

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan: Universalisation of Secondary Education

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Abstract

Secondary education is a crucial stage in the educational hierarchy as it prepares the students for higher education .It also provides the means of earning livelihood. The strict enforcement of the secondary and higher secondary stage will enable the students to compete for higher education successfully and for jobs globally. Therefore it is a great need to strengthen this stage by providing greater access and also by improving quality in a significant way. Since universalisation of elementary education has become a constitutional mandate, it is absolutely essential to push this vision forward to move towards universalisation of secondary education which has already been achieved in a large number of developed countries and several developing countries. Various programmes are introduced to enhance the quality of education in our country. The ongoing SSA programme to bring elementary education to millions of children has been successful to a large extent and has thus created a need for strengthening secondary education across the country. With the successful implementation of SSA, a large number of passing out from UP classes created a huge demand for secondary education. It is very well recognised that eight years of elementary education are insufficient to equip a child for the world and also to be a competent adult and citizen. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a scheme of the Government of India for universalisation of access to and improvement of quality of education at the secondary stage. The project is being implemented in the sharing pattern of 75: 25(75% for GOI and 25% for state govt.) during current five year plan.

KEYWORDS: RMSA, Universalisation, Secondary Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a scheme of the Government of India for universalisation of access to and improvement of quality of education at the secondary stage. It came into being after Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the highest deliberative and advisory forum on education in the country with education ministers of all the states and eminent educationists as its members, in 2004 and 2005 decided to make secondary education universal.

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) has been implemented in the state of Himachal Pradesh for secondary level (i.e. for 9th and 10th classes) w.e.f. 2009-2010 through the existing Himachal Pradesh School Education Society and administrative setup of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as per the guidelines issued by the GOI. The project is being implemented in the sharing pattern of 75: 25(75% for GOI and 25% for state govt.) during current five year plan.

2. AIMS OF RASHTRIYA MADHAYMIK SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RMSA)

- Universal access of secondary education by 2017
- Universal retention by 2020

3. VISION

The vision for secondary education is to make good quality education available, accessible and affordable (3A) to all children in the age group of 14-18 years. With this vision in mind, the following achievements are to be made:

- To provide a secondary school within a reasonable distance of any habitation, which should be 5 kilometre for secondary schools and 7 -10 kilometre for higher secondary schools.
- Ensure universal access of secondary education by 2017 (GER of 100%), and Universal retention by 2020,
- Providing access to secondary education with special references to economically weaker sections of the society, the educationally backward, the girls and the disabled children residing in rural areas and other marginalized categories like SC, ST, OBC and Educationally Backward Minorities (EBM).

4. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

There is a need of shift in the conceptual design of secondary education in order to meet the challenge of Universalisation of Secondary Education (USE). The guiding principles in this regard are; Universal Access, Equality and Social Justice, Relevance and Development and Curricular and Structural Aspects. Universalisation of Secondary Education gives opportunity to move towards equity. The concept of 'common school' will be encouraged. If these values are to be established in the system, all types of schools, including unaided private schools will also contribute towards Universalisation of Secondary Education (USE) by ensuring adequate enrolments for the children from under privileged society and the children Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.

The above goal translates into the following main objectives;

- i) To ensure that all secondary schools have physical facilities, staffs and supplies at least according to the prescribed standards through financial support in case of Government/ Local Body and Government aided schools, and appropriate regulatory mechanism in the case of other schools.
- ii) To improve access to secondary schooling to all children according to norms – through proximate location (Secondary Schools within 5 kms, and Higher Secondary Schools within 7-10 kms) / efficient and safe transport arrangements/residential facilities, depending on local circumstances including open schooling. However in hilly and difficult areas, these norms can be relaxed. Preferably residential schools may be set up in such areas.
- iii) To ensure that no child is deprived of secondary education of satisfactory quality due to gender, socio-economic, disability and other barriers.
- iv) To improve quality of secondary education resulting in enhanced intellectual, social and cultural learning.
- v) To ensure that all students pursuing secondary education receive education of good quality

Achievement of the above objectives would also signify substantial progress in the direction of the Common School System.

