72 districts during 1992-93. The same was further expanded to cover 466 districts by the end of the Eighth Plan. Under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), the Tetanus Toxoid (TT) vaccination coverage of pregnant women increased from 40 per cent in 1985-86 to 76.4 per cent in 1996-97 and 80.93 percent in 1997-98. Under the Prophylaxis scheme, 119.59 lakh pregnant women were provided with Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) tablets during 1996-97 and 83.59 lakh women during 1997-98. Around 2.11 lakh Dais were trained during 1996-97. Under CSSM training, 22715 medical officers and 92365 para medical workers were trained till September, 1996. As many as 1022 First Referral Units (FRUs) were identified for Emergency Obstetric Care in five States viz. – Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan till 1997. These services of child survival and safe motherhood, as
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revealed by various evaluation studies, contributed significantly to the reduction of Infant Mortality Rate from 79 to 72; Crude Birth Rate from 29.2 to 27.5 and Crude Death Rate from 10 to 9.0 during 1992 to 1996. An extensive network of 2424 Community Health Centres, 22,962 Primary Health Centres and 1,36,815 village level Sub-Centres was in actual operation by 1997 to extend primary health care services including safe motherhood and other family planning services to women in rural areas.

The National Nutrition Policy (NNP), adopted in 1993, made a commitment to reduce iron deficiency anaemia amongst pregnant women, blindness due to Vitamin A deficiency and iodine deficiency disorders. The supplementary nutrition to the expectant and nursing mothers continued through the universalized Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme and about 3 million mothers were receiving supplementary nutrition by the end of the Eighth Plan. Special efforts were also made to impart nutrition education to mothers and women through the programmes of ICDS and Integrated Nutrition Education and thus create awareness, positive attitudes and good practice amongst women/mothers. Above all, the emphasis has been on the removal of the discriminatory feeding practices adversely affecting women and the girl child. In the field of education, emphasis was laid on increasing the participation of women in the educational process. Accordingly, efforts were made towards Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) which resulted in a significant improvement in the enrollment of girls in schools and reduction in the drop-out rates at all levels. Under the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), 422 districts were covered by the end of March, 1998 with a total coverage of 68.57 lakh beneficiaries, of whom 41.14 lakh were women. Another programme, viz., Non-formal Education (NFE), which provided education comparable to formal schooling to those who remained outside the formal schooling system, benefited 24.81 lakh girls at one lakh exclusive NFE Centres for girls by the end of 1995-96. The same increased to 29.80 lakh girls by March, 1998. Mahila Samakhya, a programme for women’s equality and empowerment, operated in 35 districts of 7 States viz Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Assam. This programme addressed many issues like drinking water, health services, managing non-formal education, provision of pre-school centres/creche facilities etc. The village women of Mahila Samakhya were managing 529 NFE Centres and 241 Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) Centres also. The programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education which was launched in 1995 in 40 Low Female Literacy Blocks provided a special boost to enrollment, retention and attendance of girls besides leaving an impact on the nutritional status of the girl children in primary classes. In order to extend support for SC/ST girls to continue their education beyond the middle school level, the number and the intake capacity of the girls’ hostels were increased during the Eighth Plan by opening 602 additional hostels for 51299 Scheduled Caste (SC) girls and 261 hostels for 10440 Scheduled Tribe (ST) girls. During 1997-98, 78 more SC hostels for 12857 girls and 102 ST hostels for the benefit of 10200 girls were sanctioned. Special programmes like ‘Women in Agriculture’ were launched in 1993 to train women farmers having small and marginal holdings in agriculture and its allied programmes like animal husbandry, dairying, horticulture, fisheries, bee-keeping etc. Since the inception of the scheme, 210 Farm Women’s Groups were constituted and training was provided to 4200 Farm Women in seven selected States. Another programme called Training of Women in Agriculture with DANIDA and Dutch assistance imparted training to 1.89 lakh women. In order to assist women in agro-based industries, 6866 Women’s Cooperatives were formed with 100 per cent financial assistance from the Government. Under the programme of Operation Flood, rural women involved in dairy development on cooperative lines were given training in various activities relating to milk production, preservation and cooperative group formation. By the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan, 74,300 Dairy Cooperative Societies were organized. The percentage of women members
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had risen from about 14 per cent, in 1987 to about 20 per cent in 1997 (approximately 19 lakh women members). By the end of 1996, there were 8,171 exclusive Women’s Cooperative Societies (non-credit) with a total membership of 6.93 lakh women. Women’s Milk Cooperatives were leading the movement in many States especially in Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) took several measures to generate more employment opportunities for women and thus increase their capacity to earn. Of the total 60.75 lakh persons employed under various programmes of KVIC, 46 per cent beneficiaries were women. An exclusive national level Training Institute for Women was also set up at Pune during the Eighth Plan. Two schemes viz. Prime Minister’s Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) and Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) in the Small-Scale Industries sector, were designed to help women to develop entrepreneurial skills and ventures of small-scale enterprises for self-employment. Under PMRY, 85012 projects during the Eighth Plan period and 28,467 projects during 1997-98 were sanctioned exclusively for women. Under EDP, 8828 women during Eighth Plan and 3714 women during 1997-98 received training. Training and upgradation of skills for women in the most modern and upcoming trades received high priority in the Plan. The National Vocational Training Institute at NOIDA (UP) and the 10 Regional Vocational Training Institutes for women imparted basic and advanced level vocational training with an annual turnover of 1864 candidates. By February, 1998, there were 223 women’s Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and 235 women’s wings in general/private ITIs with a total sanctioned strength of 36,114 seats. This included the expansion of 66 women’s ITIs and 102 Women’s Wings in General ITIs during the Eighth Plan. Accordingly, the number of women trainees also rose from 9316 in 1991 to 16,265 in 1998. During 1997-98, 93 additional ITIs for women were sanctioned with a total capacity of 15908 women. To alleviate extreme poverty amongst rural women, programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), expanded their activities in the area of generating gainful wage and self-employment opportunities, with 30-40 per cent of benefits reserved for women. During the Eighth Plan, 1.36 lakh Women’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs) were formed benefiting 21.82 lakh women. In 1997-98, 33032 additional SHGs were formed.

