SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (SSA)

NINETEENTH JOINT REVIEW MISSION

(January 13-27, 2014)

AIDE MEMOIRE

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mission wishes to put on record its profuse gratitude to the officers, staff, teachers, resource persons and others of the following organisations/institutions without whose un-stinted support this exercise would not have been possible:-

- **MHRD, TSG (EdCIL), NCERT & NUEPA**
- **State Govt.s, State SSA Societies, & Administrations of Districts visited**
- **BRCs, CRCs, Schools, KGBVs, Resource Institutions, and other institutions visited**
- **Parents and Children who were kind enough to interact with us**
- **Any others that we interacted with, whose mention may have got inadvertently left out.**

Acronyms

ABL	Activity Based learning
AEO	Assistant Educational Officer
ADEPTS	Advancement of Educational Performance through Teacher Support
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
ATR	Action Taken Report
BEO	Block Educational Officer
BRC	Block Resource Centre
BRCs	Block Resource Person
CAL	Computer Aided Learning
CCE	Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CRPs	Cluster Resource Person
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
EBB	Educationally Backward Block
EC	Executive Committee
EDI	Education Development Index
EU	European Union
FM&P	Financial Management and Procurement
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoI	Government of India
HBE	Home Based Education
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
IRT	Item Response Theory
JRM	Joint Review Mission
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
LEP	Learning Enhancement Programme
MDM	Mid Day Meal
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MI	Monitoring Institutions
MIS	Management Information System
MLE	Multi Lingual Education
MLL	Minimum Level of Learning
NAS	National Achievement Survey
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research & Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCFTE	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
NE	North East
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NPEGEL	National Program for Education of Girls' at Elementary Level
NRST	Non-Residential Special Training
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning & Administration
OBC	Other Backward Caste
ODI	Open Distance Learning
OOSC	Out of School Children
PAB	Project Approval Board
PINDICS	Performance indicators for elementary school teachers
PIL	Public-Interest Litigation
REMS	Research, Evaluation, Monitoring and Supervision

RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SMC	School Management Committee
SFD	Special Focus Districts
SIEMAT	State Institute for Educational Management and Training
SMC	School Management Committee
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TET	Teacher Education Test
TLE	Teacher Learning Equipment
TLM	Teaching Learning Material
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSG	Technical Support Group
TWD	Tribal Welfare Department
UEE	Universal Elementary Education
UPS	Upper Primary School
UT	Union Territory
WCD	Women Child Development

1. INTRODUCTION & KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1   Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has been under implementation since 2000-01 as a flagship integrated programme of the Govt of India (GOI), in partnership with State Governments, for universalising elementary education (UEE) among children of 6-14 years age group throughout the country, **in a mission mode.** It is a successor to several programmes which were limited either in scope or coverage or both, notably *Operation Blackboard* and *Non-Formal Education* started after the National Policy on Education, 1986**,** and the World Bank-assisted *District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)*, started around 1994.

Though preliminary activities under SSA began in 2001/02, its implementation in right earnest may be said to have begun in the Tenth Five Year Plan, which commenced in 2002-03.

1.2   Some important milestones in the evolution of SSA, as also in some related programmes/fields, are as follows:

2004-05	1. GOI imposes an Education Cess @2% of Income Tax to fund programmes of Elementary Education, notably SSA, resulting in a jump in outlays 2. The cooked mid-day meal (MDM) programme is universalised at the Primary level.
2007-08	The MDM programme is extended to the upper primary level in 3427 educationally-backward blocks (EBBs).
2004-10	World Bank, DFID & EC provided about 10% of the outlay as assistance
1.4.2010	The Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education Act, 2009, (hereafter, "the RTE Act"), came into force.
2010-11	The SSA Framework for Implementation was revised so as to align it with the RTE Act.
2010-13	External Assistance for SSA only from EC & DFID.
2013	onwards External Assistance for SSA only from EC.

1.3   SSA is a highly ambitious programme in its scale and sweep. The following figures would give some idea in this behalf:-

Enrolment in Classes I-VIII (30.9.12)	20 Crore
Estimated Child Population in the relevant age group:	20.8 Crore
No. of Elementary Schools	14.3 Lakh
Approx. No. of Elementary School Teachers	60 Lakh

Apart from its huge scale which the above figures bring out, SSA also has to address the following complexities:

- Education was a State subject till 1977, when it was made a Concurrent one. However, even now, the overwhelming majority of Schools – and, therefore, teachers - belong to State Governments.
- The socio-political (28 States, 7 UTs), ethnic, economic, cultural, and linguistic (22 Constitutionally-recognised languages, many more other languages and dialects) diversity of India.

Financial and other forms of resource support have been the main instruments with the GOI to persuade States to move in a broadly-agreed direction in the area of School Education, including UEE. The following table shows the amounts of central expenditure under SSA since 2002-03:

Period	Central Expenditure (Crore Rs)
X Five Year Plan, 2002-07	27,890
XI Five Year Plan, 2007-12	76,350
XII Five Year Plan, 1 Yr 8 Mths (2012-13 & Apr-Nov, 2013)	42,692
TOTAL, 2002-2013 (Upto Nov.)	**1,46,932**

Thus, GOI alone has (at current parity of about Rs 62 to a Dollar) spent about $24 Billion on SSA during the above period. If one were to add the State share, the expenditure would be well above $ 30B.

1.4   SSA: GOALS

The four SSA Goals are:
1. All children in School;
2. Bridging Gender & Social Gaps;
3. All children **retained** through the Elementary Education cycle, i.e. through Classes I-VIII; and
4. All children receive education of **satisfactory quality**.

1.5   SSA: THE GROUND COVERED SO FAR

Considerable progress has been achieved under SSA over the years. For example:
- 24 States now report having provided universal access at Primary and Upper Primary levels as per their norms.
- NER has reached 90.8% and 64.2% at Primary and Upper Primary levels, respectively.
- Enrolment of Muslim children, as a percentage of the total, improved by nearly 50% between 2007-08 and 2012-13.
- Gender gap in enrolment declined from 8.4% in 2005-06 to 3% in 2012-13.
- With appointment of nearly 15 lakh SSA-funded teachers, Pupil-Teacher Ratio has improved from 36 in 2005-06 to 27 in 2012-13.
- About 6.3 lakh untrained teachers have been/are currently being trained.
- Student Attendance Rate has improved, especially at the Primary level, from 68.5% in 2006-07 to 76.2% in 2012-13.

- Three rounds of National Assessment Surveys undertaken by the NCERT, generally, show some degree of improvement in learning outcomes.
- Activity-based learning, Improving Reading/Writing/Comprehension/ Maths in early grades, Science and Maths teaching at the Upper Primary level, and facilitating transition of tribal children from mother tongue to the School language are SSA's current focus areas in the area of Quality.

1.6   THE JOINT REVIEW MECHANISM

The assistance agreements with external partners provide for biennial joint reviews of progress of SSA – a desk review and a field review each year at intervals of about 6 months. A Joint Review Mission (JRM) is mounted for each review – so called, because it has as members nominees of the GOI as well of the external partner(s). The current one is the 19th in the Series for which the following five States were selected:

1. Karnataka
2. Kerala, and
3. Madhya Pradesh (MP)
4. Nagaland.
5. Punjab

The Terms of Reference of the JRM are given in **Annex 1.1**, while its composition, States and districts visited by different members, and the day-wise programme may be seen in **Annex 1.2.** (Though State visits were supposed to be for 5 days, from 14-18 January 2014, they had unfortunately to be shortened by about one-and-a-half days in the case of MP and Karnataka, due to State Government's inability to receive the Mission over Makar Sankranti/Pongal, thus resulting in loss of precious time.)

1.7   EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INDEX (EDI) OF SELECTED STATES

The **DISE Flash Statistics, 2012-13,** shows the Educational Development Index (being a composite index combining indices for access, infrastructure, teachers, and learning outcomes) for each State/UT. Based on its composite value for the primary and upper primary stages, the five States chosen for the 19th JRM ranked as follows in 2012-13:

STATE	2012-13	
	EDI	RANK
Karnataka	0.66	5
Punjab	0.65	6
Kerala	0.60	14
Nagaland	0.57	26
MP	0.55	28

1.8   ABOUT THIS REPORT

Chapters 2-4 of this Aide Memoire deal with the situation vis-à-vis the four SSA Goals. Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the cross-cutting areas of (a) Programme Management, and (b) Financial Management and Procurement (FMP).

Chapters 7-11 contain State-wise reports in respect of each of the 5 States reviewed.

SOME KEY OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The major take-aways from our exercise – by way of observations as well as recommendations – are as follows.

1.   Overarching Issues:

1.1   We found the community playing a very positive role in at least three States, viz. Kerala, Nagaland and Punjab – in the first two, in terms of monitoring and ensuring teacher attendance, a**nd in the third**, by way of handsome contribution towards improvement of school infrastructure. This needs to be commended, and replicated all over the country.

1.2   SSA's achievements over the years, as briefly indicated in para 1.5 above are impressive, but there is still a long way to go. Being now over a decade old, SSA seems to be showing signs of getting **routinised**. There also seems to be a **problem in local ownership**. For a programme like this to be effective, the people actually implementing it must know why they are doing what they are doing, and must put their best foot forward. But this did not always come through in the course of our visits, and in many cases, it seemed more or less top-driven.

We were told that SSA would come up for a fresh approval of the Union Government soon for its extension beyond 2014-15. We hope, that exercise would be utilised by the Central & State Governments for a proper re-vamp of the programme – above all, to bring back the Mission spirit to its implementation.

1.3   We also found a lack of clear role perception at several levels of the implementation hierarchy – especially, among the staff of BRCs and CRCs. This should be relatively easy for the States to rectify, and they need to do that on priority.

1.4   The Mission found (i) malnutrition, and (ii) inadequate coordination with the ICDS/Anganwadi/ECCE programmes to be major issues at least in Karnataka. Since children's nutrition levels and school readiness through ECCE feed into the success of SSA, these aspects also require adequate monitoring and action – even if, technically, outside SSA's purview.

1.5   States reported that reduction in allocation in certain areas has adversely affected the programme, and their restoration would help.

2. **Enrolment and Retention**

- Comprehensive surveys are required to capture accurately children who are classified as OoSC/dropouts but also for those who are continuously absent for long periods for reasons of migration, ill health, work or similar reasons. For such children, tracking systems   for ensuring attendance in school but also for continuous academic support   need to be put in place. In this context for cross comparability and reliability of data it would be necessary to revisit the definition of dropouts, which varies from state.

- As NRST and ST training is limited and sporadic and there has not been an assessment of its academic quality it is necessary to evaluate the nature of academic content and support, and also the number and duration of such trainings.

- In order to deal with the pace and nature of urbanization there is a need to have a special thrust to deal with access, enrolment and retention issues in urban areas where the challenges of physical space, social pressures, aspirations and mobility throw up a set of challenges different to those in rural areas. Linked to this is the issue of capturing and addressing the issues related to migrant children in and outside their home states. Many good practices have already initiated between some state governments which can be emulated.

3. Inclusion

3.1 Education of tribal children – especially, those belonging to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups or PTGs – needs to be accorded high priority. In States like Madhya Pradesh, where the Tribal Welfare Department also runs a substantial number of schools (21%), the State's School Education Department, as the nodal Department for SSA, should take the former fully on board in all SSA-related matters. (In fact, in Chhattisgarh, schools run by the TWD form the majority - 53%. But in some other States also – notably, AP, Odisha, Manipur and Sikkim – their proportion is significant.)

3.2 As regards CWSN, the package meant for them seems to be getting implemented partially inasmuch as:
- Large no. of Schools are still either without ramps, or the ramps have a steep gradient, and are very often without railings;
- Braille text-books either do not reach blind children or reach them much after the rest;
- Coverage under free supply of aids and appliances is partial;
- Training of IE teachers and resource persons needs improvement;
- A more concerted and vigorous effort is needed, backed by necessary resources, to achieve adequate rehabilitation of CWSN, especially those with severe disabilities.

4. Girls' Education/KGBV

4.1 The Mission came across a near universal – and in its view, justified – demand for extending KGBV beyond Class VIII. However, participation of Muslim girls in KGBVs is still sub-optimal. All efforts should be made to rectify this.

5. Quality

5.1 The comprehensive planning for quality already initiated needs to be continued, with the states being supported to develop their own long-term and short-term quality road maps. Ensuring institutional memory, continuity of efforts and orientation of personnel to enhance governance for achieving quality would be the desired steps.

5.2   The Mission recommends that, based on the revised SSA Framework, the pedagogical model/s advocated be clearly articulated in operational terms by the states, and the learning indicators and performance standards emanate from this in a visibly linked manner. These may be presented in keeping with the needs of lay implementers.

5.3   As part of improved teacher performance, the Mission recommends that states:
- Initiate processes to assess teacher performance.
- Undertake Capacity enhancement of *teacher educators* along a chain of teaching as well as training performance standards is an urgent necessity.
- Undertake a major capacity building exercise of CRCs and BRCs, including vision and role clarity, development of appropriate monitoring tools (against expected outcomes rather than inputs alone), and analysis of data in order to take evidence-based decisions and actions.

5.4   More regular and rigorous impact assessment of all quality related interventions, including of the monitoring system itself.

6.   Programme Management

6.1   It is, in our view, important that MHRD's guidelines regarding composition of SSA structures are adhered to. However, we found in Karnataka, that not only the EC of the SSA Society is chaired by the State Education Secretary instead of the Chief Secretary, but it does not even have representatives of quite a few key Departments and Institutions. We were also told that the Governing Body of the Society (under the Chief Minister) had not met for some years. On return to Delhi, we were told that ECs in Bihar, Gujarat and HP are also chaired by the State Education Secretaries.

We consider this undesirable, and recommend that this be remedied.

6.2   Induction of only willing, competent and relatively younger persons in key SSA positions and stability of their tenure are a *sine qua non* for SSA's success. No capacity building is possible if key personnel keep changing at random. It could be a coincidence but we found that in a majority of the 5 states visited by us, the State Education Secretary and/or SPD and/or other key personnel were just a few days or weeks old. In the case of Kerala, the Mission had the disconcerting experience of meeting different SPDs on the days of initial de-briefing and the final wrap-up. GOI may wish to suitably take this up with States.

6.3   There seemed to be substantial disconnect between the SSA administration on the one hand, and regular administrators of the State Education Department, on the other, with the latter seeming only faintly interested in what is happening in their own schools under SSA. Similar disconnect was experienced between SCERT and DIETs on the one hand, and SSA's BRCs and CRCs, on the other. This also needs rectification.

7.   **Data**

7.1   While DISE is a great help in tracking progress of several aspects of SSA/UEE, it can do with further refinement – e.g. incorporating relevant demographic data from the last Census, population projections for 6-11 and 11-14 years age-groups, etc.

7.2   Staff at the state, district, block, cluster and school levels should be trained in analysing, interpreting and applying data collected at various levels- so that they do not see DISE as just another centrally-driven initiative wherein they have little to contribute.

