

Scheme for Infrastructure Development in Minority Institutes (IDMI)

(Elementary/Secondary/Senior Secondary Schools)

Evaluation Study Report

December 2013



K. R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025

Project Team

Advisory Committee

Mr M. Atyab Siddiqui, Vice President, Delhi Education Society & Chief Legal Advisor, Jamia Millia Islamia (Nominee of the Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia)

Prof M. H. Qureshi, Chair Professor, Department of Geography, Jamia Millia Islamia

Prof Mohd. Ishaque, Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia

Dr Zafrul Islam Khan, Editor, Milli Gazette.

Project Director

Prof Azra Razzack,

(Director, Dr. K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies. Jamia Millia Islamia)

Assistant Project Directors

Dr Sabiha Hussain, Associate Professor, Dr. K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia

Dr Tanweer Fazal, Associate Professor, Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace & Conflict Resolution, Jamia Millia Islamia

Research Co-ordinator

Dr Syed Tariq Ahmad

Editorial Support

Ms Mary Abraham

State Teams

Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Narender Kumar, Team Leader
Mr. Sunil Prasad, Civil Engineer
Dr. Syed Tariq Ahmad, Research Officer

Kerala

Mr. Atyab Siddiqui, Team Leader
Prof. Azra Razzack, Director
Mr. K. Masood Ahmed, Civil Engineer
Ms. Umema Siddiqui, Researcher
Ms. Suchita Panwar, Researcher

Harayana

Dr. Syed Tariq Ahmad, Research Officer
Mr. Digvijay Kumar, Civil Engineer
Mr. Mohd. Zaheer, Civil Engineer
Mr. Shaikh Shamsul Aarfin, Researcher

Karnataka

Mr. M. Atyab Siddiqui, Team Leader
Prof. Azra Razzack, Director
Dr. Narender Kumar
Mr. Sunil Prasad, Civil Engineer

Maharashtra

Mr. Atyab Siddiqui, Team Leader
Prof. Azra Razzack, Director
Mr. K. Masood Ahmed, Civil Engineer
Mr. Mohd. Rizwan, Research Assistant
Mr. Mohd. Irfan, Research Assistant

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Professor Azra Razzack
Project Director

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1. Introduction

India has had various traditions of education from time immemorial. Whether it was the *gurukuls*, madarsas, Buddhist *viharas* or Christian seminaries - all have played a prominent role in educating its populace. With the coming of the British a large network of schools were set up across the length and breadth of the country providing for secular learning. However, the desire to maintain their identity while providing for secular education for their children has resulted in denominational schools being set up by different communities in India.

After Independence, such traditions of education were recognized by the Constitution of India. Article 30(1) of the Constitution of India gives linguistic and religious minorities a fundamental right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. These rights, as enshrined, are protected by a prohibition against their violation.

In keeping with the constitutional spirit, the government of India is committed to providing a level playing field to minority educational institutions. In 1993-94 the 'Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities' was launched along with the 'Financial Assistance for Modernization of Madrasa Education'. Since 2009, this scheme is in operation in the form of a centrally sponsored Scheme for Infrastructure Development in Minority Institutes (IDMI) by the Ministry of Human Development Resource (MHRD). With over four years since its implementation an evaluation of the scheme was called for. The Dr. K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, was entrusted with the task of evaluating this scheme.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) through Ed.CIL. and the Dr. K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia was signed. The evaluation exercise was initiated at the beginning of February 2013. Field visits were made to the states of Uttar Pradesh (UP), Kerala, Karnataka Maharashtra, and Haryana. The Report is based on field visits to these states and interaction with functionaries and other stakeholders of different institutions.

1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Evaluation

The aim of this Evaluation Exercise is to assess the efficiency with which the IDMI is being administered and implemented at the state level, to understand the experience of the beneficiary organization and to suggest recommendations for further improvement of this scheme.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) are given as Annexure I.

