INDIA

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Eighteenth Joint Review Mission
17th to 24th June 2013

Aide Memoire

Contents

Annexes

Acronyms

ALIMCO	Artificial Limb Manufacturing Corporation of India
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
ATR	Action Taken Report
BRC	Block Resource Centre
CAL	Computer Aided Learning
CCE	Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation
CTET	Common Teacher Eligibility Test
CTS	Child Tracking Survey
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CWSN	Children with Special Needs
DFID	Department for International Development
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
DP	Development Partner
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DoSEL	Department of School Education & Literacy
EBB	Educationally Backward Block
Ed.CIL	Educational Consultants India Limited
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
EMIS	Educational Management and Information System
EU	European Union
EVS	Environmental Science
FISS	First International Science Survey
FM&P	Financial Management and Procurement
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoI	Government of India
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
IDA	International Development Association
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IPAI	Institute of Public Auditors of India
IRT	Item Response Theory
IT	Information Technology
JRM	Joint Review Mission
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
LEP	Learning Enhancement Programme
MCS	Model Cluster School
MEO	Mandal Education Officer
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MI	Monitoring Institutions
MIS	Management Information System
MLE	Multi Lingual Education
MS	Mahila Samakhya
NAS	National Achievement Survey
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research & Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCFTE	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NE	North East
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization

NIAR	National Institute of Administrative Research
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NPE	National Policy of Education
NPEGEL	National Program for Education of Girls' at Elementary Level
NLAS	National Learning Achievement Survey
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning & Administration
OBC	Other Backward Caste
OOSC	Out of School Children
PAB	Project Approval Board
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
QMT	Quality Monitoring Tool
RBC	Residential Bridge Course
RCI	Rehabilitation Council of India
REMS	Research, Evaluation, Monitoring and Supervision
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RMG	Repair and Maintenance Grant
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SDP	School Development Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SES	Selected Educational Statistics
SFD	Special Focus Districts
SFG	Special Focus Groups
SHG	Self Help Group
SIEMAT	State Institute for Educational Management and Training
SMC	School Management Committee
SPO	State Project Office
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSHE	School Sanitation and Hygiene Education
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TLE	Teacher Learning Equipment
TLM	Teaching Learning Material
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSC	Total Sanitation Campaign
TSG	Technical Support Group
UAM	Universal Active Mathematics
UC	Utilization Certificate
UEE	Universal Elementary Education
UPS	Upper Primary School
UT	Union Territory
VEC	Village Education Committee
VER	Village Education Register
WSDP	Whole School Development Plan

SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)
18th JOINT REVIEW MISSION
(17 – 24 June, 2013)

Aide Memoire

Introduction

1.1 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a comprehensive and integrated flagship programme of the Government of India (GoI), implemented in partnership with State governments aimed at providing relevant and meaningful education to all children in the age group of 6-14 years age in a mission mode. The four SSA Goals are as follows:

    i.   All children in school.
    ii. Bridging gender and social gaps.
    iii. All children retained in Elementary Education.
    iv. Quality Education.

1.2   SSA is supported by domestic resources and was supplemented partially by external funding from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU); presently only with EU support. As per the agreements, the GoI and Development Partners (DP) carry out a Joint Review Mission (JRM) twice a year, the main objective being to review progress in the implementation of the programme with respect to SSA's goals and to discuss follow-up actions in the light of the Terms of Reference (ToR) agreed upon for each JRM.

1.3   Specific areas of focus identified for the Mission in ToRs included: progress against sanctioned annual work plans; challenges on physical access front and strategies for ensuring education to the children of un-served habitations; status of identification and coverage of out of school children; status of retention and completion, and tracking mechanisms; progress in addressing equity issues; status of girls education and progress in bridging gaps in enrolment and retention; progress in strengthening the school system and support structures for the education of children with disabilities; status of quality interventions; monitoring structures under the programme including latest reports from monitoring institutions; and staffing pattern and environmental assessment.

1.4   The ToR for the 18th JRM are attached at Annex 1 and a list of Mission Members at Annex 2. EU participated in the JRM as a DP.

1.5   The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A of the Indian Constitution has come into force with effect from 1st April 2010. SSA has been designated as the vehicle to realize RTE provisions. Accordingly, SSA norms have been revised to harmonize with RTE provisions.

1.6   This is a desk review and presentations were made by MHRD, NCERT, NUEPA and States/ UTs on various aspects, especially focussing on quality initiatives undertaken for improvement of learning processes.

1.7   The Aide Memoire addresses the main topics of this review in six sections. In Section 2, an overview is provided and 'Key Recommendations' are made. In Section 3, progress in results and programmes related to 'Goal 1' and 'Goal 3' (Access and Retention) is taken up. Section 4 reviews progress made in relation to 'Goal 2' (Bridging gender and social gaps) and Section 5 deliberates upon various activities related to 'Goal 4 (Quality)'. Section 6 examines 'Learning Outcomes'. This is a departure from previous Aide Memoire Reporting formats, which will be explained and justified in the 'Overview' Section. Section 7 reviews Programme Management, and Section 8 focuses on Financial Management and Section 9 discusses Procurement.

1.8   Annexes to the Aide Memoire provide a commentary on actions taken in response to 17th JRM recommendations, and an assessment of progress made against the Results Monitoring Framework.

Overture

2.1 'Count your blessings not just your calamities' is a truth often lost sight of in our public discourse. Twenty years ago, in December 1993, India hosted the Education for All Summit of None High Population Countries which together accounted for about two-thirds of the world's illiterate population. India was invited to host the Summit because it had the dubious distinction of being home to the world's largest adult illiterate as well as out-of-school child populations (about a sixth of the world's out-of-school population of 12.8 crores in 1990). A recent EFA-GMR Policy Paper places the out-of-school population in India at 16.84 lakhs (2010) , or 0.3 per cent the world's out-of-school population of 5.72 crores (2011). [1] It is quite possible that in actuality the number of out-of-school children is a little larger than the UNECO estimate; further there are still a few pockets of exclusion which need to be tackled. Innovations like that of Jharkhand's drop-in-centres to provide shelter cum learning opportunities for street children without a family support would go a long way in tackling the residual hard core areas of out-of-school child population. Street children are a vulnerable group and their special needs have to be addressed so that like all other children they also receive their entitlement to free and compulsory education. Though many states have notified street children as 'disadvantaged groups/ weaker sections', however focused attention for planning and monitoring still needs to be put in place, including priority to admission in residential schools. Now that the RTE Act has mandated that all children with disabilities have to be mainstreamed and imparted inclusive education. Inclusive education implies systemic changes which facilitate school responsiveness to children with diverse needs, including children with high support needs and those with developmental disabilities. The massive attempt in Andhra Pradesh to converge SSA with all other departments and agencies concerned like ICDS and National Rural Health Mission is commendable; however, convergence is not an end in itself and has to be complemented by appropriate pedagogic interventions and appropriate changes in classroom transaction. To that end the IE component with all its implications for convergence and preparedness along with ensuring optimal learning outcomes should be viewed as a cross cutting issue across SSA.

2.2 While there are still a few challenges, there is no doubt whatsoever the nation had come a very long way on its march towards providing universal access and achieving universal participation. Universal access seems to have been achieved, and achievement of universal participation as well as elimination of gender and social disparities in participation seems to be around the corner. No less impressive is the tremendous expansion of facilities in government schools, driven no doubt by the obligation on the Government to ensure that every school meets the norms and standards stipulated by the RTE Act. These are solid achievements of which the nation in general and everyone in the education community in particular should take legitimate pride. Yet it would be premature to 'declare victory and go home'. Let there be no mistake that a more arduous challenge lays ahead. For success of second generation reforms it is necessary that everyone connected with the programme and academic management of SSA has a proper understanding of the nature of the challenge, a willingness to be self-critical, and be focussed. The goal of schooling for all having been almost accomplished the focus should shift to the

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[1] UNESCO, *Schooling for Millions of People Jeopardized by Reductions in Aid*, EFA-GMR Policy Paper 09, June 2013.

transcendental challenge of *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII.* Meeting this challenge is an extraordinarily difficult task compared to which the efforts to achieve universal access and universal participation are a child's play. As school participation approaches universality the aggregate learning levels are likely to deteriorate as the school system reaches out to and grasps more and more first generation learners, children from disadvantaged background, and children with special needs. If not for any other reason the deterioration in aggregate levels of learning could be due to the fact that the home environment has a decisive influence on learning. What is at work is something analogous to the *Kuznet Curve* ; in the initial stages of a country's economic development income inequality tends to worsen as the rich and more enterprising take advantage of the opportunities to grow richer while the poor do not; over time the poor catch up with the result that income inequality tends to be less. However, it is now conventional wisdom that Governments should not wait for the natural process of development benefits to percolate down to the poor but instead be pro-active and ensure inclusive growth. The same principle applies in the matter of ensuring learning for all. The spirit of the Deng Xiaoping's saying 'Let some people get rich' is inappropriate for UEE, All in all ensuring learning for all is a transcendental challenge that the nation faces now.

2.3   No experienced and mature administrator would be oblivious of the cardinal truth that it is for the *CEO* to be in the forefront of the efforts of his organisation to meet its foremost challenge; it is not something that could be relegated to others in the hierarchy, particularly the specialists who have no power to command, control and direct. That being so, it is imperative that the Secretary of the Education Department concerned and the SPD, SSA have to *immerse* themselves in the nitty-gritty of mastering the challenge of learning for all. Any IAS officer with a few years of experience would have a good knowledge of the tasks needed to achieve universal access and participation such as opening of schools and institutional support structures like BRCs, appointment of staff, provision of facilities , teaching-learning material and incentives , and so on. But most of the measures needed for ensuring learning for all are technical in nature falling in the realm of pedagogy, of which they have little experiential knowledge. All in all, it is essential to transform the classroom transaction altogether. Managerial measures are absolutely necessary to effect that transformation. However, unless one has a good understanding of the technical aspects of that transformation it is not possible for the Secretary and the SPD to lead the transformation.

2.4   *Universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII* would remain a pipe dream unless one is clear about what one wishes to accomplish, and to that end it is necessary to go back to the basics- go to the National Policy on Education, 1992 (NPE) - which has not yet been replaced and is still extant. The NPE expounded a new vision of universal elementary education (UEE). Apart from universal access, enrolment and retention, the Policy also linked quality improvement with learner achievement. To quote the exact formulation, there are three aspects of UEE, they being:

- Universal access and enrolment,
- Universal retention upto the age of 14 years, and
- Substantial improvement in the quality of education to **enable all children to achieve Essential Levels of Learning**.

All these three aspects are integral and indivisible parts of UEE. Substantial improvement in the quality of education is not a standalone provision but an instrument to achieve the objective of enabling all the children to achieve essential levels of learning. It is imperative not to lose sight of the quintessential fact that the true objective of UEE is to leave no child of the age-group 6-14

behind *either* at home *or* at workplace *or* in the matter of achieving essential levels of learning. If the NPE postulate of UEE is to be achieved two things should be done.

- The essential levels of learning should be laid down, and actual learner achievement should be periodically assessed so as to keep track of the progress towards the NPE goal of ensuring that all children achieve essential levels of learning.

Steps were indeed initiated to put into practice the NPE formulation. Thus a committee under the chairmanship of R.H. Dave, the then Director, UNESCO Institute for Education (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning), Hamburg, laid down **minimum levels of learning** (MLL)[1] for the primary stage.[2] The Committee specified the **competencies** every student was required to acquire in language, mathematics and environment. The *Programme of Action, 1992* (POA), spelt out in great detail the strategy to be followed for ensuring that MLLs are achieved. The main steps of the strategy are the following:

i. Preliminary assessment of the existing levels of learning achievements,
ii. Modifications of MLLs to suit local conditions, if needed be,
iii. Initial and recurrent orientation of teachers to **competency-based teaching,**
iv. Preparation of teacher training handbooks for MLL-based teaching,
v. Introducing Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) of students and using evaluation results for remedial action,
vi. Preparation of unit tests and other evaluation materials and putting them in an item pool for using as and when required,
vii. Using MLL norms as and when curriculum and textbooks are revised, and
viii. Provision of competency based teaching-learning materials.

Many States successfully used the idea of MLL to launch a number of activities including revision of text books, change in curricula and teaching methodologies, as well as in the content of teachers training. However, over time MLLs appear to have faded away from educational discourse perhaps because of the feeling among some educators that 'the target of educational achievement is the Minimum Level of Learning (MLL), not the formation of a critical mind. The curriculum is yet to be designed on socialist lines'.[3] There are no doubt higher pedagogical objectives than MLLs; these include critical thinking, creativity, problem solving and 'learning to learn'. But then as Karl Marx wrote famously in *The German Ideology,* before mankind can think and ideas can be made, man must be first fed, clothed, and sheltered. Likewise, children, particularly from disadvantaged background, must be helped to acquire *basic learning* of writing, reading, and numerical skills of a satisfactory level before they realise higher order pedagogic goals. To insist that it be either all of the higher order pedagogic goals or not at all is an example of the saying that the best is an enemy of the good. We seem to be far away from the goal of ensuring that every child acquires basic learning. There is no official time series data which bring out the trends in learning achievement; however, there is ample evidence that many children are not acquiring even basic learning not to speak of acquiring essential levels of learning. To give an example, the presentation on *Sambalan*,

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[1] The NPE and Programme of Action treat the expressions 'essential levels of learning, and 'minimum levels of learning' to be the same. They ought to be distinguished from basic learning which is narrower and limited to writing, reading, and numerical skills of a satisfactory level

[2] NCERT, *Minimum Levels of Learning at the Primary Stage*, 1991.

[3] S.N.Singh, 'Socialism and Education', pp.1574-1576, at p.1575., in NCERT, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Education*, Volume II, 2004.

an innovative programme in Rajasthan (a Hindi speaking State) brings out that in Class VIII as many 6.52 per cent of children could not read Hindi even at class VII.

2.5   Just as the idea of laying down MLLs had receded into background so did to a lesser extent measurement to assess whether the MLLs were achieved. Even where learner achievement surveys have been conducted they vary so widely in methodology as to preclude an assessment of definitive trends in the achievement of essential levels of learning. There is a great deal of truth in the observation of Lord Kelvin the eminent physicist:

> When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind

Without systematic surveys to assess the progress towards achievement of essential learner achievement efforts there is no way to judge improvement in quality, and, lot of time and effort would be wasted in the pursuit of nostrums. Figuratively, it would like flying blindfolded without any navigational guides.

2.6   Against this backdrop, it is heartening that the 'NCERT is working towards developments of learning indicators for class- I to Class VIII', and that 'Five States - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh Uttar Pradesh have already developed learning Outcomes / Learning indicators'. It is also heartening to note that Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha are 'at different stage of conducting of one or more than one round of achievement Survey of children learning', and that 'for Year 2013-14 all states / UT are planning to conduct achievements survey of children's learning levels in all district (except UP in 10 district only). In this context three observations are in order. First, it is heartening to note that quite a few States had demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm to innovate in different areas of pedagogy and programme management. The eminent educationist J.P.Naik used to say that innovations tend to be 'encapsulated', and fail to be scaled up or replicated; nor are they likely to last long. If these undesirable tendencies are to be avoided it is essential to meticulously document the innovation, have it critically evaluated, and act on the findings of the evaluations. Without rigorous evaluation, many of these innovations could be not even motion but commotion without movement and the Telugu saying *kaki pilla kaki ki muddu* (a crow of fond of its offspring) applies. Along with rigorous systems for innovations, it is imperative to have a national repository of innovations which should also disseminate the inventions all over the country. It would be a good idea to incorporate good SSA practices in departmental procedures and pre-service training.It is a matter of concern that the performance of some States is consistently below the national average and that entrepreneurship and innovation seems to be limited to a few States. Apart from taking steps to develop the capacity of these States for implementing all aspects of SSA and to innovate, MHRD may like to focus on these States in its reviews and mandate the Joint Review Mission to focus on such States.

2.7   The 'learning indicators' should lay down the 'essential levels of learning' as postulated by the NPE; once a policy is in place one cannot let one's personal preferences or ideology to guide one's official actions .Secondly, while it is imperative to encourage initiative and innovation in the States it would be expedient to lay down the minimum list of learning indicators and minimum learning outcomes at the national level through a ***joint effort*** of the Centre and States. The States should have the full liberty of going beyond the minimums. This proposal is made in view of the fact that an important objective of planning in our country had been removal of disparities in development; the objective of educational and pedagogic planning cannot be different. We need to know how the learning achievement is improving over years in a given State. It is equally important

to know, say how Uttar Pradesh is faring in comparison with Kerala. Such an inter-State comparison is inconceivable if each State were to have its own learning outcomes and indicators as well as its own methodology for conducing learner achievement surveys. Progress towards equalisation of educational outcomes across States requires comparable data which helps to compare the levels of learning acquired by students in different States. Suffice to say, **equalisation of educational outcomes is inconceivable without national norms on minimum learning outcomes and learner achievement surveys based on a uniform methodology applied throughout the country**. It cannot be emphasised enough that national norms and methodologies need not be and should not be laid down only by the MHRD or NCERT. They should be developed through an effort that is truly cooperative and collaborative in letter and spirit, and in keeping with the spirit of meaningful partnership that logically flows from education being in the concurrent list of the Constitution. While developing the national learning outcomes and indicators as well as the methodology for conducing learner achievement surveys the initiatives taken by States should be fully taken into account.

