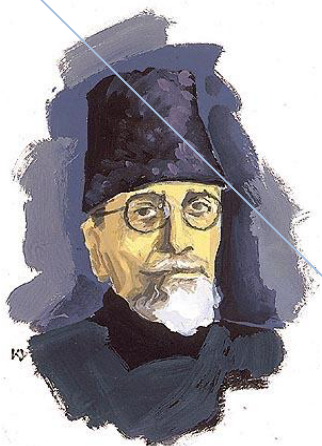# Impact of Schemes/ Programmes of Maulana Azad Education Foundation on the Target Group

March 2010

Commissioned by:

Maulana Azad Education Foundation

Conducted by:

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgement

At the outset we thank Maulana Azad Education Foundation, New Delhi, for showing confidence in Indian Social Institute by entrusting this assignment and thus giving an opportunity to our team to conduct the evaluation study of its schemes/ programmes on the target group.

Primary as well as secondary information was collected from different sets of respondents and we got constructive cooperation from them. So on behalf of the evaluation team it is our privilege and pleasure to extend gratitude to all respondents. Special thanks are due to Mr. Abrar Ahmed, Secretary (MAEF), Mr. S. Zubair Ahmad, Dy. Secretary (MAEF), Mr. Syed Jamal Ali and their colleagues for making available the requisite information.

The hard work put-in by the evaluation team members (Mr. Vincent Ekka, Dr. Ramesh Nayak and Dr. Pankaj Deep) and field investigators (Mr. Omprakash Pal, Mr. Pascal Tirkey, Mr. Rajiv Ranjan and Mr. Joseph) has been critical to the exercise. We express our sincere appreciation for their efforts. Our thanks are also due to Mrs. Madhuri Paliwal for her prompt secretarial assistance.

It is our hope that this modest effort will contribute towards setting-up of appropriate policy measures and better mechanism for implementation of the schemes/ programmes of MAEF to the benefit of hundreds of NGOs and thousands of meritorious girl students from educationally backward minorities.

Dr. Christopher Lakra   **Prof. John Chathanatt**   **Dr. Rakesh K Singh**
Executive Director   Research Director   Project Coordinator

I.   EVALUATION STUDY REPORT

A.   THE EVALUATION PROCESS

1.   Framework

In evaluating the schemes and programmes of Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF), the evaluating team of Indian Social Institute (ISI) has looked at MAEF in terms of its constitution to promote education amongst educationally backward minorities in particular and weaker sections of Indian society in general for achieving national ideals of Justice, Liberty, Equity and Fraternity and Democracy, Secularism and Socialism. The evaluators used the frame provided by the Memorandum of Association and the stated objectives, beliefs and values of MAEF. Against this the evaluators looked into the actions, schemes/ programs and implementation structures of MEAF. We also examined how MAEF schemes were perceived by its beneficiaries and stakeholders.

The Terms of Reference provided by MAEF are as per **Annexure 1.**

2.   Objectives and scope

In line with the Terms of Reference (ToR) that was drawn up by MAEF for the exercise, the objectives of this study are to evaluate the following:

- The system of selection of NGOs evolved by the Foundation and suggestions for improvement.
- The method adopted for short-listing applications received by the Foundation and suggestions for improvement.
- The inspection procedure followed by the MAEF and suggestions for improvement.
- Existing publicity system and suggestions for improvement.
- Identification of problematic states and suggestions for more equitable distribution of fund.
- Existing time schedule for receipt, processing and sanction of applications for scholarships and suggestions for improvement.
- Impact made by the Foundation in the field with reference to its objectives.

- The feasibility of inviting applications online, including online monitoring of applications and developing awareness among rural NGOs about its intended benefits.
- Have the grants given been within the limits stipulated by MAEF?
- Adherence to "first come, first served" principle while dealing with applications from NGOs.
- Computer literacy status of NGOs receiving grant-in-aid from the MAEF.
- Purposeful utilization of the space and fund by the NGO for which it has been granted.
- Verification of assets, including quality of assets created out of MAEF grants.
- Positive impact of MAEF scholarships on girl students.

3.   Methodology

The evaluation methodology used for this task included a stratified random sampling of ten (10) percent of the total NGOs (970) which have received grants-in-aid from the MAEF, interviews with randomly selected girl students who received scholarships, followed by analysis of data and feedback received from various stakeholders. In order to capture the bigger picture with respect to the programme/schemes of MAEF, both qualitative and quantitative data was gathered through questionnaires, and by taking interviews and screening available secondary data. In carrying out this exercise, the evaluators have sought to follow a participatory approach, involving various stake holders of MAEF.

Questionnaires used for gathering data from beneficiary NGOs and girl students who received scholarships are as per **Annexure 2.**

4.   Process of Data Gathering and Analysis

MAEF respondents have been its beneficiaries (MAEF funded NGOs and girl students having received MAEF scholarships) and staff members of the Foundation. Discussions were held with Ministry officials as well.   The underlying methodology used in evaluation, and in data-gathering has basically been participatory in nature.

A preliminary meeting was held at ISI to discuss the parameters of the evaluation, develop a preliminary list of key stakeholders and come to a common understanding on the methodology of the evaluation. This was basically in line with the proposal for the evaluation study as submitted to MAEF by ISI earlier.

Secondary data such as project documents, annual reports and minutes of General Body meeting as made available by the MAEF were reviewed. Qualitative interactions/ interviews were carried out with MAEF staff.

Since it is an evaluation study of programmes/schemes of MAEF, a lot of statistical analysis was not required, per se. However, SPSS was used to make whatever quantitative analysis felt necessary from the point of view of the study. Accordingly, tables and charts were prepared as per the ToR with adequate explanation of the same.

The qualitative information was synthesized through free listing of responses to obtain the range of responses. The responses were entered into the computer database under the specific question. The responses which were considered irrelevant under a specific question were removed. During this process, important statements or suggestions were extracted for use in the report as reference material.

B.   THE SITUATION

1.   Description of MAEF

Maulana Azad Education Foundation is a voluntary, non-political, non-profit making social service Organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, to promote education amongst educationally backward minorities' in particular and other backward sections in general. It is fully funded by the Government of India. The Hon'ble Minister of Minority Affairs is ex-officio President of the Foundation.

Organizational Structure: The General Body, the policy making body and final authority of the Foundation, consists of 15 members out of which six members are ex-officio including the President, MAEF and rest nine members are nominated by the President, MAEF. The management of the Foundation is entrusted with its Governing Body, which consists of six members (including President, Vice President and Treasurer, MAEF) selected from amongst the members of the General Body. Vice President and Treasurer are nominated by the President from amongst the members.

The Resources: Though the Foundation was established on July 6th, 1989 (during the birth centenary celebrations of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad), its activities gained momentum only from the Financial Year 1993-94, when the Government of India released 1st installment of Corpus Fund amounting to Rs.5 crore. The Government released 2nd installment amounting to Rs.25.01 crore during Financial Year 1995-1996. Since then, the Corpus Fund has gone up to Rs.425 crores during the current financial year 2009-10 which is expected to earn interest income of Rs.30.60 crores (approx.) in the Year 2009-10 for expenditure during the year.

The Foundation has also mobilized contributions towards Corpus Fund from sources other than Government of India. It has received contributions of Rs.5.00 lakh from Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) and Rs.2.00 lakh from Steel Authority of

India Ltd. (SAIL) last year. It has also received a donation of Rs.1 lac from M/S Bajaj Trust recently.

The Corpus Fund of the Foundation remains intact and kept invested in Banks/other financial institutions and the interest accrued thereon is the amount available for implementation of the Schemes of the Foundation.

2.   Main Schemes

Maulana Azad Foundation is implementing two[1] main schemes – a). Grant-in-Aid to NGOs and b). Scholarship to Girl Students.

a).   Grant-in-Aid to NGOs:

The objective of the scheme is to provide basic educational infrastructure and facilities in the area of concentration of educationally backward minorities which do not have adequate provision for elementary, secondary schools and Sr. Sec. Schools / Jr. Colleges / Professional & Vocational Training Institutes.

Under the scheme, the Foundation is currently providing Grant-in-Aid to NGOs/ organizations for the following purposes:

- Construction/ expansion of Schools belonging to educationally backward minorities
- Construction/ Expansion of Vocational Training Centre/ITI/Polytechnic belonging to educationally backward minorities

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[1]   Other than these two, the Foundation is also running a Vocational Training Centre for Women in Delhi where free training is provided to girls in various vocational courses like Dress Designing, Beauty Culture, Art & Crafts, Computers, etc. in order to make them self-reliant by enabling them to take up in-house business or petty jobs. At this centre, 1,222 girls have been imparted training during the year 2004 to year 2008.

- Construction of Hostel building in the institutions belonging to educationally backward minorities
- Construction/Expansion of D.Ed/ B.Ed. College belonging to educationally backward minorities
- Purchase of Science/Computer lab equipments/furniture for institutions belonging to educationally backward minorities
- Purchase of equipments/ machinery/ tools/ furniture for VTC/ ITI/ Polytechnic belonging to educationally backward minorities

Eligibility Criteria:

a. Should be registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860, or The Indian Trust Act, 1882.

b. Should have sufficient land either registered in the name of NGO, or on lease for at least 30 years, for the proposed construction.

c. Should be financially sound; should have duly audited financial statements for at least three financial years.

d. The site plan for proposed construction should be duly approved by the competent authority.

e. The school / college / institution, run by the registered NGOs should be recognized by the Central / State Education Board / Technical Board / University etc.

f. Students belonging to the notified minorities should be more than 50% of the total strength of the students.

g. The grant is released in two installments of 70% and 30% of the sanctioned amount.

h. Sanction / release of each installment is preceded by inspection by the MAEF.

It is also important to note that assistance under the scheme is meant for development of infrastructure only; not for recurring expenditure. Again, from 2008-09 onwards,

MAEF allocates its grant-in-aid to NGOs belonging to various states of the country based on the budget available and criteria such as minority population of the state, etc.

b). Scholarship for Girl Students:

Launched during 2003-04, the objective of this scheme is to recognize, promote and assist meritorious girl students belonging to national minorities who cannot continue their education without financial support. The idea is to help such girl students to meet their expenditure on payment of School/College Fee, purchase of syllabus books, purchase of stationery/equipments required for the course & payment of Boarding/Lodging charges for 11th and 12th classes.

Under the scheme, state wise/community wise quota is fixed based on the population of minorities in each state.

Initially, the total quota was 1200 scholarships per annum @ Rs.10,000/- each, which was enhanced to 3000 scholarships @ Rs.10,000/- each in 2004-05. It was enhanced to 6000 scholarships @ Rs.12,000/- each in 2007-08.

From 2008-09, total quota has been enhanced from 6000 to 12000 scholarships @ Rs.12,000/- per student. From 2009-10, total quota has been further enhanced from 12000 to 15000 scholarships @ Rs.12,000/- per student.

Eligibility Criteria:

a.   Students should belong to the notified minority
b.   Student should have secured minimum 55% marks in 10th class examination conducted by Central/ State Board of Secondary Education in the year of application and should have confirmed regular admission to 11th class.
c.   The annual income of her family should be less than Rs.1 lac per annum in the preceding financial year.

3.   Achievements

Over a period of 21 years (since 1989-90 to till date), the Foundation has sanctioned a total of around Rs.127.87 crores grant-in-aid to 970 NGOs all over the country. The annual average assistance (between 1992-93 and 2009-10) thus works out to be around Rs.7.30 crores. A major chunk of these funds have been sanctioned by MAEF and utilized by NGOs mainly for infrastructure purposes.

Year	Grant Sanctioned		Scholarship Sanctioned	
	No. of NGO	Amt. (Rs. In Crores)	No. of girl students	Amt (Rs. in Crores)
1989-90	1	0.01		
1990-91	0	0.00		
1991-92	0	0.00		
1992-93	20	0.06		
1993-94	0	0.00		
1994-95	1	0.10		
1995-96	21	3.43		
1996-97	25	4.89		
1997-98	54	6.63		
1998-99	95	12.30		
1999-00	78	12.74		
2000-01	60	9.68		
2001-02	69	9.34		
2002-03	50	5.49		
2003-04	46	3.82	634	0.63
2004-05	102	12.03	2781	2.78
2005-06	44	5.34	3,571	3.57
2006-07	52	7.56	3,846	3.85
2007-08	51	6.60	4,011	4.81
2008-09	124	17.30	12,064	14.48
2009-10	77	10.55	32,239 applications received. These are under process for sanctioning	
Total*	970	127.87		
Since inception of MAEF ((1989 to December 2009)				

Under the scholarship scheme, over six years period between 2003-04 and 2008-09, the Foundation has sanctioned Rs.30.12 crores to nearly 27000 meritorious girls students from educationally backward minorities from all over India.

C.   THE ANALYSIS

1.   Main Findings

The main findings of the study, including critical observations and suggestions/ recommendations, etc. based on the analysis of data generated out of structured questionnaires as well as that from secondary sources (in line with the terms of reference of the study) are described below:
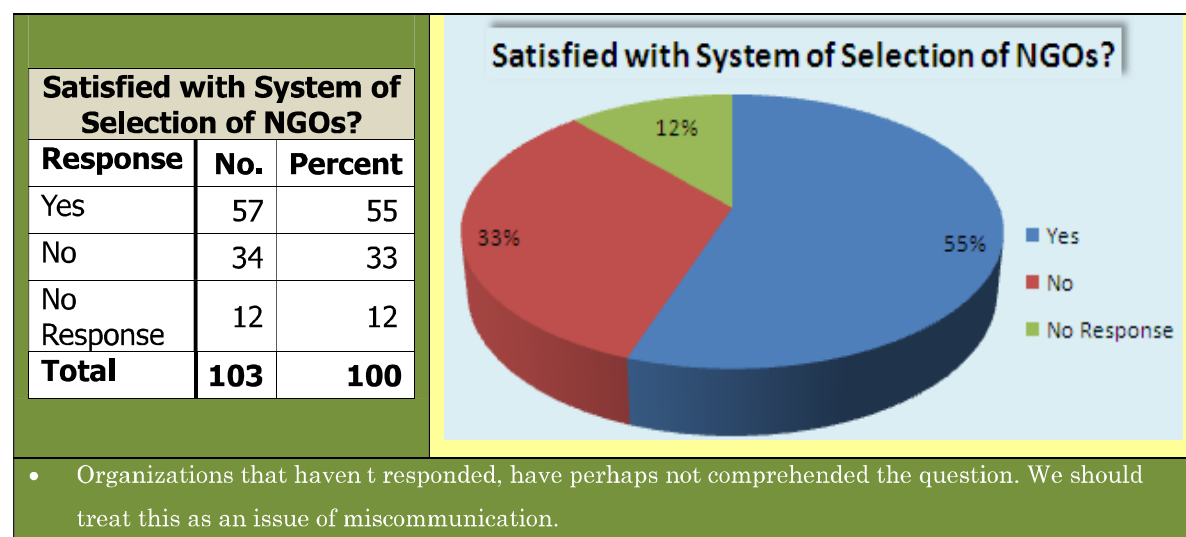
i.   System of Selection of NGOs

The Foundation, on an average, gets 300 to 400 applications every year. The official cut-off date (closing date) for receipt of applications to be considered for a particular financial year is September 30. This means that all applications, say for example, received during October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010, would be considered as applications for financial year 2009-2010, and applications received after September 30. 2010, would be considered for the next financial year. However, as things stand out, this cut-off date (September 30) doesn't seem to have much significance as the Foundation keeps getting as well as entertaining applications for grant-in-aid throughout the year.