General Objectives of the Evaluation

In keeping with the TOR that was drawn up, the objectives of the study was to evaluate the following:

1. Assess the efficiency with which this scheme is being administered and implemented by tracking mechanisms of fund flow and the utilization of funds.
2. Identify administrative bottlenecks in the implementation of this scheme.
3. Assess relevance of IDMI by reviewing its importance for the minorities in India.
4. Understand the institutions experience with this scheme.
5. Draw up recommendations for the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

1.2 The Scheme

The scheme provides for augmenting and strengthening school infrastructure in Minority Institutions, in order to expand facilities for formal education to children of minority communities. The scheme will fund infrastructure development of private aided/unaided minority elementary/secondary/senior secondary schools to the extent of 75% and subject to a maximum of Rs. 50 lakhs per school. The following are some of the components that the grant can be spent on:

- (i) Strengthening of educational infrastructure and physical facilities in the existing elementary/secondary/senior secondary school including additional classrooms, science / computer lab rooms, library rooms, toilets, drinking water facilities etc.
- (ii) Hostel buildings for children in such category of schools, especially for girls.
- (iii) Any other educational infrastructure which may be beneficial for educational advancement of the minority institution.

A copy of the scheme is given as Annexure II.

1.2 Context

"Education is the single most important instrument for social and economic transformation. A well educated population, adequately equipped with knowledge and skill is not only essential to support economic growth, but is also a precondition for growth to be inclusive since it is the educated and skilled person who can stand to benefit most from the

employment opportunities which growth will provide." (Para 10.1 of the Approach to the XIIth Five Year Plan).

Many minority school institutions do not have infrastructure which can be deemed necessary for giving proper education. It has been established that Infrastructure also helps in increasing school attendance motivation and to improve academic performance of students. Therefore this scheme has been a welcome step in this direction.

2. Methodology

Our evaluation builds upon the issues identified during our field visits to various educational minority institutions across the country that are beneficiaries of IDMI. It examines the strengths and hurdles encountered in the implementation of IDMI. The team was accompanied by a civil engineer to assess the quality of work being undertaken.