2.8   As the excerpt from POA at paragraph 2.4 above brings out pedagogic changes like laying down of learning outcomes / learning indicators, preparation of syllabus, curriculum and teaching-learning material like textbooks, in-service teacher training, and CCE are inextricably linked and therefore pedagogic changes should go hand in hand. The impression one gets, maybe it is wrong, is that opposite seems to be the case in quite a few States. For example, if CCE is introduced before the laying down of learning outcomes/ learning indicators, before the introduction of curriculum and syllabus based on the normative learning outcomes, before the in-service training informed by the new curriculum is taken up, the benefits of CCE would be sub-optimal. There seems to be the impression that each of these pedagogic measures has merit in itself, and there is no harm if they are taken up in isolation. That is not a correct impression as the whole might be sometimes less than the sum of the parts. Once say CCE is introduced without lying down of learning outcomes, it is difficult to modify the CCE introduced later after the learning outcomes are laid down. Unlearning is always more difficult than learning. Pedagogic changes should not be subjected to frequent changes at short intervals as a number of inter-related activities need to be undertaken, and long gestation periods are required for the changes to take root. That being so during the current financial year

MHRD and the States may like to focus on taking stock of the pedagogic changes on hand, and develop a national frame encompassing:

- learning indicators and learning objectives,
- methodology for assessing learner achievement , and
- the pedagogic measures needed to achieve the normative learning objectives

As the NCERT is expected to finalise the learning indicators by September finalising the aforesaid national frame by the end of this financial year is **do-able** if the MHRD and States act in concert, and with despatch and resolve.

2.9   It is well known in pedagogy that learning achievements of students in any classroom 'follow the normal probability curve', that is to say that irrespective of teaching there would always be some students whose learning achievement would be lower than that of the class average. Consequently every teacher is required to pay special attention to such students and ensure that they also achieve average levels of learning. In other word, the teacher is expected to take note of 'individual differences' in his teaching. The desirability of teaching taking note of individual differences is all the more so when the objective is to ensure that every child acquires essential levels of learning, and a considerable number of students are first generation learners ,from

disadvantaged background, and children with special needs. A preponderant proportion of classrooms are much more diverse than ever in the past, diverse in terms of the home background, and diverse in terms of learning capabilities. Therefore in-service training has to lay a strong emphasis on the need for teaching to address individual differences and the enormous diversity in a classroom. It is but natural for all activities to get routinised and lose their relevance and effectiveness, if not élan. Given the criticality of in-service teacher training to achieve learning objectives, it is necessary from time to time to take a fresh, hard look at the teacher training programmes, including their content, duration, frequency, method of delivery and linkage with real classroom transaction issues. Another aspect that needs to be effectively incorporated in teacher training is that of building teacher attitudes for addressing plurality and diversity in the classroom and a strong equity focus in classroom transaction. It is presumed that the NCERT study on the impact of teacher training on classroom transaction had taken note of all these aspects. MHRD may like to closely follow up the revision of the training programmes by the States using the findings, observations of the study as well as of the fourteen tools developed by NCERT.

2.10   The development of the national frame referred to in paragraph 2.5 above should go hand in hand with the development of a realistic roadmap to reach the goal of ensuring that every child acquires the normative learning objectives. One cannot emphasis enough the need to be realistic and eschew impractical romantic idealism. It is not a taboo for administrators- generalist or educational administrators to dream; in fact it is the refrain of students of governance that civil servants do not have dream but only nightmares, and are rule-bound snag hunters. It is often necessary to aim at the stars if one has to shoot at the bird on the branch of a tree. Yet one is a poor administrator if one's feet are not on the ground, and if like Don Quixote one is driven by visions and tilts at imaginary windmills. Let there be no mistake about the graveness of the challenge. Given the vast diversity of most classrooms, and the need that teaching-learning should be reoriented towards achievement of essential levels of *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII,* a new pedagogy has to be invented, tested and tried. It has to be communicated to thousands of officials of the State Education Department, functionaries of BRCs and CRCs and millions of teachers, and more importantly the new pedagogy has to be internalised by one and all in the education community. At the cost of being dubbed politically incorrect, the burden of expectations from the teachers, and functionaries of BRCs and CRCs, like the proverbial burden of school bag, is crushing. To say the very least, the state of pre-service teacher education is that the pass-outs are not equipped to handle the new pedagogy, and a new in-service package has to be developed to equip millions of teachers with the necessary competencies. All these cannot be done overnight, or figuratively like Rome the *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII* millennium cannot be achieved overnight. The metaphor of a child crawling before he can walk and run is apt in this context. Suffice to say, one should meticulously plan for the achievement of essential levels of learning within a realistic timeframe. The first step in the march towards the achievement of *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII* is to launch a crash programme to improve basic learning needs at the primary stage and offer focussed programmes at the upper primary stage to correct the failure to acquire basic learning needs at the primary stage. Early reading and arithmetic active learning techniques had been talked about for nearly twenty years. The *Know how* is thus available. What is needed is to get going.

2.11   It is heartening to note that the revised tools of the NCERT Quality Monitoring Mechanism were communicated to the States, that several States have developed School Evaluation Mechanisms such as *Pratibha Parva* in Madhya Pradesh, *Gunotsav* in Gujarat, *Sambalan* in Rajasthan, and *Shamiksha* in Odhisa, and that other States are in the process of developing their own mechanisms. Here again it would be advantageous to have a certain measure of uniformity and standardization, so that inter-State comparisons are possible. The guiding principle for securing

uniformity should be 'have a common core which is shared by all States and let States add on whatever they chose'. It is presumed that the School Evaluation Mechanisms include measures for linking quality with learner achievement, and if not they should be included. The national framework mentioned above should include school evaluation and effectiveness also.

2.12   There is a long history of measuring learner achievement in our country going back to 1970. In 1988 and again in 1990 NCERT undertook learner measurement studies at the primary stage. State and district specific learner achievement surveys in primary classes were taken up under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) as baseline, midterm and terminal cycles. Again under SSA, NCERT had undertaken baseline and mid-term learner achievement surveys and a National Assessment Survey for Classes III, V and VIII. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha are 'at different stage of conducting of one or more than one round of achievement Survey of children learning'. In spite of all these efforts, it would be fair to say that there is no official time series data on learner achievement on par with say number of schools or enrolment. To use strong language, the bane of learner achievement studies has been the use of different methodologies, and rather frequent changes in the methodology during a programme cycle. And worse is the tendency to view learner achievement studies as ends in themselves, and as with weather one could only talk about without being able to doing anything about them. Thus it is not possible to know from the data available the trend of learner achievement even after SSA was launched, not to speak of the trends from earlier periods. It is important to recognise learner achievement survey is a managerial tool to be used to

- assess the effectiveness of the pedagogic changes introduced, for as is said the proof of the pudding is in eating, and the proof of the relevance and effectiveness of pedagogic changes is the improvement in levels of learning they bring about,
- assess the progress towards the goal of ensuring that every child acquires essential levels of learning, and
- assess the improvements in the effectiveness of each school.

These managerial objectives can be achieved by adopting the following principles for the conduct of learner achievement surveys:

- Surveys all over the country should be conducted using a common methodology jointly developed by Centre and States,
- Methodology should not be changed frequently. When change is considered necessary, during the year when the change is effected the survey should be conducted using the old and new methodologies so that there is no discontinuity in the series. This would obviate the current situation in which the results of the NCERT Class V Survey cannot be compared with those of the SSA baselines and mid-term surveys .What is suggested conforms to the standard statistical practice for indicators like wholesale prices or national income, and
- A distinction should be made between two types of surveys:

    ✓ Sample surveys with a broad scope which help assess whether the learning outcomes are commensurate with the MLLs laid down. These surveys could be conducted once in three years like reputed surveys such OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). As far as possible the methodology should be such that comparisons could be made between India and other courtiers covered by reputed international surveys, and
    ✓ Censuses which could be conducted every year in every school in order to assess the improvement in school effectiveness. For being manageable they should be limited

to a few summary indicators such as the levels of basic learning in the primary stage.

2.13   The new learning outcome orientation is not a day late. Yet it is imperative to realise that it is an uphill task to ensure that every educational functionary internalises the ethos of learning outcome orientation as well as the various measures needed to ensure that learning outcomes are better. As compared to construction of classrooms or appointment of teachers pedagogic changes require concurrent and coordinated action at various levels all the way from the State headquarters to the classroom. To a large extent, the existential condition of senior administrators in charge of SSA is similar to that described by President Truman. In the early summer of 1952 the Presidential campaign had already begun; Truman was contemplating the problems that Eisenhower would face when he is elected.' He'll sit here', Truman would remark (tapping his desk for emphasis) and he'll say, 'Do this! Do that! *And nothing will happen.* Poor Ike. It won't be a bit like the army. He will find it very frustrating'. Shifting to the new pedagogy could be equally frustrating as apart from equipping millions of teachers with the competencies required to teach in a different way it also necessary to get them unlearn the teaching practices they had deeply internalised- or in other words get every teacher acquire a new persona and be transmuted into a teacher different from what he had been. Consequently shifting to the new pedagogy demands more intense planning, monitoring and supervision than that required for universal access and participation. Needless to say, the annual work planning formats, *Result Monitoring Matrix,* and the reporting formats needs to be modified. It is equally necessary to modify the remit of JRMs so that they expend a greater proportion of their time and energy in assessing the implementation of the pedagogic measures needed to improve learning outcomes, and to assess the extent to which learning outcomes had improved. If everything is a priority nothing is, and the usefulness of JRMs would be impaired if they give overriding priority to assess the trends in learning outcomes. It is easy to count the number of classrooms or toilets constructed or the number of teachers appointed or training classes conducted as they are tangible and palpable. In contrast   the extent to which training communicates the new pedagogy, the degree of absorption of those methods by teachers, their willingness to replace their erstwhile teaching methods by the new methods is intangible and not captured by quantitative data. Therefore much of the monitoring has to incorporate qualitative indicators which can be monitored only through rapid appraisals and quick evaluation. It is imperative to enlist a large number of individuals and organisations for appraisal and evaluation. It is equally important not be reactive to critical observations but instead be willing to accept and act on the observations and findings of appraisals and evaluations. It is equally important to recognise that appraisals and evaluations are not standalone exercises but essential elements of an outcome oriented programme management. As with learning outcomes, learner achievement survey methodology and school evaluation mechanisms joint effort by the Centre and States to develop uniform approaches to planning and monitoring of learning outcome oriented pedagogic changes as well as appraisal and evaluation methodologies.

2.14   As a category Scheduled tribe children lag behind in respect of almost all educational indicators; as such they deserving special attention in the nation's march towards the goal of universal achievement of essential Learning Levels. The unsatisfactory levels of participation and learning achievement levels of these children can be traced to the fact that their mother tongues are different from the medium of instruction, which is invariably the language of the State. The sprawling tribal tract in the heart of India spans the contiguous states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odhisa, and Jharkhand, and is home to several tribes. In this tract the same tribe lives across boundaries of States. It is therefore logical that these States work together, continuously share their experiences and best practices. MHRD may facilitate this collaboration, and critically review the efforts being made by these States to promote all aspects the education of

tribal children. A collaborative effort could be a key element of the developmental efforts being made in LWE districts in the heart of India. MHRD may also critically review the efforts being made by Assam and other North-Eastern States to promote all aspects the education of tribal children.

2.15   It is well known that new adult learners relapse into illiteracy. It is equally true that the challenge of fully achieving the objectives of SSA cannot be achieved, and more particularly the challenge of sustaining the benefits of SSA cannot be met if the State Education Departments (dealing with school education) remain as they are. This proposition applies equally to the *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan.* A B.Ed., degree is a prerequisite in most States for recruitment of officers to the Education Department. However, the state of pre-service training being what it is officers are not equipped to do their jobs which span administration, programme management, and academic supervision and leadership. In most States education officials like inspectors and district education officers are not exposed to training at any stage in their career, be it at the entry level or later mid-career. It used to be said that the old Royal Navy believed that the best way to teach swimming is to throw the new recruit into deep sea so that either he learns to swim or perish; State Education Departments seem to think similarly. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If entry level and mid-career training are mandatory for All India and Central Service Officers there is no reason why they should not be for educational functionaries. It is imperative to provide officers of Education Departments opportunities to 'open the windows to their mind' in an academic environment, to reflect on their experience, to learn from each other, and to acquire new knowledge and skills so that they return their jobs rejuvenated and empowered. The greatest contribution that MHRD could do to further educational transformation in the country is to professionalise the State Education Departments and to that end institute and fund systematic training programmes for State education officials.

Overture: Key Recommendations

- Street children are a vulnerable group and their special needs have to be addressed so that like all other children they also receive their entitlement to free and compulsory education. Though many states have notified street children as 'disadvantaged groups/ weaker sections', however focused attention for planning and monitoring needs to be put in place, including priority to admission in residential schools.

- The RTE Act has mandated that all children with disabilities have to be mainstreamed and imparted inclusive education. Inclusive education implies systemic changes which facilitate school responsiveness to children with diverse needs, including children with high support needs and those with developmental disabilities. To that end the IE component with all its implications for convergence and preparedness along with ensuring optimal learning outcomes should be viewed as a cross cutting issue across SSA.

- The goal of schooling for all having been almost accomplished the focus should shift to the transcendental challenge of *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII.* This challenge cannot be met unless the Secretary and the SPD are in the forefront of the efforts to master this challenge. Unless they have a good understanding of the technical aspects of that transformation it is not possible for them. To that end, MHRD may organize an appropriate orientation programme for Secretaries and SPDs. These programmes should be periodically organized so that newly appointed Secretaries and SPDs are given the necessary orientation to meet the new challenges of SSA.

- It is heartening to note that quite a few States had demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm to innovate in different areas of pedagogy and programme management. Without rigorous evaluation, many of these innovations could be no more than commotion without movement.

- It is imperative to have a national repository of innovations which should also disseminate the inventions all over the country. It would be a good idea to incorporate good SSA practices in departmental procedures and pre-service training.

- It is a matter of concern that the performance of some States is consistently below the national average and that entrepreneurship and innovation seems to be limited to a few States. Apart from taking steps to develop the capacity of these States for implementing all aspects of SSA and to innovate, MHRD may like to focus on these States in its reviews and mandate the Joint Review Mission to focus on such States.

- While it is imperative to encourage initiative and innovation in the States it would be expedient to lay down the minimum list of learning indicators and minimum learning outcomes at the national level through a ***joint effort*** of the Centre and States. These learning indicators and outcomes should conform to the policy postulates of the National Policy on

Education, 1992. It is equally imperative to periodic learner achievement surveys based on a uniform methodology applied throughout the country.

- During the current financial year MHRD and the States may like to focus on taking stock of the pedagogic changes on hand, and develop a national frame encompassing:
  1. learning indicators and learning objectives,
  2. methodology for assessing learner achievement, and
  3. the pedagogic measures needed to achieve the normative learning objectives

- A preponderant proportion of classrooms are much more diverse than ever in the past, diverse in terms of the home background, and diverse in terms of learning capabilities. Therefore in-service training has to lay a strong emphasis on the need for teaching to address individual differences and the enormous diversity in a classroom.

- It is but natural for all activities to get routinised and lose their relevance and effectiveness, if not élan. Given the criticality of in-service teacher training to achieve learning objectives, it is necessary from time to time to take a fresh, hard look at the teacher training programmes, including their content, duration, frequency, method of delivery and linkage with real classroom transaction issues. MHRD may like to closely follow up the revision of the training programmes by the States using the findings, observations of the NCERT study on the impact of teacher training on classroom transaction as well as of the fourteen tools developed by NCERT.

- The development of the national frame mentioned above should go hand in hand with the development of a realistic roadmap to reach the goal of ensuring that every child acquires the normative learning objectives. It is essential to meticulously plan for the achievement of essential levels of learning within a realistic timeframe. The first step in the march towards the achievement of *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII* is to launch a crash programme to improve basic learning needs at the primary stage and offer focused programmes at the upper primary stage to correct the failure to acquire basic learning needs at the primary stage.

- The BRCs and CRCs were set up with the primary objective of providing academic support to the teachers. Over time, they appear to have been loaded with so many functions that the functionaries of these institutions have become jacks of all trades and all-purpose journeymen. It is desirable to restore the original focus.

- It would be advantageous to have a certain measure of uniformity and standardization in the matter of school evaluation. The national framework mentioned above should include school evaluation and effectiveness also.

It is important to recognize learner achievement survey is a managerial tool to be used to

- assess the effectiveness of the pedagogic changes introduced, for as is said the proof of the pudding is in eating, and the proof of the relevance and effectiveness of pedagogic changes is the improvement in levels of learning they bring about,

- assess the progress towards the goal of ensuring that every child acquires essential levels of learning, and
- assess the improvements in the effectiveness of each school.

These managerial objectives can be achieved by adopting the following principles for the conduct of learner achievement surveys:

- Surveys all over the country should be conducted using a common methodology jointly developed by Centre and States,
- Methodology should not be changed frequently. When change is considered necessary, during the year when the change is effected the survey should be conducted using the old and new methodologies so that there is no discontinuity in the series. This would obviate the current situation in which the results of the NCERT Class V Survey cannot be compared with those of the SSA baselines and mid-term surveys .What is suggested conforms to the standard statistical practice for indicators like wholesale prices or national income, and
- A distinction should be made between two types of surveys:

    ✓ Sample surveys with a broad scope which help assess whether the learning outcomes are commensurate with the MLLs laid down. These surveys could be conducted once in three years like reputed surveys such OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). As far as possible the methodology should be such that comparisons could be made between India and other courtiers covered by reputed international surveys, and
    ✓ Censuses which could be conducted every year in every school in order to assess the improvement in school effectiveness. For being manageable they should be limited to a few summary indicators such as the levels of basic learning in the primary stage.

- Shifting to the new pedagogy demands more intense planning, monitoring and supervision than that required for universal access and participation. Needless to say, the annual work planning formats, *Result Monitoring Matrix,* and the reporting formats needs to be modified. It is equally necessary to modify the remit of JRMs so that they expend a greater proportion of their time and energy in assessing the implementation of the pedagogic measures needed to improve learning outcomes, and to assess the extent to which learning outcomes had improved.

