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LOK JUMBISH – Rajasthan
People's movement for education for all

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Glossary and acronyms

AC	Area coordinator — person in charge of district-level management structure
Adhyapika Manch	Women teachers' forum
APO	Assistant project officer
BNS	Bhavan Nirman Samiti — Building construction committee at the village level.
BNS	Bhavan Nirman Samiti — village-level sub-committee of the VEC to oversee/manage the repair of school building and new construction
BRPM	Block-level review and planning meeting
BSG	Block resource group
BSS	Balika Shikshan Shivir — Residential camps for primary education of out-of-school adolescent girls
CRT	Cluster resource team
DFID	Department for International Development — Government of the United Kingdom
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DRU	District resource unit
EFA	Education for all
GOI	Government of India
GOR	Government of Rajasthan
IIEP	International Institute For Educational Planning, Paris (UNESCO)
KSPS	Khand Stariya Shiksha Prabandhan Samiti (Block Education Management Committee)
Mahila Samooh	Village-level women's group
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIS	Management information system
MLL	Minimum levels of learning
MSV	Mahila Shikshan Vihar also known as WRITE
MT	Master trainers
Muktaks	Teachers of Mukangan
Muktangan	Flexible education programme for tribal children: an open school
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organisations, also known as voluntary organisations
Panchayat Samiti	Elected body responsible for local government at the block level
PO	Project officer
Prerak Dal	Group of social animators who worked with teachers and LJ functionaries to carry out school mapping and micro planning
RPM	Review planning meeting
Samvadika	State-level panel of experts on women's development
Samyukta	In-charge of women's development activities at the block level
Sandhan	A Jaipur-based educational research and training organisation that worked almost exclusively with Lok Jumbish from 1992 to 1998
Sankul Sangam	A gathering of cluster personnel – a form of staff training
Shiksha Aap ke Dwar	Household survey of educational status of children — to identify out-of-school children in the 6-14 age group
Shiksha Darpan	House-to-house survey by teachers to identify out-of-school children
Shiksha Karmi	Parateachers appointed in the Shiksha Karmi schools
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency

SM	School mapping
SS	Sahaj Shiksha — non-formal education centres of Lok Jumbish
SSK	Sahaj Shiksha Kendra — the alternative schools/non-formal centres run in the evenings for out of school children
VEC	Village education committee
VER	Village education registers
WRITE	Women's residential institute for training and education — also known as Mahila Shikshan Vihar

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The backdrop

Rajasthan evokes a mixed response in the development community. On the one hand, it conjures up the image of a romantic and rugged terrain inhabited by people who are friendly and open; on the other, it is cited as a typical case of extreme social and geographical diversity, with large arid areas in and around the desert, persistence of caste inequalities and poor status of women. According to the 1991 Census, of the 7 million primary age children (6–11 years) in Rajasthan, the proportion attending primary schools was 52.8 per cent (3.7 m). Only 37.4 per cent of primary age girls attended school. The dropout rate (Classes I and V) was around 55 per cent and fewer than 30 per cent of children completed primary schooling (Census 1991). Despite the substantial increase in the number of educational institutions and enrolment and literacy rates after Independence — the overall situation with regard to education remained grim. At the beginning of the last decade (1991), around 6,200 villages and 20,000 small habitations did not have primary school facilities. However, as the decade drew to a close, Census 2001 brought much needed cheer to the education community. It revealed a decadal jump of 21.47 per cent for men and 23.90 per cent for women in literacy rates — among the highest in the country. As compared to the previous decade, literacy stands at 76.46 per cent for men and 44.34 per cent for women (Census 2001). It looks as if Rajasthan is finally turning the corner! (See Annexure 3 for Statistical Profile of Rajasthan.)

Notwithstanding the impressive level of progress in macro statistics, sample surveys reveal a disturbing picture. Dalits, especially those belonging to communities like the Balmiki, tribal communities like the Garasia, people living in remote areas and in the margins of society, have little access to education. A significant number of their children are not in school. In any case, until recently, formal primary schools were not within the reach of children from disadvantaged communities and remote areas. In addition, the literacy rate for women is exceedingly low — 9.10 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 7.10 per cent for Scheduled Tribes (NCAER/HDI 1997). The proportion of women teachers is a dismal 27.99 per cent and teacher–pupil ratio stands at 1:54 (Government of India 2001). Discussions with village level animators involved in micro planning revealed an entirely new dimension: girls are not even counted as children!

When we did the household survey we were amazed to note that the number of girls in the total was very low. We inquired further, went over the survey forms and met families that had ‘missed out’ the girls. They said they did not count them as children, these young ones were married! There was not a single girl in Bapini village of Phalodi block of Jodhpur district who attended school. This was revealed when school mapping was done.¹

A journalist who travelled around the state documenting the situation of Dalits published a shocking account in 1999:

¹ Interview with Lok Jumbish worker in Jodhpur District, 1999.

Savitri's family is anything but well off. But when she dropped out of school here in Viraatnagar, it wasn't because of poverty. Her own classmates — and teacher — made it impossible for the 15-year-old to continue. 'The moment I enter the room in school, the other children make faces. They start singing "*bhangi aayee hai, aayee hai, bhangi aayee hai!*" (The *bhangi* has come.) The words of the song are foul and insulting.' Savitri is from a family of manual scavengers. A group that's among the most vulnerable within Dalits. The official label for them is '*bhangi*'. Many here are from the Mehter caste. And quite a few of these groups now call themselves Balmikis. With even other scheduled castes practising untouchability towards them, they end up pretty close to the bottom of the social heap. Women scavengers cleaning dry latrines tend to draw their *pallu* over the noses and grip it in their teeth. That offers them some protection in their unsanitary work. The children at the school mimic this when Savitri enters. 'They bite a side of their collar, push their noses up. Sometimes put a hanky on their faces. I would start crying, but it didn't matter to them.'²

Such descriptions do not shock the people in Rajasthan. The real-life situations they speak about have been narrated over and over again during the last 50 years. Almost every discussion on access to education and the educational backwardness of Rajasthan invariably begins (and often unfortunately ends) with stories of unequal access, persistence of caste prejudices and the abysmal situation of women and girls. These snapshots of the situation on the ground are often used to argue for higher investment in the education of girls and also for more foreign aid to Rajasthan.

Evolution of Lok Jumbish

Two questions that plagued administrators and educational practitioners were: how to turn around this diverse and difficult situation to ensure that every child gets an opportunity to go to school; and how to help girls break out of centuries of discrimination. Lok Jumbish (LJ) was born in 1992 out of one such churning within the portals of the Government of India (GOI) and the Government of Rajasthan (GOR).

Lok Jumbish drew upon close to two decades of work in the fields of primary education and women's development, done by both the government and voluntary sectors, particularly by voluntary organisations like SWRC in Tilonia, Urmul Trust in Bikaner, Sewa Mandir and Astha in Udaipur, and several other small and large initiatives in various districts of Rajasthan. In this context, the Women's Development Programme and Shiksha Karmi of Rajasthan could be considered the forerunners of the programme in the state, though countrywide, this kudos would go to Mahila Samakhya in Karnataka, UP and Gujarat.

Rajasthan Lok Jumbish was launched in 1992 by GOI and GOR with support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). Its main objective — as stated in the

² P. Sainath: This is the way they go to school. *The Hindu*, 28 November 1999.

1990 project document — was ‘to develop, demonstrate, catalyse and transform the mainstream education system with the objective of ensuring that every child has access to basic education (Grades I to VIII).’ The starting point lay in the recognition that the real problem was not one of supply alone, but of unutilised capacities — as indicated by the low enrolment and participation rates. Even 50 years after Independence, very few literate men and women can be found among the poor in the villages. Lok Jumbish began its mission to mobilise with the mandate to ‘motivate and energise’ the community and education service providers.

Box 1: Summary of goals articulated in the 1990 project document

- a) Universalisation of Primary Education, viewed as a composite programme of access to primary education for all up to 14 years of age; universal participation till they complete the primary stage through formal or non-formal education programmes; and universal achievement of at least minimal levels of learning.
- b) Drastic reduction in illiteracy, particularly in the 15–35 age group, bringing literacy levels in this group up to 80 per cent in each gender and for every identified disadvantaged group, and making the three ‘R’s relevant to the living and working conditions of the people.
- c) Provision of opportunities to maintain, use and upgrade their education, and provision of facilities for development of skills to all persons who are functionally literate and/or have received primary education through formal or non-formal channels.
- d) Creation of the necessary structure and setting in motion processes which would empower women and make education an instrument for women’s equality.
- e) Making necessary interventions and creating circumstances to enable the ‘lower castes’, the most backward of the tribal people and other poorest sections of society to move towards equal participation in basic education.
- f) Improving the content and process of education to better relate it to the environment, people’s culture and their working and living conditions, thereby enhancing their ability to learn and cope with problems of livelihood and environment.

Source: Government of Rajasthan and Government of India 1990 (December): Chapter II.

How was this concept operationalised?

The timeline given in Annexure 1 captures the evolution of the management structure in two distinct phases — 1992 to December 1999 (which encompassed Phase I and II of the project) and December 1999 to June 2004 (the ongoing Phase III of the project). The processes (some of them running concurrently) involved were essentially as follows:

Step One: Creation of an autonomous body for launching and managing the programme, with an empowered executive committee that would meet at least once in three months to review progress and approve proposals, as

well as new structures/institutional mechanisms necessary for the realisation of the project objectives.