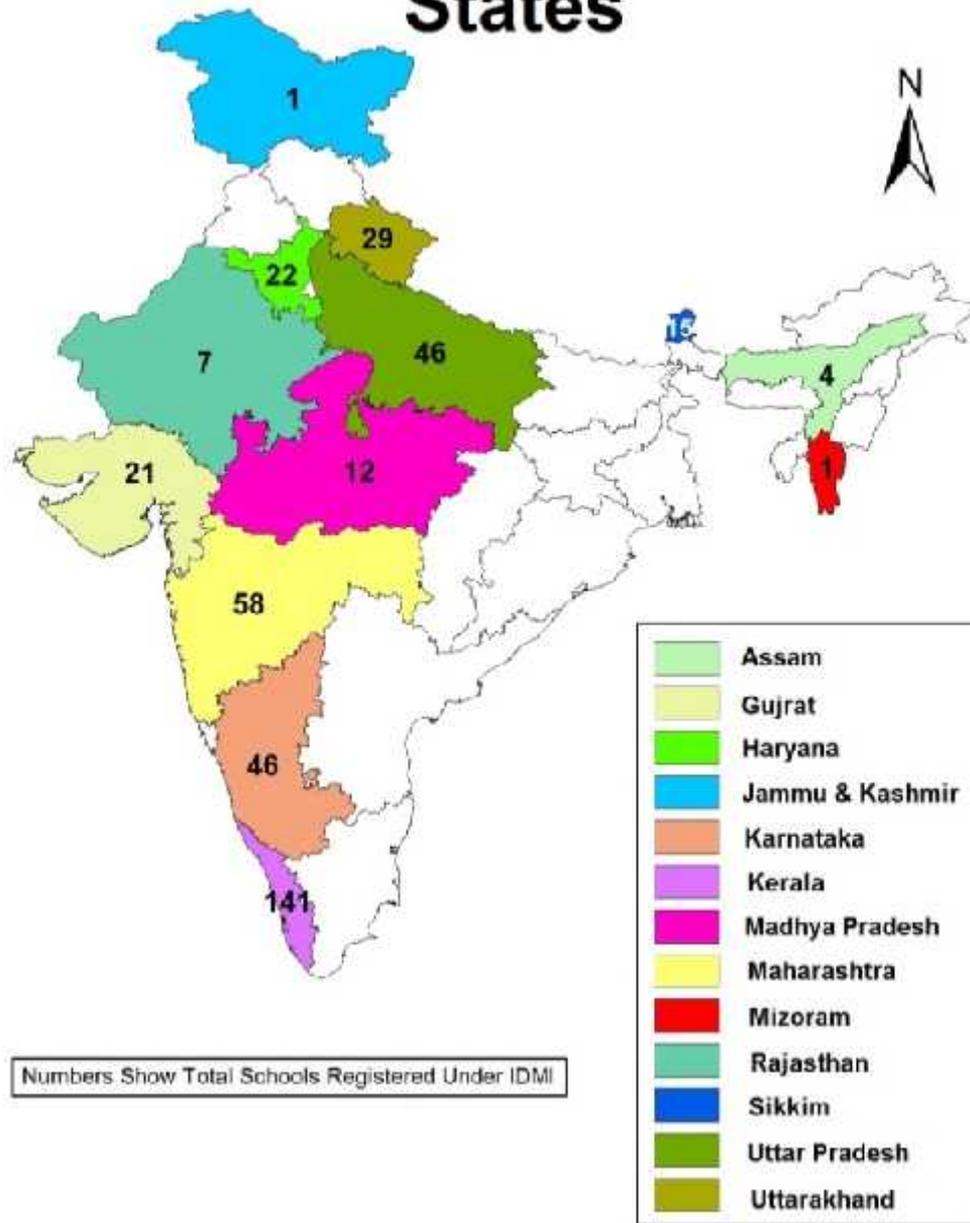
2.1 States under evaluation

The implementation of IDMI rests with the state governments. At present, institutions in thirteen states have shown interest in seeking benefit out of the scheme. Our evaluation was however restricted as per the MOU to five of these fourteen states. These states are: Uttar Pradesh (UP), Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka and Haryana. The number of institutions registered in each of these five states are given below:

Table 1
State Wise No of Minority Institutions registered under IDMI

S.No	State	No of Institutions registered under IDMI	Total IDMI Districts in the state
1	Uttar Pradesh	46	21
2	Maharashtra	58	18
3	Kerala	141	14
4	Karnataka	46	9
5	Haryana	22	5
6	Gujarat	21	12
7	Jammu & Kashmir	1	1
8	Madhya Pradesh	12	7
9	Rajasthan	7	5
10	Uttarakhand	29	3
11	Sikkim	15	3
12	Assam	4	3
13	Mizoram	1	1
Total		403	102