- Monitoring of the progress towards *universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII* has to make use of rapid appraisals and quick evaluation. It is important for senior officials not be reactive to critical observations but instead be willing to accept and act on the observations and findings of appraisals and evaluations. It is equally important to recognize that appraisals and evaluations are not standalone exercises but essential elements of an outcome oriented programme management. As with learning outcomes, learner achievement survey methodology and school evaluation mechanisms joint effort by the Centre and States to develop uniform approaches to planning and monitoring of learning outcome oriented pedagogic changes as well as appraisal and evaluation methodologies.

- As a category Scheduled tribe children lag behind in respect of almost all educational indicators; as such they deserving special attention in the nation's march towards the goal of universal achievement of essential Learning Levels. The unsatisfactory levels of participation and learning achievement levels of these children can be traced to the fact that their mother tongues are different from the medium of instruction, which is invariably the language of the State. The sprawling tribal tract in the heart of India spans the contiguous states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odhisa, and Jharkhand, and is home to several tribes. In this tract the same tribe lives across boundaries of States. It is therefore logical that these States work together, continuously share their experiences and best practices. MHRD may facilitate this collaboration, and critically review the efforts being made by these States to promote all aspects the education of tribal children. A collaborative effort could be a key element of the developmental efforts being made in LWE districts in the heart of India. MHRD may also critically review the efforts being made by Assam and other North-Eastern States to promote all aspects the education of tribal children.

- The challenge of fully achieving the objectives of SSA cannot be achieved, and more particularly the challenge of sustaining the benefits of SSA cannot be met if the State Education Departments (dealing with school education) remain as they are. This proposition applies equally to the *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan*. The greatest contribution that MHRD could do to further educational transformation in the country is to professionalize the State Education Departments and to that end institute and fund systematic training programmes for State education officials.

Key Recommendations

1. All efforts should be concentrated on retention between class I and VIII. Retention should be calculated for the complete Elementary Cycle.

2. All efforts for quality education contribute to retention and must be viewed in that manner.

3. Technical and other support should be organised for States to organise surveys to enumerate residual OoSC. Initiatives for OoSC (Specially Urban Deprived and Street Children) that have been successful must be studied and replicated where applicable.

4. Planning for universal participation should focus on strategies and interventions to reach the unreached. Instead of carrying out isolated initiatives for education of the migrants, urban deprived and children in difficult circumstances, strategic interventions may be spelled out in District elementary Education Plans to identify, enroll and retain them in elementary education.

5. The Mission recommends that IE be viewed as an integral and horizontal part of a seamless effort in the education of all children, and not as a parallel and segregated issue to be dealt with only by the IE personnel. The Mission therefore recommends that the current efforts in the development of material on Classroom Methodologies, in synergy with the proposed Adapted CCEs and Adapted Curricular Exemplars, be expedited and trialed in a few States. The DISE data should include data on CWSN.

6. The Mission further recommends that the lessons learnt from experiences of the last 10 yrs, be collated, compiled and widely disseminated.

7. The impact assessment of innovative practices for gender equity may be carried out and documentation of best practices done. Innovative practices to promote gender equity like Meena Manch and Meena Raju Manch need to be promoted and scaled up.

8. Given the emphasis on implementation of second generation reforms the need is invest more on capacity building, research and evaluation. Initiatives may be taken to make SIEMATs functional as it would help institutionalize capacity for capacity building in planning and management of education in states. The District Elementary Education Plans need to have focus on the strategic interventions for building capacity for implementing second generation reforms.

9. Capacity building of schools to formulate school development plan may be further strengthened. Capacity of SMCs by identifying and developing relevant support materials and strategies may be continued, with particular reference to creating a vision of how schools can be improved.

10. The Mission recommends that MHRD develop a Quality Education Roadmap. It should include learning indicators, clarity on pedagogy and other inputs required, and a roadmap comprising a 'roll out' towards attaining agreed upon indicators. This should be developed in consultation with the states.

11. Mission recommends that the aberrations in the accounting system may be corrected expeditiously.

12. The Mission recommends that when accounting software is stabilised and the concerned personnel are adequately trained, the practice of maintenance of accounts manually should be dispensed forthwith to avoid duplication of work.

13. The mission recommends that the system irregularities pointed out by the statutory auditors in their reports should be corrected in a time bound manner and reported to the next JRM.

14. The Mission recommends that 8 left out States should ensure the use of procurement software extensively for monitoring procurement. MHRD should monitor the website closely to ensure that States are uploading information on the database as otherwise the purpose of this control system will be defeated.

Goal 1 & 3: All Children in School, attending regularly till they complete elementary school cycle

3.1   SSA should be congratulated for substantial achievements that have been made towards increasing access and enrolment since the programme was launched in 2001-02. The Mission notes that the residual gaps are now localised by areas/ communities.

3.2   Presently, there is no agreed norm for defining school dropout. In Kerala, for example, students are regarded as dropouts after 7 days of unexplained absence. In Chhattisgarh, the period is three months. The information is most often used in tackling the issue of students who enrol at the beginning of an academic year, but never appear thereafter. The question is at what point should they be deleted from records or retained as part of 'enrolment' figures. The Mission is reported that NUEPA has been requested to develop a common definition for dropout. The Mission reiterates its recommendation that, *NUEPA should finalize the definition / criteria for dropouts within the August, 2013, so that the new definition/ criteria could be used while collecting DISE 2013-14.*

3.3   States are employing various strategies to meet requirements of inputs, outputs and outcomes stipulated by the RTE/SSA norms. (e.g. using SDP data and online systems to track enrolments of different categories of children in Odisha and Maharashtra; providing urban residential hostels and transport allowances in Odisha and other States and constructing new schools and additional classrooms based on school mapping exercises in several States) and to hold schools and communities accountable (for example; introducing a school ranking system based on these inputs and outputs in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh).

3.4   Other initiatives for enhancing quality and thereby retention are Pratibha Parv (M.P.), Pravesh (Punjab), ALM (TN), Gunavatta (Bihar), Multi Lingual Education and Samiksha (Odisha), Gunotsav (Gujarat), Sambalan (Rajasthan) and Shalegagi Naavu- Neevu (Karnataka). The Meena Raju Manches of Maharashtra are correctly addressing both girls and boys on the issue of gender.

3.5   Special focus districts have been identified based on five key parameters and support is being given to help those districts meet the indicators. Similarly, the introduction by NUEPA of unified DISE data in 2013-14 will enable States, districts, sub-districts and schools to better assess and track their progress.

Access

3.6   According to DISE data for 2012-13, there are a total of 1,420854 schools imparting elementary education to students across the country, of which 74.9% are government schools.

3.7   The GER for 2012-2013 for classes I – VIII is 106.3 and some 194.96 million children are enrolled in elementary classes (I – VIII). Girls make up 48.50% of all those who are enrolled. These achievements are reflected by SC and ST groups. The percentage of girls' enrolment within both SC and ST groups at Primary level is 48.4%; while girls' enrolment at Upper Primary level for both SC and ST stands at 48.9%. The overall Gender Parity Index (GPI) has been improving steadily and stands at 0.94 in 2012.

3.8   The ratio of primary to upper primary schools has declined to 1 is to 2.06, enabling more children to complete a full cycle of elementary education. This positive trend is due to the

considerable focus that States are placing on constructing new schools (17,535 primary schools and 7081 upper primary schools constructed in the period from 2010-11 to 30 September 2012) and additional classrooms (301,711 built in the same period) within distances specified by RTE rules.

3.9   It must be noted that despite this progress, many challenges remain to ensure that all schools meet the RTE/SSA norms and standards, particularly with respect to provision of playgrounds, compound walls and toilets, especially for girls.

3.10   There are at present about 28% (PS) schools at national level that have less than 50 children enrolled. The situation should be reviewed against data. Appropriate action should then be taken with regard to schools with very low enrolment.

Enrolment

3.11   According to DISE data for 2011-12, 199 million children are enrolled in elementary education and enrolment trends show that this has been increasing steadily at upper primary level since 2005-06. This marks the first time the 2012-13 data of all states and UTs was presented to the JRM.

The overall level of enrolment, as illustrated in Figure 3.3, has been steadily increasing across all schools since 2007-08 (185m to 199m in 2011-12). Government school enrolment has decreased slightly since 2007-08 (from 151m to 147m in 2011-12) while private school enrolment has been steadily increasing during the same period (34m to 52m in 2011-12). It is difficult to confirm exactly the reasons for these trends without further research and analysis. The mission recognizes and appreciates that the data from private schools is being collected and suggests that greater use be made of this data to understand issues related to quality of education in the different category of schools.
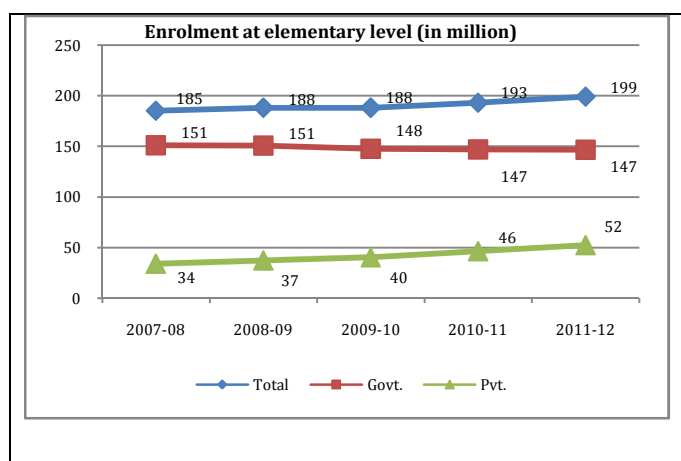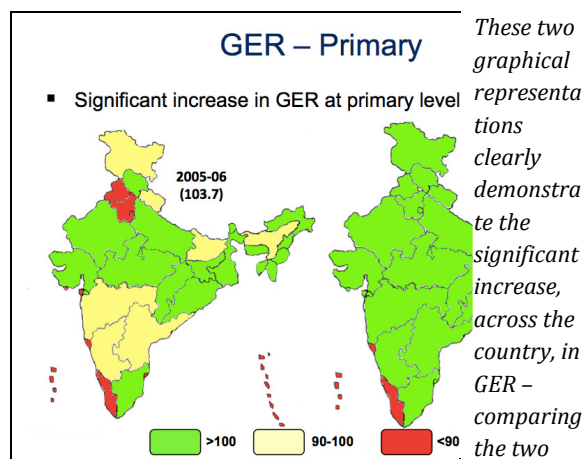

igure 3.3

3.12   The Mission appreciates efforts that have been taken to significantly increase the overall GER levels between2005-06 and 2011-12, as Figure 3.4 helps to make so clear. It is noted that very few States report a GER of less than 90 against a national average of 118.62.   This demonstrates how close India is to achieving the goal of universal access, particular at primary level.

These two graphical representations clearly demonstrate the significant increase, across the country, in GER – comparing the two

Figure 3.4   *(Data*

3.13   GER at the upper primary level has also increased significantly since 2005-06, though challenges remain in Goa, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh where the GER is 67.18, 59.80 and 59.58 respectively in 2010-11 against a national average of 81.15.

3.14   Net enrolment at primary and upper primary levels, comparing the period 2005-06 with 2011-12, also show huge transformation across the country. The gap in NER at upper primary level remains a challenge and specific interventions area wise/ category wise for social groups need to be put in place as this will require out of box thinking and will not be resolved by a business as usual approach.

Drop Out and Retention

3.15   Very similar success patterns exist in relation to dropouts, which are based on comparing the enrolment in a previous academic year with enrolment in the current academic year refer to 'Annual' dropout. Presently, there is no agreed norm for defining/ identifying this kind of dropout. NUEPA needs to expedite definition.

3.16   Figures 3.7 and 3.8 convey strongly the impact SSA is having in reducing dropout rates.
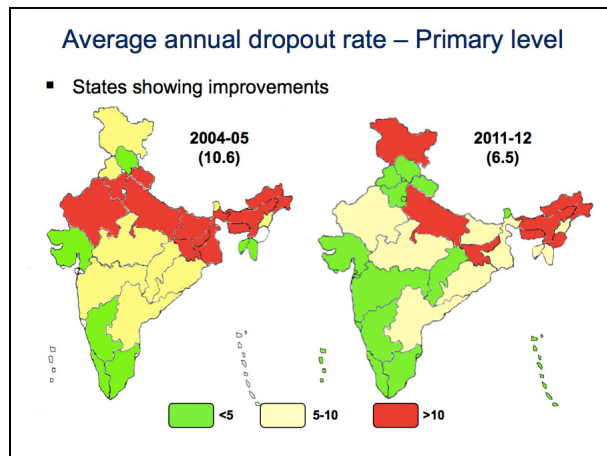

These comparative data show substantial improvement in annual dropout rates, between the two periods 2004-05 and 2011-12. Overall percentage dropout has reduced from 10.6% to 6.5%

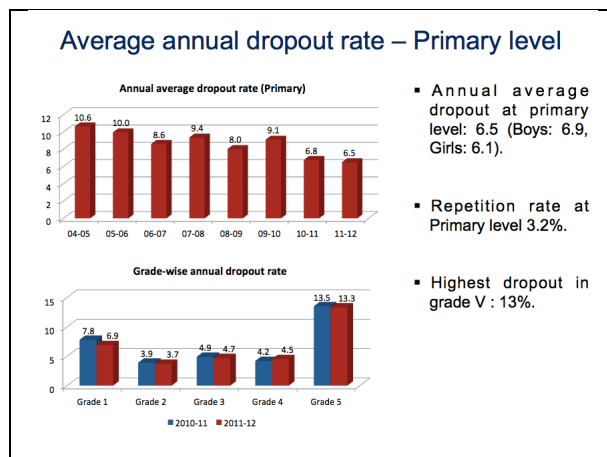*The data also highlights the States and districts which still present the greatest challenges.*

Figure 3.7   *(Data source MHRD)*

Figure 3.8   (Data source MHRD)

3.17   The dropout rate at national level stand at 6.50 % in 2011 but there remain several States and Union Territories that continue to have a dropout rate in double digits.

The high Grade 5 dropout rate is more of a transition and access issue. These Class 5 'dropouts' are students who fail to extend their education into the upper primary level – perhaps because schools are much further away from their home.

3.18   There is a high dropout rate at grade V which needs to be analyzed and reasons thereof to be identified.

3.19   Programme focus will need to move from mere enrolment of children to retention for the entire Elementary Cycle. Enrolment data is available by social group (SC, ST, OBC, CWSN, Muslim Minorities) and gender. In each group, effort must go towards achievement of enrolment and then retention as per their proportion in the population. Data for CWSN should also be available by social groups mentioned above. This would apply to all input, output, process, and outcome indicators.

3.20   The Retention Rate at national level at Primary is 75.94 with a number of states with better Retention Rate of 90 and above.

3.21   All initiatives for raising quality of education support greater retention. For example provisioning of toilets, drinking water, adequate teachers, adequate space in the classroom and the Mid Day Meal all support greater retention of children in school.

3.22   In this regard, classroom assessment is a strategy for improving quality of learning and therefore also a retention strategy. Assessment means all activities undertaken by the teacher and by their students which provide information about student learning. Assessment is the process used to determine where the learner is in their learning, where the learner needs to go and how best to get there. Paul Black and Dylan William (Inside the Black Box; Raising Standards through Classroom Assessment– 1998) found that, from 5 year olds to University Undergraduates, all displayed improved learning after regularly participating in classroom assessment with meaningful feedback. The presentations made by many states indicated that further clarity on this issue may be required. SSA, NCERT, University Departments of Education may together like to design a set of

workshops where state SSA personnel may acquire hands on experience and understanding of Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment.

3.23   One of the strongest strategies for retention is regularity and presence of the teacher. Despite the principles set out in the RTE some teachers in some states continue to spend substantial time on nonteaching activity. (e.g., 3.7% teachers in Jharkhand 36 days; 23% teachers in West Bengal 26 days).

3.24   While it is recognised that due to consistent efforts the average class room student ratio at national level has reached the recommended 1:30; some states are yet to address this issue. For example, the classroom student ratio in Bihar is 1:78 in 2012.

Transition

3.25   Despite the challenges encountered and explained above huge progress has been made in transition rates, comparing the period 2004-05 with 2011-12, as Figure 3.9 shows.
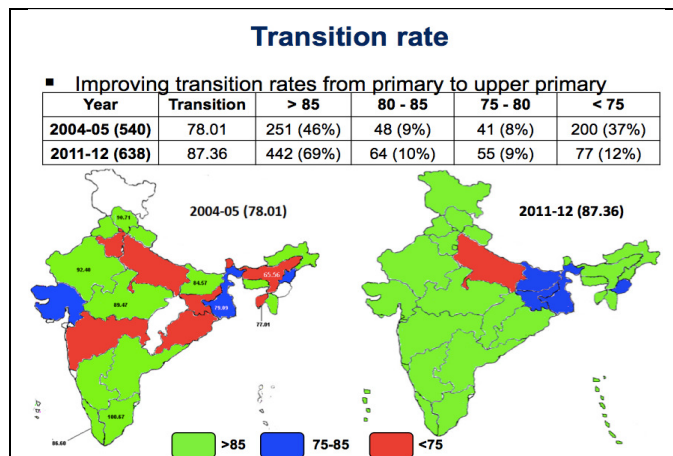
The data show substantially improving transition rates as a direct result of SSA and its intervention of building large numbers of upper primary schools, to reduce the ratio of primary to upper primary schools.

According to the data, the State of Uttar Pradesh is where the greatest transition challenges still remain.

Figure 3.9   *(Data source MHRD)*

3.26   The transition rate from Primary to Upper Primary at national level was 87.09 % in 2011-12. Maharashtra, Daman and Diu and Goa have achieved a transition rate of 99% while a number of states and Union Territories have reached 98%. States like UP with a transition rate of 71.96% need to address the situation.