- Step Two: Period of trial in five blocks with the active involvement of local voluntary agencies and social activists to create bottom-up planning mechanisms that could respond to the diverse educational needs of the community. This process resulted in the introduction of a Prerak Dals (core teams), followed by the formation of Bhavan Nirman Samiti (BNS), and then of Village Education Committees (VECs), Clusters (Sankul) for mobilisation and educational support for groups of 25–30 villages, Khand Stariya Shiksha Prabandhan Samiti (KSPS, a block-level management committee) and a Block Steering Group (BSG) to support/guide and monitor the programmes in the five blocks. This process culminated with KSPS being delegated the powers to sanction additional schools/teachers and start new non-formal and other educational centres.
- Step Three: The initiation, by trial and error, of School Mapping and Micro Planning – where a group of social animators (Prerak Dal) worked with teachers and LJ functionaries to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the educational facilities available for children in the 5–14 age group. Based on their findings, LJ brought out a manual for school mapping and micro planning in 1994. This process emerged as the single most important mechanism for community involvement in planning and monitoring the education of their children, as well as in creating mechanisms for tracking the progress of each child *by name*.
- Step Four: Evolution of norms to assess learning outcomes of children, beginning with intensive consultations on Minimum Levels of Learning. Initiated in early 1993, this process culminated in the development of textbooks and other teaching–learning material for children in both formal and non-formal schools. Training and motivation of teachers emerged as an important thrust area, as did training and capacity building of village-level groups (Prerak Dal, VEC, Mahila Samooh, BNS). To reduce dependence on specialist Master Trainers from outside, efforts were made to develop in-house training capacity. The experience of Rajasthan’s Women’s Development Programme had demonstrated that creating a ‘separate breed of trainers’ could lead to a divide between ‘trainers’ and ‘workers’. Lok Jumbish therefore identified from within its own ranks persons with the potential and aptitude to become trainers and helped them acquire the necessary training and skills. It simultaneously strengthened Sandhan, a local resource agency, and ensured its availability to LJ on an ongoing and dedicated basis. While external trainers and experts were invited to come in from time to time, they did not form the backbone of LJ’s training system. Another step that LJ took was to weave gender issues into all training and ensure that every programme included a strong gender component.

Step Four: Deconstruction of the reasons for non-participation by women teachers in MLL training led to the creation of a forum called Adhyapika Manch (see Box 2: Adhyapika Manch for details). Similarly, analysis of specific issues like gender mainstreaming, improving the quality of non-formal education and bringing it on par with the formal system, ensuring cost-effectiveness and quality of the repair and construction of school buildings and training centres led to the creation of subject specialist advisory groups at the state level. Experts and practitioners were invited at periodic intervals to interact with project functionaries. While many of the groups did not have formal/fixed members, efforts were made to maintain continuity of interaction between committed experts, practitioners and field functionaries.

Step Six: As coverage increased and the number of functionaries at all levels went up, a decision was taken to fine-tune the **matrix system of management** to ensure that each staff member shouldered the responsibility for one sector as well as one area where s/he would be responsible for all sectors. This enabled functionaries to develop a holistic understanding of the project, appreciate the needs and concerns of each sector in their area of responsibility and, at the same time, develop an interest in one special sector (non-formal education, pedagogy and curriculum, teacher training, women's development, etc.).

Step Seven: A mechanism called the RPM (review planning meeting) was put in place. Once a month, this forum brought together all functionaries at the cluster level to review their work and plan for the following month. The decisions taken in this forum, as well as assessments of progress, were then shared at the block RPM every month. The same process was then repeated at the state level once every two months. State-level functionaries were expected to attend at least two or three RPMs at the cluster and block levels each month, thereby maintaining an active link between project managers and field functionaries. These forums focused on needs-based planning, with special emphasis on reaching the unreached.

Among the innovations that can be traced to the consultative process initiated through RPMs were:

- i. **Muktangan** — a flexible programme for the education of tribal children in the Khandela cluster of Kishenganj block in Baran district, and Kotra in Udaipur district (see Box 6 on Muktangan).
- ii. **Madrassa strengthening programmes** to reach out to children from minority communities in Kaman block of Bharatpur district.
- iii. **Hostels for tribal children** (short- and long-stay) to cater to the educational needs of children of seasonal migrants as well as those living in remote/scattered habitations.

- iv. **Mahila Shikshan Vihar (MSV)** — residential condensed courses for out-of-school adolescent girls/young women in the 15+ age group (see Box 3: Wrestling with the formal system).
- v. **Balika Shikshan Shivir (BSS)** — a residential camp of 6 to 8 months duration for out-of-school girls in the 9+ age group. This serves as a bridge programme to facilitate their re-entry into the formal school system (see Box 3: Wrestling with the formal system).
- vi. Institutionalisation of **Sahaj Shiksha Kendra (SSK)**, a rigorous non-formal education programme that caters to the needs of working children (see Box 5: Sahaj Shiksha).
- vii. Creation of **Village Education Registers** (maintained by the VEC) and **Retention Registers** (maintained by the primary school/SSK) to track children's participation/attendance.

Box 2: Adhyapika Manch — forum for women teachers

We realised that few women teachers were volunteering for MLL training. Since we wanted to understand their problems, we decided to have a separate meeting with women teachers in Pisangan block. Forty-four schools were requested to send women teachers. We initiated an open discussion. It was like opening the floodgates! Training programmes are usually organised during the vacations, when most teachers get an opportunity to live with their families. Women invariably catch up on domestic chores during the vacations. When children have holidays, mothers cannot get out.

In the training programme itself, some games involved holding hands and doing other activities. Many felt inhibited before their male colleagues. Some observed that men make fun of them. One thing led to another, and we convened a two-day workshop with women teachers. Here we started with a discussion on the hopes and aspirations of the group, their dreams (about themselves and for their children), their desires, dignity in the workplace, etc. This was an eye-opener and we realised that women are rarely placed in decision-making positions even if they are trained. Therefore, MLL training is meaningless if women cannot become part of Resource Teams.

After this training they decided to form a forum called 'Adhyapika Manch'. We have also changed the training system. Now all MLL training is preceded by a house-to-house campaign to win the support of the families of women teachers. In the training programme itself, both men and women are encouraged to do all the chores. In one training programme, men confessed that they have never washed dishes! They were then encouraged to talk of traditionally restricted roles of men and women.

During training of Master Trainers we are made to look out for opportunities to raise gender issues in every programme. We also realised that if women raise the issue, it is invariably taken lightly. Therefore our male colleagues are trained to raise these issues. Well, this is really an ideal situation. But we are working hard to get there. Even today, there are many colleagues who have a long way to go. The important thing is that their journey has commenced. We have also recognised that men and women from the middle classes (especially from urban areas) put up more resistance and hold very stereotypical

views. On the other hand, men and women from poor families in rural areas are more open and less rigid.

Source: Record of meeting of Block Level Coordinators, Lok Jumbish, Jaipur, 5 June 1995. Quoted in Ramachandran 1998.

Box 3: Wrestling with the formal system

School mapping threw up a long list of children who were not in school. We tried to wrestle with the formal system and realised that the situation was far from happy — teacher recruitment was not easy, redeployment of teachers was proving difficult. Essentially, the formal schools could not accommodate such a large number of additional children. LJ had to keep the faith with the people by opening schools. By 1994 LJ functionaries realised their limitations and decided to explore alternative avenues. Eighty Sahaj Shiksha Kendras were started, and their numbers went up by leaps and bounds. (A decision was taken to avoid the word NFE and use Sahaj Shiksha instead.) Similarly, the Mahila Shikshan Vihar concept and, later, the Balika Shikshan Shivir emerged after a group visited MV Foundation's camps in Andhra Pradesh and the Mahila Shikshan Kendra in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh.

Source: Interview with Aparna Sahay, former Project Director of Lok Jumbish, Jaipur, 13 April 2003.

Box 4: Engendering building construction

For a civil engineer like me, LJ has been a unique learning experience. Women's development is the key to rural development and education. It is easy to say this, but putting it into practice has been a challenging task. We started with the recognition that women in rural areas are very involved in the construction of their homes — polishing the floors, waterproofing, etc. With a little training they could become good masons. They know a great deal and we have to recognise their knowledge. Women work as hard as men, but do not get equal wages. In LJ we started with this understanding. There have been innumerable workshops, meetings and training programmes, and each one of them deal with women's issues. As a result, almost all of us have not only been sensitised but forced to internalise the process.

We took a decision that 50 per cent of the members of Bhavan Nirman Samiti (BNS) would be women and further, that they would be active members and not silent spectators. Also, we decided that at least one of the three signatories would be a woman. We also wanted a woman 'mate' to keep records of workers. In LJ we are committed to enabling women to move from being workers to managers. After identifying them, we concentrate on ensuring that they can serve as active members of the BNS. Here Mahila Samooh provide an excellent nurturing ground for women to gain confidence to participate in other fora. Simultaneously, men are also continuously sensitised. Today, most of us are aware of the issues and are convinced that women's development is a process and not an objective. The objective is equality.

In Motipura village (near SWRC, Tilonia), some men resisted the idea of a woman signatory. It took a great deal of discussion and persuasion to settle the issue. Today, we try very hard to see that women are involved right from the planning stage and are made an integral part of the BNS team in the village, but we still have a long way to go.

I may be involved in construction and maintenance of buildings, but I see myself as an integral part of LJ. I notice that an increasing number of girls are joining our NFE centres and am worried about whether we will be able to ensure good quality education for them...

Source: Interview with Mr Loria of Lok Jumbish, Jaipur, 27 May 1995.

Box 5: Sahaj Shiksha Programme

As we reviewed NFE, we realised that two-thirds of the students were girls. We decided to make sure that NFE education was not inferior to that provided in formal schools. So what did we do? We decided to make NFE equivalent to the formal system with respect to curriculum, textbooks, calendar and teacher training, and developed a truly equivalent testing system. Since we also wanted the same quality of teachers, we adopted the Shiksha Karmi system of selecting and training teachers.

The syllabus was reorganised in two ways:

- We made it MLL oriented — children were not expected to memorise but enhance their competencies and comprehension skills. We introduced learning through play and games and created a joyful environment. We trained the teachers to elicit participation and utilise the inventive capacities of children, especially girls.
- We introduced issues that would empower the girls by enhancing their ability to access information and become articulate, and enabled them to form groups in order to prevent isolation (creating Kishori Manch where possible).

The NFE programme includes excursions, visits to government offices for education and confidence building and specific activities to make them self-confident. Funds have been provided for these inputs. The supervisory system also functions as a support system. The Field Centre staff supervises the centre. As a result, management of NFE gets a gender orientation.

In order to ensure that girls continue their education after Class V, LJ has been working hard to revert to a system where almost all primary schools are up to Class VIII. LJ recognises that girls invariably drop out if they have to go to another village for education and therefore facilities for education up to Class VIII must be provided in the same village. Parents are also persuaded to transfer their daughters from NFE centres to the formal schools. So far, 250 girls have made the changeover in Garhi. In Pisangan, almost all girls under 9 years have moved to primary schools.