8.   Financial Management & Procurement

8.1   The Mission is of the view that while maximum possible utilisation of outlays is important, expenditure should not be allowed to become an end in itself. Proper utilisation and 'value for money' considerations are as important, and should suitably temper the concern for full utilization of outlays. Where appropriate, release of financial assistance may be modulated so as to nudge implementation of neglected but important steps.

8.2   The Mission also recommends associating financial experts as members in each mission team sent to states for detailed appraisal of financial management and procurement practices in the states.

2. ENROLMENT AND RETENTION

2.1   Since the launch of SSA in 2001-02, there have been very substantial achievements in meeting the challenges of access and enrolment   at the elementary level, and therefore the main thrust proposed for the review mission was to focus on quality   and learning outcomes. However, as observed by the Mission, the states visited by - Kerala, Punjab, Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka are indicative of broad variations in progress of retention of children at elementary school level and the need to keep a focus on this aspect where necessary as a "means" to the necessary end of learning .

2.2   At the state level the Mission noted that states are using diverse strategies to meet the RTE/SSA norms and goals – these include high level political and bureaucratic involvement cutting across various departments to identify and enrol the residual Out of School children (such as M.P School Chhalein Hum Abhiyan,), school mapping on a neighbourhood norm identifying the more marginalized and finding solutions such as the Shiksha ghar for migrant children, and also converging with the functioning and funding of other departments to meet infrastructure gaps.

2.3   Certain preliminary issues which surfaced during this Mission as in some of the previous missions related to the variation in definition from state to state of when a child is defined as a' drop out'. In Kerala, a name can be struck off the list of enrolled children after 7 days, in Madhya Pradesh it is 30 days, and the definition adopted by Government of India is of a child who has continuous absence for more than 45 days. An absence of 45 days would imply that the child is absent for almost 25% of the academic year – the question does arise what impact that that level of absenteeism would have on learning levels .

2.4   Apart from this there is the broader issue whether children not classifiable as "drop out" or 'OoSc' but are absent on a continuous basis , for other reasons such as migration, ill health not in school are being adequately captured. The need for this was reinforced during the mission based both on the empirical basis of the case of Karnataka where the numbers of children after a survey was substantially greater than those in OoSchool data, and also in the case of Madhya Pradesh where it was observed in some cases that children were enrolled but had migrated or were absent for other reasons

Access

2.5   According to DISE data (2012-2013), the total number of schools imparting elementary education are14,31,702,   of which 1086720 or 75.9% are government schools. In the states all states/UTs have defined neighbourhood norms as mandated in Section 6 of the RTE ACT ; however it was reported that in Nagaland field officers were not aware of this. all Where it is not viable efforts are made to ensure access by providing a residential facility, transport or access to a private school .

Access of children in such areas. although only representing very residual numbers, need to be tracked on a continuous basis – as availability of residential facilities, opting for it , adequate provisions for transportation need to be correlated. As reported by Madhya Pradesh the availability of residential facilities for boys was less than 10% of that available for girls. In other words, data is needed to ensure that children are being served.

2.6 The ratio of primary to upper primary schools is 1:2.06 enabling many children to finish the elementary cycle of education. The declining trend is depicted in Table 1below In fact apart from Madhya Pradesh, all other states visited by the mission had ratios which were better than the national average . DISE data shows the ratio to be lowest in West Bengal - 1:4.54 which could be a factor affecting drop out and transition rates .
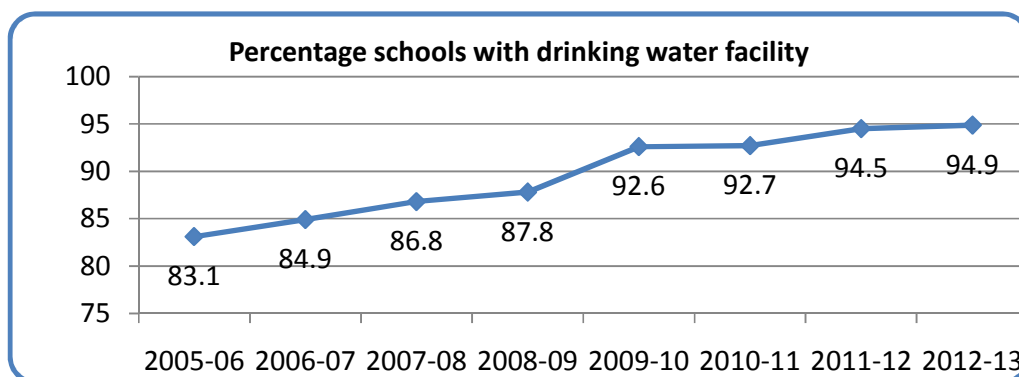
Table 1
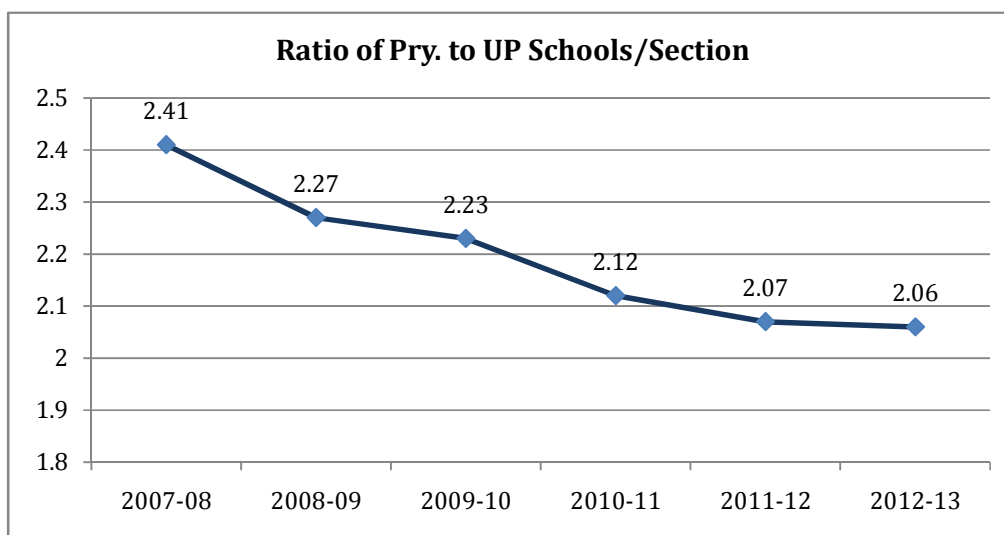
2.7 However, 8.65% schools still continue as single teacher schools , 6.83% of enrolment of all primary schools is in such schools. This figure masks the very high percentage of enrolment in such schools certain states , especially at primary level, for instance Rajasthan (24%), Arunachal Pradesh (33%,), Madhya Pradesh (13.68%) (DISE data) . At the same time ssuch as in Kerala where Integrated Learning centres were established in remote areas in Kerala which have a single teacher but do not meet the definition of school.
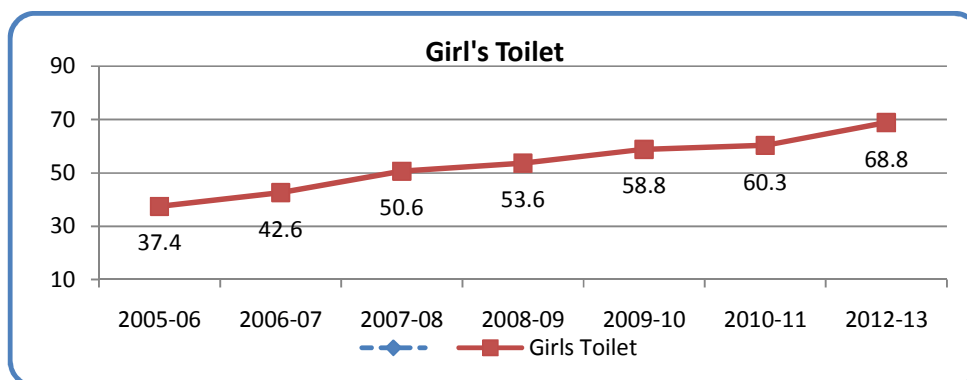
2.8 In the states visited clear efforts to meet RTE/SSA norms in terms of infrastructure for schools. Table 2 indicates the improvement in the provisioning of drinking water and states visited are trying to meet the shortfall in schools.

Table 2

Percentage schools with drinking water facility

100	
95	
90	
85	
80	
75	

83.1 84.9 86.8 87.8 92.6 92.7 94.5 94.9

2005-06 2006-07 2007-08 2008-09 2009-10 2010-11 2011-12 2012-13

2.9 Similarly, there has been a significant increase in the provisioning of girls toilets, with coverage of 68.8% o in schools. However, apart from issues of sanitation and hygiene for functioning toilets there is also the issue that only 74% of those are actually functioning.

Table-3

Girl's Toilet

90	
70	
50	
30	
10	

37.4 42.6 50.6 53.6 58.8 60.3 68.8

2005-06 2006-07 2007-08 2008-09 2009-10 2010-11 2012-13

- ◆ - ■ Girls Toilet

2.10   Areas of special concern are that while ramps have been provided in 79% of schools, the Mission noted that in many places the gradient was too steep for use and in no case did the ramps have a railing. Very roughly, the overall provisioning of playgrounds and boundary walls is about 60%.The Mission noted that quite often new buildings were being built in the playgrounds of schools, and that older buildings which could have been repaired continue to stand. It was not clear whether this was related to building norms. The Mission noted that where the community/ district level administration was active it was easier through convergence to meet these requirements.

Enrolment

2.11   The trend of enrolment at PS and Upper Primary levels are indicated in the Tables below. At primary level there has been a clear dip from 13.71 crores in 2011-2012 to 13.48in 2012-2013.   Reasons that have been attributed for this in a previous review Mission relate to stagnation in child population, the figures being mostly

15

constant since 2007-2008, and reduction in overage and underage population. At the same it is clear From the data it is clear that there has been a decline of enrolment in government schools from 9.1 to 8.6 crores and an increase in enrolment of private primary schools from 4.18 crores to 4.48 crores, a trend that needs to be watched. With the introduction of child tracking systems at state level the dip in some states has been attributed to double enrolments of children and in fact in order to address this issue some states are working towards giving children a unique identification number or using Adhar numbers.   Some sample studies on this would deepen our understanding of the causality.
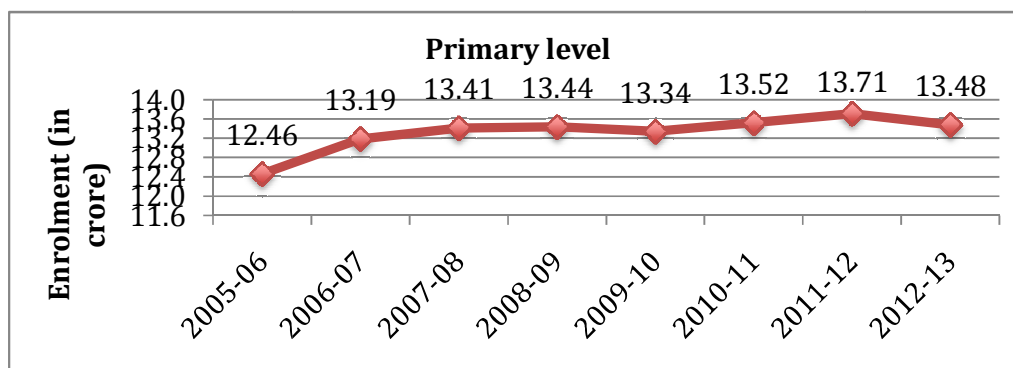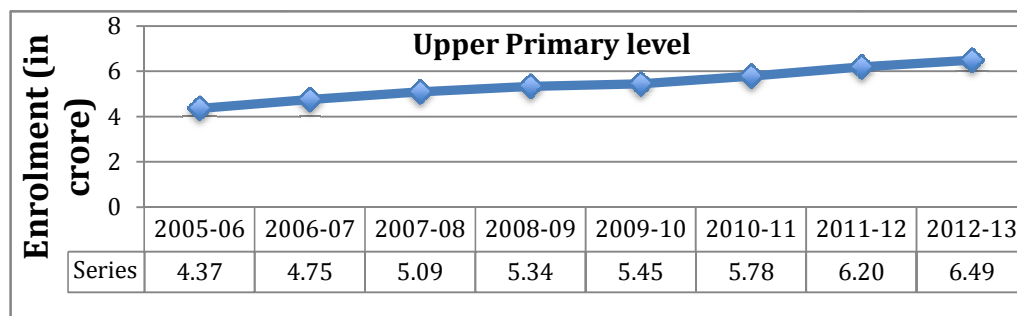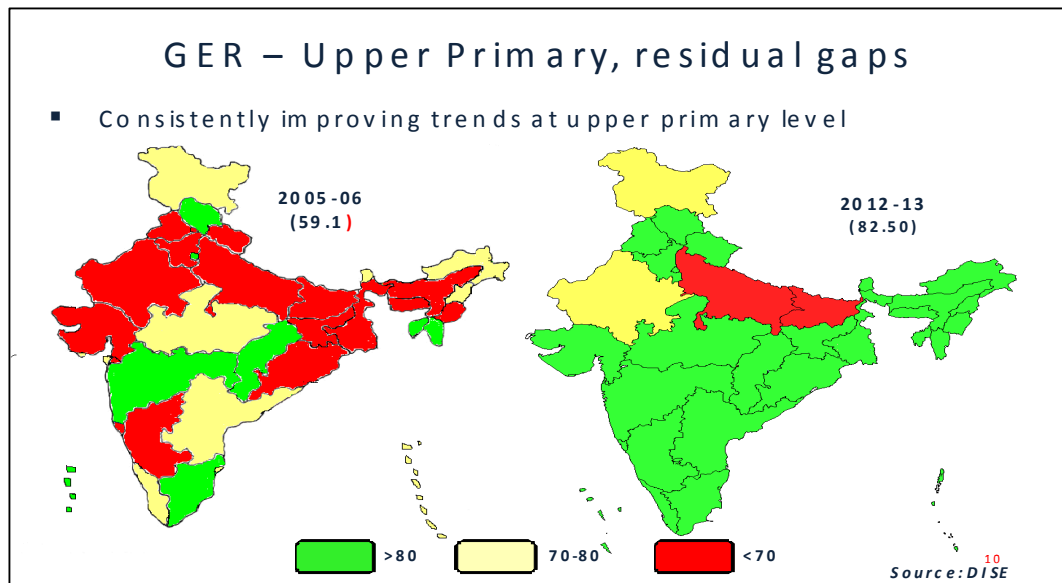
Table-4

Primary level

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
	12.46	13.19	13.41	13.44	13.34	13.52	13.71	13.48