5. APPROACH AND STRATEGY

a) Access

- Expansion and strengthening of existing Secondary Schools and Higher Secondary Schools;
- Up-gradation of Upper Primary Schools based on school mapping exercise with all necessary infrastructure facilities and teachers;
- Up-gradation of Secondary Schools to Higher Secondary Schools based upon the school mapping exercise;
- Opening of new schools in unserved areas based on the school mapping exercise;
- Promoting PPP models in the expansion of the secondary schooling network.

b) Quality Improvement

RMSA will improve enabling conditions in schools – i.e. providing required infrastructure in secondary schools, improved teaching learning processes and making the social, affective and academic environment conducive to learning. Rationalization of teacher deployment and appointment of additional teachers and in-service training of teachers is done. Residential accommodation for teachers will be provided in rural and difficult hilly areas with focus on creating accommodation facilities for female teachers.

c) Equity

With the help of this programme, separate toilets for girls will be constructed in schools. All necessary facilities will be provided for the differently abled children in all schools. States take advantage of centrally sponsored scheme, centre sector scheme and state schemes for providing free lodging and boarding facilities, scholarship and cash incentives to disadvantage group of students like girls, SC, ST, OBC and minority community.

d) Education of SCs/ STs/ OBCs/ Educationally Backward Minorities and other Disadvantage Groups

- Representation of SCs and STs in SDMC.
- Contextualization of pedagogic processes and creation of ethos (NCF 2005)
- Development of local specific teaching-learning material.
- RMSA provides flexibility to local units to develop a context specific intervention for SCs, STs and minorities like:
 - Up-gradation and strengthening of Ashram schools.
 - Engagement of community organizers from SC/ST communities.
 - Special teaching support as per need.
 - Orientation programmes for motivation for schooling using community teachers.
 - Monitoring regularly.
 - Providing context specific intervention in the form of a hostel, an incentive or special facility as required.
- Provision of one additional language teacher (tribal languages) at least TGT level (per school).

- Strengthening teachers training component of Ashram Schools looked after by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MTA).
- Provision for scholarships.

e) Out of School Children

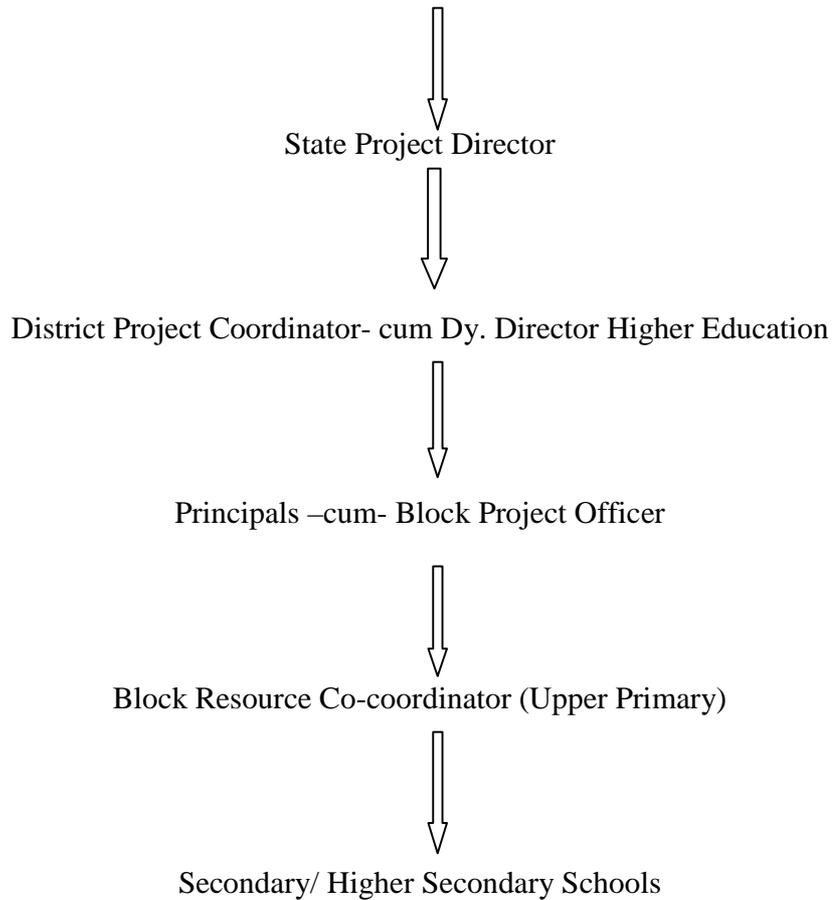
For identifying the out-of-school children at the secondary level, it is suggested that all those grade VIII graduates of a given year who do not transit to formal secondary school or distance learning centre at state or national open school may be considered as out-of-school children for that year .The assistance will be provided on the basis of assessment of out of school children and provision made in District Plan.