Source: Interview with Mr Anil Bordia, then Chairman of Lok Jumbish, Jaipur, 7 June 1995.

Box 6: Muktangnan

Our school mapping exercise revealed that out of 24 villages, 14 had been provided with government schools, while the remaining 10 had no educational facility. Of these 14 schools, 10 were non-functional due to teacher absenteeism. Children of well-off parents went to schools in Kishanganj (block headquarters), Baran or Kota (district headquarters). However, Sahariya (a tribal community) children had to work in the fields. We thought of starting Shiksha Karmi Schools (SKS) in the villages where these children lived, but we could not do this for two reasons — there were hardly any men or women who met the required educational qualifications to become shiksha karmis and SKS could not be opened in villages where a government school facility was available. Non-formal (Sahaj Shiksha Kendra) centres were also not possible because the LJ project specified that there should be at least 25 children not enrolled in school in any particular Dhani/Maja/village to justify a centre. Also, it was difficult to find men who had passed Class VIII and women who had completed Class V to staff the centres. . There were already 25 centres operating in eleven villages. When the Muktangnan project was conceived, 12 Anudeshaks were working in these centres — each being in charge of two centres. Eight of these were not natives of the particular villages but lived close by.

This experience formed the basis of Muktangnan, which imported instructors from outside the village to come in and handle the educational challenge. The idea was to incorporate the existing human resources into the Muktangnan project if they fulfilled the necessary educational qualifications to become Muktakas. Muktangnans were expected take into account the life and struggles of the people. They were to serve as places that children could come to at a time that suited them, ask whatever questions they wanted, and learn at their own pace without feeling marginalised or neglected. The need was thus to design education that would bring coherence into children's lives and be in harmony with the concerns of the community. It had to be an open school.

Source: Sharada Jain et al. in Vimala Ramachandran 2003, forthcoming.

Management Structure, Phase I and II: 1992–1999

Community mobilisation was positioned as the heart of Lok Jumbish. The 1990 project document clarified that it was not enough to create delivery mechanisms — access includes creation of demand. The community, and particularly parents, needed to be aware of the educational facilities available and play a proactive role in availing the ones they deemed appropriate for their children. Mobilisation for education was cited as necessary to create an environment where parents feel motivated to send their children to school. The document also acknowledged the need to make special arrangements for children engaged in work, girls who could not attend formal schools, children of migrant/nomadic families, tribal children and children with disability. The emphasis was on enabling children who were left behind to get on to the education bus.

Further, the necessity to involve not just the people but also the ‘teaching community’ was recognised at the very outset. Respecting teachers and supporting them with training, motivation and encouragement was thus flagged as a very important area of focus.

Project leaders acknowledged that this was not a task that would be easily accomplished. They therefore decided to learn by doing and move forward gradually by reviewing processes continuously. Since this would hinge on the ability of the project to be vigilant and maintain open channels of communication and dialogue, there was also a commitment to transparency and accountability.

Box 7: Generic management principles

Governing principles

Management will be the most critical input in the Lok Jumbish project.. The extent and quality of implementation of the project will depend on the kind of people who are placed in leadership position at all levels, and on their style of functioning. Therefore, before giving an outline of the management system, it is appropriate to underscore the principles that will govern the management system of the project....

- a) Ensure that adequate structures are established.
- b) Mission mode where goals are broken down into specific tasks, which are assigned to specific persons for implementation in a well-defined timeframe...
- c) The orientation of Lok Jumbish is unequivocally towards women and this objective can be achieved only if majority of all staff, including senior level executives, are women...
- d) While overall responsibility for implementation will rest with the State Authority, the block and the village have to be treated as the effective levels of management....
- e) The management structure will be distinct, but it will incorporate people from extant system.
- f) Selections of staff will be on the basis of merit and suitability... This implies that in no case would placement be made on the basis only of seniority or administrative convenience...

Source: Chapter VIII, Lok Jumbish Project Document, Government of India and Government of Rajasthan December 1990.

School mapping and micro planning³

Community participation is the fulcrum around which Lok Jumbish revolves. When the project was initiated in 1992, there was no precedence that it could follow, nor was there any guidance available in terms of experiential knowledge. While IIE, Paris had put out a document on micro planning, other extant literature on the subject related to spatial planning, an essentially top-down mapping exercise done by the state. Therefore, Lok Jumbish decided to learn by doing and this took almost three years. Treating each village as the basic unit for mapping and analysis, LJ began by conducting a diagnostic assessment, into which it gradually built in participatory rural appraisal techniques

³ This section of the paper draws upon a research paper on Community Participation in Primary Education — Innovation in Rajasthan by Vimala Ramachandran, which was published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, 23 June 2001

(PRA). The focus of the assessment was on mapping all children of school-going age and, where applicable, eliciting the exact reasons for non-attendance. The challenge was to present this information in a form that people — both literate and illiterate — could understand. i.e., depict the physical condition of the schools (including classrooms, availability of potable water, play area, etc.) and develop a visual database using symbols. The core principle was to ‘rely on the people to diagnose the problem and articulate their demand’. It was believed that once this happened, everything else would start falling into place.

Box 8: Illustrative sequence of school mapping (SM)

- Environment building — house-to-house contact.
- Formation of Prerak Dal and Mahila Samooh and their training.
- Confidence and skill building of Prerak Dal for SM through training and other activities.
- Village meeting to introduce the concept and elicit participation.
- Household survey — compiling the data and cross-checking (where feasible) with school records.
- Preparation of school map.
- Preparation of village education registers.
- Village meeting to discuss results, followed by planning and demand articulation.
- Enrolment day.
- Preparing proposal for Sahaj Shiksha, additional teachers, repair of building, construction of additional rooms, etc.
- Establishing the Bhavan Nirman Samiti to monitor and support building repair and maintenance, the planting of trees and other inputs.
- Organising water for children.
- Seating and other logistics.
- Starting Sahaj Shiksha and enrolment of children.
- Forming PTA and VEC.

Source: Vimala Ramachandran June 2001.

After the first survey, registers were updated every year. The VEC and Mahila Samooh were also expected to meet regularly. However, none of this was easy to organise and several problems were reported. Data from all villages was collated first at the cluster level and then at the block level, from where it was sent on to the headquarters as an alternative source of information. Project functionaries soon realised that it was not always possible to match this data with that generated by the Education Department. Since Lok Jumbish was an autonomous body that until recently was seen as being outside the government, the authenticity of its data was regarded as questionable. Matching data generated through school mapping with the database of the department was thus a contentious issue.

Once data was collated and village-level plans brought together, the proposals were sent to the Block Education Management Committee (KSPS) — which was empowered to sanction Sahaj Shiksha Kendras, schools, additional teachers, etc. — for review and approval. The Block Steering Group (BSG) constituted the principal level for planning

and implementation. However, given that additional teachers/schools and even teacher deployment was not within the purview of Lok Jumbish, there were delays in the sanctioning of primary schools and appointment of additional teachers. Building repair and construction of additional rooms also involved cumbersome approval procedures. Establishing SSKs was easier and, as a result, their number increased rapidly from 338 in 1993 to 2,644 in December 1998 (see Table 2.3 in Annexure 2).

Box 9: Gender-sensitive management

Ever since its inception, gender sensitivity has been woven into the very philosophy and structure of LJ. As 'gender sensitivity' is interpreted differently by different organisations, it might be helpful to clarify what it means within LJ:

- Firstly, it means that circumstances should be created to appoint women in reasonable proportion.
- Secondly, it implies that women should be able to work as equals and not have to conform to stereotyped expectations. Moreover, they should have appropriate working conditions, with facilities provided for safety and essential comfort.
- Thirdly, women's role in the family and their motherhood responsibilities should be recognised. They should be enabled to work at a time and pace suitable to them. The fact that they generally bear a double burden should be acknowledged, and they should be allowed enough time to overcome fatigue.
- Fourthly, circumstances that result in women's isolation should be altered — at the individual and well as group level. An organisation should attempt to create women's collectives and networks for empowerment.
- Fifthly, necessary steps should be taken to prevent sexual abuse and mental and other harassment. Exemplary penal measures should be put in place.
- Sixthly, women must have a say in decision making. This should not be confined to decisions that affect only women staff members and women and girls in educational and related situations. Their participation should extend to all decisions, including those concerning policy and finance.
- Finally, a gender-sensitive system of educational management should be capable of applying it to the entire system of education.

This is not to say that we have been able to create such an organisation in LJ. However, our effort is in this direction and each year we take concrete steps to improve the situation.

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1998.

Decentralisation went hand and hand with community participation. Recommendations, reviews and changes were initiated from the cluster level upwards. The cluster-level Review Planning Meeting was the forum where information was shared and project functionaries took stock of the situation on the ground. This information was fed to the block-level RPM, based on which the BSG made its recommendations. These were then taken up at the state-level RPM. Developed and fine-tuned over the years, the planning system was essentially a bottom-up one. Its functioning was not always smooth, but reports from the field were quite encouraging.

Although responsibility for distributing teaching–learning materials lay with cluster, books/materials and other related supplies were purchased at the block level under the supervision of a committee that included representatives of the teachers’ union. Teams of teachers (as members of the block-level committee) were involved in obtaining quotations to get competitive rates. Similarly, the purchase and distribution of free uniforms and stationery among girls was done with the involvement of teachers, again as members of block-level committees.⁴ It was envisaged that this process would not only enhance the involvement of teachers, but also neutralise hostility from within the procurement and supply system in the state.

Village-level men/women and youth, who had participated in school mapping and micro planning as members of the Prerak Dal (group of motivators/animators), were often elected to be part of the VEC and BNS.⁵ The Chairperson for the VEC was elected based on her/his level of commitment and participation in the mobilisation process.

