



RASHTRIYA MADHYAMIK SHIKSHA ABHIYAN: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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Abstract

Education provides the surest instrument for attaining sustainable development of a high order in a country. In this regard, primary education acts as the basic enabling factor for participation, freedom and overcoming of basic deprivation; whereas secondary education facilitates economic development and establishment of social justice. Over the years, liberalisation and globalisation have led to rapid changes in scientific and technological world and have prompted the general needs of improved quality of life and reduced poverty. This undoubtedly necessitates the school leavers to acquire higher levels of knowledge and skills than what they are essentially imparted with throughout the eight years of elementary education. Also, a crucial stage in the educational hierarchy, secondary education empowers children to aggrandise nations by preparing them for higher education and also the world of work. Following the recommendations of New Education Policy of 1986 and Programme of Action, 1992 the Government of India initiated different schemes to support children of secondary and higher secondary schools at different points in time.

Introduction

The RashtriyaMadhyamikShikshaAbhiyan (RMSA) scheme initiated in 2009, demonstrates the government's ambition for a secondary education system that can support India's growth and development. RMSA aims to increase the enrolment rate to 90% at secondary and 75% at higher secondary stage, by providing a secondary school within reasonable distance of every home. It also aims to improve the quality of secondary education by making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms, removing gender, socio-economic and disability barriers, and providing universal access to secondary level education by 2017. . The IEDSS (formerly IEDC), Girls' Hostel, Vocational Education and ICT@schools schemes were started with the overall objective of providing accessible, and relevant secondary education of

good quality in India. Started in 2009 in partnership with State Government and Local Self Government, RMSA was the most recent addition to these four existing schemes.

The RashtriyaMadhyamikShikshaAbhiyan is a flagship scheme of Government of India, to enhance access to secondary education and improve its quality. The implementation of the scheme started from 2009-10 to generate human capital and provide sufficient conditions for accelerating growth and development and equity as also quality of life for everyone in India. Largely built upon the successes of SSA and, like SSA, RMSA leverages support from a wide range of stakeholders including multilateral organisations, NGOs, advisors and consultants, research agencies and institutions. The scheme involves multidimensional research, technical consulting, implementation and funding support. Currently in its fourth year of implementation, RMSA covers 50,000 government and local body secondary schools. Besides this, an additional of 30,000 aided secondary schools can also access the benefits of RMSA; but not infrastructure and support in core areas.

Objectives

The scheme envisages to achieve a gross enrolment ratio of 75% from 52.26% in 2005-06 for classes IX-X within 5 years of its implementation, by providing a secondary school within reasonable distance of any habitation.

- Improve the quality of education imparted at secondary level by making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms.
- Remove gender, socio-economic and disability barriers.
- Provide universal access to secondary level education by 2017, i.e. by the end of the 12th Five Year Plan
- Enhance and universalize retention by 2020
- Physical Facilities
- Quality Interventions
- Equity Interventions
- Additional class rooms
- Laboratories
- Libraries
- Art and crafts room
- Toilet blocks
- Drinking water provisions

- Residential Hostels for Teachers in remote areas.

Implementation mechanism of the scheme

MHRD is the nodal central government ministry to coordinate RMSA with the help of RMSA State Implementation Societies (SIS) in each state. However, there are a lot of support arrangements and institutions available for better implementation of RMSA. A National Resource Group (NRG) provides guidance for bringing about reforms in teaching learning processes, curriculum, teaching learning material, ICT education and mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation. The Technical Support Group (TSG) supported by MHRD, is a constituent of the NRG and has a direct reporting relationship with the ministry. TSG provides technical and operational support and expertise to national and state level teams. Besides this, various sub-committees like Curriculum Reform Subcommittee, Teacher and Teacher Development Subcommittee, ICT Subcommittee and Planning and Management Subcommittee have been constituted under NRG. These sub-committees comprise members from the TSG and meet thrice a year to apprise themselves of the progress made on mutually set goals and commitments. In addition, NCERT and NUEPA support through dedicated RMSA units. RMSA-TCA has also been set-up for capacity building support with the assistance of DFID. In terms of financial inputs, the central share is released to the implementing agencies directly, whereas the applicable state share is also released to the agencies by the respective State Governments.

Planning and Appraisal

Planning and appraising in implementation of RMSA programme at the district and state levels is a challenging task. The challenge of planning secondary education under RMSA can be attributed to its unique features, including addressing the needs of children from a pluralist socio-economic, educational and cultural backgrounds and meeting their needs and aspirations to continue with higher education or entering the world of work. The challenge also lies in promoting complementarity among the approaches, interventions and resources of these schemes.

The RMSA envisages greater role for communities, panchayati raj institutions and other stake holders in all aspects of planning and implementation, leading to considerable devolution and decentralization of authority and management functions. Therefore, a very pragmatic approach is needed in development and appraisal of district and state level secondary education plans prepared under RMSA. Sufficient technical knowledge to deal with quantitative aspects and also to meaningfully address issues of quality is needed. It is a challenging task to build the capacity of the planning teams constituted at the state and district levels for planning and management of the secondary education in their respective areas under RMSA programme.