Map of India Showing IDMI States



Map of India showing IDMI states

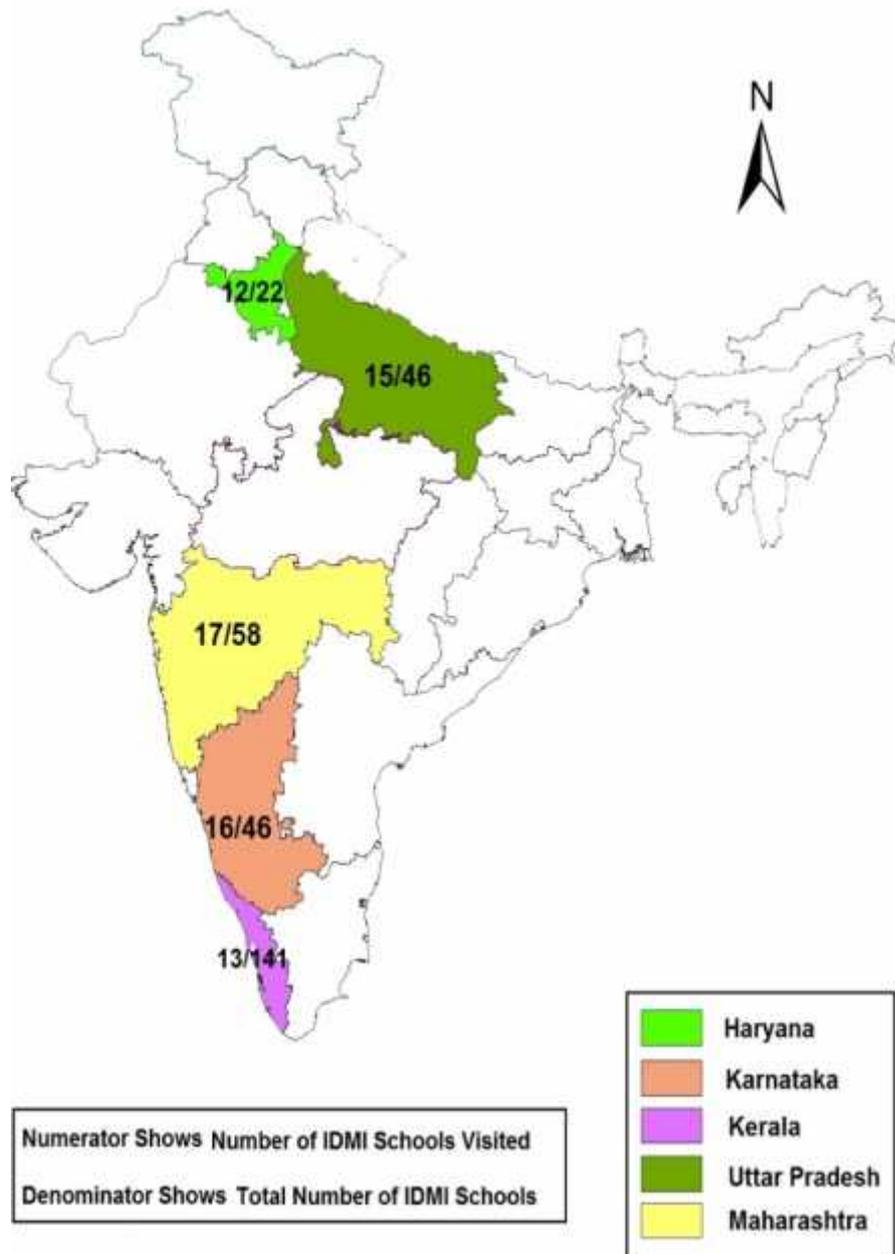
2.2 Sample

According to the MOU we had to cover forty institutions from five states, i.e. eight institutes from each state. Out of total 403 IDMI Institutions registered under the scheme in the states surveyed, a sample of 73 such institutions, proportionately distributed across 5 listed states was identified for the purpose of evaluation. As per the MOU we had to cover 40 institutions from the selected states. Within the states, care was taken to ensure their distribution across various districts. State-wise distribution of sample is as follows:

Table 2
State Wise No. of Sample institutions visited:

S.No.	State	No. of sample IDMI institutions visited
1	Uttar Pradesh	15
2	Maharashtra	17
3	Kerala	13
4	Karnataka	16
5	Haryana	12
Total		73

Map of India Showing Sample States and Number of Schools Visited



Snapshots from Uttar Pradesh



**List of Sample Institutions visited in different States
(Names of institutions visited appear as Annexure III)**

1. Uttar Pradesh

Table 2.1

S.No.	District	Number of sample IDMI Institution /School visited
1	Barabanki	3
2	Pilibhit	5
3	Lucknow	3
4	Shahjahanpur	4
	Total	15

Snapshots from Maharashtra



2. Maharashtra

Table 2.2

S.No.	District	Number of sample IDMI Institution/ School visited
1	Thane	1
2	Ahmadnagar	1
3	Aurangabad	8
4	Buldhana	3
5	Akola	1
6	Amravati	3
	Total	17

Snapshot from Haryana



3. Haryana

Table 2.3

S.No.	District	Number of sample IDMI Institution/ School visited
1	Faridabad	2
2	Mewat	10
Total		12

Snapshots from Kerala



4. Kerala

Table 2.4

S.No.	District	Number of sample IDMI Institution / School visited
1	Mallapuram	2
2	Allapuzha	2
3	Palakkad	2
4	Ernakulam	3
5	Thiruvananthapuram	1
6	Kozhikode	1
7	Kottayam	1
8	Idukki	1
Total		13