In the urban areas, poverty alleviation programmes like Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY), Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) and Prime Minister’s Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP) contributed substantially to improve the quality of life of women slum dwellers. Under NRY, women were given preferential treatment for skill upgradation and were provided assistance for setting up micro-enterprises, wage employment through construction of public assets and shelter upgradation. Similarly, women and child beneficiaries received high priority under the programme of UBSP which sought to provide an integrated package of health care services for mother and child, supplementary nutrition, non-formal/pre-school/adult education; assistance to the handicapped and the destitute. By March, 1997, 5982 Neighbourhood Development Committees comprising primarily the urban poor women were set up in 360 towns for extending basic services to 82 lakh beneficiaries. Similarly, women also received benefits under the Prime Minister’s Integrated Urban Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP) which envisaged a holistic approach to eradicate urban poverty by creating a conducive environment for improving the quality of life of the urban poor. During the Eighth Plan, 10528 cases of self-employment and 18004 cases of shelter upgradation were approved, besides setting up of 1362 Thrift and Credit Societies; 303 Community Kendras; 24698 Neighbouring Groups; 1280 Neighbourhood Committees and 208 Community Development Societies. This programme was replaced by Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana in December, 1997.
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Under the National Social Assistance Programmes, special recognition was given to women-specific needs and a National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) was launched in August, 1995. The NMBS was exclusively aimed at extending financial assistance of ₹ 300/- to pregnant women for the first two live births. Under another scheme of National Family Benefit, women could receive financial assistance of ₹ 5000/- to 10,000/- in the event of the death of the prime bread winner of the family. The scheme of S&T Projects for Women started in 1983, continued to promote Research and Development (R&D) and adoption of technology for reducing the household drudgery of women and thus improve their quality of life, working conditions and opportunities for gainful employment especially in the backward rural areas and urban slums. Of a total of 289 Science and Technology (S&T) projects, which received financial support during the Eighth Plan, 137 projects were meant for women. During 1997-98, 30 additional projects were sanctioned exclusively for women. The Schemes of Hostels for Working Women, Creches for Children of Working/Ailing Mothers, National Creche Fund and Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls extend support services for women. The Scheme of Hostels for Working Women provide safe and cheap accommodation to working women/girls who come to cities/towns in search of employment. During the Eighth Plan, 178 additional hostels were sanctioned benefiting 15532 women and their 1586 dependent children. In 1997-98, 23 more hostels were sanctioned benefiting 2269 women. This has brought the total number of hostels sanctioned since the inception of the programme in 1973 to 811 benefiting about 57,000 working women. The Scheme of Short-Stay Homes continued to provide temporary shelter and rehabilitation to the women and girls in social and moral danger. Upto March 1997, a total of 361 SSHs were sanctioned, benefiting 10830 women/girls, of which 199 new homes were sanctioned during the Eighth Plan period. The setting up of Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) in 1993 fulfilled a long awaited initiative of having a national level mechanism to meet the credit needs of poor and assetless women in the informal sector. Till March 1997, total credit worth ₹ 35.14 crore was sanctioned and a sum of ₹ 20.51 crore disbursed to 1.91 lakh women through the medium of 170 NGOs. About 60000 women received credit during 1997-98. Right from its inception, RMK maintained a recovery rate of 92-95 per cent.

The programme of Mahila Samridhi Yojana (MSY), launched in 1993, promoted self-reliance amongst rural women by encouraging thrift and savings. For a maximum deposit of ₹ 300/- with a lock – in period of one year, the Government provided an incentive of ₹ 75/-. By the end of March 1997, a total of 2.46 crore MSY accounts were opened with a total deposit of ₹ 265.10 crore. Yet another major initiative undertaken during the Eighth Plan was launching of Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) advocating social empowerment through awareness generation and conscientization programmes and economic empowerment through income generation activities on a sustained basis. The scheme was launched in 1995 in 200 ICDS blocks on a pilot basis. By July, 1998, 260 Indira Mahila Block Samities (IMBs) had been registered out of which 140 IMBs were registered during the year 1997-98. Till March, 1998, 28000 self-help groups of women were formed with services of both income generation and awareness generation, of which 21,000 women's groups were formed in 1997-98. An integrated media campaign projecting a positive image of both women and the girl child through electronic media was undertaken extensively through a large number of TV spots, quickies, documentary films etc. Radio programmes with positive messages about the girl child and women were also broadcast on a regular basis. The Central Social Welfare Board organized more than 6000 Awareness Generation Camps during 1992-96 to make 2.10 lakh rural women conscious of their rights and privileges, besides imparting knowledge about community health and hygiene, technology application, environment, etc. The National Commission for Women, a statutory body set up in 1992 to safeguard the rights and interests of women, reviewed both women-specific and women-related legislations, investigated thousands of individual complaints/atrocities and
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initiated remedial action wherever possible. It also set up Parivarik Mahila Lok Adalats and extended speedy justice to approximately 7000 women. The other issues taken up by the Commission during the Plan period included welfare of women prisoners and under-trials languishing in jails; women and children involved in the sex trade; reservation for women in Parliament and State Legislatures, Anti-Arrack movements etc.