Due to limited funds available with the Foundation, out of 300 to 400 applications received during a year, it is able to process/ sanction only about 100 to 125 applications (sometimes it is limited to even 50 or 60 applications only). The basic principle followed in selecting NGOs is 'first come, first serve'. The rest of applications are carried forward (considered as backlogs) to be considered during the next financial - on a priority basis (also under the principle of 'first come, first serve'). Needless to say, the backlog keeps getting long with each passing year. In fact, as the study was being carried out (December 2009-February 2010), the Foundation was busy processing applications received way back in 2007-08 and 2008-09.

The system inevitably results in delays and confusion. As the outcome of the structured questionnaire from a sample size of 103 NGOs shows, not all NGOs are happy with the system of selection of NGOs:

Satisfied with System of Selection of NGOs?		
Response	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	57	55
No	34	33
No Response	12	12
Total	**103**	**100**

Satisfied with System of Selection of NGOs?

- Organizations that haven t responded, have perhaps not comprehended the question. We should treat this as an issue of miscommunication.

The main reason of dissatisfaction is delayed selection as the following graph shows:

Reasons of Dissatisfaction		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Complex process	8	22.2
No transparency	6	16.7
Delayed selection	10	27.8
Other reasons	12	33.3
Total	**36**	**100.0**

Reasons of Dissatisfaction

- Other reasons include avoidance of need based approach, evading background of the institutions, and non-preferential treatment to small school.
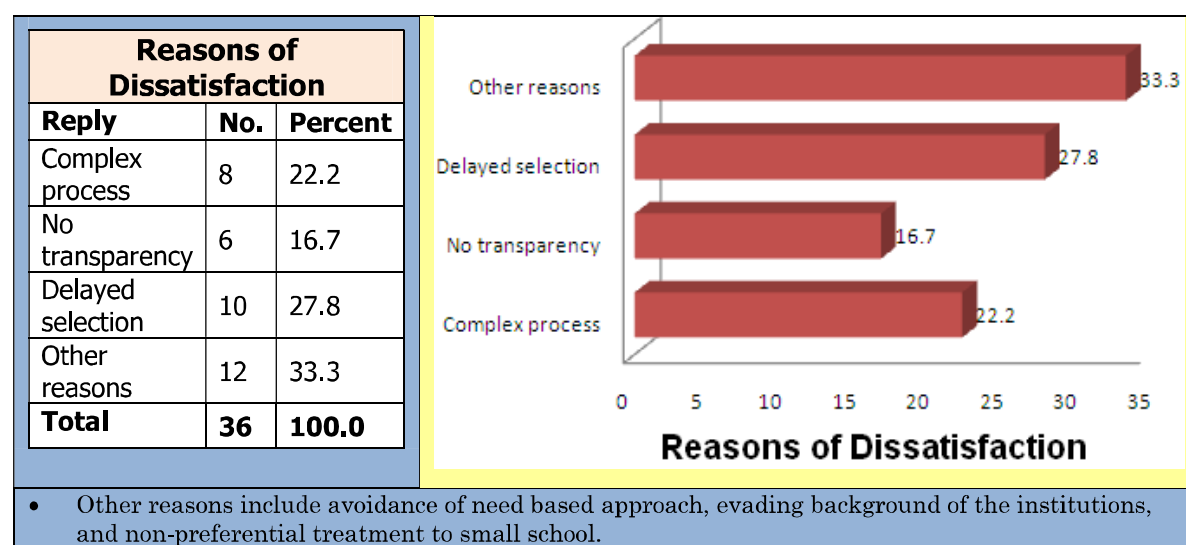
The rest of the reasons of dissatisfaction such as complex process, lack of transparency, etc. basically follow from the main reason, i.e., 'delayed selection'. A number of NGOs also hold the view that the nature of applicants/ NGOs (whether they are operating in urban or rural areas) as well as their existing financial strength should also be considered as important factors while selecting them for grant-in-aid. Rural as well as

financially poor NGOs should be given preference over urban NGOs and those with sound financial health. The Foundation therefore needs to streamline the system of selection of NGOs. This would require a serious re-look at the current wisdom to carry forward applications resulting in never ending backlogs/ pending applications.

ii.   Method Adopted for Short-listing of Applications

On receipt of application from NGOs, it is scrutinized in the office of the Foundation. There is a checklist of documents required to be attached with the application, and this scrutiny is all about verifying the veracity or the attached documents as per the checklist. Only applications with complete documents become eligible for selection or short-listing for grant-in-aid during a particular financial year. However, in case of applications which are not eligible (in the sense that some documents are missing, incomplete or things like that), information is duly sent out (through correspondence, etc) to applicants for providing with necessary documents. Upon satisfactory response/ receipt of documents, such applications also become eligible for grant, and inspection process sets in motion.

There are some issues involved here. First, though receipt of applications are duly registered or recorded in the grant register of the Foundation (date wise), scrutiny (whether applications are complete with all necessary documents or not) is done at a later stage/ date only (with a time lag). As a result, it is quite possible that even incomplete applications of some NGOs could get precedence over applications of other NGOs which are complete in all respects. This seems unfair and amounts to violation of the spirit of "first come, first serve" principle. The Foundation should therefore ensure that scrutiny of applications takes place without any time-lag. For this, it must have a committed team to verify the checklist and documents attached with applications. Only eligible/ complete applications should find a place in the grant register of the Foundation.

Secondly, there is also a perception among some of the beneficiary NGOs, especially those which received assistance in earlier years, that the Foundation sometimes selects

NGOs out of turn on the recommendations of VVIPs. But it must be pointed out here that in recent years, the Foundation has started adhering to the 'first come, first served' principle and things seem to have improved. For greater transparency, however, it is suggested that the list of eligible applications should also be put up on Foundation's website with regular updates and information about their current status.
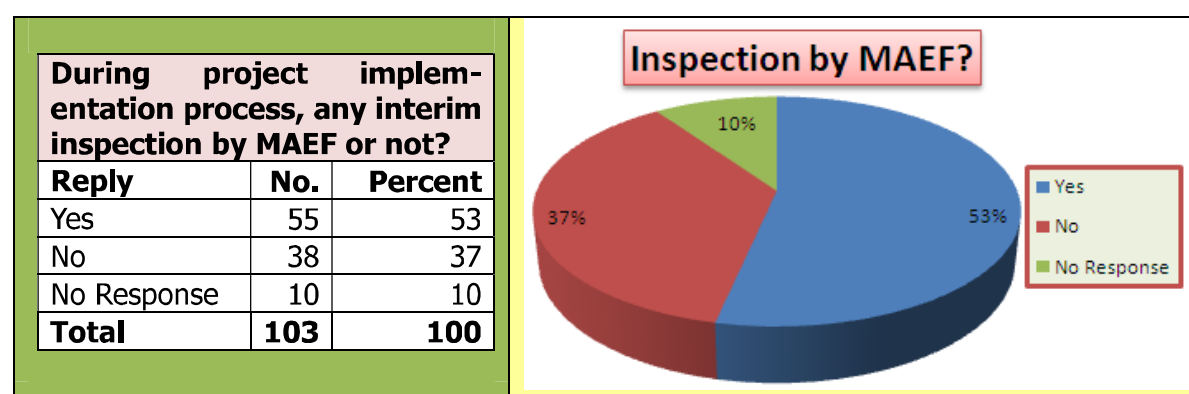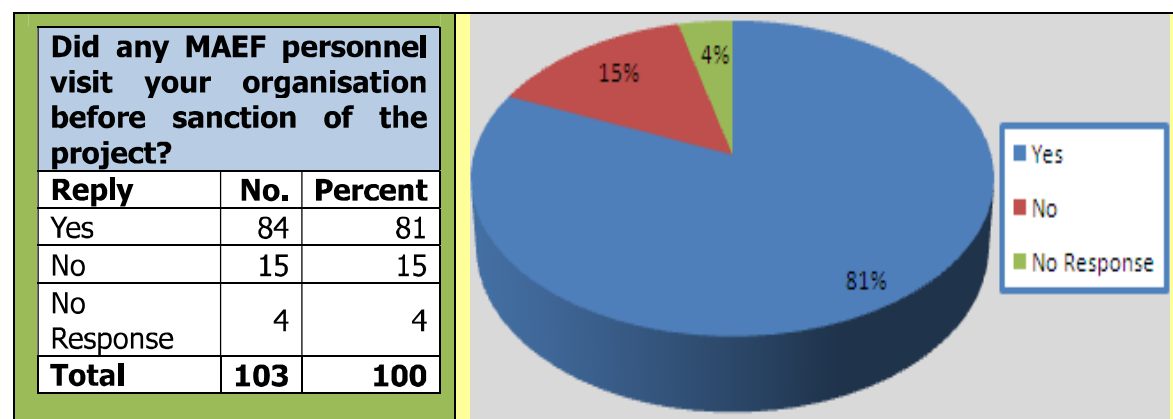
iii.   Inspection Procedure Followed

All short-listed/ eligible applications (complete with all required documents) for the year under consideration are referred for spot inspection. The Foundation has nominated inspection authorities in the majority of states of India. The majority of such inspecting authorities consist of retired government servants. Depending on the size of the state, they range from two to three officials in each state. In many states, however, there is hardly any inspection authority nominated by NAEF. For instance, there is no such authority nominated in Bihar. Nominating authorities work on honorarium basis. It is only when the authorized inspection authority submits its report that the inspection report along with the application is placed before the Sub-Committee of the Foundation for screening.

The recommendation of the Sub-Committee is then placed before the Governing Body of the Foundation for decision regarding sanction of grant-in-aid. Once the grant-in-aid is sanctioned, a sanction letter is issued to NGO and the sanctioned grant is released in two installments in the ratio 70:30. On completion of necessary formalities, the first installment of 70% of sanctioned grant is released. When the NGO submits the utilization certificate against the first installment of grant, it is scrutinized in the office of the Foundation and another spot inspection is conducted by a technically qualified person nominated by the Foundation.

The inspection procedure followed by the Foundation is commendable indeed in the sense that only after due verification and proper satisfaction on the part of inspection authorities grant is released. In fact, sanction/ release of each installment is preceded by

inspection by the MAEF. The perception among beneficiary NGOs about the inspection process of the Foundation can be gauged from the following graphs:

Did any MAEF personnel visit your organisation before sanction of the project?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	84	81
No	15	15
No Response	4	4
Total	103	100

During project implem-entation process, any interim inspection by MAEF or not?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	55	53
No	38	37
No Response	10	10
Total	103	100

The majority of respondents (84%) do acknowledge that the Foundation has conducted visits to ascertain authenticity of the organizations supported. They also maintain that inspection visits have taken place during project implementation process as well. Organizations that have responded in negative or haven't responded, have perhaps not comprehended the question. We should treat this as an issue of miscommunication.
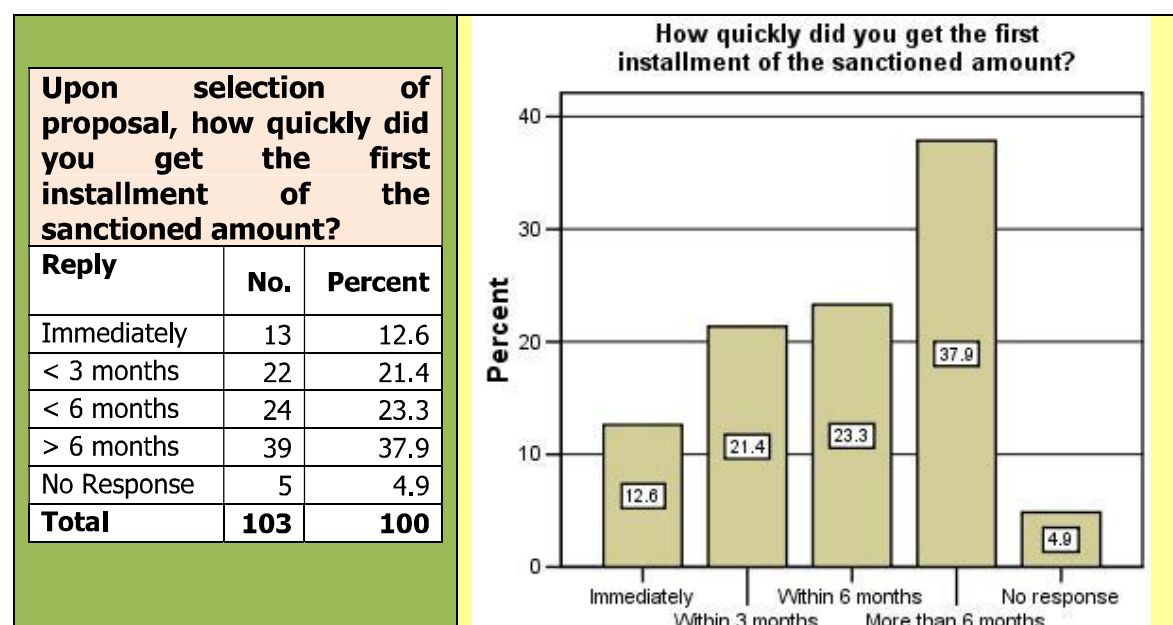
Nevertheless, the quality or comprehensiveness or seriousness of inspection visits by the inspection authorities and their inspection reports are not convincing all the time. In some instances, it was found that inspection authorities erred in submitting their

