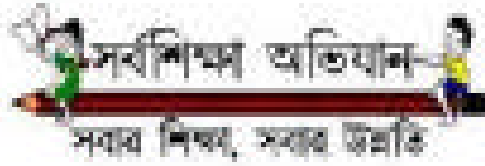


Integrated Education for Disabled Children

A Report



**RESEARCH & EVALUATION CELL
DISTRICT PROJECT OFFICE
SARVA SHIKSHA MISSION, BARDHAMAN**

Executive Summary

- ✍ Objective of IED is to bring more CWSN under the umbrella of SSA and provide them functional literacy & education at par with other children.
- ✍ The target group is children in the 6-14 years age bracket.
- ✍ Steps include setting up resource centers, support manpower development and train required personnel, provide barrier free access to schools, provide mental, physical and financial support for mainstreaming disabled children.
- ✍ SSA provides upto Rs.1200/- per CWSN per year.
- ✍ Total 140699 CWSN identified and 115384 children enrolled in schools.
- ✍ 14134 enrolled in EGS and 10731 CWSN provided home-based education.
- ✍ 94% schools have ramps and 25 % have handrails for barrier free access.
- ✍ Aids and Appliances provided to only 25 % of the CWSN.
- ✍ In 19 % of schools at least one teacher have been trained on IED issues.
- ✍ **Awareness is Poor** - In none of the VEHCs, guardians of CWSN have been inducted and most of the members are unaware of the IED scheme.
- ✍ In the sample, 50 % children face orthopedic disorder, 28 % suffer from Mental/Neurological disorder and 6 % have Hearing/Speech problems.
- ✍ Majority of the CWSN are regular in classes and adapting to the syllabus.
- ✍ Only 30 % of interviewed CWSN have received financial support from SSA.
- ✍ 75 % of CWSN dissatisfied with school atmosphere & only 18 % find their classmates co-operative.
- ✍ Performance of DLROs is really dismal. Only 6 % of school authorities and just 2 % of students are satisfied with the performance of *Special Educators*.
- ✍ SEs are irregular, seldom visit the schools, and whenever they do they do not play their role responsibly.
- ✍ IEP is basically non-existent and home-based education unheard of.
- ✍ Scheme has provided physical infrastructure but failed to provide compassionate personnel crucial for successful implementation
- ✍ Awareness Campaigns, Monitoring of Special Educators, Stress on Personal contact rather than on physical infrastructure , are suggested steps.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	6
1. Inclusive Education – An Overview.....	6
2. SSA’s Policy on Inclusion.....	6
3. Education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN).....	7
4. Objectives of the IED Scheme.....	7
5. Provisions for CWSN under SSA	8
IED IN WEST BENGAL.....	9
1. Background Facts	9
2. IED in Bardhaman District.....	10
a) Overvie w of some facts	10
3. Methodology of Survey.....	11
DETAIL REPORT - SURVEY FINDINGS	12
1. Physical Infrastructure:	12
2. Teacher Training/Guardian Participation:	12
3. Personal Attributes of CWSN:	12
4. Educational Attributes of CWSN :.....	16
5. School Environment:	16
6. Performance of Special Educators:	17
CONCLUSION	19

ACKNOWLEDEMENT

We are gladly expressing our view that the Research & Evaluation Cell, Sarva Shiksha Mission, Bardhaman had undertaken some qualitative Studies to assess various programmes of SSM. A research work on Integrated Education for Disabled Children is being published. The findings of this study should be useful to the educationists, planners and policy makers to formulate future policy and strategies on elementary level of education on the Children with Special Needs.

District Research & Evaluation Cell likes to express special thanks to Dr. Rajarshi Majumder, Department of Economics, Burdwan University to undertake this research works and spent a considerable amount of his time and effort.

Immense gratitude is expressed to the Savadhipati, Zilla Parishad, Bardhaman, District Project Director and District Magistrate, Bardhaman, Chairman, DPSC, Additional District Magistrate (in Charge of SSM), District Project Officer, SSM, Bardhaman and other district officials for extending their kind support and encouragement.

We are grateful to the field Investigators for collection the data avoiding all kinds of risks in visiting interior villages and schools.

The study is not possible without direct cooperation of the children, we hope their bright future. Let us make the world a better for the Children with Special Needs.

