



PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, WOMEN, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS**

**THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY SECOND REPORT
ON**

**Action Taken by the Government on the
Recommendations/Observations contained in the Three
Hundred Twenty Eighth Report on Plans for Bridging the
Learning Gap caused due to School Lockdown as well as
Review of Online and Offline Instructions and Examinations
and Plans for Re-Opening of Schools**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 19th December, 2022)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 19th December, 2022)



Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
December, 2022 / Agrahayana, 1944, (Saka)

Website: <https://rajyasabha.nic.in>
E-mail: rsc_hrd@sansad.nic.in



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December, 2022/ Agrahayana, 1944(Saka)**

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To be annexed later

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(Constituted *w.e.f.* 13thSeptember, 2022)

1. Shri Vivek Thakur - Chairman

RAJYA SABHA

2. Dr. Faiyaz Ahmad
3. Shri Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya
4. Ms. Sushmita Dev
5. *Dr. K. Keshava Rao
6. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
7. Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu
8. Dr. M. Thambidurai
9. Shri Ghanshyam Tiwari
10. Shrimati Sangeeta Yadav

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Rajendra Agrawal
12. **Dr. T.R. Paarivendhar
13. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
14. Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary
15. Shri Sangam Lal Kadedin Gupta
16. Shri Sri Krishna Devarayalu Lavu
17. Shri Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi
18. Shri Sadashiv Kisan Lokhande
19. Dr. Jaisiddeshwar Shivacharya Mahaswamiji
20. Shri Asit Kumar Mal
21. Shri Anubhav Mohanty
22. Shri Balak Nath
23. Shri Chandeshwar Prasad
24. Shri T. N. Prathapan
25. Shri Ratansinh Magansinh Rathod
26. Shri Jagannath Sarkar
27. Dr. Arvind Kumar Sharma
28. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
29. Shri Dharambir Singh
30. Shrimati Pratibha Singh
31. Shri S. Venkatesan

*Nominated *w.e.f.* 11.10.2022

**Nominated *w.e.f.* 16.11.2022

SECRETARIAT

Shri Jagdish Kumar, Additional Secretary
Smt. Nirmala Bhatt, Joint Secretary
Shri A. K. Mallick, Director
Shri Har Prateek Arya, Deputy Secretary
Shri Pritam Kumar, Deputy Secretary
Shri Vijay Kumar Rai, Under Secretary
Smt. Suman Khurana, Committee Officer
Shri Rohit Kumar Mishra, Committee Officer
Shri Agam Mittal, Assistant Committee Officer

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred and Forty Second Report of the Committee on the Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the Three Hundred and Twenty Eighth Report on “Plans for Bridging the Learning Gap caused due to School Lockdown as well as Review of online and offline Instructions and Examinations and Plans for re-opening of Schools”, which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 6th August, 2021.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of Recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Ministry of Education (Department of School Education and Literacy) *vide* their communication dated 16th December, 2021.

3. The Committee considered the draft Report and adopted the same in its meeting held on 15th December, 2022.

NEW DELHI
15th December, 2022
Agrahayana 24,1944 (Saka)

Shri Vivek Thakur
Chairman
Department-related Parliamentary
Standing Committee on Education,
Women, Children, Youth and Sports

ACRONYMS

AEES	Atomic Energy Education Society
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
BISAG-N	Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CICSE	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations
CIET	Central Institute of Educational Technology
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CSC-SPV	Common Service Centre-Special Purpose Vehicle
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTSA	Central Tibetan School Administration
CWSN	Children With Special Needs
DAISY	Digitally Accessible Information System
DIETs	District Institutes of Education and Training
DIKSHA	Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing
DoSE&L	Department of School Education and Literacy
DTH	Direct-to-Home
EMRS-NSTA	Eklavya Model Residential School- National Science Teaching Association
FLN	Foundational Literacy and Numeracy
FTTH	Fiber To The Home
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISL	Indian Sign Language
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organisation
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITPD	In-service Teacher Professional Development
IVRS	Interactive Voice Response System
JNVs	Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas
KVS	Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOOCs	Massive Open Online Courses
MoTA	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NAS	National Achievement Survey
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NEP	National Education Policy
NIE	National Institute of Education
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration

NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
NIPUN	National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
NISHTHA	National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement
NIT	National Institute of Technology
NVS	Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti
NTA	National Testing Agency
OBC	Other Backward Classes
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OoSC	Out of School Children
PCPs	Personal Contact Programmes
PDPET	Professional Development Programme for Elementary Teachers
PM e-VIDYA	Pradhan Mantri eVidya
PRAGYATA	Plan, Review, Arrange, Guide, Yak(talk), Assign, Track, and Appreciate
PSSCIVE	Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education
RIE	Regional Institute of Education
R&I	Research and Innovation
RTE	Right to Education
RT-PCR	Real time reverse transcription–polymerase chain reaction
SAFAL	Structured Assessment For Analysing Learning
SC	Scheduled Caste
SIEs	State Institutes of Education
SIOS	State Institute of Open Schooling
SMILE	Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRGs	State Resource Groups
SWAYAM	Study Webs of Active–Learning for Young Aspiring Minds
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TEI	Terminal Endpoint Identifier
UT	Union Territory
ZIETs	Zonal Institutes of Education and Training

REPORT

The Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports deals with the action taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in its 328th Report on “Plans for Bridging the Learning Gap caused due to School Lockdown as well as Review of online and offline Instructions and Examinations and Plans for re-opening of Schools”, which was presented to the Rajya Sabha and laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 6th August, 2021.

2. The Action Taken Notes in respect of Recommendations contained in above mentioned Report were received from the Ministry of Education (Department of School Education and Literacy) *vide* their communication dated 16th December, 2021. These have been categorized as follows.

Chapter I: Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government

Paras – 18.1 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f)), 18.2 ((a), (b), (c)), 18.5 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g)), 18.7 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e)), 18.9 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h))

Total - 29

Chapter II: Recommendations which the Committee does not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:-

Paras – 18.2 ((d), (e), (f), (g), (h)), 18.4 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g)), 18.6 ((a), (b), (c), (d)), 18.8 ((a), (b), (c), (d))

Total - 20

Chapter III: Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:-

Paras- 18.3 I(a), 18.3 II ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h)), 18.10 ((a), (b), (c), (d), (e))

Total - 14

Chapter-IV: Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are still awaited:-

Paras - Nil

Total - Nil

CHAPTER-I

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

LEARNING LOSS

Recommendation

1. *Intensive bridge courses and accelerated learning programmes should be developed in consultation with experts in the field to make up for the learning loss and bring students to the level of learning of each class.* (Para-18.1 a)

Action Taken

The Ministry in its Action Taken Note has submitted that during the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers, parents, and students had to remain at homes to prevent its spread. In this situation, multiple alternative ways of learning at home through interesting activities have been developed which would maintain continuity of their learning. NCERT has developed an Alternative Academic Calendar (AAC) which is flexible and suggestive for all the stages of school education resources along with textbooks. The teachers can implement this taking into consideration the contexts and needs of the State/UT. This calendar has been developed by the faculty members of all the constituent units of the NCERT including NIE, CIET, PSSCIVE and all the five RIEs using on-line platforms for discussion and feedback. Also, the Department of School Education and Literacy has issued guidelines for mainstreaming of Children of Migrant Labourers and Out of School Children (OoSC) on 13th July 2020 and 7th January 2021 respectively. Thereafter, a comprehensive COVID Action plan was also shared with States/UTs and other stakeholders on 4th May 2021 for mitigating the loss of learning. It has further been stated that NCERT has also developed a bridge course for Out of School Children studying in special training centres for the age group 6 to 14 years under the provision of Right to Education Act, 2009. The course aims to bridge the learning gaps and help children to be mainstreamed in the regular school. The bridge course also comes with a teacher handbook, which will help the teacher in transaction and assessment of the competencies to bridge the learning gap. In addition, bridge courses have been developed by NVS teachers Class wise and Subject wise. In the starting of the session, 15 days were devoted for Bridge Course to bring the students to the level of learning of new class. Special classes are also being arranged in KVS for students to address the learning loss. Worksheets,

specially designed learning modules, Alternative Academic Calendar developed by NCERT have been provided to students and teachers to address learning loss.

Recommendation

2. *Learning Outcomes, subject-wise, during the pandemic period should be assessed by regularly conducting tests with multiple – choice questions or quizzes and remedial measures taken through intense customized personal remedial classes to address the problem areas of each student.* (Para-18.1 b)

Action Taken

The Ministry has informed that during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Government of India held detailed consultations with the States and UTs at different levels for taking their views/perspectives on how to assess and bridge the learning gap and thereby improve the Learning Outcomes (LOs) in the Covid-19 pandemic period. Education being in the concurrent list of the Constitution, majority of the schools are under the domain of the respective State and UT Governments. Hence, to ensure that every student gets continued access to education, a multi-pronged approach has been adopted. A comprehensive initiative called PM e-VIDYA has been initiated as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan on 17th May, 2020, which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes: DIKSHA (one nation, one digital platform) which is the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades are available on it (35 of the 36 states and UTs have on boarded on DIKSHA platform and contextualised the content as per the local need); One earmarked SwayamPrabha TV channel per class from Class 1 to 12 (one class, one channel); Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- ShikshaVani; Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website/YouTube.

The Ministry has further informed that it has undertaken a proactive initiative, named, 'MANODARPAN' covering a wide range of activities to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing during the COVID outbreak and beyond. In addition to the above, the Central Government is constantly advising States/UTs through guidelines and meetings with respect to interventions for reducing impact of

pandemic on education and improving learning outcomes. The guidelines issued so far include Guidelines for Children of Migrant Laborers, Guidelines for Out of School Children and Mitigation of Loss of Learning, PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education, Learning Enhancement Guidelines for Continuous Learning, Covid-19 Related Health and Safety SOP/Guidelines for School Re-Opening, COVID Action Plan for School Education, Alternate Academic Calendar, Guidelines for JNV –Residential Schools, Guidelines for parents on Home Based Education, Guidelines for orphaned Children, Guidelines for developing E-content for CWSN, CBSE competency-based assessment framework and NCTE Guidelines for TEIs.

Also, the Government of India has been implementing the sample based National Achievement Survey (NAS) aimed at classes III, V, VIII and X in a cycle of every three years. The next round of NAS held on 12th November 2021 across the country will help in assessing the learning interruptions and new learnings during the COVID pandemic and support taking up of remedial measures.

