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WIDTECH PROJECT
EXPANDING ADVOCACY FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

USAID CONTRACT # FAO-0100-Q-06-600600

Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) - Prime Contractor;
Academy for Educational Development (AED) – Sub-Contractor

EVALUATION OF USAID-FUNDED GIRLS' EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose. An evaluation of the USAID India-supported Girls' Education project - *Expanding Advocacy for Girls' Education in U.P.* - was conducted May 12 - June 5, 2001 in Delhi and Lucknow in India. The project is implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) as prime contractor, and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) as sub-contractor, covering the period October 1, 1998, through March 31, 2001. USAID India engaged L.T.Associates, Inc. (LTA) to provide an independent expatriate evaluator, and directly engaged a local evaluator, to assess the program in the third year of its implementation.

The Girls' Education Activity is an element of the USAID Mission's Strategic Objective # 9, which aims at expanding advocacy and service-delivery networks for women and girls. The Activity has three main elements:

- To support greater coordination and cross-fertilization of activities that promote girls' education in Uttar Pradesh state ;
- To establish a girls' education coordination center to serve as a clearing house for policies, research, training, and information in the area of girls' education; and
- To strengthen the capacity of public and private institutions and other stakeholders in support of girls' education in Uttar Pradesh.

DAI/AED/L has prepared a three-year work plan to implement the Activity, of which the development of the girls' education coordination center (to be named as Better Education Through Innovation Foundation, BETI) is the center-piece. This center was to be a catalyst, not an implementing agency, whose role was to support the other two elements. It was conceived as a clearinghouse for information as well as a "center of excellence" in policy dialogue, research, advocacy, training, capacity-building, and alliance-building in support of girls' education in U.P.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess progress in the implementation of the DAI/AED work plan with a view to providing USAID India with factual information on the relevance and impact of the BETI Foundation on girls' education in U.P.

Specifically the evaluators were asked to:

1) Examine (a) the contractor's effectiveness in implementing the activities, laid out in the work plan; (b) the extent of stakeholder participation, in identifying and conducting research as well as training projects; (c) the quality control mechanisms that exist in DAI/AED/BETI, and the quality of project deliverables; (d) the contractor's effectiveness in support of the center with respect to management structures, efficiency, and timeliness.
2) Assess (a) the adequacy and appropriateness of institutional structures, such as the Board of Trustees, Steering Committee, and Technical Advisory Groups; (b) the extent of DAI/AED support in setting up BETI's institutional bodies, and follow-up on recommendations by BETI management; (c) BETI's comparative advantage and sustainability; (d) BETI's business plan for its attention to self reliance and growth.
3) Make recommendations for improving efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

The evaluation was conducted in a spirit of constructive learning, and involved self-evaluation, collective thinking, review of relevant documents, and key informant interviews.

Findings. Although the project was initiated in October 1998, the bulk of the work has been undertaken since September 1999, and, while there are notable achievements especially during the last six months, the results and quality are short of those intended in the DAI/AED/L work plan. With regard to achievements, the most notable project activities and outputs were the following:

1. BETI's set-up as a Trust and its launching ceremony was well organized and publicized;
2. a study of private sector schools;
3. classroom-based PLA/PRA gender training for Bahraich DIET teachers;
4. the BETI website
5. participation in the framing of the education policy of the state of U.P.

There are also some promising joint ventures between BETI and such partners as CARE and CRS (an early childhood development effort), the *Janshala* project (community mobilization in two urban wards of Lucknow), and AED/W and CISCO (the piloting of a gender module on IT).

However, in terms of the quality and timeliness of deliverables, there remains much to be desired. Serious implementation delays have occurred throughout the project. There are complaints that it is heavily dependent on external technical assistance and that the cumbersome approval arrangements prevent quick responses. A lack of agreement on BETI's functions and priorities and inadequate understanding of the prerequisites for setting up a girls' education coordination center stem from the project implementation team's limited organizational development expertise. Unclear roles and responsibilities for key project staff in leadership, management, and decision-making have led to poor managerial efficiency and effectiveness. Concerns were also directed at the organizational capabilities of the center, with much of the decision-making power centralized at the top; inadequate level of in-house technical expertise; and with poor utilization of participatory processes limiting professional and stakeholder inputs, and programmatic linkages with partners in the field.

BETI's current set-up was seen as a major impediment. Indeed, while BETI exists on paper as an independent entity with its own board of trustees and corporate officers, in reality its structures and operations are not distinct from the AED/L office and its personnel. Nor does the entity command a separate budget or dispose of an appropriate corporate strategic plan and effective organizational structure and management systems. Thus, despite unanimous agreement on the need for a girls' education coordination center and high regard for the current director of the DAI/AED/L office with respect to her commitment, social standing, and connections, BETI is perceived as having a limited ability to fulfill its program goals and objectives.

The general view is that for BETI to become a "center of excellence," an effective body for "coordination and cross-fertilization," a "clearing house for policy, research, advocacy, training, and alliance-building," and a "catalyst rather than an implementing agency," the center should follow certain key guidelines of democratic governance and quality assurance:

A BETI should have strong, independent technical and managerial leadership as distinct from the DAI/AED/L office;
B The Chair of BETI's Board of Trustees should not also be the BETI's Executive Director;
C BETI's management style should follow democratic principles, encouraging broad-based participation and transparency in decision-making;
D BETI should develop a technically strong in-house capability and staff with a proven record in innovative work on girls' education in India and elsewhere;
E BETI should set clear objectives, and pursue a strategic plan if it is to meet its overall goals; and
F BETI's sustainability is contingent upon its capacity to elicit its own funding independent from the AED contract; appropriate institutional and organizational structures and systems; strategic business planning processes; and strong in-house program leadership to define priorities and mobilize commitment and support to achieve them.

Recommendations. To bridge the gap between the concept and the reality of BETI as a girls' education coordination center for U.P., the evaluators recommend the following:

1/.- Separating BETI and the AED/L Office: A distinction between DAI/AED/L and BETI, organizationally as well as in its functions, will help clarify roles, identify appropriate staff needs, and build the foundation for the future growth and development of BETI within a supportive framework.

2/.- Leadership and staffing: BETI's future evolution should be guided by strong technical leadership through the separation of the function of Chairperson from the Executive Director and Treasurer. Both these persons should be carefully selected, strong conceptually as well as managerially, independent, and focused. BETI's in-house expertise should be strengthened in an orderly way according to a clear set of agreed priorities.

3/.- Roundtables: Professionally facilitated roundtables (using local experts to the extent possible) would ensure the focused participation of present and potential partners, key stakeholders, selected beneficiaries and professional staff in defining the development strategy and setting priorities for BETI to fulfill its mission, allowing it to become an effective and efficient organization and, later, an institution to be valued in its own right.

The remaining few months of the project should be utilized to initiate the process of BETI separation from DAI/AED/L. Competent institutional/organizational development specialists might assist DAI/AED in building BETI's organizational and institutional capabilities, allowing BETI to play the coordinating and catalytic role envisioned for it from the beginning. The BETI idea is undeniably pertinent, and the experience so far encouraging. Although the project is currently facing some fundamental problems, its achievements to date indicate that the vision is worth supporting.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AED	-	Academy for Educational Development
BETI	-	(Center for) Better Education Through Innovation
BRC	-	Block Resource Center
CARE	-	Center for American Relief Everywhere
CREDA	-	Center for Rural Education and Development Action
CRS	-	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
CTO	-	Chief Technical Officer
CV	-	Curriculum Vitae
DAI	-	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DIET	-	District Institute of Educational Training
DPEP	-	District Primary Education Program
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
ECE	-	Early Childhood Education
ECCE	-	Early Child Care & Education
ECDC	-	Early Childhood Development Center
ED	-	Executive Director
ESC	-	Executive Steering Committee
GECC	-	Girls' Education Coordination Committee
GOI	-	Government of India
GOUP	-	Government of Uttar Pradesh
ICDS	-	Integrated Child Development Service
IR	-	Intermediate Result
IT	-	Information Technology
MS	-	Mahila Samakhya
NFE	-	Non-Formal Education
NGO	-	Non-Govemmental Organization
NPRC	-	Urban Ward Education Committee
OD	-	Organizational Development
OP	-	Operating Partner
PRA/PLA	-	Participatory Rapid Appraisal/ Participatory Learning Appraisal
R4	-	Results Report and Resources Request
RF	-	Results Framework
RG	-	Resource Group
SO	-	Strategic Objective
SOW	-	Scope of Work
SCERT	-	State Council for Education Research and Training
SIEMAT	-	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
SUDA	-	Urban Development Agency
TAG-A	-	Technical Advisory Group - Advocacy
TAG-R	-	Technical Advisory Group - Research
TAG-T	-	Technical Advisory Group - Training
TLM	-	Teaching-Learning Materials
UP	-	State of Uttar Pradesh
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
VEC	-	Village Education Committee
WIDTECH	-	Women in Development Technology

I.- INTRODUCTION

An evaluation of the USAID India-supported Girls'Education Activity was conducted May 12 – June 8, 2001, in Delhi and Lucknow. The project is implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) as prime contractor and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) as sub-contractor, covering the period of October 1, 1998, through March 31, 2001. USAID India engaged L.T. Associates, Inc. (LTA) to provide an independent expatriate evaluator, and directly hired a local evaluator, to assess the program in the third year of its implementation.

I.A.- Background and Purpose of the Evaluation

The Girls' Education Activity is an element of the USAID Mission's Strategic Objective # 9, which aims at expanding advocacy and service-delivery networks for women and girls. The activity has three main objectives:

- To support greater coordination and cross-fertilization of activities that promote girls'education in Uttar Pradesh state;
- To establish a girls'education coordination center to serve as a clearing house for research, policy studies, training, and information on girls' education; and
- To strengthen the capacity of public and private institutions and stakeholders to support girls' education in Uttar Pradesh.

The state of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) was selected for several reasons. First, the state exhibited extremely high gender gaps in child survival, schooling, literacy, and other relevant areas; and the gender gap in literacy was one of the highest in the world. Second, few donors were assisting girls' education in U.P. at the time the project was started. Third, USAID has other, related investments in place in the state, e.g., a women's reproductive health program.

From its inception, the girls' education coordination center was seen as a catalyst rather than an implementing agency. It was conceived as a coordinating body that would serve as a clearing house for critical discussion and the dissemination of information on relevant program interventions, and it was intended that the center would initiate policy dialogue, research, advocacy, training, capacity development, and alliance-building with regard to girls' education in U.P.

A three-year work plan was prepared by DAI/AED, and revised later with the approval of USAID, to implement the project, focusing essentially on establishing and building the organizational capacity of the girls' education center. The work plan included three principal elements:

- Strengthening the capacity of institutions like the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and the State Institute of Education, Management and Training (SIEMAT) in Uttar Pradesh to improve girls' education;
- Strengthening the capacity of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and its operating partners; and

- Establishing a girls' education coordination center, now named Better Education Through Innovation Foundation (BETI).