In the year 1992, government of India passed 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments act to provide 33.3 per cent reservation to women in urban and rural local bodies. In the course MGS-001 Unit 15 titled “Gender Mainstreaming in Policy research programmes and schemes” discussed local body reservation and its implications.

Box 2.1

India’s Commitment in 4th World Conference for Women – Beijing Platform for Action

India accepted the Platform for Action without reservation. Additional commitments made by the Government of India in 1995 to promote gender equality included a promise to increase the education budget to 6% of GDP; universalization of the mother and child care programmes and the formulation and operationalization of a National Policy on Women; setting up a Commission for Women’s Rights to act as a public defender of Women’s Human Rights; and institutionalisation of a national level mechanism to monitor the implementation of the PFA. The policy framework within which efforts are being made to ensure gender equality has been spelt out by the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) and the Tenth Plan. The effort is to bring gender justice and make de jure equality into de facto equality. Several state governments have also formulated policies for women’s empowerment.


2.3.5 Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002)

Special initiatives and achievements for the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) include adoption of Women’s Component Plan (WCP) to ensure that benefits from other developmental sectors do not by-pass women and not less than 30 per cent of funds/benefits flow to them from all the women-related sectors. Review of the progress of the WCP during the Ninth Plan reveals that funds flowing from one of the women-related Departments (viz. Family Welfare) was as high as 70 per cent of its Gross Budgetary Support of the Ninth Plan; launching of ‘Swa-Shakti’ to create an enabling environment for empowerment of women through setting up of self-reliant Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and developing linkages with lending institutions to ensure women’s access to credit facilities for income-generation activities (1998), ‘Stree Shakti Puraskars’ instituted for the first time in the history of women’s development to honour five distinguished women annually for their outstanding contribution to the upliftment and empowerment of women; setting up of a Task Force on Women under the Chairpersonship of Shri K.C.Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission to review the existing women-specific and women-related legislations and suggest enactment of new legislations or amendments, wherever necessary. The Task Force also suggested a thematic programme for celebrating the year ‘2001 as Women’s Empowerment Year’, besides reviewing 22 existing legislations; introduction of Gender Budgeting to attain more effective targeting of public expenditure and to offset any undesirable gender-specific consequences of previous budgetary measures (2000-01). Adoption of a National Policy for Empowerment of Women to eliminate all types of discrimination against
women and to ensure gender justice, besides empowering women both socially and economically; celebration of the Year 2001 as ‘Women’s Empowerment Year’ to create awareness generation, remove negative thinking, besides building up confidence in women through the processes of conscientization so that they can take their rightful place in the mainstream of the nation’s social, political and economic life (2001). Recasting of Indira Mahila Yojana as ‘Swayamсидha’ – an integrated programme for empowerment of women through a major strategy of converging the services available in all the women-related programmes besides organizing women into SHGs for undertaking various entrepreneurial ventures (2001); Launching of ‘Swadhar’ to extend rehabilitation services for ‘Women in Difficult Circumstances’; introduction of a Bill on Domestic Violence against Women (Prevention) to eliminate all forms of domestic violence against women and the girl child (2002).

Table 2.1 Women’s Component Plan: Some Facts and Figures (Rs. in millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Ministry/Department</th>
<th>Ninth Plan (GBS)</th>
<th>Flow to WCP</th>
<th>Percent (GBS to WCP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Women-specific(Nodal Department)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Women and Child Development</strong></td>
<td>78104.2</td>
<td>78104.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Women-related Ministries/Departments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>51181.9</td>
<td>25812.5</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Family Welfare</td>
<td>151202.0</td>
<td>105412.6</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Indian Systems of Medicine &amp; Homeopathy</td>
<td>2663.5</td>
<td>1331.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>203816.4</td>
<td>102124.4</td>
<td>50.1</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>8991.2</td>
<td>3008.5</td>
<td>33.5</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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Gender Awareness

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Included in the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

The total Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) of all Ministries and Departments for the Ninth Plan was Rs. 2,039,820 million. WCP as a percentage of the total GBS of the GOI for the Ninth Plan works out to 25.5.

Box 2.2 Women’s Empowerment Policy 2001

Progress towards gender equality and women’s empowerment in India has been built upon strong commitments by the government and unflagging effort by the women’s movement. Gender inequality arising out of social norms and cultural traditions has been addressed through a range of direct and indirect measures and the aim of the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) has been to bring about social change – changes in attitudes towards women and women’s empowerment. The policy itself reflects the aspirations of women and the women’s movement. This document presents an overview of the achievements of the last ten years, with special focus on the period 2000-2005, as well as the remaining gaps and challenges which will guide future actions. India accepted the Platform for Action without reservation. The policy framework within which efforts are being made to ensure gender equality has been spelt out by the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) and the Tenth Plan. The effort is to bring gender justice and make de jure equality into de facto equality. Several state governments have also formulated a policy for women’s empowerment.