CBSE's scheme of examinations in classes IX to XII mandates schools to conduct multiple examinations continuously. Schools are required to conduct periodic tests and other internal assessments, portfolios, projects and other formative and summative tests. In formative assessment, learning gaps are identified and various remedial measures are taken to address the learning gaps. CBSE has developed resource material to handhold teachers regarding formative and summative assessment. In order to implement the recommendations of the NEP 2020, CBSE has also modified its examination scheme by introducing biannual examinations from the academic session 2021-22. The examinations will be held at the end of two terms, each on half of the syllabus prescribed for the year. For classes X and XII, the first term examinations of one and a half hour are currently being conducted using the question paper comprising only Multiple Type Questions developed by CBSE and in the presence of external supervisors appointed by CBSE. The second term examination will be held during March –April 2022 for a duration of 2-hours. This would have descriptive questions and the results will be declared either on the basis of both of these examinations or on the basis of first term only if the second term is not possible due to any exigency.

In NVS, formative assessment is regularly carried out including multiple choice questions, assignments, projects, quizzers, concept maps, etc. NVS has the provision of remedial classes in the regular timetable of schools. After assessing the problem areas of each student, remedial

measures are taken regularly by the NVS teachers. Similarly, in KVS, regular tests through different e-platforms including support from DIKSHA portal have been conducted from time to time to address problem of each student. Subject wise, grey areas were identified and remediation provided to the students. Comprehensive guidelines have been issued to all Regions on 03.08.2021.

Recommendation

3. *Extra classes, curtailment of vacations, assigning expert teachers for personalized coaching, parental engagement, peer-group and collaborative learning may be explored to help students, who are lagging behind and provide them personalized and dedicated attention to bridge the learning gap. Senior class students should be advised to take up the role of mentors and take classes of the junior students and it should be taken as a criteria of assessment in more structured manner.* (Para-18.1 c)

Action Taken

Education being in the concurrent list, majority of the schools are under the domain of respective State and UT Governments. Decision regarding school reopening, provision of extra classes, vacation, personalized coaching are undertaken at state level. Guidelines for undertaking various activities are provided by the Department of School Education & Literacy from time to time for better implementation of the schemes and for improving the quality of education imparted in schools. Further, to address the issues related to gaps and/or loss of learning among students, during the lockdown, NCERT has prepared 'Students Learning Enhancement Guidelines' with a focus on learning outcomes. The guidelines suggest models for the following three types of scenarios:

- (i) Learning Enhancement during COVID-19 for students without digital devices.
- (ii) Learning Enhancement during COVID-19 for students with limited accessibility to digital devices.
- (iii) Learning Enhancement during COVID-19 for students with digital devices.

The guidelines can be accessed at: [https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/announcement/Learning%20Enhancement Guidelines.pdf](https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/announcement/Learning%20Enhancement%20Guidelines.pdf)

NCERT has also developed a bridge course for Out of School Children (OoSC) studying in special training centres for the age group 6 to 14 years under the provision of Right to Education Act, 2009. The course aims to bridge the learning gaps and help children to be mainstreamed in the regular school. The bridge course also comes with a teacher handbook, which will help the teacher in transaction and assessment of the competencies to bridge the learning gap. Peer group and collaborative learning are also being encouraged among the students in NVS schools. Under this, class-wise, subject-wise WhatsApp groups are created to give personalized guidance to the students. Parents are also being guided by the teachers to assist the learning of students at home. Further, group wise assignment and activities were given to students of KVS as per CBSE guidelines. Students are allowed to ask their queries through WhatsApp or make call to the teachers. Guidelines issued for parents by the Ministry of Education have been shared with all KVs. Small Whatsapp groups have been formed to clarify doubts.

Recommendation

4. *Specific instructional materials and worksheets, workbooks may be created to address the specific learning requirements of students thus enabling them to bridge the learning gap/loss.*

(Para-18.1 d)

Action Taken

In order to explore ways of catering for student diversity, and enhancing quality of education, various interventions are being encouraged under SamagraShiksha. Learning enhancement (remedial teaching) is being supported with the main objective of identifying the learning gaps and equipping students with the core learning pre requisites appropriate for middle/secondary level of education. Teachers involved provide students with a variety of learning opportunities for effective learning, such as using diversified resources rather than focusing only on textbooks, and making use of a spectrum of multi-sensory experiences to tap the different potential of students. Worksheets/workbooks for various subjects have also been provided. This would help a diverse set of learners to bridge learning loss.

Under Samagra Shiksha, a provision has been provided for partnership with parents, families and the community wherein children's interest and choices is taken care of. Teachers will involve parents/ guardians of children in the activities of the pre-school so that they are able to replicate the same or similar activities at home. She/he will involve them in the development

of Teaching Learning Material (TLM) like toys, puppets, story chart, story box, flash cards, dolls and masks etc. Parents will also be involved in organizing cultural activities, field trips, excursions and visit to the fair etc. Parents or guardians will be continuously counselled regarding behavior problems of children. A guideline for Three-month Play-based School Preparation Module for Grade-I Children, entitled VIDYA PRAVESH, have been developed as per the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The purpose is to help teachers ensure that all children are exposed to a warm and welcoming environment when they enter Grade-I, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to their smooth transition to school. The guidelines intend to create a stimulating learning environment that is joyful, safe, ensures emotional security and provides support to all the children in school and at home. The play-based pedagogy is a significant aspect of the guidelines that plays a vital role in creating a joyful and stress-free environment for children to learn, and also in addressing the learning needs of children with special needs or disabilities (Divyang). Focus is also given on learning in mother tongue or home language and allowing as many languages as children bring to the classroom, including sign language.

In NVS, Instructional package (supplementary learning materials / work books, worksheets, quizzes etc.) and learning resources such as Exemplar problems & Bridge course materials are developed and being provided to the students along with similar materials available on Diksha Portal. Similarly, in KVS Worksheets, handouts are being prepared and used.

In NIOS, Worksheets at Secondary and Senior Secondary level are being developed with the purpose to provide academic support to learners and keep them academically engaged through constant practice. Similarly, the learner's guide at Secondary and Senior Secondary level is being prepared by NIOS for addressing the unfinished learning and learning losses due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations

5. *Mandatory Helpline Centers for every subject to clear the doubts of the students should be made operational to clear the doubts of students in each subject. Phone-in programmes may also be aired through TV and on community radio with subject experts to elaborate on topics and explain difficult concepts to students. WhatsApp Groups comprising teachers/subject experts may*

be created for each class in schools to aid students in their learning, clarification of doubts/concepts etc. (Para-18.1 e)

6. *The best formative assessments, like Chatbot Assessment, may be encouraged to map students learning processes / outcomes and identify those who require specific attention and the subjects in which targeted instruction is needed.* (Para-18.1 f)

Action Taken

The Department has informed that as indicated earlier, a comprehensive initiative called PM eVIDYA has been initiated as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan on 17th May, 2020, which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes:

- DIKSHA (one nation, one digital platform) is the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades are available on it.
- One earmarked SwayamPrabha TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel).
- Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- ShikshaVani.
- Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired developed on Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language on NIOS website/ YouTube. All these schemes/programmes are free of cost and available to all the students across the nation.

The PM eVidya DTH-TV Live telecast details (as on 14th September 2021) are as follows:

- i) Class 1 to 10 Live programmes: 1059 Live interactive sessions of 30 minutes each have been telecast on class based channels (1 to 10). It covered about 529.5 hours of telecast.
- ii) Class 11 & 12 Live programmes: 106 live interactive sessions of 60 minutes each have been telecast based on class based channels (11 & 12). It covered about 106 hours of telecast.

It has further been stated that to reach out to those students who lack access to technology, various innovative activities are being done at national, state or district level such as Gali-GaliSim-Sim, Tili-Mili programme, Motor Eskool, Roving Teacher, Project SMILE (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement), e-Kaksha, formation of Whatsapp and other social media groups, Work Book Distribution at home, Teacher calling to maintain connects with students. Till 14th September, 2021, 16,274 calls were received to enquire about telecast of educational programmes through PMeVIDYA IVRS. In addition, the PMeVidya live TV Programme on Teaching Learning Interventions for Inclusive Classrooms - Ask the Expert: 121 live sessions of 'Teaching Learning Interventions for Inclusive Classrooms - Ask the Expert' have been transmitted live covering about 60.5 hours. DIKSHA Chatbot through portal and whatsapp is available for users. Class-wise, subject-wise WhatsApp groups are being created at JNVs to give personalized guidance and to clear the doubts of the students. Subject-wise, group of teachers are created at cluster level for sharing of resources and experiences. Provision of helpline number has also been made in every JNV to provide assistance to the students and parents. In KVS, Students are allowed to ask their queries through WhatsApp or make call to the teachers and specially designated Email provided to the students in all KVs. WhatsApp groups have been created for all groups. NIOS also provides online education support throughout the year using various online platform such as Live video programmes on e-Vidya, Content Support for NIOS Learners on DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) platform, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on SWAYAM Platform, Live Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs) through Web Radio (MuktaVidyaVani) and Community based programmes on Community Radio (91.2 MHz) of NIOS.

NEED FOR PROPER DOCUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

Recommendations

7. *The Committee recommends that a comprehensive assessment to collect data of the post COVID situation leading to the learning loss due to school lockdown may be undertaken by the Department of School Education & Literacy to cover the following areas of concern:*

7.1. *learning loss assessment immediately across the country covering each and every student, with specific emphasis on students belonging to rural and backward areas as well as economically weaker and marginalized sections of the society and also Children with Special Needs. The findings / results of the survey should be compared with the figures for the pre-COVID*

period and the groups of students and areas / subjects which require immediate remedial action should be identified; (Para-18.2 a)

7.2. the basic reading, writing and arithmetical skills of students of various classes and compare them with the results during pre-COVID period. Thereafter, remedial programmes / evidence based multi-pronged strategies may be devised to make up for the learning loss so that future learning and employment prospects are not adversely affected. (Para-18.2 b)

Action Taken

The Department has informed that it has advised the States/UTs to conduct survey of children with and without access to digital devices. Various initiatives were taken up by the Ministry of Education, States and Union Territories to mitigate the effect of the COVID pandemic on school education. It has been submitted that a detailed report on these initiatives can be seen at the website of the Ministry of Education at the following link: https://dsel.education.gov.in/sites/default/files/update/covid_initiatives.pdf

Further, the National Achievement Survey (NAS) was held on 12th November, 2021 across India to assess the learning outcomes of students and schools across grades 3,5, 8 and 10. The NAS has covered (a) Government Schools (Central Government and State Government); (b) Government Aided School; and (c) Private Unaided Schools. The objective of NAS 2021 is to evaluate children's progress and learning competencies as an indicator of the health of the education system, so as to take appropriate steps for remedial actions at different levels. National, State/UT and District Report cards will be prepared to enable analysis of results and remedial action at the appropriate levels. Also, Ministry of Education has launched a National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat), for ensuring that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27. The National Mission lays down priorities and actionable agendas for States/UTs to achieve the goal of proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy for every child by the end of Grade 3. The Mission has been set up under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha which is an integrated scheme of school education covering from Pre-School to Senior Secondary level. It will focus on children of age group of 3 to 9 years including pre-school to Grade 3. The children who are in Class 4 and 5 and have not attained the foundational skills will be provided individual teacher guidance and support, peer support and age appropriate and supplementary graded learning materials to acquire the necessary

competencies. The goals and objectives of the mission are required to be achieved by all Govt., Govt. Aided and Private Schools so that universal acquisition of FLN skills can be achieved.