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess progress achieved to date in the implementation of the DAI/AED work plan with a view to providing USAID/India with factual information on the relevance and impact of the BETI Foundation so that the Mission can decide on further effort to support this activity.

I.B.- The Tasks of the Evaluation

More specifically, the evaluators were asked to examine and assess the following:

1) Examine (a) the contractor's effectiveness in implementing the activities in the work plan; (b) the extent of stakeholder participation in identifying and conducting research and training; (c) the contractor's effectiveness in supporting the center with respect to management structures, efficiency, and timeliness, and (d) BETI's business plan for its attention to self-reliance, growth, and sustainability.
2) Assess (a) the relevance and impact of the BETI Center and its activities; (b) the quality control mechanisms of DAI, AED, and BETI, the quality of project deliverables, and the relevance of the deliverables to the overall goal and project objectives; (c)the comparative advantage of BETI and its potential for sustainability; (d) the adequacy, functioning, and appropriateness of institutional structures such as the Board of Trustees, Steering Committee, and Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) for purposes of serving BETI's mandate; and (e) the support from DAI/AED in setting up BETI's institutional bodies, BETI management's guidance for these bodies and follow-up on recommendations.

The evaluators were also asked to make recommendations on improvements relating to project efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

During USAID India's initial briefings of the consultants, the critical issue of the evaluators' independence was raised. The Mission stressed that findings should not be biased, and made it clear that the consultants had been selected based on their "independent standing" and technical strength in the fields of girls' education and organizational development. It was noted that the project was developed with limited resources, that there had been concern from the outset at the limited technical leadership for the project, and that the project design forced BETI to operate as a contractor, rather than a grantee. The evaluators were told they should feel free to question the assumptions behind the project, the entire arrangement with G/WID and DAI, and the contractor's degree of success in "helping to create a corporation."

I.C.- Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation was conducted in a spirit of collaboration and open-mindedness involving review of relevant documents, interviews with key players, group self-evaluation, and critical discussion. Participants were frank and helpful.

The evaluation team consisted of Dr. Seema Agarwal-Harding (U.S. consultant) and Mr. Dayaram (local consultant).

Following a two-day review in Washington by Dr. Agarwal-Harding of relevant documents provided by USAID/India and AED/W the team spent three days in Delhi at the USAID office undergoing briefings, reviewing files and project implementation records, and conducting preliminary interviews. Five days were spent in Lucknow in the local AED office, where a three-day self-evaluation workshop was held with the full participation of the AED staff and the USAID/ Project CTO. While in Lucknow, several interviews were held with primary stakeholders and key participants.

Individual interviews with stakeholders, implementation partners, members of BETI's Board of Trustees, Steering Committee members, and TAG members helped the evaluation team to determine the project's implementation experience to date. The self-evaluation workshop conducted in Lucknow with AED/L/BETI staff provided insights into the day-to-day workings of the BETI Foundation.

Upon return to Delhi, two days were spent debriefing USAID/India staff, while additional key informant interviews were also held. An oral presentation was made at the USAID office on May 31, 2001; another on June 6, to a larger audience. A draft version of the evaluation report was submitted by the evaluators to USAID/India before the departure of the U.S. evaluator on June 8. Written comments on the draft from USAID/India were received on June 12, subsequent to which the report was finalized by the two evaluators and the contractor, L.T. Associates, Inc.

A list of persons interviewed is provided in Appendix 1 along with an interview schedule and interview guide in Appendices 2 and 3. The list of documents consulted is given in Appendix 4.

II.- FINDINGS

Section A presents a description of the project's overall performance to date. Specific comments on the problems and constraints encountered in building BETI into an effective organization are presented in Section B.

II. A.-Description of Project Activities and Achievements

With support from DAI/AED/L, the BETI Foundation was established as a Trust in March 2000, and following a well-publicized launching ceremony in April 2000 the agency has been involved in a number of training and outreach activities, the majority of which were undertaken during the last six months. Key dates related to the establishment and functioning of BETI are indicated below. Tables 1.1.to 1.5 provide more details on the major activities conducted and results achieved; they are followed by detailed descriptions of some on-going outreach efforts.

II.A.1.- Major Activities and Results

Table 1.1.- Key Dates related to BETI's Establishment & Activities

September 1998:	New contract signed between USAID/India and DAI/AED under WIDTECH. DAI/AED developed work plan for October 1, 1998, through March 31, 2001.
December 1998:	Sehba Hussain was hired as Project Director and AED office was set up in Lucknow.
July 1999:	Roundtable held to identify BETI's mission and functions Private Sector School Study recommended by CRS.
August 1999:	New USAID/CTO for the girls'education project was hired; work plan revised.
December 1999:	Private Sector School Study approved.
January 2000:	Presentation by a consultant on alternative legal status for BETI; USAID Project CTO's minutes recorded the consultant's intent to submit a proposed organizational structure for BETI with four separate committees with clearly defined functions; the proposal was never received.
March 2000:	Establishment of BETI as a Trust with Deeds and By-laws by Ms.Sehba Hussain and Dr. Kamal Gulati. Ms. Hussain was designated as Chair and Dr. Gulati as Secretary of the Trust.

April 2000:	First TAG-R meeting held. Spectacular Launching of BETI.
July 2000:	AED/L submitted first draft proposal for the DIETs.
September 2000:	AED/L's official letter on the DIETs sent to GOUP.
November 2000:	First meeting of the Steering Committee held. BETI website launched with databases available online.
January 2001:	Approval for the DIET activity received. *Mahakumbh mela* attended by BETI.
March 2001:	PLA activity held in the Baharaich DIET.
April/May 2001:	Private Sector School Study completed.

Appendix 5 provides the names of BETI's institutional structures and their members, and its organizational chart. An organizational framework proposed by participants at the self-evaluation workshop in Lucknow is presented in Appendix 8.

Table 1.2 below presents the project activities in terms of the SO9/IR3 indicators.

Table 1-2.- SO9/IR3 Results Framework and Related Indicators

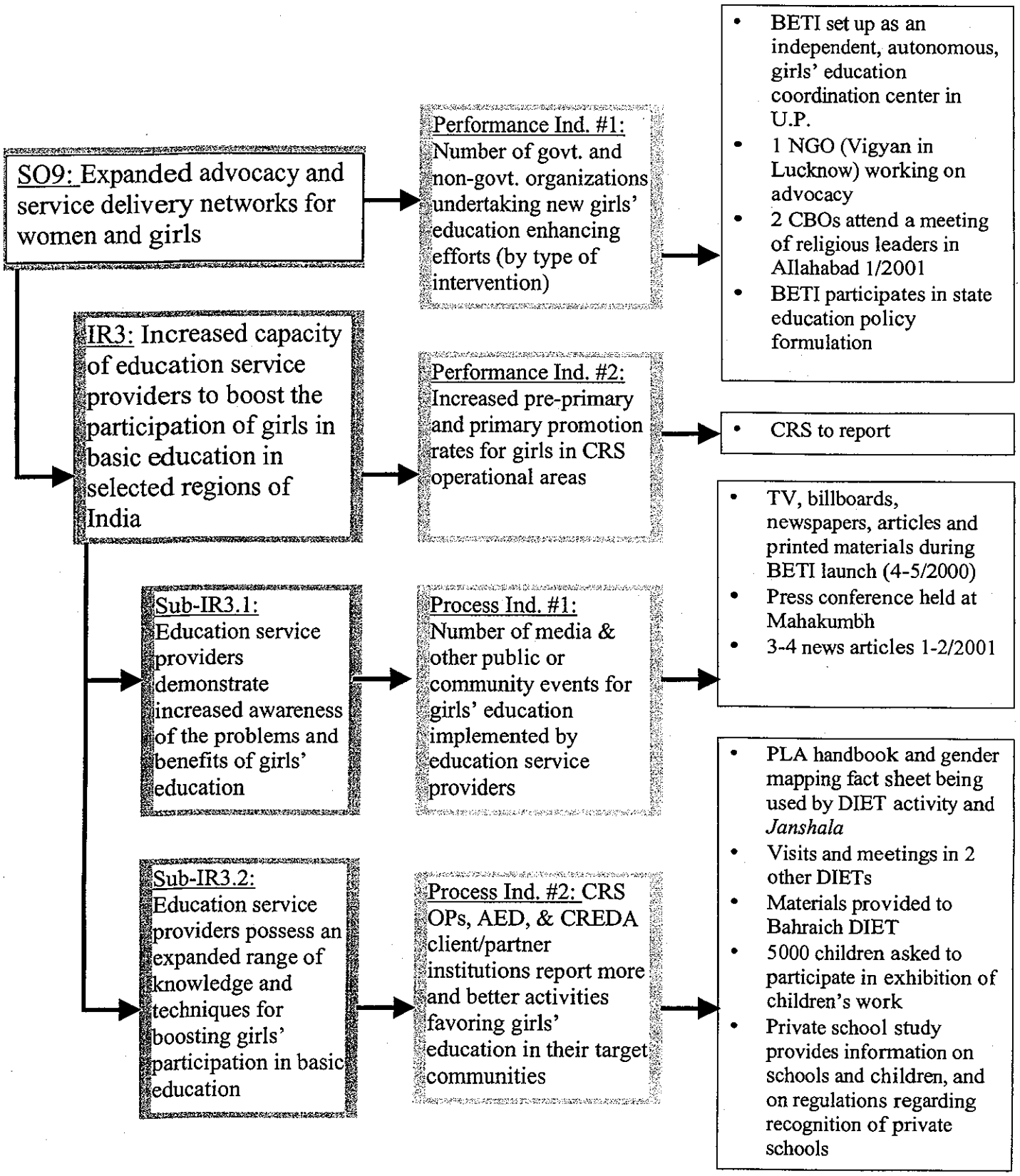


Table 1.3 below represents a summary of the perceived results of the project after three years of implementation, as they relate to the three stated objectives of the project.

Table 1-3.- Project Objectives and Results Achieved

Stated Objectives of the Project	Perceived Results after three years
Support greater coordination and cross-fertilization with activities in support of girls' education	Coordination with CARE, CRS, *Janshala,* and selected DIETs in U.P. has begun. Despite a slow start, there are reasonably good indications that this will continue, provided BETI's technical input is valued. Efforts to design strategies that may lead to cross-fertilization are also underway. BETI's current organizational structure inhibits effective coordination.
Establish a center to serve as a clearing house on policies, research, training, materials, and information on girls' education	BETI is beginning to set up a resource base in materials and a website. However, the quality of the website as well as the resource center are below expectations. BETI's capacity to conduct policy research and to influence policy is still limited. BETI is beginning to be seen and used as a resource for gender training, and it is expected that its performance will improve and that it may continue to be useful in this regard.
Strengthen the capacity of public and private institutions, and stakeholders in support of girls' education in U.P.	BETI was supposed to identify an institution and strengthen its capacity to advance girls' education. SIEMAT and *Mahila Samakhya* were identified as two likely institutions, but no concrete progress has been made, as reported by project team. Further, as a young organization with limited capacity and credibility, BETI is not yet accepted as an entity which can strengthen the capacity of other institutions.