inspection reports resulting in sanction/ release of installment to even those NGOs which did not deserve funding/ assistance from the Foundation.
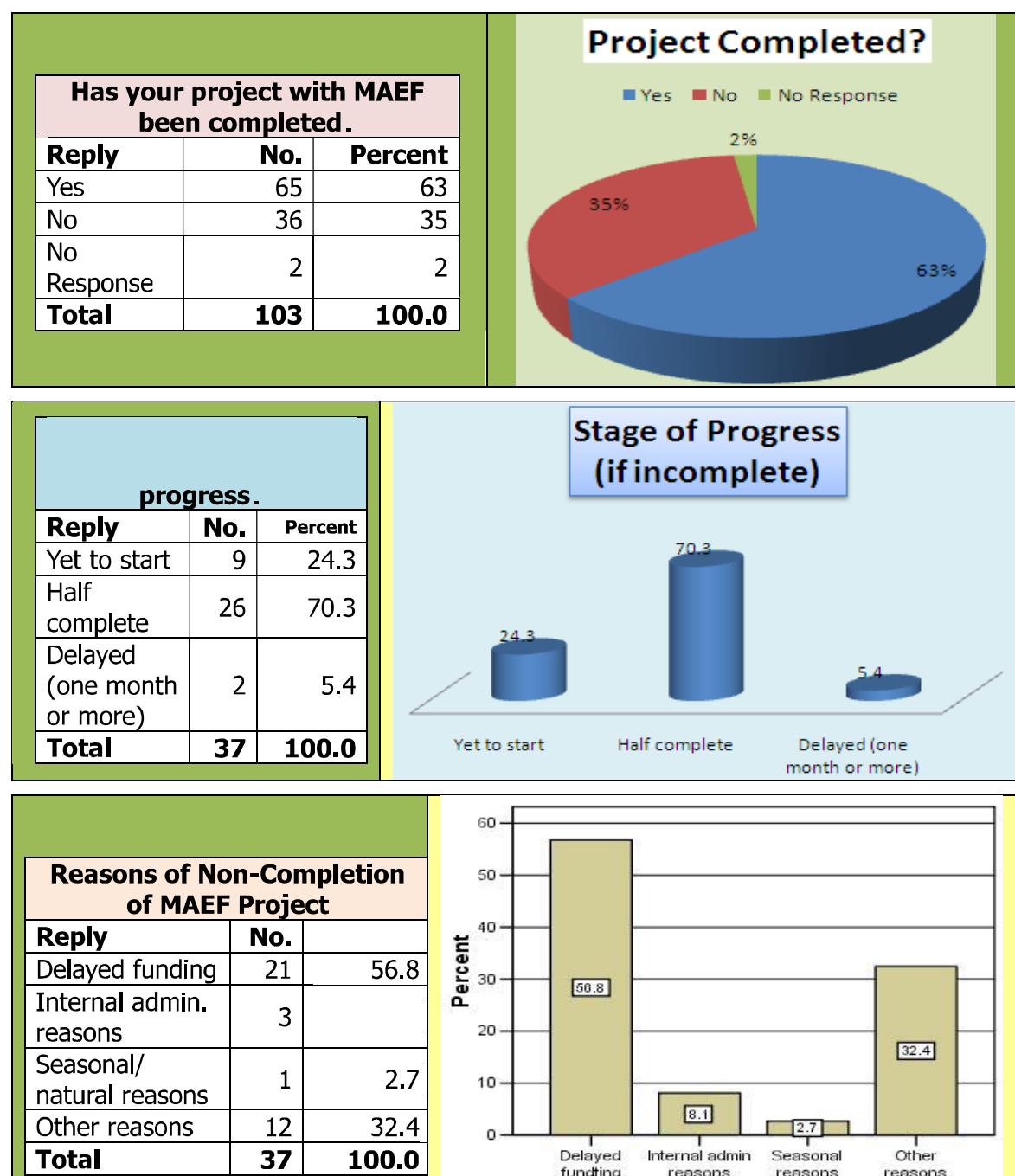
iv.   Existing Schedule for Receipt of Proposals and Sanction of Assistance

The official date for receipt of applications/ proposals is 1st May to 30th September every year. However, the Foundation keeps getting as well as entertaining applications for grant-in-aid throughout the year. Due to limited funds available with the Foundation, it is not in a position to process all eligible applications/ proposals during the same year. As mentioned in earlier section, many applications are carried forward (considered as backlogs) for consideration during the following financial year. This results in routine disruptions in the entire process/ schedule. As a result, sanction of assistance, release of installments and completion of projects do get invariably delayed.

An issue of importance that was evaluated is the time taken by the Foundation to release first installment of the sanctioned project. Considering the backlog of applications and limited number of personnel at the Foundation, the majority response in or around six months is commendable indeed.

Upon selection of proposal, how quickly did you get the first installment of the sanctioned amount?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Immediately	13	12.6
< 3 months	22	21.4
< 6 months	24	23.3
> 6 months	39	37.9
No Response	5	4.9
Total	103	100

How quickly did you get the first installment of the sanctioned amount?

Nevertheless, as one can understand, there is still ample scope to further reduce the time that the Foundation takes in completing the entire process – starting from receipt of proposals to sanction of assistance and completion of projects within time.

Has your project with MAEF been completed.		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	65	63
No	36	35
No Response	2	2
Total	103	100.0

progress.		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yet to start	9	24.3
Half complete	26	70.3
Delayed (one month or more)	2	5.4
Total	37	100.0

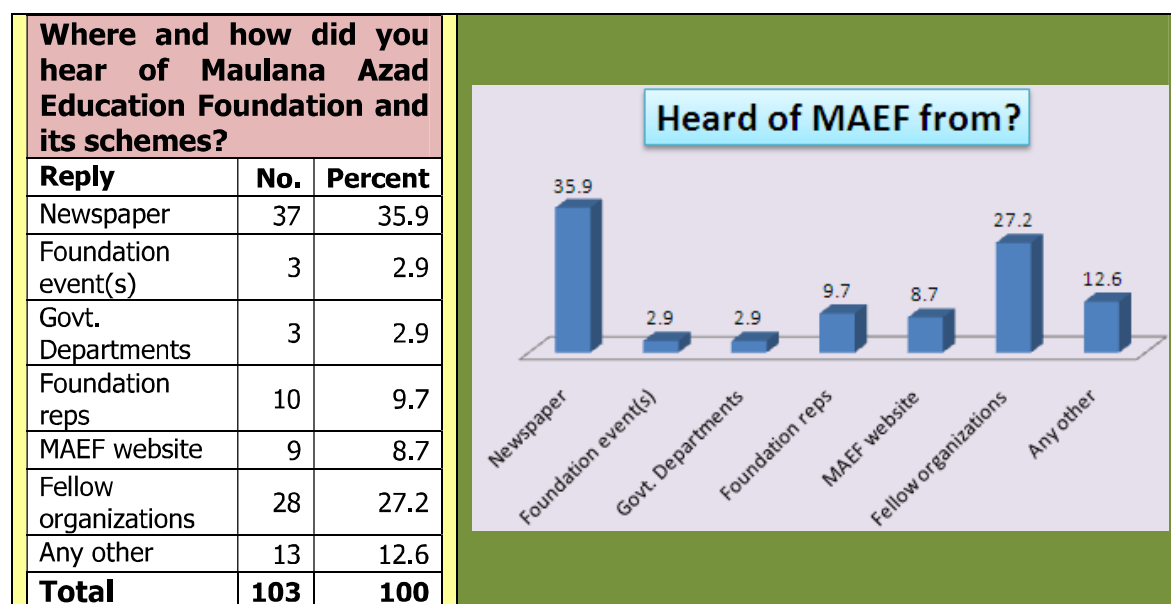| Reasons of Non-Completion of MAEF Project		
Reply	No.	
Delayed funding	21	56.8
Internal admin. reasons	3	
Seasonal/ natural reasons	1	2.7
Other reasons	12	32.4
Total	37	100.0

As it is clear from the above graphs, delayed funding is being perceived by the organizations as one of the main reasons of non-completion of the Foundation projects.

In order to streamline the schedule for receipt of proposals and sanction of assistance, it is suggested that the Foundation scraps the existing system of carrying forward applications/ proposals (considered as backlogs) for consideration during the following financial year. Instead, the Foundation should strictly follow the official schedule (May 01 to September 30) for receipt of applications every year. Short-listing of NGOs/ proposals for a particular year should be based on fresh eligible applications (complete with all documents) received during that financial year only. Files of pending applications should be treated as closed. The Foundation can sure intimate all such pending applicants to reapply next time, if they so desire, along with fresh budgets as well as with all necessary documents. The success of such a system would however depend on how transparent the Foundation becomes in its functioning. For it is essential that the Foundation is regular in displaying on its website an updated state-wise list of all eligible applications received during a year.

v.   Existing Publicity System

The website of the Foundation is one of the main sources for publicity and information dissemination around its activities. Besides, the Foundation regularly writes/ requests various state governments through their Minority Affairs Department/ Social Justice Department to publicize its schemes and programmes. Efforts are also being made to advertise more and more through the broad channels of the Ministry of Minority Affairs. Repeated reminders & rejoinders also form part of the publicity strategy. Many state governments do respond positively with dissemination of information through various state channels, including advertisements in local/regional newspapers. However, despite repeated reminders, most of the state governments do not pay much attention.

At the national level, the Foundation inserts advertisements in Rashtriya Sahara (Hindi and Urdu) and Indian Express, two very popular newspapers covering the entire northern and to some extent central parts of India. At present, however, regional news

papers (because of their multiplicity and cost implications) are not being used for publicity purposes.

Where and how did you hear of Maulana Azad Education Foundation and its schemes?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Newspaper	37	35.9
Foundation event(s)	3	2.9
Govt. Departments	3	2.9
Foundation reps	10	9.7
MAEF website	9	8.7
Fellow organizations	28	27.2
Any other	13	12.6
Total	**103**	**100**

Heard of MAEF from?

35.9   2.9   2.9   9.7   8.7   27.2   12.6

Newspaper   Foundation event(s)   Govt. Departments   Foundation reps   MAEF website   Fellow organizations   Any other

Nevertheless, considering that the number of quality proposals/ applications from some of the most educationally backward areas/ states is still low (where implementation of the scheme is most desired), it is high time the Foundation adopts area specific publicity strategies to attract more and more proposals from such states.

It is imperative that the Foundation reaches out to more and more NGOs from educationally backward states (with sizable minority population) through organization of more and more events/ workshops and thereby ensuring better publicity to its schemes. As one of the possible pro-active steps, the Foundation could also commission studies (through independent professional agencies) about potential NGOs in some of the remotest or most backward areas/states for possible financial support.

vi.   Identification of Disadvantaged States

In recent years, the Foundation has made conscious efforts to improve the regional spread of its grant-in-aid scheme. In the process, some of the disadvantaged states which did not attract proposals earlier have also started benefiting from the scheme.

This is commendable indeed. However, the effort needs to be continued on a sustained basis. Since the objective of the scheme is to provide basic educational infrastructure facilities in the area of concentration of educationally backward minorities, it is important to identify most disadvantaged states deserving attention first. In other words, it is imperative to identify the disadvantaged states and prioritize them as per their requirements/ needs.

An analysis of census data[2] shows that in keeping with the objective of the Foundation, the state-wise allocation of grant (based on factors such as proportion of total all India minority population and female literacy rate of largest minority) should ideally be as under:

Suggested/Indicative Norms for State-wise Allocation of Grant-in-Aid					
S.N.	States/UT	Total Minority Population	% of total All India Minority Population	Female Literacy Rate of Largest Minority	Weightage*
1	Uttar Pradesh	31932826	16.85	37.40	10.33
2	West Bengal	21065448	11.12	49.80	6.99
3	Bihar	13814783	7.29	31.50	5.90
4	Punjab	15308719	8.08	61.20	5.68
5	Maharashtra	17437584	9.20	70.80	5.59
6	Kerala	13926058	7.35	80.50	4.51
7	Assam	9300748	4.91	40.20	4.22
8	Haryana	2427903	1.28	21.50	3.95
9	J & K	7134480	3.76	34.90	3.92
10	Andhra Pradesh	8231808	4.34	59.10	3.38
11	Rajasthan	5689642	3.00	40.80	3.24
12	Karnataka	7880917	4.16	63.00	3.21
13	Jharkhand	4913988	2.59	42.70	2.96
14	Tamil Nadu	7270645	3.84	81.60	2.85
15	Nagaland	1827862	0.96	61.60	2.62
16	Meghalaya	1735968	0.92	63.30	2.48
17	Gujarat	4940362	2.61	63.50	2.43

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[2] The First Report on Religion, Census of India 2001

18	M.P.	4371924	2.31	60.10	2.34
19	Uttaranchal	1263716	0.67	40.30	2.10
20	Manipur	932096	0.49	58.50	1.95
21	Delhi	2333146	1.23	59.10	1.82
22	Arunachal Pradesh	371116	0.20	37.80	1.68
23	Himachal Pradesh	275413	0.15	46.60	1.60
24	Orissa	1687201	0.89	44.10	1.59
25	Tripura	457035	0.24	51.40	1.50
26	Mizorum	853728	0.45	91.40	1.46
27	Sikkim	197026	0.10	59.80	1.42
28	Chandigarh	189682	0.10	88.50	1.31
29	Chattisgarh	945538	0.50	74.00	1.21
30	Goa	453397	0.24	78.80	1.14
31	Daman & Diu	15914	0.01	72.40	0.99
32	Dadar & N. Haveli	13162	0.01	72.00	0.98
33	Lakshdweep	58419	0.03	80.20	0.90
34	Pondicherry	127227	0.07	82.90	0.90
35	Andman & Nico. Is	108451	0.06	71.60	0.85
	All India	**189508794**	**100**		**100**

* Largest minority (at state level) varies from state. It doesn't necessarily mean 'Muslim' the largest minority at national level. For example, the largest minority in Punjab is Sikh

** As calculated from weightage points 50% for Minority Population and 50% for Largest Minority Female Literacy in inverse proportion

The above table gives a broad view as to how different states of India are placed in terms of their share in total minority population of the country and female literacy rate of the minority population. Bihar, West Bengal and Assam emerge as some of the key states which deserve more assistance than they have so far received.

Experience shows that a strict adherence to a quota system/ norms (as stipulated above) would be difficult under the circumstances – mainly because the scheme is demand-driven and the Foundation follows the 'first come, first serve' principle. Unless quality applications do reach from all the disadvantages states and that too in good numbers, we cannot stress too much on regional spread of the scheme. Nevertheless, while allocating grants-in-aid, the Foundation should not deviate too much away from these norms / facts as far as possible.

vii.   Equitable Distribution of Grants-in-Aid

Over a period of 21 years (since 1989-90 to till date), the Foundation has sanctioned a total of around Rs.127.87 crores grant-in-aid to 970 NGOs all over the country. It goes to the credit of the Foundation that over these years it has been able to reach out as many as 25 states/union territories. This is despite the fact that applications/ proposals from many of the states are only few and far between, and most of these do not even satisfy the eligibility criteria fixed by the Foundation.