Furthermore, it has been stated that the Department has constantly advised States/UTs through guidelines and meetings like - PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education, Learning Enhancement Guidelines for Continuous Learning, Covid Action Plan for School Education, Guidelines for parents on Home Based Education etc. with respect to interventions for reducing impact of pandemic on education to address learning gap. Under this, in KVS, remedial programmes such as special classes are being arranged to address learning loss. Similarly, in NVS, assessment is being made an integral part of Online Learning and is mapped with learning outcomes so that remediation programme may be imparted on graded pattern according to the learning level of students. CBSE has also taken the following measures to promote Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN):

- (i) The following eight modules under three MOOCs are prepared on FLN and so far, around 54000 teachers have been registered for training on these:
 - a. Meaning and Importance of Foundational Learning
 - b. Teaching and Learning changes recommended by the NEP for FLN grades
 - c. Learning Goals for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy across Grades 1, 2 and 3
 - d. Skills and Mind sets of an FLN Teacher
 - e. Active Pedagogy and the shift from Traditional Practice
 - f. Conducive Classroom Environment
 - g. Importance of Classroom Assessments
 - h. Structured lesson plans as a tool to improve student learning and achieve FLN outcomes
- (ii) A microsite has been created which can be accessed at <http://cbseacademic.nic.in/fln/>
- (iii) A question bank of 500 competency-based questions for each grade for grades 1 to 5 available at CBSE FLN microsite.
- (iv) A Monitoring Group under FLN has been constituted which would include progress and review of teacher training, integration of Reading Mission, Assessment tools of Pratham, oral reading fluency tools and SAFAL (key stage assessment at 3,5)
- (v) Continuous interactions with schools, teachers, parents etc. through webinars are being carried out.

Recommendation

7.3 Out-of-school children, particularly girls, during the pandemic and concerted action taken to bring them back to school and mainstream education by giving them incentives in the form of study material, digital devices, wholesome nutritional food etc; (Para-18.2 c)

Action Taken

The Department of School Education and Literacy has informed that in order to prevent drop outs, lower enrolments and loss of learning, the Ministry of Education has issued guidelines for identification, smooth admission process and continued education of migrant children on 13th July, 2020.

Further, to ensure that children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country, Ministry of Education has shared guidelines dated 7th January, 2021 with all States which, among others, include identification of out of school children from age 6-18 years, enrolment drives and awareness generation, student support while schools are closed, continued Education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN), student support on school reopening and Teacher capacity building. Also, a comprehensive COVID action plan has been shared with the States and UTs on 4th May 2021, outlining the role of local bodies, formation of nodal group at village/town level, conducting door-to-door/helpdesk-based/App based survey to identify out of school children, their mainstreaming and resource sharing.

The Department has developed an online module for compiling the data of Out of School Children (OoSC) identified by each State/UT and their mapping with Special Training Centres (STC) on the PRABANDH Portal (<http://samagrashiksha.in>). The concerned State/UT validates the child wise information of the identified OoSC and STC uploaded by the concerned Block Resource Centre of the State for monitoring the progress of mainstreaming of OoSC.

During the pandemic, the Ministry of Education has also taken various steps for providing children continued access to education, which are available to each category of students irrespective of their region or economic standard. A comprehensive initiative called PM e-Vidya has been started which aims to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. The initiative includes all forms of digital modes to provide wide access- DIKSHA (online), SWAYAM (online), SWAYAM PRABHA (TV), other TV Channels

including use of Doordarshan and AIR Networks. Further, an Alternate Academic Calendar has been prepared for learning solutions for grade 1 to 12 for both children with and without device. Also, Pragyata guidelines were issued to States/UTs to facilitate continued education through various modes. The guidelines *inter-alia* include situation where internet connectivity is not available or available with very less bandwidth, resources are shared through various platforms like television, radio etc., that do not depend on internet.

Moreover, under Samagra Shiksha, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for undertaking various activities to reduce dropout rate including opening/strengthening of new schools upto senior secondary level, construction of school buildings & additional classrooms, setting up, up-gradation and running of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas for girls belonging to disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, OBC, Minority and Below Poverty Line (BPL), setting up of residential schools/hostels, free uniforms, free text books, transport allowance and undertaking enrolment & retention drives. Further, special training for age appropriate admission of out of school children and residential as well as non-residential training for older children, seasonal hostels /residential camps, special training centres at worksites, transport/ escort facility are also supported to bring out of school children to the formal schooling system. Also, mid-day meal is provided to students at the elementary level of education.

Further, under the student oriented component for the children with special needs, financial assistance is provided for identification and assessment of children with special needs, aids and appliances, braille kits and books, appropriate teaching learning material and stipend to girl students with disability etc. Also, Section 10 of the RTE Act states that it shall be the duty of every parent or guardian to admit or cause to be admitted his or her child or ward, as the case may be, for elementary education in the neighborhood school. The scheme further emphasizes upon provision of gender segregated toilets in all schools, provision of self-defence training from classes VI to XII and Special state specific projects such as Life Skills, Awareness programmes, Incinerators, Sanitary Pad Vending Machines etc. for varied interventions under equity for enhancing access, retention and quality for girls by promoting enrolment drives, retention and motivation camps, gender sensitization modules etc.

In addition to the above, under Samagra Shiksha, for the first time in 2021-22, financial assistance upto Rs. 2000 per annum has been provided for supporting Out of School Children (OoSC) of age group of 16-19 years, belonging to socio-economically disadvantaged groups, for

completing their education through NIOS/SIOS, for accessing course materials and certification. Also, under National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme, scholarship is awarded to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue the study at secondary stage.

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Recommendations

8. *The Department should make concerted efforts in coordination with Ministries/Departments concerned to make available high-speed internet connectivity and at least one TV Set, one Desktop Computer, large screens with projectors etc. in all schools across the country to bridge the digital divide. The problem of power outages in various parts of the country may be tackled by leveraging non-conventional energy sources like solar power, wind power etc. in schools and make them self-sufficient educational hubs.* (Para-18.5 a)

9. *The step taken by UT of Ladakh to distribute pre-loaded Tablets may be replicated in other parts of the country to distribute pre-loaded Tablets customized for each class for students in middle school and re-furbished laptops with pre-loaded educational programmes for students of secondary and senior secondary classes may be distributed instead of providing free textbooks. Efforts may also be made to manufacture such tablets/laptops indigenously at low cost through public-private partnership and by involving IITs, IT Industry, business houses etc.* (Para-18.5 b)

10. *A Digital Library with tablets, laptops, educational videos and other digital devices may be set up in each school, wherefrom students may borrow such devices for their educational needs for a specified time period.* (Para-18.5 c)

11. *Leverage private sector expertise and resources through effective collaboration to provide digital devices to students belonging to economically weaker and marginalized sections of society. The Department should make concerted efforts to utilise CSR funds for this purpose.*

(Para-18.5 d)

12. *Classes with physical distancing in community halls, auditorium etc. in villages and small towns, mobile classes etc. may be explored as innovative strategies for students who cannot afford*

digital devices. Large Screens with projectors may be set up in playgrounds or open areas for such students to avail online classes. (Para-18.5 e)

13. The Department should moot a proposal with MeitY and Ministry of Communications for provision of internet packs at concessional rates to students particularly from economically backward and marginalized sections of society as well as high speed internet connectivity to all schools. (Para-18.5 f)

14. The best practices adopted by teachers/schools in various States/UTs to ensure continued education during the pandemic, bridge the digital divide and minimize learning loss may be collated and issued by the Department in the form of guidelines/practices to be adapted by other States/UTs to suit their specific requirements. (Para-18.5 g)

Action Taken

Below mentioned efforts have been made by the Department to overcome the digital divide:

Under the Bharat Net programme, the CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd (CSC-SPV) of MeitY has been assigned the task of providing Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connectivity to Gram Panchayats including connectivity to the Government Institutions, including schools. This project is for providing Internet connection to Government schools in respective Gram Panchayat. The School Education Departments of the respective State Governments have appointed State/District-wise Nodal Officers for this project for effective implementation. About 63,100 Schools have been provided FTTH connections through Bharat Net so far. To reach out to those students who lack access to technology, various innovative activities are being done at national, state or district level such as Gali-GaliSim-Sim, Tili-Mili programme, Motor Eskool, Roving Teacher, Project SMILE (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement), e-Kaksha, formation of WhatsApp and other social media groups, Work Book Distribution at home, Teacher calling to maintain connects with students.