Table-5

Upper Primary level

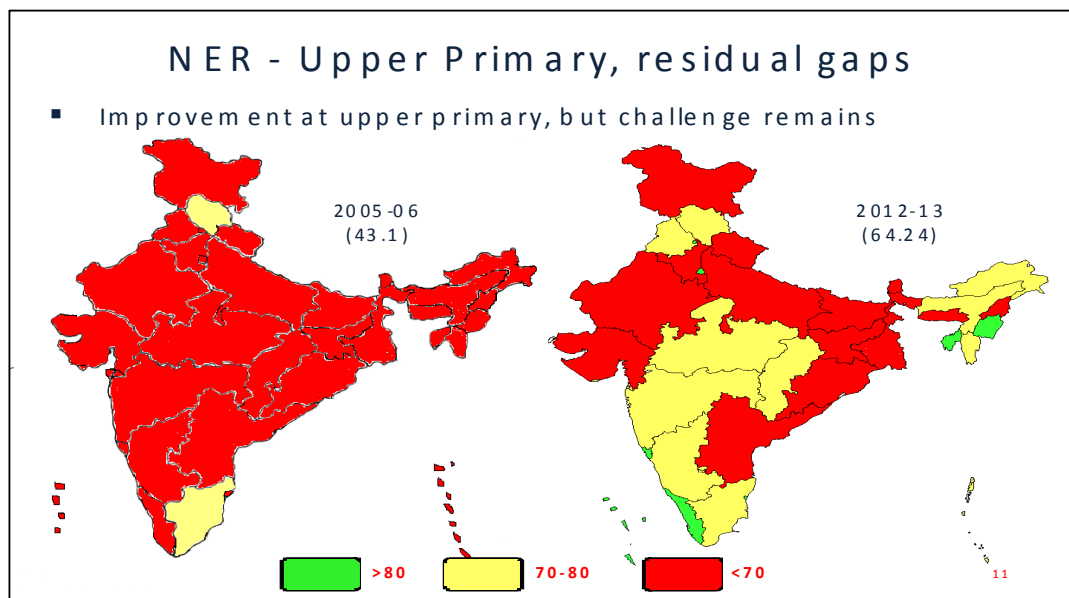|	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Series	4.37	4.75	5.09	5.34	5.45	5.78	6.20	6.49

2.12   The Mission noted that all state apart from J& K , Bihar and Kerala report a GER Of more than 100 and that at t UP level there has been a steady improvement as can be seen in the Table below. The national average is 82.50 but many states reaching almost 100 and above 95. = HP. Punjab, Kerala and many of the smaller UTs, with the lowest levels continue to be UP (68.35) and Bihar (60.53)

Figure-1

GER – Upper Primary, residual gaps

- Consistently improving trends at upper primary level

2005-06 (59.1)

2012-13 (82.50)

>80   70-80   <70

Source: DISE

2.13 – The figure below is illustrative of the steady improvement in NER, but that challenge still remains

Figure-2

NER - Upper Primary, residual gaps

- Improvement at upper primary, but challenge remains

2005-06 (43.1)

2012-13 (64.24)

>80   70-80   <70

2.14   An issue that emerged in three states – Kerala, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh during the Mission was that the figures of the State for GER/NER and that of the DISE data are at variance, and therefore the method of computing , the manner of collecting data   need to be reconciled   . For instance the GER/NER of Kerala

according to the state is over 100, while that capture in the DISE data for UPS is 97 and 80

Dropout and Retention

2.15   While the definition of dropouts is   accepted to cover the difference in enrolment between a class enrolment for the current year and the previous class enrolment for the previous year, the first issue is that they way that dropouts are being computed in different states varies. In Kerala, visited by the mission the definition is of continuous absence for more than 7 days; in Madhya Pradesh it is for more than 30 days, and in GoI it is 45 days. There is a need to capture those students who are neither classifiable as of School or drop outs but are habitually absent for reasons of migration, ill health etc. In fact in the context of the second generation of reforms there is a strong rational to focus on the special effects of in and out migration on dropout/ retention and to capture the children impacted as a separate category
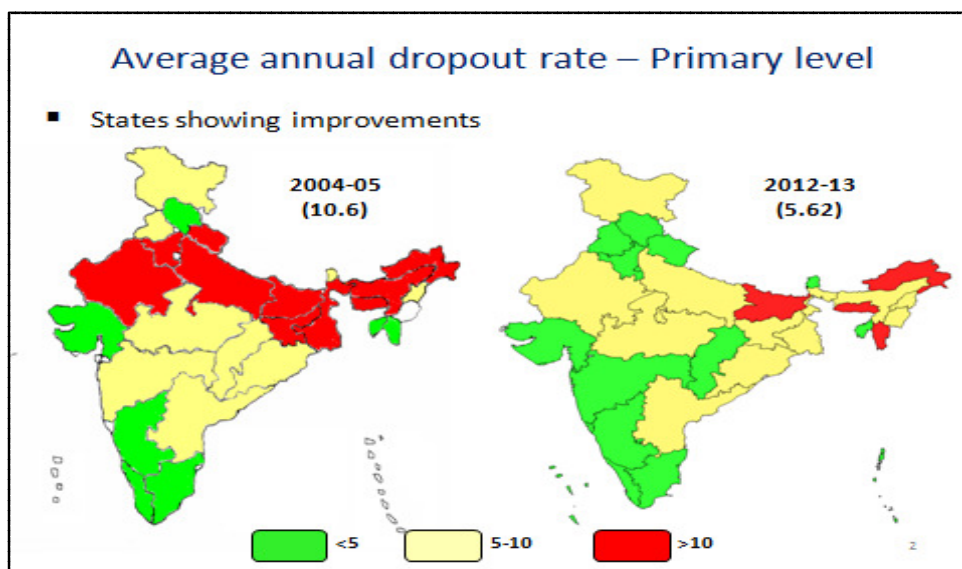
2.16   The table below illustrate representation illustrate the overall improvement / reduction in the drop out rate from 10.6 in 2004-2005 to 5.62 in 2012-13.

Figure-3

Average annual dropout rate
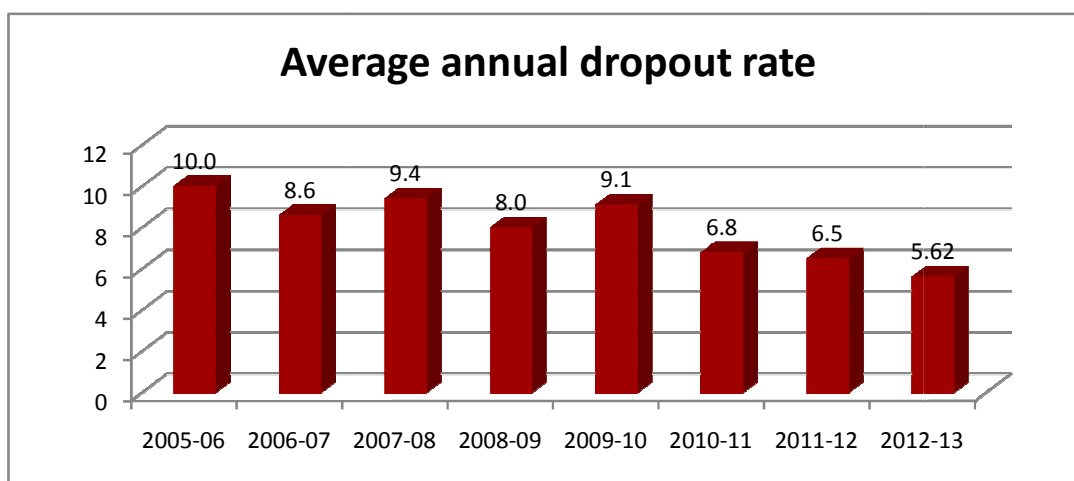
However, the greatest challenges are in Bihar and several states of the north east - Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and at Upper Primary level Nagaland and Assam also have a rate of more than 10%. It is important to begin to map the reasons and stage at which children drop out of the educational system.
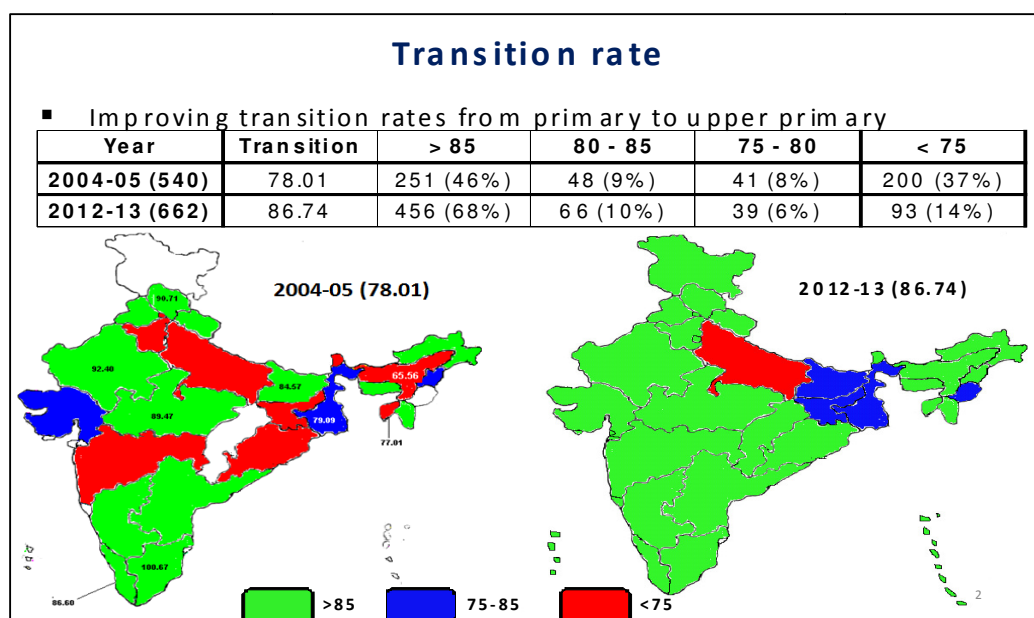
Figure-4

Average annual dropout rate – Primary level

States showing improvements

2004-05 (10.6)

2012-13 (5.62)

<5   5-10   >10

Transition

2.17   While there has been an overall improvement in transition rates and in many states it is touching almost 100% states like UP and Bihar where the transition rates are 75 and 74 % need to focus more greatly on this. In certain states like Bihar and Arunachal Pradesh the transition rate of boys is significantly lower than that of girls. This also needs investigation as in some cases distance and problems of access are cited for the lack of transition.

Figure-5

Transition rate

Improving transition rates from primary to upper primary

Year	Transition	> 85	80 - 85	75 - 80	< 75
2004-05 (540)	78.01	251 (46%)	48 (9%)	41 (8%)	200 (37%)
2012-13 (662)	86.74	456 (68%)	66 (10%)	39 (6%)	93 (14%)

2004-05 (78.01)

2012-13 (86.74)

>85   75-85   <75
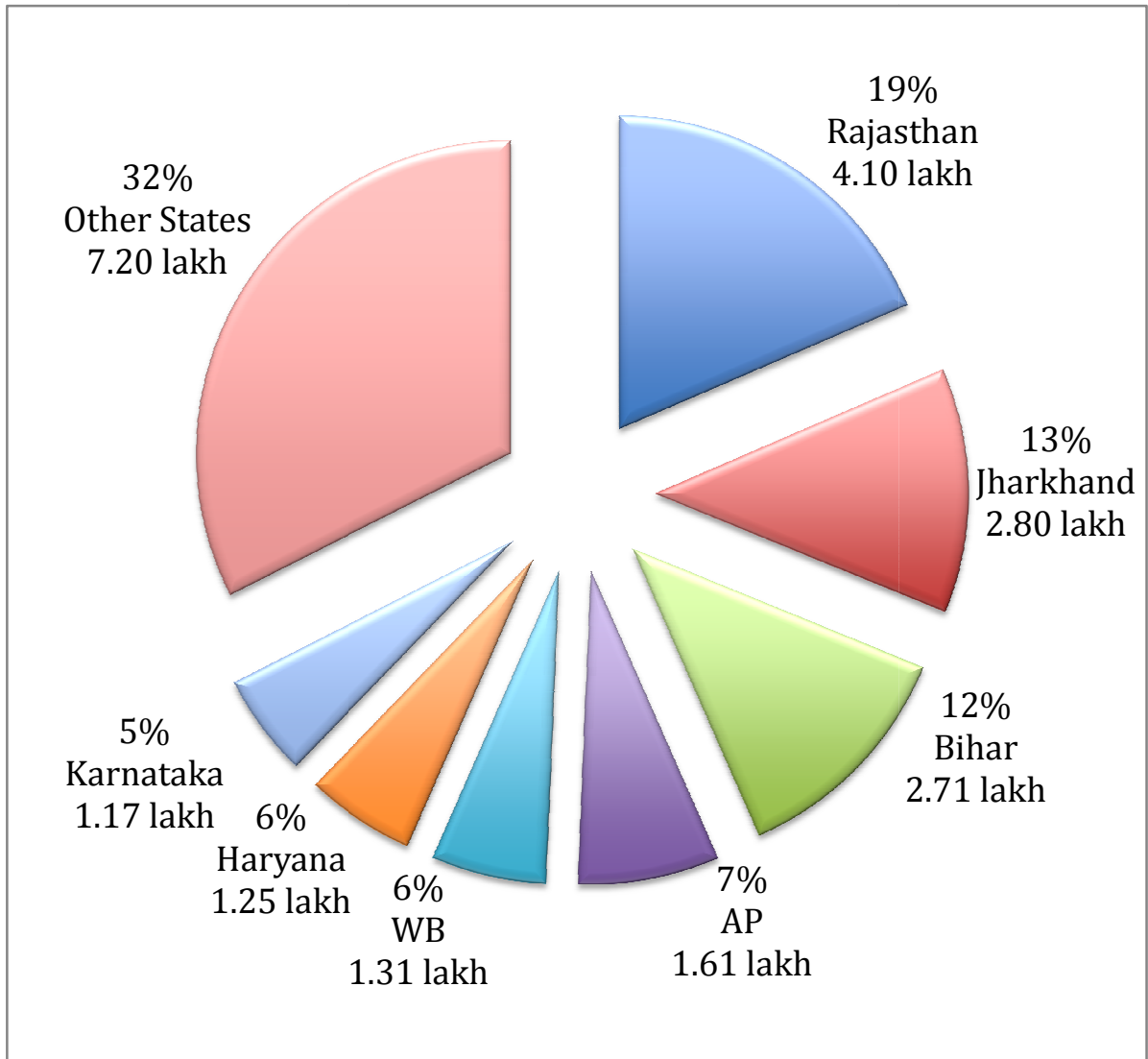
Out of School Children

2.18   The Table at Annex 1 gives a comprehensive picture of the very positive improvement and sharp decline in the number of out of school children in all states. There has   been a steady decline from 28. 6 lakhs in 2009-2010 to 22.1 lakhs in 2012-2013

Out of School Children Time Series (Table-6)

S. No.	Name of the State	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Andaman & Nicobar Island	0	0	0	751	0
2	Andhra Pradesh	171414	127093	115810	301271	161538
3	Arunachal Pradesh	18322	15853	11343	9688	3443
4	Assam	199187	59446	124577	118603	102518
5	Bihar	522586	784900	352331	282669	271096
6	Chandigarh UT	8700	6168	3782	6018	4544
7	Chhattisgarh	72354	178490	128185	64860	76204
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	159	103	167	171
9	Daman & Diu	910	427	409	379	133
10	Delhi	38922	32063	23536	9854	7255
11	Goa	1828	754	13024	3608	2500
12	Gujarat	99343	107121	58137	102836	84358
13	Haryana	147866	108145	107599	84032	125084
14	Himachal Pradesh	2587	2854	2414	3243	2811
15	Jammu & Kashmir	52131	39150	36281	43153	59061
16	Jharkhand	114835	127130	236265	502942	280617
17	Karnataka	35637	111218	39841	125888	117845
18	Kerala	12316	13183	10043	21425	1406
19	Lakshdweep	156	69	7	7	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	163983	132524	70486	126485	74415
21	Maharashtra	56080	38384	16145	218799	86856
22	Manipur	4748	23972	21340	9632	8744
23	Meghalaya	18104	17520	14393	20998	33557
24	Mizoram	5542	4146	9759	8234	7362
25	Nagaland	23147	32737	20108	11719	8589
26	Orissa	270783	186838	72048	30591	19591
27	Pondicherry	604	513	901	885	341
28	Punjab	47165	65422	30939	18459	17414
29	Rajasthan	117012	92056	1210917	497029	410957
30	Sikkim	1910	814	2130	1911	1185
31	Tamilnadu	66896	56113	52558	53832	45120
32	Tripura	1507	3261	596	1818	1489
33	Uttar Pradesh	301988	108310	194146	109677	64442
34	Uttaranchal	8133	8475	8168	6893	6858
35	West Bengal	282526	240237	218150	136437	131375
	Total	**2869222**	**2725545**	**3206471**	**2934793**	**2218879**

2.19 However, it would be evident from the figures below and the data provided   that the states which require a special focus are Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Bihar**.**

Figure-6

2.20.   In many states there has been a high level of political and bureaucratic involvement in working towards the identification of OoSC children, through special campaigns such as, School Chalein Hum Abhiyan in Madhya Pradesh. These campaigns are followed by Special Training., residential and non residential. However, there is a need to track these children separately and also focus of more marginalized section such as migrants (internal and external), homeless, children of sex workers etc. A repeat during the year of the enthusiasm and commitment through the same officers would go a long way to see that the campaigns are achieving their long term ends. Other strategies include annual updation of Village/ Ward Education

Registers , special survey squads for targeted areas like railway stations, bus stands , red-light areas, drop in centres, transit homes.