Grant-in-Aid (Rs.in crores) Sanctioned upto October 31, 2009
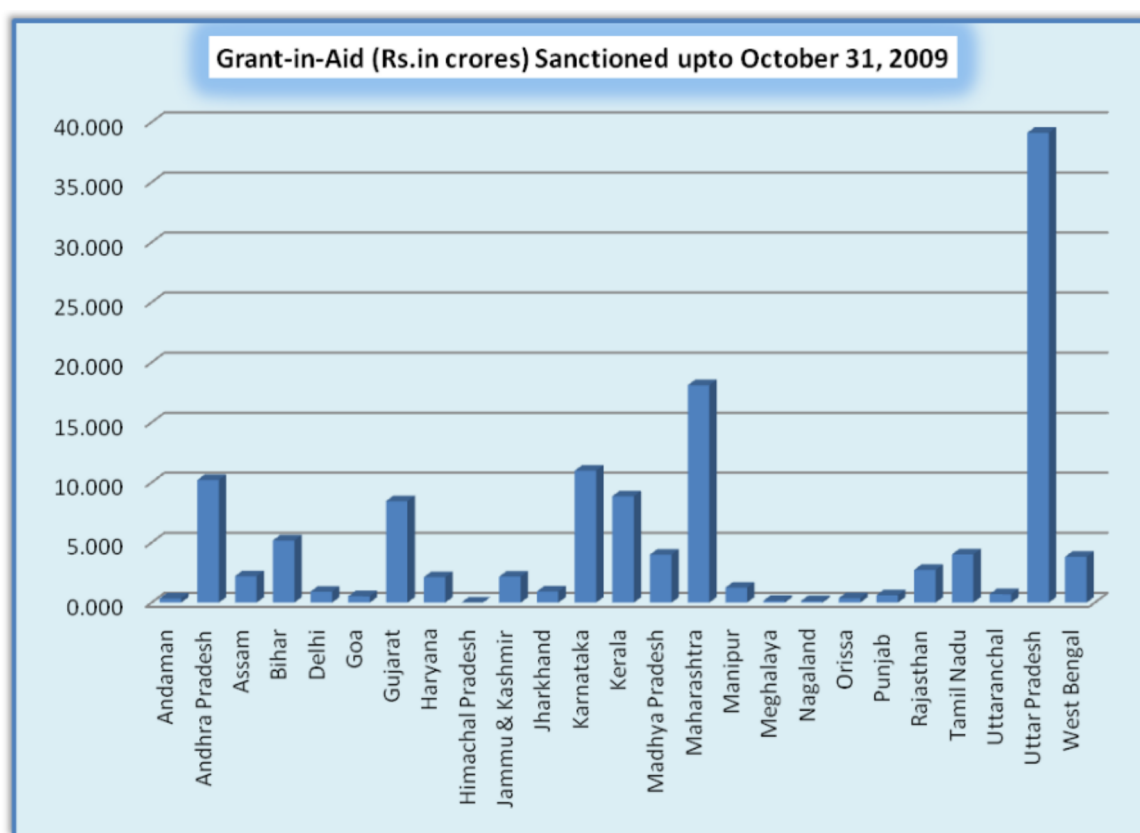
As the above graph depicts, the major beneficiaries of the grant-in-aid scheme are NGOs/ organizations mainly from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. Some prominent states (in terms of significant educationally backward minority population) such as Bihar, West Bengal and Assam have so far been unable to catch up with them.

A state-wise analysis of sanctioned grant during last five (5) years (given below in the table) further corroborates the above observations:

State-wise Sanction of Grant-in-Aid during Last Five years (Sanction in Crore Rs)										
	2009-2010		2008-2009		2007-2008		2006-2007		2005-2006	
States/UTs	Sanction	%	Sanction	%	Sanction	%	Sanction	%	Sanction	%
All India	**10.55**	**100**	**17.26**	**100**	**6.67**	**100**	**6.73**	**100**	**5.34**	**100**
J & K			0.150	0.87	0.100	1.5	0.300	4.46		
H.P.	0.010	0.09								
Punjab										
Chandigarh										
Uttaranchal			0.050	0.29						
Haryana	0.100	0.95	0.400	2.32	0.250	3.75	0.120	1.78	0.070	1.31
Delhi					0.250	3.75	0.035	0.52		
Rajasthan	0.150	1.42	0.100	0.58	0.000		0.600	8.91		
Uttar Pradesh	3.125	29.6	4.095	23.7	2.490	37.3			2.063	38.6
Bihar	0.300	2.84	0.300	1.74			0.300	4.46	0.300	5.62
Sikkim										
Arunachal Pr.										
Nagaland			0.135	0.78						
Manipur			0.150	0.87	0.250	3.75				
Mizorum										
Tripura										
Meghalaya			0.150	0.87						
Assam	0.100	0.95	0.400	2.32						
West Bengal										
Jharkhand			0.150	0.87	0.200	3.00				
Orissa										
Chattisgarh										
MP	0.250	2.37	0.250	1.45	0.300	4.50	0.423	6.28	0.100	1.87
Gujrat	0.350	3.32	1.000	5.79	0.450	6.75	0.700	10.4	0.300	5.62
Daman & Diu										
Dadar & N. H										
Maharashtra	2.860	27.1	3.902	22.6	0.750	11.2	1.935	28.7	0.910	17
A.P.	2.035	19.3	2.055	11.9	0.450	6.75	0.000			
Karnataka	0.675	6.4	1.950	11.3			0.850	12.6	0.400	7.49
Goa										
Lakshdweep										
Kerala	0.150	1.42	0.905	5.24	0.550	8.25	0.470	6.98	1.200	22.5
Tamil Nadu	0.450	4.26	0.870	5.04	0.630	9.45	0.250	3.71		
Pondichery										
Andman & N.			0.250	1.45						

As suggested earlier, it needs to be emphasized again that the Foundation should adopt area specific publicity strategies to attract more and more proposals from disadvantaged/ problematic states. If states/ educationally backward districts are unable to send in enough applications, may be the Foundation could even think of relaxing some basic criteria/conditions such as proper recognition. At the same time, the argument of non-receipt of quality applications (meeting all eligibility criteria) cannot be stretched too far. The very fact that certain states or districts of a state start attracting many applications during specific time period/ years all of a sudden (say for example Pilibhit in U.P. between 1988-99 and 2002-2003[3]) simply indicates that non-fulfillment of essential requirements by NGOs of certain states/ areas does not hold much ground.

There is also a need for restructuring the General/Governing Board members to make it broad based with more and more representations from important disadvantaged states. Currently, if we look at the Governing Board members of the Foundation, it is quite apparent that they are mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and a couple of other states which incidentally have taken a lion's share of MAEF sanctions so far. A broad-basing of Governing Board members would help in ensuring a more equitable distribution of MAEF grant-in-aid.

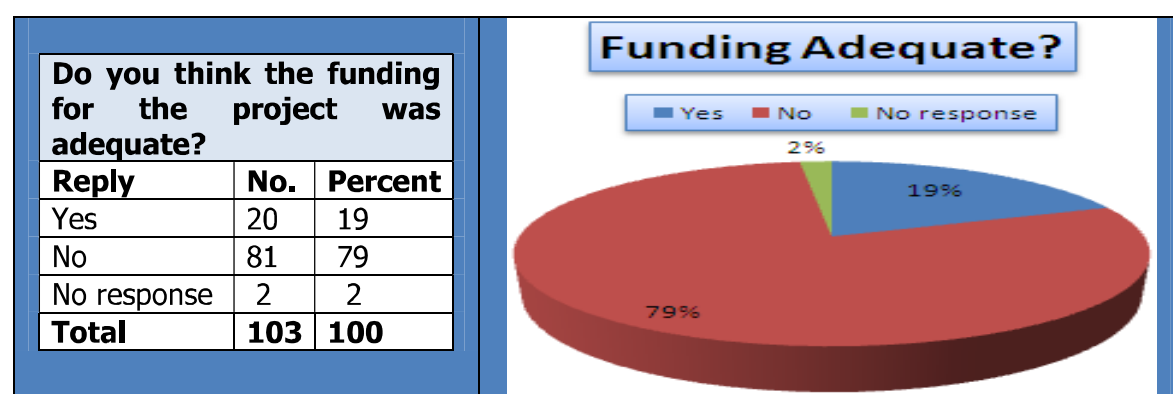viii.   Grants-in-Aid and Limits Stipulated by MAEF

The Foundation has fixed ceiling limits for sanction of grant-in-aid for NGOs under various categories. For instance, if School is recognized up to 5th standard & to be upgraded up to 8th standard, it can seek assistance maximum up to Rs. 5 lac only. For purchase of furniture & fixtures for schools recognized up to 10th/ 12th standard (both), the ceiling limit is Rs.1 lac only. Maximum ceiling limits (Rs.30 lacs) have been fixed for construction of hostel buildings (100 bedded dormitory types) and construction/ expansion of B.Ed. College building. Similarly, ceiling limits do exist for other kind of infrastructure support as well. Considering the limited funds that the Foundation has been working with, the ceiling limits seems to be a well thought out plan/ strategy.

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[3] 21 NGOs in 1998-99, 12 in 1999-2000, 4 in 2000-01 and 2 in 2001-02.

There have been instances in the past when NGOs have been given assistance much beyond the existing ceiling limits. However, of late, there is hardly any NGO which has received funding beyond ceiling limits. The Foundation seems to be fairly careful in not flouting the rules that it has set for itself.
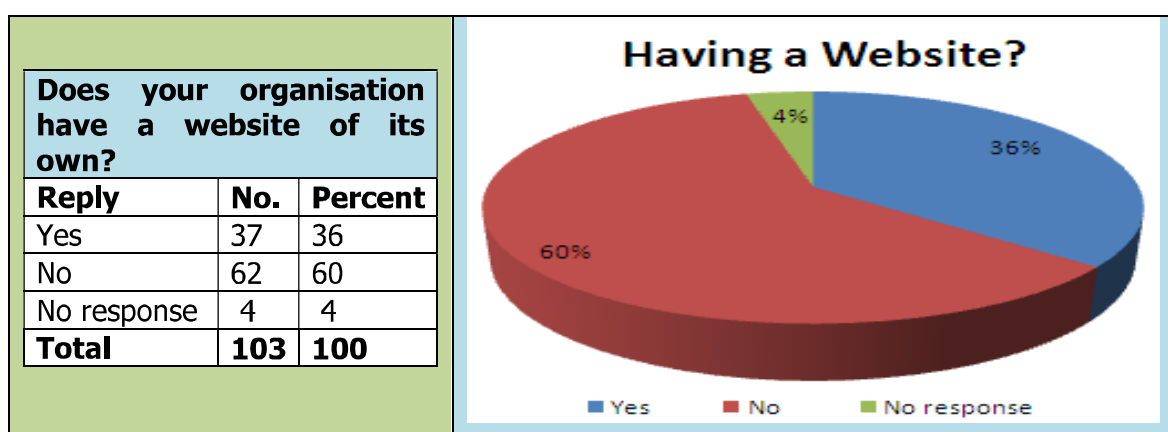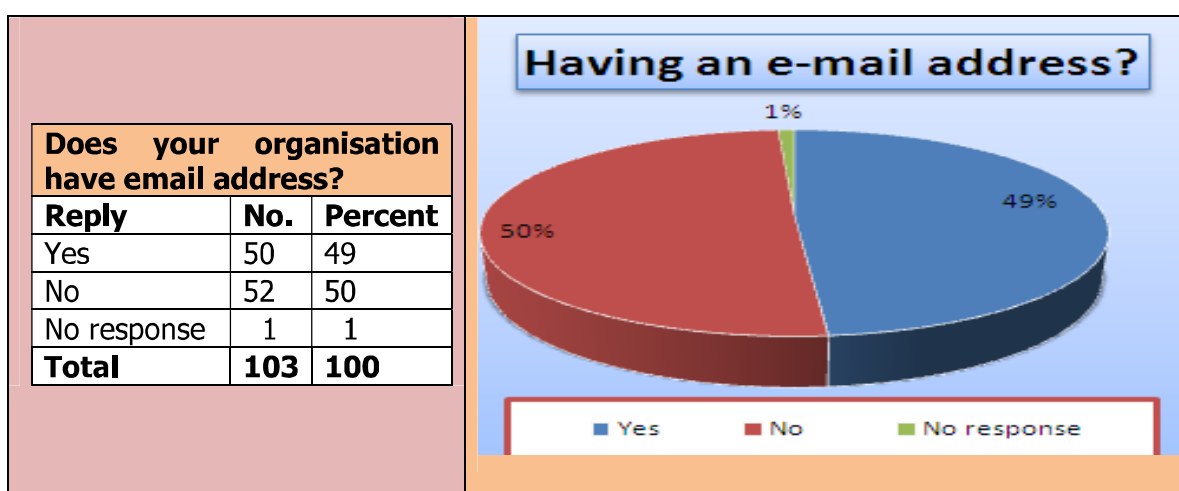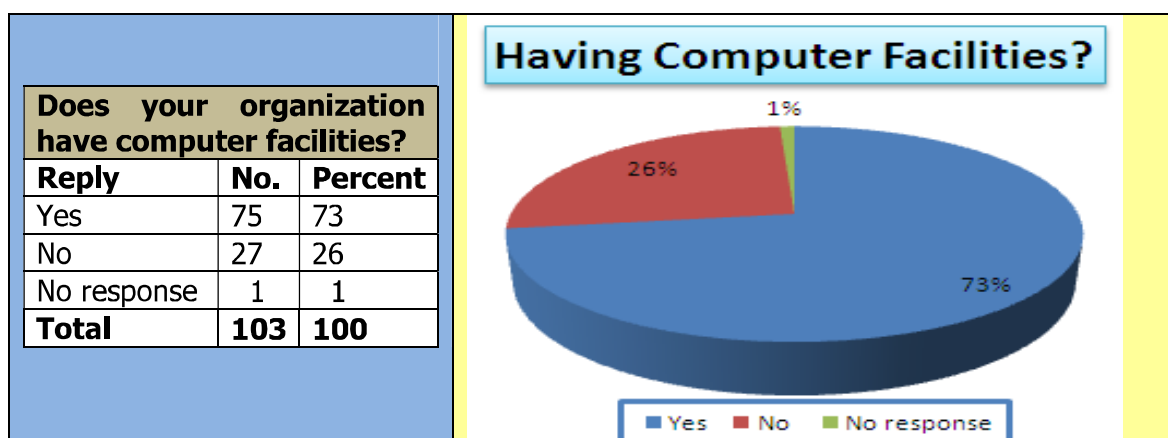
Nevertheless, it must be mentioned here that fixing ceiling limits for infrastructure support needs of NGOs all across the country without periodic revisions (in view of cost escalation) and without regional cost considerations does create problems at times.

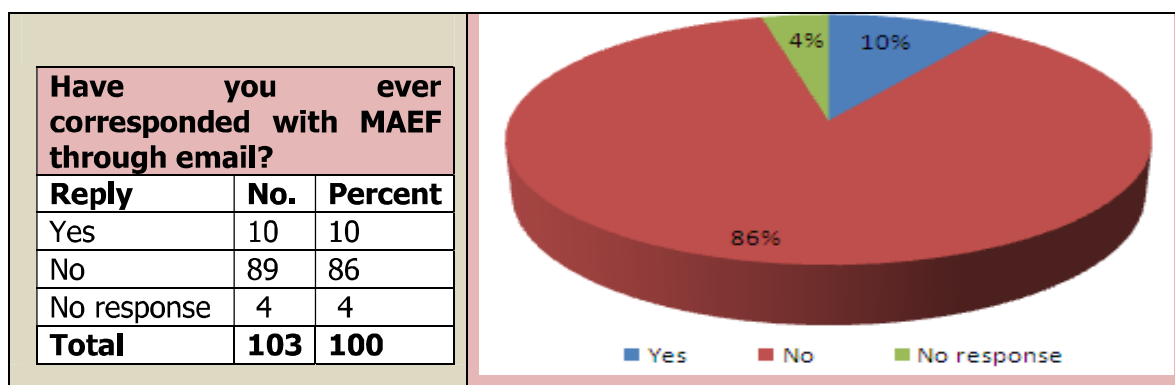| Do you think the funding for the project was adequate?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	20	19
No	81	79
No response	2	2
Total	103	100

Funding Adequate?

In fact, some amount of flexibility (depending on inflationary tendencies) sometimes does become necessary and the Foundation could review its policy in this regard, accordingly.

ix.   Computer Literacy Status of NGOs

Computers are used in a variety of ways in today's world from typing a simple letter to improving educational access, individualized instruction and games. If a person has heard at least one of these uses, then he is considered as a person with computer awareness. On the other hand, a person is considered as a computer literate if he could use computer on his own. For example, even if a 5 years old child can play a computer game then he is considered as a computer literate person. Unfortunately, however, the evaluation of the beneficiary NGOs/ organizations shows them in very poor light so far as computer literacy and knowledge are concerned.