The policy aims at:

- The advancement, development and empowerment of women in all spheres of life.
- Introduction of more responsive judicial legal systems that are sensitive to women’s needs.
- Ensuring women’s equality in power sharing and active participation in decision-making.
- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.
- Comprehensive economic and social empowerment of women.
- Strengthening and formation of relevant institutional mechanisms.
- Partnership with community-based organizations.
- Implementation of international obligations/commitments and cooperation at the international, regional and sub-regional levels.
2.3.6 Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007)

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) advocated the following measures: National Plan of Action to operationalize the Women’s Empowerment Policy; National Policy and Charter for Children; National Commission for Children to ensure protection of their rights; National Nutrition Mission; Pilot project for providing food grains to under-nourished pregnant and lactating mothers and to adolescent girls. In pursuance of the avowed objective of empowering women as agents of socio-economic change, the National Policy on Empowerment of Women was adopted in April, 2001. On this basis, the National Plan of Action, is being implemented which includes the following strategies: (a) To create an enabling environment for women to exercise their rights both within and outside their homes; (b) to reserve one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies; (c) to adopt a special strategy for the Women’s Component Plan to ensure that at least 30% of funds and benefits flow to women from all development sectors; (d) to organize women into self-help groups as a mark of the beginning of empowering them; (e) to accord high priority and ensure easy access to maternal and child health services; (f) to initiate steps for eliminating gender bias in all educational programmes; (g) to institute plans for free education of girls upto the college levels including professional levels; (h) to equip women with necessary skills in modern upcoming trades which would make them economically independent and self-reliant; and (i) to increase women’s access to credit through setting up of Development Bank for women entrepreneurs in the small and tiny sectors.

Box 2.3

Monitorable Targets set by the Tenth Plan

- Reduce gender gaps in literacy and wage rates by at least 50% by 2007
- Reduce maternal mortality rate to 2 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 1 by 2012
- Reduce infant mortality rate to 45 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 28 by 2012
- Reduce poverty ratio by 5% by 2007 and by 15% by 2012
- Reduce the decadal rate of population growth between 2001 and 2011 to 16.2%
- Ensure that all children are in school by 2003 and that all children complete 5 years of schooling by 2007
- Increase in literacy rates to 75% within the Plan period
- Ensure that all villages have sustained access to potable drinking water within the plan period
- Provide gainful and high quality employment to the addition to the labour force over the Tenth Plan period.
- Increase forest and tree cover to 25% by 2007 and 33% by 2012
- Clean all major polluted rivers by 2007 and the other river stretches notified by the Government by 2012

2.3.7 Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)

Responding to the need for promoting gender equity, the roadmap for the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2011) included a five-fold agenda: (i) Ensuring economic empowerment; (ii) Engineering social empowerment; (iii) Enabling political empowerment; (iv) Implementing women-related legislations; and (v) Creating institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and strengthening delivery mechanisms.

The Eleventh Plan recognizes that women and children are not homogeneous categories; they belong to diverse castes, classes, communities, economic groups and are located within a range of geographic and development zones. Consequently, some groups are more vulnerable than others. Mapping and addressing the specific deprivations that arise from these multiple locations is essential for the success of planned interventions. Thus, apart from the general programme interventions, special targeted interventions catering to the differential needs of these groups will be undertaken during the Eleventh Plan.

The gender perspectives incorporated in the Plan are the outcome of extensive consultations with different stakeholders, including a group of feminist economists. In the Eleventh Plan, for the first time, women are recognized not just as equal citizens but as agents of economic and social growth. The approach to gender equity is based on the recognition that interventions in favour of women must be multi-pronged and they must: (i) provide women with basic entitlements; (ii) address the reality of globalization and its impact on women by prioritizing economic empowerment; (iii) ensure an environment free from all forms of violence against women (VAW) – physical, economic, social, psychological etc; (iv) ensure the participation and adequate representation of women at the highest policy levels, particularly in Parliament and State assemblies; and (v) strengthen existing institutional mechanisms and create new ones for gender mainstreaming and effective policy implementation. The Plan lays down six monitorable targets: (1) Raise the sex ratio for age group 0-6 from 927 in 2001 to 935 by 2011-12 and to 950 by 2016-17; (2) Ensure that at least 33% of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are women and girl children; (3) Reduce IMR from 57 to 28 and MMR from 3.01 to one per 1000 live births; (4) Reduce malnutrition among children of age group 0-3 years to half its present level; (5) Reduce anaemia among women and girls by 50% by the end of the Eleventh Plan; and (6) Reduce dropout rate for primary and secondary schooling by 10% for both girls as well as boys.

(http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planvel/fiveyr/11th/11_v2/11th_vol2.pdf)

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: a) Use this space given below to answer the questions.
   b) Compare your answers with the one given at the end of the Unit:

1) Write a short note on the women’s component plan.

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2) What is Swayamsidha?

2.4 NODAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The erstwhile Department of Women and Child Development (now upgraded to Ministry of Women and Child Development) constitutes the National Machinery for Empowering Women in the country. The Ministry is responsible for mainstreaming gender in national development by attempting to raise the overall status of women on par with that of men. The Ministry, in its nodal capacity, formulates policies, plans and programmes and facilitates enactments/amendments/legislations affecting women and guides/co-ordinates/streamlines the efforts of both Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations working to improve the status of women in the country. The programmes of the Ministry include: continuing education and training; employment and income generation; welfare and support services and gender sensitization and awareness generation. These programmes of an innovative nature play the role of being both supplementary and complementary to other general development programmes in the sectors of health, education, labour and employment, rural and urban development etc.

A most significant national level achievement for women’s development is the setting up of the National Commission for Women through an Act. The Commission has the responsibility to monitor that the safeguards provided to women under the Constitution and the special laws enacted by the parliament for the protection and benefit of women are implemented effectively. Women’s legal literacy programmes took a new dimension through the Legal Literacy Manual of Women. The major objective of the Manual is to create awareness about the existing laws that concern women i.e. working women, contract labour, bonded labour, Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, marriage and divorce, dowry and rape, kidnapping and abduction. Another achievement in the line of action towards the betterment of the status of the girl child is the formulation of the SAARC Decade of the Girl Child. The formation of a National Credit Fund for Women targeting the poorest of the poor and assetless women who need credit but are not served by banks, can also be considered a notable achievement. In the history of demographic records, for the first time, an attempt was made to capture women’s work in the informal sector in the 1991 census. It was a joint effort of the erstwhile nodal Department Of Women and Child, the office of the Registrar General of India and of the United Nations Fund for Women.