Out of School Children

3.27   Figure 3.11 provides a comprehensive picture regarding positive trends in the reduction of out-of-school children.
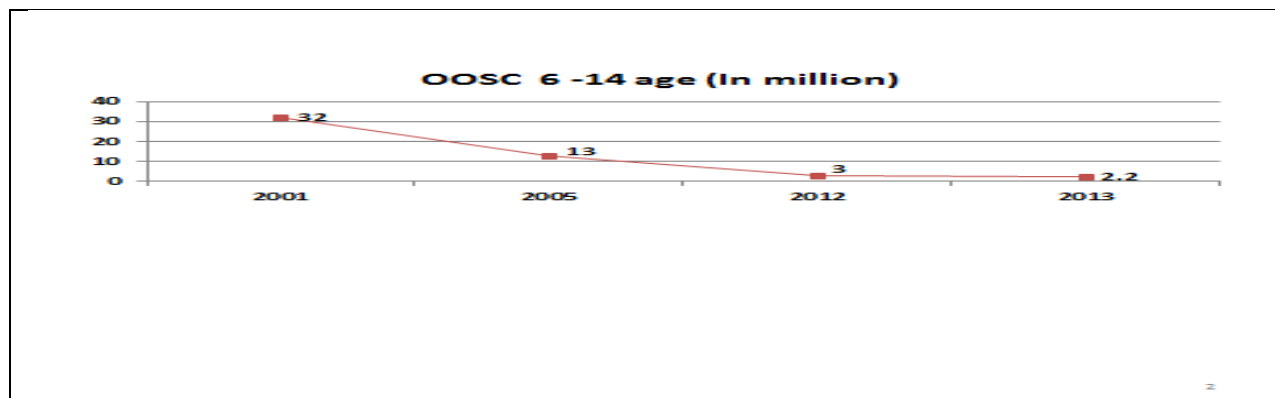
Figure 3.12

OoSC are now less than 1% of the target child cohort, as States have reported 22 lakh OoSC for 2013(0.58 %). Girls from 49% of the OoSC and 51% are boys. State wise distribution are as shown in pie chart above. The highest numbers of OoSC are in Rajasthan (4,10,957), Bihar (2,71,096), Jharkhand (2,80,617). Within these States the number of districts with large number of OoSC are localized except for Bihar- Rajasthan (7), Bihar (dispersed), Jharkhand (4), Haryana (2), Karnataka (1), Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh (urban areas)

3.28   The Mission commends the efforts being made in reducing the number of OoSC as reflected in the data presented above. Several States have developed a child tracking system (CTS) based on extensive household surveys. However, the Mission is concerned that the OOSC may be higher, may not be adequate to rely on updates from Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) and schools. Enabling the local authorities as notified under the RTE Act (PRIs and Urban Local Bodies) to carry out functions divested to them will go a long way in getting accurate data on OoSC. This will ensure that OoSC are picked up timely for coverage under Special Training Centres.

3.29   There are many states who themselves admit to concern about generating dependable data on numbers of Out of School Children (OoSC). It is suggested that NCERT, NUEPA and TSG assist the states to design reliable methods for conducting surveys to identify and keep track of OoSC. TSG should also share information on strategies for the education and mainstreaming of OoSC that have brought positive results.

3.30   The issue of Urban Deprived and Street Children is of increasing concern. SSA will need to focus more attention on this group. This group is characteristically always mobile. Identifying and enumerating Street Children poses methodological challenges. Therefore, OoSC may remain under reported. Even after enumeration there are challenges in providing education for this group. Project personnel would require patience and a non –judgemental mind set in order to approach and retain Street Children in schools or education centres. Many of these children are growing up without adult supervision and may be exploited and controlled by criminals. They are also constantly in danger of acquiring habits of substance abuse and addiction.

3.31   Urban deprived and street children come from many different states of the country and therefore speak different languages. Many and perhaps most OoSC and Street Children pick up the dominant language of the city they live in. Even so, designing bridging and mainstreaming programmes for this group is a challenge. In many cases, many of these children find difficulty in fitting into age appropriate classes. Therefore, there may not be time to introduce the classical

multilingual education methods of gradually moving from mother tongue to classroom language. Need appropriate strategies will need to be designed to help enroll and retain these children.

3.32 Several states have addressed the issue of urban deprived and street children in innovative ways. Jharkhand's Drop-in-Centres and Uttrakhand's Pahal are two such initiatives. Jharkhand managed to mainstream 65% of those identified and brought to the Drop-in-Centres. Pahal is a successful PPP model where the identified children are being mainstreamed in private schools.

3.33 State specific initiatives on migrating children like SSA Gujarat developing migration cards with unique pre-printed numbers for both intra -State and inter-State migrant children have been under taken. TN has developed a system of identifying and enrolling children migrating into the state. However, because the children coming into the state speak many different languages, TN is contacting the mother state for help in acquiring textual material in the mother tongue. However, attempts such as these are isolated and no inter State mapping of migration trends has been done by involving the States in a formal dialogue for the same. The sharing of migration data, books and teacher support remains largely delegated totally to the States for migrating children with no oversight/ monitoring.

3.34 The Mission is pleased at the efforts being made to significantly closing gender and social gaps. SC, ST enrolment in Classes I-VIII is higher than their proportion in the population, while the enrolment of Muslim children is slightly below their proportion in the population. Similar information is required for CWSN. When disaggregated percentage data as per the 2011 Census become available, the out-of-school data should be mapped State wise.

3.35 Despite these achievements, concerns remain about timely identification of OoSC, ensuring school based special training, follow-up and tracking of children mainstreamed into schools after having received special training.

3.36 *Recommendations*

- All efforts should be concentrated on retention between class I and VIII. Retention should be calculated for the complete Elementary Cycle.

- Definitions for enrolment, dropout and retention need to be clarified and agreed with states.

- All children master the basic reading and numeracy skills by Class 2 (within the next year) and skills of critical thinking, expression and problem solving by Class 5 within the next two years.

- All efforts for quality education contribute to retention and must be viewed in that manner.

- Technical and other support should be organised for States to organise surveys to enumerate residual OoSC. Initiatives for OoSC (Specially Urban Deprived and Street Children) that have been successful must be studied and replicated where applicable.
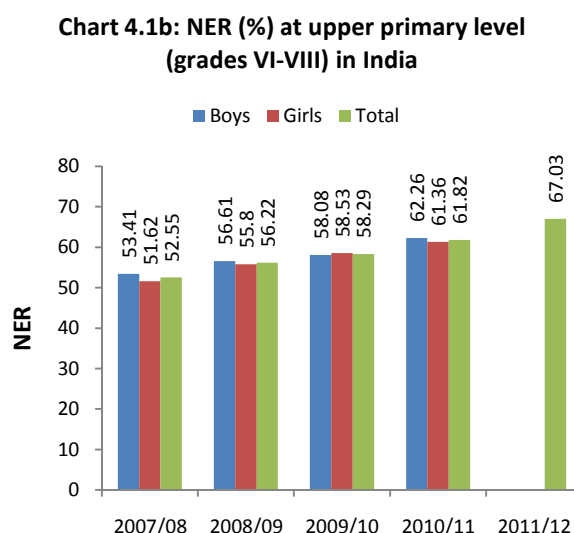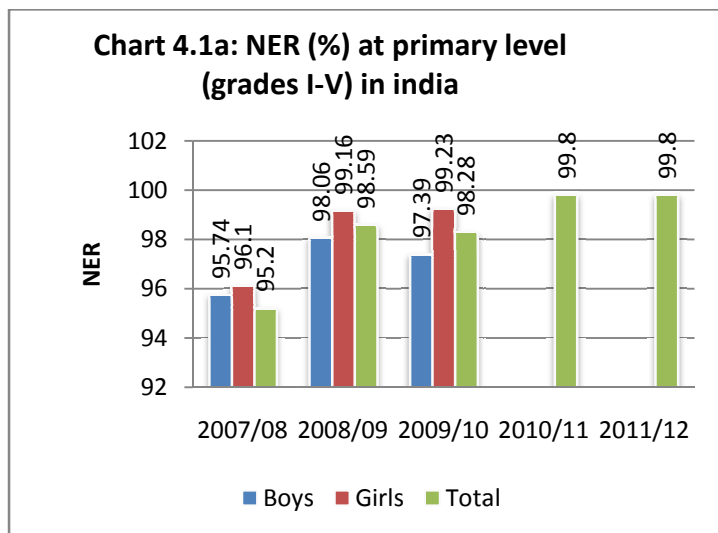
Goal 2: Bridging Gender and Social Gaps

4.0   Ensuring equity in educational opportunities and meeting learning needs of all are considered major development challenges in India, particularly with the enforcement of the RTE Act 2009. Further, the subject assumes critical importance because of its contribution to human development, the ultimate developmental goal of SSA. It is argued that persistence of inequality can reduce the pace of human development, and in some cases, may even prevent it entirely. 'This is most marked in inequality in health and education and less so for inequality in income' (HDR, 2013). However, 'equity' is often considered a 'marginal theme' in programme design and execution, which implies absence of a framework for creating equal educational opportunities and responding to the learning needs of children with varying socio-economic backgrounds, girls, children with special needs (CWSN) and children in difficult circumstances. In fact, 'circumstance factors' like parental education and wealth, gender, caste and religion contribute the most to persistence of educational inequality. Factoring in these circumstance factors into the programme planning and management is essential to overcome educational inequality. The Mission notes that the SSA considers 'equity' a major developmental goal (Goal 2), and accordingly, emphasizing on strategic interventions for creating equal educational opportunities and meeting learning needs of all. Indeed, educational opportunities at the elementary level in India is becoming more and more equal over the years, although there still exist regional, gender and social disparities. It may be noted that 'equity' is a cross-cutting theme, and as such, it would also be addressed in other goals of the SSA. In this section, the focus is on assessing the current status in progress towards bridging gender and social gaps. The section also looks into the interventions under SSA for providing equal educational opportunities to CWSN and children in difficult circumstances.

Gender Gaps

4.1   The Mission notes tremendous progress towards improving educational opportunities of girls at the elementary level. Participation of girls in primary and upper primary education has increased significantly over the years. In fact, there is more or less equal participation of boys and girls in primary education. The ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment at primary level has increased from 0.92 in 2006/05 to 0.94 in 2011/12. At the upper primary level, it has gone up to 0.95 in 2011/12 from 0.84 in 2005/06 (Flash Statistics, DISE 2011/12). Significantly low ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment at primary and upper primary levels is seen in Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana and Maharashtra. Further, the ratio is not improving significantly in these states since 2009/10. However, it may be noted that the sex ratio in Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana is relatively low compared to other major states. It was also reported that around 35 districts in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi and D& Diu have large gender gap in enrolment (MHRD, 2013).

4.2   There is remarkable progress in the participation of relevant age group children in elementary education. In fact, participation of 6-10 year olds in primary education has become universal, i.e. 99.8% in 2011/12 (see Chart 4.1a). At the primary level, the NER of girls is much higher than that of the boys. In 2010/11, there around 3 percentage point difference in NER figures for boys and girls. In 2010/11, around 2.5% of girls and 5.3% of boys in the age group 6-10 were out of school. However, wide variations in the participation of 6-10 year old girls in primary education exist across states. Participation of 11-13 year old children in upper primary education is a major concern across states in the country. The NER of both boys and girls at the upper primary

level is increasing steadily over the years (see Chart 4.1b). However, participation of 11-13 year old girls compared to that of boys is a major concern at the upper primary level.

Chart 4.1a: NER (%) at primary level (grades I-V) in india

Chart 4.1b: NER (%) at upper primary level (grades VI-VIII) in India

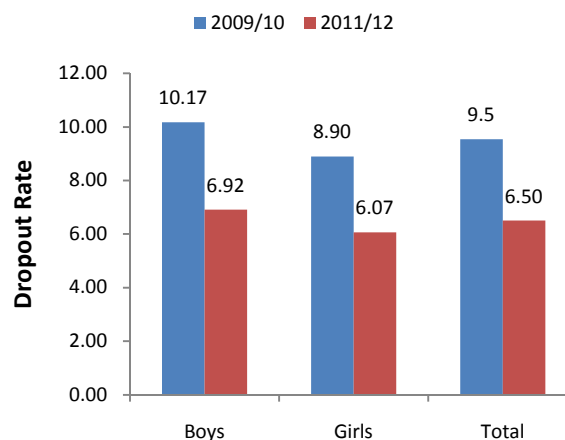Source: DISE, NUEPA for all years except 2011/12. Source for 2011/12 data is MHRD.

In fact, the transition loss from primary to upper primary level is a matter of concern. The transition rate from primary to upper primary level was 87.09% in 2010/11; it was 86.87% for boys and 87.32% for girls (DISE Flash Statistics, 2011/12). In 2011/12, the transition rate was not significantly different at 87.36% (MHRD, 2013). However, the transition rate from primary to upper primary level has increased significantly from 78.01% in 2004/05 to 87.36% in 2011/12. Moreover, regional variations exist in the transition rate. Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh report transition rates below national average.

4.3   The flow rates of girls have improved at the primary level. The promotion rate of girls at primary level has increased from 86% in 2009/10 to 90.8% in 2011/12. The repetition rate of girls has come down to 3.12% in 2011/12 from 5.1% in 2009/10 (see Chart 4.2a) and their dropout rate has decreased to 6.07% in 2011/12 from 8.90% in 2009/10 (TSG, 2013). The retention rate of girls has improved by 2.84 percentage points since 2009/10 (i.e. from 91.1% in 2009/10 to 93.94% in 2011/12). In fact, now, more girls than boys are being retained in primary education (see Chart 4.2b). In the absence of disaggregated data, it is not possible to comment on the retention status of girls at upper primary level. It may be noted that the retention rate of girls at primary level reported in the 17th JRM was 74.94%. The difference in the retention rate of girls could be largely due to the methodology for estimation student flow rates (promotion, repetition and dropout rates). While the 17th JRM reports the dropout and repetition rate figures on the basis of apparent cohort method, the 18th JRM reports the flow rates following the reconstructed cohort method.

Chart 4.2a: Repetition rate (%) at primary level (grades I-V) in India

2009/10   2011/12

	Boys	Girls	Total
2009/10	5.5	5.1	5.3
2011/12	3.22	3.12	3.17

Repeatition Rate

Chart 4.2b: Dropout rate (%) at primary level (grades I-V) in India

2009/10   2011/12

	Boys	Girls	Total
2009/10	10.17	8.90	9.5
2011/12	6.92	6.07	6.50

Dropout Rate

4.4   The Mission notes that, in terms of participation in elementary education, the SSA has made remarkable progress in reducing gender gap at the national level. Gender gap in participation, however, still exists across states and within states across districts.

4.5   The JRM also notes the findings of the recent National Achievement Surveys (NAS), 2012 showing no significant difference in the learning achievements of boys and girls.

4.6   Several programmes and innovative interventions both by the centre and states have contributed significantly towards bridging gender gaps in elementary education. The Mission recognizes that Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) (residential schools/hostels for disadvantaged girls) and the National Program for Education of Girls' at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) are two key large scale interventions promoting gender equity in elementary education. The Mission recognises that Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBVs) (residential schools/hostels for disadvantaged girls) is playing a positive interventionist role to enhance self-esteem and self-confidence of girls. Out of 3609 sanctioned KGBVs, 3569 have been operationalised with a total enrolment of 3.44 lakh. Of these enrolled girls, 31 % belong to SC category, 25 % to ST, 30 % to OBC, 8 % to Muslim, and 6 % to BPL category. States with a very significant number of KGBVs include: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. One important challenge for many of these excellent institutions is to put more-adequate safety and security arrangements and measures in place.

4.7   Target audience for KGBVs was never-enrolled/ drop out/ vulnerable girls. It would be extremely useful if specific guidelines are given to States to ensure enrolment/ admission predominantly through residential special training conducted in the KGBV or elsewhere in case of space constraint, so as to ensure that the most deserving are attended to first and the KGBVs don't become just a regular residential upper primary school.

4.8   Timelines within the current financial year need to be laid down for the States to fill all vacant seats in KGBVs and also to complete the buildings and operationalize the small number of KGBVs sanctioned but unopened.

4.9   The National Program for Education of Girls' at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is implemented in educationally backward blocks (EBB) and addresses the needs of girls who are 'in' as well as 'out' of school. NPEGEL also reaches out to girls who are enrolled in school, but who do not attend school regularly. All Educationally Backward Blocks have been included under NPEGEL. 41,779 model schools are functional in 3,353 EBBs of 442 districts. In total 4.24 crore girls are covered under NPEGEL.

4.10   Several other initiatives are being implemented in states for promoting gender equity. Few example of these initiatives are Balika Chetana programme in Andhra Pradesh, Life Skills Training Programme in Assam, Meena Activities in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Jagruthi Shibhira in Karnataka, special coaching for girls in Manipur and introduction of lady counsellors in Odisha.

4.11   Although gender equity in participation and retention is not an issue any more, gender equality continues to be a major development issue. Several states are taking initiatives to promote gender equality. Meena Manch and Meena Raju Manch are innovative practices to promote gender equity. For example, Meena Raju Manch in Maharashtra is a forum for girls and boys in upper primary schools, which aims at promoting education of girls, rights of children and adolescent in particular, and address equity related issues in school and respective villages. Meena Raju Manch has also been incorporated in the teacher training modules to promote issues of gender sensitivity especially in the educationally backward blocks (EBBs) of the state, and at the same time.

4.12   *Recommendations*

- Although gender equity in participation and retention is no more an issue in primary education, several districts in report gender gaps in enrolment and transition. Area specific approach (like that of EBB) may be adopted to increase enrolment and transition of girls.
- The impact assessment of innovative practices for gender equity may be carried out and documentation of best practices done. Innovative practices to promote gender equity like Meena Manch and Meena Raju Manch need to be promoted and scaled up.
- Strengthen security and safety arrangements and measures in all residential environments, including KGBVs.