Moreover, Navodaya Vidyalayas have well equipped computer labs and smart computer labs with 40 laptop / tablets in most of the schools that are used by the students for their educational needs. In 616 JNVs, smart computer labs have also been established under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Total 825 Computer labs with smart provisions are established in

JNVs under CSR. NVS is in process of providing Digital Tablets pre-loaded with educational contents to all the students of Class XI & XII. The students who do not afford digital devices are being guided through Mobile School / home visits by teachers at a centrally located place of students residence, personal contact by the teachers using telephone or through indirect contact (any parent / relative or other JNV students nearby / Peer group / Alumni) or local teachers. Instructional packages (Supplementary learning materials / workbooks etc. and learning resources such as Exemplar problems, Bridge courses etc. were delivered to home. Efforts are being made by NVS to upgrade to high speed Internet connectivity in all JNVs. Guidelines for Online Education have been issued by NVS incorporating the experiences / best practices adopted by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas for continued education of students. Recently, 1173 Smart Classrooms has been set up in 99 JNVs, located in Minority Concentrated Areas. Ministry of Minority Affairs has funded for these Smart Classrooms. Training has been provided to all the teachers on Smart Classroom & Virtual Classroom at school after installation. There is a proposal for setting up of 1511 Smart Classrooms in 152 JNVs located in Tribal districts with financial assistance of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan also has a good digital/technological infrastructure comprising of:

- 11780 e-classroom
- 376 Digital Language Lab with 30 consoles in each lab
- 11080 Personalized E-learning systems
- 6447 E-Pragya Touch Tablets
- Students computer ratio- 16:01

Further, continuous upgradation and procurement of digital/ technological infrastructure is undertaken to facilitate effective academic transaction. All KVs are using available resources like e-Classrooms, Computers, TVs for students. Good Broad Band connectivity with specified speed depending on the number of students is being made available in almost all KVs. Under project e-prajna, 6447 Tablets preloaded with e-content were provided to students and teachers of one Kendriya Vidyalaya in each region. Presently, these students are studying in class-XII. All DCs/Principals have been requested to explore CSR for providing digital devices to the students of KVs. To minimise the digital divide, various steps have been taken up by NIOS which include the following:

- NIOS delivers **3 hours live video programmes** every day on **e-vidya 10 and 12 channels** for providing continuous learning support for learners at the Secondary and Senior Secondary level including Vocational Courses and Indian Sign Language based content *w.e.f.* 01.04.2021 i.e., after the onset of the second wave of COVID Pandemic. These channels can be accessed through DD, dish TV, and Jio App. Jio T.V. App.
- NIOS content is available on a separate vertical '**DIKSHA**' (**Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing**) of e-Vidya involving e-content and QR coded energized books for all the classes and provides multi-mode access to digital/online education called 'one nation, one digital platform' comprising one channel for each class. The special e-content for visually and hearing-impaired students is also available on the platform. Till now, 652 NIOS contents related to different subjects at secondary level and 1018 contents at Senior Secondary level are uploaded on DIKSHA Portal. The learners can download the video and content and learn at their own convenient time.
- **Live Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs)** of Secondary, Senior Secondary, Vocational courses and Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) are broadcast through **Web Radio (Mukta Vidya Vani)**.
- **The Community Radio (91.2 MHz)** of NIOS broadcasts live programmes on topics relevant to the community. To provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for healthy living and education during COVID-19 pandemic, various civic issues related to COVID-19 such as guidance and counseling, social distancing measures and health and nutrition, Yoga and meditation are discussed.
- **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)** relating to NIOS (grades 9 to 12 of open schooling) are uploaded on SWAYAM portal which contain 42 courses including 13 courses at Secondary level, 20 courses at Senior Secondary level and 8 Vocational courses. 80,000 learners have already enrolled in these courses. SWAYAM MOOCs have been developed using the four-quadrant approach – text in PDF, a teaching video, self-assessment exercises; and discussion forum.
- **Worksheets at Secondary and Senior Secondary level** are being developed with the purpose to provide academic support to learners and keep them academically engaged through constant practice. These are exploratory in nature and help in developing problem-

solving skills, creative thinking, and life skills; in the form of project work that engages learners in some activity, etc.

- The **learner's guide** at Secondary and Senior Secondary level is being prepared by NIOS for addressing the unfinished learning and learning losses due to COVID-19 pandemic. In the learner's guide, the contents presented in the textbook (Self-Learning Material of NIOS) are broken down into concise summary and are presented with the support of visual cues, pictures and flow charts.
- For **facilitating education of Divyangjan**, study material has been developed in Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language; both are available on NIOS website/YouTube. 176 sign language videos are uploaded on DIKSHA portal by NIOS. Contents in sign language medium are delivered twice a week through live video programme on e-Vidya 10 channels.

NIOS Video resources are available on the NIOS website (www.nios.ac.in) and YouTube channel.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF TEACHERS

Recommendations

15. *The Department should encourage States / UTs to augment existing digital / technological infrastructure and create more such facilities for optimal utilization of the same by teachers / students for efficient and effective delivery of content via online mode.* (Para-18.7 a)

16. *Teachers may be trained in a strategic manner so as to enable them to create captivating content for digital education and engage students in online mode through active interaction and creation of a school like ambience.* (Para-18.7 b)

17. *Teachers, particularly in rural, tribal and backward areas may be given intensive training in use of digital devices and Information Technology in collaboration with IITs, private sector etc.*

(Para-18.7 c)

18. *Provision of incentives in the form of digital devices, internet connectivity, data packs etc. at home to teachers, particularly those in rural, remote or backward areas, in order to encourage them to shift to digital education and explore new strategies / innovations therein.*

(Para-18.7 d)

19. *Specialized training programmes may also be developed for teaching children with special needs, physically challenged children and children with learning disabilities, particularly for imparting online / distance education.*

(Para-18.7 e)

Action Taken

As informed in its Action taken Notes, the Department of School Education and Literacy has launched an initiative to improve learning outcomes at the Elementary level through an Integrated Teacher Training Programme called NISHTHA – National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Samagra Shiksha in August 2019. The aim of this training is to motivate and equip teachers to encourage and foster critical thinking in students, handle diverse situations and act as first level counsellors.

Due to COVID-19 challenges and in order to provide continuous professional development opportunities to the teachers at the elementary level, this Department has launched NISHTHA online using DIKSHA platform in October 2020. Under NISHTHA, a module on integrating ICT in teaching, learning and assessment has been introduced. Further, NCERT has initiated a webinar series from April, 2020 focusing on orientation of teachers, students and other stakeholders on use of various ICT tools, digital initiatives and emerging trends in educational technology, cyber safety and security. Further, NEP 2020 emphasizes the continuous professional development of school heads and teachers to meet the needs of enriched teaching-learning processes for quality education. Also, it has been highlighted in NEP 2020, that each teacher and school principal is expected to participate in at least 50 hours of continuous professional development every year for their own professional development, driven by their own interests. To realize this goal, NCERT has developed a series of courses for continuous professional development and delivered through DIKSHA. States/UTs have run these courses on DIKSHA.

NCERT has also been conducting various online/ blended courses on ICT/ ET as under:

Online Certificate Course on Action Research in Educational Technology

1. The online course on Action Research in Educational Technology is specially developed for the teacher educators at elementary level working in District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), different State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and State Institutes of Education (SIEs). The course also aims at assisting them in conducting In-service Teacher Professional Development (ITPD) in Action Research. On 1st December 2020, the 10th cycle of courses on Online Action in Educational Technology was started with 160 candidates in blended mode. Online synchronous meetings were conducted on a regular basis to resolve the issue and doubts raised by participants. 139 candidates completed the course.
2. The same course was also conducted through SWAYAM portal and 6,583 teachers and teacher educators have participated in the course.

Rollout of ICT and pedagogy integration curriculum in States /UTs/ autonomous organisations

1. Courses under ICT in education curriculum is implemented in States/UTs under Samagra Shiksha to enable teachers to use technology in the classroom. Induction- 1 course was implemented in Karnataka and 11,481 teachers were trained and certified during 2020-21. Training was also initiated for 2021-22.
2. Around 400 sessions were conducted as part of a Webinar series for various stakeholders on ET and ICT tools.
3. Online courses were conducted for the National ICT awardees. Almost 65 awardees were awarded Induction 1 certificate and 27 awardees were certified for Refresher 1 course on “ICT Pedagogy Integration in Teaching Learning and Assessment”.
4. Virtual workshop on ‘Development of e-Content’ was conducted in two phases for State Resource Groups (SRGs) of all the 36 States/UTs and around 750 participants were trained. Virtual training was also attended by 2000 teachers of Punjab through YouTube. Workshops on e-Content development were conducted for participants from Chandigarh. Also training support was provided for the states of Assam, Haryana and UP.
5. On the occasion of Safer Internet Day, a panel discussion was conducted and an online quiz was also launched on Feb 13, 2021. Around 35,938 participants attempted the quiz, out of which 19,505 were certified on “Safer Internet Day Awareness Quiz”.

6. Online training on ‘Development of digital game-based e-Content, was conducted for 10 days during 5-16 July 2021. Around 3755 participants registered for the course including students and teachers. At the end of the online course, around 202 submitted a digital game as an assignment and around 125 were certified after evaluation of the digital games.
7. A five days online workshop on ‘Use and Integration of Technology on One Year Implementation of the Vision of NEP - 2020’ was organised during August 9-13, 2021. About 13,385 participants registered themselves and around 2172 participated in the course assessment quiz conducted at the end of the workshop and 1204 scored 70% & above and were certified.

Professional Development of NCERT Faculty and teachers on ICT in Education

1. An online training programme was conducted on “Assessment using Google Forms’ on May 7, 2020.
2. Training on conducting ‘Online Classes using Google Meet’ and web-based training on ‘Cyber Safety & Security’ was also conducted through YouTube for NCERT faculty and Demonstration Multipurpose Schools.

ICT course through NISHTHA 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0

1. One dedicated course on ‘Integration of ICT in Teaching, Learning and Assessment’ was developed and conducted as part of NISHTHA 1.0 (Elementary) through DIKSHA portal and around 29,25,296 teachers and school heads at the elementary level of education were enrolled and 25,87,674 were certified. This course was implemented in 30 States/ UTs and 8 autonomous organisations (CBSE, CICSE, KVS, NVS, CTSA, AEES, Sainik Schools, EMRS-NSTA under MoE, MoD and MoTA) in 13 languages.
2. One dedicated course on ‘ICT in Teaching, Learning and Assessment’ is being conducted as part of NISHTHA 2.0 (Secondary) through DIKSHA portal and around 64,83,11 teachers and school heads at the secondary level of education were enrolled and 42,32,36 were certified till date. This course is being implemented by 31 States/ UTs and 7 autonomous organisations (CBSE, CICSE, KVS, NVS, CTSA, AEES, Sainik Schools, under MoE and MoD) in 8 languages.

Module 1 of NISHTHA is specifically on ‘Curriculum, Learner Centred Pedagogy, Learning Outcomes and Inclusive Education’, wherein the pedagogies for achieving the learning outcomes

for all children have been specified, namely, role of teachers in creating inclusive classrooms and Teacher's skills- accept and address diversity, gender sensitive education, inclusion in teaching of different subjects and assessment for inclusive environment. Further, it also includes content on assistive technologies, digital resources for DIVYANG children etc. NCERT has developed guidelines on specific goal of developing teaching-learning e-content for Children with Special Needs.