The National Policy for the empowerment of Women (2001) has been placed at Annexure 1 of this unit.

2.4 SUMMING UP

This Unit broadly analyzes India’s Five Year Plans. Economic Planning is considered in the context of the effective and optimal utilization of the resources. The planning process was started in India after the establishment of the Planning Commission in the year 1950. The first three Five Year Plans concentrated more on welfare of women like establishment of the Social Welfare Board and implementing schemes for women, children and the marginalized. After formal
Gender Awareness

 earmarking of funds in 1997-98 in the form of the Women’s Component Plan, gender sensitivity in allocation of resources started. The Seventh Plan introduced 27 beneficiary oriented schemes. The Eighth Plan recognized the need for separate flow of funds for the development of women. The Ninth Plan adopted the women’s component plan as a strategy. The Tenth Plan also committed for budgetary allocation and implemented the Women’s Component Plan and Gender Budgeting. The Eleventh Plan Committed for Gender Equity and worked towards it. This clearly shows that Government of India was also committed to bring gender equality and equity.

2.5 GLOSSARY

Central Social Welfare Board : The Central Social Welfare Board came into being in an era when welfare services for the disadvantaged sections of society were not systematized and the welfare infrastructure was not yet a formal construct. In the newly independent nation, visionaries such as Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Pt. Govind Vallabh Pant and Sh. C.D. Deshmukh were preparing the blueprint for the holistic development of all sections of the community against the background of Partition and communal disharmony. Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh, veteran social worker, parliamentarian and member of the Planning Commission was entrusted the responsibility of standing at the helm of the nascent Board that was perceived as an interface between the resources of the Government and the energy and outreach of the voluntary sector. Voluntary effort in the field of welfare in India during the early fifties was largely an amorphous and individualistic attempt to provide ‘fire fighting’ measures in areas where extreme marginalization was taking place. In such a perspective the first aim of the Board was to promote voluntarism and the setting up of voluntary organizations. This could not be carried out without any preliminary baseline data that would provide a direction and purpose to the implementation of welfare programmes. In other words, the early days of the Board in an uncharted territory were a time of determining the felt needs of society and formulating programmes to address those needs, while simultaneously creating an environment of voluntarism at every level so that voluntary organizations that could implement these programmes could be established. This seemingly impossible Herculean task was given to the founder Chairperson of the Board, Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh. Over the years, the Board has been steadily evolving into a mature instrument of social change that has its anchor in the changing realities of our society. In order to maintain the topicality of its schemes and programmes and to remain responsive to the needs of society, the Board has been revamping and redesigning or formulating programmes that best fulfill emerging requirements.

Krishi Vigyan Kendras : Based on the recommendation of the Education Commission (1964-6), Consideration/review by the Planning Commission and Inter-Ministerial Committee and further recommendation by the committee headed by Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta appointed by ICAR in 1973 the idea of establishment of Farm Science Centres (Krishi Vigyan Kendras) was evolved.
The first KVK, on a pilot basis, was established in 1974 at Pondicherry under the administrative control of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. In 1976-77, the Planning Commission approved the proposal of the ICAR to establish 18 KVKs during the Fifth Five Year Plan. With the growing demand for more such Kendras, 12 more KVKs were approved by the Governing Body of the Council in 1979 and established in the same year from Agricultural Produce Cess Fund (AP Cess). Pending clearance of the Sixth Five Year Plan scheme on KVK by the Planning Commission, 14 additional KVKs were again approved by the Council in 1981, which were established during 1982-83 from AP Cess Fund. The activities of KVKs include:

- On-farm testing to identify the location specificity of agricultural technologies under various farming systems.
- Conducting frontline demonstrations to establish its production potentials on the farmers’ fields.
- Training of farmers to update their knowledge and skills in modern agricultural technologies and training of extension personnel to orient them in the frontier areas of technology development, functioning resource and knowledge centres of agricultural technology for supporting initiatives of public, private and voluntary sector for improving the agricultural economy of the district.
- Creating awareness about improved technology, a large number of extension activities will be taken up. The seeds and planting materials produced by the KVKs will also be made available to the farmers.

2.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress  Exercise 1

1) The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) did not enunciate any new goals of development for women. The Plan contained discussion on the activities of the Central Social Welfare Board and its achievements. The need for promoting girl’s education through educating parents, employing women teachers and discussions on maternal and child health was mentioned. However, there was no mention of women’s involvement in the industry and credit facilities for women in the cooperative or banking sector. In the field of labour a view was expressed on the physical and “biological disabilities” of women at the work place while allotting types of work.

2) Sixth Five Year Plan

3) Welfare Aspect
1) Special initiatives and achievements for the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) include adoption of Women’s Component Plan (WCP) to ensure that benefits from other developmental sectors do not bypass women and not less than 30 per cent of funds/benefits flow to them from all the women-related sectors.

2) Recasting of Indira Mahila Yojana as ‘Swayamsidha’ – an integrated programme for empowerment of women through a major strategy of converging the services available in all the women-related programmes besides organizing women into SHGs for undertaking various entrepreneurial ventures.

2.7 REFERENCES


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2.8 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1) Discuss the Schemes and Programmes implemented in the Eighth Five Year Plan.

2) Briefly explain the role played by Ministry of Women and Child Development for developing and implementing women-related schemes and programmes.
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 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.

1.3 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.

1.4 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.

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

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

1.7 However, there still exists a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes, and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other. This has been analyzed extensively in the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, “Towards Equality”, 1974 and highlighted in the National Perspective Plan for Women, 1988-2000, the Shramshakti Report, 1988 and the Platform for Action, Five Years After – An assessment”.