Note: Information for this table was collected by the team at a self-evaluation workshop held in Lucknow during May 22- 24, 2001.

Table 1.4 gives detail about BETI's major activities and achievements

Table 1-4.- DAI/AED/L and BETI Major Achievements to date

S. N.	Achievements highlighted by AED/L	Indicators	Results
1.	Launch + *Kumbh Mela* festival (Launch: April – May 2000; *Kumbh Mela:*February 2001)	Media coverage, forging partnerships with journalists, launch event	• Interest in the issue of girls' education demonstrated by newspaper articles June/July 2000 as well as participation involving 38 schools, 350 teachers and 5000 entries of displays by school-children. • 3-4 schools now working with neighboring schools / communities + 2 *madarsas*
2.	Private School Study (Dec. 1999 – June 2001)	Exercise Report, Study Report, Tool for private school recognition	• Information was collected from a fairly large sample in a new, important area not yet well understood or supported • Information obtained on girls' education included male/female ratios and degree of community support • Information was obtained on how many schools are recognized/unrecognized and on regularization of private schools • Information dissemination is planned for June 2001 • Research may contribute to policy discussions (but this is seen as unlikely given BETI's present style of operations with stakeholders and GOUP).
3.	Collaboration with DIETs (December 2000)	Fact sheet on gender mapping, data collection format, presentation at district level using primary and secondary data	• Credibility built and relationships forged with DIET staff • BETI invited back by *Bahraich* DIET, which asked for more training • Institutional development plan was requested for gender component of teachers' in-service training. Senior Lecturer at *Bahraich* DIET made oral request to BETI staff • *Bahraich Mela* advocacy table provided free by Baharaich DIET • BETI invited to attend monthly administrative meetings at a block where all clusters come. These meetings discuss school support issues, including matters affecting girls'education • One BETI manager physically provided the DIET with learning materials due to come from the DPEP but whose distribution had been delayed.

4.	PLA Workshop (February 2001)	Tool kit in English and Hindi; Workshop report; BRC/NPRC training for 25 people	• Training reached 10 people (6 teachers and 4 trainers/coordinators from 2 schools) • 28 persons from DIETs, State Office underwent concept training, March 20-22 • Intensive orientation of these people planned for 7 days in July in one district so they can become master trainers; this training will be conducted by three BETI staff • Training planned for 44 schools in 2 blocks in each of 3 districts, including urban areas (NPRC); • There is satisfaction that PLA is being done in schools, including those in urban areas, where it was not done before.
5.	Janshala (since January 2001, under BETI umbrella)	Social mapping in 2 educational wards of urban Lucknow (sample 20%); Information booklet on Janshala training material; 900 community group members training	• Ward Resource Centers are finally getting established after dialogue • Community now provides water (BETI provided list of schools with no toilets or water to State Director of Urban Development) • Finding solutions for *anganwadi* workers – where there are no *anganwadi* workers • School Education Committees, MTA, and PTAs are being formed; didn't exist in urban areas earlier.

Details on each activity are indicated in Appendix 6 and described below. BETI's work areas are presented in Appendix 7.

I.A.2.- Private Sector School Study

The purpose of the study was to understand the different dimensions of the private schooling system, especially supply-side issues at the primary and upper-primary levels. Schools surveyed are primarily those in a selected area of Lucknow. The study treated the following:

- Physical infrastructure (buildings and essential facilities)
- Management, especially recognition and operation
- Teaching-learning process; teaching methods and instructional aid
- Community support and parent-teacher interaction
- Profiles of children attending the schools
- Teachers' backgrounds – gender, numbers, training, experience, salary, etc.

The study was exploratory, and descriptive rather than analytical. Basic data were collected through a questionnaire in Hindi. All types of non-governmental schools were lumped together as "private school." *Madarsas* and *Makhtabs* of their very nature needed special and separate attention.

The decision to conduct a Private Sector School Study was the outcome of a consultative process. The study was initially proposed by CRS and received endorsement by other partners. It was commissioned before the Technical Advisory Group on Research (TAG-R) was constituted. TAG-R was not involved in finalizing the study's scope, and TAG-R had no say in the selection of the researcher.

The Study was commissioned in December 1999 and was to be completed by March 2000, before the launch of BETI. However, the study was not finished until March 2001. This excessive delay is viewed by many as due to the weak technical expertise available within BETI, which affected its ability to conceptualize and carry out the study.

The final version of the study was drafted by someone not associated with the study at any stage, and it appears that much of the true flavor of the study was lost in its translation into English. Some TAG-R members felt that the research design could have been different, that they were not consulted adequately in the study's design or implementation, and that the views they did express were not incorporated into the design.

Despite these limitations, the study can be seen as significant. It is the first study of private schools in U.P. It generated information about private sector educational facilities through interactions with teachers and school managers. It has brought to the fore important issues. The study's most important conclusion is that, even at the primary stage, private schools play an important role in children's education in U.P.

Since a highly competent TAG-R now exists under the BETI umbrella, TAG-R membership can play a much more proactive role in all aspects of future BETI research efforts.

I.A 3.- Collaboration with the DIETs

Strengthening the capacities of the DIETs is one of the key elements of the AED/L work plan for BETI, and a good deal of activity is occurring in this regard.

The GOUP, which has been working on a previous project involving DIET Rae-Bareilly, is now cooperating with BETI on work with three new DIETs. This follows a period of negotiations that was prolonged both because of a delay in sending a formal communication to the GOUP/DPEP and of the late start of DPEP work with the DIETs.

BETI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DPEP/UP for work involving the three DIETs of Bahraich, Hapur (Ghaziabad) and Jaunpur. According to the MOU, BETI will assist the DIETs, BRCs, NPRCs, and VECs in their planned interventions with technical assistance for qualitative institutional capacity development, and with special emphasis on enhancing advocacy and technical support for girls' access, retention and achievement in schools.

Work with the Bahraich DIET started recently after the appointment of a field coordinator; in the other two DIETs, coordinators are yet to be appointed. Field Testing of the PLA toolkit in Bahraich has taken place with students, teachers and DIET faculty members.

Gender sensitization activities will be undertaken with teachers in selected clusters during the month of June 2001. An approach paper on this has been developed by BETI's part-time Training Coordinator.

The following table provides a summary of BETI's planned work with selected DIETs in U.P.

District	Block	Nyaya Panchayat	No. of Schools	No. of Students			No. of Teachers		
				B	G	T	M	F	T
Bahraich	Mihinpurwa	Vishwanath-gaon	06	1231	654	1885	10	03	13
Shravasti	Jamunaha	Shikari -Chaura	08	1101	723	1824	16	02	18
Ghaziabad	Simbhawali	Gandu Nagla	07	656	480	1136	15	01	17
	Garh	Dehrarampur	07	553	540	1093	18	01	19
Jaunpur	Barsathi	Gothaon	08	1171	975	2146	19	03	21
	Machhli-shahar	Rampur - Kalan	11	1504	1524	3028	28	01	29
4 Districts	6 Blocks	6 clusters	37	6216	4896	11112	106	11	117

While BETI staff and consultants are putting forward their best efforts in providing innovative and much needed PRA/PLA training to selected DIETs, the view of the GOUP and other local stakeholders is that much of the work that was done under the Rae-Bareilly project could be utilized well under this activity. BETI should review the work previously with DIET Rae-Bareilly to learn from that experience and find out what could be adopted for use in the other DIETs.

I.A.4.- Cooperation with *Janshala*

BETI has been selected as the lead coordinating agency for the Janshala Project for two wards in urban Lucknow. This collaboration is governed by an MOU, already signed. Laxmi and SEWA, two other NGOs in Lucknow, have been identified by SCERT for Hazratganj and Saadatganj Wards, respectively.

The work involves preparation of maps and the identification of clusters and civil wards with the help of Nagar Nigam and the Department of Education. A total of 33 schools (31 primary and two upper primary) are covered from the 148 Mohallas and two municipal wards.

The social mapping being done involves resource mapping, venn diagrams, timelines, seasonality, focus group discussions with teachers, community members and parents, interviews with teachers, and the provision of additional information by Sector Wardens. Results of the social mapping

have been shared with such relevant entities as the Department of Basic Education, SUDA, ICDS, Nagar Nigam, the DIETs and DPEP.

In meetings with the Director of SUDA, the Director of ICDS, the Secretary of Women and Child Development, the Chief Warden for Civil Defence, and officials from U.P. Jal Nigam, full collaboration and support have been assured specifically regarding the following:

- Infrastructure improvement (water supply, toilets, etc.);
- Community Centres to double up as schools where need exists;
- Early Childhood Education - Additional registration in the existing Aganwadi Centres; services attached to schools; some new centers.

Community support was assured for:

- Formation of School Education Committee for 5 schools where orientation has taken place
- Dialogue on location/construction of WRC
- Parent–Teacher meetings twice per year at each school level
- Solutions for day-to-day problems (e.g., cleaning of toilets, temporary arrangement for storage of drinking water) by the School Education Committee/Community
- Mobilisation for education in the catchment of Saadatganj school by the Committee under the leadership of an active Maulavi
- Identification of space for establishing an Alternative Education Center for working children

Proposed activities for the current quarter are:

- Networking workshops for School Management Systems
- Preparation of Ward Education Plans
- "Utsavas" for environment building to help increase enrollment in both the wards
- Selection of "Bal Mitras" for remedial learning and alternative schooling based on the Pratham (Mumbai) model - 10 units in each ward (total for the year – 25 units per ward).

I.A.5.- Partnership with CRS and CARE for ECDC

Pre-schooling is considered critical not only to retain children longer in school but also because it allows many girls to attend school who would otherwise be left at home to take care of younger siblings while their parents are working. CRS has been supporting partners in the area of ECDC. CARE is also working to strengthen ECDC programs that permit girls to be released to attend school.

The major challenge for the ECDC program has been to secure community acceptance for pre-schools. At the same time, those parents who do want pre-schooling also want the 3Rs to be taught from the pre-school years.