Snapshot from Karnataka



5. Karnataka

Table 2.5

S.No.	District	Number of sample IDMI Institution / School visited
1	Bidar	6
2	Gulbarga	4
3	Bijapur	1
4	Dakshin Kannada	5
Total		16

3. Implementation of the Scheme – Functioning and Issues of Concern

3.1 Introduction

The scheme has received an overwhelming response amongst the various stakeholders, namely the school management and the members of the minority communities that the scheme intends to benefit since its inception in 2009. Respondents were unanimous in their view that the scheme is beneficial to the community. The scheme has resulted in the up gradation of infrastructure in many institutions which are proving helpful in attracting students. This scheme has also given a definite impetus to the education of Minorities and girl students, especially those coming from economically deprived backgrounds and residing in remote areas. The up gradation of infrastructure like additional classrooms, separate toilets for girls and boys, boundary wall for the school, laboratories etc. has been helpful in increasing the enrolment rates of students in these institutions.

A factor that needs to be recognised is that in setting up these minority institutions, the management of these minority institutions are supporting the government by providing education facilities for the masses, which in fact is the duty of the state. They are indeed rendering a valuable service and shouldering the responsibility of the education of the populace along with the government. This service should be duly recognised and supported

3.2 Scheme Awareness and Publicity

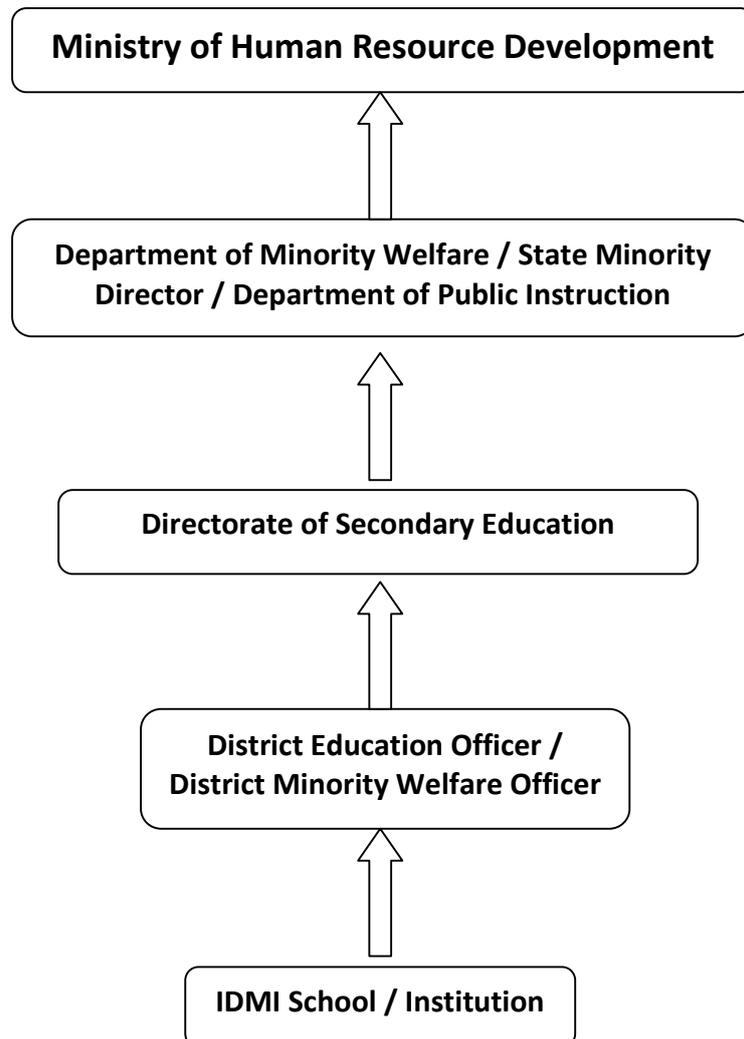
While the scheme has been in operation since 2009, details regarding it are not widely known. There is limited publicity and only those institutions where managements are active have been able to access information.