1.8 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.

1.9 The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal and formal norms, and practices.
1.10 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**

1.11 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 healthcare, 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.

**Policy Prescriptions**

**Judicial Legal Systems**

Legal-judicial system will be made more responsive and gender sensitive to women’s needs, especially in cases of domestic violence and personal assault. New laws will be enacted and existing laws reviewed to ensure that justice is quick and the punishment meted out to the culprits is commensurate with the severity of the offence.

2.2 At the initiative of and with the full participation of all stakeholders including community and religious leaders, the Policy would aim to encourage changes in personal laws such as those related to marriage, divorce, maintenance and guardianship so as to eliminate discrimination against women.

2.3 The evolution of property rights in a patriarchal system has contributed to the subordinate status of women. The Policy would aim to encourage changes in laws relating to ownership of property and inheritance by evolving consensus in order to make them gender just.
Gender Awareness

Decision Making

3.1 Women’s equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making, including decision making in political process at all levels will be ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment. All measures will be taken to guarantee women equal access to and full participation in decision making bodies at every level, including the legislative, executive, judicial, corporate, statutory bodies, as also the advisory Commissions, Committees, Boards, Trusts etc. Affirmative action such as reservations/quotas, including in higher legislative bodies, will be considered whenever necessary on a time bound basis. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in the Development Process

4.1 Policies, programmes and systems will be established to ensure mainstreaming of women’s perspectives in all developmental processes, as catalysts, participants and recipients. Wherever there are gaps in policies and programmes, women specific interventions would be undertaken to bridge these. Coordinating and monitoring mechanisms will also be devised to assess from time to time the progress of such mainstreaming mechanisms. Women’s issues and concerns as a result will specially be addressed and reflected in all concerned laws, sectoral policies, plans and programmes of action.

Economic Empowerment of women

Poverty Eradication

5.1 Since women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line and are very often in situations of extreme poverty, given the harsh realities of intra-household and social discrimination, macro economic policies and poverty eradication programmes will specifically address the needs and problems of such women. There will be improved implementation of programmes which are already women oriented with special targets for women. Steps will be taken for mobilization of poor women and convergence of services, by offering them a range of economic and social options, along with necessary support measures to enhance their capabilities.

Micro Credit

5.2 In order to enhance women’s access to credit for consumption and production, the establishment of new, and strengthening of existing micro-credit mechanisms and micro-finance institution will be undertaken so that the outreach of credit is enhanced. Other supportive measures would be taken to ensure adequate flow of credit through extant financial institutions and banks, so that all women below poverty line have easy access to credit.

Women and Economy

5.3 Women’s perspectives will be included in designing and implementing macroeconomic and social policies by institutionalizing their participation in such processes. Their contribution to socio-economic development as producers and workers will be recognized in the formal and informal sectors (including home based workers) and appropriate policies relating to employment and to her working conditions will be drawn up. Such measures could include:

- Reinterpretation and redefinition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary e.g. in the Census records, to reflect women’s contribution as producers and workers.
- Preparation of satellite and national accounts.
- Development of appropriate methodologies for undertaking (i) and (ii) above.
Globalization

Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women’s equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated fully. However, from the micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development, it is evident that there is a need for re-framing policies for access to employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which may flow from the globalization process.

Women and Agriculture

5.5 In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. will be expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector.

Women and Industry

5.6 The important role played by women in electronics, information technology and food processing and agro industry and textiles has been crucial to the development of these sectors. They would be given comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services to participate in various industrial sectors.

5.7 Women at present cannot work in night shift in factories even if they wish to. Suitable measures will be taken to enable women to work on the night shift in factories. This will be accompanied with support services for security, transportation etc.

Support Services

5.8 The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled will be expanded and improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life. Women-friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process.

Social Empowerment of Women

Education

6.1 Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area. Sectoral time targets in existing policies will be achieved, with a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. Gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination.
6.2 A holistic approach to women’s health which includes both nutrition and health services will be adopted and special attention will be given to the needs of women and the girl at all stages of the life cycle. The reduction of infant mortality and maternal mortality, which are sensitive indicators of human development, is a priority concern. This policy reiterates the national demographic goals for Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) set out in the National Population Policy 2000. Women should have access to comprehensive, affordable and quality health care. Measures will be adopted that take into account the reproductive rights of women to enable them to exercise informed choices, their vulnerability to sexual and health problems together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases such as malaria, TB, and water borne diseases as well as hypertension and cardio-pulmonary diseases. The social, developmental and health consequences of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases will be tackled from a gender perspective.

6.3 To effectively meet problems of infant and maternal mortality, and early marriage the availability of good and accurate data at micro level on deaths, birth and marriages is required. Strict implementation of registration of births and deaths would be ensured and registration of marriages would be made compulsory.

6.4 In accordance with the commitment of the National Population Policy (2000) to population stabilization, this Policy recognizes the critical need of men and women to have access to safe, effective and affordable methods of family planning of their choice and the need to suitably address the issues of early marriages and spacing of children. Interventions such as spread of education, compulsory registration of marriage and special programmes like BSY should impact on delaying the age of marriage so that by 2010 child marriages are eliminated.

6.5 Women’s traditional knowledge about health care and nutrition will be recognized through proper documentation and its use will be encouraged. The use of Indian and alternative systems of medicine will be enhanced within the framework of overall health infrastructure available for women.