Does your organization have computer facilities?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	75	73
No	27	26
No response	1	1
Total	**103**	**100**

Having Computer Facilities?

1%
26%
73%

Yes ■ No ■ No response

Does your organisation have email address?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	50	49
No	52	50
No response	1	1
Total	**103**	**100**

Having an e-mail address?

1%
49%
50%

■ Yes ■ No ■ No response

Does your organisation have a website of its own?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	37	36
No	62	60
No response	4	4
Total	**103**	**100**

Having a Website?

4%
36%
60%

■ Yes ■ No ■ No response

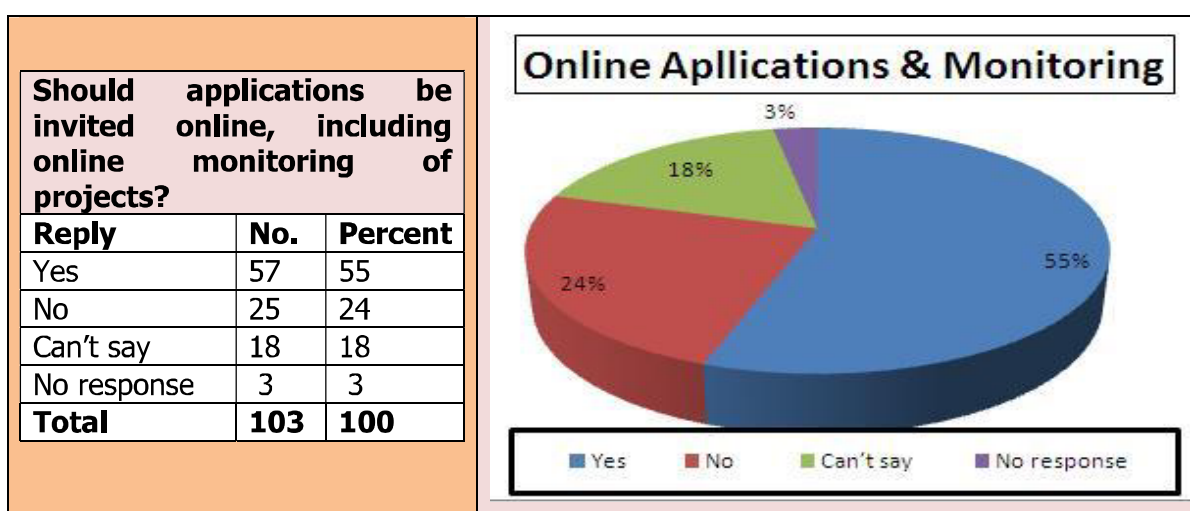| Have you ever corresponded with MAEF through email?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	10	10
No	89	86
No response	4	4
Total	103	100

The majority of the NGOs are having computer facilities in their offices and schools, but due to lack of internet connection in the region most of them do not have websites of their own. The majority of them do not have even e-mail IDs. Naturally therefore they have almost never corresponded with the Foundation through emails.
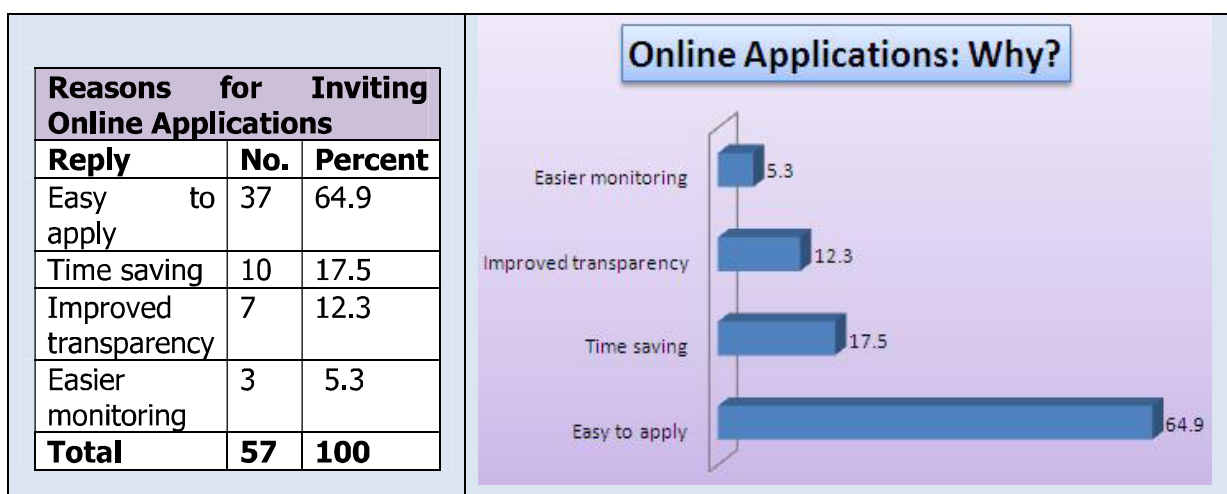
x.   Inviting Applications Online

Poor computer literacy status of the beneficiary organizations poses a huge challenge before the Foundation in inviting applications online. But it is encouraging to note that most of the organizations, because of their computer awareness do recognize the need for online applications, including online monitoring of projects.

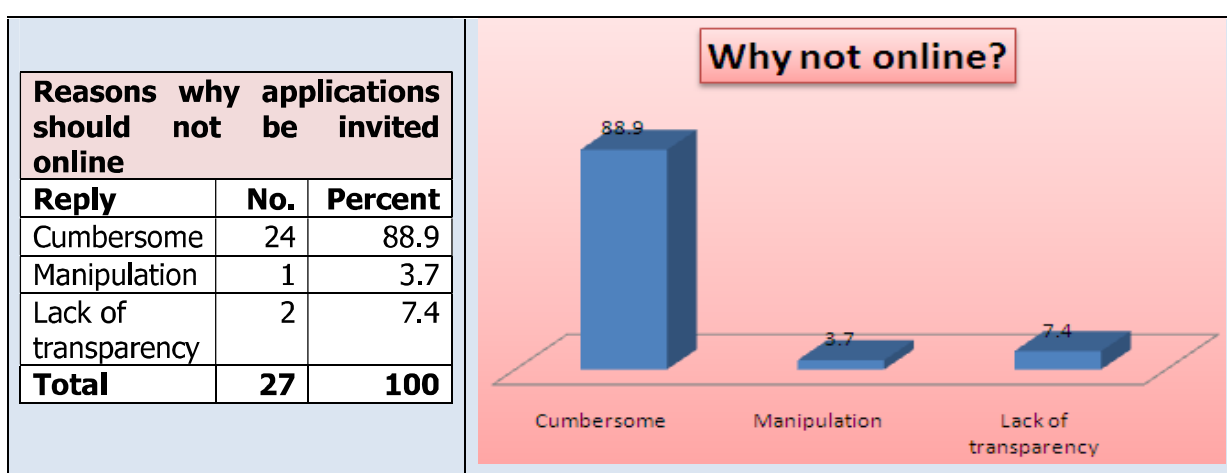| Should applications be invited online, including online monitoring of projects?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	57	55
No	25	24
Can't say	18	18
No response	3	3
Total	103	100

Online Apllications & Monitoring

Respondents in favour of online applications believed that it would not only make the process easier (65%), but would also save time (17.5%). About 12.3 percent of the respondents thought it would result in improved transparency, while 5% believed monitoring will become easier.

Reasons for Inviting Online Applications		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Easy to apply	37	64.9
Time saving	10	17.5
Improved transparency	7	12.3
Easier monitoring	3	5.3
Total	**57**	**100**

The main reason why some of the NGOs were not in favour of inviting applications online was that they thought the entire exercise would unnecessarily become cumbersome. Manipulation and lack of transparency were also perceived as possible threats.

Reasons why applications should not be invited online		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Cumbersome	24	88.9
Manipulation	1	3.7
Lack of transparency	2	7.4
Total	**27**	**100**

Having gone through the system of NGOs evolved by the Foundation and the method adopted for short-listing and processing applications, the evaluator suggests that in order to keep up with the changing times and meet the need for greater transparency and improved service delivery, the Foundation must go for inviting online applications,
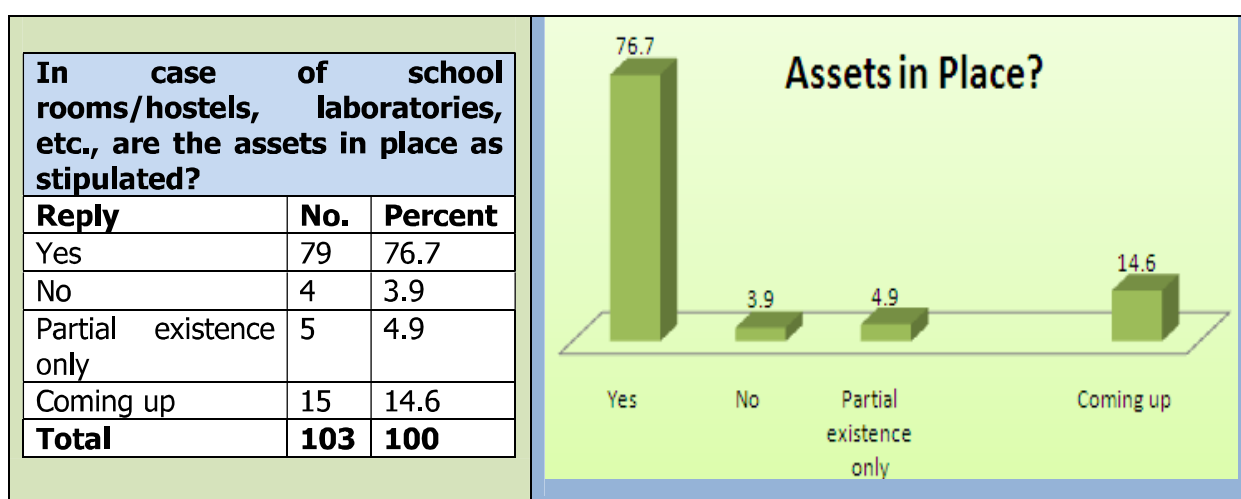
including monitoring of proposals sooner than later. Perhaps it should take a cue from the Ministry of Minority Affairs[4] and come up with a better system - learning not only from its experiences but also from those of other successful models[5] that are in vogue.

It is suggested that the Foundation should hire a specialized outside agency to look into the details of the requirements in this regard and start working on the plan.
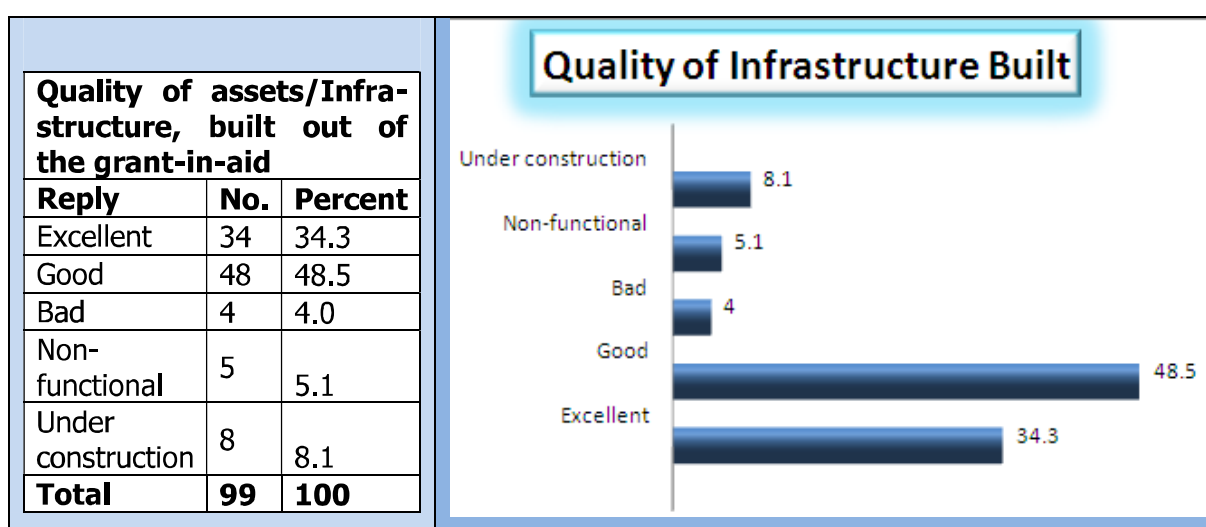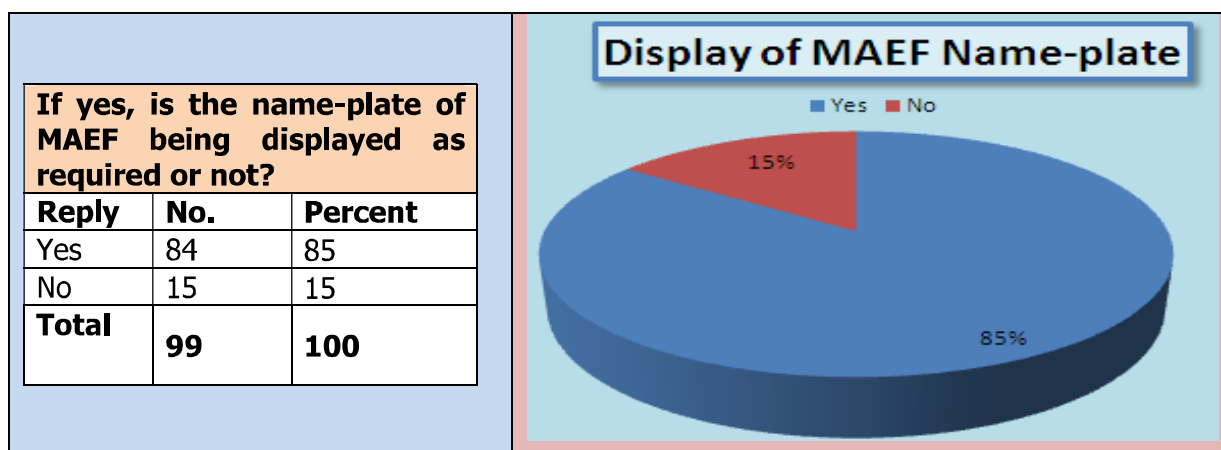
xi.   Asset Verification

The evaluators, during the asset verification process, have made an attempt to physically verify the assets created out of MAEF grants, such as school buildings, rooms, hostels, laboratories, etc. and assess their quality as well. The exercise was largely satisfactory in the sense that in most cases assets were definitely in place. In a few cases, however, the authenticity of the assets/ infrastructure (whether they were actually built out of MAEF fund or not) was difficult to judge because of absence of any significant indicator. MAEF name-plates, which are an essential terms of agreement signed between the Foundation and the beneficiary organizations were missing in such cases.

In case of school rooms/hostels, laboratories, etc., are the assets in place as stipulated?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	79	76.7
No	4	3.9
Partial existence only	5	4.9
Coming up	15	14.6
Total	**103**	**100**

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[4] The Ministry has already introduced inviting online applications

[5] Municipal Corporation of Delhi has taken significant steps towards the introduction of e-technology in its functioning. Successful online services include, filing of property tax returns, register and order birth and death certificates, order and renew trade/factory license, submit tenders for development works, etc.

