

14. *National Consortium for Open Schooling*

14.0 Introduction

The National Consortium for Open Schooling (NCOS), was set up to promote Open Schooling in the States. The objectives of NCOS are to (i) facilitate the Apex Body functions of NIOS and (ii) Promote better cooperation and collaboration among agencies/institutions involved in Open Schooling, distance education and correspondence education at school stage. The Secretariat of NCOS is located in NIOS. NCOS endeavours to upscale/strengthen existing State Open Schools (SOS). It ensures cooperation and collaboration among NIOS and Open Schooling organizations.

14.1 Open Schooling State Coordination Committee (OSSCC)

Efforts were made to set up the Open Schooling State Co-ordination Committee (OSSCC) under the Chairmanship of Secretary (School Education) of each State.

14.2 Upscaling of State Open Schools (SOS)

The Open Schools of States of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal have been requested to upscale/strengthen them, especially in terms of enrolment, upgradation from Secondary to Senior Secondary, introduction of Open Vocational Education, Open Basic Education Programmes, etc. The States of Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Tamil Nadu were impressed upon the need to revive/re-activate their Open Schooling scheme.

14.3 Setting up New State Open Schools

States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Jharkhand have developed their project proposals and techno-economic-feasibility reports for the setting up of State Open Schools. They are awaiting their State Government's approval. Himachal Pradesh has initiated efforts for having a State Open Schooling Cell in the Directorate of Education or a full-fledged State Open School within the Board of School Education. The States of Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh are in the process of finalization of their Project Proposal for setting up SOSs.

A proposal for the Jharkhand State Open School (SOS) within the Jharkhand Academic Council (JAC) is under the active consideration of the State Government. The state of Chhattisgarh has initiated the process of setting up of SOS. The state of Uttarakhand, is visualizing setting up of the SOS or a State Open Schooling Cell.

14.4 Setting up of Open Schooling Cell (OSC)

As an alternative, the School Education Boards are being suggested to set up Open Schooling Cell (OSC) within the Board/Council where the States are not coming up promptly for setting up their full-fledged State Open School. In the North-East, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim have recently started taking initiative to set up their own Open Schooling Cells. A meeting to consider setting up of State Open School was held for some States of North Eastern Region in March, 2007 at Kolkata. The Open Schooling in the Union Territories (UTs) is being encouraged by NIOS through the



neighbouring State Open School (SOS). Dadra and Nagar Haveli is trying to get linked with the Regional Centre, NIOS, Jaipur (Rajasthan).

14.5 Annual meeting of NCOS

A meeting of the National Consortium of Open Schooling (NCOS) was organized by the

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) in collaboration with JSS Karnataka Technical Institutional Campus, Mysore (5 and 6 February 2007). The recommendations emphasized increased efforts to substantially upscale the open schooling programme in the country on priority basis, particularly to meet the educational needs of students for secondary education.