*District Research & Evaluation Cell,
Sarva Shiksha Mission, Bardhaman*

Acknowledgement

To implement Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) the Government of India and our State Government have taken many necessary steps. On the track of UEE the District Sarva Shiksha Mission, Bardhaman has been initiated many programmes from the beginning of the project.

In the field of Research & Evaluation, District Sarva Shiksha Mission undertook some qualitative studies to assess the branches of the project. District SSM completed Study on Integrated Education for Disabled jointly with Economics Department, the University of Burdwan.

We like to measure the educational status of the Children With Special Needs and the degree of consciousness of the schools and the community members.

I would like to express my gratitude especially to Dr. Rajarshi Majumder, Head of the Economics Department, BU to undertake this research works and spent a considerable amount of his time and effort.

I am grateful to all the district level officials and pers onnel for providing immense support at every stage. I congratulate all the Shikshasebis, children, community members, guardians and teachers who helped us in completing this research work.

**District Project Officer,
Sarva Shiksha Mission, Bardhaman**

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Inclusive Education – An Overview

Inclusive education, as we know it today, is a process. It is about breaking barriers, an on-going search to respond to diversity and about the presence and equal participation of all students within the mainstream education system. As a process, it requires that education systems become more and more flexible and accommodating without losing out on quality. It means that the supports that the child needs for education should be there in schools. It also implies capacity building of teachers, parents and communities to negotiate with the education system and for governments to develop policies wherein inclusion is perceived as a vital element of the education system.

The key objective of SSA is Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). Three important aspects of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. This goal of UEE, has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, making free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right, for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. This Amendment has given a new thrust to the education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), as without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. In-fact inclusion of one of the groups, which is extremely crucial for UEE, is perhaps that of the CWSN. Hence, education of CWSN is an important component of SSA.

2. SSA's Policy on Inclusion

SSA ensures that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. Hence, SSA has adopted a *zero rejection policy*. This means that no child having special needs should be deprived of the right to education and taught in an environment, which is best, suited to his/her learning needs. These include special schools, EGS, AIE or even home-based education. The major thrust of SSA is on inclusion or mainstreaming CWSN into the fabric of formal elementary schooling. Experiences of programmes like DPEP and various research findings have shown that inclusion is best determined by the individual needs of the child. Most children with special needs can be enrolled

and retained in regular schools if adequate resource support is provided to them, whereas there are others who might have to be provided some kind of pre-integration programmes, before they can be mainstreamed in a classroom. There might also be still some CWSN with severe profound disabilities, who would require an educational programme and intensive specialized support completely beyond the purview and scope of a formal school in the current situation. *Thus, SSA has adopted a more expansive and a broad-based understanding of the concept of inclusion, wherein a multi-option model of educating CWSN is being implemented.* The dual objective of embracing this model is to bring more CWSN under the umbrella of SSA and to provide to CWSN appropriate need based skills, be it vocational, functional literacy or simply activities of daily living. Further, an attempt is being made to provide these skills in the most appropriate learning environment.

3. Education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN)

CWSN have often been marginalized on account of their disability, lack of awareness on the part of the community about their potential, apprehensions on the part of the teachers to teach such children and a general societal attitude of sympathy towards such children focusing more on what they cannot do rather than on what they can do. Realizing the importance of integrating CWSN in regular schools, SSA framework has made adequate provisions for educating CWSN. SSA ensures that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category & degree of disability, is provided meaningful & quality education. The target group is children in the 6-14 years age bracket.

4. Objectives of the IED Scheme

1. To provide least restrictive environment to disabled children so that they may grow and develop like other children.
2. To integrate the children with mild to severe disabilities to formal Govt. schools.
3. Parent / Sibling Counselling
4. To support manpower development activities and train required personal such as normal school teachers, DIET lecturers and itinerant teachers.
5. To setup resource centres.

-
6. To provide an equal opportunity to the disabled children and prepare them for life like other members of the society.
 7. To mainstream the disabled children to achieve principle of normalization.