- Schooling processes can play a critical role in protecting girls from cultural practices like child marriage. Consequently, increase efforts to equip teachers with the requisite understanding and skills to seek and utilize necessary support from community and State structures.

Social Gaps

4.13   Across states, enrolment of children from educationally disadvantaged communities such as SC, ST and Muslims has been steadily increasing. It was also reported that majority of SC and ST children attend government primary and upper primary schools. Enrolment of SC students in primary/upper primary classes has increased marginally from 19.06% (2010-11) to 19.80% (2011-12). Girls form nearly 49% of the overall SC enrolment. In the case of ST enrolment, there has been a negligible change of 10.7% (2010-11) to 10.92% (2011-12). Girls continue to account for half of ST enrolment. OBC enrolment in primary level has increased from 40.09% previous year to 42.8%. There is a similar increase in upper primary classes as well (40.27% to 43.25%).

4.14   In 2010-11, Muslim enrolment was 13.04% in primary classes and 11.25% at upper primary level. A marginal increase in these figures has occurred in 2011-12. However the percentage share of Muslims in the total enrolment at primary and upper primary level remains less than their share in the total population. There are 16 state/UTs which are reporting less enrolment at prmary level and the gap is relatively large in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha (see Figure 4.3).

**Chart 4.3: Percentage share of Muslims in primary level enrolment (2011/12) is more that of their population share in most major states except Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha**
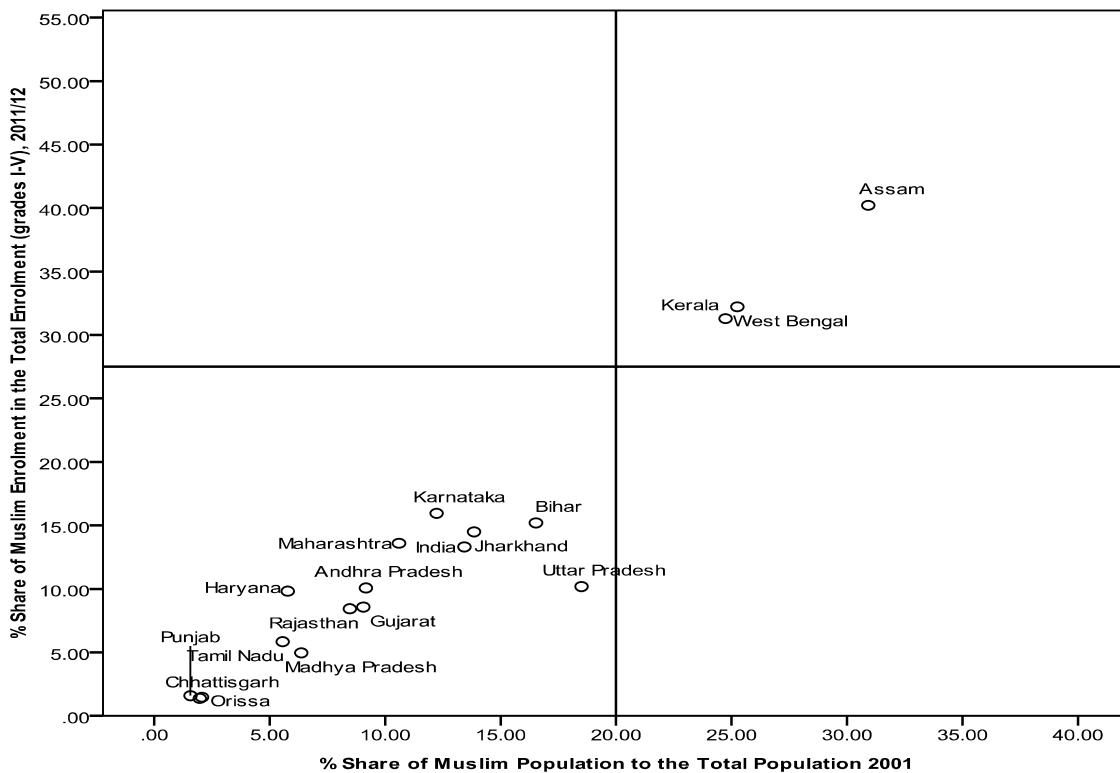
Source: DISE Flash Statistics, 2011/12.

4.15   The retention rate of children from disadvantaged communities are increasing over the years. Chart 4.4 shows the average annual dropout rate by social categories at primary level for the academic year 2011-12. These data are especially encouraging from a gender perspective, but also help to underscore that gender equity is a broader concept than the education of girls. It is encouraging that once Muslims are enrolled in school their subsequent retention is not greatly below the mean.

4.16   Figure 4.3 compares average annual dropout rates in special focus districts, for different social groups, with reference to the periods 2006-07 and 2011-12 (MHRD, 2013). Data for all categories show a positive trend. In the same period, dropout rates for the country as a whole decreased by 2.1% (from 8.6% to 6.5%). The rate of progress in Special Focus Districts is broadly comparable, though the progress that has been made in respect of Scheduled Tribe retention in Special Focus Districts is especially noteworthy (see Chart 4.5).

Average annual dropout rate of different categories (Primary) 2011-12
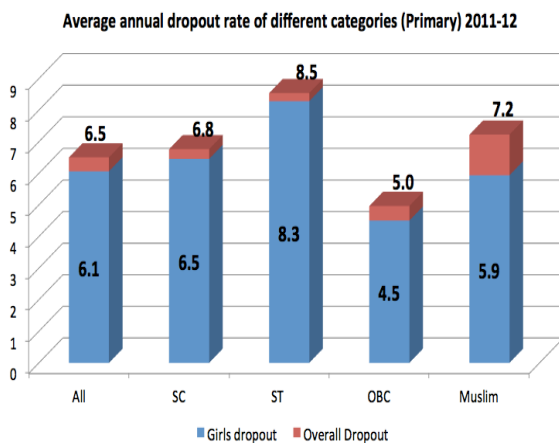
- **Girls dropout is invariably lower than overall dropout in all categories**

Chart 4.4

Reduction in Average Annual Dropout Rates in Special Focus Districts
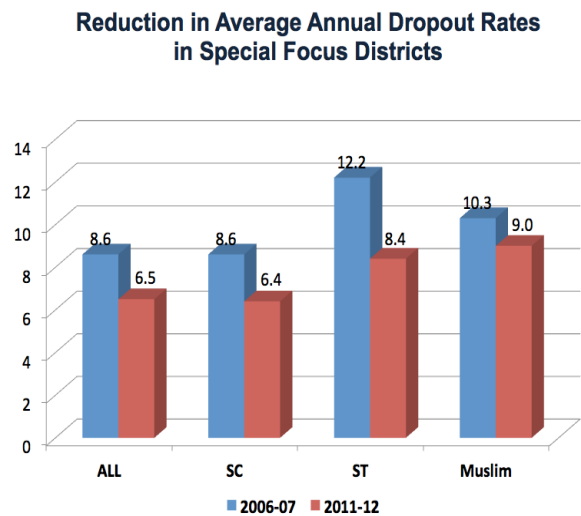
Chart 4.5

4.17 The schooling of children of a large number of migrant workers in agriculture and unorganized sectors presents huge challenges. SSA is already working in this area and is doing commendable work that needs to be sustained. The initiative of Tamil Nadu in providing schooling to migrant children in their mother tongue is commendable. However, the state faces shortage of text books in different languages for implementing these initiatives. States should therefore network with each other to deal with the issues of education of migrant children. The mother tongue based MLE programme in tribal area is also an important initiative to overcome language barrier in elementary education.

4.18   Reaching the last segment of the relevant elementary school age is a major challenge. These children are usually the hardest to reach groups from disadvantaged communities, working children and urban deprived including street children. Several states are taking initiatives to reach these children. Examples of such initiatives include the Drop-in Centers in Jharkhand and PAHAL in Uttarakhand. These initiatives are being implemented in public-private partnership mode to identify and enroll children in difficult circumstances in formal schools/education centers with the ultimate objective of mainstreaming them. However, these initiatives have very limited coverage and are implemented in project mode. It is now time to focus on strategies and interventions that would help reach the unreached in elementary education.

4.19.   Recommendations

- Planning for universal participation should focus on strategies and interventions to reach the unreached. Instead of carrying out isolated initiatives for education of the migrants, urban deprived and children in difficult circumstances, strategic interventions may be spelled out in District elementary Education Plans to identify, enroll and retain them in elementary education.

- Efforts in conducting awareness programmes on girls' education for the parents of disadvantaged groups, and especially the Muslim community may be continued and strengthened.

- It is necessary continue tracking the progress towards bridging social gaps in enrolment at primary and upper primary levels and in access to primary and upper primary schools in ST/SC/ Muslim dominated districts/blocks.

- Monitoring and supervision of SSA activities in Special Focus Districts based on social gaps, gender gaps and retention may be intensified.

- The Right to Education Act, 2009, ensures the right of children with linguistic diversities to receive teaching in the mother tongue as far as practicable. It is thus suggested that Multi Lingual Education (MLE) be utilised by States as a tool for bridging children to school language from home language, so as to ensure learning and also retention till completion of elementary education. Sharing of materials and methodologies developed by the States amongst them should be encouraged.

4.20   <u>Disability Perspective and Inclusive Education (IE) in SSA</u>

The Mission appreciates that the RTE Act and SSA have been instrumental in changing the lives of millions of children with disabilities. It is noted that there are inter-State and even intra-State differences in the implementation and even in the understanding of what constitutes Inclusive Education; but it must be appreciated that the process of institutionalizing inclusion of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) into mainstream schools, is now taken as a state obligation/mandate and not as an option or a welfare program. The RTE ACT, and the Amendments in 2012, has mandated the right to education of nine categories of children with disabilities (as per PD Act and NT Act).

SSA-I focused very successfully on access, in terms of physical and spatial location of schools. SSA-II was about retention and meeting physical targets. For SSA III, the stage is set for a focus on quality.

Now, therefore, we need to move to another level altogether, i.e., the level of actual learning of CWSNs, within the mainstream system of schools, and what/where/how inputs that facilitate their learning, can be put in place, as part of a seamless system of universal achievement of essential levels of learning in Classes I to VIII children, with diversity entrenched, and respected, in the classrooms.

4.21   Identification-The Mission notes that convergence with Health and Social Welfare sectors in almost all the States is very good. However differential identification and assessment, especially between and within the developmental disabilities, is a highly skilled activity, particularly in the case of Autism. Inadvertent mislabeling may have negative implications for the child's entire life. The Health and Social Welfare sectors can further strengthen their support in this effort.

The Mission has noted that another source mentioned that CWSNs enrolled in school are 27.64 lakhs, of which 141309 lakhs (5.1%) are in SRP (84797 have been mainstreamed which is 60%) and 154345 (5.59%) are in HBE (77558 have been mainstreamed which is 50%). That means that 295654 CWSNs are mainstreamed. This is very commendable.

4.22   Mainstreaming IE within SSA—inputs that will enhance quality as well as inclusion

SSA has, over the years, provided opportunities for CWSN, unparalleled in the history of disability in India. However, IE remains a parallel and vertical effort within SSA. The Mission recommends that IE be viewed as an integral and horizontal part of a **seamless effort in the education of all children**, and not as a parallel and segregated issue to be dealt with only by the IE personnel.

4.23   Curriculum Adaptations, Classroom transactions, and CCE

The Mission appreciates that these are the key areas, already addressed in SSA to an extent, but further strengthening is recommended. This is probably the main reason for CWSNs (particularly those with Developmental Disabilities) dropping out, after Class 2 or 3. (Please refer to graphs from Odisha 2011, Assam 2011 and Andhra Pradesh 2013).

4.24   Systemic changes to enhance inclusionary practices:-

The Mission notes that disaggregated data on CWSNs in SSA has been a very good effort. Now, in an effort to promote seamlessness and inclusionary practices, it is recommended that DISE data may include data on CWSNs also (student attendance, repetition, transition, completion, drop-out rates).

Similarly, within the development of new directions for Teacher Performance Standards Framework , School Performance Standards, and Student Performance indicators, efforts in early grade learning, curriculum renewal, residential schools, and other excellent initiatives as under Prathiva Parva(MP), Pervesh(Punjab), ABL and ALM (TN) Gunwatta (Bihar) Gunotsav (Gujarat), Sambalan (Rajasthen) Samiksha (Odisha) MRM, Drop-in Centres (Jharkhand)—(because they lend themselves well to special needs) the Mission recommends that these efforts be made inclusive of CWSNs also. In continuation of mainstreaming IE within the SSA, the School Leadership Program by

NUEPA, HP and others States may be encouraged to include training on Peer leadership, Attitudes, and Bullying of CWSNs, Parents roles in IE as well as that of siblings.
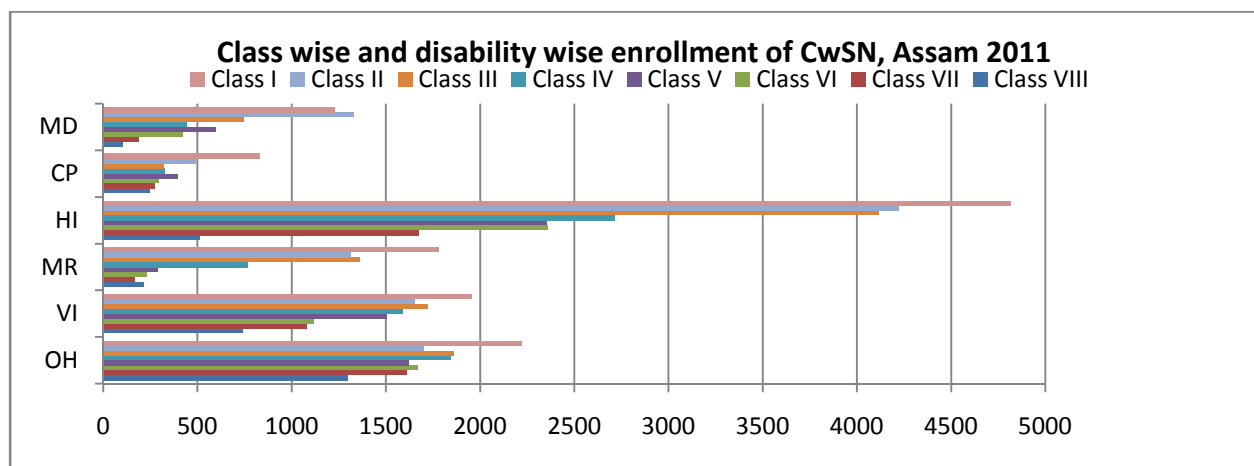
As already noted by many states, the earlier the intervention for CWSNs, the better the functional outcomes. Promotion of early learning remedial/ rehabilitation centers as school readiness programs (as seen in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh), is recommended for replication. AP's module of Special Curriculum for children with MR, available as package, would be useful for others.
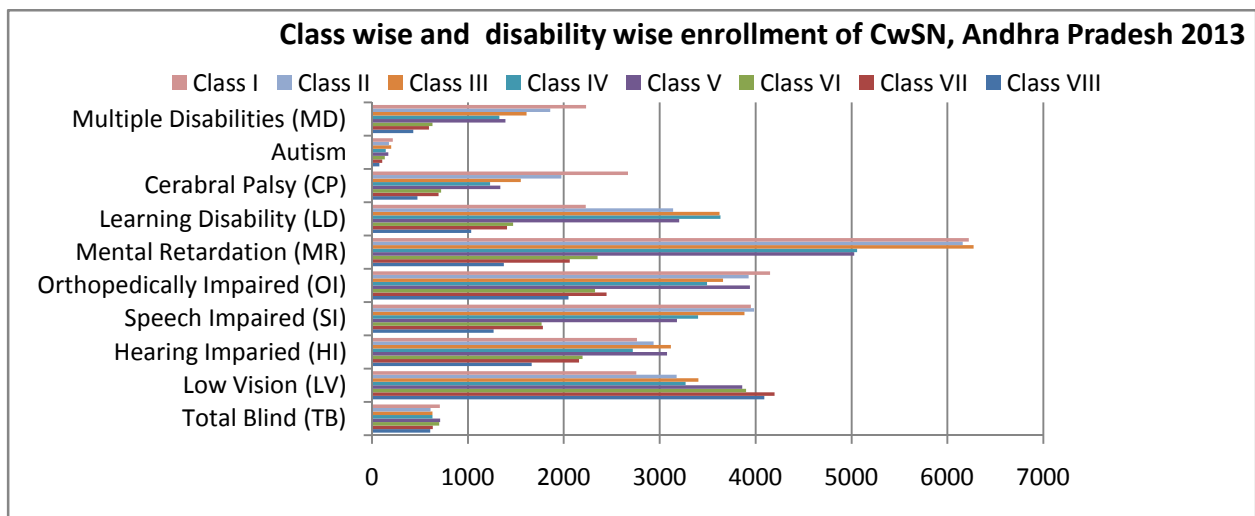
The Mission has observed that monitoring of IE personnel is often viewed as difficult because of the itinerant nature of their jobs. This could be made more rigorous as the one in AP, where daily on-line tracking, is being done.

4.25   Consolidation of lessons learnt from previous interventions

The Mission notes with great appreciation the excellent and pioneering work done in IE by SSA, and the many spin-offs that have had a rippling and positive impact in every State. The Mission feels that, in an effort to consolidate all these good practices, they may be compiled nationally, and widely disseminated to all stakeholders. The following documents could be developed for future learning:

Development of a i) National Compilation of State-wise interventions, those that include CWSNs. ii) a National Compilation of Research Studies by various States, undertaken in IE. iii) Strategy for system strengthening initiatives for CWSNs, iv) Strengthening of existing material into a Booklet on "Addressing Special Needs in RTE/SSA"-bringing out the rights aspect (For e.g., Parents' right to information from Teachers about progress of their children sec.24 (e) other parental concerns (through FAQs), their duties as in sec.10 Chapter 3, grievance redressal mechanisms sec 31 and 32, and such other important matters.