Nutrition

6.6 In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all the three critical stages viz., infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase, focussed attention would be paid to meeting the nutritional needs of women at all stages of the life cycle. This is also important in view of the critical link between the health of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women with the health of infant and young children. Special efforts will be made to tackle the problem of macro and micro nutrient deficiencies especially amongst pregnant and lactating women as it leads to various diseases and disabilities.

6.7 Intra-household discrimination in nutritional matters vis-à-vis girls and women will be sought to be ended through appropriate strategies. Widespread use of nutrition education would be made to address the issues of intra-household imbalances in nutrition and the special needs of pregnant and lactating women. Women’s participation will also be ensured in the planning, superintendence and delivery of the system.
Drinking Water and Sanitation

6.8 Special attention will be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas and urban slums. Women's participation will be ensured in the planning, delivery and maintenance of such services.

Housing and Shelter

6.9 Women’s perspectives will be included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter both in rural and urban areas. Special attention will be given for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation for women including single women, heads of households, working women, students, apprentices and trainees.

Environment

6.10 Women will be involved and their perspectives reflected in the policies and programmes for environment, conservation and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women’s participation will be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation. The vast majority of rural women still depend on the locally available non-commercial sources of energy such as animal dung, crop waste and fuel wood. In order to ensure the efficient use of these energy resources in an environmental friendly manner, the Policy will aim at promoting the programmes of non-conventional energy resources. Women will be involved in spreading the use of solar energy, biogas, smokeless chulahs and other rural application so as to have a visible impact of these measures in influencing eco system and in changing the life styles of rural women.

Science and Technology

6.11 Programmes will be strengthened to bring about a greater involvement of women in science and technology. These will include measures to motivate girls to take up science and technology for higher education and also ensure that development projects with scientific and technical inputs involve women fully. Efforts to develop a scientific temper and awareness will also be stepped up. Special measures would be taken for their training in areas where they have special skills like communication and information technology. Efforts to develop appropriate technologies suited to women’s needs as well as to reduce their drudgery will be given a special focus too.

Women in Difficult Circumstances

6.12 In recognition of the diversity of women’s situations and in acknowledgement of the needs of specially disadvantaged groups, measures and programmes will be undertaken to provide them with special assistance. These groups include women in extreme poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations, women affected by natural calamities, women in less developed regions, the disabled widows, elderly women, single women in difficult circumstances, women heading households, those displaced from employment, migrants, women who are victims of marital violence, deserted women and prostitutes etc.

Violence against women

7.1 All forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate its incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance will be created and
stressed for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work place and customs like dowry; for the rehabilitation of the victims of violence and for taking effective action against the perpetrators of such violence. A special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls.

Rights of the Girl Child

8.1 All forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive within and outside the family. These would relate specifically to strict enforcement of laws against prenatal sex selection and the practices of female foeticide, female infanticide, child marriage, child abuse and child prostitution etc. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of the girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas relating to food and nutrition, health and education, and in vocational education. In implementing programmes for eliminating child labour, there will be a special focus on girl children.

Mass Media

9.1 Media will be used to portray images consistent with human dignity of girls and women. The Policy will specifically strive to remove demeaning, degrading and negative conventional stereotypical images of women and violence against women. Private sector partners and media networks will be involved at all levels to ensure equal access for women particularly in the area of information and communication technologies. The media would be encouraged to develop codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self regulatory mechanisms to remove gender stereotypes and promote balanced portrayals of women and men.

Operational Strategies

Action Plans

10.1 All Central and State Ministries will draw up time bound Action Plans for translating the Policy into a set of concrete actions, through a participatory process of consultation with Centre/State Departments of Women and Child Development and National/State Commissions for Women. The Plans will specifically including the following:

i) Measurable goals to be achieved by 2010.

ii) Identification and commitment of resources.

iii) Responsibilities for implementation of action points.

iv) Structures and mechanisms to ensure efficient monitoring, review and gender impact assessment of action points and policies.

v) Introduction of a gender perspective in the budgeting process.

10.2 In order to support better planning and programme formulation and adequate allocation of resources, Gender Development Indices (GDI) will be developed by networking with specialized agencies. These could be analyzed and studied in depth. Gender auditing and development of evaluation mechanisms will also be undertaken along side.
10.3 Collection of gender disaggregated data by all primary data collecting agencies of the Central and State Governments as well as Research and Academic Institutions in the Public and Private Sectors will be undertaken. Data and information gaps in vital areas reflecting the status of women will be sought to be filled in by these immediately. All Ministries/Corporations/Banks and financial institutions etc will be advised to collect, collate, disseminate and maintain/publish data related to programmes and benefits on a gender disaggregated basis. This will help in meaningful planning and evaluation of policies.

Institutional Mechanisms

11.1 Institutional mechanisms, to promote the advancement of women, which exist at the Central and State levels, will be strengthened. These will be through interventions as may be appropriate and will relate to, among others, provision of adequate resources, training and advocacy skills to effectively influence macro-policies, legislation, programmes etc. to achieve the empowerment of women.

11.2 National and State Councils will be formed to oversee the operationalisation of the Policy on a regular basis. The National Council will be headed by the Prime Minister and the State Councils by the Chief Ministers and be broad in composition having representatives from the concerned Departments/Ministries, National and State Commissions for Women, Social Welfare Boards, representatives of Non-Government Organizations, Women’s Organisations, Corporate Sector, Trade Unions, financing institutions, academics, experts and social activists etc. These bodies will review the progress made in implementing the Policy twice a year. The National Development Council will also be informed of the progress of the programme undertaken under the policy from time to time for advice and comments.

11.3 National and State Resource Centres on women will be established with mandates for collection and dissemination of information, undertaking research work, conducting surveys, implementing training and awareness generation programmes, etc. These Centers will link up with Women’s Studies Centres and other research and academic institutions through suitable information networking systems.