5. Provisions for CWSN under SSA

SSA provides upto Rs.1200/- per child for the inclusion of disabled children, as per specific proposal, per year. District plan for children with special needs is formulated within the Rs.1200/- per child norm. The interventions under SSA for inclusive education are identification, functional and formal assessment, appropriate educational placement, preparation of Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), provision of aids and appliances, teacher training, resource support, removal of architectural barriers, research, monitoring and evaluation and a special focus on girls with special needs.

Chapter 2

IED IN WEST BENGAL

1. Background Facts

A total of 140699 CWSN have been identified and 115384 children have been enrolled in the schools. 14134 are enrolled in EGS and 10731 CWSN are being provided home-based education. 34707 CWSN have been provided with aids and appliances; 98958 teachers have been provided intensive training on IE; 122654 teachers have been oriented to IE through 20-day training; and 2732 teachers were provided RCI foundation course. 709 resource teachers have been appointed. 43506 schools have been provided with ramps for barrier free access.

In SSA-West Bengal, under the IE component, NGOs provide support in the form of State Level Resource Organisations (SLROs) and District Level Resource Organisations (DLROs). Activities like identification of CWSN, distribution of aids and appliances, teacher-training, school readiness, enrolment, providing resource support to the enrolled CWSN and home-based rehabilitation to address zero rejection policy etc. are undertaken by the districts with the help of DLROs. The overall aim is to bring out-of-school CWSN to general schools and provide individualized education to the enrolled disabled children. Whereas, on one hand, at the State level the role of the SLRO(s) is mainly advisory, on the other hand in the districts, DLROs are more actively involved in the process of implementation. A support mechanism has thus, been developed and NGOs already working in the field of disabilities facilitate implementation of this task in collaboration with SSA personnel. The NGOs that form the SLRO for IE programme in the State assist in planning, development of training modules, arranging aids and appliances and monitoring and evaluation. These institutes have had long experience of working on issues of disability and education of CWSN. The SLRO has mainly been formed to draw upon the resources available within the State. Besides, the SLRO conceptualise the strategies and interventions for IE implementation; address area specific problems; develop training materials/modules; train master trainers, key resource persons and DLRO members; draw up time bound calendar of activities and carry out specific field-based assignments. Compared to SLROs, the DLROs are more closely involved with the process of implementation. These DLROs devote more time to the programme and

undertake fieldbased assignments/tasks. Future course of action and ways of tackling specific problems are also a part of their agenda. The State, with the help of DLROs, is implementing IE activities in all the educational districts. 196 DLROs are functioning along with 709 special educators. The State is trying to shape inclusion of CWSN with the active help of parents, teachers, common people and all kinds of professionals concerned with the promotion of IE. One of the activities carried out by the DLROs under SSA is Observation of the World Disabled Day every year, mainly to increase awareness on IE.

2. IED in Bardhaman District

a) Overview of some facts

In Bardhaman district there are around 4803 schools under the IED programme. Of the total 31 Blocks and 10 Municipal areas, 18 Blocks and 3 Municipal areas are having DLROs to support to the scheme.

In these schools, there are about 5610 reported CWSN, most of whom are supposedly facing Orthopedic and Hearing/Speech disorders.

Bardhaman District at a Glance

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>2007</i>
Area (Sq KM)	7024
Number of Municipalities (Urban)	10
Number of CD Blocks (Rural)	31
Population (projected)	75,25,764
Population Density (per sq km)	1071
Literacy (%)	70.2
Child Population (5-14 Years)	11,00,000
Enrolled Children – Primary	5,37,877
Enrolled Children – Upper Primary	4,41,804

Source: Office of the DPO, SSA -Bardhaman, Census of India – 2001.

Table 1

IED in Bardhaman District at a Glance

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>2007</i>
Total No of Blocks / Municipalities	42
No of Blocks / Municipalities where IED intervention activities are going on	21
No of Special Educators present	84
No of Identified CWSN	16154
No of CWSN enrolled in schools	5610
No of CWSN provided Home-based education	739

Source: Office of the DPO, SSA -Bardhaman.

Table 2

School Information related to IED in Bardhaman District

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>2007</i>
Schools in the District having enrolled CWSN	4803
No of Schools having ramp and handrail facility	2290
No of CWSN provided aids and appliances	1217
No of Regular Teachers trained on IED issues	19,000
No of CWSN provided Incentives	5457
Fund for Special TLM kit distributed (Rs)	3.6 Lakh

Source: Office of DPO, SSA -Bardhaman.