Both CRS and CARE have expressed a need for additional support in this area. In one ward of Lucknow city, BETI has begun work in ECDC along with CRS and CARE. In an attempt

to collaborate, the following activities have been planned by BETI in support of CRS and CARE:

- Capacity building for participatory action research on child care in pre-primary and feeding programs; addressing gender differences in program access, services and impacts; assessing constraints on, and opportunities for, enhancing the impact of child care feeding programs on girls' education.
- Technical assistance for identifying the poorest and neediest at the village level in dialogue with community organizations, OPs, NGOs, and CSOs, with an emphasis on community action and convergence of services, e.g., child care, with a focus on girls.
- Formulation of action plans to facilitate the development and growth of active learning in ECE as community-owned and -supported functional activities linked with child care and girls' education.

I.A.6.- Website and Resource Center

The BETI website was set up in November 2000 and features databases available online. Although in its rudimentary stage, the website has the potential of being very useful once the information is more complete and provided it is regularly updated.

As of June 2001, the website had 17 entries, most related to BETI activities. These included:

- A description of the girls' education scene in U.P.
- Information on organizations linked with BETI in some capacity (four entries)
- Findings of the Private Sector School Study
- Training Resource Materials, with information on different training manuals, the names of the preparing organizations and the language of the manuals
- An Expert Resource Data base, giving information on contact addresses, areas of expertise and language capabilities
- Media Contacts.

BETI has tried to classify, index, and design materials on the web in a manner suited to meeting the information needs of its stakeholders; however, there is work to be done. The site could serve many more functions: for instance, putting research findings related to girls' education in India and abroad on the web could be of immense value to planners, policy-makers and implementing agencies. It could also help BETI in its advocacy function. Collecting innovative practices and disseminating these to the implementing agencies and others are also BETI mandates that could be satisfied by putting the information on web pages.

With regards to BETI's resource function, there are signs that other agencies and organizations are looking to BETI for resource support. BETI has been approached by 15 organizations and individuals from various parts of Uttar Pradesh seeking the following assistance:

- Curriculum materials and resource persons for NFE programs
- Information on gender training
- Linkages on child labor and *Balwadis*
- Materials for organizing and training women's groups
- Designs of programs for adolescent girls
- Information on ECD curricula
- How to link with BETI.

Most inquiries come through personal contacts with the BETI staff. Others come from partner organizations and people who have read about BETI in the newspapers.

BETI resource center materials are largely BETI's own reports and publications, but also include some training materials from other organizations. Nevertheless, materials in the Resource Center are scanty; there has been very little effort to identify relevant materials and procure them.

A short-term consultant could help collect relevant information and enter it on the web pages. Such a consultant could also help develop the Resource Center into a well-stocked depository for materials related to girls' education. DAI/AED technical support toward this end should be strengthened.

II.B.- Comments on BETI's Effectiveness and the Quality of Deliverables

The BETI project represents an innovative, complex, and challenging initiative meant to fill a gap identified by stakeholders in the education sector in U.P. Despite participants' laudable efforts, there have been implementation problems that have caused the quality of project deliverables to suffer, most of which stem from weaknesses of an organizational and institutional nature, as indicated in the following sections.

II.B.1.- Implementation delays

There have been consistent and unnecessary delays in implementation, not fully understood by project staff, throughout the life of the project. A large part of the work is dependent upon consultants, and delays in consultant or staff approvals have meant serious and, in some cases, irreversible delays in implementation. In some critical instances (e.g., the letter to GOUP regarding work with the DIETs, staff appointments), there has been disregard for concerns. In appointments of staff and consultants, the proper bidding process has often not been adhered to, and there has been a recurring problem in approving nominations due to the failure to submit SOWs and CVs together and on time. All this seems to reflect inadequate planning and insufficient preparation on the part of the contractor, despite repeated attempts to guide the process of submission of requests by USAID/I.

Requests for technical assistance are currently routed through two intermediate layers of approvals, both located in Washington: AED/W and DAI/W. This has proved cumbersome and time-consuming, and has been detrimental to the progress of the project.

AED/L often does not know where a request is stuck. Although the office has tried to monitor the process, it has been unable to speed it up. There is nothing to indicate that this problem of implementation delays has been resolved.

II. B.2.- Limited Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

The technical and managerial leadership of the BETI program is weak, and this has affected BETI's efficiency and effectiveness, as reflected in:

- BETI's over-centralized decision-making in the hands of one person at the top who occupies several policy and executive positions. Inadequate staffing, weak technical and managerial in-house capabilities, and a non-strategic business plan are additional problems, discussed in detail elsewhere in this report.
- The absence of a well thought-out, regular internal review process to facilitate "learning while doing." Although there are annual work plans and reports, quarterly operational plans, and progress reports, it is evident from reading these documents that there is limited follow-up of pertinent issues, e.g., the linkage with SIEMAT, the pursuit of the PROBE

study, the development of BETI's organizational structure. Reports mention many of these activities, often stating reasons for delays, but without appropriate follow-up actions. Consultants' reports, such as Ron Bonner's report on the Results Framework, list several issues and recommendations, but these have not been pursued.

- A lack of resourcefulness in identifying and effectively utilizing the large pool of local intellectual resources in girls' education and related fields. There have been regular, frequent complaints by USAID/I that DAI/AED/BETI are not identifying good technical people locally; that, when they are identified, they are not being utilized properly; and that their recruitment is not carried out in a thoughtful or careful manner, often leading to consultants' loss of interest. Several consultants told the evaluation team about what they felt were unnecessary arguments over their pay scale and scope of work. Such complaints have been detrimental to the credibility of the DAI/AED/BETI team. Finally, the skills of the consultants eventually selected often do not match the skills needed for the job, and the selection process is often not transparent or competitive.
- A rigidity and disregard for suggestions from the project team and technical resource persons, leading to mistrust and lack of confidence. This is especially evident with respect to USAID/I's concern for the organizational development of BETI, and with the request for technical assistance from the contractor to strengthen this aspect of the project. Even the routine provision of technical assistance for different project activities features disregard for the concerns of USAID/I, especially with respect to submission of SOWs, CVs and other documents, which tend to be submitted for approval piecemeal rather than in an organized manner.

Although BETI disposes of a consultant roster (as posted on its website), there is limited evidence that this has been used systematically to obtain "state of the art" expertise in required areas.

II.B. 3. - Different Perceptions of BETI's Vision and Priorities, and Mismatch between BETI's Concept and Reality

Although a common vision of BETI's role was developed at the Roundtable attended by stakeholders and partners, in practice different program partners have different ideas about what the priorities of a "girls' education coordination center" should be. This has led to dissatisfaction with the way it is currently operating. Despite efforts to create a common vision, and chart a path to get to that vision, clarity and unanimity are still missing. Nor do AED/L and BETI staffs share a common vision of BETI amongst themselves, as was evident during the self-evaluation workshop held in Lucknow. Some examples of this problem are given below.

BETI is viewed in Uttar Pradesh and the rest of India as providing an unmet need in the area of information dissemination. Yet this function has not been properly internalized by BETI staff. During the self-evaluation workshop, none of the current DAI/AED/L staff (who also function as BETI staff) mentioned information dissemination as one of their primary functions. When this was pointed out to them, they acknowledged that this was a gap in their perception. Because of this gap, the quality of the web-site has suffered, and while there have been well organized, powerful and high profile media events aimed at advocacy, the impact of such events remains uncertain.

The research and policy-dialogue function is one of the key operating areas envisaged for the girls' education coordination center. The idea was that research should be timely, manageable, action-oriented, and lead to policy and program improvements. Yet the type of research appropriate for BETI to undertake, and congruent with BETI's methods and purpose, is not well understood by BETI staff. Their own in-house capability to design, conduct and supervise research activities is also limited. The TAG-R is made up of highly capable persons, yet they are not used effectively in research activities. They in fact complain of being misused, of having limited influence, and of "play-acting" during TAG-R meetings.

Another BETI function envisaged was building the capacity of public and private institutions involved in promoting girls'education. BETI's staff remain unclear as to how they are supposed to do this. Many see it as a direct training function, e.g., training of teachers in the different DIETs, which implies a role as an implementing agency serving the needs of the GOUP and other clients, rather than a catalyst as originally conceived. Interviews within USAID/I revealed clearly that BETI was to be tasked to strengthen the capacity of CRS and its operational partners (OPs) in the area of girls' education. This decision by USAID/I, meant to coordinate the organizations USAID supports, figured in the revised work plan of October 1, 1999, of DAI/AED. Currently, not all stakeholders agree to this BETI function.

CRS, for example, doubts that BETI has the capacity to take up the task of building CRS capacity, given CRS's long history of working in U.P. (indeed, in India) and more recently with girls' education efforts in selected rural and urban areas. This was evident during the evaluators' meeting with CRS, and is also mentioned in Dr. Bonner's report of February 2000, in spite of the fact that USAID's Results Framework for reporting on its IR3 was developed in consultation with CRS. At any rate, the general view amongst BETI's partners is that it is unrealistic for BETI, a fledgling organization with limited in-house technical resources, to build the capacity of other organizations. Partner institutions, both public and private, rather see themselves as helping strengthen the capacity of BETI.

CRS has used organizations inside and outside U.P. to provide resource support for advancing its girls' education efforts, and views BETI mainly as a research and advocacy organization. According to CRS, there are in fact many other organizations with better expertise than BETI in the areas where CRS requires support. CRS' view is that BETI must acquire that capacity before CRS will look to it for support of this kind.

In terms of networking with other girls' education providers, BETI's informal networks are well established and reliable, but institutional linkages and formal networks are yet to emerge. A particular example of poor linkages is BETI's relationship with SIEMAT in U.P. The need to involve SIEMAT with girls' education in U.P. first appeared in the WIDTECH project in Harding's situational analysis study (1998). Harding saw important responsibilities for SIEMAT in the area of capacity building for civil society organizations. In the revised work plan, prepared by DAI/AED for the period from October 1,1999, to March 31, 2001, strengthening SIEMAT's capacity was again mentioned as a priority area. This, according to the work plan document, was the outcome of discussions with USAID/I.

The Vth Quarterly report observed that "ongoing communications with partner organizations suggest the need to carefully explore their needs and the ways in which collaboration can be beneficial. A summary report on the needs assessment of existing resources and a note on recommended strategies/processes for the BETI center to undertake in its training cooperation with partners will be the deliverables. The work should be completed in the seventh quarter." However, while the VIIth Quarterly report mentions meetings held with partner organizations on various issues including advocacy, private sector school study and the launch of BETI, there is no specific mention of SIEMAT. In the subsequent quarterly reports, strengthening of the capacity of SIEMAT keeps appearing as a deliverable without any reporting of activities with SIEMAT.

During the evaluation, it became clear that the way BETI is functioning today is very different from its concept as articulated in the project SOW. This has been at the heart of USAID/I's concern with BETI and the project as a whole. The following table summarizes the mismatch.