At Present, the following contents in English and Hindi Medium in the form of Text, Video and Sign Language are available on DIKSHA Platform for the benefit of the Learners:

- NCERT and NIOS have also developed e content for visually impaired children and uploaded on DIKSHA.
- 21 subjects of Secondary level comprising 763 content pieces
- 32 subjects of Senior Secondary level comprising 1333 content pieces
- 191 videos in ISL medium for 7 subjects of Secondary and Senior Secondary level.

NISHTHA secondary Program has also been launched for all the teachers of NavodayaVidyalaya Samiti to adopt innovative teaching methodologies and pedagogies. Also, KVS regularly organizes In-Service courses for the teachers to update them with new and innovative teaching methodologies to impart such learning and progressively assess difficulties. Online In-service Courses and workshops were conducted by KVS through its Zonal Institutes of Education and Training (ZIETs), for capacity building and hand holding of teachers so as to enable them to conduct online classes efficiently. During these courses, teachers have been trained on use of different platforms, developing & use of various e-resources, audio/video recording & techniques for uploading of content. Training of teachers was also conducted to apprise them about different methods to conduct online assessment. A total number of 42821 teachers were trained from April, 2020 till 31st January, 2021 for conducting online classes. Trainings, workshops and webinars are being conducted from time to time to sensitize all teachers about the effective use of devices.

CBSE conducted 2420267 man-hours of training for around 0.7 million teachers from April 2021 till present on different areas including online pedagogy. Several bite-sized modules were also prepared and disseminated post training to augment the capacities of teachers.403634 teachers have also been trained under National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic

Advancement (NISHTHA) program of the Government of India. In addition, following action has been taken by CBSE:

- (i) National Annual Conference of Sahodaya School Complexes are held on yearly basis. Under Sahodaya, CBSE has helped schools come together and form an interactive and sharing relationship. At present, there are 260 such complexes which are active throughout the country and share and care for each other, particularly those which are in close physical proximity.
- (ii) Webinar Series on NEP: CBSE conducted a series of webinars for its Principals, Teachers and Parents to facilitate effective implementation of NEP-2020 from July-August 2020 onwards.
- (iii) Development of online and blended teacher training modules and content as exemplar by CBSE: The following eight modules under three MOOCs are prepared on FLN and so far, around 54000 teachers have been registered for training on these:
 - Meaning and Importance of Foundational Learning
 - Teaching and Learning changes recommended by the NEP for FLN grades
 - Learning Goals for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy across Grades 1, 2 and 3
 - Skills and Mind sets of an FLN Teacher
 - Active Pedagogy and the shift from Traditional Practice
 - Conducive Classroom Environment
 - Importance of Classroom Assessments
- (iv) Structured lesson plans as a tool to improve student learning and achieve FLN outcomes:

In respect of NIOS, following actions have been initiated:

- NIOS organizes training programmes for its Study Centre Coordinators and tutors who take academic counselling sessions for NIOS learners on weekends.
- NIOS is developing a 100 days online teacher training programme to orient teachers for digital teaching-learning, transforming teaching with 21st Century Skills and to provide engaging learning experience. This will aid the capacity building of teachers in new knowledge and 21st century skills to perform their duties at the optimum level.
- Periodic in-service training is also needed in order to keep the teachers up to date and in consonance with the latest developments in knowledge as well as new technology or techniques used in the teaching learning process. However, it is not always practical to

develop training programmes right from scratch, rather Competency-based approaches may be integrated into the existing teacher training course. Hence, NIOS is reviewing its existing Professional Development Programme for Elementary Teachers (PDPET) Course to integrate competency based approaches into education which the teachers would integrate into their own practice during their classes based on learning outcomes as a cross cutting theme across all activities and tasks that comprise the training.

- NIOS regularly undertakes capacity building programmes to orient the Academic Faculty to the various facets of work and activities at NIOS with particular emphasis on their role in the Department.
- Recently, a two-day orientation Programme was organized on 12th -13th April 2021 at NIOS Headquarters for the faculty members of the Academic Department to familiarize them with the various dimensions of Open Schooling. Different sessions on Evolution of Open Schooling, NEP- Implications for Open Schooling, Activities of NIOS, Roles and Functions of the Academic Department, Development of Self Learning Material, Overview of Media and ICT, Overview of the NIOS Library and Free-to-use Resources, Assessment Practices at NIOS, and Projects at NIOS were conducted.
- NIOS is developing the Gender Green Teacher Programme which is an in-service professional development programme for school teachers, in the areas of environment and gender. It shall be complemented by a strong ICT enabled network of teacher practitioners. The programme shall include modules on gender and environment with a common focus on how these themes can be mainstreamed and integrated in teaching and learning. The overall objective is to increase knowledge, change attitudes and improve responsible practices/behaviours in regards to both the environment and gender, at both the level of the teacher and the learner.

For developing specialized training programmes for teaching children with special needs, physically challenged children and children with learning disabilities, NVS has taken following action:

- Facilities such as ramps and special toilets are provided to Children with Special Needs (students).
- Sessions on inclusive education are the integral part of all induction trainings organized for teachers and Principals.
- Collaboration with specialized training institutes is being done to impart training.

Similarly, in KVS inclusive education is a part of all training programs for teachers. Sessions are held during in-service training program of teachers and focused workshops are also held to sensitize teachers and provide basic training.

Following initiatives have also been undertaken by NIOS for creation of content for DIVYANG children:

- NIOS is delivering one-hour live programme in Indian Sign Language twice a week on PM e-Vidya 10 TV Channel since September 2020.
- NIOS delivers 3 hours live video programmes every day on PM e-vidya 10 and 12 channels for providing continuous learning support for learners at the Secondary and Senior Secondary level including Vocational Courses and Indian Sign Language based content.
- Sign Language Dictionary comprising of 36 videos of about 2000 words and sentences.

SCHOOL RE-OPENING GUIDELINES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Recommendation

20. *The closure of schools for over a year has had a deep impact on the wellbeing of students, especially their mental health. The hazards of not opening the schools are too serious to be ignored. The confinement of young children within the four walls of the house, being unable to attend school, has altered the relationship between the parent and the children adversely. The closure of schools has impacted the social fabric of the family in negative manner leading to early/child marriage and increased involvement of children in household chores. The present situation has exacerbated the learning crisis that existed even before the pandemic with the marginal and vulnerable children getting adversely affected. Keeping this situation in mind, it becomes all the more imperative to open schools. The seriousness of the matter should not be overlooked and a well-balanced reasoned view may be taken for opening up of the schools. The Committee accordingly recommends the following:*

Accentuated vaccine programmes for all students, teachers and allied staff so that schools may start functioning normally at the earliest. (Para-18.9 a)

Action Taken

School Education Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories were requested to comply with the advisory of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for undertaking 100% vaccination for the eligible age-groups by duly creating additional vaccination centres and optimal capacity utilization of existing centres *vide* the Ministry's D.O. letter No. 1-2/2020-IS.5 dated 19.07.2021. All the States and UTs have been requested to upload the status of reopening of schools and vaccination of school staff on the Google Tracker created for this purpose.

Similarly, all the Autonomous Bodies under the Department of School Education and Literacy were also requested to get all their officers/staff (teaching/non-teaching/regular/contractual) vaccinated urgently *vide* the Ministry's D.O. letter No. 7-2/2021-Sch.4 dated 26.7.2021. They have also been requested to upload the status of vaccination of their staff on the Google Tracker.

Staff of the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are getting Vaccine for COVID-19. Around 92% of the JNV staff has got at least first dose of the Vaccine and around 45% have received both the doses of the vaccine. The parents / guardians of students have been made aware about the Vaccination programme by the JNVs, and they are motivated to get Vaccination for themselves and eligible wards.

KVs are being opened as per the direction of concerned state governments and classes are being conducted in blended mode.

Recommendation

21. *Classes may be held on alternate days or in two shifts to thin out students along with observance of physical distancing and compulsory wearing of face masks at all times, frequent hand sanitization etc.* (Para-18.9 b)

22. *Regular thermal screening at the time of attendance and random RT-PCR tests may be conducted to identify and isolate any infected student / teacher / staff immediately. A sick-room with essential facilities / medicines may be set up in each school for facilitating observation, immediate isolation and for providing basic medical kit in case of emergency.* (Para-18.9 c)

23. *Zero tolerance towards laxity in maintaining Covid protocols and appropriate behavior by all the stakeholders, namely, school management / authorities, teachers, students, allied staff,*

parents, visitors, school and private transporter and any other person(s) connected with school management and functioning. (Para-18.9 d)

Action Taken

It was informed that the Ministry of Education, Department of School Education and Literacy have issued detailed, exhaustive and comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/Guidelines for Health and Safety protocols for reopening of Schools and Learning with Physical/Social Distancing in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and after taking into consideration the suggestions/comments received from States and Union Territories vide letter No. 11-16/2020-Sch.4 dated 05.10.2020. The guidelines/SOPs are divided into two parts:

- a) Part I refers to the health and safety aspects for reopening schools. These are based on the prevailing instructions of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with regard to health and safety protocols, and may be implemented by adopting/adapting in accordance with the local situation in all States/UTs.
- b) Part II refers to learning with physical/social distancing and the aspects related to the delivery of education, such as curriculum transactions, instructional load, timetables, assessment, emotional and mental health and capacity building of stakeholders, etc.
- c) These guidelines are advisory in nature and States &UTs may use these in the manner deemed fit to prepare their own guidelines/SOPs.

States and UTs have been advised that based on these guidelines/SOPs, they may develop their own Standard Operating Procedures for reopening schools and for training different stakeholders.

For conduct of physical classes, guidelines issued by respective State Government are being followed by NVS and KVS. During the period of suspension of physical classes, online classes / offline academic support is being provided to the students as per Pragyata guidelines.

Adherence to the SOPs on school re-opening and COVID-19 management plan is being monitored in NVS at three levels viz. Cluster Level, Regional Office Level and Head Quarter Level. In every JNV, provision for isolation centre has been made. Regular thermal scanning of employees is being done by Vidyalaya Staff Nurse. Every JNV has a Medical Inspection room in which basic facilities and medicines are available.

KVS follows the protocols, and guidelines issued by Govt. of India/State Authority and instructed to all Regional Offices to take all preventive measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 and give proper attention on sensitisation/cleanliness of Vidyalaya campus vide this office letter dated 19.04.2021, 22.04.2021 & 21.06.2021.