Table 3

3. Methodology of Survey

To prepare the report on IED in Bardhaman district we undertook a field survey. We were constrained by the official direction of having only 25 samples. However, we surveyed 50 CWSN for preparing the report.

Two areas with DLROs - *Bardhaman and Durgapur*, and three without DLROs - *Purbasthali, Memari and Raniganj*, were visited to bring out the ground realities. *In total, 17 schools were visited*. While raniganj and Durgapur make up the Western region, Bardhaman and Memari constitute the Central region, and Purbasthali is the representative of Eastern region. It must however be noted that the sample size is too small to have any rigorous testing of the results and in future there must be large sample study of the condition of CWSN and IED.

Chapter 3

DETAIL REPORT - SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Physical Infrastructure:

It was observed that *94 per cent of the schools have ramps* though *only 25 per cent had handrails* for barrier free access (Table 4). *Aids and Appliances have been provided to only 25 percent* of the CWSN while *in 31 percent schools special TLM has been prepared* for them.

2. Teacher Training/Guardian Participation:

Only *19 per cent of school authorities* responded that at least *one teacher* of the school *have been trained on IED issues*. In none of the VEHCs, guardians of a CWSN have been inducted into the committee and *most of the VEHC members are unaware of the IED scheme*.

Survey Findings on IED in Bardhaman District – School Level Query

<i>Percentage of Schools</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>All</i>
With Ramp	80.0	100.0	100.0	93.7
With Handrail	20.0	50.0	0.0	25.0
With at least one teacher trained on IED issues	0.0	33.3	20.0	18.7
CWSN has been provided aids & appliances	20.0	0.0	60.0	25.0
Special TLM Kit has been prepared	20.0	0.0	80.0	31.2

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 4

3. Personal Attributes of CWSN:

Of the total 50 children interviewed by us, 28 were boys and 22 were girls. While majority of them are in the 5-8 age group, there were few in 9-14 age group also (Table 5a).

The types of problems that the CWSN varies from Visual disorder to Hearing & Speech problems, to Orthopedic disorders and Neurological or Mental disorders (Table 5b). *50 percent of the children face orthopedic disorder, 28 percent suffer from Mental/neurological disorder* while only *6 percent have Hearing/Speech problems*. Parents of most of the CWSN are either traders or daily laborers (in the urban areas) or agricultural laborers (in the rural areas) (Table 5c).

Survey Findings– Age & Gender Distribution of CWSN

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number of CWSN Interviewed -Total	28	22	50
Numbers in 5-8 Age Group	13	7	20
Numbers in 8-10 Age Group	6	4	10
Numbers in 10-12 Age Group	3	3	6
Numbers in 12-14 Age Group	6	5	11
Numbers in 14+ Age Group	0	3	3

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 5a

Survey Findings – Distribution of CWSN by Problem Type

<i>Percentage of CWSN with</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
Visual Disorder	17.8	13.6	16.0
Hearing / Speech Disorder	7.1	4.5	6.0
Orthopaedic Disorder	42.8	59.0	50.0
Mental / Neurological Disorder	32.1	22.7	28.0