Box 10: Coverage at the close of Phase I and II

- Blocks covered: 58.
- Number of villages covered in environment building: 9,576.
- Number of Prerak Dals formed: 8,523.
- Mahila Samooh formed: 6,813.
- School Mapping completed: 8,212.
- New primary schools opened: 529.
- New Shiksha Karmi Schools opened: 454.
- Upgrading of primary to upper primary schools: 268.
- New teacher positions in primary and upper primary schools: 1,255.
- Sahaj Shiksha Kendras: 3,430.
- Number of girls and boys enrolled in SSKS: 345,398 and 15,413 respectively.
- Number of Balika Shivirs: 11; number of girls participating: 1,495.
- Number of new primary school buildings: 125.
- Number of school building repaired and rooms constructed: 773.

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1998; (February) 2001.

Partnership with NGOs (Phase I and II)

Over the years, a total of 52 NGOs worked with Lok Jumbish as partners at all levels and their involvement was formalised through decisions taken in the RPMs at cluster, block and state levels. While at cluster level they played the role of ‘mobilising agencies’, at the block and state levels they served as resource agencies for training and providing ongoing pedagogic support. Interviews with partner NGOs reveal **that they had no**

⁴ Interview with Aparna Sahay, former Project Director of Lok Jumbish, Jaipur 13 April 2003; meetings with Ajmer District Cluster, block and district functionaries on 21–22 April 2003, and with Prince Salim — former Lok Jumbish functionary on 22 April 2003; and discussion on first draft of the case study with Ganesh Nigam of Lok Jumbish Parishad on 4 July 2003.

⁵ Op cit.

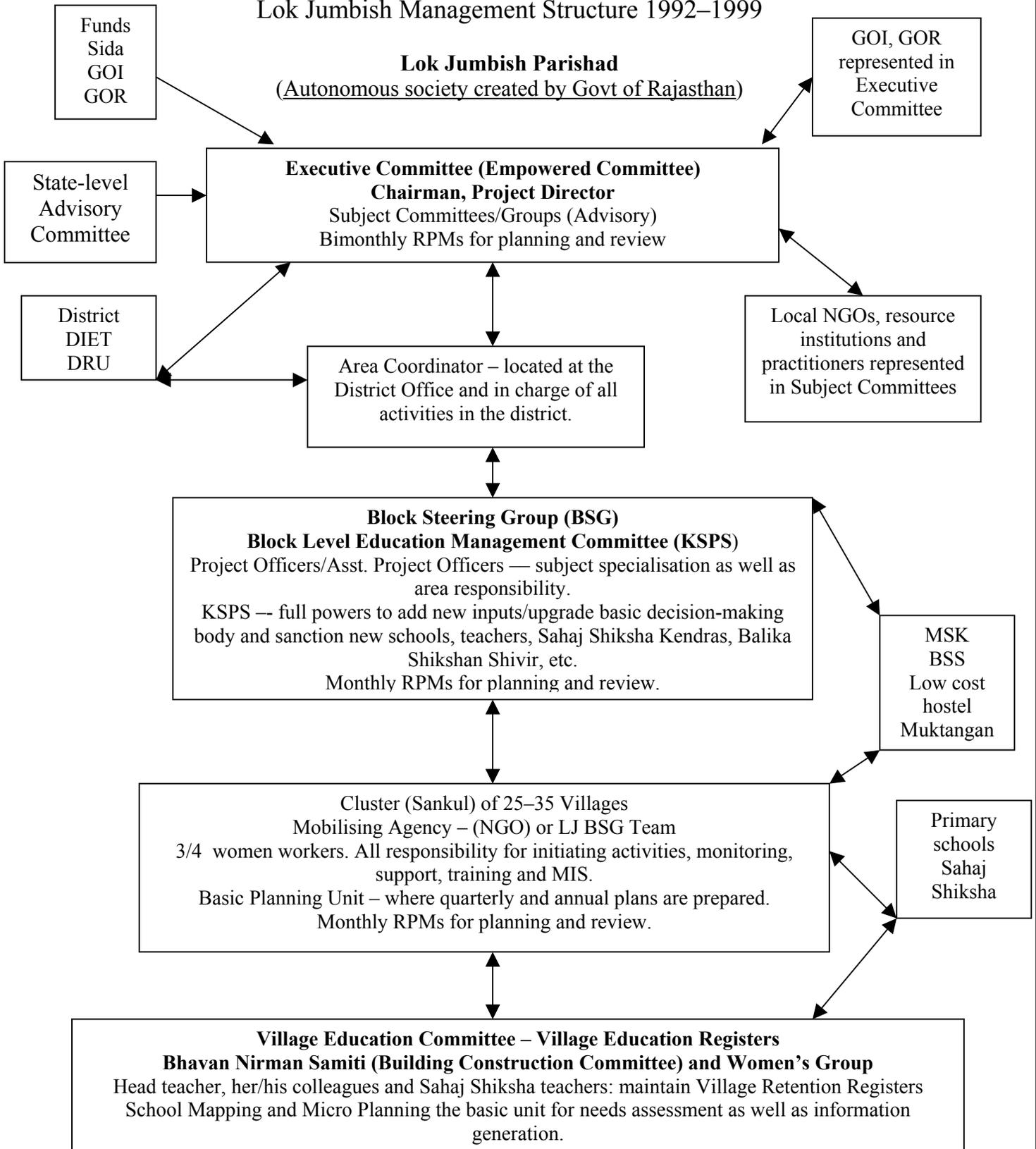
formal contract with LJ and funds were transferred and responsibilities assigned to them based on the minutes of RPMs. Unit costs for all activities (training, camps, teacher honorarium) were determined in the RPMs and approved by the State Executive Committee.⁶

The bottom-up management system as it had evolved up to June 1998 is depicted in the following diagram.

⁶ Interviews with Aparna Sahay, former Project Director of LJ, on 13 April 2003 and Dr Sharada Jain, Director of Sandhan, on 11 April 2003, and meeting with some NGO partners on 12 April 2003.

Exhibit 1

Lok Jumbish Management Structure 1992–1999



Management in Phase III (1999–2004)⁷

The period starting with the withdrawal of assistance by Sida in the wake of the Pokhran nuclear tests in 1998 and the official commencement of LJ Phase III with DFID (UK) funding in 2000 was one of ambivalence. It was also in this period that Rajasthan saw a change in government and Lok Jumbish witnessed a change in leadership. Uncertainty regarding availability of external assistance to continue the project and change in the priorities/direction of the government slowed down the pace of LJ's work. UNICEF came to the rescue of some ongoing initiatives like Balika Shikshan Shivar and provided funds to run 24 BSS. While project functionaries continued to get their salaries — albeit irregularly — almost all activities were suspended for about 18 months. The following section tries to capture this tumultuous period in the history of Lok Jumbish.

One of the first decisions taken by the newly elected state government was to transfer the project from the Department of Education to the Panchayati Raj Department — a decision that was formalised in a government order dated 10 June 1998.⁸ Bringing the project under Panchayati Raj meant that teachers now came under the administrative control of the Rural Development Department. An immediate implication of this was that teachers in formal schools were now officially involved in a range of government programmes — drought relief, cattle census, women's self-help groups — in addition to ongoing non-teaching tasks pertaining to census operations once in 10 years, economic surveys to identify below-poverty households once in five years, periodic pulse polio campaigns, election duties, preparation of voters' lists and so on.

While school mapping and micro planning continued — although at a slower pace — Lok Jumbish Parishad functionaries were involved in designing and executing Shiksha Darpan (survey of children in and out of school done by teachers in 1999) and Shiksha Aap ke Dwar (household survey undertaken by the Education Department in 2003 to identify out-of-schoolchildren). The data collected from these two surveys were utilised by the government for planning to strengthen existing schools and open new schools/Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas. In this context, a District Executive Committee was constituted with the District Collector as its chairperson, and included one District Project Coordinator and two Assistant Project Coordinators. Annual plans were prepared on the basis of data generated through Shiksha Darpan/Shiksha Aap ke Dwar as well as the plans prepared at the cluster level. They were approved by the Project Executive Committee and sent to the block and cluster levels for implementation. The District Executive Committee emerged as the key decision-making unit.

Cluster-level structures were continued for monitoring purposes, but the monthly RPM, though not formally discontinued, did not receive the attention and support it did in Phase

⁷ Interviews with Mr. B L Sharma, Chairman Lok Jumbish, Mr Alok, Project Director, Lok Jumbish, and Academic Officer Mr Ganesh Kumar Nigam, Jaipur, 30 May 2003.

⁸ Rajasthan government order dated 23 April 2003, reversing the 10 June 1998 order allocating a range of non-teaching responsibilities to schoolteachers.

I and II of the project. Discussing the reasons for this change, Lok Jumbish functionaries explained that the project had gone into hibernation for almost two years. A number of factors contributed to this situation. First, there were a number of internal changes: the project was transferred to Panchayati Raj in June 1998, there was change in LJ leadership in June 1999, and a series of audit inquiries were initiated in the same year. Second, as an aftermath of the Pokhran nuclear tests, Swedish funding for the project was discontinued at the end of Phase II. Negotiations with DFID (UK) commenced after the withdrawal of Swedish aid and went on for almost 18 months — further exacerbating the sense of insecurity that had gripped the project.

Box 11: Accounting for community contribution in cash and kind

One management issue that LJ failed to resolve was to evolve appropriate mechanisms to account for community contribution by way of labour or material for the construction and/repair of school buildings. During the period 1999–2001, a number of audit objections were tabled — essentially dealing with ‘misappropriation of funds’ collected by the project through community contribution in order to augment funds for construction and maintenance. *While no new guidelines had been issued*, the implication of such audit objections was that the VECs should have deposited the funds in the government treasury and then re-appropriated them for construction. Schoolteachers and VEC members said that this was more or less impossible because most contributions are either in kind or by way of labour. Cash contributions are now deposited in the bank account of the school committee and used for construction or repair. Similarly, community contribution of labour and materials is taken into the final calculation of the cost of repair or new construction.

Earlier, Lok Jumbish sanctioned funds ranging from Rs 100,000 to Rs 250,000 — depending on the requirement calculated by the village-level committee. Now a ceiling of Rs 1,000,000 has been stipulated. Given the lack of clarity on mechanisms to harness and use community contributions, proactive involvement of the community in upgrading infrastructure has suffered in many areas.

Source: Meetings with VEC and cluster-level functionaries, Ajmer district, 21 April 2003.