BETI's concept as articulated in the SOW	**The reality of how BETI functions today**
Coordination center	Implementation agency
Catalyst, proactive	Reactive
Clearing house	Repository of resources
Broad-based ownership	Limited ownership
Active participation of stakeholders	Passive participation of stakeholders
Defining new directions	Service provider
Innovative	Broker of services
Leveraging resources from public, private, and corporate sectors	Contracting services to government and clients on a needs-be basis
Strong in-house technical capability	Weak in-house technical capability
Building capacity of other institutions	Other institutions strengthening BETI's capacity to deliver

II.B.4.-BETI's Comparative Advantage and Sustainability

Within its short existence, BETI has signed contracts with the GOUP and other partners as a provider of gender-related services within several projects:

- Gender training for selected DIETs (partial DPEP support)
- Community mobilization in urban wards (*Janshala* funds)
- Piloting of gender module on IT with AED/W (CISCO Systems funds)
- ECE demand generation (CARE & CRS support)
- Vocational training pilot activity (*Unniti Foundation)* (planned).

Given these successes, BETI might be able to mobilize enough contracts to sustain itself if it were to become primarily a service provider, as the need for gender-related services is great in U.P.

The prospect of BETI's sustainability, however, is constrained in several ways:

(1).- BETI is not perceived as a entity separate from the project or from AED/L, as its Chief executive and staff are AED/L personnel and its office is still located within AED/L;

(2).- BETI's effectiveness and viability depend on one individual, the current State Director of DAI/AED/L and the Project Director, who is also serving BETI in many additional capacities:

- Chairperson of BETI's Board of Trustees
- Treasurer of BETI
- Executive Director of BETI
- Chairperson of the Steering Committee of BETI
- Chairperson of the Technical Advisory Groups on Research and Advocacy

(3).- BETI's staff salary structure will be difficult to maintain. The current structure is that of the DAI/AED/L project which provides BETI with support. It may not be compatible with what a more independent BETI could afford. BETI would have to rely on other factors than salaries, including the commitment and dedication of DAI/AED/L staff, if it wished them to continue beyond the life of the project as BETI staff, given the expected fall in their earnings.

BETI's business plan, however, does not provide clear guidance as to how this isse of sustainability might be satisfactorily resolved.

II.B.5.- BETI's Business Plan

BETI's business plan does not reflect strategic thinking regarding BETI's funding plans, or areas of strategic advantage for BETI within the developmental mosaic of U.P. Nor does BETI's staffing plan match the vision and scope of the Foundation.

The Business Plan does not explain the strategies for achieving the agency's main objectives. It contains a financial plan, describing the financial requirements for five years and how BETI would be able to sustain itself from overhead earnings. It also describes how the dependence on USAID/I and DAI/AED will taper off and how BETI could become sustainable. It talks of generating resources from sources other than USAID, mainly by selling services. Some of the forecasted plans seem highly improbable given BETI's current capacity, and there is no matching plan for technical capacity enhancement. In fact, the Business Plan leaves the possibility open that BETI might be compelled to provide services in new areas in which it is not now active.

The staffing plan has identified three positions of coordinators for different program areas: (a) Administration and Business Development, (2) Programming and Monitoring, and (3) Communication and Information Resource Management. The job responsibilities are detailed. There is a mismatch, however, between the existing staff positions in BETI and what has been called for in the Business Plan. One of BETI's important functions is gender training. Although this is also one of the important deliverables, there is no training coordinator position provided for in the Business Plan.

In the October 2000-June 2001 work plan, DAI/AED was to carry out several tasks related to the launching of the BETI center. Among these, the two most critical were to conduct a strategic planning exercise with the BETI team, and to develop an organizational plan for BETI. Neither of these was accomplished. According to the XIth quarter report, these were "delayed due to non-availability of the consultant, and vacant staff positions." As a result, the lack of an "action plan" or "strategic focus" for BETI has been cited by several members of the Steering Committee/Advisory Committee as preventing BETI from utilizing the Steering Committee or the Technical Advisory Groups effectively. While the By-laws provide for the existence of a Board of Trustees, and for an advisory council, in practice these functions are controlled by the Chairperson of the Executive Council. Although the Advisory Council has been given "reviewing and approving" functions, and is expected to "take decisions pertaining to the program of the Trust," the current Steering Committee/Advisory Council members interviewed by the evaluation team feel unable to steer the development of BETI. They talk about the need for BETI to be "governed by a wider group, and not put too much power in the hands of one person," citing as examples the need for preparing the agenda for meetings through a participatory process, in advance; for devoting the bulk of the meeting time to discussing strategies rather than to presentations; for delegating responsibility to members of the Steering Committee to guide the process of decision-making; and for allowing the Steering Committee to be headed by a prominent personality other than the director of the BETI Foundation. They all seem to feel that a sound organizational structure and a strategic business plan will be critical if BETI is to develop a clear focus, gain credibility, and achieve its goals and objectives.

If BETI is to evolve as a coordinating body, it will need further strengthening and substantial support, both technically and managerially. Most important still, it will need to develop a corporate strategy and action plan to translate its mission into reality, with clear focus and priorities. DAI/AED/L's cooperation in this respect is critical for the future development of BETI, especially during the period of the no-cost extension.

II.B.6.- Limited organizational Development (O.D) Experience and Training While Designing BETI

BETI was conceived of as a deliverable of the DAI/AED project. USAID/I realized throughout the implementation of the project that strong organizational development experience was necessary if BETI were to be set up as an independent, autonomous girl's education coordination center. Despite repeated requests, and USAID/I's insistence on medium- to long-term technical assistance from the contractor in the area of institutional development, such assistance has not been provided to BETI in an adequate manner. The contractor appears to have had neither the understanding nor the capability to set up a corporation of this nature in India, and this had led to some significant flaws in BETI's design. For example, lines of demarcation between BETI and DAI/AED/L have been allowed to become fudged, and DAI/AED/L staff have taken on a dual function, becoming BETI staff instead of working as facilitators in helping to set up an independent coordination center with appropriate leadership and following democratic governance principles. This "dual identity" of the DAI/AED/L staff has led to confusion, lack of objectivity on their part, and an inability to function effectively --- points they themselves made to the

evaluators. Confidence of USAID/India in the implementing partners has also been seriously affected.

The BETI center has not been able to ensure the effective use of technically sound committees because the roles and responsibilities assigned to these committees do not allow them to function with full capacity. Existing committees (with the exception of the Board) have advisory functions and no decision-making power. It also appears that suggestions made by USAID/I related to organizational development principles have not been given due attention and have often been ignored. This is reflected in the centralization of the key functions in one person, as well as in the absence of an organizational development plan. Although the USAID Project CTO's meeting minutes talk of the intent of a DAI/AED consultant to submit an organizational plan, as well as detailed functions and roles for the technical committees, these never materialized.

II.B.7.- Ambiguity in Roles and Responsibilities of Key Project Implementers

There are no official documents or meeting minutes that clarify the roles or responsibilities of the different implementing partners, i.e., DAI/W, AED/W and AED/L. As a result, confusion has been allowed to set in with respect to day-to-day management and decision-making. There is frustration, fear of blame, and a feeling of helplessness in DAI/AED/L staff in the face of the problems encountered, especially regarding delays in project implementation. DAI/AED/L staff cannot see any role for DAI/W in project implementation, and contend that DAI/W provides an unnecessary constraint under which they must operate. DAI/AED/L staff also feel that they have no decision-making powers, and are unclear where such powers lie, whether with DAI/W, AED/W or with USAID/I. Consequently, they lack a sense of ownership of project activities, and are reluctant to share responsibility for the project's accomplishments or failures.

For its part, AED/W feels that it is doing what it has been asked to do by USAID/I. Examples given included the hiring of the director and adherence to the time-frame for launching BETI. With regard to DAI/W, with whom a brief interview was held, it appears that the firm, although it is the prime contractor, does not share the burden or the responsibility for implementing the project, both of which have been passed on to AED/W. The net effect is that there is a lack of ownership for the result framework of BETI on the side of the contractor. This situation has adversely affected USAID/I's confidence in the project staff's ability to deliver the required results.

Finally, DAI, AED and BETI seem unclear about their roles, and they have not adhered to the roles envisaged in the SOW. One reason may be the evolving and unfolding nature of the project, which requires close and direct interaction between USAID/I and DAI/AED/L that has often been lacking. (When this in fact has happened, it has led to improved implementation.) The physical proximity of the two agencies should have allowed for more frequent interaction; however, there appears to be a lack of mutual trust between DAI/AED/L and USAID/I, stemming mainly from the fact that respective roles and responsibilities have not been effectively clarified. As a result, attempts by USAID/I to provide technical inputs have often been misconstrued, and treated as interference or unnecessary control.

DAI/W and AED/W seemed to have provided valuable technical support to BETI, but usually when requested under critical circumstances and normally in response to demands from DAI/AED/L or USAID/I. Throughout the implementation, USAID/I has felt that the contracting firms have neither been proactive nor monitored the project closely. DAI/W's role, in fact, is not visible, except for the routing of various proposals, requests, and reports.

Further investigation is needed to determine what reasons and constraints have led to this unsatisfactory state of affairs. The non-availability of DAI/W and AED/W representatives during the evaluation has prevented the evaluation team from delving more deeply into the matter.

III.- RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations focus on ways to overcome some of the existing constraints and to improve BETI's effectiveness and impact as a girls' education coordination center for U.P.:

III.A.- Creating an Operational Distinction between DAI/AED/L and BETI

The contractor (DAI/AED) should be encouraged to create a distinction between DAI/AED/L and BETI, organizationally as well as in its functions. This will help clarify roles, identify appropriate staff needs, and build the foundation for the future growth and development of BETI within a supportive framework. DAI/AED/L's primary function as a support service for BETI can be realized under such an arrangement. Once the separation is made effective, DAI/AED should develop a strategic work plan for the remaining months of the project. The contractors' role as facilitators in the development and strengthening of BETI is critical. Without DAI/AED support, and the cooperation of the founding members of BETI and its Board, USAID/I may find it difficult to guide the future development of BETI.