2.21   With the increasing urbanization of India and projected figures that would live in cities by there is a need to increase the thrust of SSA in urban areas where the challenges in terms of availability of physical space, social pluralism and problems, and aspirations are quite different to rural areas. The nature of sensitization and orientation to deal with these issues has to be specialized and distinct from approaches in rural areas

2.22   In at least two states visited by the Mission there was appeared to be a variance between the reported and actual figures. In Karnataka, the State Report notes that the "State's original estimation of 22,741 OoSC children has been drastically revised based on detailed survey undertaken by the state in November 2013. This was done due to directive given by the High Court in response to a PIL filed by a NGO. While survey results are being finalized, working estimate is now over 2 lakh children. Only 52% of the original estimate of SC were brought back to school during the year and hence revised estimate will require a whole new plan for bringing children back to schools and keeping them in schools. This appears to be an important area of work for the state in the coming year." In Madhya Pradesh also the figure seemed low based on actual attendance in schools. This is also linked to the issue of definition of out of school children /drop outs .

2.23   The Mission noted the initiatives taken vy MHRD to enumerate the OoSC including the development of a model checklist for formulating State/UT and District Action Plans for Access and Out of School children and requesting them to prepare AWPB for 2014-2015 with data from Census 2011, data of child surveys by Labour Department and other sources for comprehensive identification and cross verification of OoSC , particularly of vulnerable categories such as working children to plan for enrolment and retention in schools.

2.24   It is evident from the data that in broad terms the gender gap has been effectively dealt with the ratio of enrolment to boys enrolment being at 0.95, special focus to ensure bringing into School of CWSN and the Muslim children, especially at UPS, so that they are at par with their census share is necessary.

Special Trainings

2.25   While there is provision in SSA for special trainings, residential and non residential, as a bridging device to bring out of school children up to a standard where they can be mainstreamed in to the regular schools ,the achievements in terms of the special training held and their coverage is 45% of the target, 7.9 lakh children out of a target of 17.86 lakhs.   It was observed that there is a need also to evaluate the nature of special trainings in terms of duration, content and success in mainstreaming into schools .

Key Recommendations

- Comprehensive surveys are required to capture accurately children who are classified as OoSC/ dropouts but also for those who are continuously absent for long periods for reasons of migration . ill health, work . For such children tracking systems   for ensuring attendance in school but also for continuous academic support   need to be put in place.

- As NRST and ST training is limited and sporadic and there has not been an assessment of its academic quality it is necessary to evaluate   the nature of academic content and support, and also the number and duration of such trainings.

- In order to deal with the pace and nature   of urbanization there is a need to have a special thrust to deal with access, enrolment and retention issues in urban areas where the challenges of physical space, social pressures, aspirations and mobility throw up a different set of challenges to those in rural areas.Linked to this is the issue of capturing and addressing the issues related to migrant children in and outside their home states. Many good practices have already initiated by some state governments which can be emulated .

- In terms of access for left out habitations an assessment and clear provisioning for alternatives such as transport allowance/ residential facility need to be made . For infrastructural short falls convergence and supervision at the district level are key for which District Magistrates can play a critical role.

- Specific strategy to bring in children where the share in enrolment is less than census share – CWSN/ Muslims.

- Community involvement is a key factor in ensuring quality education but also attendance, enrolment and retention of children as evidenced both in Kerala and Nagaland. Training to cover all members of SMC in a time bound way and make them aware of their critical role is important

3.   BRIDGING GENDER AND SOCIAL GAPS

3.   Equity in education consists of two facets (OECD, 2008). The first is fairness, which fundamentally means ensuring that personal and social settings – for example gender, religion and castes, socio-economic status or ethnic origin, disability – should not be an impediment to attain educational potential. The second is inclusion, in other words ensuring basic education for all. These two aspects are closely interwoven: embarking upon school failure helps to defeat the effects of poverty which often may be reason for school failure. In this section, the focus is on assessing the present status in progress towards bridging gender and social gaps. The section also explores the interventions under SSA for providing equal educational opportunities to CwSN and children in challenging conditions.

Gender Gaps

3.1   The Mission records remarkable progress towards improving educational openings for girls at the elementary level in the visited states. Participation of girls in primary and upper primary education has increased significantly over the years. Gender gap, however, still exists across states and within states across districts. The ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment at primary level has not increased from 0.94 in 2011/12 to 0.94 in 2012/13. At the upper primary level, it has remained at 0.95 in 2012/13 as compared to last year (Flash Statistics, DISE 2012/13).

3.2   As noted by the 18th JRM, considerably low ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment at primary and upper primary levels is found 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. As mentioned in 17th and 18th JRMs Aide Memoir, around 35 districts in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi and D& Diu have large gender gap in enrolment (MHRD, 2013). There are certain states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, showing the ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment above 1 and it would be crucial to study reasons for the decrease in boys' enrolment in these states.

3.3   There is remarkable progress in the participation of relevant age group children in elementary education. No segregated figures are available for year 2012-13 but in 2010/11, there was about 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.

3.4   The transition rate from primary to upper primary level was 86.87% for boys and 87.32% for girls (DISE Flash Statistics, 2011/12). In 2011/12, the transition rate

for girls was not significantly different at 87.17% (DISE, 2012/13). However, the transition rate from primary to upper primary level for girls has progressed significantly from 74.15% in 2003-04. There are also state wise disparities in the transition rate. Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh report transition rates below national average.

3.5   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 2.70 in 2012/13 from 5.1% in 2009/10 and their dropout rate has decreased to 5.34% in 2012/13 from 8.90% in 2009/10 as shown in Chart 3.1 and 3.2 (DISE, 2012/13). The average drop-out rate for upper primary level for girls is 3.20 in 2011/12.
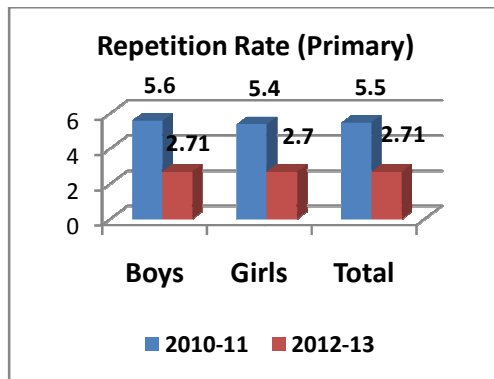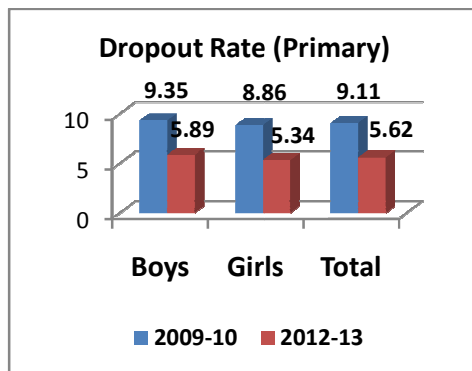
Chart 3.1: Repetition Rate (Primary)

Repetition Rate (Primary)

	Boys	Girls	Total
2010-11	5.6	5.4	5.5
2012-13	2.71	2.7	2.71

Chart 3.2 Dropout Rate (Primary)

Dropout Rate (Primary)

	Boys	Girls	Total
2009-10	9.35	8.86	9.11
2012-13	5.89	5.34	5.62

3.6   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). It has been heartening to observe that in fact, now, more girls than boys are being retained in primary education.

3.7   46.37% teachers are female at the National Level. Below given chart 3.3 shows that there has been a steady positive trend, which needs to be maintained.

Chart 3.3: Percentage Distribution of Female Teachers

Figure 17
Percentage Distribution of Female Teachers
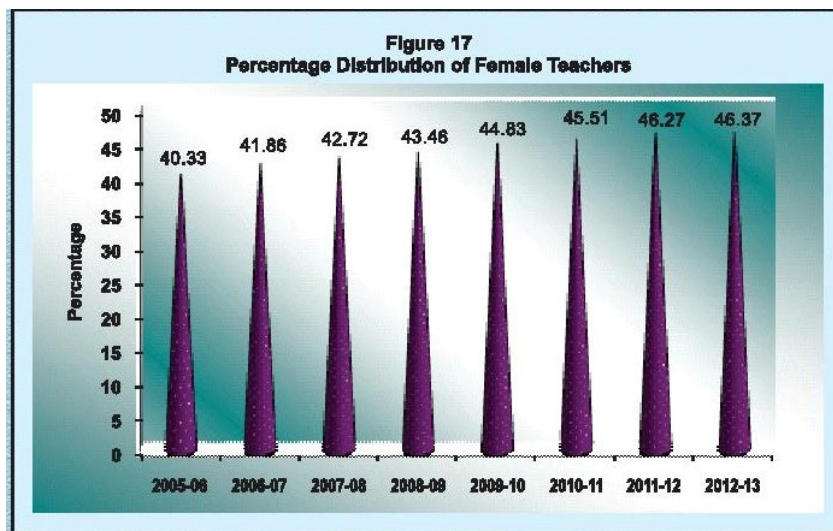
DISE, 2012-13

3.8   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.

3.9   It was unanimously agreed in all reports that KGBVs are the success story of India to ensure – enrolment and retention of girls in school and instilling self confidence among girls however it reaches to very small fraction of girls; therefore the relevant aspects/lessons could be mainstreamed in all schools for all girls.

3.10   Out of 3609 sanctioned KGBVs, 3573 have been operationalised with a total enrolment of 349037 lakh. Of these enrolled girls, 30.53 percent belong to SC category, 24.99 percent to ST, 30.51 percent to OBC, 7.50 percent to Muslim, and 6.47 percent to BPL category. States with a very significant number of KGBVs include: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

3.11   In Karnataka state report, there was a mention of an issue of overcrowding in KGBVs and since hostel for class 9-10 girls under RMSA may take time, alternative arrangements to improve space and infrastructure are recommended. In States like Nagaland, out of the 11 KGBVs, buildings for two KGBVs have been constructed and others are working in the rented buildings.

3.12   In the KGBVs and Girls hostels, the sanitation and hygiene conditions of toilets need an improvement. No proper drainage system exists in the visited KGBV and girls' hostel in the state of Madhya Pradesh. One important challenge for many of these excellent institutions is to put more-adequate safety and security arrangements and measures in place, as no boundary wall exists.

3.13   The National Program for Education of Girls' at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) was implemented in educationally backward blocks (EBB) and addressed the needs of girls who are 'in' as well as 'out' of school. Since 2013-14, the NPEGEL has been discontinued.

3.14   Several other initiatives are being implemented in states for promoting gender equity. Few examples of these initiatives are 'Sports for Development' in Madhya Pradesh and Jagruthi Shibhira in Karnataka.

3.15   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.

3.1   Recommendations

i.   The Mission came across a near universal – and in its view, justified - demand for extending KGBV beyond Class VIII. The KGBVs may be upgraded with a tie-up with RMSA.

ii.   The participation of Muslim girls in KGBVs is still sub-optimal. Concerted efforts should be made to rectify this.

iii.   Above mentioned 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. In several states the aspects of the education of boys that are also raising concern; therefore concerted strategies to enroll, retain, achieve learning levels in boys including provision of hostel facilities for boys;

iv.   State must ensure that the enriched curriculum includes all the components of gender issues, rights of children and women, adolescent life skills, adolescent sexual and reproductive health;

v.   Cooperation with relevant agencies may be encouraged as partners for training purposes especially in gender and adolescent and hygiene issues but SSA should take primary responsibility for training and capacity building;

vi.   Ensure greater equality across the types of provision – girls hostel, KGBV etc. – since there is a disparity between these types of provision and in the funding allocated to each (e.g., Per child expenditure for girls' hostel is lesser compared to per child expenditure for KGBVs);

vii.   State must ensure that the assistant teachers in KGBVs are provided with regular training along with the other SSA teachers by DIETS on activity based learning, CCE, preparation of teaching learning materials, enriched curriculum particularly gender issues, KGBV management etc.;

viii.   It is also necessary that buildings should also be constructed for all KGBVs which are running in rented buildings on the priority basis.

ix.   State should work towards enhancement of quality learning and focus on life-skills components in the curriculum as well. Setting up functional libraries along with multi-media facilities should be a mandate in every KGBV to enhance their learning.

Social Gaps

3.2   Across states, enrolment of children from educationally disadvantaged communities such as SC, ST and Muslims has been gradually progressing. Enrolment of SC students in primary/upper primary classes has improved marginally from 19.80% (2011-12) to 20.24% (2011-12). Girls form 48.6% of the overall SC enrolment. In the case of ST enrolment, there has been an insignificant change of 10.7% (2010-11) to 10.85% (2012-13). Girls continue to account 48.67 percent of ST enrolment. OBC enrolment in primary level has improved from 42.8% previous year to 43.15%. There is a similar growth in upper primary classes is not seen (43.25% to 43.66%).