Class wise and disability wise enrollment of CwSN, Assam 2011

Class wise and disability wise enrollment of CwSN, Odisha 2011

Class I, Class II, Class III, Class IV, Class V, Class VI, Class VII, Class VIII

Class wise and disability wise enrollment of CwSN, Andhra Pradesh 2013

Class I, Class II, Class III, Class IV, Class V, Class VI, Class VII, Class VIII
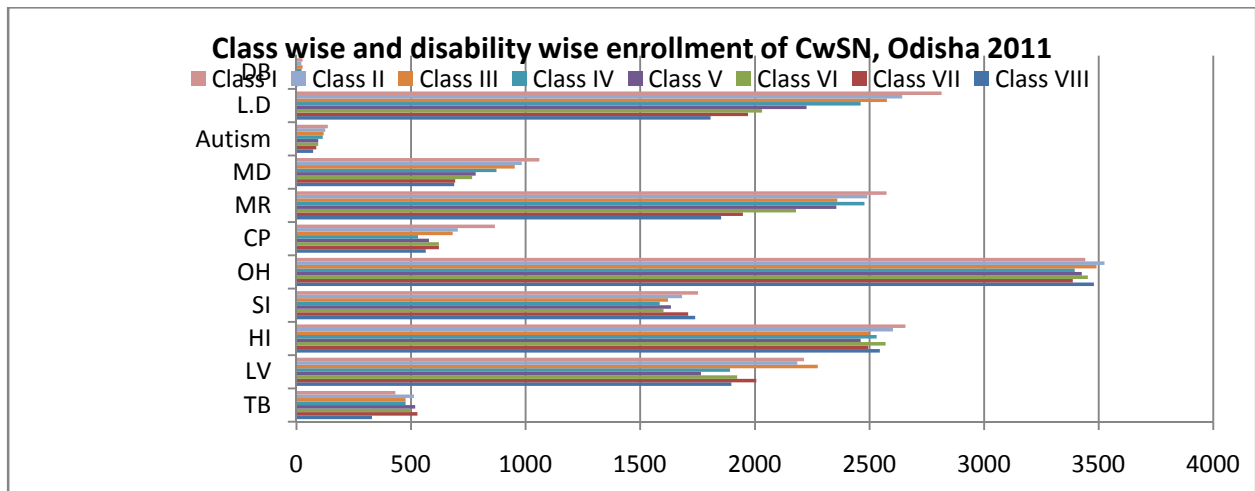
4.26   *Recommendations:*

- The Mission recommends that IE be viewed as an integral and horizontal part of a **seamless effort in the education of all children**, and not as a parallel and segregated issue to be dealt with only by the IE personnel. The Mission therefore recommends that the current efforts in the development of material on Classroom Methodologies, in synergy with the proposed Adapted CCEs and Adapted Curricular Exemplars, be expedited and trialed in a few States.

- That within the development of new directions for Teacher Performance Standards Framework , School Performance Standards, and Student Performance indicators, efforts in early grade learning, curriculum renewal, residential schools, and other excellent initiatives that the Mission was acquainted with

- The Mission recommends that DISE data may include data on CWSNs also (student attendance, repetition, transition, completion, drop-out rates) and that OOSC date should include CWSN.

- In continuation of mainstreaming IE within the SSA, the School Leadership Program by NUEPA, HP and others States may be encouraged to include training on Peer leadership, Attitudes, and Bullying of CWSNs, Parents roles in IE as well as that of siblings.
- The Mission feels that, in an effort to consolidate all the good practices and lessons learnt thereof,, they may be compiled nationally, and widely disseminated to all stakeholders.

Goal 4: Education of Equitable Quality and Learning Outcomes

5.1 Recognizing the imperatives of the present situation/context

This mission takes place at a critical time in the development of elementary education in the country. The RTE is being implemented with great vigour across the country, though varying degrees of effectiveness. Some of the provisions in the Act, such as non-detention and CCE, have raised a great deal of debate and concern. Alongside, with the success of enrolment efforts within SSA, student diversity has increased greatly due to the entry of hard-to-reach children in schools, and due to the migration to urban areas (which has created, for instance, multi-lingual situations in slum schools where they did not exist before). In keeping with the PTR norms now required, a large number of new teachers have just entered the system, and more will shortly be entering – thus increasing the challenge posed by teacher development.

The increasing demand for education has also led to a wide-spread proliferation of low-fee private schools, offering competing education to the government school system. Finally, concerns are being raised in various quarters about the quality of elementary education, especially with regard to learning levels.

In keeping with the imperatives of this context, the MHRD has initiated Second Generation Reforms with focus on Quality and Learning outcomes under SSA, a step appreciated by the Mission. This renewed focus on quality by the MHRD includes the following:

- Basic foundational programme on reading, writing, comprehension and mathematics in class I & II.
- Science and Maths teaching at Upper primary level.
- Technical Cooperation fund for Capacity Building in NCERT for (i) NAS Studies and (ii) Curriculum adaptations for severe disabilities with external aid.
- Education governance and management

In keeping with this, and building on the emphasis laid down by the last 17thJRM, the 18thJRMtoo continues the stress on Quality and Learning Outcomes and supports a results-based approach.

5.2 Enabling Systemic Readiness to Deliver Quality

Based on interaction with the states and perusal of the various documents provided, the Mission suggests that the renewed focus on quality in the present context consider the following key strategic directions.

1. Developing a roadmap for quality education
2. Ensuring the availability of required teaching learning time
3. Building capacity of personnel and institutions, and enabling their improved functioning
4. Ensuring the quality (and focus) of individual activities (such as CCE / training)
5. Using monitoring and documentation effectively

1. Developing a roadmap for quality education

Any major improvement in Quality requires a clear understanding, agreed upon learning indicators, and a shared roadmap for Quality Education.

Learning Indicators

Learning indicators guide schools and teachers in setting up bench marks. These help teachers in planning and developing effective and realistic teaching-learning and assessment strategies. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Karnataka have developed Learning Outcomes grade wise and subject wise. Uttar Pradesh has incorporated learning indicators in their CCE model, against which learning progress of students can be assessed. The NCERTtoo is developing performance indicators for all curricular areas, for grades I-VIII.

The Mission suggests that interaction be facilitated with and among states so that there can be a shared national agreement on Learning Indicators.

Clarifying pedagogy, assessment and related components needed to achieve learning indicators

There is at present a great deal of variation across states in their understanding of pedagogy, in particular what 'activity-based' learning is, the nature of materials that would support them, and desired practices that would meet RTE and NCF expectations. During deliberations with the Mission, states have expressed anxiety and have asked for clear guidance, in particular on addressing issues of diversity in classrooms.

The Mission suggests that ways be found to support states in this regard.

Quality Education Roadmap:

A Quality Education Roadmap (QER) will include the above learning indicators (which would serve as objectives to be attained) and the pedagogic understanding being shared. Critically, it will enable a strategic and coherent approach, detail the incremental 'roll out' over the coming periods, and emphasize inter-linkages across various activities and components, with a focus on clear objectives.

Among other advantages of the QER would be the following:

- The offices of Directorate of Elementary Education, State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT), SarvaSikshaAbhiyan (SSA) and Directorate of Secondary Education needs to work in tandem for convergence and synergy, which will be facilitated by a *jointly* agreed upon understanding of quality and a roadmap to attaining it.
- The framework should also provide mechanism and ways of convergence between various schemes.
- The regular educational administration should own the responsibility of quality education and enhanced learning outcomes. The State/UTs Education Departments should reinforce Quality Education and enhanced learning outcomes as their motto. In other words the quality should not be left to SSA or SCERT alone.

Towards this MHRD may consider creating a specific Quality Assurance Task Force, ending the isolation in which the different organizations work.

2.   Ensuring the availability of required teaching learning time

RTE Norms and Teachers:

- Teachers are backbone for quality education but there are 8.3% schools with single teachers. Under SSA though 19.82 lakh teachers were sanctioned (till 2012-13) only over 14.00 lakh are recruited up to 31.03.2013 leaving a very large balance of > 4.00 Lakh teachers to be positioned. The States/UTs should have a clear road map for expeditious recruitment of teachers as per RTE Norms with in a fixed timeline as per their commitments given in the PAB meetings. The defaulting states viz.,Bihar, Odisha, Gujarat, Maharashtra,West Bengal,Jharkhand,Uttar Pradesh,Uttarakhand and others are to be monitored very closely for expeditious recruitment of qualified candidates.
- Though at nation level the PTR moved favourably from 36 in 2005-06 to 30 in 2011-12 at Primary level. At state level states like Bihar (59), Uttar Pradesh (44) and Jharkhand (40) continue to have very adverse PTRs. Even in the states having PTR<30 at primary level, there are a large number of schools with adverse PTRs illustrating the lack of seriousness of State/ UT educational systems on the issue of rationalization.
- Presently there are 12.16% of teachers on contract having implications of teacher training and litigations having cost of time and money.
- The States/UTs are to have clear roadmap for both teacher recruitment and rationalization.

School/ Teaching days and Non-Academic Activity:

- The school days and teaching time are utmost importance for ensuring quality. The states/ UTs should revisit various works entrusted to the Teachers so that the Teachers have adequate time for teaching and creativity. States/UTs should ensure strict compliance to the S.26 of RTE Act, 2009 provision prohibiting deployment of teachers for non-educational purposes.
- The schedule of RTE Act, 2009 prescribes a minimum number of 200 and 220 working days for Primary and Upper Primary classes. However the DISE data reports that Meghalaya, Kerala and Nagaland have less than 200 days both in Primary and Upper Primary.
- The States/ UTs are requested to review the scenario and take necessary follow up action such that minimum School days and prescribed time limits are followed and the days for non-academic activities do not prevent the required number of instructional days under RTE.

Timely distribution of Text books

- Text books are the primary resource material for the teachers and children for class room transaction. There has been significant increase in MHRD budgetary allocation for text books since 2007-08 with an allocation of 768.78 Cr to 1651.35 crores in 2012-13. However

it is seen that a number of states are not supplying the text books in time or on the date of school opening. In the current academic year all the States/ UTs are to ensure timely supply and similarly in future.

- Timely distribution of Books (developed based on NCF-2005 and Section 29 of RTE Act, 2009) as per SSA norms on the date of school opening should be a non-negotiable item for the PAB approvals and releases. This would ensure that the children's time in school is well utilized.

3. Building capacity of personnel and institutions, and enabling their improved functioning

In-service teacher training under SSA

<u>Achievements</u>

In-service teacher training has been a crucial component of the SSA program and, SSA has made available substantial investments towards in-service teacher training over the years. A central aspect of the in-service training program is the 20-day annual training and, on an average, 3 million teachers are trained each year. In addition, in-service training's have also catered to 0.8 million untrained teachers. Nearly all States have developed detailed training modules for in-service training based on the needs and requirements of the state and, are reporting on the implementation of such training on an annual basis.

The Mission takes note of the fact that there are positive shifts in designing of in-service teachers training since inception of SSA. Moreover, in-service teachers training have been the main mechanism for rolling out various innovations and, have responded reasonably well to the curricular renewal process after NCF 2005.

The Mission appreciates SSA's role in radically expanding the system's capacity to train teachers and that states are moving towards training of shorter duration with focused agendas.

Concerns

In terms of translating their efforts to improve pedagogy, classroom experience and learning outcomes, the Mission feels that considerable efforts, in terms of training design, preparation of RPs, quality of teacher training materials and, assessment of impact of training -still need to be made in order to realize the goal of quality education in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

Considering that the teacher comprises the single biggest determinant of educational quality, feedback from States during discussion indicates that, teacher training under SSA has become routinized and has led to apparent 'training fatigue'.

In order to assess the impact of INSET on teachers, MHRD sponsored a time bound study to be conducted across 15 sampled states through different geographical areas. The study notes that:

- Analysis of training needs was not carried out in most of the states,
- Although there has been a shift to child centered approach, handling diversity in classrooms, equity etc. constructive approach to teaching as advocated in NCF 2005 was not

reflected in the training package. Specific areas such as arts, heritage crafts, health and physical education, and work education, were not included in most of the training packages in the sampled states.

- Many of the trainees observed that the training package was not found to be relevant or useful and, in many places the modules were distributed much later or not distributed at all.
- In some of the states the study notes that e sessions were disrupted due to inexperienced Resource Person's who could not cope with the experienced teachers,
- The learning were found to be 'not useful' by more than half of the rural teachers in almost all the states. Overall one in 10 teachers found the training's to be 'least useful'.

Further, DISE data shows that there are more than 0.7 million untrained teachers are already there in the system and they required to be trained as per RTE by 2015. The 18th JRM expresses deep concern over the slow progress with respect to untrained teachers and the presence in schools of over 0.7 million untrained teachers. Moreover, simply moving untrained teachers through an input driven training mechanism will not improve student learning outcome. Thus, in terms of both quantitative and qualitative capacity, there are huge challenges to overcome.

Recommendations

- The Mission recommends that the Teacher Training Program be rejuvenated, with innovative and experiential training methodologies. <u>There needs to be a clear focus on outcomes and, what the teacher is expected to deliver in the classroom for improving learning as per the need and requirement of every child.</u>
- There is consensus that the present design and implementation mechanisms and of the teacher training program are inadequate. States have identified many constraints such as lack of availability of qualified trainers, training fatigue & teachers' reluctance to attend training, lack of continuity and consistency between various training programs, and, insufficient follow-up after training. Keeping learning outcomes for all children as the central focus-these must be reviewed by MHRD for developing a central strategy, benchmarks, a pool of good materials and, experienced and qualified resource persons.
- The Mission also recommends that an incremental approach be adopted wherein training's are rolled out and provided to teachers based on their experience and the different levels of performance they demonstrate.
- Presently there are around untrained 7 lakh teachers. Majority of total untrained teachers are in West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Assam and other NER States and the RTE Act deadline for training of untrained teachers is 2015. The states should share their action plans with MHRD and monitor the timelines.
- The teacher in-service trainings should be need based. Various training modules developed should be revisited to post-RTE context.
- NAS cycles highlight the dire need for increased learning levels at Class I and II. Further considering the significant drop outs during the transition from Class I to class II and from Primary to Upper Primary, there is a need to lay emphasis on Early Reading, Writing and Comprehension in Class I and II and Early Science and Mathematics in Upper Primary.

Training Plan for Inclusive education

It is noted that Resource Teachers have been appointed to promote Inclusive Education (IE) and the Mission is aware that there are no personnel available who are trained specifically in IE. This was noted in the 17th JRM also.

Given the realities, there is now a need for a two-pronged action-plan:-

a) First, to reorient Resource Teachers in SSA to IE (as was done consecutively for 3 years in West Bengal) and

b) Secondly, to scale up in-service training for regular teachers on IE, with special focus on classroom transactions for children with developmental disabilities (for eg. those with Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Multiple Disabilities and Intellectual Disabilities. The rationale for this is embedded in data showing that these are the groups that are dropping out at classes 2 and 3. Use of ICT training through video conferences is highly recommended for large-scale transfer of quality content. (Short term in-service courses do not require RCI approval).

Professionalization of Academic Support structures: DIET-BRC-CRC

Currently SSA has nearly 6800 Block Resource Centres across the country. In 2012-13, more than 70,000 CRCs are functional, which is 98% of sanctioned CRCs.

Concerns

The Mission records its concern over the quality of academic support provided to teachers. The professional development of BRCCs and CRCCs is a matter of concern in relation to the role of educational leadership and technical support they are intended to provide.

Structures created at the cluster and block levels are serving far too many schools in many States and are <u>unable to maintain a balance between their administrative and academic roles</u>, <u>the latter suffering in the process.</u> CRCCs and BRCCs end up doing much more administrative work than academic support.

Several States have expressed problems of ensuring a robust and effective teacher trainers' cadre at Block and cluster level. In a number of instances, the teacher trainers have tended to be in the same grade as the teachers they are training, thereby often unable to enthuse and inspire the teachers.

Recommendations:

- Based on the presentation on BRCs and CRCs and, feedback from the States during discussion, it is recommended that each State prepare its plan & strategy to strengthen the academic support structure. Formal linkages to DIETs or appropriate alternative teacher training institutes at the district level and SCERTs at the State level should be explored.
- The operationalization of a vibrant cadre of teacher trainers and teacher educators who can lead improvements in teaching practice is critical to taking classroom improvements

forward. In this regard, there is a need to think through the future role, position and capacities of cluster and block level resource persons.

- Presently there appears to be a disconnect between the DIETs and the BRC-CRCs in most of the states except a few. Further the DIETs are understaffed.
- The BRC-CRC structure is more engaged in information management, MDM etc. They are made to be Multi-purpose workers. The academic support appears to have lost its primacy in a number of States/ UTs.
- The BRC and CRC job charts and service conditions are to be revisited based on experience to attract talent in a cycle approach with professionalisation.

School Mentoring, Monitoring, leadership and Accountability:

- Presently the Educational Administrators viz., District and Block Education and Inspection officials and BRCs/CRCs are more engaged in the administration and information management and less on academic support suggesting the need to revisit the job charts of various stakeholders with emphasis on Quality Education and Learning Outcomes.
- For effective monitoring the capacities of Educational Administrators viz., DEE, Jt.DEEs, Dy.DEEs, DEOs, BEO, Inspectors and others are to be built upon with induction and refresher trainings. Institutionally the SIEMATs are to be strengthened/ operationalised in every state.
- More synergy is needed between the District Education Officer and the sub-District level Academic Support structures. There should be mandatory visits to schools by the BEOs at least once in six months and by the DEO at least a fixed number of Schools a Year. There should be regular convergence meetings at District level involving DIETs, BEOs, BRCs and others by the DEOs.
- There needs to be a system of performance management for teachers and schools together with enabling factors.

