



Executive Summary

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National Policy on Education, 1986 (revised in 1992) emphasizes universal access and enrolment to elementary education, universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. Achieving universal primary education was one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of India, which aimed to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, would be able to complete a full course of primary education. MDGs originated from the Millennium Declaration adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000.

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India, which provides for free and compulsory education of all children in the age of six to 14 years as a Fundamental Right. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) was enacted by the Parliament in August 2009, which came into force on 1 April 2010. The RTE Act provided further impetus for universal access to elementary education, compulsory enrolment of children, attendance and completion of elementary education. For carrying out provisions of the RTE Act, Government of Madhya Pradesh framed Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011 (MP RTE Rules) in March 2011.

In the above background, we conducted the performance audit of implementation of the RTE Act in the State. The performance audit was carried out between March 2016 and August 2016. The period of coverage of the performance audit was from the inception of implementation of the RTE Act in the year 2010-11 to 2015-16.

Audit noticed that the objective of universal elementary education to all children could not be achieved in the State, even after six years of enactment of the RTE Act. Household survey (HHS) for identification of out of school children (OOSC) was deficient in as much as it ignored marginalized children. The universal retention in elementary education was not achieved due to high dropouts. There was improvement in infrastructure facilities in government schools, but large number of schools were still without the prescribed infrastructure. Teachers, who play a pivotal role in schooling system, were not available in schools according to norms under the RTE Act. The quality of education imparted in elementary education in government schools was lagging behind. The important findings of performance audit are given below:

1. Financial Management

- There was no separate budget for implementation of the RTE Act in the State. The activities under the provision of the RTE Act were carried out through the funds available under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA). Audit noticed that Government of India (GoI) and State Government short released ₹ 7,284.61 crore for SSA against approved outlay of Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) during 2010-16. However, School Education Department (Department) failed to utilise available fund for SSA, which resulted in large unspent balances and less release of fund from GoI.

(Paragraphs 2.1 and 2.3)

- The RTE Act provides that private unaided schools, providing free and compulsory education under the Act, shall be reimbursed expenditure incurred by it to the extent of per child expenditure incurred by the State, or actual amount charged from the child, whichever is less. Audit noticed that ₹ 357.70 crore was reimbursed to private schools as on March 2016. In three test checked districts, fee reimbursement of ₹ 1.01 crore was paid to 303 unrecognised schools. There were cases of excess payments and double payments to schools towards fee reimbursement.

(Paragraph 2.5)

2. Free and compulsory elementary education

- Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) in primary education and proportion of pupils starting Class I who reach Class V, were identified as indicators to measure the achievement of MDG. The NER of State as on March 2016 was less as compared to All India average. State was able to achieve marginal growth in NER at upper primary level (Classes VI to VIII). However, audit noticed decline in NER at primary level (Classes I to V) from 93.66 *per cent* (2013-14) to 79.83 *per cent* (2015-16).

Further, there were 24 *per cent* and 23 *per cent* drop out of children, starting Class I during 2010-11 and 2011-12 who reached Class V during 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. Thus, State could not achieve MDGs targets, though it was under obligation to ensure completion of elementary education of every child under the RTE Act.

(Paragraph 3.1)

- Local authorities were required to maintain records of children to monitor enrolment, attendance and learning achievement. However, such records were not maintained. Department was still under process to delineate role and responsibilities to local authorities. Annual HHS under *School Chalein Hum Abhiyan* for identifying children from zero to 14 years did not cover vulnerable categories of children. As a result, the data of OOSC in the State was not reliable. National Sample Survey on Estimation of OOSC (September 2014) reported 4.51 lakh OOSC in the State, whereas HHS 2015-16 identified only 0.60 lakh OOSC.

(Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.7)

- The data compiled for enrolment of children in elementary education was also not reliable. Unified-District Information System for Education (U-DISE) was the data capture format used across the country for the entire school education. Audit noticed difference in the range of 3.97 lakh to 16.18 lakh in enrolment figures for classes I to VIII as per HHS and those reported in U-DISE during the HHS survey period 2011-12 to 2015-16. Districts reported cases of double and fake enrolments and wrong entries in U-DISE.