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 5b

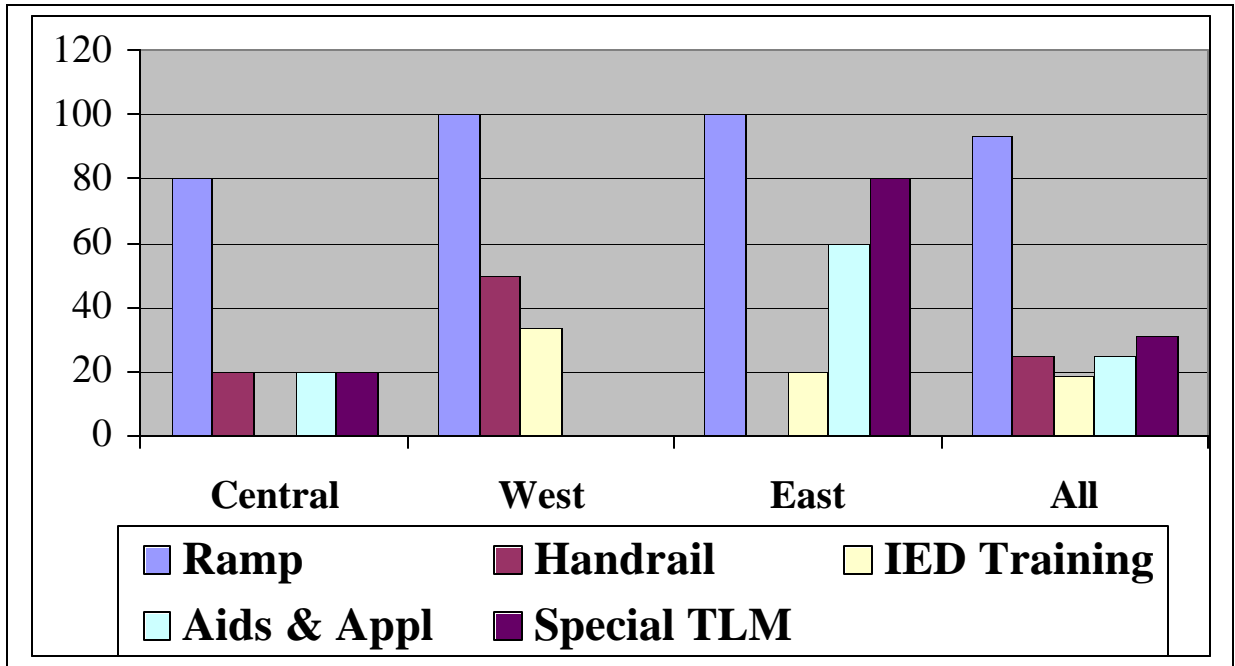
Survey Findings – Parents Background of CWSN

<i>Learners with Parents as</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>All</i>
Agricultural Labourer	42.1	0.0	57.1	32.0
Industrial Worker	5.2	17.6	14.2	12.0
Others	52.6	82.3	28.5	56.0

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 5c

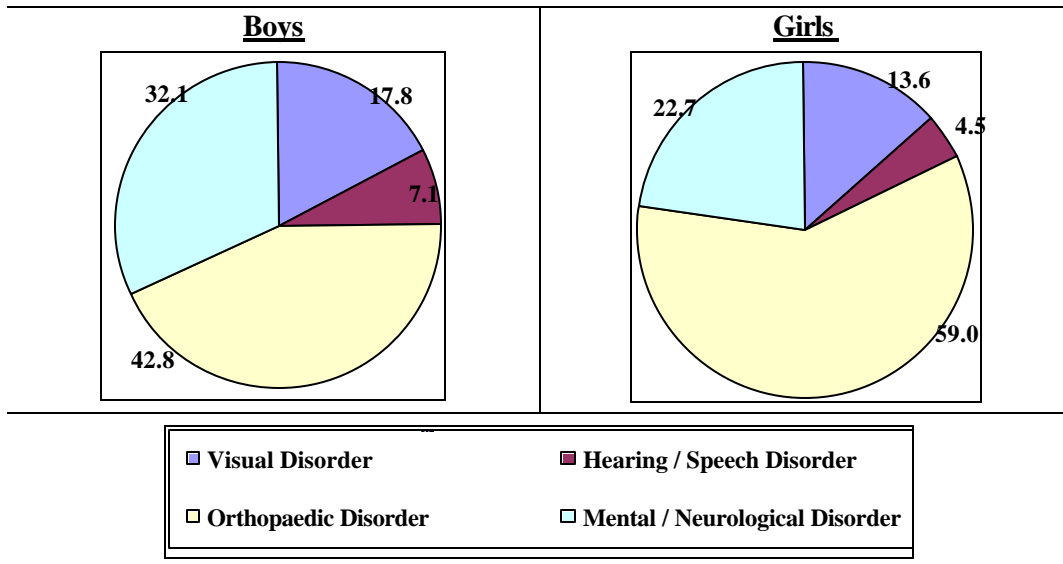
Infrastructure in Formal Schools for CWSN



Source: Field Survey, June 2008

Figure - 1

Type of Problems of CWSN



Source: Field Survey, June 2008

Figure - 2

Characteristics of Enrolled CWSN– (Percentages)