School Leadership Development

Another new area of development has been in terms of Leadership training for head teachers which has been provided in states like Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. NUEPA is also working on developing a framework on School Leadership through its recently established National Centre for School Leadership. The mission observes that this centre is in the initial stage and looks forward to expedited development of support material for school leadership. It is suggested that NCSL probe further the already available experience with states and come out with a situation analysis with respect to school leadership. This would enable a high level of connectivity at the grassroots level in the true sense.

4. Ensuring the quality (and focus) of individual activities (such as CCE / training)

Continuous and comprehensive assessment of student's learning progress.

Considerable activity has taken place across the country towards implementation of CCE.

- 26 states/U.Ts have implemented CCE and 9 states/U.Ts are in the process of developing their CCE models.
- NCERT has developed exemplar CCE packages for primary stage and upper primary stage. NCERT package illustrates how teachers can assess learning progress of children during the teaching learning process.

In CCE models of U.P, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu also assessment is an integral part of teaching learning process. In U.P the CCE model has been developed and tried out by teachers. U.P has included learning indicators in their CCE model. However, the recording procedure needs to be simplified. Tamil Nadu has developed Active Learning Methodology, in which CCE is an integral part of teaching-learning process. Student's record of work is used to asses learning. Rajasthan is in the process of developing the CCE model.

CCE Models of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Andaman & Nicobar are similar in that these require teachers to conduct four formative and two summative evaluations. There are four to six tests for each subject and about 20-30 tests in a year. In addition to these tests, students are required to submit projects and assignments. Students are also evaluated for non- scholastic areas, personal & social qualities on rating scales. This scheme fragments learning as scholastic, non scholastic and co-scholastic. Evaluation remains an isolated activity. A large number of training programmes were organised for teachers on 'CCE' but teachers are still struggling with development of tools for evaluation of non-scholastic areas. Evaluation has occupied the central stage and teaching learning has been pushed to periphery. Teachers spend significant proportion of instructional time in recording and preparing detailed report cards. Teachers consider this kind of CCE an additional burden. With so many tests teachers start 'teaching to tests' leading to rote learning and use of 'guide books' by students and teachers both. States may consider revising this model of CCE. The CCE package developed by NCERT would help them in this regard.

In any model of CCE, the focus should be on learning, that is, all children learn and achieve the curricular objectives. CCE models should also address the issue of 'diversity' and 'inclusion'. CCE models of NCERT and other states may be adapted for Children with Special Needs. There is no need to develop separate CCE schemes for CWSN.

To reiterate, some of the key aspects to be borne in mind include the following:

- The objective of the CCE is to improve class room transaction for improved child learning and thus reduce learning gaps. It cannot be an end in itself but a means for quality education and enhanced learning.
- A number of States / UTs viz., Meghalaya, UP, Karnataka, Kerala, Chattisgarh and others are implementing CCE in right earnest but with varying designs of rating, student profile, assessment tools/ technique and frequency of assessment. The concept is still evolving and clarity is inadequate among the education administrators, teachers and parents.
- The burden of documentation should be lightened for using it in the Teaching-Learning process and to enable the teacher a constructivist.
- Presently the CCE exemplars are not adapted to the CWSN and thus are to be adapted.

- Given the long association of a number of states with the CCE, the NCERT together with the states jointly formulate CCE implementation strategy at School / cluster / block/ district/ state level with simple and consistent formative and summative assessment systems with clarity together with the enabling factors with enough scope for individual teacher innovation.
- There is a need to create a wider awareness about the rationale behind the CCE for its better appreciation by the teaching community –both private and government.

A note on Non-Detention Policy

The myth that 'no learning or low learning levels' is because of no detention' policy is a resultant of traditional practice of 'teaching to tests' Teachers teach students to pass the examination and purpose of examinations is to pass or fail students. Failed students are detained in the same clas. When there are no examinations and no failure, teachers do not teach. Fear of failure and and examinations compels teachers to teach. Students fail because system failed to deliver. Students should not be punished or detained for systemic failure. Also, teaching to tests leads to distortion in the aims of education. The aim of education is all round development of children. School experiences are designed and selected to facilitate all round development.

RTE Act provides for learning without fear, trauma and anxiety. The focus should be on 'development and learning' – the responsibility of student learning is on schools and teachers.
Who fails? It is the first-generation school-goers who are failed, and it is they who are likely to be pushed out of the school system.

Given the wide-spread public notion that that absence of examinations is leading to loss of quality, there is an urgent need to ensure public awareness on both CCE and non-detention.

Ensuring teacher performance

Each state needs to develop a mechanism to ensure teacher performance. The Mission welcomes the process initiated by the MHRD and sees its value in relation to ensuring outcomes.

5.   Using monitoring and documentation effectively

Learning measurement and assessment systems:

The National Achievement Surveys conducted by NCERT provide information about learning achievement of students. This data can be used by states to plan inputs for quality improvement. Chattisgarh, Karnataka and Kerala conduct their own state level achievement surveys. Gujarat measures the achievement of students under the programme 'Gunotsav' and Madhya Pradesh measures the achievement of students under 'PratibhaParv' programme. Uttar Pradesh has finalised the tools for achievement. Other states have yet to initiate the process. The results of achievement surveys also inform the states as to what extent their 'quality efforts' succeeded. States can take decision about continuance of a programme.

- NCERT has been organizing National Achievement Surveys but change of methodology has affected the degree of comparability. There is a need to ensure greater consistency and building time-series data.
- Presently the NAS does not cover the CWSN. In future the NAS should cover the CWSN with appropriate test construction.
- The Mission appreciates that the MHRD has encouraged states to undertake State level achievement survey in the current academic year.
- A good number of States/UTs with their in-house SCERT talent have undertaken learning measurements (PratibhaParv in MP, Gunvatta in Gujarat, Sambalan in Rajasthan) as innovation. Though their endeavor deserves high appreciation the paradox is every state is defining their own learning outcomes by adopting different methodologies thus the potential benefit of comparability is lost. Also, there is a need to have data over a longer duration so that trends over time may be identified.
- The Quality Education Roadmap (which includes learning indicators) referred to earlier may be used by states.

Quality Monitoring

States are monitoring the quality of Elementary Education under various programmes. 'Samiksha' programme in Odisha monitors the quality of education on six parameters- School Environment, Curricular Progamme, Co-curricular programme, school Community Link, School Management and MDM. There are sixty indicators for six parameters. Curricular programme alone has 24 indicators. Indicators should be fewer in number, specific, measurable and relevant. The Curricular Programme includes teaching-learning process and information on whether unit tests conducted or not. No effort has been made to relate performance of students to classroom processes.

PratibhaParvprogramme of Madhya Pradesh monitors 'quality' on three parameters- Achievement level of students, school activities and infrastructure. All 1.12 lac schools are assessed twice in a year.

Monitoring parameters in 'Gunotsav' programme of Gujarat are achievement of learning outcomes for each class, participation in co-curricular activities and availability and use of infrastructure. Attendance of children is also an indicator for assessing performance of children.

ShalegagiNevu-Neevuprogramme of Karnataka involves community in monitoring and improvement of quality. Schools are assessed on six parameters- school profile, SDMC involvement, infrastructure facilities, utilization of grants, co- curricular activities and classroom process and learning outcomes. There is one combined score for learning outcome and classroom processes. Achievement on learning outcomes and classroom processes can be taken as two separate parameters, so that co-relation between two could be worked out; what kind of classroom processes facilitate better learning.

Quality indicators in 'Sambalan' programme are Teaching- learning plan and role of Head Teacher, learning level and seating arrangement, child participation, use of library, use of science &maths kit, use of computers, use of workbooks, qualitative feedback in children's note books and display of children's work in the classroom. Monitoring data is shared with district and state level functionaries.

NCERT has developed comprehensive tools for monitoring quality. The tools have been shared with all the states. Data collected through these tools will be analysed and feedback will be provided to the states.

States are required to establish monitoring mechanisms in their states.

Documentation and dissemination of good practices

The Government of India has been providing support to States/UTs for undertaking a number of initiatives viz., infrastructure, quality initiatives etc. and are being monitored through Quarterly reports. However there is an immediate need for building a robust electronic repository / database bank at state and nation level.This would help states in learning from each other. A mechanism needs to be worked out for sharing good practices. Some of the promising practices shared by the states included the following:

- Tamil Nadu has introduced Active Learning Methodology (ALM) in their schools to enhance the learning levels of children. This methodology engages students in active learning. Students do more than just 'listening'; they read, write, discuss and solve problems. The activities are based on textbook content. Teacher assesses students during the teaching learning process.
- Punjab has implemented Creative Learning Model (CLM) in their schools. A reading corner has been established in every school. Radio classroom, school education calendar, school magazine by students, Pervesh Bal Pustika and are some of the innovations introduced by Punjab.
- Mother tongue based MLE programme in Odisha shows significant improvement in the learning achievement of children (NCERT, Evaluation of MLE programme). The programme covers eight tribal languages. In classes I &II, focus is on developing child's mother language; for which teachers knowing that language are appointed. Transition from mother tongue to school language takes place by class III.

Most of the States / UTs have been undertaking a number of innovations in Quality education but are not documented well for sustainability and replicability. Much has been invested in research and documentation, Like the MHRD, the States should publish their research reports in their respective websites and MHRD website as well regularly.

5.4 Recommendation

The Mission recommends that MHRD develop a Quality Education Roadmap. It should include learning indicators, clarity on pedagogy and other inputs required, and a roadmap comprising a 'roll out' towards attaining agreed upon indicators. This should be developed in consultation with the states.

Programme Management

It was reported to the Mission that the SSA is for a major shift in the 12th Plan period, while consolidating the efforts towards universal access, participation and retention, the SSA would go for the second generation reforms to improve quality, equity and governance and management. Programme management, therefore, assumes critical importance in the successful implementation of the second generation reforms. Investing more on capacity building in planning and management, monitoring and evaluation would help create the necessary enabling conditions for effective programme implementation.

6.1   Mission notes the important initiative taken by the Government of India in establishing the National Centre for school Leadership (NCSL) at NUEPA for promoting school improvement. The NCSL aims at building the capacity of schools in general and head teachers for school improvement. The leadership development programme implemented by NCSL focuses on five key areas – leading teaching and learning, organizational change and leadership, community and partnership leadership, leading school management and personal qualities and values. Work of the NCSL is well in progress and piloting of the training curriculum is on in select states. School leadership initiatives in and Rajasthan were also shared with the Mission.

6.2   It was reported that significant progress has also been made in two important aspects of the data collection and monitoring system, i.e. the integration of DISE and SEMIS and the move towards a unified database for school education. In due course, when these systems have bedded in, these developments will result in more timely and more comprehensive data. The Mission was informed that DISE and SEMIS systems have been integrated. It is expected that the consolidation will happen this coming data collection cycle, at least in some states. This is very encouraging to hear since this will significantly improve the quality of the data. The Mission notes that there is a shift (of different magnitudes in different states) from government to private primary schools, though the States are initiating actions to address this shift. The Mission also is aware that states themselves are introducing additional data collection systems. For example, Child Tracking Systems and Village Education Registers are used to identify out-of-school children, School Development Plans require schools to collect data, Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation increases the records teachers keep on individual children, and so on. Each of these data collection systems may have validity in its own right.

6.3   At the programme level, the monitoring and supervision mechanism of SSA is quite comprehensive. The salient features of monitoring and supervision mechanism include: (a) regular, periodic reviews of the programme at various levels; (b) detailed data collection and analysis; and (c) involvement of monitoring institutions to provide independent review of the programme implementation. The regular monitoring and supervision of the SSA programme is envisaged in a multi-layer fashion in SSA. At national level, Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) appraisal process involves extensive review of the programme implementation. Besides this, review meeting of programme coordinators are held in every quarter and meeting of Education Secretaries and SPDs of all states are held in every six months to review and discuss the programme progress and

issues. MHRD and TSG also make periodic visits to assess ground realities of programme implementation.

6.4   Monitoring systems are getting established at various levels of program implementation. At the national level, the SSA Results Framework (RF) adopted by the Project Approval Board is now a principal tool for monitoring progress against program objectives. In addition, the Mission is pleased to see that all states now prepare their own specific Results Framework Datasheets, which get used for AWP&B preparation.   However, the Mission observed that considerable scope remains to strengthen the usage of the RF for monitoring. Given the need for tracking progress under RTE, it is necessary to modify the indicators reported in the RFD. Particularly, a composite indicator/index of the minimum standards to be maintained in schools and other process indicators may be added in the RFD.

6.5   The Mission notes continued progress towards a more decentralized planning process. The RTE Act stipulates that all schools will develop comprehensive school development plans (SDP). The SDP is to be basis for the plans and grants made to that school. This process is already underway as many states decentralize education administration through *Panchayati Raj* Institutions. However, efforts need to be made to strengthen decentralized educational planning and administration.

6.6   Several previous JRMs have noted the need and potential to do much more to increase parental and community involvement for the success of SSA. While community mobilization efforts were observed by the Mission, there remains universal agreement that more and better activities are required.

6.7   The Mission notes that SCERTs, DIETS and universities have been involved in some national level studies. It was reported that state-level research abstracts have been collected by TSG, which are going to be published soon. However, the Mission observed that while states have conducted numerous research studies, there appears to be little use of the findings of these studies in planning and management of SSA.

6.8   States are conscious of the need for building the capacity of the district, sub-district and school level units such as BRCs, CRCs and SMCs. The initiatives of Tamil Nadu in strengthening the capacity of BRCs and CRCs for programme management were also shared with the Mission. All states are making efforts towards building capacity of the SMCs for school improvement. However, still more needs to be done to improve the capacity of SMCs for implementing the provisions of RTE Act 2009 at the school level.

6.9   The Mission observes that while monitoring SSA, the tendency of states is to report progress without giving due impotence to identifying the correlates of success and failure. To be able to identify factors that facilitate or arrest progress towards SSA goals, there is a need to deepen research and evaluation and improve the quality of DISE (now UDISE) data. Particularly, analysis of disaggregated data at sub-national levels would help improve planning and management of SSA interventions.

6.10   The Mission notes that some of the important considerations directly related to programme management include convergence of interventions and departmental coordination, institutionalization of planning and management capacity at state and district levels (i.e. strengthening resource organizations like SIEMAT, SCERTS, DIETS and other resource organizations), improving quality of data for planning and monitoring and deepening research and evaluation. Besides, there is a need for documenting and disseminating best practices in states particularly areas relating to reaching the unreached, classroom practices, low-cost learning material development, bridging gender and social gaps, and school improvement planning. The electronic cataloguing of best practice resource materials may be given priory for facilitating documentation and dissemination.

6.11   Recommendations

- Given the emphasis on implementation of second generation reforms the need is invest more on capacity building, research and evaluation. Initiatives may be taken to make SIEMATs functional as it would help institutionalize capacity for capacity building in planning and management of education in states. The District Elementary Education Plans need to have focus on the strategic interventions for building capacity for implementing second generation reforms.

- A register of resource persons and organizations in various thematic areas such as planning and management, pedagogy, quality, etc. may be created at the state and district levels. This is important for planning for capacity building and facilitating training and support services.

- Research and evaluation activities may be further expanded in areas relating to access, participation, retention, quality, equity, and planning and programme management with focus on identifying factors that facilitate or arrest progress towards expected outcomes. The Mission feels that there is a need for impact evaluation of various innovative initiatives being implemented by states, particularly relating to access and participation of children from disadvantaged communities and urban deprived, children in difficult circumstances, gender and social equity, community participation, programme monitoring to feed into programme planning management.

- Capacity building of schools to formulate school development plan may be further strengthened. Capacity of SMCs by identifying and developing relevant support materials and strategies may be continued, with particular reference to creating a vision of how schools can be improved.

- Given the multiple data systems available in the states a data audit may be carried out which would: (a) identify the overlaps between data collection systems, with the idea to reduce these through data sharing protocols and to cross-check data reliability; (b) look at data collection demands through the lens of the classroom teacher and the school, to assess whether the time burden is appropriate for the benefits accrued from the data collection; and (c) assess whether and how the data is actually being used for policy and programme design and implementation, so as to refine the data needs. NUEPA and MHRD identify those

states which appear to have been more successful in including private school data, and share this good practice with other states. This needs to be done in time so that the States can address the issue effectively in the next data collection cycle in September.