f) Improvement of School Infrastructure and Civil Works

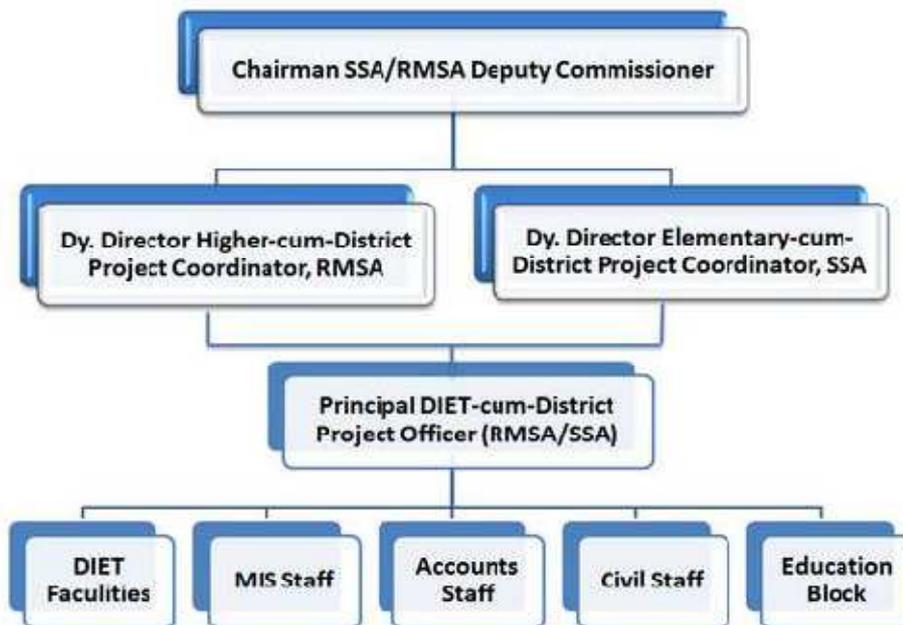
The allocation for civil works will not exceed 33% of the approved Perspective Plan. In a particular year's Annual Plan, provision for civil works can be considered up to 40% of the Annual Plan expenditure depending upon the priorities assigned to various components of the scheme in that year within the overall project ceiling of 33%. Each State must formulate a strategy for repair. School Management and Development Committees will have to carry out the civil works activities through a transparent system of account keeping. The School Management and Development Committee could certify the maintenance and repair work under taken in a school. Efforts to improve the school environment by addition of a few inexpensive internal and external elements will be made. All schools will be fitted with rain water harvesting system and disabled friendly provisions. Provisions for renewable energy utilization may be explored in the school buildings strengthened/ upgraded under RMSA. Solar panels for water heating, running water pump, solar lantern etc. are suggested as some of the possible activities. Provision for fire safety equipment in schools may be explored.