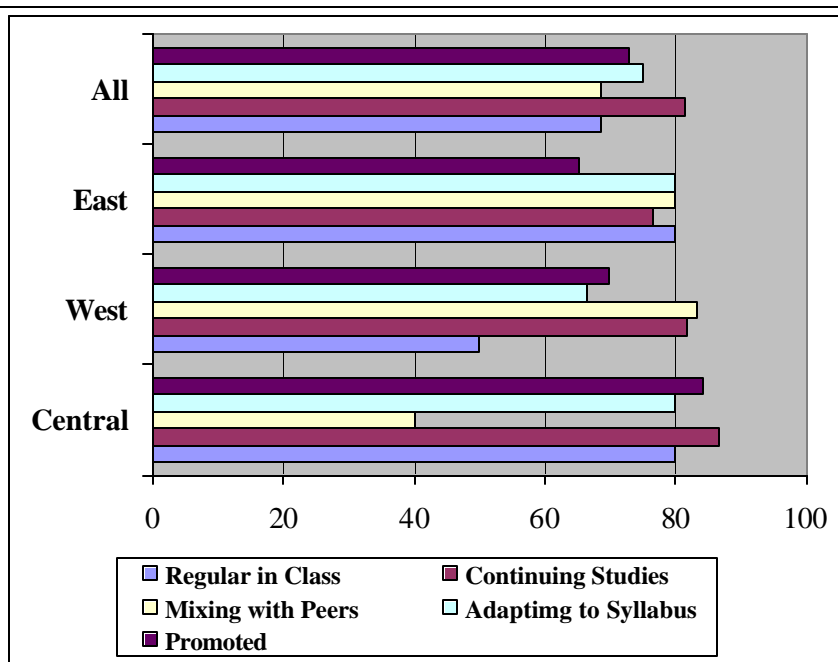


Figure - 3

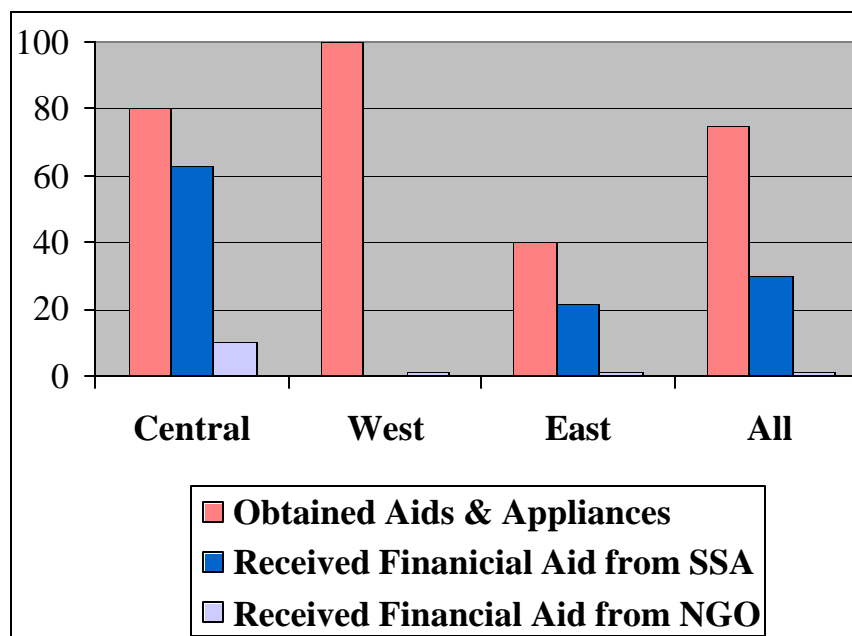


Figure – 4

4. Educational Attributes of CWSN :

It is heartening to note that *majorities of the CWSN are regular in attending classes and adapting to the syllabus* (Table 6). Continuity of studies, obtaining promotion to next higher class and mixing with peers are also satisfactory. However, there is regional disparity and central areas are doing better than the other two in all aspects except peer group mixing.

What is shocking to note is that only 30 percent of the enrolled and interviewed CWSN have received financial support from SSA and a meager 2 percent from NGOs and other sources. In the Western region, none have received such support, though they have obtained aids and appliances.