If yes, is the name-plate of MAEF being displayed as required or not?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	84	85
No	15	15
Total	99	100

Display of MAEF Name-plate

Quality of assets/Infra-structure, built out of the grant-in-aid		
Reply	No.	Percent
Excellent	34	34.3
Good	48	48.5
Bad	4	4.0
Non-functional	5	5.1
Under construction	8	8.1
Total	99	100

Quality of Infrastructure Built

The quality of assets was generally good, some even falling into the excellent category.

It is suggested that all the beneficiary organizations should be served a reminder to display the name-plates of the Foundation as agreed with a request to send in their latest contact address, telephone numbers, name of the chief functionaries, etc. The address details of many organizations, especially those which received grants-in-aid earlier, have changed over the years. Therefore, the reminder to this effect should also be prominently displayed on the Foundation website on a continued basis.
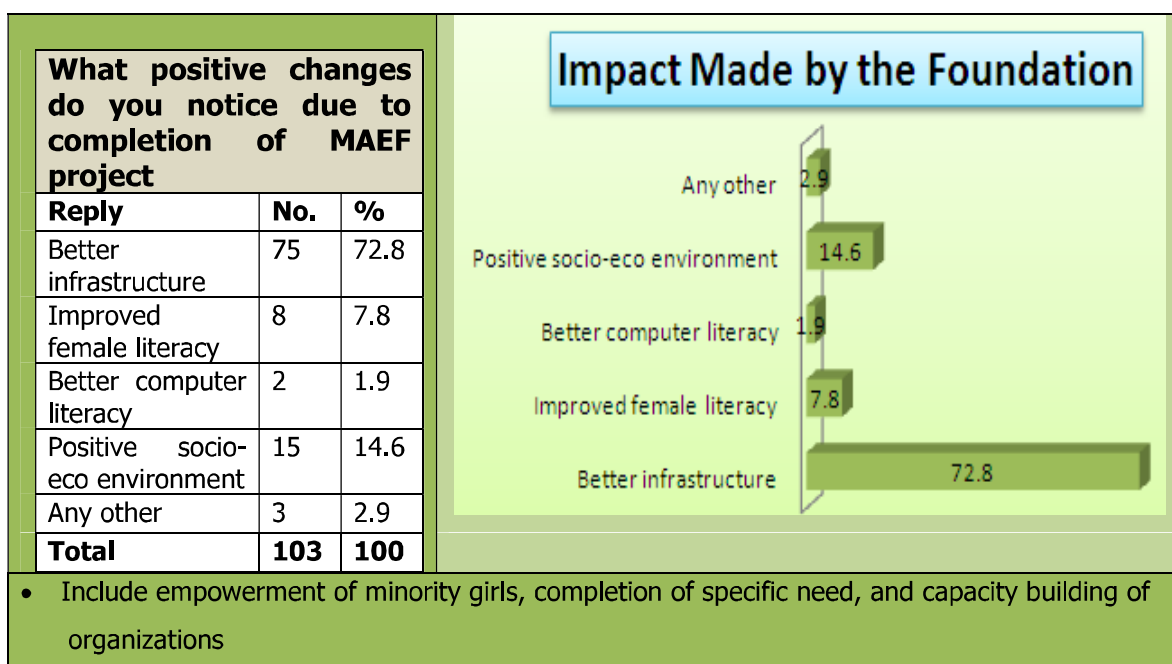
During mandatory inspection visits/ processes, the inspecting authorities should specifically be insisting on the need for displaying MAEF name-plates by the beneficiary organizations. After all, non-display of the name-plates, an important indicator of assets

• The assessment was purely subjective, depending on the judgments made by the evaluators in the field

created out of MAEF grant, shows that inspecting authorities are not serious on this matter.

xi.   Impact Made by the Foundation

The impact made by the Foundation has been tremendously positive and visible. With continuous support for basic educational infrastructure and facilities in the area of concentration of educationally backward minorities which do not have adequate provision for elementary or higher educational schools or Institutes, especially for girls, the Foundation is doing a fairly good job in creating better infrastructure and positive socio-economic environment. Improved female literacy and computer literacy are being perceived as other important positive changes that schemes of the Foundation have brought about.

What positive changes do you notice due to completion of MAEF project		
Reply	No.	%
Better infrastructure	75	72.8
Improved female literacy	8	7.8
Better computer literacy	2	1.9
Positive socio-eco environment	15	14.6
Any other	3	2.9
Total	**103**	**100**

- Include empowerment of minority girls, completion of specific need, and capacity building of organizations

A general complaint of the NGOs against the grant-in-aid scheme has been that enough money/ amount is not being released. The Foundation gives grant-in-aid amounting to lacs only. NGOs want higher grant-in-aid, possibly running into crores of rupees even. However, this complain is understandable. The Foundation, with its limited fund, cannot cater to the needs of all, in their entirety.

It appears that despite the enhancement in its Corpus Fund in recent years, the interest earned from the Corpus Funds, which is the only source of income for the Foundation, is not enough to meet the demands from NGOs and other beneficiaries, not to forget for clearing up the ever increasing pending applications. Since the rate of interest has also declined recently, it is bound to adversely affect the income of the Foundation. In order to supplement the shortage of funds, it is therefore strongly felt that the Corpus Fund of the Foundation should be further increased. Or else, the Foundation should be provided with additional financial support (other than Corpus Fund support) on an annual basis so that there is no shortage of funds for implementing its highly useful and popular schemes.

It is also felt that there is an urgent need to strengthen the human resource of the Foundation. It is working with minimum essential staff since inception. There are hardly about a couple of staffs which are taking care of applications concerning grant-in-aid. The situation may well be gauged from the fact that Foundation's expenditure on establishment and administration has always remained below 5% of its total income, while 95% or more of the total income has been spent on schemes alone. It is a fact that the working of the Foundation has increased manifolds over the last several years without any increase in permanent staff strength. There are only around 8 permanent staff members, including the Secretary & Deputy Secretary (which are of course saddled with other important responsibilities) and a driver and a peon. In effect, the working professional team consists of only 4 permanent staff members. With a view to streamline the overall office work, it is suggested that ad-hoc measures to meet the growing need for staff members should be resisted with. The Foundation should go for permanent staff.

The Foundation, despite being engaged in promoting education amongst educationally backward minorities for the last 20 years, doesn't have a permanent office of its own either. Over the years, the office of the Foundation has kept shifting from one place to the other many a times. The present office of the Foundation within the premises of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is in a precarious and dilapidated condition. We therefore suggest that the Foundation should soon be provided with a permanent office/ accommodation with all modern means of communication.

xiii.   Existing Schedule for Receipt, Processing and Sanction of Scholarships

The scholarship is given to girl students passing Xth exam and taking admission in XIth in the year when result of Xth exam is declared. Results of Xth exam are usually out by May-June every year. Knowing that it might take at least another month or so to get admitted in XIth, the cut-off date for receipt of scholarship applications is deliberately kept as far back as 30th September. Last year, however, with a view to expedite the whole process, the closing date for receipt of applications was August 31.

For   distribution of scholarship, state-wise quota has been defined by the Foundation based on 2001 census. The applications are required to be verified by the Principal of the school where the student is studying. Every year nearly 20000 to 25000 applications are received under the scheme. For processing of these applications, the Foundation has developed software. On receipt of eligible applications, it is scrutinized and entered in the computer which prepares merit list state-wise and community-wise. Thereafter selection is made by the Foundation as per quota. All this takes about four to five months' processing time.

Thereafter, sanction letters are issued to the selected students by registered post informing them to open bank account in their names. On receipt of information regarding bank account, the amount of scholarship is released through A/c payee cheques and sent through registered post to the students directly on their residential addresses. The cheque is deposited by the candidate in respective banks. From the time sanction letters are dispatched to the students till they get cheques from the Foundation, around one to two additional months again pass by.

On an average, from the time they get admitted in XIth, successful students have to wait around seven to eight months. In fact, sometimes it takes even longer than seven-eight months. As a result, students are hardly in a position to utilize the scholarship money

they get (if at all in XIth) for the intended purpose. Usually students get first installment (for class XI) when they have already passed out and joined class-XII (or maybe it is just about to happen). To cut down time for processing the second installment (for class-XII), the Foundation has started sending in a verification form (along with the cheque for first installment) to be signed by the Principal of the school where she is studying (verifying that the student has graduated to class-XII).

The processing and sanction of scholarship to girl students indeed take time. There have been instances when both the installments (for class-XI and X-II) have been released together. Of late, the Foundation is making serious efforts to cut down the time consumed during the whole process. However, shortage of staff members is not helping the cause. At the same time, one cannot discount the fact that the scheme introduced in 2003-04 with only 1200 scholarship, has gradually increased to 15000 now. For this reason, the task of sending in sanction letters followed by issuance of cheques to the successful students this time round (2009-10) has rightly been outsourced to IDBI.

From this year onwards, the Foundation has decided that the scholarship amount of Rs. 12,000/- will essentially be released in two equal installments of Rs. 6000/- each. Perhaps this is in keeping with the requirements of the scheme that a student must first pass class-XI to be eligible for the second installment (for class-XII). On the face of it, the decision seems fair – taking care of due diligence in the process. However, being aware of the practical difficulties in processing installments and the resultant delays therein, we suggest the decision be reviewed and overturned. It is a common knowledge that the quantum of scholarship amount (Rs.12,000), which is not enough for quality education in any case, gets almost squandered in inconsequential equal installments of Rs.6000/- each, especially when delivered late.

xiv.   Impact of Scholarships to Girl Students

Ever since its introduction in 2003-04, the scholarship scheme for girl students has got an overwhelming response from all across India. Over a six year period between 2003-04 and 2008-09, the Foundation has sanctioned Rs.30.12 crores to nearly 27000 meritorious girl students from educationally backward minorities from all over India.

The popularity and effectiveness of the scheme is evident from the fact that whereas the similar Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme of the Ministry of Minority Affairs for studen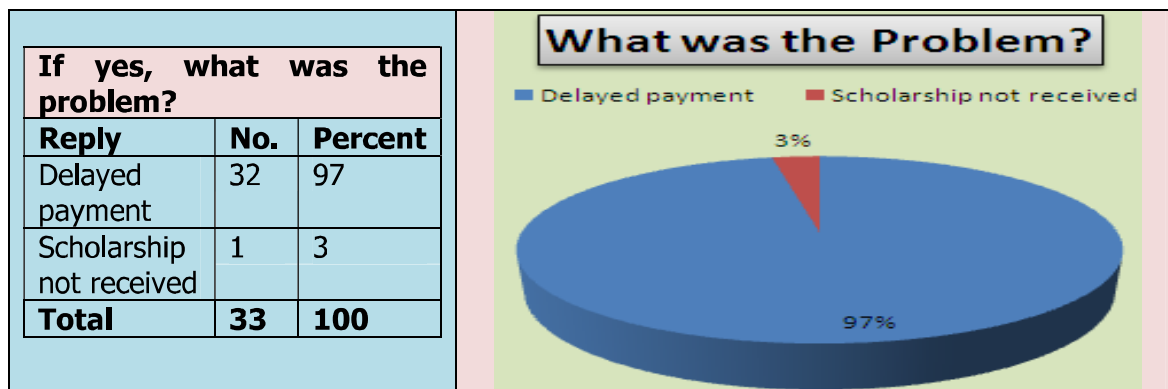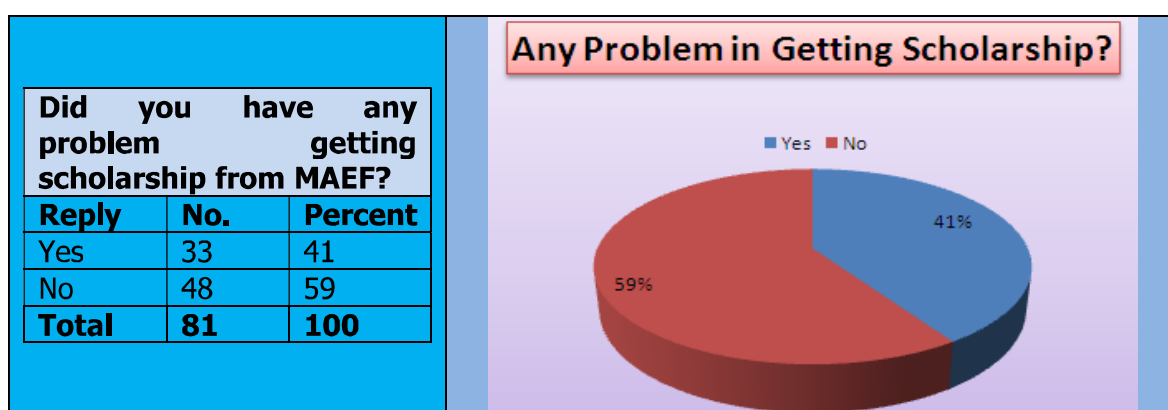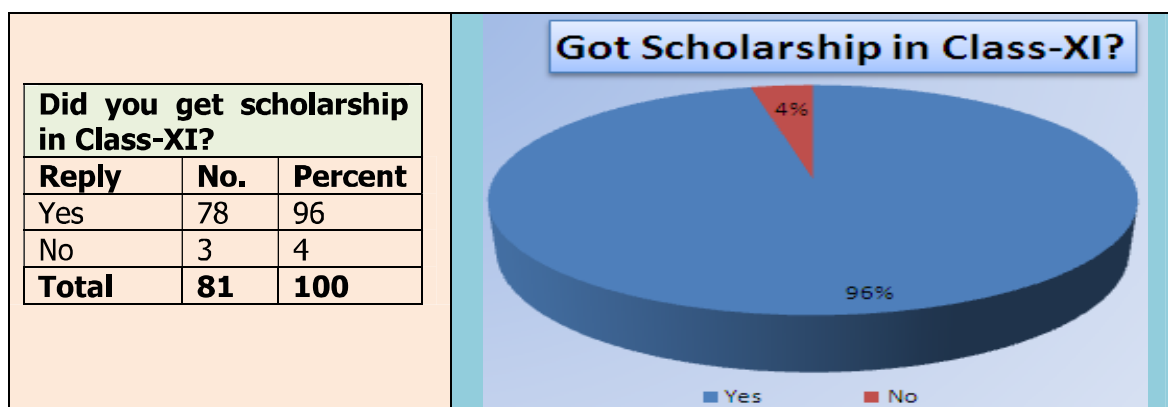ts belonging to the minority communities could not be utilized during the last financial year and was surrendered, the Foundation is all set to further increase the number of scholarships under this scheme from the current 15000[6] to at least 20000 following year, subject to availability of funds.