III.B.- Strengthening BETI's Leadership (Technical and Managerial) and In-house Technical Expertise

BETI's future evolution should be guided by strong technical leadership through the separation of the functions of the Chairperson from those of the Executive Director/ Treasurer. USAID/I may need to take an active role in identifying suitable leadership for BETI. The selection and appointment of the Chairperson and Executive Director need to be based on clear job descriptions and candidates' proven work histories. Both these job-holders should be carefully selected, technically strong conceptually as well as managerially, independent, and focused. Once selected, they should be allowed to operate within an open, supportive, and creative environment. BETI's in-house expertise should also be strengthened to fulfill the promise of becoming a credible "clearing house," a "center of excellence," and an effective body for "coordination and cross-fertilization" of programs related to policy, research, advocacy, training, and alliance-building." Effective leadership of BETI would be demonstrated through its pursuit of broad-based democratic governance and quality assurance:

a. Developing strong, independent (technical and managerial) leadership distinct from that of the DAI/AED/L office;

b. Creating a distinction between the Chair and the Executive Director of BETI;

c. Operating under a management style that lends itself to democratic principles, broad-based participation and transparency in decision-making;

d. Appointing appropriate staff, distinct from that of the DAI/AED/L office;

e. Developing a technically strong in-house capability and staff with a proven record of having carried out serious and innovative work for girls' education in India and elsewhere;

f. Following clear objectives, strategic plans, and specific actions for meeting BETI's overall goals; and

g. Building BETI's sustainability through a refined organizational structure, more strategic focus, business planning processes, and stronger linkages with on-going activities of educational services providers.

Recent steps taken by the Board to appoint a separate Treasurer, and the beginning of programmatic linkages with CRS, CARE, *Janshala,* and DIETs are proof that there is movement in this direction already, as expressed by the few Board members interviewed by the evaluators.

III.C.- Holding Roundtables on BETI's Vision, Priorities, and Program Linkages

Roundtables externally and professionally facilitated (using local experts to the extent possible) would ensure the active and focused participation of partners, key stakeholders, selected beneficiaries, and key staff in the definition of strategic and operational plans for BETI, by:

- Defining a commonly shared vision for BETI as a girls' education coordination center;
- Supporting an independent Board/Steering Committee for BETI, and empowering it to define priorities and functions. The Board/Steering Committee should ideally be an active decision-making body, with membership of strong advocates, leaders, and practitioners of girls' education efforts, donor agencies, and representatives of the public, private media, religious groups, etc.
- Building a broad-based ownership for BETI. Institutional linkages for BETI should be strengthened through a transparent process of listening, learning, and sharing, with wide participation of partners (e.g., CRS, CARE, UNICEF, NGOs, etc.), stakeholders (GOI, GOUP, DPEP, MS, SIEMAT, SCERT, etc.), and beneficiaries (DIETs, Schools, CBOs, etc.). Linkages should build on past field experiences, targeted innovations, and joint ventures.

USAID/I might take the initiative in ensuring the organization of such a roundtable, which might sit for several sessions and could evolve into a more effective steering committee over the course of the next several months.

III.D.- Improving the quality and timeliness of project deliverables

Critical for BETI's product quality is to strengthen BETI's in-house expertise and to combine this with a more effective use of consultants. The staff needs of BETI should be reflected in its strategic plan, with staff (and consultant) skills matching the priority program areas. Although the project's SOW detailed the intent behind the project, it did not provide a holistic strategy or approach for implementing it. For example, while the SOW asked for a "proposal for setting up the BETI center," it did not focus on the development approach or strategy, or indeed on the form or structure of such an organization. An implementation strategy for strengthening the BETI

Foundation as a girls' education coordination center was not requested; it should now be developed.

Monitoring the implementation of a detailed action plan both by the contractor and USAID/I will be helpful within a flexible environment that promotes internal learning, along with accountability.

Also necessary for BETI's future success is a simple arrangement to replace the existing cumbersome and complex funding and approval mechanism. Streamlined procurement processes with clearly specified time limits for approvals and flexible funding arrangements (e.g., grants) should be explored.

Finally, frequent and direct communications with the GOI and GOUP would be helpful in strengthening cooperation, building ownership, and exploring bilateral arrangements for future funding. Strong programmatic linkages with partners would improve the quality and effectiveness of the deliverables.

In order for project managers to fulfill their roles effectively, roles of key project staff should be made clear, and critical skill gaps in project management, administration, understanding funding mechanism limitations, etc., should be identified and filled, preferably with training.

IV.- CONCLUSIONS

Information available to date to the evaluation team shows that the project has completed some but not all the key actions and activities laid out in the revised AED/L Work Plan for the October 1, 1998- March 31, 2001 contract period. The girls' education coordination center, (now named the BETI Foundation) was established in March 2000 as a Trust; its Board of Trustees, Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Groups have been constituted and have met at least once; its work areas have been defined and its organizational structure established. It has completed a survey of private sector schools in U.P., set up a website, made contacts with the media, and signed protocols of cooperation with a few public and private educational services providers. All these actions and activities have been done within the past six months, except for the private sector school survey, and are far less than what was promised in the DAI/AED/L Work Plan in terms of both quantity and quality. One of the reasons might be that the Work Plan itself was too ambitious given the resources at the project's disposal: its also lists many activities indicate their respective priorities.

Even though the activities completed are fewer than planned by DAI/ AED/L and are relatively newly started, they seem to go in the right direction. While it is too early to expect the project to show positive impact, the decision to evaluate progress thus far is a pertinent one. Indeed, the evaluation has revealed that the project have been facing a member of fundamental constraints, which require immediate attention.

IV.A.- Lessons learnt

The evaluation once again demonstrates that agreement on a vision or idea is not enough to make it work. Much more needs to follow. The idea must be embodied first in a strategic plan, and then in resource and operational plans through a process of priority-setting and planning for implementation and sustainability. The process must involve key stakeholders as active participants, and continuous monitoring. In this instance, the focus of the strategic planning process should be to define the steps that will enable BETI to operate as an effective and efficient organization, and at the same time pave the way for it to become an institution valued by its environment. A phased work plan is needed.

IV.B.-Unresolved Issues

The constraints facing the project stem from three fundamental, related problems that need further research. They are fundamental because, if they are left unresolved, the future of BETI cannot be assured regardless of how relevant the original vision might have been. These constraints are the following:

1/.- The non-existence of BETI as an independent, autonomous entity in its own right. On paper there is an entity called BETI, but in reality this entity does not exist, either physically or as an organization, apart from the project or, more specifically, the AED/L office and its personnel.

This is a sore point made to the evaluation team repeatedly during its field work, by BETI's stakeholders, partners and staff. Although everyone including DAI/AED seemed to agree that BETI should have an independent structure, so far this has not materialized.

2/.- The absence of a budget for BETI. No regular funding source is available outside the project/contract funds administered by DAI/AED/L. Therefore, BETI's operations are tied not only to the amount of funding available under the contract, they are also hampered by the regulations and procedures governing the disbursement of these project funds.

3/.- The legal status and institutional features of BETI. Although discussion of BETI's legal status lies outside the evaluators' SOW, some of the organizational and management problems brought to their attention nevertheless stem from BETI's legal and institutional framework. Such are questions and claims regarding the decision-making of the Board, the Steering Committee, the Technical Advisory Groups, etc., as well as the many "hats," some of which would be incompatible in normal circumstances, that the incumbent Director is wearing within BETI and AED/L. Different views of the respective compositions, roles, and decision authority of these structures also exist among stakeholders, as indicated in the DAI/AED work plan and interviews with members of these structures, who want more decision-making authority. One question is why the Board, which is supposed to be composed of senior technical and management experts, should be vested with authority over policies and key staffing decisions, while the Technical Advisory Groups, which comprise similar professional experts, and the Steering Committee, which represents current and potential BETI financiers, are not?

Thus, at the heart of the strategic thinking process for BETI are the key issues of funding sources and institutional structures. These issues should be analyzed beyond their legal aspects with a view to delving into such areas as the socio-political requirements for a high-profile, non-governmental agency to operate successfully in India. Experiences from other countries should be reviewed.

At this point, it appears that BETI does need technical support from competent institutional/ organizational development specialists to guide it through the review and planning process. These skills are hard to find and they are expensive, but DAI/AED should be in a position to provide them.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Persons Interviewed

1-	Ms.	Carla Barbiero- USAID/I
2-	Ms.	Renu Jain-USAID/I
3-	Dr.	Nalin.R. Jena-USAID/I
4-	Prof.	A.K.Jalaluddin - TAG/R member, BETI
5-	Dr.	Akhila Shibdas - TAG/A member, BETI
6-	Dr.	Panchmukhi - Member of Board, BETI
7-	Mr.	Mahesh Kumar - Auditor, BETI
8-	Dr.	Vimla Ramchandran
9-	Dr.	Sharda Jain- Sandhan, Jaipur
10-	Dr.	Manju Agarwal
11-	Mr.	Manohar Shenoy - Director, CARE/L, UP (Member BETI, Steering Committee)
12-	Mr.	Alexander Matthew - Project Director, CRS, Lucknow
13-	Ms.	Deepti Pant - Coordinator, Education, CRS, Lucknow
14-	Ms.	Sikha - CRS/L
15-	Ms.	Puja - CRS/L
16-	Ms.	Suman Bhatnagar, UNICEF, Lucknow
17-	Mr.	Net Ram, Secretary, Basic Education, Govt. of U.P.
18-	Ms.	Vrinda Saroop - State Project Director, DPEP, UP
19-	Mr.	Rajesh Tandon - Director, PRIA, Delhi
20-	Ms.	Sehba Hussain - BETI
21-	Ms.	Nishi Mehrotra - Deputy Director, BETI
22-	Ms	Neeti Saxena - BETI
23-	Ms.	Saheera Naim - Communications Consultant
24-	Ms.	Anjum Hasan - Business and Finance Development Consultant
25-	Mr.	Alok Dwivedi - Office Assistant
26-	Mr.	R.P. Sahi - Social Mobilization Consultant
27-	Dr.	Chloe O'Gara - Vice President, AED/W
28-	Ms.	Deanna Handel - DAI/W

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

Date	Time	Names of organizations/individuals and meeting venues	Linkage with BETI	
5/12	10:30 am	Lem H. Truong, President LT Associates, Inc.	Contract for Evaluation signed and briefing on assignment	Work
5/14	10:30 am	DAI (Belinda Bernard) and AED (Deanna Handel)	Contractors for USAID/I girls' education project - briefing on project implementation highlights	Docu
5/16	10:00 am	USAID office Deputy Director and staff - briefing	Funding agency	
	4:00 pm	Carla Barbiero, USAID		
	5:30 pm	Renu Jain and Nalin Jena, USAID		
5/18	11:00 am	Akhila Sivadas, Media Advocacy Group	TAG-Advocacy member	
5/19	10:30 am	Prof. AKJalaluddin Dr. Panchmukhi	TAG-Research member Board of Trustees member	
	12:30 pm	Mr. Mahesh Kumar	Auditor, AED Chartered Accountant, and facilitator for setting up BETI as a Trust	
5/20	5:00 pm	Ms. Sehba Hussain	Director, AED/L and Founding member of BETI	
5/21	9:30 am	Ms. Sehba Hussain, Ms. Nishi Mehrotra, Ms. Shahira Naim, Ms. Niti Saxena,	AED/L staff, also working as BETI staff Steering Committee member	
	3:45 pm	Ms. Anjum Hassan, Mr. Alok Dwivedi, Mr. RPShahi - staff of the AED/L office Ms. Manju Agarwal, Director, Mahila Samakhya		
5/22	11:15 am	Mr. Alexander Matthew, CRS Zonal Director Ms. Puja, CRS Education team member Ms. Shiksha, CRS program executive	Steering Committee member, and implementing partner for IR3 Results Framework	
	7:00 pm	Dr. Sharda Jain, Director, Sandhan	TAG-Research member	
5/23	8:15 am	Dr. Vimala Ramachandran, women's activist, Former Director MS, GOI	Stakeholder	
	11:00 am	Mr. Manohar Shenoy, Director, CARE-U.P.	Steering Committee member	
5/24	Cancelled	Dr. Shardendu, Director, SCERT	Stakeholder, and Implementing partner on work with DIETs	
	Cancelled	Mr. Abhimanyu Tewari, President - U.P. Prathmik Shiksha Sangh, GOUP	Steering Committee member	

