



## Mains Practice Question

### Case Study

You are the District Collector of a rural district with a high rate of female illiteracy and child marriage. A new government scheme has been launched to provide financial incentives to families who keep their daughters in school until age 18. However, implementation has been challenging due to deeply entrenched cultural norms.

Recently, you have received reports that some families are falsely claiming the incentives while still marrying off their daughters early. You must carefully analyze the situation, balance competing interests and take adequate steps to resolve this issue.

1. What are the stakeholders involved in this situation?
2. What actions will you take regarding effective implementation of the scheme and address other immediate social challenges?
3. What long-term strategies can be implemented to sustain the impact of the scheme and changing societal attitudes towards female education and child marriage?

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### Introduction

A government scheme incentivizes families to keep daughters in school until 18 to combat high female illiteracy and child marriage rates in a rural district. However, challenges include **false claims and deep-rooted cultural barriers**.

- The District Collector must balance these issues, enforce the scheme, and promote long-term societal change.

### Body

1. What are the stakeholders involved in this situation?

Stakeholder	Role/Interest
District Collector	Responsible for the successful implementation of the government scheme and overall governance of the district.
Families of Girls	Direct beneficiaries of the scheme who are supposed to keep their daughters in school until age 18 in exchange for financial incentives.
Girls (Potential Beneficiaries)	Primary beneficiaries of the scheme, who stand to gain education and avoid early marriage.
Local Community/Influencers	Hold significant sway over social norms and practices, including attitudes toward female education and marriage.

<b>Educational Institutions</b>	Schools and teachers are involved in educating girls and monitoring their attendance and progress.
<b>NGOs and Civil Society Groups</b>	Organizations working on female education, child rights, and social change in the district.
<b>State Government</b>	The higher-level authority overseeing the implementation of the scheme across districts.
<b>Other Law Enforcement Agencies</b>	Police and other agencies responsible for upholding the law, including laws against child marriage

2. What actions will you take regarding effective implementation of the scheme and address other immediate social challenges?

- **Establish a Rapid Response Team:** Immediately form a team of district officials, local police, and social workers.
  - Set up a **24/7 hotline for reporting false claims.**
  - Respond to **urgent cases within 24 hours.**
- **Conduct Emergency Verification:** Start immediate spot checks on a sample of beneficiary families.
  - Delegate the task to **verify school attendance records** of girls enrolled in the scheme to the SDM.
  - File cases against the fake beneficiaries and take actions against local officers if found guilty.
- **Freeze Suspicious Payments:** Immediately halt incentive payments to families suspected of false claims pending investigation.
  - Expedite payments to **verified genuine beneficiaries** to reinforce positive behavior.
- **Emergency Community Meetings:** Call for urgent meetings with village leaders and influencers.
  - Clearly communicate **zero tolerance for false claims.**
  - Seek their cooperation in identifying and resolving issues.
- **Awareness Campaign:** Use local media, including radio and mobile announcements, to spread information about the scheme's benefits and legal consequences of false claims.
  - Emphasize the illegality and harm of child marriage.

3. What long-term strategies can be implemented to sustain the impact of the scheme and changing societal attitudes towards female education and child marriage?

- **Focus on Quality Education:**
  - **Enhance School Infrastructure:** Invest in **improving school buildings, sanitation facilities,** and teaching aids to create a more attractive learning environment.
  - **Teacher Training:** Train teachers in **gender-sensitive pedagogy** and child psychology to provide better support for girls in classrooms.
  - **Vocational Training:** Integrate vocational training opportunities within the education system to **offer career pathways and enhance girls' employability.**
- **Behavior Change Communication:**
  - **Community Awareness Campaigns:** Organize regular campaigns involving **local influencers, religious leaders, and media** to address traditional beliefs and promote the benefits of girls' education.
  - **Community Dialogues:** Facilitate dialogues and discussions within communities to challenge existing norms and empower families to prioritize girls' education.
- **Mobile Counseling Units:** Deploy **counselors to visit affected villages** and provide on-the-spot support to families facing pressure.
  - Offer immediate psychological support to girls at risk of early marriage.
- **Strengthening Social Safety Nets:**
  - **Conditional Cash Transfers:** Link **financial incentives to school attendance as well as progress reports** to ensure genuine enrollment and learning.
  - **Scholarship Programs:** Offer scholarships and educational grants based on merit and

need to further incentivize girls' education.

- **Safe Accommodation and Support Services:** Provide safe **hostels or boarding facilities for girls.**
- **Monitoring and Feedback:**
  - **Data-Driven Approach:** Regularly collect and analyze data on enrollment, attendance, learning outcomes, and stakeholder feedback through **Block Development Officers.**
  - **Performance Reviews:** Use data to identify areas for improvement and adjust policies based on community needs and effectiveness.
  - **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensure transparent implementation of the scheme and hold officials accountable for misuse or irregularities.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:**
  - **Engage Corporate Sector:** Encourage corporate social responsibility initiatives focused on girls' education and skill development.
  - **Role Models and Mentorship Programs through NGO:** Connect girls with educated women from that area through **local NGOs** who can serve as role models and mentors, inspiring them to pursue educational goals.

## Conclusion

Successfully addressing female illiteracy and child marriage requires a multi-faceted approach. **Strict enforcement, community engagement, and support systems** are crucial. Long-term strategies focusing on education, women's empowerment, and behavior change are essential. Sustained political will and resource allocation are key to achieving lasting change.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiiias.com/mains-practice-question/question-8411/pnt>