**Chart 3.4: Percentage of Enrolment by Caste**
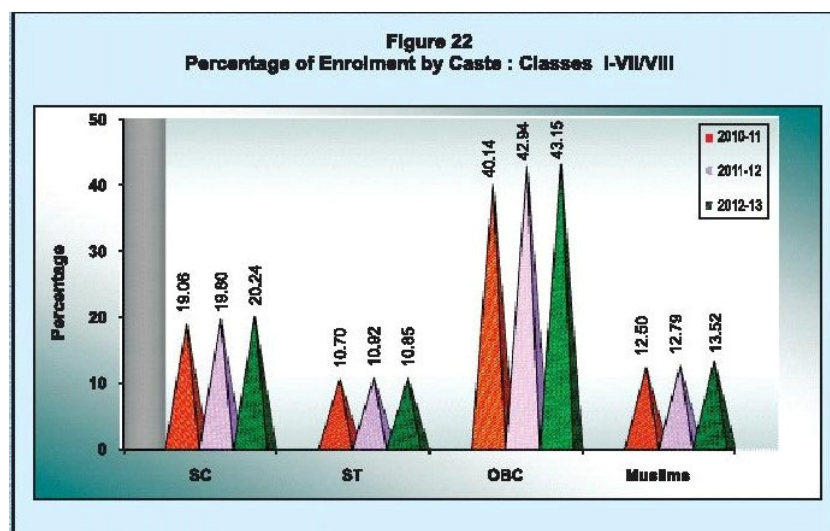
DISE, 2012-13

3.3   In 2012-13, Muslim enrolment was 14.20% in primary classes and 12.11% at upper primary level. Girls represent 49.88% of the overall Muslin enrolment at the elementary. The percentage share of Muslims in the total enrolment at primary and upper primary level remains less than their share in the total population in various

28

states. There are 16 state/UTs which are reporting less enrolment at primary level and the gap is relatively large in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha (see chart 3.5).

3.4   While data elsewhere in this report show that Muslims are under-represented in enrolment in some states, however it is encouraging that once Muslims are enrolled in school, their subsequent retention is not significantly below the mean.

Chart 3.5: Percentage share of Muslims in primary level enrolment (2012/13)
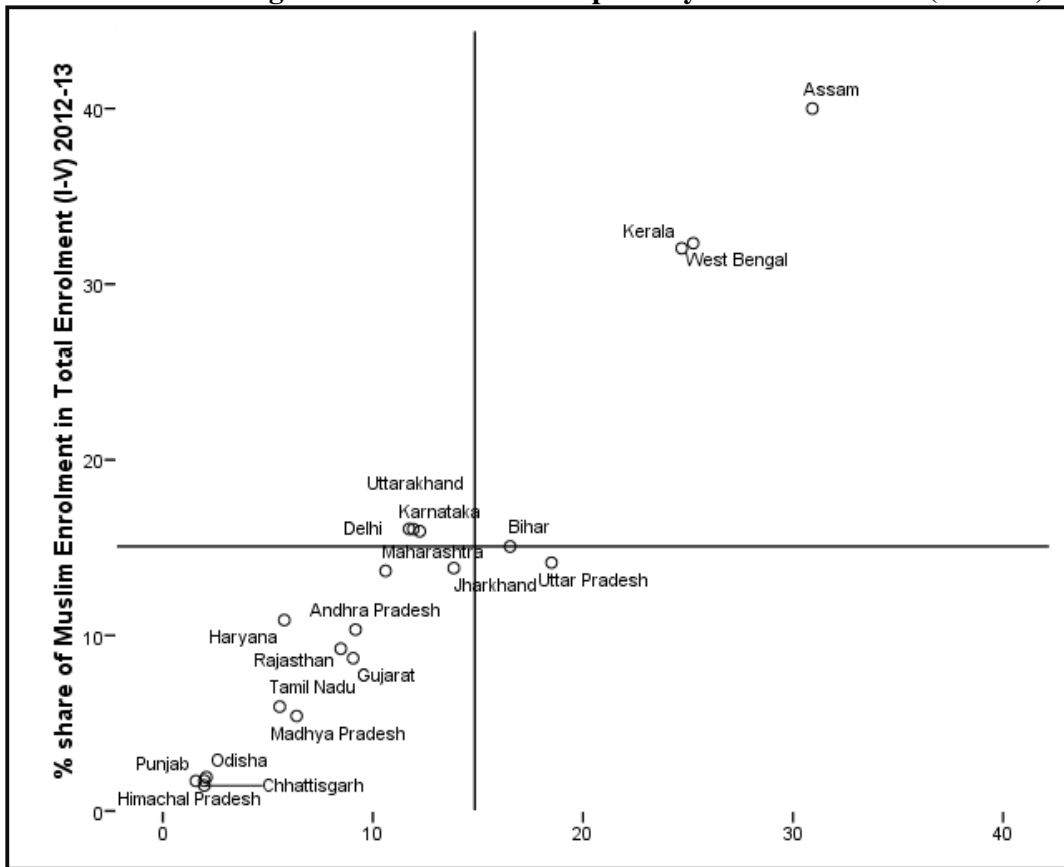

% Share of Muslim population to the total population

Source: DISE Flash Statistics, 2012/13

3.5   The retention rate of children from disadvantaged communities has moved upwardly in last few years. Chart 3.5 shows the average annual dropout rate by social categories at primary level for the academic year 2012-13. 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.

Chart 3.5: Average Dropout Rate for 2012-13
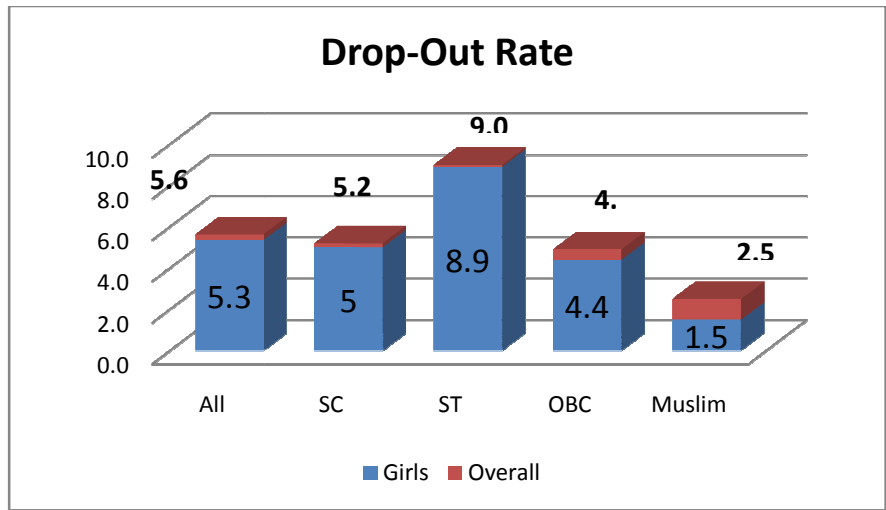
Drop-Out Rate

3.6   With reference to the periods 2006-07 and 2011-12 (MHRD, 2013), 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 3.6).

Chart 3.6 Reduction in average annual dropout rates in SFDs

DISE data 2012-13
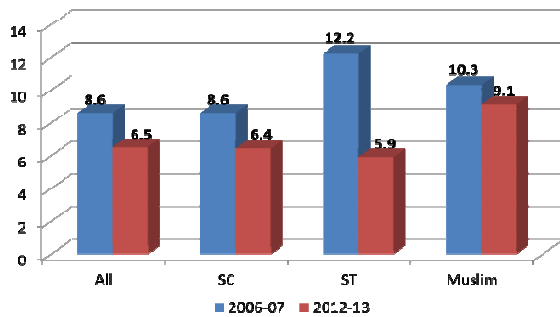
3.7 The schooling of children of a large number of migrant workers in agriculture and unorganized sectors remains a huge challenge. SSA has been working in this area and is doing commendable work however there is a need to enforce special plan for nomadic and migrant workers in certain states.

3.8   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. The Multi Lingual Education (MLE) is used by States as a tool for bridging children to school

30

language from mother tongue, which is a welcoming sign however this could be used to enhance the learning levels.

3.9   These children are usually the hardest to reach groups from disadvantaged communities, homeless, working children and urban deprived including street children. Several states are taking initiatives to reach these children however initiatives have very limited coverage and are implemented in project mode. It is now time to focus on strategies and interventions in more continuous manner.
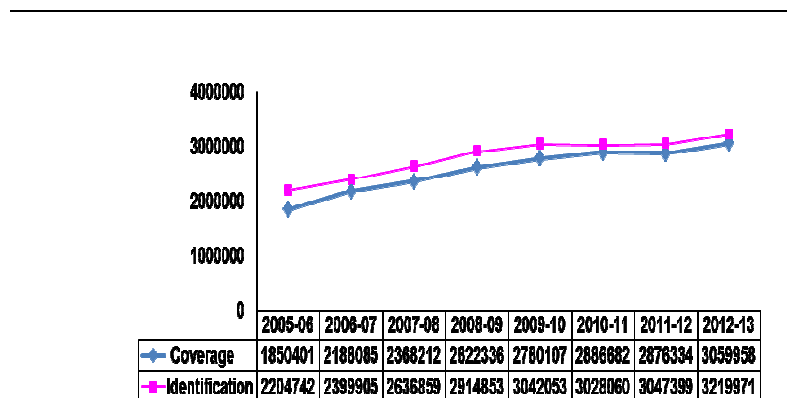
3.10   Recommendations

i.   Education of tribal children- especially, those belonging to PTGs- needs to be accorded very high priority. The State's School Education Department, being the nodal Department for SSA, should take the Tribal Welfare Department fully on board in all SSA-related matters.

ii.   Mission felt that there is lack of overall vision vis a vis the concept of inclusion – mainly seen as a series of activities and the spirit of inclusion not permeating the schools and teachers.

iii. Specific strategy to ensure the better education attainment for the minority; focused on Muslim population. Special efforts needed to increase enrolment of Muslim girls in relevant KGVBs.

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

v.   There is need for a comprehensive approach to address constraints and to influence the relevant decision-making processes which relates to a child's education status, particularly related to the issues faced by SC children.

Children with Special Need (CWSN)

3.11   The Mission appreciates the progress made in addressing Children with Special Needs (CwSN). Since 2005-06, the Issues pertinent to CwSN have been brought to the centre stage both in planning, monitoring and at the school level. The CWSN component has received varied range of attention in the visited states.

Chart 4.6 Number of CwSN covered and identified

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Coverage	1850401	2188085	2368212	2622336	2780107	2886682	2876334	3059958
Identification	2204742	2399905	2636859	2914853	3042053	3028060	3047399	3219971

Source: MHRD

3.12   The Mission has noted that MHRD mentioned that CWSNs enrolled in school are 27.79 lakhs out of identified 32.19 lakhs CwSN; however states like Madhya Pradesh have identified less number of CwSN or Kerala over identified as compared to population share;

3.13   There are 16863 Resource Teachers. Aids and appliances have reached to 28.77 lakh. 1.64 lakhs teachers were trained on the RCI module. 23.84 lakhs teachers trained in inclusive education training for 3-5 days;

3.14   Mission applauds the achievements in IECD in Kerala, which is exemplary. The resource teachers encountered were highly dedicated, despite having a high caseload and operating in an environment where state welfare organisations are only marginally involved in the provision of services to CWSN.

3.15   In states like Karnataka, Mission noted that Home Based Education (HBE) had reached out to children from marginalized backgrounds, who are unable to come to school. However, it was also observed that optimum rehabilitation is possibly not being achieved for these children at present. Arrangement for referrals, provision of funds for accessing best possible medical and rehabilitative services is not achieved, also due to lack of synergy with Health and Women and Child Development departments.

3.16   During the visits to schools in Punjab, the mission members observed that there were Ramps in almost all schools, but it was found that schools are still not barrier-free in reality. For instance in most schools, the area from the gate to the ramp has many barriers for a wheelchair borne child. It was also observed that Disabled friendly toilets (DFTs) are not available in all Schools.

3.17   During the field visit, the team visiting Madhya Pradesh did not observe any integration of the CWSN in the class room practices;

3.18   Recommendations

i.   As regards CWSN, the package meant for them seems to be getting implemented partially inasmuch as:-

   a. Large no. of Schools are still either without ramps, or they have a steep gradient, and are very often without railings;

   b. Braille text-books either do not reach blind children or reach them much after the rest;

   c. Coverage of aids and appliances is partial;

   d. Training of IE teachers and resource persons needs improvement;

   e. A more concerted and vigorous effort is needed, backed by adequate resources, to achieve adequate rehabilitation of CWSN, especially those with severe disabilities.

ii. 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.

iii. The Mission recommends that the good practices could be presented nationally, and widely shared with all states.

iv. Optimum rehabilitation of CwSN children covered under Home Based Education requires detailed, planning, close coordination with Health and WCD and allocation resources.

v. The Mission recommends that a provision of resources and capacity building inputs be more closely aligned to documented needs on the ground.

vi. Resource Teacher (RT) training should more strategically focus on systematic needs assessment, i.e. aligned with numbers of CwSN categories present in the district and learning needs of RTs.

vii. The Mission recommends that IE be regarded as an integral and horizontal part of a continuous endeavor in the education of all children; therefore 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.

4. EDUCATION OF SATISFACTORY QUALITY

4.1 Planning and implementation of quality improvement

4.1.1 The Mission notes that several actions have been taken by the MHRD towards the key priorities highlighted in the shift to second generation reforms in SSA, initiated in mid-2013. These include the modification of the SSA Framework and revision of the norms pertaining to aspects under focus. A Quality Checklist has been drafted through a national workshop in January 2014.

4.1.2 The new paragraphs inserted in Chapter 4 of the SSA Framework provide guidance to the states on different aspects of quality improvement. The Mission welcomes in particular the revised norm that LEP funds be accessed by a state only if it develops a long-term comprehensive quality plan, as this will enable a holistic approach. This will also help states overcome the phenomenon where good initiatives tend to get discontinued in following years.

4.1.3 It would be useful to make overt the assumption that in-service training programmes will be linked to performance standards for teachers and school heads. The revised norms for TLE, Research and Evaluation, libraries and the training of SMCs are useful additions.

4.1.4 The recently developed model checklist for preparing quality improvement plan along with monitoring parameters was provided to the Mission. Worthwhile features include that the states may customize it, the incorporation of the scope for convergence with other schemes/departments, and the provision for conditions that enable improved performance on part of teachers.

4.1.5 However, given the very large number of items included in the Checklist, there is the danger that users may find it difficult to establish focus. One way to address this would be to start by identifying the degree of improvement (in terms of teacher performance and student learning) targeted over the implementation cycle, and work backwards from this to select activities from this checklist. The Mission was informed that the purpose is to provide decision makers a 'dashboard' to quickly assess whether the required quality inputs are being incorporated. Therefore it is important that the Checklist not be confused with planning formats or data collection requirements. At present, the monitoring parameters conflate inputs and outcomes, and it would be helpful to separate the two.