Despite delays in processing applications from students, an overwhelming majority of girls do acknowledge having received the scholarship during class-XI itself. This is a testimony to the fact that the Foundation is running this scheme quite efficiently.
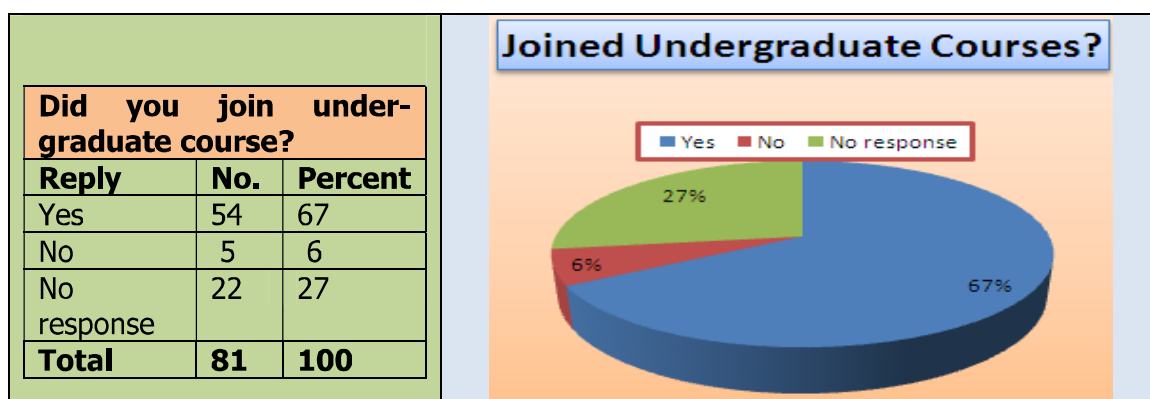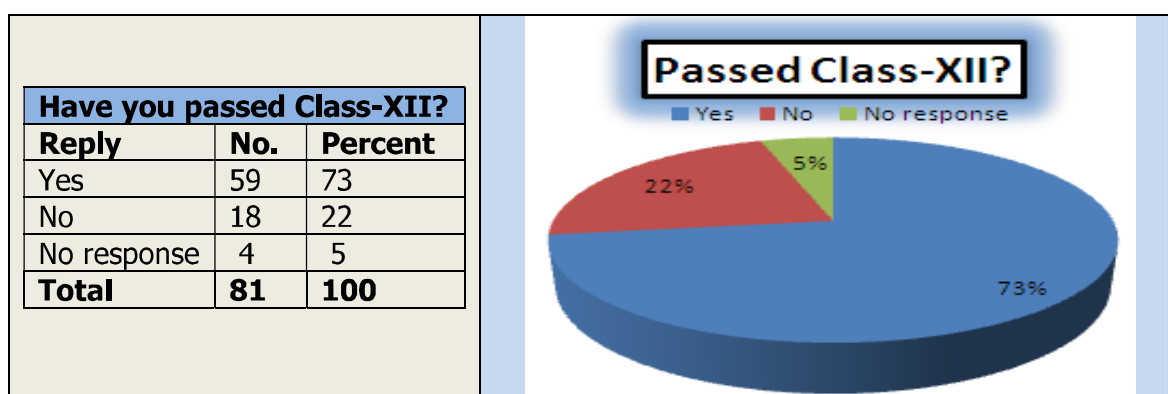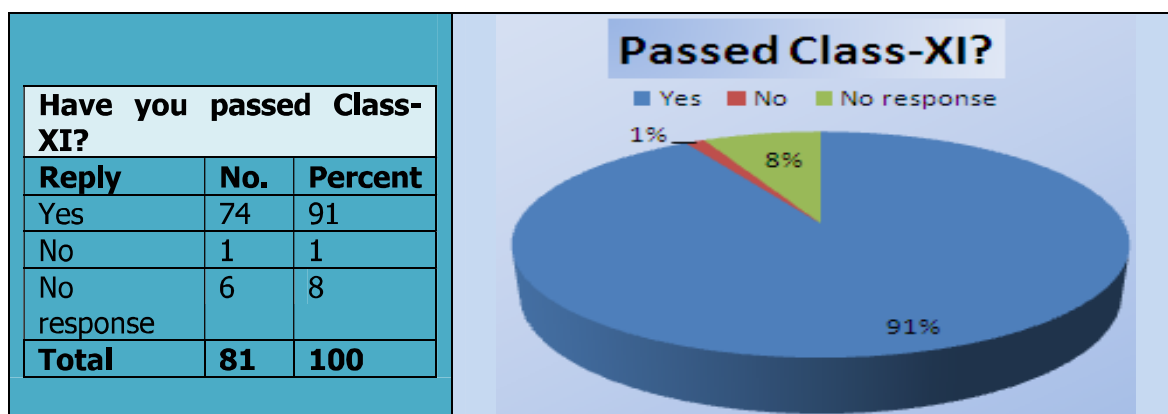
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[6] Introduced in 2003-04 with only 1200 scholarships, the numbers have gradually increased to 15000 in 2009-10.

Did you get scholarship in Class-XI?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	78	96
No	3	4
Total	**81**	**100**

Did you have any problem getting scholarship from MAEF?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	33	41
No	48	59
Total	**81**	**100**

If yes, what was the problem?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Delayed payment	32	97
Scholarship not received	1	3
Total	**33**	**100**

In order to ascertain the impact of the scheme, an attempt was made to look at the percentages of scholarship holder girls who completed class-XI, class-XII, and those who joined in undergraduate courses as well. We found that an overwhelming majority of scholarship holder girls (91.4%) passed class-XI, while an equally impressive proportion of them have passed class-XII and joined undergraduate courses (72.8% and 66.7%, respectively) as well. This clearly shows that the scheme has been fairly successful in

motivating young meritorious girls from the educationally backward minority communities to increase their rate of attainment at higher secondary level, provide opportunities for higher education and enhance their employability.

Have you passed Class-XI?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	74	91
No	1	1
No response	6	8
Total	81	100

Have you passed Class-XII?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	59	73
No	18	22
No response	4	5
Total	81	100

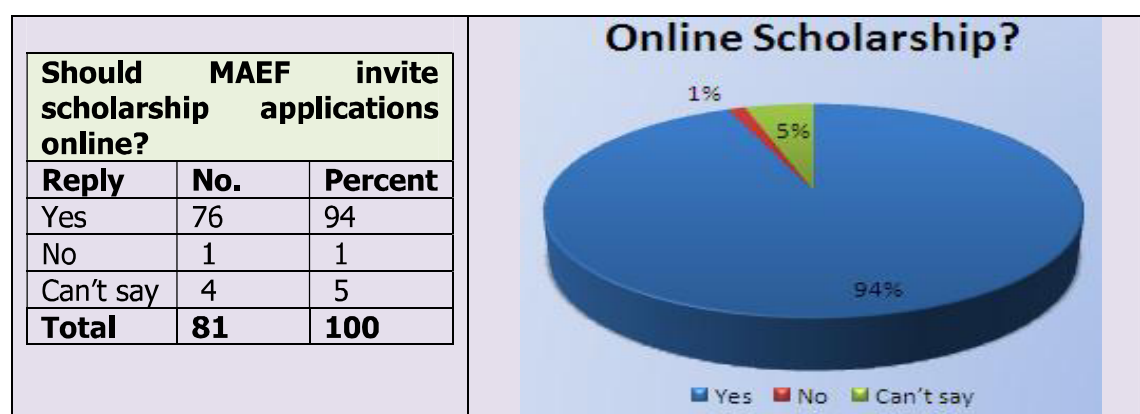| Did you join under-graduate course?		
Reply	No.	Percent
Yes	54	67
No	5	6
No response	22	27
Total	81	100

For a broader evaluation of the impact of MAEF scholarship, it would have been better to also look into what proportion of scholarship holder girls secured employment or became

self-employed. However, a short-study of this nature does have its limitations because of cost and time considerations. It calls for a much larger sample of beneficiary girl students, especially those from the earlier years, from a much larger number of states where the scheme has been implemented. This evaluator therefore suggests that in order to assess the benefits that have accrued to the girl students under the scheme in their entirety, the Foundation should commission a separate study on the impact of the scheme.

Having assessed the scheme, it also goes without saying that almost all beneficiary girl students are in favour of inviting applications under the scheme online, including online monitoring and tracking.

Should MAEF invite scholarship applications online?		
Reply	**No.**	**Percent**
Yes	76	94
No	1	1
Can't say	4	5
Total	**81**	**100**

The Foundation has already computerized its office and almost all essential information relating to the scholarship scheme is available on its website. As soon as the applications are processed, the software that the Foundation uses for this scheme generates state-wise merit list, which is then displayed on the website. However, there is still scope for improvement. Inviting online applications would definitely make the whole process much easier and transparent. It is suggested that the Foundation should also set up a separate complaint/ feedback cell so that applicants' complains can be heard and solved timely. For there are cases, though very few in number, where respondents complained that some of the meritorious applicants despite having applied with good marks could not get the scholarships, and the Foundation did nothing to attend to such complains.

2.   Field Notes

- As expected, NGOs/ organisations which got MAEF funding long ago, say 7 to 8 years back or before, could not respond satisfactorily (as compared to the recent beneficiaries) to questions concerning system of selection of NGOs, existing schedule for receipt of proposals and sanction of assistance, inspection procedure followed, etc.

- Due to changes brought in the governing structure, their memory seems to have faded over the years. The personnel credited /responsible for bringing in grants-in-aid have retired/ moved on or died. The current heads of such organizations do not have fond memories of MAEF aid for obvious reasons.

- There is no systematic and regular information channel existing between the beneficiary organisations/ NGOs and MAEF. After completion of the projects, organizations hardly have any exchange of information with MAEF (to and from) resulting in kind of a disconnect. Apart from the MAEF website, which of course contains important updates, information about its activities, there is hardly any other source of communication. As a result, most of the NGOs are quite oblivious of the happenings around MAEF.

- Many NGOs/ organizations have complained delays in the entire process involved in getting MAEF grants-in-aid. There is also a perception that many organizations receive grants-in-aid not because they simply get to know about the scheme through print media or words of mouth (from fellow organizations) and apply accordingly, but due to political connections / recommendations or proximity with MAEF personnel in one way or the other.

- Nevertheless, almost all do admit that the grant-in-aid has proved immensely helpful in developing/ creating infrastructure for the minority organizations as well as in overall improvement in socio-economic environment in local areas.

3.   The Glitches/Limitations

The evaluators were faced with the following minor glitches or limitations while venturing into the field and coming up with the overall findings of the study:

- The Foundation doesn't have a one-stop consolidated (year wise or otherwise) list of beneficiaries (NGOs as well as that of girl students) along with their complete contact/address details and latest telephone numbers or e-mail IDs.

- The list of beneficiary NGOs being displayed on MAEF website, a hard copy of which was made available to Indian Social Institute (ISI), was inadequate to reach out/ contact them easily. It doesn't contain complete address details in most cases and telephone numbers at all. Though MAEF was prompt in providing us with telephone number of select number of NGOs, most of such numbers were out of date and not of much help.

- In case of girl students, contact numbers were almost non-existent. Perhaps it has got something to do with their poor socio-economic conditions. Nevertheless, it does become a significant hindrance in reaching out to them and survey.

- In view of the above, it is suggested that the Foundation must try developing a directory of its beneficiaries (with complete address details, contact details, etc) to be updated from time to time for unhindered survey/ analysis/ impact study in future.

- The evaluator felt that prior to getting into the field, it would be better if we could get necessary details about beneficiary NGOs/ organisations in terms of sanction letters, project completion reports and inspection reports, etc. Due to pressing engagements of limited MAEF staff members, however, we could not go through such documents before hand. As time was fast passing by, our field investigators

therefore ventured into the field without these documents and were depending much on the information shared by the respective beneficiaries.

- In order to keep pace with time and cut down scope of any apprehension and dilly-dallying on the part of beneficiaries to respond to our evaluation queries, we requested Deputy Secretary of the Foundation from the very beginning to send in letters to each of the selected NGOs informing them about visit of ISI personnel for evaluation study. MAEF was very kind in dispatching such introductory letters at the earliest. Unfortunately, however, many NGOs could receive such letters only after the visit by ISI personnel/ investigators. As a result, there was much apprehension in giving information by the organisations and our investigators were even denied information in some cases. Accordingly, field visits were rescheduled for some states, especially where introductory letters were delivered late.

- Contacting NGOs/ Organisations within the stipulated period also became difficult and time-taking due to inclement weather conditions throughout January this year, especially in Northern states of India, resulting in frequent disruptions in scheduled travel plans to carry field surveys. Meetings with many organizations, most of which are educational institutes, had to be cancelled and rescheduled due to their closures forced by extreme cold and foggy weather.

C.   CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

It is evident from the findings of the evaluation study of the two main schemes of the Foundation, namely, grant-in-aid to NGOs and scholarships to meritorious girls, that the Foundation is playing an exemplary role in promoting education amongst the educationally backward minorities. The schemes of the Foundation are not only popular but also highly relevant with visible impact on target groups.

The main suggestions that follow from this evaluation study are as summarized as under:

- The Foundation needs to further streamline the system of selection of NGOs. This would require a serious re-look at the current wisdom to carry forward applications resulting in never ending backlogs/ pending applications. It is suggested that the Foundation scraps the existing system of carrying forward applications/ proposals (considered as backlogs) for consideration during the next financial. Instead, the Foundation should strictly follow the official schedule (May 01 to September 30) for receipt of applications every year. Short-listing of NGOs/ proposals for a particular year should be based on fresh eligible applications (complete with all documents) received during that financial year only. Files of pending applications should be treated as closed. The Foundation can sure intimate all such pending applicants to reapply next time, if they so desire, along with fresh budgets[7] as well as with all necessary documents. The success of such a system would however depend how transparent the Foundation becomes in its functioning. For it is essential that the Foundation is regular in displaying on its website an updated state-wise list of all eligible applications received during a year.

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[7] Other than inordinate delays and confusion, the current process also results in making the budgets of the projects (against which NGOs/ organizations send in applications) stretched beyond means. In fact, during a gap of two-three years, the cost of any infrastructure project (small or big) is likely to increase substantially. Currently, the Foundation doesn't give applicants the opportunity to update their financial proposal as per the changed circumstances. This puts them under tremendous financial pressure in maintaining the quality of their projects.

- Only eligible/ complete applications should find a place in the grant register of the Foundation. Incomplete applications should never get precedence over applications complete in all respects. The Foundation should therefore ensure that scrutiny of applications takes place without any time-lag. For this, it must have a committed team to verify the checklist and documents attached with applications.

- In recent years, the Foundation has started adhering to the 'first come, first served' principle and the system of short-listing of NGOs seems to have improved. For greater transparency, however, it is suggested that the list of eligible applications should also be put up on Foundation's website with regular updates and information about their current status.

- Considering that the number of quality proposals/ applications from some of the most educationally backward areas/ states is still low (where implementation of the scheme is most desired), it is high time the Foundation adopts area specific publicity strategies to attract more and more proposals from such states.

- It is imperative that the Foundation reaches out to more and more NGOs from educationally backward states (with sizable minority population) through organization of more and more events/ workshops and thereby ensuring better publicity to its schemes. As one of the possible pro-active steps, the Foundation could also commission studies (through independent professional agencies) about potential NGOs in some of the remotest or most backward areas/states for possible financial support.

- In recent years, the Foundation has made conscious efforts to improve the regional spread of its grant-in-aid scheme. In the process, some of the disadvantaged states which did not attract proposals earlier have also started benefiting from the scheme. However, the effort needs to be continued on a sustained basis. Fixation of quota/ state-wise allocation of grant (based on percentage of minority population and female literacy rate) could serve as a good indicator or guide in this regard.