Financial Management

Budget analysis – 2012-13

7.1   The Mission was informed that budget allocations and releases have been significantly below the total approvals for Central share funding made through the AWPB/PAB process. In 2012-13, Rs.69,982.35 crore was approved against the GOI budget estimate of Rs. 25,555 crore which was subsequently reduced to Rs. 23,875.83 crore in revised estimate and supplementary budget,. The higher PAB allocation was made taking into account the compliance of RTE mandate on infrastructure with the expectations of a supplementary grant. The combined release of funds by MHRD and States amounted to Rs.42,143.12 crore. As against the financial outlay, the reported expenditure was Rs.44,282.65 crore as on 31-3-2013 as detailed below:

(Rs. In lakhs)

S.No.	State	Outlay approved	Total funds available (including 13th FC & other receipts)	Expenditure as per FMR	% on total funds	% on outlay
1	Andaman & Nicobar	2928.23	2127.22	1720.26	80.87	58.75
2	Andhra Pradesh	474585.63	245288.63	255233.49	104.05	53.78
3	Arunachal Pradesh	52182.22	51546.22	47581.20	92.31	91.18
4	Assam	222791.43	168704.95	158075.47	93.70	70.95
5	Bihar	1061515.52	620673.82	544504.65	87.73	51.30
6	Chandigarh	5809.16	4321.52	2021.22	46.77	34.79
7	Chhattisgarh	279776.56	175008.90	158992.40	90.85	56.83
8	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	2449.55	1951.15	1508.75	77.33	61.59
9	Daman & Diu	943.22	679.24	574.89	84.64	60.95
10	Delhi	20617.63	9267.31	7882.29	85.05	38.23
11	Goa	3531.71	1872.59	1852.84	98.95	52.46
12	Gujarat	336922.40	232423.93	223362.26	96.10	66.29
13	Haryana	125624.51	80376.53	70043.94	87.14	55.76
14	HP	33329.56	25397.35	25308.45	99.65	75.93
15	J&K	180006.70	95376.58	88218.34	92.49	49.01
16	Jharkhand	252629.35	179584.72	174457.09	97.14	69.06
17	Karnataka	206428.14	158277.44	154767.35	97.78	74.97
18	Kerala	52301.78	48367.02	42970.41	88.84	82.16
19	Lakshadweep	378.77	265.00	126.39	47.70	33.37
20	Madhya Pradesh	419687.85	345768.02	326932.32	94.55	77.90
21	Maharashtra	262622.75	187938.72	159280.35	84.75	60.65
22	Manipur	47543.97	20527.59	11869.47	57.82	24.97
23	Meghalaya	48520.75	30202.50	23753.09	78.65	48.95
24	Mizoram	23671.52	17342.68	16364.23	94.36	69.13
25	Nagaland	28086.86	13030.91	12941.93	99.32	46.08
26	Odisha	277272.42	185367.52	184811.77	99.70	66.65
27	Pondicherry	2035.20	1270.80	1232.44	96.98	60.56
28	Punjab	106653.10	87491.69	84820.51	96.95	79.53

S.No.	State	Outlay approved	Total funds available (including 13th FC & other receipts)	Expenditure as per FMR	% on total funds	% on outlay
29	Rajasthan	399907.77	360167.02	339730.04	94.33	84.95
30	Sikkim	6140.98	4428.70	3837.20	86.64	62.49
31	Tamil Nadu	198807.46	127378.14	110294.20	86.59	55.48
32	Tripura	24124.39	14655.09	14602.61	99.64	60.53
33	UP	1042745.99	750549.74	681527.16	90.80	65.36
34	Uttarakhand	56932.75	40581.10	39452.85	97.22	69.30
35	West Bengal	734146.04	517297.91	455294.32	88.01	62.02
	Total	**6993651.87**	**4805508.25**	**4425946.18**	**92.10**	**63.29**
36	National Component	4582.69	2610.96	2319.20	88.83	50.61
	Grand Total	**6998234.56**	**4808119.21**	**4428265.38**	**92.10**	**63.28**

(Source: TSG)

7.2   While the percentage of expenditure incurred on total funds is 92%, the same on outlay approved is 63%. Larger and larger financial resource mobilisation for the second generation commitments in SSA, which is the vehicle for implementation of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, require a robust financial management system, right from budget estimation to the downstream expenditure, for realisation of value for money for this flagship scheme in social sector.

7.3   Out of 35 States and UTs, 20 States/UTs could meet their expenditure commitments for the year satisfactorily. The percentage of reported expenditure incurred by the States against the funds available is indicated below:

Percentage of expenditure on available funds

Sno	Trend of Expenditure on Available funds	No State	Name of State
1	States which incurred expenditu up to 50%	2	Chandigarh and Lakshadweep
2	States which incurred expenditu up to 60%	1	Manipur
3	States which incurred expenditure Up to 70%	0	-
4	States which incurred expenditure Up to 80%	2	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Meghalaya
5	States which incurred expenditure Up to 90%	10	Andaman & Nicobar, Bihar, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.
6	States which incurred expenditure more than 90%	20	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

(Source: TSG)

Distribution of Expenditure – 2012-13
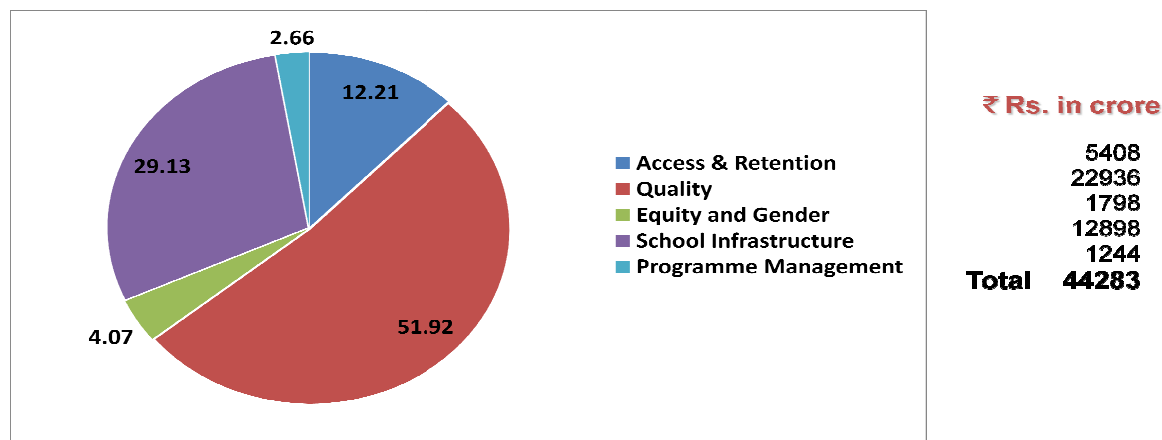
Budget analysis – 2013-14

The Mission was informed that the higher allocation of budget for 2013-14 has been reduced considerably to Rs. 45,975.83 crore keeping in view of the GOI budget estimate of Rs. 27,258 crore. While approving the AWP&B for 2013-14, the activities have been prioritized taking into account the committed liability and essential needs of each State. This step seems to be in keeping with the recommendations of the earlier JRMs. The Mission, however, was informed that PAB Minutes of some States are yet to be finalized. The ad-hoc release of Rs. 8,873.13 crore was made in May 2013 which works out to 32.55% of GOI allocation.

The indicative outlay approved for 2013-14 and the ad-hoc release made is as follows: -

S.No.	State	Outlay for 2013-14	Ad-hoc Released made in 2013-14
1	Andaman & Nicobar	1822.550	440.39
2	Andhra Pradesh	280875.081	55015.17
3	Arunachal Pradesh	30205.810	9325.85
4	Assam	161063.292	33230.97
5	Bihar	578518.003	83536.94
6	Chandigarh	5803.191	
7	Chhattisgarh	142190.244	30043.59
8	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1749.168	386.24
9	Daman & Diu	433.801	145.54
10	Delhi	20700.305	1593.14
11	Goa	2451.229	450.12
12	Gujarat	164577.697	57236.57
13	Haryana	74791.869	

S.No.	State	Outlay for 2013-14	Ad-hoc Released made in 2013-14
14	**HP**	21276.826	6144.00
15	**J&K**	167731.592	22585.97
16	**Jharkhand**	115978.990	45010.71
17	**Karnataka**	116639.362	34850.62
18	**Kerala**	40294.212	11000.42
19	**Lakshadweep**	290.739	58.50
20	**Madhya Pradesh**	370293.832	83694.68
21	**Maharashtra**	141637.548	
22	**Manipur**	41838.671	
23	**Meghalaya**	40028.617	
24	**Mizoram**	19302.596	3638.83
25	**Nagaland**	22171.497	3313.14
26	**Odisha**	159217.278	45891.58
27	**Puducherry**	806.347	299.02
28	**Punjab**	77671.361	17336.05
29	**Rajasthan**	327319.336	85944.03
30	**Sikkim**	6057.083	627.29
31	**Tamil Nadu**	139299.463	23659.16
32	**Tripura**	20136.023	3700.48
33	**UP**	900882.071	131222.72
34	**Uttarakhand**	36824.655	9513.30
35	**West Bengal**	362860.277	87417.99
	Sub Total (SSA)	**4593740.612**	**887313.010**
	National Component	3842.340	
	Total	**4597582.952**	**887313.010**

(Source: TSG)

Trend of expenditure

After the introduction of the monthly expenditure plan from 2008-2009 the states continue to show the encouraging trend of balanced spending throughout the year instead of uneven spending and rush of expenditure in the last two quarters. The chart below demonstrates that for 2012-13 expenditure in the last quarter was 31 percent and in the final two quarters the expenditure was at the near optimum level of 54 percent for the first time.
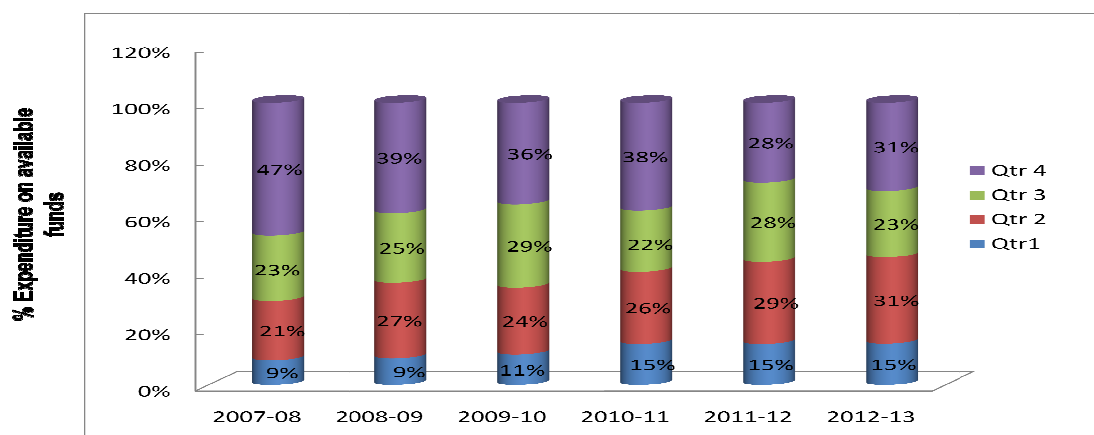
Accounting and disclosure issues

SSA programme, being run on mission mode, has a separate set of accounting and auditing standards codified in the Manual on Financial Management & Procurement. Formats for financial reports and statement of accounts require a disclosure to capture the true and fair view of the state of affairs of the implementing society. One basic requirement for such depiction is adoption of mercantile system of accounting (accrual basis) to capture the assets and liabilities of the entity correctly. This very essential element of accounting, as prescribed, has not yet been adopted in many states. Some other major accounting deficiencies still plaguing the system are:

- Advances for capital works are treated as work-in-progress
- Funds released to SMCs treated as expenditure
- Release of funds treated as expenditure instead of advance
- Un-reconciled/unexplained ledger balances
- Prior period expenses booked in current year
- Refund of unspent balance at block level treated as income/receipts
- Improper system of bank reconciliation
- Non reconciliation of remittances in transit

  Mission recommends that the aberrations in the accounting system may be corrected expeditiously.

Accounting Software

The Mission is happy to note that the financial accounting software has been installed and is working in 31 States up to the district level. In Madhya Pradesh, the standard accounting software has been installed in SPO and 2 districts and other districts are having their own software in place. Accounting software at BRC level has been installed in 8 States of Goa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. However, the same has not been installed in 4 States/UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Island, Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshadweep and Meghalaya. It has, however, been reported that even where the software is reportedly running, manual records are also being maintained at the district levels.

The Mission recommends that once the software is stabilised and the concerned personnel are adequately trained, the practice of maintenance of accounts manually should be dispensed forthwith to avoid duplication of work.

Audit timeliness

The Statutory Audit Report for a financial year is due by 1st November of the next financial year and the States need to ensure its submission by due date. All SSA statutory audit reports for FY 2011 – 12 have been received by March 2013 and a review of timeliness regarding the receipt of audit reports shows that over the years there has been improvement as indicated in the Table below: -

Month of Receipt	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	No. of States		
By November	8	11	9
By December	7	10	10
By January	9	6	7
By February	2	6	4
By March	2	0	5
By April	4	1	0
By May	2	1	0
By June	1	0	0
Total	35	35	35

The Mission feels that statutory reports are very vital instruments of financial control and recommends that sustained effort may continue to see that all audit reports are received by the due date and corrective/remedial actions on the reports are taken immediately.

Audit Observations

Audit comments for FY 2011-12 show some lapses in the system which include non-maintenance/non-production of statutory records; inadequate Internal controls for assets, internal audit not commensurate with size of operations and weak compliance system for internal and statutory audit; insufficient monitoring of funds spent at schools and sub-district level and deviations from procurement procedures. Some instances of serious financial irregularities and fraud have been brought to light by the auditors in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

The mission recommends that the system irregularities pointed out by the statutory auditors should be corrected in a time bound manner and reported to the next JRM.

Audit Compliances

There is considerable improvement in the statutory audit compliance by most states. However, it is reported that statutory audit compliance is still outstanding from the states as given in the table below: -

Year	States
2005-06 (8 States)	Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland
2006-07 (16 States)	Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Puducherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura
2007-08 (14 States)	Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh
2008-09 (22 States)	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Goa Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
2009-10 (28 States)	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh & West Bengal
2010-11 (31 States)	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, D&N Haveli, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand & West Bengal

There is an urgent need to settle the old outstanding paras as with the passage of time there is an increasing likelihood of the records not being available with the attendant risk that some improprieties may never be accounted for.

The mission recommends that MHRD/the states should closely monitor the settlement of outstanding audit objections and fix accountability in this matter.

Internal Audit

Internal audit is the most effective system for risk assessment in any organization/scheme, especially for a multivariate scheme like SSA. The Mission noted that MHRD is vigorously monitoring the progress of internal audit through Quarterly Review Meetings of State Finance Controllers. MHRD mentioned that internal audit for 2012-13 is being done in 3 States of Andaman & Nicobar, Gujarat and Uttarakhand on concurrent basis, in 23 States the internal audit is in

progress and in 9 States of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Manipur and Nagaland internal audit has not been carried out.

The Mission recommends that the 9 states in default should henceforth be asked to complete their internal audit exercise without delay and bring the status up-to-date.

Staffing

7.4   The Mission noted that there is an improvement in the staffing of Finance and Accounts staff as shown in the Table below: -

	Position as on 31-3-2012		Position as on 31-3-2013	
Office	No of vacant posts	% of vacant posts	No of vacant posts	% of vacant posts
SPO	68	22	61	17
DPO	410	23	315	19
Block	7675	45	1943	15

At district level, status of FM staffing is being regularly monitored by MHRD. However the status of vacancies for major states has been quiet high and has not shown an improvement over the past few years. Large vacancies exist in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

7.5 Based on the initiative of MHRD states are now allowed to hire one block level accountant for every 50 schools. Over the past one or two years this has resulted in introduction of this new set of accountants with the objective of strengthening block level accounting as well as for supervision/ support to SMC level account keeping. Large vacancies exist in Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

7.6   The Mission reiterates that vacancies should be filled up through constructive action as large scale vacancies in this cadre vitiate the financial management system.

Capacity Building of Finance & Accounts staff

7.7   The Mission was informed that in 2012-13 capacity building for finance and accounts staff was not provided by 10 States of Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. While adequate training was provided by other States, the training provided by 16 States of Andaman& Nicobar Island, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura and West Bengal was found to be inadequate as they did not provide the full 5 days of training as stipulated in the FMP manual.

As development of professionally competent contingent of Finance and Accounts staff is a pre-requisite for having a robust financial management system in operation, capacity building of Finance and Accounts staff needs serious attention. The Mission recommends that adequate

attention should be paid in this matter. The finance and accounts staff should have adequate exposure to the latest systems in financial reporting and accounting.

Implementation of CPSMS

The Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS) is a Central Sector Plan Scheme of the Planning Commission which is being implemented by the office of the Controller General of Accounts in Partnership with National Informatics Centre (NIC). The Scheme, which has been introduced in 2008-09, is a common transaction based online fund management and payment system and MIS for the Plan Schemes of Government of India. Initially this scheme has been extended to 9 flagship Plan schemes of Government of India which include SSA. The releases from Government of India will be based on the balances available under the Scheme.

The Mission was informed that more than 6.84 lakh CPSMS registrations have been completed under SSA covering State/Districts/BRC/CRC/School level entities. Reportedly SSA now accounts for the highest number of registrations in India under the CPSMS. This will strengthen funds management/ program implementation in the future.

The Mission appreciates the progress of registration at various levels carried out by SSA under the Scheme as given below: -

State level   -   100%
District level   -   93%
BRC level   -   92%
CRC level   -   72%
School level   -   60%

Procurement

Procurement Software

An online Procurement software to monitor procurements worth Rs. 10 lakh and more has been hosted sometime back on a dedicated website (www.rte-ssaprocurement.com). The site is being maintained and hosted through an Internet Service Provider, KITINFINET.

The Mission was informed that currently 8 States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are using this software to monitor the procurement worth Rs. 10 lakh and more.

The Mission recommends that the remaining States should also ensure the use of the software extensively for monitoring the procurement. MHRD should monitor the website closely to ensure that States are uploading information on the database as otherwise the purpose of this control system will be defeated.

Procurement Plan

Para 113 of the Manual on Financial Management and Procurement envisages preparation of an annual procurement plan under SSA and uploading the same on the State's SSA website under intimation to MHRD within one month of the approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget by the PAB at the National level. Annual Procurement Plan is another important tool to monitor procurement. The Mission was informed that MHRD on 22nd May 2013 has urged the States to prepare the Procurement Plan for 2013-14 and upload on the States' SSA website immediately.

The Mission recommends that MHRD should monitor closely to ensure that States are uploading the procurement plan on their website.

Major observations of the statutory auditors on Procurement

The Mission noted that the statutory auditors have pointed out some key observations on procurement in their Audit Report for 2011-12 which include purchases without inviting tenders, purchase of large value items on local shopping instead of open tender, not following the prescribed procurement procedures, non recovery of TDS from contractors' bills, irregularities in procurement of goods, non-production of procurement documents etc.

The Mission recommends that these observations need to be pursued to the finality and suitable remedial measures are to be taken at MHRD and State level.