4.1.6 Education governance and management has been rightly identified as critical to second generation reforms through SSA. After the initial cycles of implementation where curricula, pedagogy, learning materials and assessment have been worked upon, along with intensive in-service training across the country, the key issues affecting quality and learning outcomes lie to a great extent in governance and management. Progress is noted in the Programme for School Leadership, with five key areas having been identified for development of curriculum in educational leadership. Apart from this, it is suggested that some of the other key steps include:

- orientation of administrators in the emerging performance standards and capacity building towards supporting their attainment,

- enabling continuity of effort by ensuring institutional memory and planned staff turn over, and
- orientation of state leadership on quality issues to enable effective decision making on quality related issues.

4.1.7   The overall thrust on outcomes is beginning to be visible at the national level, with the formulation of learning indicators and performance standards being under way. However a similar shift is yet to be noted in the states visited where provisioning and a plethora of activities continue to be implemented in a discrete manner, as ends in themselves. A synergy across activities as well as *a reduction in the number of activities so as to focus on a few critical ones and ensure quality* would be the way forward.

Key recommendation

The comprehensive planning for quality already initiated needs to be continued, with the states being supported to develop their own long-term and short-term quality road maps. Ensuring institutional memory, continuity of efforts and orientation of personnel to enhance governance for achieving quality would be the desired steps.

4.2 Pedagogy, curriculum and special projects

4.2.1   The teaching learning process lies at the heart of quality improvement. The RTE clearly mandates that children learn through 'activity, exploration and projects' while the NCF-05 as the referral document specifically insists that children construct their own knowledge. While engaging children is a useful starting point, for meaningful learning (mentioned in the revised SSA framework) and construction of knowledge to take place, children need to be encouraged to reflect and apply their learning. Periodic consolidation of emerging learning would also 'fix' the gains acquired. In the classrooms visited, the Mission noted increased availability of materials though their use was witnessed much less. The notion of 'activity' seems to be limited to a preliminary level of interaction, and answering teacher's questions. In the upper primary classes, in particular, pedagogy is much more hazy, with few hands-on activities, joint group work or use of materials. Among the teachers, trainers, academic personnel and other stakeholders interacted with, there was a limited understanding and, often, confusions.

The Mission believes, therefore, that advocated pedagogical model/s need to be clearly articulated at the state level, in a manner that the layperson may understand it in operational terms.

4.2.2   Following from this, there appeared to be a lack of alignment between the different components such as textbooks, in-service training, additional material developed, assessment practices or projects being implemented. (In this regard, the emphasis on alignment between the different components asserted in the Revised Framework is highly welcome.) A key feature that needs to be widely understood is that of principle-based and procedural components. Principle-based components require that common principles (e.g. 'connect with the child's previous knowledge when introducing a new concept') be followed by all but in their own way, i.e. their manifestations be multiple and context-specific. This applies to much of pedagogy

and use of materials. Procedural components (of which assessment is a key example) require that every teacher implement them in the same way as given, or their effectiveness will be in doubt. Thus, in ABL projects' methodology, the insistence that each child will attain a milestone by exactly the same set of activities is a contradiction of the principle-based nature of pedagogy, just as the fairly loose implementation of assessment witnessed in some states compromises on the procedural nature of the component.

4.2.3 Since learning indicators and the teacher performance standards emanate from the advocated pedagogical model/s, there is a need to make overt the linkages between the desired practice and these standards. Comprehensive quality improvement plans would hinge to a great extent around a clearly articulated understanding of expected classroom practices, or the desired pedagogy.

4.2.4 Along with constructivist pedagogy, the NCF-05 also places CCE as a pedagogical tool in the classroom. In the field visits, however, the Mission observed that CCE was perceived by teachers and others as a separate component by itself (rather than as part of the daily planning, teaching, reviewing and ongoing remediation or course-correction process). Many teachers reported it to be a 'burden' imposed on them from above, while officials and members of the public – probably due to an incomplete understanding – tend to take a reductive view, equating CCE with non-detention and even blaming it for 'reduction in quality of education'.

The Mission therefore urges the MHRD to initiate a major communication exercise regarding CCE.

4.2.5 With the success in bringing in hard to reach children into school, facilitating age appropriate admissions, inclusion of CWSN and increasing urbanization (which brings children from different regions of the country into the same classroom), teaching learning processes are now dealing with a greater range of diversity than every before. A differential classroom where different needs are being addressed simultaneously (rather than the same method, pace and learning time being applied to each student) would be the key to creating an inclusive and responsive process. Along with the exemplars of curricular and material adaptations being undertaken by the NCERT, there is a need to articulate the *principles* and *practices* of inclusive and responsive pedagogy that will enable teachers to address and even take advantage of the great range of diversity in the classroom. MHRD had, in collaboration with the NCERT and Unesco in 1999-2000, developed such an approach and in-service training for government schools on basis of field-testing in four states – an effort may be made to re-examine this for its applicability in the current context.

4.2.6 The Mission notes that a majority of the states have either revised their curricula or are in the process of revising them in light of NCF-05. Textbooks and supplementary materials are being piloted. Six states have also developed learning outcomes/indicators which, along with the syllabus, are helping them in CCE. In the states visited, with the exception of Kerala, objectives and activities related to Art Education, Work Education, Health and Physical Education were relatively less defined and not given much time, thus reducing the potential for children's 'holistic development' mandated by the RTE.

4.2.7   As part of the thrust on quality improvement, the Mission noted that specific efforts are under way in many states:

MLE: Started as an initiative to enable tribal children to move from their home language to the school language, this addresses *one* part of the issue, as it does not take into account the presence of several languages in the same classroom, and strategies to benefit from them to enable children to attain proficiency. Also, since migration and urbanization brings multiple languages in the classroom that may not otherwise be found contiguous to each other (E.g. Punjabi and Odia in a classroom in Delhi), the MLE approach needs to be widened to bring these into its ambit.

Early Grade Reading, Writing and Comprehension: A strong foundation in reading and writing is considered an essential component for participation and continuation of schooling. Children coming from print deprived and minimally literate homes depend entirely on the school to learn how to read and write. There is a growing body of evidence across the world that shows that there has to be a systematic and organised programme to teach children how to read, as reading is not 'caught' automatically by all children, and therefore needs to be taught explicitly through a mix of meaning making and skill building, i.e. by adopting a *balanced approach*.

In light of this, the revised framework of SSA (4.6.2.2) advocates a Foundational programme for classes 1 and 2 to ensure that children learn to read with comprehension, write independently and have basic mathematical skills. Some of the features of the programme include - having a dedicated teacher for the foundational years, an appropriate instructional design to teach reading, adequate instructional time, mix of oral work along with reading and writing, a mix of whole class, group and individual learning to maximise time on task, setting up a print rich environment and library corners, training of teachers and CRPs and BRPs to provide support, etc. A Reading Cell was set up in NCERT to create awareness on this issue and has created a repository of children's literature, having have implemented a pilot in 560 schools. Several states are implementing focussed programmes to improve early grade reading. Some are based on the NCERT model, whereas others have come up with their own.

Of the 5 states visited by the Mission team, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala are implementing some form of early grade reading programme. Some have adopted the NCERT model, while others have developed their own. In Madhya Pradesh, the team found that the children's attainment level in Hindi in the lower classes was a matter of concern as the ability to read and comprehend is the basis of all learning. To be effective on the ground, it is important for the early reading programmesfocus on clearly defined learning goals/indicators and ensure that all stakeholders in the system work in unison to ensure that these goals are achieved.

Similarly, programmes for Early Grade Mathematics for classes 1 and 2, and Science and Mathematics in Upper Primary have also been introduced.

ABL: This programme has been in operation for several years and has been evaluated in different ways. Studies till now present mixed results with several (e.g. in MP and TN) indicating that learning gains accrued are well below expectations or not different from 'traditional' classrooms. There tends also to be a confusion between the

idea of activity-based learning (as mandated by the RTE) and the *projects* called ABL, which is only *a way* of implementing this. Since the ABL approach of using a ladder of sequenced competencies (or behavioral outputs) was formulated when MLLs were in operation, it does not any more fit into the constructivist approach of the NCF-05 which has overtly discarded behaviorist practices. This inner contradiction has led to limitations in the ABL projects which *now need to be re-cast in light of the NCF and RTE*.

Key Recommendation

The Mission recommends that, based on the revised SSA Framework, the pedagogical model/s advocated be clearly articulated in operational terms by the states, and the learning indicators and performance standards emanate from this in a visibly linked manner. This may be presented in keeping with the needs of lay implementers across the country.

4.3 Teacher Quality: Recruitment, development and training

4.3.1   Unfilled teacher posts remain the biggest barrier to full implementation of the RTE. However, efforts to accelerate teacher recruitment have begun to bear fruit, with 14.80 lakh teachers being recruited against the 19.82 lakh teachers sanctioned under SSA (5.17 lakh being sanctioned in 2012-13). Around 11 lakh vacancies still remain to be filled by the states (state sector: 5.6 lakh, SSA: 5.6 lakh).

4.3.2   The TET has been welcomed by the states and it is reported to have reduced the political pressures experienced during recruitment while also leading to better qualified teachers being selected. While some states such as Rajasthan and MP have been able to expedite recruitment process, in others such as UP, Jharkhand and West Bengal it tends to remain slow due to decentralization and court cases. With the exception of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Assam, other states are reported to have completed or nearly completed professional training of untrained teachers. Some of the states are using ODL as a means to provide this training – however it is not clear whether this would indeed be of a quality equivalent to face-to-face training.

The Mission recommends that the effectiveness of implementation of ODL-based training programmes be assessed.

Status on Teacher Eligibility Test across States/UTs as on September 2013

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Conducted	If Yes Date/ Month	No. of tests	Conducted By
1	Andaman & Nicobar Island	Yes	26-06-2011 29-01-2012 18-11-2012	3	C.B.S.E.
2	Andhra Pradesh	Yes	31-07-2011 08-01-2012 31-05-2012	3	AP School Education Department with support from S.C.E.R.T
3	Arunachal Pradesh	Yes	28-10-2012	1	Directorate of Elementary Education
4	Assam	Yes	10-01-2012 19-12-2012	2	State Empowered Committee, Constituted by Govt. of Assam
5	Bihar	Yes	20-12-2011 21-12-2011	2	S.C.E.R.T.
6	Chandigarh	Yes	26-06-2011 29-01-2012 18-11-2012	3	C.B.S.E.

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Conducted	If Yes Date/ Month	No. of tests	Conducted By
7	Chhattisgarh	Yes	08-01-2012	1	VYAPAM
9	Dadra Nagar Haveli	Yes	05-05-2012 18-11-2012 28-07-2013	3	C.B.S.E.
8	Daman & Diu	Yes	05-05-2012 18-11-2012 28-07-2013	3	C.B.S.E.
10	Delhi	Yes	26-06-2011 29-01-2012 18-11-2012 28-07-2013	4	C.B.S.E.
11	Goa	No	--	0	--
12	Gujarat	Yes	12-06-2011 28-08-2011 25-02-2012 10-06-2012 08-07-2012 18-08-2013 01-09-2013	7	Gujarat state Examination Board
13	Haryana	Yes	05-11-2011 06-11-2011 25-06-2013 26-06-2013	4	Board of school education Haryana
14	Himachal Pradesh	Yes	14-08-2012 15-09-2013 22-09-2013 29-09-2013	4	Himachal Pradesh Subordinate Services Selection Board/ Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education (HPBOSE)
15	Jammu & Kashmir	No	--	0	--
16	Jharkhand	Yes	26-04-2013	1	Jharkhand Academic Council
17	Karnataka	No	--	0	DSERT, Karnataka has initiated development of tools for TET
18	Kerala	Yes	25-08-2012 27-08-2012 01-09-2012	3	S.C.E.R.T.
19	Lakshadweep	Yes	26-06-2011 29-01-2012 18-11-2012	3	C.B.S.E.
20	Madhya Pradesh	Yes	04-12-2011	1	VYAPAM
21	Maharashtra	No		0	
22	Manipur	Yes	16-09-2011 27-11-2012	2	B.O.S.E.M
23	Meghalaya	No	--	0	--
24	Mizoram	No	--	0	Mizoram Board of School Education (MBSE) will be conducting the test.
25	Nagaland	Yes	--	1	SCERT.
26	Orissa	Yes	02-12-2012 10-06-2013	2	Board of Secondary Education Odisha
27	Pudducherry	Yes	12-07-2012 14-10-2012	2	Teacher Recruitment Board, Chennai
28	Punjab	Yes	03-07-2011 09-06-2013	2	S.C.E.R.T & S.E.D.E.C
29	Rajasthan	Yes	09-09-2012	1	Secondary Education Board, Rajasthan
30	Sikkim	No	--	0	Yet to be conducted

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Conducted	If Yes Date/ Month	No. of tests	Conducted By
31	Tamil Nadu	Yes	12-07-2012 14-10-2012 17-08-2013 18-08-2013	4	Teachers Recruitment Board
32	Tripura	No	--	0	--
33	Uttar Pradesh	Yes	13-11-2011 27-06-2013 28-06-2013	3	U.P.B.S.E./ Utter Pradesh Basic Education Board
34	Uttarakhand	Yes	21-08-2011	1	U.K.E.B.
35	West Bengal	Yes	29-07-2012 (Upper primary) 31-03-2013 (Primary)	2	West Bengal Board of Primary Education for Primary, West Bengal Central Sch. Service Commission for Upper Primary

4.3.3   With increased recruitment, PTR has improved from 36 in 2005-06 to 27 in 2013-14, though it still remains high in Bihar (53), UP (39) and Jharkhand (39). Improved PTR will doubtless have a positive impact on classroom processes and outcomes, though it may not be immediately evident. Rational deployment still remains an issue, with single teacher schools being reported in several states and school-wise PTR still not having been uniformly attained. An improvement has also been registered in teacher attendance, which will increase the teaching learning time available. The example of Kerala, where community has effectively been involved in monitoring student and teacher attendance, is worth emulating.

4.3.4   The Mission notes learning indicators (which include elements of the learning process) and teacher performance standards are under process of development by the NCERT. The latter have drawn from the earlier ADEPTS implemented by MHRD, while leaving out some of the key features (such as *levels* of performance indicators) that made it effective. The PINDICS document does not provide the rationale or principles or the pedagogical model that lie behind the standards and indicators chosen. The very large number of indicators, the mix of generic with the particular (e.g. 'uses child-centred activity-based learning strategies' is an indicator along with 'encourages children to ask questions'), and the very subjective manner of assessing the level of performance indicate this to be a very preliminary draft. A more user-friendly version is needed and the Mission urges that PINDICS be rigorously tested and feedback be collected from potential users as well as experts before the the standards are formally used.

Some of the states have reported that they have developed their own performance standards, while others will presumably customize their own context-specific standards from the NCERT's exemplar ones. There are still a few areas that need to be worked out, including the manner in which these standards will be used to assess and improve teacher performance.

4.3.5   MHRD has indicated a shift in in-service teacher training, towards a more need-based and contextual implementation. However, in the states visited this and other desired changes were not witnessed, with teachers continuing to report training fatigue due to lack of variation and applicability to their situations. Overall, the

number of training days has also been reduced. In interaction with training institutions such as DIETs, it was found that the principles of NCFTE-09 were not fully internalized by the staff and their training tends to continue as of old. At the same time, DIETs were not being used for in-service training in some of the states.