However, even those institutions which had applied for it were not aware of exactly when their application was accepted or their grant sanctioned and if not, then reasons for rejection. However, the process for application was felt to be tedious and time consuming. Most of the schools reported a minimum gap of at least two years from the time of applying for the scheme and receiving the grant. Some institutions in Uttar Pradesh reported having to wait for two years for their applications to be accepted in the first place. Some in Delhi. For example some schools even in Delhi which had spent time, energy and money applying for it, did not have any clue as to the acceptance or rejection of their application nearly four years after having applied.

3.3 Procedure for Application

The application process is long drawn out. The Minority Schools/Institution applying for the scheme are required to apply to the relevant nodal department at the state level. After close scrutiny of the papers submitted to the nodal agency, the application is sent ahead to the Ministry of HRD, which further scrutinises the applications and grants the scheme to the respective School/Institution.

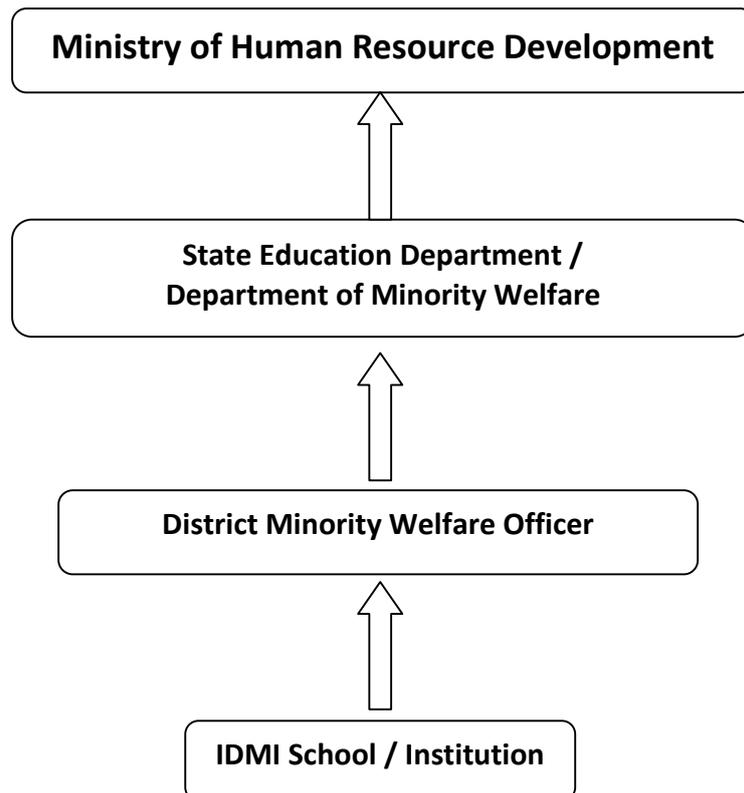
Figure 1



3.4 Transfer of Funds

It was found that after the grant was released from the HRD Ministry at the centre, it was usually forwarded to the nodal agency for the implementation of the scheme in a particular state, before finally reaching the beneficiary institutions.

Figure 2
Mechanisms – Transfer of Funds



3.5 Utilisation of Funds

It was largely found that most of the institutions had used up their first instalment and were waiting for the second instalment. Most of them had also submitted their utilisation certificates on how the first instalment had been utilised and how far progress had been made.

It was however, painful to notice that despite having utilized the 1st instalment and having utilized the management share of 25% there is an inordinate delay in the release of the 2nd instalment.

However, the delay in receiving the second instalment stalled the construction being undertaken with the result that the cost of construction has increased manifold.

4. Summing Up

The centrally sponsored scheme – IDMI, has been hugely welcomed as a measure of social advancement of education of the minorities. Nearly 90% of the students who have benefitted belong to the Minority Communities. It has resulted in up gradation of infrastructure in many minority institutions. The improved facilities in the schools are surely going to give a much needed impetus to the *quality* schooling experience of students.