- Experience shows that a strict adherence to a quota system/ norms would be difficult under the circumstances – mainly because the scheme is demand-driven and the Foundation follows the 'first come, first serve' principle. Unless quality applications do reach from all the disadvantages states and that too in good numbers, we cannot stress too much on regional spread of the scheme. Nevertheless, while allocating grants-in-aid, the Foundation should not deviate too much away from an indicative quota as far as possible.

- Major beneficiaries of the grant-in-aid scheme have so far been NGOs/ organizations mainly from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. Some prominent states (in terms of significant educationally backward minority population) such as Bihar, West Bengal and Assam have so far been unable to catch up with them.

- If disadvantaged states/ educationally backward districts are unable to send in enough applications, the Foundation could even think of relaxing some basic criteria/conditions such as proper recognition. The argument of non-receipt of quality applications (meeting all eligibility criteria) cannot be stretched too far.

- There is also a need for restructuring the General/Governing Board members to make it broad based with more and more representations from important disadvantaged states. Currently, if we look at the Governing Board members of the Foundation, it is quite apparent that they are mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and a couple of other states which incidentally have taken a lion's share of MAEF sanctions so far. A broad-basing of Governing Board members would help in ensuring a more equitable distribution of MAEF grant-in-aid.

- To keep up with the changing times and meet the need for greater transparency and improved service delivery, the Foundation must go for inviting online applications, including monitoring of proposals sooner than later. It is suggested that the Foundation should hire a specialized outside agency to look into the details of the requirements in this regard and start working on the plan.

- Some of the organizations do not display the name-plates of the Foundation support (mandatory as part of the agreement with the Foundation). Beneficiary organizations should be served a reminder to display the name-plates of the Foundation with a request to send in their latest contact address, telephone numbers, name of the chief functionaries, etc. Since the address details of many organizations, especially those which received grants-in-aid earlier, have changed over the years, the reminder should also be prominently displayed on the Foundation website on a continued basis. Further, during the mandatory inspection visits, inspecting authorities should specifically be insisting on the need for displaying MAEF name-plates by the beneficiary organizations.

- Despite significant enhancement in its Corpus Fund in recent years, the Foundation doesn't have enough funds at it disposal to meet the demands from NGOs and other beneficiaries, not to forget for clearing up the ever increasing pending applications. In order to supplement the shortage of funds, it is therefore strongly felt that the Corpus Fund of the Foundation should be further increased. Or else, the Foundation should be provided with additional financial support (other than Corpus Fund support) on an annual basis so that there is no shortage of funds for implementing its highly useful and popular schemes.

- There is an urgent need to strengthen the human resource of the Foundation. The working of the Foundation has increased manifolds over the last several years without any increase in permanent staff strength. With a view to streamline the overall office work, it is suggested that ad-hoc measures to meet the growing need for staff members should be resisted with.

- The Foundation, despite being engaged in promoting education amongst educationally backward minorities for the last 20 years, doesn't have a permanent office of its own either. The present office of the Foundation is in a precarious and dilapidated condition. Therefore, the Foundation should soon be provided with a permanent office/ accommodation with all modern means of communication.

- The processing and sanction of scholarship to girl students indeed take time. Therefore, the recent decision to release scholarship amount of Rs. 12,000/- in two equal installments of Rs. 6000/- each should be reviewed and overturned. It is a common knowledge that the quantum of scholarship amount, which is not enough for quality education in any case, gets almost squandered inconsequential, especially when delivered late.

- The scholarship scheme of the Foundation has been fairly successful in motivating young meritorious girls from the educationally backward minority communities to increase their rate of attainment at higher secondary level and providing them with opportunities for higher education and enhance their employability. However, in order to ascertain the full impact of the scheme, the Foundation should commission a separate evaluation study with a much larger sample of beneficiary girl students, especially those from the earlier years, from a much larger number of states where the scheme has been implemented.

- The Foundation doesn't have a one-stop consolidated list of beneficiary NGOs and girl students along with their complete contact/address details and latest telephone numbers or e-mail IDs. This makes the task of contacting them difficult. It is therefore suggested that the Foundation must try developing a directory of its beneficiaries (with complete address details, contact details, etc) to be updated from time to time for unhindered survey/ analysis/ impact study in future.

- There is no systematic and regular information channel existing between the beneficiary organisations/ NGOs and MAEF. After completion of the projects, organizations hardly have any exchange of information with MAEF (to and from) resulting in a disconnect. Apart from the MAEF website, which of course contains important updates, information about its activities, there is hardly any other source of communication. As a result, most of the NGOs are quite oblivious of the happenings around MAEF. It is therefore suggested that the Foundation should have a committed public relations team, which could also look into the complaints from the field. Additionally, the Foundation should also come up with a periodic newsletter around its activities to be shared with partners on regular basis. After all, "publication of materials including journals and periodicals and preparation and dissemination of material for mass media" is one of the specified objectives of the Foundation. To begin with, the task could even be outsourced to outside an agency.

O

II. ANNEXURE

1. Terms of Reference

(i) The system of selection of NGOs evolved by the Foundation and suggestions for improvement

(ii) The method adopted for short listing applications received by the Foundation and suggestions for improvement.

(iii) The inspection procedure followed by the MAEF and suggestions for improvement.

(iv) Existing schedule for receipt of inspection and sanction of assistance per projects and system for improvement.

(v) Existing publicity system and suggestions for improvement.

(vi) Identification of problematic states on the basis of desired indices like literacy, female literacy, drop-out rates, etc and suggestions for more equitable distribution of fund.

(vii) Existing time schedule for receipt, processing and sanction of application of scholarship and suggestion for modification and improvement.

(viii) The impact made by the Foundation in the field with reference to its objectives.

(ix) The sample size of the NGOs to be covered under the proposed syudy should not be less than ten percent (10%) of the total NGOs who have received grants-in-aid from the MAEF.

(x) The feasibility of inviting applications online, including monitoring of applications and to develop awareness among rural NGOs on its intended benefits.

(xi) Is there equitable distribution of MAEF grants between various States? If not, did MAEF take steps to improve the inter se allocation between various states?

(xii) Have the grants given been within the limits stipulated by MAEF?

(xiii) Has MAEF followed the principal of "first cum first served" while dealing with the applications from NGOs?

(xiv) Computer literacy status of the NGOs, receiving grant-in-aid from the MAEF.

(xv) Is the NGO utilizing the space purposefully for which it has been granted?

Asset Verification:

(xvi) Verification of assets, including the quality of assets, created out of MAEF grants, such as school rooms, hostels, laboratories, etc.

(xvii) How many girl students who received scholarships at XIIth level passed and joined undergraduate courses and completed the same. And if so, did they go for post-graduation.

1. Questionnaires

Questionnaire for Beneficiary NGOs

1. Name of the organization:

2. Name of the Chief Functionary:

3. Address:

4. District:

5. State:

6. Tel/ email/ fax:

7. Date of inception of the organization (mention DD/MM/YR):

8. Amount of MAEF grant-in-aid received:

9. Purpose of grant-in-aid received:

System of selection of NGOs

10. Are you satisfied with the system of selection of NGOs, evolved by the Foundation, especially the 'first come, first serve' method.
    Yes ☐☐   No ☐   Can't say   ☐

11. If not, give reasons –
    Complex process   ☐   No transparency ☐   Delayed selection ☐
    Other reasons (specify) ☐

12. Are you aware of any NGO/ Organization which deserved MAEF funding but could not avail.   Yes ☐   No ☐

13. If yes, what were the reasons (please specify):

14. Do you have any suggestion to improve system of selection of NGOs evolved by the Foundation. Please mention:

Inspection procedure followed

15. Has your project with MAEF been completed?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

16. If not completed, what is the stage of progress?
    Yet to start ☐   Half complete ☐   Delayed by 1 month or more ☐

17. If not completed, give reasons:
    Delayed funding ☐   Staff not available ☐   Season (rains) ☐   Other reasons
    (specify) ☐

18. What were/ are the mandatory requirements for completion of the project?
    External evaluation ☐   Utilization Certificate ☐   Audited accounts ☐☐
    Completion certificate ☐

19. If completed, did your organization submit a Completion Certificate to MAEF?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

20. Has your organization submitted Utilization Certificate to MAEF?
    Yes ☐☐   No ☐

21. During project implementation process, has/had there been interim inspection /
    reviews/ monitoring by MAEF or not?   Yes   ☐   No ☐

22. If so, at what intervals? (mention periodicity):

23. Is there a standard periodical reporting format given by MAEF? Yes ☐   No ☐

24. Do you have any suggestion to improve inspection procedure followed by MAEF?
    Please mention:

Existing schedule for receipt of proposals and sanction of assistance:
25. Upon submission of proposal, how long did MAEF take to respond to your proposal/
    query?
    Within 15 days ☐   Within 3 months ☐   Within 6 months ☐
    More than 6 months ☐

26. Did any MAEF personnel visit your organization before sanction of the project?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

27. Upon selection of proposal, how quickly did you get the first installment of the sanctioned amount?
Immediately ☐   Within 3 months ☐   Within 6 months ☐   More than 6 months ☐

28. Do you have any suggestion to improve existing schedule of receipt of proposals and sanction of assistance from MAEF? Please mention:

Existing publicity system

29. Where and how did you hear of Maulana Azad Education Foundation and its schemes?
Newspaper ☐   Meeting/seminar/Conference organized by Foundation ☐
Government Departments ☐   Foundation representatives ☐   Website ☐
Fellow organizations ☐   Any other (specify) ☐

30. How do you think MAEF could improve publicity/communication with regard to its schemes? Please mention:

Impact made by the Foundation

31. What positive changes do you notice due to completion of MAEF project?
Better infrastructure ☐   Improved female literacy ☐   Improved drop-ratio ☐
Better computer literacy ☐   Positive socio-economic environment ☐   Any other (specify)

32. Do you think the funding for the project was adequate?Yes ☐   No ☐

33. Was there a change in the quantum of funds requested for?   Yes ☐   No ☐

34. If yes, what was the reason for the change?
Limited funding☐   First time funding ☐   Other reasons (specify) ☐

35. If not, what do you think is the reason?
Costs have gone up ☐   Budget was unrealistic ☐   Other reasons (specify) ☐

36. Was there any provision for maintenance of assets/infrastructure built into the project?
Yes ☐   No ☐

37. Has your organization reapplied for any funding from MAEF?
   Yes ☐   No ☐

38. If yes, has there been a response?   Yes ☐   No ☐

39. If yes, were you encouraged to apply again?   Yes ☐   No ☐

40. If no, what are or were the reasons given?
   One time funding policy ☐   Proposal not in funding priority ☐
   Limited funding available in the given financial year ⌐   Any other (specify) ⌐⌐

41. Do you feel the need for some non-financial support from the Foundation, e.g,
   Project management ☐   Financial management ☐   Participatory methods ☐
   Project proposal writing ⌐   Training methods ⌐   Any other (specify) ⌐⌐

Computer literacy of NGOs:

42. Is your organization having computer facilities or not? Yes ☐   No ☐

43. Is your organization having an email address or not? Yes ⌐   No ⌐

44. Does your organization have a website of its own?   Yes ⌐⌐   No ⌐

45. Have you ever corresponded with MAEF through email? Yes ⌐⌐   No ⌐

46. Do you think MAEF should invite applications for project proposals online, including
   online monitoring of projects? Yes ⌐   No ⌐   Cant' say ⌐⌐

47. If yes, give reasons.   Easy to apply/ Lesser hassles ⌐   Time saving ⌐
                                 Improved transparency ⌐   Easier monitoring ☐

48. If not, give reasons.   Cumbersome/difficult to handle ☐   Manipulation ☐
                                 Lack of transparency ⌐

Information dissemination

49. Do you get any newsletter from MAEF regarding its activities/schemes or not?
   Yes ☐   No ⌐

50. Do you see the website of Foundation often? Yes ⌐   No ☐

51. If yes, do you think MAEF's website is updated often?
    Yes ☐   No ☐   Can't say ☐

52. If yes, do you think there is enough information on MAEF website?
    Yes ☐   No ☐   Can't say ☐

53. Do you often attend any meeting/ seminar/ training/ conference of the Foundation?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

54. Do you know of the Scholarship Scheme of the Foundation? Yes ☐   No ☐

55. Can you name any of the girl who has received the MAEF scholarship? Yes ☐
    No ☐

Asset verification (to be observed by the investigator)

56. In case of school rooms/ hostels, laboratories, etc, are the assets in place as stipulated?
    Yes ☐   No ☐   Partial existence only ☐   Coming up ☐

57. If yes, is the name-plate of MAEF being displayed as required or not?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

58. If not, why? Please specify:

59. In case of equipments/stationeries, computers, etc, is the number as stipulated?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

60. If not, why? Please specify:
61. What is the quality of assets/infrastructure built out of the grant-in-aid?
    Excellent ☐   Good ☐ Bad ☐   Non-functional ☐

62. During project implementation process, has/had there been interim inspection by MAEF regarding quality of assets/ infrastructure or not?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Name & Signature of Investigator   Date

Team Leader/ Coordinator   Date

Questionnaire for Scholarship Holder Girls

1. Name:

2. Registration No.:   3. Religion:

4. Address:

5. District: 6. State:

7. Telephone:

8. Did you get MAEF scholarship in Class-XI. Yes ☐   No ☐

9. Did/do you have any problem in getting scholarship from MAEF. Yes ☐   No ☐

10. If yes, what is/was it.   Delayed payment ☐   Irregular payment ☐
                                Complex/ tiresome procedure ☐   Any other (specify) ☐

11. Amount of scholarship per month (in Rs). Please mention:

12. Do you think, this amount is/ was sufficient. Yes ☐   No ☐

13. Have you passed class-X.   Yes ☐   No ☐

14. How much percentage did you get in Class-X.   Below 55% ☐   55% and
      above ☐

15. Have you passed Class-XI.   Yes ☐   No ☐

16. If yes, how much percentage did you get in Class-XI. Below 55% ☐   55% and above ☐

17. If not, why. Please specify:

18. Have you passed Class-XII.   Yes ☐   No ☐

19. If yes, did you join or have you joined undergraduate course. Yes ☐   No ☐

20. If not, why. Please mention:

21. If yes, did you pursue or are you pursuing post-graduation course.   Yes ☐
      No ☐

22. If not, why. Please specify:

23. Earning category/ status of your father/guardian

      Salaried (govt.) ☐   Salaried (non-government) ☐   Daily wage earner ☐   Other (specify) ☐

24. Is your father literate.   Yes ☐   No ☐

25. Is your mother literate.   Yes ☐   No ☐

26. Do you think MAEF should invite applications for scholarships online.
      Yes ☐   No ☐   Cant' say ☐

27. If yes, give reasons.   Easy to apply/ Lesser hassles ☐   Time saving ☐
                                Improved transparency ☐   Easier monitoring ☐

28. If not, give reasons.   Cumbersome/difficult to handle ☐   Manipulation ☐
                                Lack of transparency ☐

Name & Signature of Investigator   Date

Team Leader/ Coordinator   Date