4.3.6   The key feature emerging from the field visits was that the weakest link in the chain of in-service training is the teacher educator/trainer. Most trainers interacted with were themselves not in a position to implement in the classroom what they expected the teacher to. Moreover, their own training tended to be shorter than the training being given to teachers, with the focus being on the contents of the module rather than specific training skills required for communicating it effectively to teachers or generating understanding and capabilities in participants.

Capacity enhancement of teacher educators along a chain of teaching as well as training performance standards is an urgent necessity.

Key recommendations
- *States initiate processes to assess teacher performance.*
- *Urgent steps be taken to enhance capacity of teacher educators.*

4.4   BRCs and CRCs

4.4.1   Aligning the teacher support system – comprising of the BRCs and CRCs – towards quality assurance is a critical thrust in SSA. With the provision of 6 subject specific RPs and 2 RPs for CWSN in each block, the BRCs would be better placed to address the needs of upper primary, as well as those of CWSNs. Support staff has also been provided to enable RPs to concentrate more on academic tasks.

4.4.2   Visits to the states however revealed an uneven picture in terms of the staffing of the BRCs and CRCs. In some of the states, the BRC staff is fairly new or does not have the required background, and has had relatively little capacity building. *The development of performance standards and indicators for BRCs and CRCs would contribute greatly to appropriate recruitment, capacity building and monitoring of the effectiveness of these structures.*

4.4.3   The role clarity between the AEOs/BEOs and the BRC also remain an issue, with there being overlaps. Part of the reason for the lack of clarity at various levels is that while the *tasks* of BRCs and CRCs are listed, their *roles* and responsibilities are not. There is a need to clearly define the difference they are expected to make, and also limit their activities to the time available.

4.4.4   Interaction with BRC team over the districts visited and a perusal of available documents indicates the need for classroom and school observation formats that capture expected practices advocated in the state. In some of the states visited, BRC-CRC members' visits to schools tend to be at irregular intervals, often involving different personnel at different times. Visit reports of BRC/CRC RPs that the Mission observed lacked detail and were general in nature.

4.4.5   The revised QMTs have recently been used to capture information on the status of quality indicators in each block, though the data is yet to be analysed.

4.4.6   Often, a very high degree of activity seems to take place at the BRC level. However without a specific statement of *outcomes* being worked towards, the activities undertaken tend to remain discrete instead of synergizing with each other. Alongside, the DIETs too are initiating a number of activities without necessarily connecting with SSA interventions. A closer linkage with DIETs would enhance the academic resource available to the BRCs while also ensuring coordination with the many district level activities being implemented by the DIETs.

4.4.7   More reflection time is needed by BRC teams, especially on the data collected by them.

4.4.8   *The Mission strongly urges SSA to undertake a major capacity building exercise for this vital quality assurance component.* Vision and role clarity, development of appropriate monitoring tools (against expected outcomes rather than inputs alone), analysis of data in order to take evidence-based decisions and actions would contribute to the effectiveness of CRCs and BRCs.

4.5   Assessment, Monitoring and Data

4.5.1   Post RTE, it is children's right to learn that needs to be delivered and monitored. In this context, the Mission appreciates the shift to more focused implementation and outcome oriented monitoring in SSA. The U-DISE, QMT, NAS, quarterly review of targets approved by PAB, independent studies by the TSG, and the JRMs are some of the key monitoring systems at the national level. At the classroom level, CCE is being incorporated as a regular ongoing real-time assessment process. In addition, the states have periodic evaluation mechanisms (such as the PratibhaParva in MP or Sambalan in Rajasthan). The SLAS is also under development for more granular information on student learning.

4.5.2   In light of this, the following considerations are advanced:

   a. Given the very high number of activities already being performed by various personnel, the overall emphasis on monitoring needs to remain in proportion to actual implementation time available.
   b. Effectiveness of various monitoring mechanisms themselves needs to be assessed as all forms may not be equally effective and may need modifications/improvements.
   c. The previous Missions have pointed out the improvements required in the NAS, including the degree to which it reflects worthwhile learning objectives, comparability and timeliness. Analysis emerging from it should be better able to inform policy makers, planners and decision-makers.
   d. Process and outcome indicators need greater emphasis as quality indicators. For instance, the four key quality indicators presented to the Mission [80% teachers have professional qualifications, no. of states that have revised curriculum, number of trained teachers and no. of states that have CCE modules or have initiated it], while useful in themselves, are output indicators rather than outcome indicators.

4.5.3   The Mission is aware that levels of learning as revealed by NAS are regarded a 'poor', and that there are other national studies claiming 'declining' learning levels. However, in a rapidly expanding system bringing in crores of children as first-

generation school-goers, as well as lakhs of new teachers who teach post-NCF-05 curricula and pedagogy that they did not experience themselves, this should not be surprising. *The Mission urges MHRD to explore the veracity of reported declining levels of learning as well as the causes thereof.* One potential cause could be that the changing profile of students is not matched by the curriculum and textbooks which are unable to take into account the strengths, experiences and knowledge these students bring. This may also be the case with the kinds of assessments conducted, which may not be appropriate for them (e.g. the picture of a doll used in the NAS is unlikely to be identified by the typical government school student in non-urban areas).

4.5.4   CCE and Students Learning Assemment: An increased focus on assessment was evidenced in all the 5 states visited by the Mission team. CCE has been introduced in all states but its implementation at the classroom level remains a huge challenge. In Nagaland, it was found that due to lack of understanding of the nature and purpose of CCE, it was being translated into a system of continuous and rigorous testing, producing exactly the opposite effect on children and not in consonance with the spirit of RTE and NCF2005.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Mission members found the state has implemented a large-scale assessment covering all schools across the state, with a view to reduce gaps in attainment levels in Maths and Language in Class 3. State level testing of student learning levels was also being carried out in Karnataks through Karnataka School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Council (KSQAAC). All these tests as well as independent studies carried out by different agencies show that the learning levels of children, in spite of having so many innovative projects, was still quite low. Poor reading, writing and numeracy skills at the foundational level is an area of concern. The Mission members felt that although a great deal of time and energy was being spent on assessment, the information gathered was not being utilized to bring about suitable modifications and improvement in the teaching learning process.

4.5.5   Quality Monitoring:Many states have taken up the initiative to evaluate and grade the quality of schools through state wide programmes such as Pratibha Parva, Gunotsav, Sambalan and Shamiksha, etc. Such exercises may have some impact in terms of energising the stakeholders in the initial stages, but has the risk of becoming a routinised activity, an end in itself, not leading to any improvement of overall quality or functioning of the school system.

4.5.6   Availability and use of data: As more and more reliable data on a range of indicators is available, there is a greater need to ensure its effective use in making appropriate decisions or improving implementation. Information from CCE can be used not only to improve classroom processes but also to assess teachers' needs. Data from the use of teacher performance standards to assess teachers would not only indicate effectiveness of training and teacher development inputs, but also help set the agenda for future inputs. Similarly while testing is being undertaken widely, the actual utilization of the data is yet to be seen.

4.5.7   With the increased monitoring processes, research and evaluation capacities and activities are also likely to increase. *The Mission recommends that more rigorous evaluation of programmes such as Nali Kali / ABL or Early Reading Interventions be incorporated in future processes within SSA.*

Key recommendations

- More regular and rigorous impact assessment of all quality related interventions, including of the monitoring system itself.
- Enhanced use of data emerging from various sources, to inform planning and implementation at all levels.

5.   PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

5.1   As mentioned earlier, current approval of the Union Government for SSA is upto the next financial year, 2014-15, and MHRD would be seeking, in the coming months, fresh approval for a suitable period beyond that. This presents a unique opportunity to take stock, and re-engineer the programme for greater effectiveness. Revamping the programme would no doubt be a joint exercise involving Central & State Governments, Resource Institutions and other main stakeholders. Based on our visits to States, we are of the view that the revamped programme should have the following features:

- Careful selection of personnel and giving them stable tenures so that their capacity can be built up
- Intensive Capacity-building
- With proper capacity-building, adequate delegation/ decentralisation / autonomy, so that decisions get taken at the lowest appropriate level, and there is **an adequate sense of ownership at all levels**
- Re-energising the mission mode.

5.2   Even counting from the beginning of the X Five-Year Plan (i.e. the year 2002-03), SSA is now nearly twelve years old. It is indeed difficult to sustain a mission mode in a vast, nation-wide programme like SSA over such a long period. In this context, it may be worthwhile to recall the essential features of the mission mode implementation:

- A dedicated team for programme implementation, un-burdened with other work,
- Active involvement of all other concerned agencies,
- Adequate capacity-building of the core team as well as others concerned
- Clear division of responsibilities, time-bound goals and targets, and tight monitoring of progress,
- Intensive mobilisation of the community in general, and stakeholders, in particular, for achievement of programme goals,
- Intensive use of technology and the media.

5.3   The above features have been built into the SSA programme design in various ways. However, stock needs to be taken of their current status, across States. As mentioned above, a certain degree of routinisation, over 12 years, is perhaps inevitable. The challenge now lies in so re-orienting the programme that the mission mode gets suitably restored.

5.4   There is no denying the complexity of the challenge of ensuring that all 28 States stick closely to SSA's programme parameters – or, at least the core ones. The line between flexibility and *laissez faire*, or discipline and rigidity can be a fine one. Yet, it is our belief that there should be minimum compromise on core requirements, e.g. adoption of proper personnel policies by States, especially in regard to key

personnel, and proper constitution and regular meetings of the important bodies envisaged under SSA, e.g. the Governing Body and Executive Council of the State SSA Society.

5.5   As illustration, the EC of the Karnataka SSA Society is not merely not chaired by the Chief Secretary or an Additional. Chief Secretary, but has no representation of the following key Departments and institutions:-

• Health & Family Welfare,
• Tribal Welfare
• Rural Development and Panchayati Raj,
• Urban/Municipal Administration
• Public Health Engineering (in charge of drinking water and sanitation), and
• The Regional Institute of Education, Mysore.

As a result, the EC has tended to become an in-house body of the Education Department, rather than being a broad-based one which could deliberate on and resolve important inter-departmental issues. We found that, at least in the last few meetings of the EC, Departments like Finance and Planning were represented at so junior a level as to make their participation virtually meaningless.

We were also informed that the Governing Body of the State SSA Society had not met for some years.

5.6   We believe it is important to uphold the sanctity of the key structures envisaged in SSA guidelines, as also of their other core features. Any lacunae in the constitution of the core structures and irregularity in their functioning should be quickly red-flagged, and adverse consequences should follow if a State proves really recalcitrant. All concerned also need to take this into account, and not insist on single-minded pursuit of expenditure targets even if that results in dilution of core requirements.

5.7   Some of the earlier Missions have also commented on the distance that exists between the regular educational administrative set-up and the SSA organisation, and between BRCs/CRCs and the DIETs. Our Mission has generally had the same impression. This subject is, we believe, of sufficient importance to merit a serious dialogue between MHRD and States so as to devise ways to achieve adequate integration.

5.8   Coordination between the ICDS and SSA programmes is of great importance. The former did not use to fund construction of Anganwadis earlier but has now been doing it for some years. Co-location of Anganwadis with Primary Schools to the maximum extent possible - both, when new Anganwadis are built as also where they are run in other premises - needs to be systematically pursued.

5.9   We generally came across overcrowded classrooms and BRCs/CRCs in Karnataka. But at the same time, we also found that, in many cases, this could have been considerably eased by a relatively inexpensive intervention like making built-in shelves, in whose absence, a whole lot of material was occupying precious floor space. There were also other instances of lop-sided use of space – e.g. for office and display purposes at the cost of adequate sitting and movement space for students and teachers. It would, in our opinion, be worthwhile to sensitise States to the need for optimum utilisation of available space.

5.10   Navodaya Vidyalayas were set up as pace-setting schools. We recommend that each Navodaya and Kendriaya Vidyalaya be asked to "twin" with at least one Government Elementary School in its neighbourhood for sharing of resources, and mutual benefit. Likewise, every DIET and University Department of Education should also "adopt" at least one elementary school in its proximity for all-round support. This may affect only a small number of elementary schools, but would have substantial demonstration value and ripple/extension effect.

5.11   The importance of generation of robust data and their smart utilisation cannot be over-emphasized. Relevant recommendations in section 1.9 of Chapter 1 may please be seen in this regard.

6.   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PROCUREMENT

6.1   The Mission was aware of critical importance of finance as the life-blood of any Scheme and the imperative of its efficient,effective, economical and prudent management.It .looked to the budgeting, expenditure flow,procurement and also to accounts and audit which are important tools of internal control.

6.2   Budget Analysis – 2013-14

6.2.1   The Mission was informed that against the Government of India allocation of Rs. 27258 crore, the PAB approved an outlay of Rs. 47753.15 crore. The budget approval for this year is strictly within the allocation made by Government of India which will facilitate full release of funds to the States as per the approved outlay.