The scheme promises to have a positive impact on educational achievement of children especially those belonging to a relatively modest socio-economic background by helping them study in a far more comfortable environment with an improved infrastructure.

Parents and members of the community, especially in the rural areas, are looking forward to their children too going to school in a proper building rather than being discouraged by the fact that proper school facilities are meant only for the elite.

Development of infrastructure, such as toilet facilities for girls has ensured that girls are regular to the school. Building hostel has also proved to be an impetus for education amongst minorities in remote areas. With a proper building and infrastructure in place gives the community a confidence that the school will continue, thus adding to the interest generated in the schooling of their children, especially in rural and remote areas.

4.1 Some Concerns

- It was felt that the amount being allotted by the Government is insufficient, keeping in mind, the requirement of various educational institutions. It may be noted that most of these institutions have been set up as initiatives of the community to provide education for their children. However, with limited resources at their end, making proper infrastructure available for quality teaching learning environment is not always possible, especially in rural areas and those catering to the most deprived.
- Delays in making available the second instalment have meant that Projects are pending completion. The team saw a number of projects which were in a state of incompleteness with only the basic infrastructure having been erected. While this has meant that the building meant for children is still not available to them it has the following serious additional consequences:
 - An incomplete building with bricks, iron rods and other construct material lying around on the school campus poses a major hazard for the young children

studying there. Children were found to be playing in these half complete buildings which poses a grave danger to them.

- A building which has not been plastered and is exposed to the vagaries of nature will have an adverse impact on its strength as well.
 - The escalation in costs is at time prohibitive and has resulted in the project remaining incomplete. Additionally, loans taken for the construction become a heavy burden for the institution.
-
- Long delays in release of funds leads to corruption at the lower bureaucratic level and the school administrators become victim to the unnecessary avarice of clerks etc. Complaints have also been received of `some part` being played by the middlemen and local politicians.
 - Over bureaucratisation in the non release of funds or the delays and the `passing the buck culture` in the movement of IDMI files puts the genuineness of the State under a cloud.
 - The status of the Applications under IDMI are not officially communicated to the stake holders with the result that the applicant has to run from pillar to post getting either no information or half baked information. This leads to unnecessary rumour mongering, heart burning and interference by the middleman.
 - Reasons for rejection are not conveyed to the institutions, which makes the entire exercise of applying futile.
 - An issue which is a matter of great concern is that the state government waits for all institutions which have applied to clear their formalities before forwarding applications to the MHRD. This should be done away with as this could mean a long wait for many an institution.
 - Insistence of obtaining a Minority Status Certificate as a pre requisite for considering the Applications under IDMI is a prohibitive step towards meeting its objectives. This requirement has unnecessarily embroiled the stake holder into legal wrangling.
 - The application process is so tedious and lengthy and also incurs a huge expenditure. Many institutions complained that the simple task of applying itself could cost up to 20 – 25, 000. This at times becomes a major burden for the institution.

- Administratively, it has been noticed with great concern, that applications for the grant of IDMI are being considered or being given preference only where the institution claiming funds is *physically* situated in a minority concentration district. This puts the objectives of the Scheme in a futility. By way of illustration, it be noted, that the historic 350 years old Anglo Arabic School (previously the *madrassa Ghaziuddin Khan*) providing modern education today to some 2500 students of the Muslim community of the walled city of Delhi is not situated in a officially declared 'minority concentration district'. However, the Application has been rejected presumably under the pretext that the institution does not fall in a notified minority concentrated district (although it caters to the Muslims of the walled city of Delhi) and the corporate of students studying then in nearly 99%.