Planning and Appraisal Process

- **Prioritization and Process Initiation:** There is no defined timeline to initiate the planning process, but observations made by Joint Review Missions (JRMs) held in January and July every year, help to set most of the priorities for planning for the next year. The Five year Plan allocations and Union Budgets also drive the priority elements for planning. Based on these inputs, the TSG conducts regional workshops with different states seeking feedback in implementation, discussing appraisal process and planning priorities.
- **Preparation of Plans:** The state plan is generally prepared around the 10 chapters specified in the AWP&B Manual prepared by NUEPA. The work of the SPO and the District offices is to complete information spread across 60 odd tables needed to prepare the plan, requiring a focus on finalisation of UDISE data and compilation of information around information on civil works. Even though the cut-off date for school data (UDISE) is 30th September, the states continue updating the data till December. The writing of the district plans and their compilation in the state plan therefore takes place between December and March.
- **Submission of plans, discussions with TSG and Pre-PAB and Final PAB approvals:** Review of plans under RMSA is currently advised at two stages- at the state level and then at the national level. The state level review is conducted by the State Executive Committee of the RMSA, while the Project Approval Board (PAB) is the final forum at the national level where state plans are discussed, appraised and approved. The dates for PAB are announced well in advance and generally 3-4 states are covered on one PAB day. All other activities like pre-PAB meetings, TSG discussions, resubmissions are planned accordingly.

RMSA in Punjab

The State has a literacy rate of **76.68%**. The State has **4229** senior secondary schools and **8822** secondary schools.

State Description:

| | Government | Private Aided | Private | Total |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| No. of Secondary schools | 3406 + 68 (Central Govt.) | 364 | 4984 | 8822 |
| Total Enrolment (Secondary) | 435046 | 58508 | 370292 | 863846 |
| No. of Teachers (Regular) | 27318 | 1557 | 16784 | 45659 |
| No. of Higher Secondary schools | 2001 | 228 | 2000 | 4229 |
| Total Enrolment (Higher Secondary) | 400004 | 46012 | 225765 | 689781 |
| No. of Teachers | 12165 | 622 | 9355 | 22142 |

Educational Indicators:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| GER at Secondary level | 86.39 |
| NER at Secondary level | 47.48 |
| Dropout Rate at Secondary level | 9.80 |
| Transition rate class VIII to IX | 91.89 |
| Gender Parity Index (GPI) | 0.97 |
| Gender Gap | 13* |
| Retention Rate | 94.79 |
| Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in government secondary schools | 18 |
| Student Classroom Ratio (SCR) in government secondary schools | 33 |
| Gross Access Ratio | 98.97 |

*Gender Gap is high .

- **SFD Coverage:** There are 12 SC concentrated district in Punjab. Further there are 21 Educationally Backward Block (EBB) in Punjab.
- **Physical Progress (2014-15 up to 31st October 2014):**

i) **New School:** 276 new schools are approved and 222 have been made functional by the State. 14340 students are enrolled in these schools

ii) **Strengthening of schools:** Out of 3406 schools in the State, 2820 schools have been approved infrastructure under RMSA.

The components approved and progress is as follows:

| Item of construction | Approved | Completed | In progress | Not started | % completed |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| New School | 276 | 215 | 49 | 12 | 77.90 |
| ACR | 1262 | 879 | 60 | 323 | 69.65 |
| Science Lab | 1286 | 984 | 114 | 188 | 76.52 |
| Computer Lab | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Art and Craft Room | 2760 | 1339 | 170 | 1251 | 48.51 |
| Library | 2161 | 827 | 1069 | 265 | 38.27 |
| Toilet | 1269 | 1263 | 0 | 6 | 99.53 |
| Drinking water | 914 | 914 | 0 | 0 | 100.00 |

iii) **Girls Hostel:** Out of 21 Girls Hostel approved 13 hostels are functional with 650 girls admitted. 21 Hostels are functional in own building.

Construction of all 21 hostels has been completed.

iv) **ICT@ school:** Till date against the approval for coverage of 3697 schools, 3696 schools are functional. 5 years cycle has been completed for 2199 schools.

v) **Vocational Education:** The State was approved 100 schools for coverage of vocational courses and it has been started in 100 schools.

Scheme of Subjects has also been revised to make Vocational subject additional sixth subject at secondary level.

vi) **Coverage of CWSN:** Coverage of **10125** CWSN has been approved in 2014-15.

vii) **Other major activities as on 2014-15:**

Status on Teacher Training (2014-15):

| Activities | Approval | Completed |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|
| Teacher under RMSA | 1954 | 817 |
| Special Educator | 22 | - |
| Teacher training | 128367 | 108859 |
| Leadership training | 150 | 50 |

viii) **GOI releases as on 31st December 2014** (Rs. in lakh)

| Scheme | GOI releases as on 31 st December 2014 | | | GOI funds released to SIS |
|----------------------|---|---------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | Recurring | Non-recurring | Total | |
| RMSA | 3500.98 | 0.00 | 3500.98 | 0.00 |
| IEDSS | 370.85 | 0.00 | 370.85 | 0.00 |
| Girls' Hostel | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| ICT | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Vocational Education | 223 | 804.92 | 1027.92 | 0.00 |
| Total | 4094.83 | 804.92 | 4899.75 | 0.00 |

ix) **Expenditure Status as on 31st December 2014**

| Head | Outlay for 2014-15 | Total Funds available with SIS | Expenditure | Unspent balance with SIS |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| RMSA | 12491.72 | 925.35 | 1304.23 | -378.88 |
| ICT@school | 0.00 | 1071.75 | 0 | 1071.75 |
| Girls Hostel | 174.73 | 65.44 | 0 | 65.44 |
| IEDSS | 392.55 | 138.25 | 0 | 138.25 |
| Vocational Education | 1766.50 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| All components | 14825.50 | 2200.79 | 1304.23 | 896.56 |

x) **Status on State share release:** Partially Released

xi) **Status on Audit report:** Received for 2013-14

xii) **Model schools:** As against 21 EBBs, 21 Model schools have been approved to the State. For all 21 Model schools construction is complete.

xiii) Areas of concern:

- 58% of Teachers positions vacant.
- GIS mapping yet to be completed. Manual school mapping by using town planner maps.
- None of the Special educator appointed.

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