Recommendation

24. *Each school should have at least two Oxygen concentrators with trained personnel to address any eventuality and provide first aid till availability of outside medical help. (Para-18.9 e)*

Action Taken

The SOP/Guidelines for reopening of schools issued by this Department provide for constitution of 'Task Teams' such as, Emergency Care Support/Response Team, General Support Team for all stakeholders, Commodity Support Team, Hygiene Inspection Team, etc. with earmarked responsibilities.

These SOP/Guidelines provide for ensuring availability in school or at contactable distance, full-time trained health care attendant/nurse/doctor and counsellor to take care of physical and mental health of the students.

All States/UTs are expected to comply with the COVID-19 related directions issued by Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, from time to time.

The extent and severity of COVID-19 is evolving and changing with time and also varies spatially from region to region. The response and safety protocols will accordingly need to be adjusted to these dynamics by the States/UTs from time to time. States/UTs may plan additional measures depending on the local situation.

Education being a subject in the Concurrent List of Constitution, majority of schools are under the jurisdiction of the State Governments. It is, therefore, for the respective State/UT Governments to take appropriate action to ensure availability of the requisite facilities/equipment/items to deal with any eventuality in their schools.

Every JNV has at least one oxygen cylinder, along with pulse oxymeter and thermal scanners in sufficient numbers. Oxygen Concentrators are also available at Regional office level which can be utilized by the JNVs, in case of emergency.

Recommendation

25. *Students belonging to economically weaker and marginalized sections of society may be supplied hand sanitizer/facemask at regular interval.* (Para-18.9 f)

Action Taken

The SOP/Guidelines for reopening of schools issued on 5.10.2020 clearly provide that the schools are to “Ensure availability of key supplies like thermometers, disinfectants, soaps, etc., and arrange for availability of these essentials. The thermometer to be used should be a calibrated contact-less infrared digital thermometer.”

A checklist for safe school environment has been prescribed in the SOP/Guidelines for reopening of schools. This contains a Checklist for School Administrators, Teachers and other Staff. Under this Section, the School Administration is to confirm that key supplies like thermometers (calibrated contact-less infrared digital thermometer), disinfectants, soaps, hand sanitizers, masks, etc., are available in adequate quantity in the school. This is applicable for all the staff and students, whosoever is in need of these items.

Face masks and sanitizers are provided by the JNVs, free of costs to all the students. In the KVS, hand sanitizers to workers are being provided at regular intervals.

Recommendation

26. *Frequent / surprise inspection of schools may be done by health inspectors / health workers to ensure strict adherence to hygiene and COVID protocols.* (Para-18.9 g)

Action Taken

The SOP/Guidelines are provided for organizing regular health check-up of students and teachers. Further, education, being a subject in the Concurrent List of Constitution, majority of schools are under the jurisdiction of the State Governments. It is, therefore, for the respective State/UT Governments to take appropriate action to ensure frequent checks of their schools to ensure adherence to hygiene and COVID protocols.

In addition, the school-wise SOPs on school re-opening and COVID-19 management plans of every JNV are approved by the concerned district authorities and they regularly visit the JNVs to inspect the adherence to the COVID-19 Protocols. At the cluster level, an Assistant Commissioner of NVS supervises the JNVs in the matter.

Recommendation

27. *Best practices being followed in different countries for opening of schools may be taken into consideration for taking an informed decision.* (Para-18.9 h)

Action Taken

The decision for reopening schools in States/UTs is a matter within the purview and authority of the State/UT and, therefore, it is for the State/UT Governments to take into consideration all the relevant factors, including the practice being followed in different countries for opening of schools.

CHAPTER-II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

NEED FOR PROPER DOCUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

Recommendations

1. *Impact of online/digital/distant education during the pandemic to create data sets based on demography, socio-economic status, student's learning habits, including hours of online study, students perception of their self-learning, occupational aspirations, psychological effect etc. for a comparative study/analysis and for augmenting policy makers' awareness and aid them in formulating policies for ensuring better preparedness and for planning for future scenarios;*

(Para-18.2 d)

2. *Availability of digital devices and their usage, with special emphasis on rural, tribal and backward areas of the country and the economically weaker and marginalized sections of society and remedial action taken based on the findings thereof;*

(Para-18.2 e)

3. *Performance assessment of teachers, especially in coordination with the States and UTs, to ascertain their potential in handling audio-visual tools and imparting digital education;*

(Para-18.2 f)

4. *The minimum requirements of technological infrastructure for improving digital education in schools across the country, particularly in rural, tribal, hilly and backward areas as well as in Aspirational Districts, and chalk out a roadmap for development of such facilities with increased investment to meet any such emergent situations in future.*

(Para-18.2 g)

5. *Weekly assessment of digital learning outcomes to regularly assess learning progress of students to enable them to course correct in case requisite targets are not achieved.*

(Para-18.2 h)

Action Taken

The Department has informed that a comprehensive initiative called PM e-vidya has been initiated which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode

access to education. This will benefit nearly 25 crore school going children across the country.

The initiative is a work in progress and includes:

- DIKSHA, the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in states/UTs: and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades (one nation, one digital platform).
- One earmarked TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel)
- Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- ShikshaVani
- Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired.

To reach out to those students who lack access to technology, various innovative activities are being done at national, state or district level such as Gali-GaliSim-Sim, Tili-Mili programme, Motor Eskool, Roving Teacher, Project SMILE (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement), e-Kaksha, formation of Whatsapp and other social media groups, Work Book Distribution at home, Teacher calling to maintain connects with students.

Also, keeping in view the availability of digital infrastructure, PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education have been issued. The guidelines brief on various modes of digital education including online mode that depends more on availability of internet, partially online mode that utilizes the blended approach of digital technology and other offline activities, and offline mode that utilizes television and radio as a major medium of instruction of education. It also provides a roadmap or pointers for carrying forward enhanced quality online education. This guideline will be useful for a diverse set of stakeholders including school heads, teachers, parents, teacher educators and students. It also outlines the support to be provided to students with special needs. Main emphasis is on balanced online and offline activities keeping the screen time as an essential parameter according to the level of students. Physical health and mental wellness is stressed across the guidelines so that children do not get overly stretched or stressed, or get affected negatively owing to prolonged use of digital devices. The guidelines can be accessed at:

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/pragyata-guidelines_0.pdf

Further, the state governments have been directed to act based on the situation prevailing at every place to meet the demands of all students for providing them with the digital access required for learning digitally. Depending on the states' requirement, the Ministry of Education provides Rs.6.40 Lakh for setting up computer labs and Rs.2.40 Lakh for smart classroom.

During 2021-22, an outlay of Rs. 276.0 lakh has been estimated under ICT and Digital Initiatives to the State of Kerala for establishment of smart classrooms in 115 schools.

Under the Bharat Net programme, the CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd (CSC-SPV) of MeitY has been assigned the task of providing Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connectivity to Gram Panchayats including connectivity to the Government Institutions, including schools. This project is for providing Internet connection to Government schools in respective Gram Panchayat. The School Education Departments of the respective State Governments have appointed State/District-wise Nodal Officers for this project for effective implementation. About 63,100 Schools have been provided FTTH connections through BharatNet so far.

PM e-Vidya live TV Programme on Teaching Learning Interventions for Inclusive Classrooms - Ask the Expert:121 live sessions of 'Teaching Learning Interventions for Inclusive Classrooms - Ask the Expert' have been transmitted live covering about 60.5 hours. Further, DIKSHA Chatbot through portal and WhatsApp are available for users.

In addition to the above, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are residential schools which are well equipped with desktops, laptops and internet connectivity. All classrooms of 99 JNVs located in Minority Concentrated Areas, have been converted into smart classrooms. In 616 JNVs, smart computers labs have been established under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). NVS has conducted survey of availability of digital devices with the students and strategy for reaching out to every student through online and offline modes was finalized. For the students who are not having devices or internet connectivity, remedial measures were taken to reach out to them by way of providing them the printed instructional packages and through personal contact by the teachers through telephone or through indirect contact (any parent / relative or other JNV student nearby / Peer group / Alumni). Instructional packages (Supplementary learning materials / workbooks etc.)and learning resources such as Exemplar problems & Bridge courses etc. were delivered to home. JNVs have been directed to chalk out strategy for each student in consultation with teachers and parents to ensure that child-wise learning plan and necessary well-being support is identified. Every teacher has to maintain data regarding accessibility of digital education, socio-economic status, learning habits and special attention, if required for every child. Online classes by teachers are monitored / inspected by Vice Principals and Principals of the JNVs on regular basis to judge the quality of teaching and ascertain their potential in imparting digital education and providing technical assistance, if needed. Regional Offices also monitor the online teaching

transactions to ascertain the quality of education being imparted. Attendance of students in online classes is reviewed on weekly basis by the JNVs. Student-wise assessment on progress of learning and need of additional support is also being done by teachers and the same is monitored at Principal level. Officers from Regional Offices also monitor online classes.

Also, in KVS, mapping of students to assess availability of devices was done and about 98.82 % students reached through various modes of online teaching- learning process. All out efforts are also being made to reach to all. Teachers' performance being assessed from time to time by Principals/VP/HM and hand holding or support is also being provided by Principals & Regional Office through training, workshops and webinars. In house content too has been prepared by the teachers. There are 11780- E –classrooms, 376- Digital Language lab, 88163- Desktop computers available in KVs. All KVs are using these technological infrastructures to impart digital education to the students.

DIGITAL EDUCATION AND ITS EFFICACY

Recommendations

6. *Recorded online courses/Massive Open Online Courses may be developed in all regional languages for each class where students can customize learning speeds and timings. (Para-18.4 a)*

7. *An Integrated Learning Management System, a software application for overall administration may be created for availability, tracking, reporting and delivery of all educational content created across the country in multiple languages on a single platform as well as for training-learning and development/capacity building programmes for both students and teachers. (Para-18.4 b)*

8. *Artificial Intelligence-based education tools which can collect data on a student's level of understanding and learning progress, analyze it and accordingly determine or customize the digital content/course to augment comprehension and spur learning progress. (Para-18.4 c)*

9. *Augmented and Virtual Reality Education solutions may be developed for enabling interactive learning and understanding core concepts. The Department may enter into collaboration with the Indian Institutes of Technology and other leading engineering colleges to develop low cost technologies for the same. (Para-18.4 d)*

10. *Virtual labs with simulation exercises for practical classes should be developed for extensive use in all classes across schools.* (Para-18.4 e)
11. *Regular feedback/control mechanism for e-content should be made mandatory as the course designer needs to be aware of the needs of the 'end users' i.e., students and teachers and tailor/customize content and delivery to suit their needs/requirement.* (Para-18.4 f)
12. *Technical courses may be incorporated in the curriculum to equip students for technological and digital advancements and enhance their digital literacy.* (Para-18.4 g)

Action Taken

As informed by the Department, the following efforts have been made to improve digital education:

E-Content is available in **33** Indian languages on DIKSHA. **4,167 Textbooks** are energized by States/UTs and published on DIKSHA, **2,11,304** pieces of e-content are live on DIKSHA as on date. 14 States/UTs and central organizations (including CBSE and NCERT) are leveraging Vidya Daan to source content on DIKSHA. Further, CBSE has advised its schools to follow the PRAGYATA Guidelines for Digital Education developed by Ministry of Education which also specify the time duration per day for online classes for different classes in school.