(Paragraph 3.4)

- During 2010-16, 10.25 lakh children in the State left the schooling after primary stage (class V), while 4.09 lakh children left the schooling after class VII without enrolling in class VIII. Thus, universal retention of children in elementary education could not be achieved.

(Paragraph 3.6)

3. Teachers

The RTE Act provides for ensuring prescribed pupil teacher ratio (PTR) within three years of the commencement of the Act, i.e., by March 2013. However, 18,940 State Government schools at primary level and 13,763 schools at upper primary level (Class VI to VIII) had adverse PTR as on March 2016. Further, there should not be single teacher school as per RTE norms. However, 18,213 State Government schools were running with single teacher as on March 2016. Audit noticed that there were 63,851 vacant posts of teachers/head teachers in primary schools and upper primary schools as on March 2016. However, large number of vacant posts of teachers co-existed with posting of excess number of teachers in many districts/schools.

(Paragraph 4.1)

4. Quality of education in State Government schools

- Department could not ensure availability of prescribed infrastructure in State Government schools within the specified time period under the RTE Act, i.e., by March 2013 and large number of schools were lacking these facilities even as on March 2016. In the State, adverse Student Classroom Ratio was noticed in 12,769 primary school (PS) and 10,218 upper primary school (UPS) as on March 2016.

(Paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2)

- Department introduced *Pratibha Parv* programme in the year 2011-12 to assess and evaluate the academic performance of students of all Government PS and UPS. The results of *Pratibha Parv* revealed that the educational quality did not improve in State Government schools, as the percentage of Grade A and Grade B students steadily declined during 2013-16. During the beneficiary survey, 71 per cent parents reported that their children were not provided additional academic help by schools.

Department conducted an End Line Test in August 2016 which revealed that majority of students were not able to read, write and recognise words and lacked age appropriate mathematical ability.

(Paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8)

5. Implementation of the RTE Act in other than State Government schools

- There was no mechanism to track opening, running and closing of private sector schools. The records of recognition were not maintained by District Education Officers and Block Elementary Education Officers, who were responsible for providing recognition to private schools.

(Paragraph 6.1)

- Only 67 per cent to 71 per cent of private sector unaided schools in the State provided admission to children under the RTE Act. Department had no information about the reasons due to which remaining private sector schools did not implement the RTE Act.

(Paragraph 6.2)

6. Monitoring and grievance redressal

- School Management Committee (SMC) was formed in all test-checked State Government schools. However, the required proportion of representation of parents/guardians was not found in SMCs of 87 schools out of 390 test-checked schools. Beneficiary survey revealed that some of the parents, who were part of SMC, were not aware of their roles in SMC, which jeopardised the objective of forming SMC. Further, the targets for inspection of schools by district level and block level officials were not achieved.

(Paragraphs 7.2, 7.5 and 7.6)

- Grievance redressal mechanism for teachers and students at district level was not put in place as required under the RTE Act and MP RTE Rules.

(Paragraphs 7.9 and 7.10)

7. Summary of Recommendations

- Department should make efforts to utilise the available funds provided by GoI and State Government and strengthen the expenditure control mechanism.
- The performance of duties assigned to Local Authorities under the RTE Act/Rules should be ensured. Department should ensure Aadhaar seeding with SAMAGRA ID, which is allotted by State Government as the unique ID for each child, to monitor his/her enrolment, attendance and learning achievement and to prevent double enrolment and duplication in enrolment.
- Department should ensure that instructions for rationalisation of teachers are implemented effectively so as to ensure that there are no adverse pupil teacher ratio and single teacher school in the State. Steps should be taken to fill up the vacant posts.
- Department should ensure that all schools must comply with infrastructural norms for an effective learning environment.
- Mechanism developed by Department for recognition of private schools through Education Portal needs to be more effective and maintenance of records of recognition should be ensured both at State and district levels for future convenience. A system should be developed to track the opening, running and closing of private schools in the interest of students.
- SMC should be formed with requisite number of members. SMC members should be made aware of their functions under the RTE Act and members need to be empowered through arranging training programme at regular interval.
- The grievance redressal mechanism for teachers and students should be strengthened.