1. 2.2   As against the financial outlay approved, the reported expenditure was to the extent of Rs. 23932.20 crore as on 30.11.2013 as detailed below:

(Rs. In lakhs)

S. No.	State	Approved Outlay 2013-14	Total Funds Available	Expenditure till November 2013	% on total funds	% on total outlay
1	Andaman & Nicobar	1385.28	1112.41	513.29	46.14	37.05
2	Andhra Pradesh	308847.62	219156.62	161518.55	73.70	52.30
3	Arunachal Pradesh	30348.81	14735.90	13201.43	89.59	43.50
4	Assam	160590.30	112587.38	59583.71	52.92	37.10
5	Bihar	693581.77	410029.30	237402.59	57.90	34.23
6	Chandigarh	5803.19	5087.20	3575.51	70.28	61.61
7	Chhattisgarh	162588.24	86956.09	79190.23	91.07	48.71
8	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1426.45	1393.27	741.19	53.20	51.96
9	Daman & Diu	433.80	476.72	200.62	42.08	46.25
10	Delhi	20600.31	10488.27	4709.76	44.91	22.86
11	Goa	2451.23	1115.41	1102.48	98.84	44.98
12	Gujarat	137400.94	95508.77	74318.38	77.81	54.09
13	Haryana	74277.14	36591.97	20267.38	55.39	27.29
14	HP	21505.39	11992.70	11529.58	96.14	53.61
15	J&K	167731.59	75895.48	65218.19	85.93	38.88
16	Jharkhand	130241.50	75415.50	52963.58	70.23	40.67
17	*Karnataka*	118216.08	113326.05	67308.64	**59.39**	**56.94**
18	*Kerala*	40294.21	33730.55	18392.20	**54.53**	**45.64**
19	Lakshadweep	290.69	262.21	121.41	46.30	41.77

S. No.	State	Approved Outlay 2013-14	Total Funds Available	Expenditure till November 2013	% on total funds	% on total outlay
20	*Madhya Pradesh*	369535.46	298813.14	220471.95	**73.78**	**59.66**
21	**Maharashtra**	141693.55	76630.57	59243.79	77.31	41.81
22	**Manipur**	29552.96	13692.25	4927.67	35.99	16.67
23	**Meghalaya**	40028.62	17548.41	15412.56	87.83	38.50
24	**Mizoram**	19302.60	12546.94	8002.23	63.78	41.46
25	*Nagaland*	22171.50	9905.69	9526.28	**96.17**	**42.97**
26	**Odisha**	159217.28	64734.74	60967.68	94.18	38.29
27	**Puducherry**	806.35	758.00	394.38	52.03	48.91
28	*Punjab*	73953.65	51304.70	38524.29	**75.09**	**52.09**
29	**Rajasthan**	337217.81	267042.99	232088.04	86.91	68.82
30	**Sikkim**	6057.08	5186.58	3120.72	60.17	51.52
31	**Tamil Nadu**	152945.36	95908.17	80542.18	83.98	52.66
32	**Tripura**	20134.42	10258.66	10137.43	98.82	50.35
33	**UP**	917830.57	748528.40	570578.66	76.23	62.17
34	**Uttarakhand**	40428.97	29677.83	22259.22	75.00	55.06
35	**West Bengal**	362860.28	234756.46	185163.91	78.87	51.03
	Sub Total (SSA)	**4771751.00**	**3243155.33**	**2393219.70**	**73.79**	**50.15**
	National Component	**3564.31**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**
	Total	**4775315.31**	**3243155.33**	**2393219.70**	**73.79**	**50.15**

5.2.3 While the percentage of expenditure incurred on total funds is 73.79%, the same on approved outlay is 50.15%. The States need to accelerate the expenditure for the remaining period of the financial year in order to achieve the approved target.
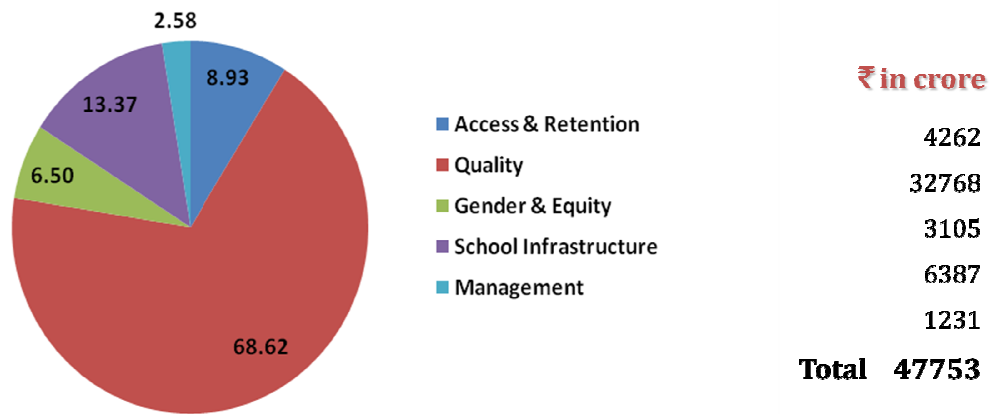
5.2.4 Out of 35 States, 23 States could meet an expenditure of above 70% for the current year. 5 States incurred an expenditure less than 50% of the funds available which is considered to be very low taking into account only 4 months are left to close the financial year and performance of these states are below the target.

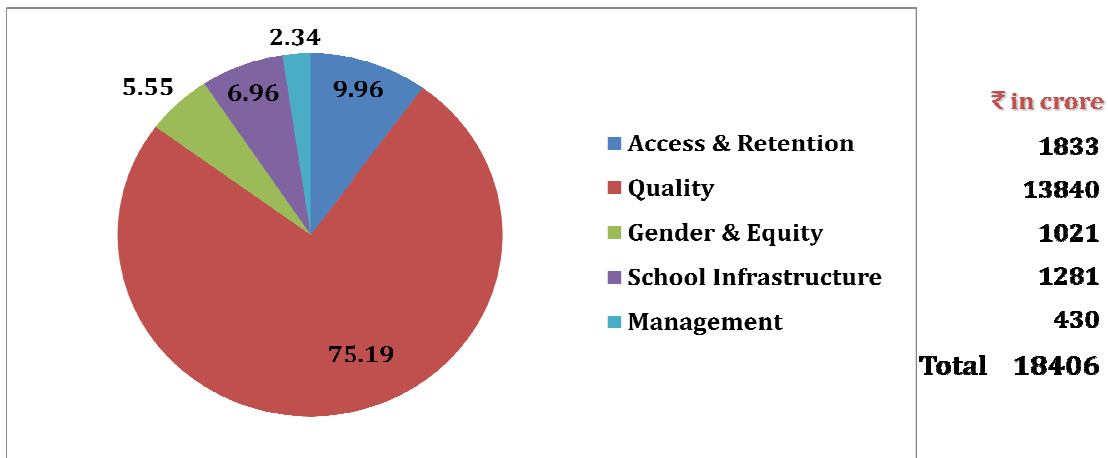| S. No.	Trend of Expenditure on Available Funds	No. of States	Name of State
1.	States which incurred expenditure up to 50%	5	Andaman & Nicobar Island, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Lakshwadeep and Manipur
2.	States which incurred expenditure up to 60%	7	Assam, Bihar, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Haryana, **Karnataka, Kerala** and Puducherry
3.	States which incurred expenditure up to 70%	2	Mizoram and Sikkim

4.	States which incurred expenditure up to 80%	10	Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, **Madhya Pradesh**, Maharashtra, **Punjab,** Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal
5.	States which incurred expenditure up to 90%	5	Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu
6.	States which incurred expenditure above 90%	6	Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, **Nagaland,** Odisha and Tripura

Distribution of Outlay – 2013-14

6.2.5 The category-wise distribution of outlay approved for 2013-14 and expenditure incurred up to 30.09.2013 are as follows:


₹ in crore

Access & Retention	4262
Quality	32768
Gender & Equity	3105
School Infrastructure	6387
Management	1231
Total	**47753**

Distribution of Expenditure up to September, 2013

₹ in crore

Access & Retention	**1833**
Quality	**13840**
Gender & Equity	**1021**
School Infrastructure	**1281**
Management	**430**
Total	**18406**

6.2.6   The Mission noted with appreciation the allocation of a major chunk –Rs 32768cr(68.62%)- to interventions for qualitative improvement in SSA .

6.3   Improved Trend in Quarterly Expenditure

6.3.1   The Mission was aware of critical importance of even flow of expenditure throughout the financial year to avoid the flood of expenditure in March .After the introduction of monthly expenditure plan from 2008-09, the States continue to show the encouraging trend of balanced spending throughout the year instead of uneven spending and rush of expenditure the last two quarters. The chart below shows that for 2012-13 the expenditure as compared to the previous years, the trend in all the quarters show improvement, avoiding bunching at the last two quarters.
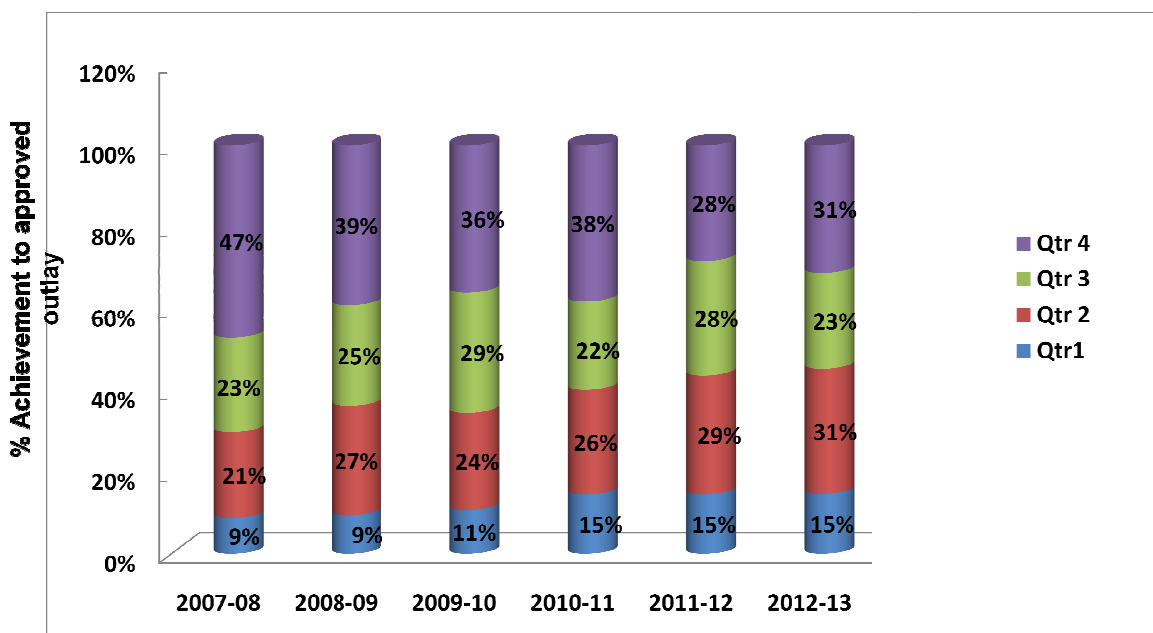
6.4   Accounting

6.4.1   The Manual on Financial Management & Procurement provides detailed accounting procedure for the SSA. The accounts are to be maintained on double entry system of accounting up to block level and single entry system of accounting for cluster and school level. Some of the deficiencies noticed in accounting system through the Statutory Audit Reports are:

- Accounts are maintained on cash basis instead of accrual basis.
- Assets Register not maintained.
- Annual Physical Verification of Stock and Assets not carried out.
- Monthly Bank Reconciliation not regularly carried out.

The Mission recommends that the deficiencies in the accounting system should be corrected early.

6.5   Accounting Software

6.5.1   The Mission appreciates the progress made in introduction of accounting software in 31 States up to District Level and 13 States up to Block Level. It is reported that the 48 Districts of Madhya Pradesh not covered earlier have now been covered and also all the blocks. The software has not been installed in 4 states of Andaman & Nicobar Island, Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshwadeep and Meghalaya. Efforts should be made to install the software in these states also. Even where the software is running, manual records are also being maintained.

The Mission recommends that the software needs to be installed in the remaining 4 States and the coverage should be extended up to Block Level gradually and the manual system dispensed once the software is stabilised.

6.6   Adjustment of Outstanding Advances

6.6.1   The Mission noted with concern that advances have remained unadjusted due to no-submission of completion certificates and utilisation certificates which has been observed by statutory auditors. Against the outstanding advances of Rs. 16498.02 crore reported in the statutory audit report of 2011-12 an advance of Rs. 6066.16 crore is reported to be outstanding as on 30.09.2013.

6.6.2   It has been reported that in the statutory audit report of 2012-2013 an advance of Rs. 5863.05 crore was outstanding as on 1.4.2012. Against this adjustment has been made and the outstanding advance is now reduced to Rs.2610.87 crore (Capital Head Rs. 1741.51 crore & General Head Rs.869.36 crore).

The Mission recommends that clear strategies need to be adopted to adjust all outstanding advances of 2011-12 by 31.03.2014.

6.7   Audit

6.7.1   The Mission looked to audit as an indispensable tool to enforce accountability. Audit of Statutory Audit, internal audit and Accountant General' audit have been prescribed.

6.7.2   Statutory Audit

The statutory audit report for a financial year is due by 1st November of the next financial year. It has been reported that the statutory audit reports for 2012-13 have been received from 32 States so far. The audit report from 3 States of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and West Bengal are yet to be received. During the corresponding period last year audit reports of 26 States were received till January 2013 and compared to this there is marked improvement in submission of audit reports in 2012-13. The States need to ensure the submission of statutory audit reports by due dates in future.

Since the statutory audit report is a very important financial monitoring tool, the Mission recommends that sustained efforts needs to be made to submit the audit report by due date.

6.8 Compliance of Audit Observations

6.8.1   Audit observations from 2005-06 are reported to be outstanding for settlement. These outstanding audit observations need to be settled on priority to avoid lapse of time. The Mission is happy to note that MHRD is taking effective steps in compliance of the outstanding audit observations by inclusion in the agenda item of quarterly review meeting of State Finance Controllers, holding separate discussions with SPDs and Finance Controllers at National Level and propose to discuss the issues in the forthcoming PAB Meetings.

The Mission recommends that MHRD and States should closely monitor the progress of settlement of outstanding audit objections and take sustained efforts to settle the outstanding audit observations.

6.9 Internal Audit

6.9.1   Internal audit is the most effective system of internal control particularly for the sound financial management system in a flagship programme like SSA. It has been reported that in 23 States the internal audit is in progress and in 12 States the same is yet to start for the year 2013-14. The States need to strengthen the internal audit system with a view to conduct the same on concurrent basis. MHRD needs to monitor the progress of internal audit vigorously.

The Mission recommends that the 12 States not started the internal audit be asked to complete the internal audit by 31.03.2014.

6.10 Staffing

6.10.1 The Mission is aware that vacancies pose serious hindrance to accounts keeping, noted that there is marginal improvement in the staffing of finance & accounts as detailed below:

Level	31.03.2012		30.09.2013	
	Vacancy	Percentage	Vacancy	Percentage
SPO	68	22	68	20
DPO	410	23	341	21
Block	7675	45	2559	20

6.10.2 The staff position at District Level in some major states like Bihar, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh has been quite significant over the years.

6.10.3 Similarly, the position of block level accountants is very high in states like Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

6.10.4 These states need to strengthen the staff position at District and Block level on priority.

The Mission recommends that the vacancies of Finance and Accounts need to be filled urgently in order to strengthen financial management system.

6.11   Capacity Building of Finance & Accounts Staff

6.11.1 Since development of sound financial management system is contingent on development of professional competence of accounts staff, it is imperative to provide capacity building to finance and accounts staff at all level. The manual on Financial Management and Procurement provides 5 days mandatory capacity building in a year to all finance and accounts staff. In 2013-14 capacity building for finance and accounts staff was not provided by 16 States of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Dadara & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Jharkhand, Lakshwadeep, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Sikkim and Uttarakhand.

The Mission recommends that the States need to provide adequate capacity building to finance and accounts staff.

6.12   Procurement

6.13.1 The Mission was aware of the importance of procurement process in the financial management .It looked to the procurement plan ,hosting on the website and use of e-tender as essential requirements for promoting transparency.

6.12.2 Procurement Plan

(i)   The manual on Financial Management and Procurement provides preparation of Procurement Plan every year and uploaded on the States' SSA website within one month of the approval of the AWP&B by PAB at National Level.

(ii)   The Procurement Plan for 2013-14 was prepared by all States and uploaded on their websites. This has also been uploaded on the SSA website at National Level. The Mission appreciates the efforts taken by MHRD in uploading the Procurement Plan for 2013-14 in respect of all States on SSA website at National Level.

6.12.3 Procurement Software

(i)   An online procurement software to monitor procurements of open tender contract of Rs. 10 lakh and above has been hosted on a dedicated website through an internet service provider, KITNFINET.

(ii)   Currently 8 states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are using this software.

The Mission recommends that all states need to use the software extensively to monitor the procurement of open tender contract of Rs. 10 lakh and above and this effort need to continue in future to maintain the transparency of Procurement.