NVS teachers have created class-wise and subject-wise e-content that was circulated to all the JNVs for the use of teachers and students during digital / online learning. Single Learning Management System (LMS) using platform of Microsoft Teams for Education is being adopted in NVS for online classes. Teachers are being trained and MS Teams would be used by all JNVs for conducting online teaching and learning by providing personalized e-content / projects for assessment and performance analysis of the students as well as monitoring of classes. Attendance of students during online classes is also being recorded. NVS teachers have created class-wise and subject-wise e-contents that were circulated to all the JNVs for the use of teachers and students. The content is open-ended and can be customized by the teachers as per their requirement. NVS has incorporated technical courses such as artificial intelligence, Coding, Data Science and Information Technology for Classes VI to VIII. For Classes IX & X Artificial Intelligence, Data Science & Information Technology and for Classes XI & XII, Information Technology and Computer Science have been incorporated.

KVS follows the curriculum designed by CBSE and Artificial Intelligence as a skill course has been introduced in all the Kendriya Vidyalayas from session 2020-21 onwards. NIOS also provides online education support throughout the year using various online platform such as Live video programmes on e-Vidya, Content Support for NIOS Learners on DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) platform, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on SWAYAM Platform, Live Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs) through Web Radio (Mukta Vidya Vani) and Community based programmes on Community Radio (91.2 MHz) of NIOS.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN, CHILDREN OF MIGRANT WORKERS

Recommendation

13. *The Committee, while appreciating the efforts made by the Department to provide inclusive and equitable learning to all by enhancing and integrating learning with technology, recommends that the Department should give wide publicity to the various steps and measures taken by it to impart inclusive and equitable education to all sections of students, including CWSN, OoSC, children of migrant workers etc., so that the beneficiaries are aware of the facilities available for them.* (Para-18.6 a)

14. *The Department should urge the States / UTs for better and stricter implementation of the various guidelines issued in this regard, so that the benefits actually percolate to the ground level.* (Para-18.6 b)

15. *Concerted efforts may be made to develop textbooks in DAISY format in regional languages also.* (Para-18.6 c)

16. *Special audio / video content and in Indian Sign Language may be created to cater to the curricular learning requirements of physically challenged children / children with special needs.* (Para-18.6 d)

Action Taken

Education being in the Concurrent List of the Constitution, majority of the schools falls under the domain of the respective State/UT Government. To prevent loss of learning and to ensure that children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country, the Department of School Education &

Literacy has shared detailed guidelines dated 13th July, 2020 and 7th January, 2021, on the steps to be taken by the States and UTs. The guidelines, among others include admission without any procedural formalities, identification of out of school children, enrolment drives and awareness generation, student support while schools are closed, continued education for Children With Special Needs (CWSN), student support on school reopening and Teacher capacity building.

Further, it was informed that a comprehensive COVID action plan has also been shared with States and UTs on 4th May 2021 which delineates detailed action plan for all Stakeholders involved on Access, Retention, Continuous Learning, Capacity Building and Stakeholder engagement.

The Department has also been pursuing the matter relating to the safety and security of the Children during these times through regular follow-up, Project Approval Board Meetings, etc. Also, various interventions under Samagra Shiksha have been realigned to manage the crisis with specific emphasis on access to quality education, learning process and safety & security of children and also that funding provided for various components under Samagra Shiksha may be utilized to deal with the current situation. The efforts have been made by Department of School Education & Literacy for Children With Special Needs as mentioned below:

- i) In all, 580 textbook based ISL videos have been recorded. Out of these, 490 are from classes 1 to 5. Out of these, 350 textbook based ISL videos uploaded on DIKSHA.
- ii) Out of 10,000 ISL dictionary words, all 10,000 ISL dictionary words have been uploaded on DIKSHA. From these 200 ISL dictionary videos with audio/ voice over and subtitles have been prepared and a flip book has been developed. The ISL Dictionary of 10,000 words on DIKSHA was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 7th Sept, 2021.
- iii) About 2,607 audio book chapters have been developed and uploaded on DIKSHA. The Talking Books (377) /Audio Books chapters (2,350) uploaded on DIKSHA and ePathshala was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 7th Sept, 2021.

As per the Policy, 3% seats in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are reserved for admission of CWSN. Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas provide inclusive education to the children with special needs. This policy of NVS is widely published through notifications and other publicity materials viz. prospectus of NVS Entrance Exam. The various guidelines issued by Government of India are circulated to all the JNVs for implementation. NVS has also prepared its own "Guidelines for

Online Education” drawing from guidelines of MoE and experiences of JNVs. Implementation of these guidelines is being monitored.

KVS has informed all concerned about resources available for students especially CWSN. DCs, Principals, & Teachers are being sensitized about the effective implementation of the various guidelines. NCERT developed ‘Priya the Accessibility Warrior’ which is being shared with all KVS.

Central Board of Secondary Education has permitted its schools to continue education through online mode. CBSE vide its circular number 52/2020 directed schools to make adjustments needed for Divyang students learning. Schools were specifically suggested to:

- use alternatives to print, such as audio or other formats in instruction, and sign-language options in all forms of the learning material (virtual, printed or broadcasted).
- use flexible scheduling, assistive technology, simplified homework and formative assessments to alleviate the pressure on students and parents.
- guide and train teachers and provide them evidence-based resources on how to teach children with special needs in remote and online settings.
- support parents by offering expert advice of special educators and counsellors.
- follow the Pragyata guideline’s section 3.4 which provides insights on supporting online learning of Children With Special Needs (CWSN).

CBSE has also brought out a manual on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing during COVID. The Board has also organized a series of wellness webinars involving students as peer leaders and influencers and discussed issues such as care, compassion, communication, integrating art in education, importance of life skills and coping mechanisms especially during pandemic.

NIOS is the largest “Open School” in the world which provides education to all including disadvantaged persons who because of one or other reasons could not continue their education in the formal system of education. For Children with Special Needs, NIOS has taken following action:

- NIOS has transformed seven subjects each at Secondary and Senior Secondary level to Video format in Indian Sign Language for facilitating education of deaf and hard of hearing learners. These sign language videos are available on NIOS Channel on YouTube and Diksha platform.
- Sign Language Dictionary comprising 36 videos of about 2000 words and sentences has been prepared and is available on NIOS website.
- NIOS has introduced Indian Sign Language as a language subject.
- NIOS is working on the process of standardization of Indian Sign Language (ISL). In this regard, a committee has been constituted for standardization of Indian Sign Language and various initiatives have already been taken.
- One-hour Live telecast videos in Indian Sign Language on e-Vidya channel is being done regularly since September 2020 for awareness and dissemination of ISL across the country
- Talking books for the learners with blindness and low vision in 6 subjects at Secondary level and 10 at Senior Secondary level are developed.
- NIOS is in the process of developing a training manual for capacity building of functionaries associated with special education of NIOS all over the country, and the process has already been initiated.

In respect of Out-of-School Children, following action has been taken by NIOS:

- NIOS focuses on understanding the problems of dropouts and creates pathways to take them into the fold of NIOS.
- In compliance of NEP 2020, a committee has been constituted comprising officials from CBSE, KVS, NVS, NCERT, NIEPA to prepare a scheme to cater the educational needs of dropouts from the formal school system through ODL courses designed by NIOS. NIOS will develop a mechanism of collaboration with states/UTs.

REVIEW OF EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

Recommendation

17. *A credible, fair and transparent system of continuous assessment throughout the year may be developed and put in place even when normal functioning of schools re-commences, so as to meet any future emergent scenarios. This system should be over and above the final board examinations and would aid in helping students and teachers get a correct perspective of their learning curve. and course correct wherever required.* (Para-18.8 a)

18. *Guidelines for Internal Assessment, Practicals, Project Work, particularly for classes 10 and 12, be formulated and circulated for strict implementation in every school at the Centre and in States / UTs, be it Government, Government-aided or private, in order to ensure objective and uniform standard of assessment across the country.* (Para-18.8 b)

19. *Workbooks be designed to test and assess the understanding of core concepts and their practical application in each subject and teachers may assign topic-wise exercises from these workbooks to regularly assess their students' learning progress by assigning marks thereto and tabulating them for final assessment.* (Para-18.8 c)

20. *Experiential learning may be encouraged and teachers may be given extensive training to adopt new and innovative teaching methodologies to impart such learning and progressively assess students' learning abilities and difficulties. Research Projects based on the experiential learning and understanding of core concepts in each subject and Presentations by students of their own projects before a panel of subject experts for objective evaluation thereof may also be considered as an alternative assessment method.* (Para-18.6 d)

Action Taken

CBSE's scheme of examinations in classes IX to XII mandates schools to conduct multiple examinations continuously. Schools are required to conduct periodic tests and other internal assessments, portfolios, projects and other formative and summative tests. In formative assessment, learning gaps are identified and various remedial measures are taken to address the learning gaps. CBSE has developed resource material to handhold teachers regarding formative and summative assessment.

CBSE has modified its examination scheme by introducing biannual examinations from the current academic session 2021-22 to implement the recommendation of NEP-2020.

The examinations will be held at the end of two terms each on half of the syllabus prescribed for the year. For classes X and XII, the first term examinations of one and a half hour are currently being conducted using the question paper comprising only Multiple Type Questions developed by CBSE and in the presence of external supervisors appointed by CBSE. The second term examination will be held during March –April, 2022 for a duration of 2-hours. This would have descriptive questions. The results will be declared either on the basis of both of these examinations or on the basis of first term only if the second term is not possible due to any exigency.