The roles and responsibilities of all functionaries were reviewed and a document published outlining responsibilities at each level and for each functionary. This was done at the state level on the basis of recommendations obtained from RPMs. ‘Everyone now knows his job and also the method to achieve his/her task. Unit costs and funds for each activity were approved and printed in annual work plans for each district. Each block and Sankul has their plan and they know what they have to do. This document empowers functionaries to carry out their responsibilities’ (Mr B. L. Sharma, 28 May 2003). The village pradhan was designated as the chairperson of the Village Education Committee instead of an elected chairperson from amongst the VEC members.

In its order dated 13 February 2003, the High Court of Rajasthan reversed the 10 June 1998 order that had burdened schoolteachers with a range of non-teaching

responsibilities. A government order was issued on 23 April 2003 specifying that schoolteachers were now expected to perform only the following non-teaching duties:⁹

- Literacy/education-related surveys (Shiksha Aap Ke Dwar/Shiksha Darpan).
- Duties in connection with state and parliamentary elections.
- Census operations once in 10 years.
- Economic surveys to identify below-poverty households once in five years.
- Pulse polio campaign.

Discussions in the blocks and districts revealed that this order is yet to be implemented. Teachers in several districts reported that they have not yet been relieved of drought relief and self-help group monitoring responsibilities.

Box 12: Come and look at our new school...

We reached Ramgarh (name changed) in Masuda Block of Ajmer District around 10 a.m. The primary school was located within a small fort.. There was a lot of rubble lying around. At a distance we saw a brand new building, freshly painted and decorated. We were informed that the VEC and the Bhavan Nirman Samiti were finalising arrangements for a formal inauguration of the school building. While the project had allotted Rs 100,000 for additional rooms, the VEC had decided to demolish the old structure, which was unsafe, and construct a brand new building with three rooms. This had cost them almost Rs 250,000, with parents contributing free labour and the Panchayat making free building materials available! The VEC members said they were not sure if they had followed 'appropriate financial procedures' — but they could not have achieved what they did without the contributions of the community and the Panchayat.

As we entered the school, we saw one teacher managing over 120 children. (Of the three teachers posted to the school, one was away on 'drought relief duty' and the second had gone to the district office to answer some queries regarding the women's self-help group.) Some children were reading, others were copying from the blackboard. The teacher was teaching mathematics to Class IV .

We wandered around, talking to VEC and BNS members. Some parents had come with flowers to decorate the school. During the lunch break, the teacher invited us into his small office, where he had maintained meticulous records. While he was showing us around the office, one of the VEC members said that they were happy with the teachers; the problem was the non-teaching duties that took up a lot of their time. At this point the teacher opened a register and said that in the last academic year the school had functioned for only 120 out of 240 days! The teachers had been given a range of additional responsibilities — managing the registers of self-help groups, supervising the drought relief work, pulse polio campaign, census survey, maintaining the electoral list, distributing election identity cards, election duties, animal survey and so on. These were in addition to the regular Lok Jumbish

⁹ Order issued by the Government of Rajasthan, dated 23 April 2003, directing the District Magistrates to comply with the ruling of the Honourable High Court of Rajasthan, dated 13 February 2003, which superseded a specific provision of the earlier government order issued on 10 June 2003.

meetings, enrolment campaigns/surveys (Shiksha Aap ke Dwar) and training programmes.

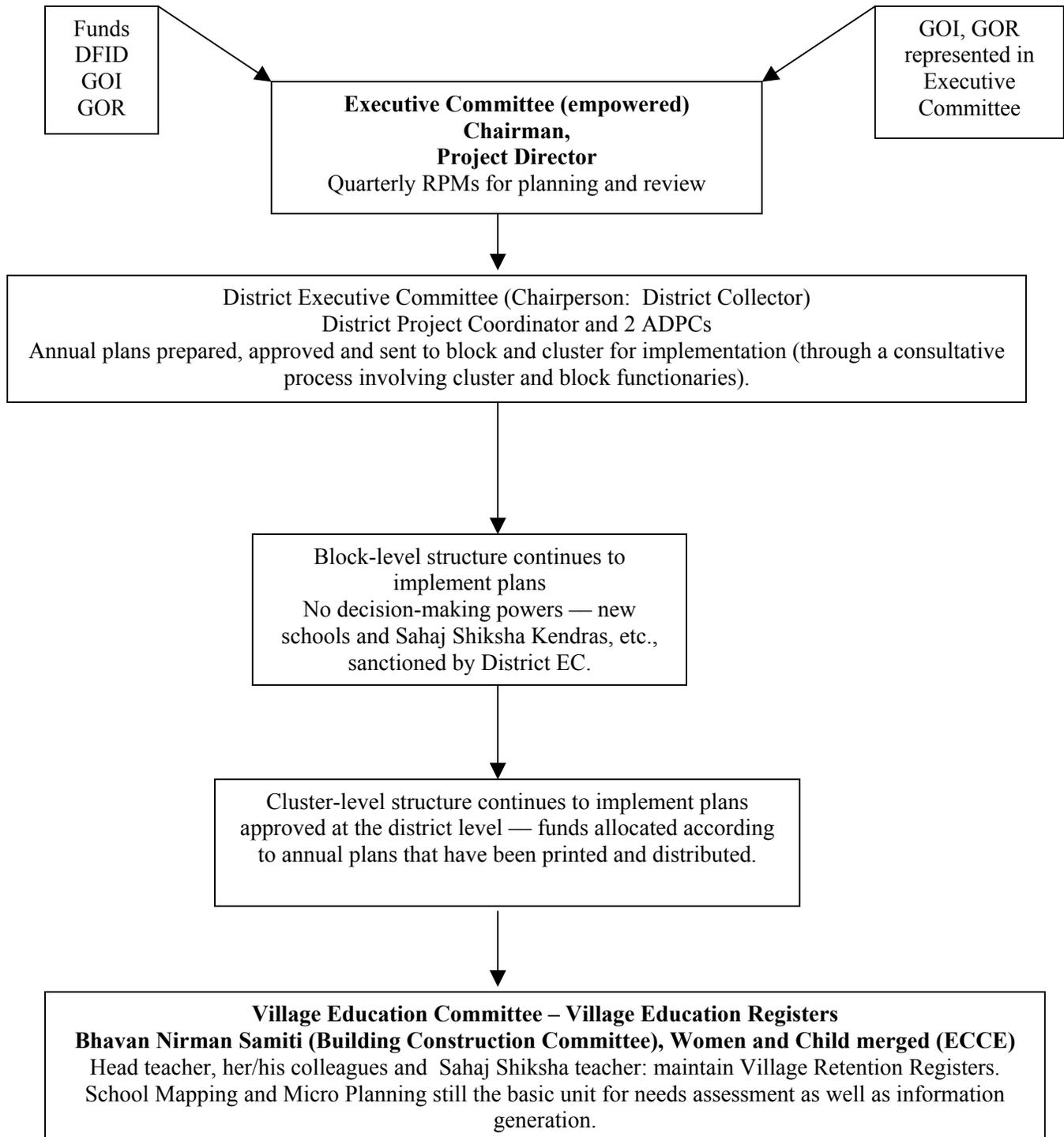
The parents and VEC members, who got involved in the discussion, said that they were concerned about what and how much their children were actually learning. As we were about to leave, one of them said: *'The impact of this will be felt 10 years from now! Children in Class IV and V can barely read! As a member of the VEC I strongly feel that teachers should first teach. The government should find someone else to supervise drought relief work.'* To which the teacher responded: *'I cannot agree more. When we look back 10 years from now, we will realise that it is indeed tragic that our children did not get a fair chance. Lok Jumbish has been able to involve the community and parents who have taken a lot of interest in the school. I sincerely hope someone will listen to them now.'*

Source: Meeting with VEC members and schoolteachers, 21 April 2003.

An order issued by the GOR Elementary Education Department on 16 April 2003 outlines the management system that will be put in place when the Lok Jumbish project comes to a close in June 2004. According to this order, all education programmes and projects — DPEP, Lok Jumbish as well as the Shiksha Karmi Project — will function under the umbrella of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Cluster, block and district-level structures will cease to exist. The government will replace the society that is currently managing the DPEP programme by the Rajasthan Council for Primary Education (Rajasthan Prathamik Shiksha Parishad), which will be in charge of all elementary education programmes. All Lok Jumbish structures, and perhaps even processes and special structures like Balika Shikshan Shivir and Mukangan, as well as special programmes and initiatives that are currently in operation may be reviewed and made an integral part of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.¹⁰

¹⁰ Rajasthan Government Order (in Hindi) dated 16 April 2003.

Exhibit 2
Lok Jumbish Management Structure as of June 2003



Points to consider

Rajasthan has been home to two unique educational initiatives. The first, the Shiksha Karmi Project (started with Swedish assistance in 1987), tried, with promising results, to reactivate non-functioning primary schools in remote areas through locally recruited teachers. Today, almost 16 years after its inception, the programme continues to function, although in a low key. Rajasthan Lok Jumbish was also launched with Swedish assistance in 1992 and continued with DFID support from December 1999 (according to the agreement with DFID, it was earmarked to wind up in June 2004). As is clear from our foregoing discussion, LJ was a far more ambitious project that involved mobilisation of the community around primary education and reaching out to out-of-school children through various means. One of the more interesting features of Lok Jumbish was its ability to design and deliver needs-based educational programmes. For example, the project strengthened the primary school through infrastructure development, teacher motivation and enhancement of their knowledge, skills and commitment, formation and training of VECs and so on. Sahaj Shiksha, or non-formal education centres, were run outside normal school hours for children who are unable to make it to the formal school. The residential condensed education programme (Mahila Shikshan Vihar) and short-term camps (Balika Shikshan Shivir) were organised for older girls and young women with the express purpose of increasing the pool of educated women in rural and remote areas. School preparedness camps were also organised for handicapped children to help them get a head start. However, the most interesting aspect of the project was the preparation of village-based school maps — a process in which the local people were involved in surveying the educational status of children and finding out reasons for non-enrolment and poor attendance. The maps prepared at the village level were retained at the cluster level of 20 villages and emerged as a powerful tool for community sensitisation and mobilisation. The creation of Village Education Registers to track children was another innovation that has now been adapted across the country through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

But what was of particular significance, at least for the people living in Rajasthan, was that the administration recognised that different models are necessary to reach out to children who live in a highly unequal society, wherein the educational status of children, especially girls, from the Dalit community, the scheduled tribes and those living in remote areas is abysmally low. Almost anyone who has worked in Rajasthan will agree that the state cannot achieve the goal of universal elementary education unless it is prepared to acknowledge and respond to diverse situations. The mere existence of primary schools is not enough. People who have visited the outskirts of major towns like Jaipur, Ajmer and Udaipur will also agree that even if children (especially girls) from Dalit families enrol in school, the school environment is not conducive to their retention. It is not uncommon to see Dalit children carry their own jute sacks on which they can sit, because the school does not provide them with the mats it does to others. It is also not uncommon to see such children sitting *outside* the door of the classroom.