Survey Findings on IED in Bardhaman District – Student Level Query

<i>Percentage of CWSN</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>All</i>
Regular in Attendance	80.0	50.0	80.0	68.7
Continuing Studies	86.8	81.8	76.7	81.6
Mixing with Peers	40.0	83.3	80.0	68.7
Adapting to Syllabus	80.0	66.6	80.0	75.0
Obtained Promotion	84.2	69.7	65.1	72.8
Obtained Aids and Appliances	80.0	100.0	40.0	75.0
Obtained Financial Support from SSM	63.1	0.0	21.4	30.0
Obtained Financial Support from NGOs	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 6

5. School Environment:

Most of the CWSN say that school atmosphere is encouraging (Table 7). But in central region, 75 percent of them are not satisfied with the school atmosphere. But the CWSN are not happy about their classmates as *only 18 percent say that classmates are co-operative*.

Survey Findings on IED in Bardhaman District – Student Opinion

<i>Percentage of CWSN saying</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>All</i>
School Atmosphere is Encouraging	26.3	100.0	100.0	72.0
Classmates are Cooperative	26.3	23.5	0.0	18.0

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 7

6. Performance of Special Educators:

One of the major roles in the IED programme is that of the Special Educators. The DLROs, mostly NGOs, appoint special educators for every school. They are supposed to visit the schools regularly to assess the needs and progress of the enrolled CWSN in that school. They are also supposed to act as a coordinating person between the school authorities, guardians of CWSN and the SSA. In addition they are also responsible to arrange for aids and appliances and financial support from the SSA for the CWSN. Home based education and preparation of IEP are also functions of the special educator.

However, the situation is really dismal in this regard (Table 8). *Only 6 percent of school authorities and just 2 percent of the students are satisfied with the performance of the special educator.* They are irregular, seldom visit the schools, and whenever they do they do not play their role responsibly.

Survey Findings on IED in Bardhaman District – Role of Special Educators

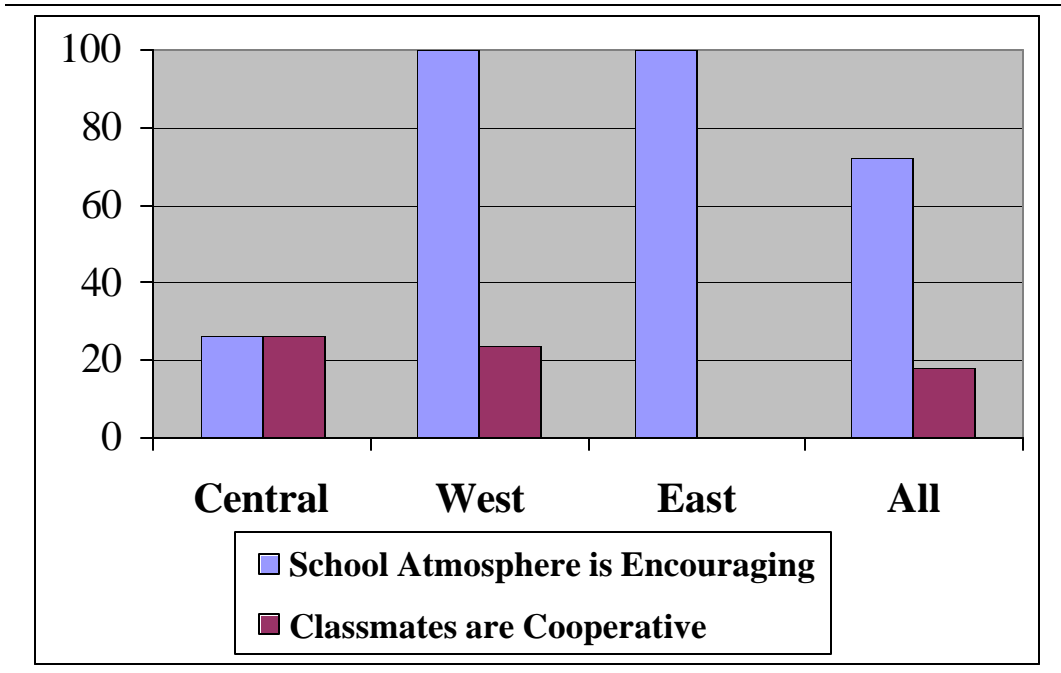
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Central</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>All</i>
<i>Schools' Opinion –</i>				
Service is Regular	20.0	0.0	0.0	6.2
Service is Satisfactory	20.0	0.0	0.0	6.2
<i>Students' Opinion –</i>				
Service is Regular	5.2	0.0	0.0	2.0
Service is Satisfactory	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Field Survey, June 2008.