Guidelines for assessment issued by CBSE are being implemented in all JNVs. NVS has formulated and implemented system of continuous assessment incorporating the CBSE guidelines which includes formative assessments including competency based tests, Quizzes, Activities, Projects and assignments etc. Online course on Experiential Learning and Competency based Education has been undertaken by the Principal and Vice Principals on DIKSHA portal. Instructional package (supplementary learning materials/workbooks, worksheets, quizzes etc.) and learning resources such as Exemplar problems, Bridge course material are developed and provided along with similar materials which are available on DIKSHA Portal to the JNV students for their learning & assessments.

The KVS has also followed all the norms related to fair and transparent examination systems as prescribed by the Govt. Authorities and CBSE. Parents' teacher's meetings are being organized regularly to develop better understanding of the examination process. Examination schedule and curriculum are intimated to all students in the beginning of academic session through online teaching and other modes of communications. The development of project work is an integral part of all secondary and senior secondary level students and separate marks are assigned to them in the final results. Research Projects based on the experiential learning have been taken up for understanding of core concepts in each subject.

CHAPTER-III

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

STEPS TO ENSURE CONTINUED LEARNING

Recommendation

1. *Budget for the Digital/Online education: The Committee noted with concern the underutilization of the allotted funds by some States and recommends that the Department should urge the States / UTs to fully utilize the budget grants made to them during the financial year 2021-22 to augment digital / online education and create necessary infrastructural and technological facilities required therefor. The Committee also recommends that since the digital / online mode of education is going to be the new normal even after the pandemic subsides, efforts to technologically empower every school and students across the country may be aggressively pursued and additional funds allocated for the purpose, as per requirement.*

(Para-18.3 I)

2. *Use of Satellite TV for telecasting Educational content- a cost effective and viable solution- Telecast of educational programmes through satellite TV, on the model of Gujarat and Odisha, for a cost-effective mode of online education with wide outreach should be developed in all other States/UTs in collaborating with BISAG-N.*

(Para-18.3 II a)

3. *Wide publicity may be given to the educational programmes being aired on Doordarshan and on satellite TV to create awareness amongst general public. The educational channels of the Department may be clubbed and placed along with entertainment or news channels having high TRPs for enhanced visibility and attract higher viewership, instead of placing them at the end of the spectrum of available channels as being done at present.*

(Para-18.3 II b)

4. *The presentation of educational programmes on Doordarshan may be re-designed to make it more lively and engaging for the students. Theatre/Cine artists, Cartoonists may be roped in for creating interesting and engaging educational content.*

(Para-18.3 II c)

5. *ISRO may provide increased transponder capacity for enhanced content delivery through satellite TV.* (Para-18.3 II d)

6. *Increased bandwidth may be provided for community radios for enhanced educational content and wide publicity may be given to such programmes.* (Para-18.3 II e)

7. *States should be encouraged to use available time slots on DD regional TV channels to air educational content by utilizing existing resources and satellite capacity optimally.*

(Para-18.3 II f)

8. *The Department should take proactive measures along with Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Department of Telecommunication to upgrade and revive tele-education networks in different States under Edusat Programme by upgrading networks, replacing obsolete equipment with latest gadgets.*

(Para-18.3 II g)

9. *All schools, community halls in villages, small towns etc. should be equipped with Doordarshan Free Dish, so that students can watch educational channels and learn there from.*

(Para-18.3 II h)

Action Taken

As informed to the Committee, the Department of School Education & Literacy has made the following efforts to ensure continued learning:

A comprehensive initiative called PM e-VIDYA has been initiated which unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode access to education. This will benefit nearly 25 crore school going children across the country. The initiative is a work in progress and includes:

- DIKSHA, the nation's digital infrastructure for providing quality e-content for school education in States/UTs and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades (one nation, one digital platform).
- One earmarked TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel)
- Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and CBSE Podcast- Shiksha Vani

- Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired.

In order to support and reach out to those who do not have much access to the internet, MOE introduced SWAYAM PRABHA DTH channels. SWAYAM PRABHA is a group of 32 channels devoted to telecast of high-quality educational programmes. There are 12 Dedicated TV channels one each from Class 1 to 12. For each class, there are adequate telecast hours with a repeat at convenient times in the day.

NIOS provides online education support throughout the year through live interactive programmes of e-Vidya 10 and 12 channels at the Secondary and Senior Secondary level. For facilitating education of Divyangjan, study material has been developed in Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in sign language; both are available on NIOS website/YouTube. In addition, NIOS is telecasting one hour live interactive programmes on e-Vidya channel in sign language.

Comments of the Committee

It has been observed that the Ministry has initiated various programmes in the direction of e-learning. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should focus towards increasing the reach of these programmes to remotest areas of the country and should also chalk out ways with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for introduction of cost effective technologies such as Public wi-fi under the Bharat Net Programme that can easily be afforded by any section of the society. The Committee further recommends that besides schools and community halls, Common Service & free public wi-fi Centers and Gram Panchayat Sachivalyas be also equipped with Doordarshan Free Dish. Also, efforts be made to make available e-learning content in Regional languages too. The Committee should also be apprised of the bottlenecks being faced in the implementation of such programmes on digital platforms and the response of the students towards them.

The Committee is, however, constrained to note that the Department in its action taken reply has not addressed various specific recommendations like underutilization of Budgetary grants by States, increasing transponder capacity and bandwidth for enhanced educational content and upgradation of Edusat programme etc, which had been made by the Committee. Therefore, the Committee suggests that the Department submit a recommendation-wise action taken status for perusal of the Committee especially

highlighting the status of Community Radios, Incentives for students towards Data Recharge and new technological platforms like use of Podcast/ Edtech etc.

BLENDED (HYBRID) MODE OF EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

Recommendation

10. *The Department may ensure that the investment made by the Centre and States for developing digital / online education during the pandemic period are systematically integrated into the education system, so that the gains achieved are not lost once normal functioning of schools recommence.*

(Para-18.10 a)

11. *The Department may chalk out a long term strategy to sort out the impediments in this field and ensure access to good quality and equitable digital education at economical rates to students in each and every part of the country.*

(Para-18.10 b)

12. *Conscious efforts may be made by the Department to remodel curricular learning at all levels to incorporate both conventional pedagogy and digital / online education in equal measure, so that blended learning becomes a norm rather than a concept in the near future.* (Para-18.10 c)

13. *A study of the methods adopted by other countries in the field of blended education may be conducted and best practices may be collated and adapted to suit the educational requirements of our country.*

(Para-18.10 d)

14. *The Department should set up at least one school on the complete hybrid model of teaching in every district and tehsil of the country. These schools should become operational by October and all the necessary infrastructure should be made available to them. These schools will be a case study for setting up more such schools in the future and will help inspire other schools.*

(Para-18.10 e)

Action Taken

The Ministry of Education has formed the National Steering Committee for the development of National Curriculum Frameworks on 21-9-2021. The Committee will be assisted by NCERT. One of the terms and reference of the Committee is ‘All the National Curriculum Frameworks would also reflect upon the implications of situations such as COVID-19 Pandemic on respective areas for future.’

The Department has also drafted a centrally sponsored scheme for setting up of exemplar schools for approval. The scheme for Exemplar Schools is intended to prepare schools of excellence. The project will cover more than 15000 schools managed by Central government/State/UT Government/local bodies. There will be special focus on Aspirational districts by including all KVS and NVS schools in these districts, along with other state/UT government schools. More than 20 lakh students are expected to be the direct beneficiaries of the scheme.

Comments of the Committee

The Committee is of the view that integration and propagation of Smart Class Programme will be extremely beneficial in Blended learning programmes in the country. Besides that roping in social enterprises and Ed Tech Platform (with requisite Tax incentives) will be able to provide the necessary encouragement towards such programmes. The Committee is of the view that National Steering Committee for the development of National Curriculum Frameworks should chalk out a policy in this direction too and apprise the Committee of the same. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should ensure that proper infrastructure is available for deemed purpose so as to adequately address any dropouts taking place and to apprise the Committee of the efforts taken up by the Ministry in this regard and also the steps taken to monitor and inspect the programmes to be initiated at the grass root level. Also, a status report on Integrated Scheme on School Education, Digital Initiatives and other innovative Programmes for monitoring Smart Class Set be also submitted for perusal of the Committee.

CHAPTER-IV

**RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT
IS STILL AWAITED**

-Nil-

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE - AT A GLANCE

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE (CHAPTER-III)

STEPS TO ENSURE CONTINUED LEARNING

It has been observed that the Ministry has initiated various programmes in the direction of e-learning. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should focus towards increasing the reach of these programmes to remotest areas of the country and should also chalk out ways with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for introduction of cost effective technologies such as Public wi-fi under the Bharat Net Programme that can easily be afforded by any section of the society. The Committee further recommends that besides schools and community halls, Common Service & free public wi-fi Centers and Gram Panchayat Sachivalyas be also equipped with Doordarshan Free Dish. Also, efforts be made to make available e-learning content in Regional languages too. The Committee should also be apprised of the bottlenecks being faced in the implementation of such programmes on digital platforms and the response of the students towards them.

The Committee is, however, constrained to note that the Department in its action taken reply has not addressed various specific recommendations like underutilization of Budgetary grants by States, increasing transponder capacity and bandwidth for enhanced educational content and upgradation of Edusat programme etc, which had been made by the Committee. Therefore, the Committee suggests that the Department submit a recommendation-wise action taken status for perusal of the Committee especially highlighting the status of Community Radios, Incentives for students towards Data Recharge and new technological platforms like use of Podcast/ Edtech etc.

(Para 18.3)

BLENDED (HYBRID) MODE OF EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

The Committee is of the view that integration and propagation of Smart Class Programme will be extremely beneficial in Blended learning programmes in the country. Besides that roping in social enterprises and Ed Tech Platform (with requisite Tax incentives) will be able to provide the necessary encouragement towards such programmes.

The Committee is of the view that National Steering Committee for the development of National Curriculum Frameworks should chalk out a policy in this direction too and apprise the Committee of the same. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should ensure that proper infrastructure is available for deemed purpose so as to adequately address any dropouts taking place and to apprise the Committee of the efforts taken up by the Ministry in this regard and also the steps taken to monitor and inspect the programmes to be initiated at the grass root level. Also, a status report on Integrated Scheme on School Education, Digital Initiatives and other innovative Programmes for monitoring Smart Class Set be also submitted for perusal of the Committee.

(Para 18.10)