Lok Jumbish was unique because it tried to reach out to children — especially girls — who were being effectively kept out of the formal school system. A very conscious effort was made to address the educational needs of children from poor and underprivileged communities. It is therefore a matter of concern that such a unique and path-breaking initiative is being wound up. What is even more disturbing is the fact that the bottom-up process it developed is being reversed and replaced by the familiar top-down approach.

Can competing models coexist?

Some commentators argue that there is no space for alternative/competing models in the same area and that it is administratively more efficient to have some degree of uniformity. Paradoxically, given the wide diversity and staggering inequalities that characterise such areas, most educational practitioners agree that no one model can respond to the situation effectively. While the rhetoric of decentralisation and people's participation has grown louder, bottom-up processes that genuinely empower people to plan for themselves are finding fewer advocates in the larger community of development planners and administrators in Rajasthan. Lok Jumbish continues to be cited as an exemplary case in bottom-up planning — yet the very process of empowerment it engendered emerged as a formidable challenge to educational administrators and local power elites.

Did the project carry with it the seeds of self-destruction?

Those who have been closely following the evolution of Lok Jumbish argue that the seed of its demise was inherent in its very conceptualisation. To begin with, it was positioned as an entity outside the government, a programme that competed with and challenged mainstream structures. Secondly, identification of any large-scale programme with a few pioneers carries with it the promise of its own destruction, especially when these charismatic leaders/pioneers fail to create a sense of ownership in the mainstream.

Officials who created the LJ structures argue that bypassing the mainstream was necessary to ensure both greater flexibility and tighter financial control. The smooth flow of funds, greater flexibility, genuine decentralisation and the appointment of committed (and not just experienced) people matter, and are difficult to achieve within the mainstream. They also argue that as long as mainstream system remains inflexible, the creation of autonomous structures like LJ is unavoidable.

The experience of different state-level structures reveals a disturbingly mixed picture. While innovation, flexibility and responsiveness are hailed as the hallmark of these structures, they continue to remain outside the mainstream. For example, the Mahila Samakhya Societies created by the government in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh have been able to reach poor rural women and involve them in empowering educational processes. But their interaction with the mainline Education Department is minimal, despite the fact that they have the state's Education Secretary as their chairperson. Similarly, with their emphasis on instituting a process-oriented

structure of functioning, the Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi projects have managed to work with their target population — the very poor, but are yet to be absorbed by the mainstream system.¹¹

Box 12: Are autonomous societies the answer to administrative bottlenecks?

The appropriateness of autonomous institutions (called societies in India) to implement special programmes and projects is an issue that still vexes educational administration. While the idea of establishing statutory institutions like University Grants Commission and Board of Secondary Education and Universities has been accepted across the world, the creation of parallel structures to implement projects and programmes has been contentious. In 1986–87, the Government of India and the Government of Rajasthan agreed to set up a society called the Shiksha Karmi Board to implement the Swedish-assisted innovative education programme. Like other NGOs in India, this government-sponsored body was registered under the Societies Registration Act, but with one significant difference: its formal leader was to be an ex-officio member of the government, i.e., the Education Secretary of the state. It was hoped that this would provide the structure the flexibility and openness of an NGO, and at the same time give it the outreach, legitimacy and authority of a government body. The combination of the two was viewed as a necessary mechanism for mobilising girls and for reaching out to children in remote areas through paraprofessional teachers. It was also argued that relaxing rules for recruitment and organising intensive ongoing support and training would not be possible within the rigid formal school system.

The Shiksha Karmi Board thus set a new precedent. Subsequently, almost all special projects, including district-level implementation mechanisms under the Total Literacy Campaign and a range of EFA projects, adopted this structure. The government registered these societies under the formal leadership and control of the civil service (Lok Jumbish, which is chaired by a retired civil servant, is an exception). For all practical purposes, these societies are controlled by the formal administrative system, although the systems adopted for channelling funds and recruitment might differ from those followed by government bodies.

How does a structure of this kind interact with the mainstream? Experience of 10 state-level structures reveals a disturbing picture. While hailed for their innovation, flexibility and responsiveness, they are not integrated into the mainstream. Flexible rules and the more liberal systems for dispensing travel and other allowances create imbalances — leading to petty jealousy among the government staff. There have been instances when mainline administrators have consciously created financial bottlenecks for these structures.

The moot point is whether the valuable experience of these special projects administered by autonomous societies will be adapted by mainstream structures. Existing evidence is not very encouraging, especially in the social sectors and those involving special focus groups. It is argued that the cumbersome, process-oriented implementation, monitoring and accountability systems that are essential for social mobilisation, cannot be replicated in mainstream structures. Others argue that the unit cost of special projects with special structures is not replicable.

Notwithstanding above criticism, the smooth flow of funds, greater flexibility, genuine decentralisation and appointment of committed people make a difference. It is argued that as long as mainstream systems remain rigid, the government, donor agencies and leaders with a vision cannot but create autonomous structures. *Bypassing the main artery becomes a necessity when it is clogged, atrophied or fossilised.*

Source: Vimala Ramachandran 1998.

Autonomous bodies have also been able to create a different work culture. Monitoring mechanisms are tight, and officials working in these projects admit that accountability to

¹¹ Vimala Ramachandran with Harsh Sethi 2001.

the donor makes a difference. Liberal provisions for travel and other allowances go a long way in motivating workers. The flip side is that there is simultaneously greater scope for ‘misuse’ of flexible procedures — especially in the appointment of support organisations, sub-contracting project-related work, hiring consultants, authorising foreign travel, and so on. There have been cases of mainline administrators creating financial and other bottlenecks if they feel they are being denied of their share of the ‘goodies’, or if they believe that proper procedures are not being followed.

Interestingly, while Lok Jumbish was positioned outside the government from the very beginning, the Shiksha Karmi Board was conceived as falling within the purview of the state’s Education Department. Shiksha Karmi was positioned as a low-key project that was not in competition with the mainstream. Rather, it aimed to address problems *that could not be tackled by the formal school system*. It was to serve, not as an alternative, but as a complement to formal schooling. Most importantly, a significant number of officials, educationists, teachers (including the teachers’ union of Rajasthan) and NGOs identified with the project. This wide base of support enabled the project to overcome a shortcoming that marks most special schemes — that of being seen as ‘captive’ to specific individuals or a group. And lastly, its working style, expenditure pattern and facilities compared well with the mainstream, and helped it escape the image of a well-endowed project flush with funds. In a resource-deficit state like Rajasthan, its austerity and simplicity went a long way in creating a positive public image .

Lok Jumbish, on the other hand, was projected — rightly or wrongly — as being unique, innovative and something special. From its very inception it was perceived as a project that challenged the mainstream, bypassed the formal system and, more important, was not owned by it. Identified, as it was, with the people who designed and launched it, *LJ was always viewed as an exclusive project*. Unlike the Shiksha Karmi Board, it did not start on a low key, but was in the limelight from the word go.

Leadership

Every new initiative gets its initial momentum from its leaders, those who break the path and make the journey less formidable for others. Such leaders are no doubt important in terms of creativity, encouragement and nurturance. There is, unfortunately, another side to the issue. Some leaders are so charismatic that the programme they introduce is inextricably identified with them, and regarded almost as an extension of their personality. They are people from whom others at every level of the organisation draw inspiration and strength. They usually have little patience with cumbersome procedures, particularly those concerned with screening/contracting resource agencies, consultants and functionaries.¹² It is said that the mark of good leaders is not just the ability to lead,

¹² For example, most of the NGO partners who worked with Lok Jumbish did so on the basis of decisions taken in RPMs and state-level meetings. Many of them did not have contracts. Therefore, when financial and procedural audit was initiated in 1999, they had no leg to stand on. Their relationship came to an abrupt end. This was quite a blow to those that were dedicated agencies working exclusively for Lok Jumbish.

but to also gradually make themselves redundant and move on, allowing other members of the project staff to take ownership. However, if the success of a project is conditioned on the continuing presence of the leader, a clash of the project leaders with the mainstream system has a demoralising effect on the rank and file.

But, as witnessed in the post-1999 phase of Lok Jumbish, frequent change in leadership does not do much to boost the morale of the workers either. Lumbering project directors with additional charges or with other primary responsibilities also impacts the programme negatively. However, the issue here is not just one of frequent transfers or a constant influx of new people; the question that begs attention in Lok Jumbish is the whether these new leaders are given enough time to understand the project and provide strategic leadership.

Donor support and sustainability

When Sida decided to suspend bilateral aid to India in the wake of the 1998 nuclear test in Pokhran, Lok Jumbish was plunged into a period of uncertainty. In this context, while it is true that educational planners and administrators in India and in various bilateral agencies do not have control over political decisions, they do need to make some provision for contingencies. Therefore, at least some of the responsibility for the situation that Lok Jumbish found itself in between 1999 and 2001 must be borne by the chief donor. What with loss of momentum and financial uncertainty, coupled with changes in LJ leadership and the government, particularly in its priorities, it became difficult to sustain the processes initiated by Lok Jumbish.

Lok Jumbish rose like a shooting star and remained on the horizon long just enough to be noticed and applauded. Its failure to survive needs to be examined and analysed with rigour and in a non-partisan manner. It is only through such an analysis that we might find answers to several unanswered questions about sustainability of exemplary innovations.