4.2 Technical Observations

- There is a lack of proper guidelines for State/District Level officials on how to monitor the Utilisation of Grant given to the schools under the Scheme. In the absence of these guidelines, it is left to the individual school to decide on how it wants to use the grant amount and what type of construction it wants to undertake. It was observed that in many places construction had been done without any guidance and supervision of a civil engineer. Hence, technical faults too had been observed in some of the construction undertaken. Therefore, it is imperative that an approved drawing for construction should be maintained.
- No structural drawings were available in many places. Structural drawings should be made mandatory while the applications are being sanctioned and these should be checked at the state level itself for structural stability/seismic resistance, keeping in view the safety of the students involved. It should be ensured that the structural elements are designed in accordance with the latest Bureau of Indian Standards RCC, seismic, live loads and dead load codes before the amount is sanctioned to ensure the safety of the students in the institution.
- The institutions were generally found to have utilized the grant on infrastructure development
- Some institutions utilize the grant amount timely, having completed the construction even before the release of the second instalment. However, some of them have been slow in utilizing the grant.
- Utilization certificate (UC) should be countersigned by an engineer and the district nodal officer after inspection of the site.
- A Govt Engineer should be deputed (like C&DS Engineer in UP) to ensure better monitoring and quality construction.

- The grant should be utilized in a definite time period so as to make it more cost effective.
- The sanction certificate should indicate the purpose for which the grant is sanctioned i.e. the no. of class rooms, library, lab, toilet, boundary wall etc.
- The delays incurred in the application getting accepted till the actual receipt of the grant amount, escalates the cost of the project and, as result, modifications are made to the original project proposal.
- There is a problem in the supply of good quality water and sand and therefore, the administration needs to pay special attention in this regard.
- A regular audit, supervision and guidance by the administration is required to maintain the quality of construction and a civil engineer should be appointed for regular guidance.

5. Recommendations

- i. The minimum grant should be substantially enhanced to enable the institution to ensure that basic quality infrastructure is in place. In fact there should be no ceiling and should be based on the need and requirement. However, to start with the minimum amount of funding under this scheme should be enhanced to at least Rupees One Crore for each institution. This amount should be appropriately enhanced every three years.
- ii. The state funding needs to be enhanced from 75% of the project cost to 95%. This will ensure that the minority schools with meagre resources at their disposal are not left out and the benefits of the scheme reach the most educationally deprived.
- iii. The institution's share of existing 25 % (recommended 5%) could also be met through a easy loan facility without any interest. This will ensure that this scheme will reach the most deprived of the minority communities.
- iv. Mechanisms should be worked out to provide additional funds to those institutions which are financially worse off, more so because they do not take any fees or the school fee is minimal.
- v. The central government should disburse funds to the stake holders by creating an effective methodology in which the middleman does not play any role whatsoever.
- vi. The application process from the date of application to the release of funds to schools should be institutionalized and time bound so as to make the whole process smooth, transparent and avoid delays in disbursal of funds.

- vii. Too much of paper work is prohibitive. Institutions with the slightest of shortcomings in their paper work fall prey and are denied the assistance. This also gives enough scope for corruption in handling such cases. The process should be such that it facilitates , rather than be prohibitive.
- viii. To ensure better utilization of funds as well as transparency, a separate amount needs to be allocated only for popularizing the scheme and taking out advertisements in the newspapers (especially in vernacular languages) explaining the application process in detail.
- ix. Need to set up information dissemination centres, failing which only those institutions which have the means can access information by appointing their people (agents) in Delhi to keep them updated on central government schemes
- x. The minority institutions should not be asked to submit Minority Status Certificates from the National Commission of Minority Educational Institutions situated at New Delhi as this is a cumbersome process, as well as a financial burden for institutions situated at a remote distance from Delhi.
- xi. The Scheme should also not be limited to institutions in minority concentrated districts. Any minority institution which is in financial need should be able to access this scheme , irrespective of where it is located.
- xii. There should, however, be a process of monitoring put in place to ensure that the buildings constructed are of good quality and safe for children. For checking the quality and the work done, government appointed engineers should visit the site.
- xiii. There should be proper designated officers to take care of such a scheme. As of now, officials find themselves overburdened and hence the disinterest and delay in handling and processing applications.

The Scheme should be seen as essentially as a hand holding measure to deprived communities which are clamouring for the cause of education for their children. Therefore, all out effort should be made to facilitate the process of grant of funds. Long delays, bureaucratic hurdles, long winding process – all this will result in further frustration of the community and the essential purpose of providing a supporting facility for the cause of education will die a natural death.