5/25	11:10 am	Ms. Vrinda Saroop, State Director DPEP	Stakeholder	
	3:30 pm.	Ms. Suman Bhatnagar, Education program officer, UNICEF	Stakeholder	
5/26	9:30 am.	Mr. Net Ram, State Secretary, Basic Education, GOUP	Steering Committee member	
5/30	4:00 pm	Mr. Rajesh Tandon, Director, PRIA	Stakeholder, and O.D. specialist	

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

i) How did you get involved with this project? Who approached you? How did you feel about getting involved? How has your involvement experience been so far?

ii) How was the project idea conceived? What process was used to contextualize the project and inputs? What lessons were learned from the UMASS project and how did these influence this project's design and implementations style?

iii) What do you think the project has accomplished so far?

iv) What do you see as the project's main challenges?

v) Do you feel that there is a need for BETI? Why? Are there any doubts about the assumptions that have guided its inception?

vi) How do you see BETI's role? Are you aware of any other organizations which have a similar mandate to BETI? Is there convergence of thinking regarding BETI's role?

vii) The USAID project has three principal elements- Building the capacity of the DIETs, SIEMAT, and SCERT; Building the capacity of CRS and its OPs; and establishing a girls' education coordination center. Is there any evidence that the first aspect was pursued by the project? Was BETI supposed to provide this? What is BETI's relationship with SCERT and SIEMAT?

viii) What is BETI's relationship with CRS and CARE? In what ways does this relationship work well? What problems, if any have been encountered in the relationship so far?

ix) What channels of communication and management structures provide challenges to the project? Are you satisfied with the project structures and communication channels? Are they conducive to efficient and effective implementation? Can you suggest better ways?

x) Do you feel that there is clarity of roles of the major players - USAID/I, AED/L, BETI, AED/W, DAI?

xi) If you have attended any of the meetings, what has been your experience? How do you see the different committees of BETI functioning well? Can you describe the ways in which the committees are not functioning well in your experience? What suggestions can you make?

xii) Do you feel any strain from the implementation project so far? How would you describe the strain? Where does the strain come from? What could alleviate the strain?

xiii) With hindsight, do you see aspects of the design or implementation that could have been done differently? What on-going mechanisms were in place that could have allowed you to modify the project during the last two years?

xiv) What comment would you like to make regarding the planning process of the project? Has it been well planned? Do the plans match the goals and objectives of the project? Are the plans followed well? What problems have been encountered? What suggestions would you like to make?

xv) Have you noticed project delays in other USAID projects in U.P.? If so, what were the reasons for these delays? Why do you think there have been delays in this project? What was happening during the first year of the project? Why was the private sector school study so delayed?

xvi) Did the contractor relationship with USAID/I provide strain to the project? What was the nature of this strain?

xvii) What assistance, if any has been provided by AED and DAI? What was the nature of the support? Has their support been of use to the project? What needs, if any, were not met by the contractor?

viii) What are your views about the talents and caliber of key project staff? To your mind, do they represent the technical skills needed for their roles and functions? What types of additional skills would be needed for their roles?

xix) What type of staff should a girls' education coordination center have? In your mind, does BETI have this type and caliber of staff? What would be your recommendations?

xx) Do you see BETI as a "Center of Excellence"? What would such a center provide that would make it a clearing house on policy, information, research, training and advocacy? What to your mind is the primary function of a girls' education coordination center?

xxi) Who does BETI work with? What is the nature of this relationship? What value, if any, does BETI add to this relationship?

xxii) Does BETI know about, and/or understand your partner strengths? What ways would you suggest for strengthening the linkages between BETI and yourself or other partner organizations?

xxiii) Who is BETI accountable to? What is BETI's relationship with GOUP, other implementing partners, and with the CBOs?

xxiv) How is this project viewed in U.P.? What has been the experience of working with USAID, its contractors, and contract staff? How has the communication been? Are you aware of any recent developments and shifts within the project? Would you like to make any suggestions?

xxv) Who needs BETI? Who uses it? Why? What would they do if BETI was not there? What would happen to BETI beyond AID/AED?

xxvi) Would you like to make any suggestions to USAID regarding future involvement in girls' education in U.P.? Which other actors, agencies, institutions should they speak to? What should they focus on? What should they avoid?

Appendix 4:List of Documents Reviewed

1- DAI's Scope of Work

2- Work Plans

- October 1998 - August 2000
- October 1999 – March 2001
- October 2000 – June 2001

3- David Harding's report, "Strengthening Girls' education in India," prepared for USAID/India; June 1998

4- Peg Sutton's reports

- Situation Analysis of Girls' Education in U.P
- The BETI Center

5- Ron Bonner's report," Results Framework for Girls' Education," prepared for USAID/India

6- Reports of the Private Sector School Study

7- BETI Research Strategy notes

8- Minutes of Technical Advisory Group (Research) and Steering Committee meetings

9- Annual Progress Reports

- 1999
- 2000

10- Quarterly Progress Report

- October – December 2000
- July – September 2000
- April –June 2000
- January – March 2000
- October – December 1999
- July – September 1999
- April –June 1999
- December 1998-March 1999

11- Trust Deed and By-laws

12- BETI's Business Plan

13- Note on Establishing program linkages for BETI

14- Minutes of Roundtable consultative meeting for BETI

15- BETI Results Report for 2000

16- Draft PLA Toolkit

Appendix 5: BETI's Institutional Structures & Organizational Chart

A.- Founding members:

1. Ms. Sehba Hussain
2. Dr. Kaval Gulati

B.- Board of Trustees:

1. Ms. Sehba Hussain, Chairperson
2. Dr. Kaval Gulati
3. Dr. Devaki Jain
4. Dr. V.R. Panchamukhi
5. Mr. S.K. Sharma
6. Ms. Runa Banerjee

C.- Steering Committee:

1- Secretary, Department of Basic Education, GOUP
2- Director, Doordarshan, UP
3- Director, CARE –UP
4- Director, CRS- North India
5- Director, Mahila Samakhaya, UP
6- Director, SRC, Literacy House
7- Regional Representative, OXFAM- UP
8- President, UP Primary Teachers Association
9- Ms. Anuradha oshi, SIDH, Mussorie
10- Director, OSD, USAID/ I, New Delhi
11- Dr. Chloe O'Gara, AED, Washington
12- Ms. Sehba Hussain, Director, BETI Foundation

D.- Technical Advisory Groups:

1- TAG (Research)

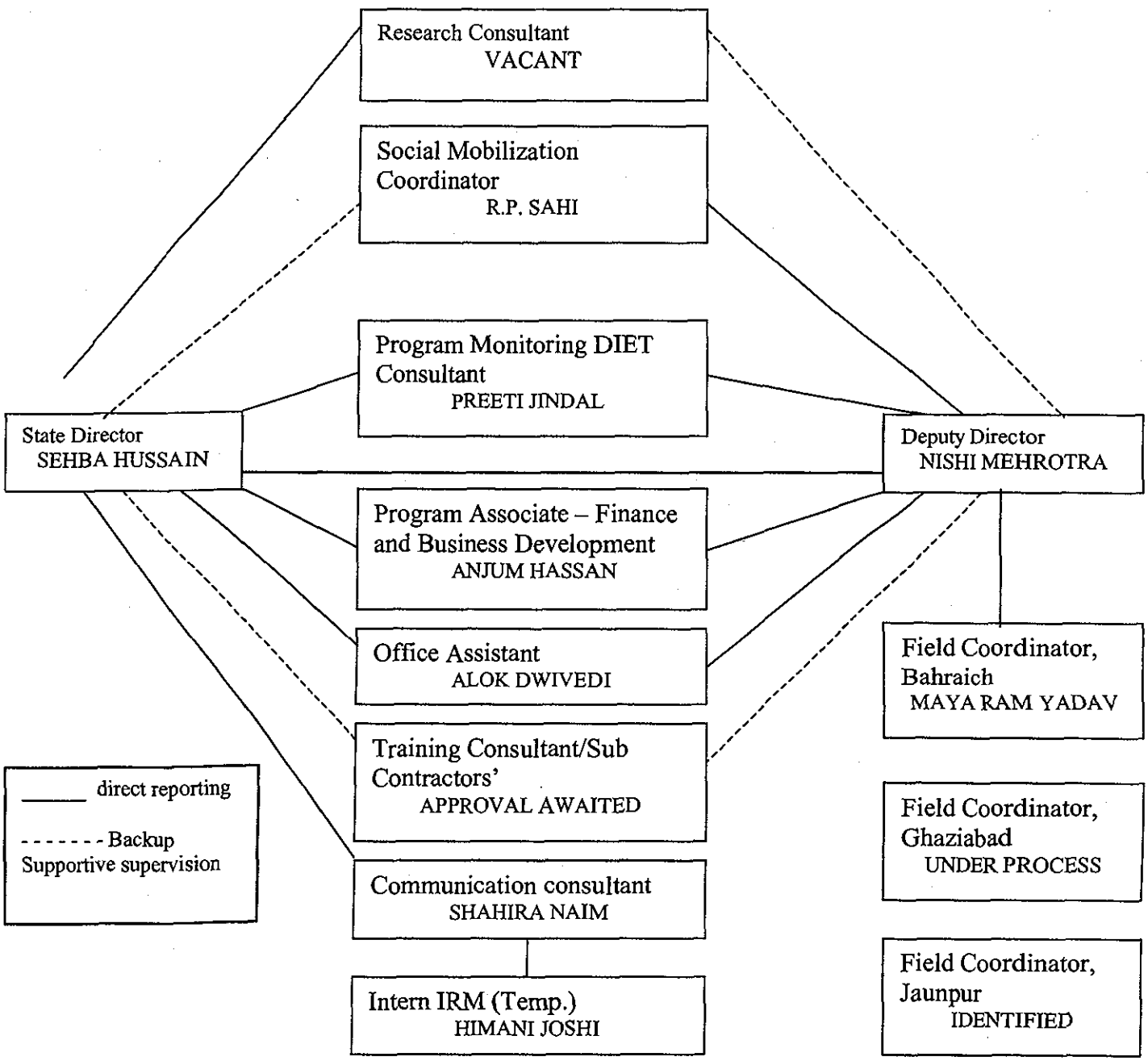
1. Ms. Sehba Hussain, Chair
2. Dr. Sharda Jain, Sandhan, Jaipur
3. Prof. A.K. Jalaluddin, New Delhi
4. Ms. Renuka Mishra, Nirantar, N. Delhi
5. Dr. Puja Juyal, I.T. College, Lucknow