6) RMSA IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE





Organisation



6) CIVIL WORKS

The main issue related to implementation of civil works under RMSA is that most of these works are quite big works in terms of physical outputs and finances involved. As far the RMSA guidelines, the construction is to be done through building committee of the schools or through special agencies engaged for the purpose. Another issue which the state has been facing regarding speedy construction of civil works is the non availability of land for construction of new school. Different options were explored for implementing various civil works under RMSA and based on the capabilities available with various agencies like BSNL (civil wing) HIMUDA etc. The construction of complete school building was assigned to these agencies.

7) TEACHER'S TRAINING

Teachers training under RMSA in the state are being conducted through DIETs. At the state level trainings, master trainers in the three main subject's viz. Mathematics, Science and English have already been trained and they have further imparted trainings in their respective districts. In all the teachers special focus is to train teachers in computer/ IT education also. At the district level, development of module and master trainers in other subjects, viz. Social science, Hindi, Sanskrit, Physical education, Art and craft/Drawing were given to the DIET's level.

.a) To improve the quality of teacher's training, SPO has created a pool of master trainers in mathematics and science in collaboration with National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur.

.b) Minimum level competencies for Maths, Science and English for secondary classes have been identified with the help of school teachers.

.c) Teacher training modules of Science, Maths and English have been developed at the state level. Master trainers in the subject of mathematics and science have been trained in collaboration with NIT Hamirpur.

. d) The SPO is also involving SCERT and SIEMAT for providing support in relation to RMSA trainings. Recently the SCERT has been assigned the task of preparing the plan for ensuring employability and Development of Guide Book on Career Guidance and counseling for secondary school students.

. e) Five days training of Principals and Headmasters of GSSS and GHS is under process at the state level. All the districts will be covered for the above trainings. The main focus of this training is to make all the school heads aware about Pedagogy, Right to Education Act-2009, School organization, Administrative management, Account matters, Role of SMCs in effective functioning of schools, preparation of School Development Plans, RTI etc.

8. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education for children with special needs in sector was not there until recently. Under SSA a large number of students were being covered under IED component and a

large number of these children have now passed elementary education. Accordingly, a demand was being felt to create and provide special facilities to special children.

9. RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Piloting of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation in class 9th in selected 50 schools of Shimla, Bilaspur and Solan Districts have been undertaken. All the Heads of these schools will be trained for CCE activities. Minimum level of competencies for English, Hindi, Maths, hindi, science for secondary classes will be identified with the help of school teachers and experts and the achievement level of students is being proposed to be measured based on these competencies. Baseline assessment will be later on compared with terminal assessment to see the progress made by the children during the academic session.

10. GENDER SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

All the activities planned and implemented under RMSA have been undertaken keeping in view the gender perspective. Following activities have been undertaken under gender intervention:

- ..a) SMC have been sensitized towards girls education in convergence with SSA.
- ...b) Five girls hostels in educationally backwards blocks of Chamba and Sirmour districts are under construction.
- ...c) More emphasis have been given under RMSA to different routine activities like girl guiding, NSS and NCC to empower girls.

11. SMC AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

The SMC is monitoring the progress of implementation of all the components of the scheme under RMSA at school level. SMC s members have been authorized to supervise the school at regular intervals and school officials are being accountable to the community. They are being trained for this job.

12. CONCLUSION

Rashtriya Madhaymik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a flagship programme of the Government of India. This programme is for universalisation of education at the secondary stage. Rashtriya Madhaymik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) has been implemented in the state of Himachal Pradesh for secondary level (i.e. for 9th and 10th classes) w.e.f. 2009-2010 through the existing Himachal Pradesh School Education Society and administrative setup of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This scheme provides equality in Girls, SC, ST and Minority education. This scheme is the milestone of the Secondary Education System in India. Our education system is moving towards quality education through the RMSA.

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