Table 8

There is no effort at providing meaningful and compassionate support with CWSN and the children are rarely finding any help from these personnel. IEP is basically non-existent and home-based education unheard of. *Under such circumstances whatever little assistance the children are getting are coming from sympathetic teachers.* The scheme has provided physical infrastructure but has failed in providing the human touch to the programme, without which there is little scope of success.

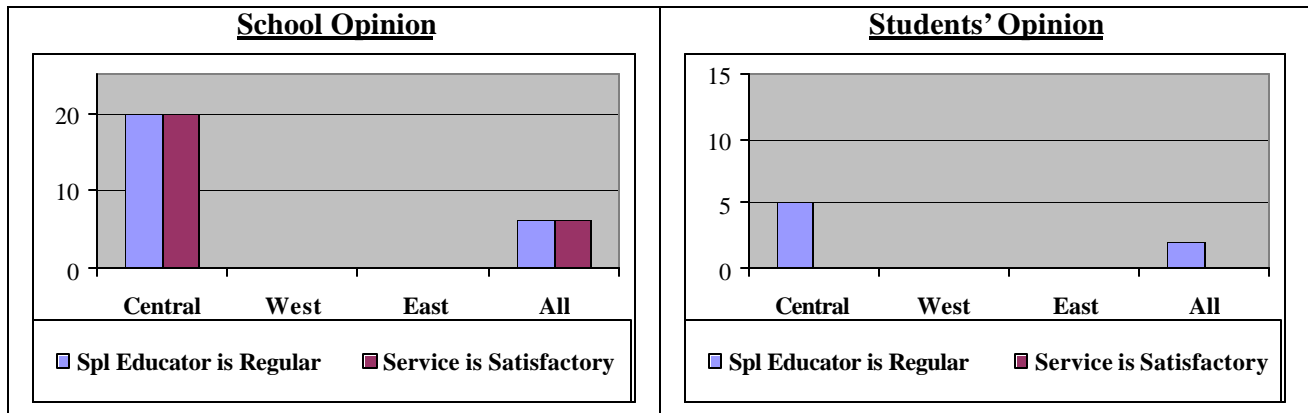
Perceptions of Enrolled CWSN – (Percentages)



Source: Field Survey, June 2008

Figure - 5

Performance of Special Educators



Source: Field Survey, June 2008

Figure - 6

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

1. Summary of Findings

Attitudinal barriers prevent CWSN from coming to schools. Unless these barriers are effectively addressed, success in bringing significant number of CWSN to school may be difficult to achieve. Hence, *it is important to undertake wide spread awareness* on the need and importance of educating CWSN. In this regard, an attempt has been made by the IED programme of the SSM. However, the program is observed to have little success in meeting its objectives because of the limited roles played by the DLROs and Special Educators. As a result, *there is no perceptible difference between the condition of the CWSN in the areas with DLROs and in the areas without them*. Consequently, even in the limited areas where the programme is having additional manpower and institutional support, it is doing not as much for the children in need as desirable.

2. Suggestions

The situation is therefore pathetic and serious introspection is necessary on the part of parents, teachers, policy makers and the implementing personnel.

The most important step in this regard is Generation of Awareness among all members of the society. One-to-one and Group meeting between Special Educators and Parents of the CWSN, between Special Educators and school teachers are necessary. These meetings must *focus on illustration and exhibit of successful CWSN* who have been able to defeat their inherent shortcomings and have emerged as one of the many children.

Participation of CWSN in integrated competitive and non-competitive co-curricular events like Sports, Cultural functions, Drawing competitions, etc. will create a feeling of belonging, normalcy, and confidence among the CWSN. This mindset will help them in overcoming their physical limitations.

Curriculum adaptation according to the needs of the CWSN and *strengthening of manpower* through on-job training programmes for the regular teachers and Special Educators are some other steps that may help the cause of the CWSN.