2- TAG (Advocacy)

1. Ms. Sehba Hussain, Chair
2. Ms. Akhila Shivdas, CFAR, N. Delhi
3. Ms. Irpinder Bhatia, Asavari Films, N. Delhi
4. Dr. Urmil Thapiyal, Writer, Composer & Lyricist, Lucknow
5. Mr. Sharat Pradhan, Correspondent, Reuters, Redff. Net and other agencies, Lucknow

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF BETI(as of May 26, 2001)

Note: Mr. Anmol Singh died. Although Neeti Saxena is working in the BETI office, her name was not mentioned in DAI/AED/DETI staff list, because her salary is being paid from another source. Ms. Preeti Jinda is the new Program Monitoring consultant



Appendix 6: Snippets from the files provided by DAI/AED/L

- A three-day PLA workshop in Lucknow elicited views on BETI. Taking part were participants from the three districts of Baharaich, Ghaziabad, and Jaunpur. They included BRC Coordinators, ABSAs (Additional Basic Shiksha Adhikaris), NPRCCs (Nyaya Panchayat Resource Center Coordinators), teachers (from two schools in each district), DIET faculty, and representatives from SCERT and the State Project Office. The participants felt that:

  - *A carefully developed seating arrangement will help develop contacts among the children.*
  - *Developed an understanding of the workload of children and their school participation.*
  - *One can understand the problems girls face to participate in school.*
  - *Gender differences will have to be taken up through activities.*
  - *Basic problems of gender bias can be addressed through gender analysis of text books.*
  - *Learned that girls like to be questioned on school work just as boys do.*
  - *Realized that inappropriate language though unconsciously used, still affected the girls' psyche.*

- The launch was such a high profile event that BETI is firmly registered in the minds. This is of great advantage when one meets officials and other people who can easily recall BETI. For example, during the first meeting with Ms. Sharda Lal, Program Executive, All India Radio, she immediately remembered BETI, was aware of its agenda – thanks to the visibility during the launch.
- BETI has an informal arrangement with Lucknow under which we have provided the Program Executives in-charge of Women's Program (both rural/urban), children's program (rural/urban) with lists of Resource Persons to be used for talks, panel discussions etc. BETI will also facilitate their field visits to make live recordings of success stories in the field. One talk and one panel discussion has already been broadcast. A field trip to record the success story of Balika Shiksha Project in Barabanki is scheduled for June.
- The Mahakumbh was covered by the news channels. In Aaj Tak, the 24-hour Hindi news channel, it was part of a feature on "Night Life at the Kumbh". The team had shot the street theatre performance in the camp area at night.
- As part of the Mahakumbh Advocacy, a BETI-sponsored booklet containing sayings from ancient scriptures on women's education was released at a meeting of religious leaders at the Mahakumbh. The book was released by Sri Sri Ravishankar ji, the head of the Art of Living Movement. Among the other eminent persons who spoke at the function as the Head of the Gayatri Pariwar. Both of them endorsed the cause of Girl Child Education. The function was attendedly a cross section of people including their followers. The event was covered by the media.

Appendix 7: BETI's WORK AREAS

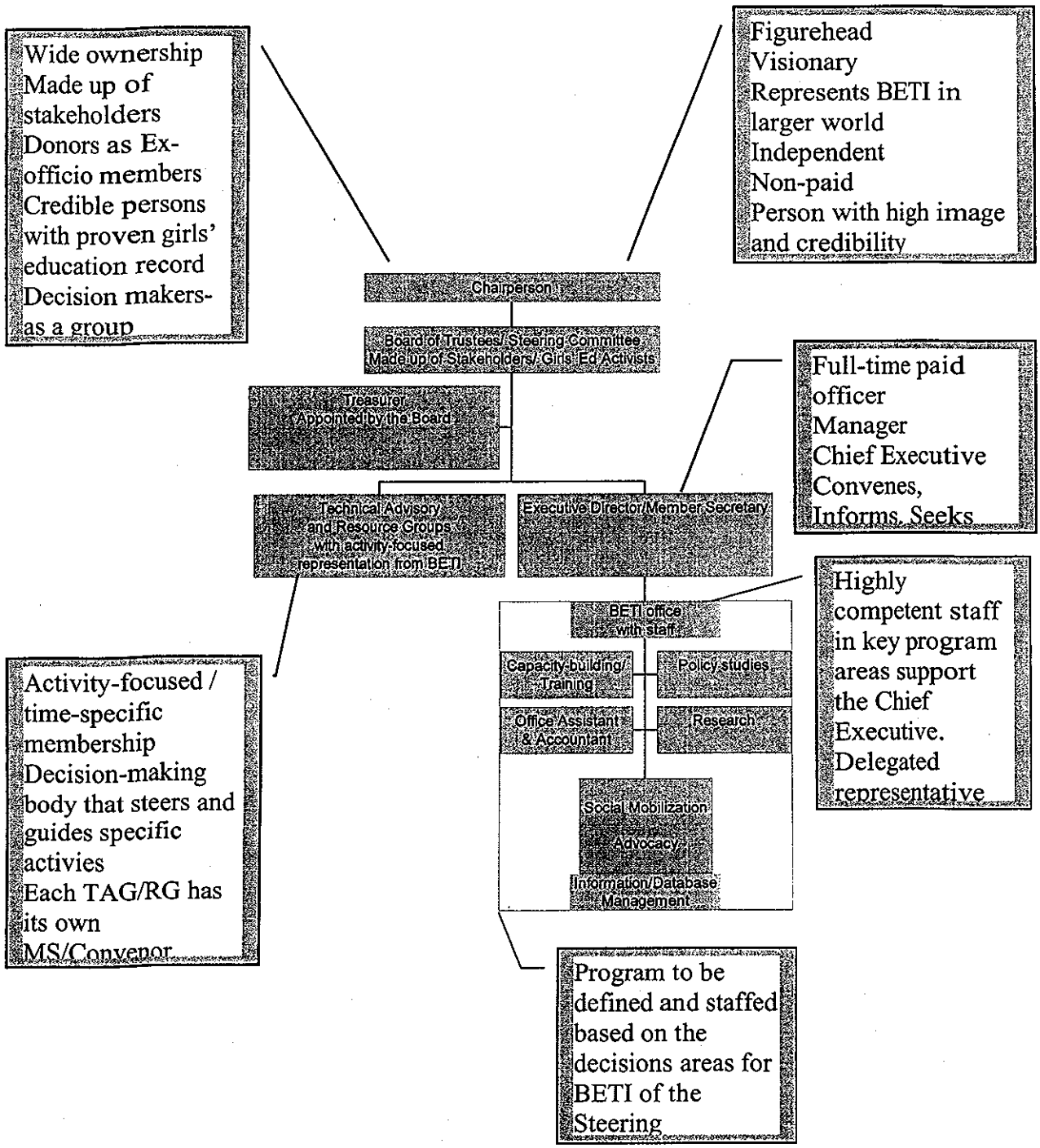
	Advocacy/ Social Mobilization	Information/ Database Management	Research	Capacity building/ Training
BETI Institutional Capacity	Marketing	Website	Team training in research techniques	Staff members
Janshala	Importance of schooling for girls (the largest unreached group), working children and children with disabilities	Adapt Pratham model from Mumbai	PLA - Social Mapping, - Micro-planning (e.g., water outlets, working children, distance to school, etc.)	Training for - Community Core groups - Teachers for Alternative Education Centers - Teacher Monitors
DIETS	Advocacy for girls education - Retention in schools through "Mother-Daughter Melas" - School enrollment campaigns - Capacity building of community through folk media * Village Education Committees (VEC), Mother-Teacher Associations, Women's Motivator Groups at village/cluster level.	- Dissemination of useful TLMs. - Data collection on district-specific education information & its dissemination. - Information about local resource persons available at district level to Block Resource Center of DPEP, - Sharing & disseminating resource materials to Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centers to strengthen schools	PLA to strengthen Gender in Class-rooms in the 5 research areas - Curriculum, - Instruction and guidance - Language and speech - Managing time & space - Sexuality	- At community level VECs, Women motivator Groups (WMG), Mother / Teacher Associations (MTAs) and Mahila Sansads (Women's Parliament.) - DIET Level: Training of Block Resource Coordinators, Nyaya Panchayat Resource Center Coordinators and in-service training of teachers and Shiksha Mitras (Para-Teachers)
Vocational Education & Training	Demand generation in urban areas (work with NGOs e.g., LAXMI , Mahila Samakhya & SEWA	Access to Non Formal Education and Family Life Education materials from State Resource Centre (Literacy House) & Mahila Samakhya	Identification of out-of-school girls with assistance from Janshala through LAXMI and SEWA.	Support NFE and Vocational training being done by SEWA and vocational training through apprenticeship
CISCO	- Demand generation. Look for job placements for girls with IT training.	- Collect information on 10 Women Polytechnics in U.P. - Based on certain criteria select 5 for collaboration.	- Market Research on Girls as IT users - Identification of and feasibility analysis of local academies - Gender module for IT field testing in training programs	- Training of local instructors, - Local NGO/Academy strengthening

Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Community Awareness - Importance of ECE - Contribution to ECE - Supplementary nutrition	ECE examples from India and around the world	Community perceptions of ECE	Strengthen existing Anganwadis & Balwadis
Information Resource Center	Access following websites on education. SIEMAT Mahila Samakhya HRD-GOI website International websites	- Develop Website network - Data base of + Consultants + Media Personnel + Reviews & Journals for Education Research. + Best Practices	- Case studies/ - micro studies	Collaborate with Mahila Samakhya Resource Centers at state & district level

Source: BETI: 24 May '01

Appendix 8: Organizational Framework proposed for BETI

at the Self-Evaluation Workshop in Lucknow, May 22-24,2001 by Stakeholders.



This framework was developed during detailed discussion with key stakeholders in the course of the evaluation, and with AED/L and USAID/I staff during the self-evaluation workshop held in Lucknow on 5/24/01