Annexure 1: Lok Jumbish project time line

December 1991 ¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formulation of Lok Jumbish by Department of Education, Government of Rajasthan and the Government of India, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). - Agreement to share resources at the ratio of 3:2:1 (Sida:GOI:GOR). - Pilot activities initiated in Arain and Pisangan blocks.
18 May 1992 ¹⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registration of Lok Jumbish Parishad — Association for Advancement of Basic Education for All in Rajasthan in Jaipur. - Basic management structure spelt out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Autonomous body with the Chief Minister of Rajasthan as the ex-officio President. ➤ Non-official and eminent person as fulltime working Chairman. ➤ Empowered Executive Committee with representatives from GOI and GOR. Project functionaries appointed either on deputation or <i>special selection</i> from government, or recruited on a fixed term contract. ➤ Funds to flow directly into the bank account of Lok Jumbish Parishad — with the Executive Committee having full financial powers to determine the procedures/modalities of expenditure. ➤ Decentralised, needs-based and bottom-up planning.
June 1992	Mr Anil Bordia retires as Education Secretary of GOI and takes over as the Chairman of Lok Jumbish Parishad.
September 1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project formally gets off the ground in five blocks¹⁵ in partnership with five NGOs — Ajmer Adult Education Association, Social Work Research Centre (Tilonia), Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha (Garhi), Rajasthan Banwasi Kalyan Parishad (Kishanganj) and Urmul Trust (Bikaner).
November 1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A two-day Review Planning Meeting (RPM) set in motion at the state level to review progress, involve teacher's organisations, voluntary agencies and academic institutions in the management of LJ, work out parameters of programmes and act as an orientation mechanism. - The Block Steering Group (BSG) created with the objective of overseeing the work at the block level. - Khand Stariya Shiksha Prabandhan Samiti (Block Level Management Committee — KSPS) created to initiate and manage demand driven, needs-based field processes. - KSPS bye-laws adopted in September 1993. - Field centres proposed in a cluster of 20 to 22 villages - Creation of Village Education Committee (VEC) set in motion. - Village-level activities started with conventions and meetings, followed by creation of a Core Team of three to four animators to initiate school mapping and simultaneously work towards creating a women's group in the village — one that would eventually join the VEC. - Decided that all activities be initiated with the help of a Mobilising Agency (MA) – a local NGO or any agency (government, LJ BSG or non-

¹³ Government of Rajasthan and Government of India (December) 1990.

¹⁴ Lok Jumbish Parishad (November) 1992 and (July) 1995.

¹⁵ Arain and Pisangan in Ajmer District, Garhi (Banswara), Kishanganj (Baran) and Loonkaransar (Bikaner).

	government) that is committed to the goals of LJ.
May 1993 ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benchmark survey in 15 per cent of villages in the five blocks (14,000 households). It included achievement tests of children in Classes III and IV.¹⁷ - Project expanded to 15 blocks covering 13 districts. - Rules and regulations (including delegation of financial powers) adopted in March 1993. Till then ad hoc procedures approved by Executive Committee were followed.¹⁸ - Bhavan Nirman Samiti (Building Construction Committee) established to take responsibility for renewal/construction of buildings. - School mapping and micro planning introduced in July 1993. - Women's mobilisation made integral part of programme — training of women's groups to enable them to participate in village-level educational planning and encourage them to send their daughters to school. - Concept of Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) adopted as a benchmark to develop curriculum.
January 1994 ¹⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KSPS gets powers from the government to sanction educational facilities: Non-formal Education Centres (Sahaj Shiksha Kendra), Shiksha Karmi Schools, Primary Schools, upgrading primary school to UPS, requisition additional teachers. - Field centres formalised with at least two women staff. - MLL-based curriculum introduced.
June 1995 ²⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School mapping processes were firmly grounded and Sandhan Research Centre developed a training manual (October 1994). - Non-formal education centres went to scale — 1,470 centres approved by KSPS and 832 centres started by June 1995. - MLL adopted for NFE centres — equivalence with formal system ensured. - Mahila Shikshan Vihar (Women's Residential Institute for Training and Education) opened in Jalore to cater to the educational needs of out-of-school adolescent girls. - Apna Ghar (My Home) — a low-cost hostel for tribal children started with 40 children by Pratapgarh BSG. - Unit costs for non-formal education centres, training of master trainers/teachers and other education and training activities evolved on the basis of experience. These unit costs were approved. - Block-level management formalised.: - Monthly block-level RPM introduced - BSG constituted with a project officer and a women's development officer (Samyukta).
January	- Adhyapika Manch — forum for women teachers created to respond to the

¹⁶ Lok Jumbish Parishad (May) 1993.

¹⁷ The survey revealed a 'real participation rate between 55 to 65 per cent for boys and 25 to 30 per cent for girls in the 6–11 age group'. The retention rate for boys was between 28 to 38 per cent, while that for girls was between 17 to 24 per cent. The percentage of girls varied from 27 per cent in Pisangan to 35 per cent in Arain. The average attendance did not exceed 70 per cent among boys and 66 per cent among girls (ibid.).

¹⁸ Interview with Aparna Sahay — former Chief Accounts Officer (1992–93) and Project Director, Jaipur, 13 April 2003.

¹⁹ Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1994.

²⁰ Lok Jumbish Parishad (July) 1995.

1996 ²¹	educational and training needs of women teachers in a sensitive manner.
January 1997 ²²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formalisation of the matrix system of management: each Programme Officer in the state office assigned area responsibility for seven to eight blocks. - Formalisation of the Block Education Management Committee (with powers to sanction schools/NFE centres delegated to it by the Executive Committee) and introduction of matrix system at the block level. The block emerged as the principal level of planning and implementation and comprised one Project Officer, three Assistant Project Officers and one Samyukta. Each APO and Samyukta made responsible not only for a subject area but also for overseeing implementation in LJ cluster. - Monthly cluster-level RPMs formalised. - Decision to hold state RPMs on rotation basis in different districts. - MIS system stabilised — village-level information flows upwards through the BSG. - Handbook for school mapping and micro planning printed and disseminated. - Micro planning the main vehicle for universal enrolment and retention. <p>(All these processes were initiated in 1993–94 and by 1997 were effectively in place.)</p>
January 1998 ²³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action plans prepared at the cluster and block levels. - Cluster-level RPMs gained momentum. - Introduction of following initiatives in response to specific needs of unreached children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mukhtangan Yojana (a flexible education programme for tribal children) introduced in 17 villages in Khandela (<u>Baran district</u>) and 20 in Kotra (Udaipur district). ➤ Madrassa education programme interfaced with Madrassa. ➤ Residential camps for mainstreaming children with disabilities. ➤ Hostels for tribal children (short-duration and long-duration) with free boarding and lodging to meet the needs of seasonal migrants and children living in remote habitations. ➤ Balika Shikshan Shivir (short-term residential camps for adolescent girls, many of whom are married and/or missed the opportunity for schooling). Four experimental camps started in early 1997. Encouraged by their overwhelming success, an additional 14 camps were started in educationally backward areas, catering to 1,400 girls. - Micro planning institutionalised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Village Education Registers (VER), to be maintained by VECs, introduced in all villages. ➤ Retention Registers introduced in all the schools and Sahaj Shiksha Kendras. - Gender-sensitive management principles agreed on by LJ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appointment of women at all levels in reasonable proportions ➤ Facilitative working environment/conditions ➤ Recognition of women's role in family make space for suitable pace of work ➤ Creation of women's collectives at all level to enable them to overcome

²¹ Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1996.

²² Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1997.

²³ Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1998.

	<p>isolation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prevention of sexual abuse/harassment — exemplary penal measures introduced (guidelines formulated). ➤ Extension of gender sensitivity to all aspects/levels of LJ (grievance redressal mechanisms introduced). ➤ Samvadika — an informal forum created for brainstorming and planning on gender issues. <p>(These processes started in 1994 and were in place by 1997–98.)</p>
10 June 1998	- Government order issued, bringing Lok Jumbish under the purview of the Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development. Teachers brought under the ambit of rural development, thereby creating scope for delegation of non-teaching responsibilities from time to time — depending on the emerging economic/development needs of the state.
June 1998	Phase II formally came to a close on 30 June 1998. However it was extended to December 1999 by the Government of India and Government of Rajasthan.
June 1999 to March 2001 ²⁴	<p>The Lok Jumbish project goes into ambivalent phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sida withdraws support as a result of the Pokhran Nuclear Test — the future of LJ becomes uncertain - Change in top leadership at the state as well as the project level. - A number of audit and procedural inquiries ordered. - Contracts with a number of resource agencies and NGO partners were terminated/reviewed after financial and performance audit. A significant number of LJ functionaries left when their yearly contracts were not renewed. - While DFID agreed to reimburse project expenditure with effect from December 1999, the process of appraisal and negotiations took some time. DFID formally signed the agreement in March 2001. - During this period, there were almost no funds flowing into the district clusters and villages. Many workers continued to function without salaries or funds for training and other activities.
January 2000 ²⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District Executive Committee constituted under the chairpersonship of the District Collector to coordinate and monitor the programme in the district. (The GR clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all LJ functionaries was issued by the Director in September 2002.)²⁶ - Impact of this GR on LJ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cluster and block-level RPMs have become irregular (though not formally discontinued). ➤ The BSG/KSPS have become dysfunctional — though they formally continue to exist. ➤ Annual plans and budgets prepared by block-level officials approved by the District Executive Committee. Plans are printed and distributed up to the cluster and block level. Each functionary's role and responsibilities listed in the annual plan.

²⁴ Lok Jumbish Parishad (February) 2001.

²⁵ Interview with Lok Jumbish officials: Chairman Lok Jumbish Parishad Mr B L Sharma (28 May 2003) and Project Director Mr Alok (28 May 2003), District and block functionaries in Ajmer (21 and 22 April 2003), Primary School Teachers (21 and 22 April 2003), former Director Aparna Sahay (21 and 22 April 2003).