11.4 While institutions at the district level will be strengthened, at the grass-roots, women will be helped by Government through its programmes to organize and strengthen into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) at the Anganwadi/Village/Town level. The women’s groups will be helped to institutionalize themselves into registered societies and to federate at the Panchyat/Municipal level. These societies will bring about synergistic implementation of all the social and economic development programmes by drawing resources made available through Government and Non-Government channels, including banks and financial institutions and by establishing a close Interface with the Panchayats/Municipalities.

Resource Management

12.1 Availability of adequate financial, human and market resources to implement the Policy will be managed by concerned Departments, financial credit institutions and banks, private sector, civil society and other connected institutions. This process will include:

a) Assessment of benefits flowing to women and resource allocation to the programmes relating to them through an exercise of gender budgeting. Appropriate changes in policies will be made to optimize benefits to women under these schemes;
b) Adequate resource allocation to develop and promote the policy outlined earlier based on (a) above by concerned Departments.

c) Developing synergy between personnel of Health, Rural Development, Education and Women & Child Development Department at field level and other village level functionaries’

d) Meeting credit needs by banks and financial credit institutions through suitable policy initiatives and development of new institutions in coordination with the Department of Women & Child Development.

12.2 The strategy of Women’s Component Plan adopted in the Ninth Plan of ensuring that not less than 30% of benefits/funds flow to women from all Ministries and Departments will be implemented effectively so that the needs and interests of women and girls are addressed by all concerned sectors. The Department of Women and Child Development being the nodal Ministry will monitor and review the progress of the implementation of the Component Plan from time to time, in terms of both quality and quantity in collaboration with the Planning Commission.

12.3 Efforts will be made to channelize private sector investments too, to support programmes and projects for advancement of women

Legislation

13.1 The existing legislative structure will be reviewed and additional legislative measures taken by identified departments to implement the Policy. This will also involve a review of all existing laws including personal, customary and tribal laws, subordinate legislation, related rules as well as executive and administrative regulations to eliminate all gender discriminatory references. The process will be planned over a time period 2000-2003. The specific measures required would be evolved through a consultation process involving civil society, National Commission for Women and Department of Women and Child Development. In appropriate cases the consultation process would be widened to include other stakeholders too.

13.2 Effective implementation of legislation would be promoted by involving civil society and community. Appropriate changes in legislation will be undertaken, if necessary.

13.3 In addition, following other specific measures will be taken to implement the legislation effectively.

a) Strict enforcement of all relevant legal provisions and speedy redressal of grievances will be ensured, with a special focus on violence and gender related atrocities.

b) Measures to prevent and punish sexual harassment at the place of work, protection for women workers in the organized/unorganized sector and strict enforcement of relevant laws such as Equal Remuneration Act and Minimum Wages Act will be undertaken.

c) Crimes against women, their incidence, prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution will be regularly reviewed at all Crime Review fora and Conferences at the Central, State and District levels. Recognised, local, voluntary organizations will be authorized to lodge Complaints and facilitate registration, investigations and legal proceedings related to violence and atrocities against girls and women.

d) Women’s Cells in Police Stations, Encourage Women Police Stations Family Courts, Mahila Courts, Counselling Centers, Legal Aid Centers and NyayaPanchayats will be strengthened and expanded to eliminate violence and atrocities against women.
e) Widespread dissemination of information on all aspects of legal rights, human rights and other entitlements of women, through specially designed legal literacy programmes and rights information programmes will be done.

Gender Sensitization

14.1 Training of personnel of executive, legislative and judicial wings of the State, with a special focus on policy and programme framers, implementation and development agencies, law enforcement machinery and the judiciary, as well as non-governmental organizations will be undertaken. Other measures will include:

a) Promoting societal awareness to gender issues and women's human rights.

b) Review of curriculum and educational materials to include gender education and human rights issues

c) Removal of all references derogatory to the dignity of women from all public documents and legal instruments.

d) Use of different forms of mass media to communicate social messages relating to women's equality and empowerment.

Panchayati Raj Institutions

15.1 The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Indian Constitution have served as a breakthrough towards ensuring equal access and increased participation in political power structure for women. The PRIs will play a central role in the process of enhancing women's participation in public life. The PRIs and the local self Governments will be actively involved in the implementation and execution of the National Policy for Women at the grassroots level.

Partnership with the voluntary sector organizations

16.1 The involvement of voluntary organizations, associations, federations, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations, as well as institutions dealing with education, training and research will be ensured in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of all policies and programmes affecting women. Towards this end, they will be provided with appropriate support related to resources and capacity building and facilitated to participate actively in the process of the empowerment of women.

International Cooperation

17.1 The Policy will aim at implementation of international obligations/commitments in all sectors on empowerment of women such as the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+5) and other such instruments. International, regional and sub-regional cooperation towards the empowerment of women will continue to be encouraged through sharing of experiences, exchange of ideas and technology, networking with institutions and organizations and through bilateral and multi-lateral partnerships.
Kind Attn.

Clarification Regarding Use of Women Component Plan

Vide letter no. PC/SW/1-3(13)/09-WCD, dated 5th January, 2010, Planning Commission, Government of India, has stated that, “the concepts of Women Component Plan and Gender Budgeting are not complementary but often contradictory and the world over countries have moved to using Gender Responsive Budgeting as a tool for gender mainstreaming and ensuring gender equity” and has clarified that, “Women Component Plan should no longer be used as a strategy either at the Centre or at the State level. In its place as already initiated by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Women and Child Development, we should adopt Gender Responsive Budgeting or Gender Budgeting only”.