²⁶ Order dated 19 July 2001 listed the members of the district committee. Order dated 6 September 2002 listed the functions of the District Executive Committee.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School mapping and micro planning continues at village level as a mobilisation activity. However, the data requirements for planning were collected through Shiksha Darpan and later/Shiksha Aap ke Dwar, a household survey covering all villages in the state, including LJ project areas.²⁷ - Women's Development cell has been merged with child development (Early Childhood Care and Education).²⁸ - Teachers have been given additional responsibilities — supervising drought relief programmes and women's self-help groups.
March 2001	- DFID formally signed an agreement with Government of India to fund Phase III of Lok Jumbish and agreed to reimburse expenditure with effect from December 1999.
13 February 2003 ²⁹	- Rajasthan High Court judgement that teachers cannot be asked to take on additional responsibilities and they can only be called upon for duties in national interest only: Election duty, census operations every 10 years, economic surveys every five years, and Pulse Polio campaign.
23 April 2003	- Government of Rajasthan issued an order directing District Magistrates to comply with the Rajasthan High Court ruling on non-teaching responsibilities of schoolteachers.
16 April 2003:	<p>Anticipated changes in July 2004 in connection with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the management of education programmes in the state:³⁰</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phase III of Lok Jumbish comes to a close. As per the guidelines of Government of India, all basic education programmes will come under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Lok Jumbish will cease to exist as a project and so will Lok Jumbish Parishad — an autonomous body created to manage the project. - All project functionaries to come under the purview of block and district Education Officers. - Special parallel systems created by Lok Jumbish will cease to exist with the closure of the project in June 2004.

²⁷ After eight blocks were transferred to DPEP, LJ was left with 57 blocks. Data from micro planning was available only for 30 of them. Data/information at the state level was collected through a state-wide survey known as Shiksha Aap Ke Dwar.

²⁸ The Government of Rajasthan and the Director Lok Jumbish made the following declaration on 17 January 2000 in the High Court of Judicature of Rajasthan (S B Civil Writ Petition No. 113/2000; Mrs Vijay Laxmi Joshi versus Lok Jumbish and Others): 'The petitioner was working in the unit of Women's Development. The same has been abolished and the reason being that because of financial constraint every effort was made to see that the project should be reduced to such an extent that there may not be an excessive burden on the project and also to see at the same time that the very object of the project may be achieved which was related to universalisation of primary education, providing access to primary education for all children up to 14 years and accordingly a decision was taken to abolish the Unit of Women's Development in the project and the same has been done so for the Phase III of the project The First Phase of Project ended on 30.6.1995. The Second Phase ended in 30.6.1998 and was extended up to 31. Dec. 1999. However for the purpose of transferring the balance fund available with Sida the latter agreed to pass this fund up to December 1999. The Parishad under such financial constraints was required to restructure itself and exhaustive exercise was carried out....'

²⁹ Interview with Mr Alok on 28 May 2003, Jaipur.

³⁰ Ibid.

Annexure 2: Coverage of Lok Jumbish

Table 2.1: Statistics at a glance: Lok Jumbish, December 1997

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blocks covered: 58. • Revenue villages: 9,755. • Environment building done: 5,683 • Core teams formed: 4,420 • Mahila Samooh formed: 2,816 • School mapping completed: 4,006 (percentage 70.49). • New primary schools opened: 383 • New Shiksha Karmi schools opened: 454 • Upgrading to upper primary schools: 227 • Additional teachers — primary 752, upper primary 559 • Sahaj Shiksha Kendra: 3,703 (April 1997) • 14,691 boys and 31,148 girls enrolled in Sahaj Shiksha Kendra. • Number of Balika Shivirs: 11; number of girls participating: 1,495 • Number of new primary school buildings: 125 • Number of school buildings repaired and rooms constructed: 773

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (January) 1998.

Table 2.2: Coverage as of December 1999

1.	Number of villages covered in environment building	9,576
2.	Number of Prerak Dals formed	8,523
3.	Membership of Prerak Dals	Men: 65,765 Women: 42,181
4.	Number of women's groups formed	6,813
5.	Number of villages where school mapping was completed	8,212
6.	New primary schools opened	529
7.	Primary schools upgrades to upper primary schools	268
8.	New teacher positions in primary and upper primary schools	1,255

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (February) 2001.

Table 2.3: Year-wise expansion of non-formal education centres

Period	No. of Blocks	No. Of Sahaj Shiksha Kendra			Enrolment		
		Total	Day	Night	Total	Boys	Girls
December 1993	6	338	-	338	8,366	3,273	5,063
December 1994	12	760	-	760	14,595	5,262	9,333
December 1995	18	936	-	936	17,601	5,743	11,858
December 1996	25	1,502	400	1,102	28,184	9,168	19,016
December 1997	33	2,326	780	1,546	45,839	14,691	31,148
December 1998	51	3,430	1,358	2,072	67,234	21,118	46,116

December 1999	42	2,644	1,061	1,583	49,952	15,413	34,539
December 2000	42	2,445	927	1,518	46,713	14,445	32,268
December 2001	35	2,076	967	1,109	40,725	13,032	27,693

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (February) 2002; (December) 2002.

Table 2.4: Enrolment in innovative programmes as of March 2002

	Boys	Girls	Total
Kishanganj Mukhtangan	537	447	982
Kotra Mukhtangan	606	328	934
Balika Shikshan Shivir – 98	-	9,000	9,000

Source: Lok Jumbish Parishad (February) 2001; (December) 2002.

Annexure 3: Statistical profile of Rajasthan

Table 3.1: Rajasthan literacy status by social/economic group, gender (rural)

By land size group	Landless	Marginal	Small	Medium	Large
Male	44.70	52.60	61.70	63.70	65.90
Female	5.70	14.50	17.90	19.80	21.40
By occupational group	Agriculture	Salaried	Wage earners	All others	Total
Male	57.20	83.30	44.90	70.40	60.40
Female	14.60	42.10	6.00	29.20	19.00
By social group	ST	SC	Other Hindus	Minority	Total
Male	39.10	51.80	66.40	45.90	60.40
Female	7.50	9.10	23.90	7.80	19.00

Source: NCAER/HDI Survey 1994.

Table 3.2: Ever enrolment rate by income, social group and occupation (rural)

By per capita income	Up to 1500	1501—2500	2501—4000	4001—6000	6000 +
Male	76.00	69.60	75.50	87.90	89.70
Female	31.80	32.10	40.10	55.90	65.40
By land size group	Landless	Marginal	Small	Medium	Large
Male	63.10	73.80	76.60	83.60	80.00
Female	15.02	36.40	41.80	45.20	47.00
By social group	ST	SC	Other Hindus	Minority	Total
Male	57.10	58.40	76.80	71.90	68.50
Female	42.90	46.40	64.80	58.40	55.80

Source: NCAER/HDI Survey 1994.

Table 3.3: Literacy rates: All-India and Rajasthan, 2001

State	Male	Female	Male–female gap	Decadal increase Male	Decadal increase Female	Increase ranked in descending order	
						M	F
All-India	75.96	54.28	21.68	11.83	15.00		
Rajasthan	76.46	44.34	32.12	21.47	23.90	1	2

Source: Government of India 2001a, pp.126.

Table 3.4: Proportion of women teachers and teacher–pupil ratio

State	Women	Total	% Women	TPR
Primary and junior basic schools				
Rajasthan	26538	94812	27.99	54
Middle and senior basic schools				
Rajasthan	30238	118650	25.49	54

Source: Government of India 2001.

Table 3.5: Percentage of household population age 6-14 years attending school by sex, residence and state, 1992-93 & 1997-98

State	NFHS 1992-93				NFHS 1998-99			
	6-10		11-14		6-10		11-14	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Boys								
All-India	86.2	71.4	84.2	73.4	91.7	83.2	85.1	78.5
Rajasthan	82.5	69.9	87.0	75.2	88.5	87.4	88.9	82.8
Girls								
All-India	81.8	55.0	75.7	47.9	89.1	75.1	82.8	61.6
Rajasthan	72.4	36.4	71.2	28.6	82.7	66.0	75.5	44.9

Source: NFHS I and II, IIPS, Mumbai.

Table 3.6: Total household population above age 6 by median number of completed years of schooling by residence and sex, (NFHS-II 1998-99)

State/India	Median no. of years of schooling					
	Rural areas			Urban areas		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
All India	4.6	0.0	7.3	8.3	5.8	2.6
Rajasthan	3.9	0.0	0.0	7.5	3.6	5.7

Source: NFHS II, IIPS, Mumbai.

Note: The median number of years for female is 0.00 in rural areas because an overwhelming proportion of adult rural women are either illiterate or barely literate.

**Table 3.7: Eighth Plan (1992-97) and Ninth Plan (1997-2002)
Outlay and actual expenditure (Rs in million)**

Name of project	Eighth Plan		Ninth Plan	
	Approved outlay	Actual expenditure	Approved outlay	Actual expenditure
Rajasthan Shiksha Karmi (Sida and DFID)	350.00	294.10	319.10	727.90
Rajasthan Lok Jumbish (Sida and DFID)	900.00	639.30	721.60	1,962.60

Source: Department of Elementary Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India 1999 and 2002 (expenditure up to 15 March 2002 only).

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Mr Alok, Project Director, Lok Jumbish (2003).

Mr Ganesh Kumar Nigam, Academic Officer, Lok Jumbish (2003).

Ms. Aparna Sahay, former Director, Lok Jumbish Project (2003). Currently Director of the Women's Resource Centre in HCM/RIPA, Jaipur.

Dr Sharada Jain, Director, Sandhan Resource Centre, Jaipur (2003).

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- a. Mr. Anil Bordia, former Chairman, Lok Jumbish Parishad (30 May, 7 June 1995).
- b. Mr Loria, formerly with Lok Jumbish Parishad (27 May 1995).
- c. Discussions with Lok Jumbish functionaries: Ms Kusum Sharma, Ms Vijaylakshmi, Mr Dayaram, Ms Smita and Ms Sumitra Choudhary.
- d. Meeting with Block-level Coordinators held in Jaipur on 5 June 1995. Participants: Ms Sadhana Khanna, Ms Rita Chaturvedi, Ms Asha Verma, Ms Manju Vyas, Dr Vimla Jain and Ms Kusum Sharma.

- e. Meeting with Sayuktas and few Sandhan members on 6 June 1995, Jaipur. Participants: Taravami (Lunkaransar), Vimla Jain (Falaudi), Varsha Sharma (Sandhan), Kusum Vyas (Pokharan), Sanju Sharma (Sandhan), Padmavati (Arain), Sadhana (Pisangan) and Kiran Dogra (Shahbad).