

## **Chapter 8**

### **Student's Entitlements**



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## Student's Entitlements

With the objective of registering growth in enrolment and retaining the enrolled students in the public schooling system, Samagra Shiksha Implementation Framework as well as Right to Education Rules, provide for distributing incentives like free uniforms, textbooks, bicycles and school bags. This Chapter discusses the timeliness and adequacy of supply of these items to the students. The highlights of the audit findings are as follows:

- The State supplied free uniform to 214.98 lakh (98 *per cent*) students out of 218.49 lakh eligible students, during 2018-23. The remaining 3.51 lakh students were deprived of the benefit, due to non-release of grant by the State.
- In 71 out of 77 of test-checked schools, uniforms were distributed with delays ranging from one to 520 days from the stipulated dates.
- Free textbooks were to be supplied by the second week of March of each year, so that books would be available to the students at the start of the academic session. However, there was delay in distribution of free textbooks by 90 to 198 days, during 2018-23.
- Due to the lapses of the school authorities of six sampled districts in ensuring valid bank accounts of eligible students, financial incentive of ₹1.59 crore towards purchase of bicycles could not be transferred to 6,132 eligible students.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 was enacted by the Parliament and made effective from 2010. Under Section 38 of the RTE Act, the Government of Odisha (GoO) issued (September 2010) Orissa Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010. Rule 4 of the Odisha RTE Rules, stipulates that the School Management Committee shall prepare a School Development Plan (SDP) comprising three annual sub plans containing the estimates of class-wise enrolment for each year; requirement of teachers for Classes I to VIII and additional infrastructure with reference to the norms and standards. Besides, financial requirement for meeting the entitlements of children such as free text books and any other additional financial requirement for fulfilling the responsibilities of the school under the RTE Act. The rights and entitlements of children stipulated under the RTE Act 2009, RTE Rules 2010 of GoO and under the schemes / guidelines / circulars of GoI and GoO for promotion of school education are detailed in **Table 8.1**.

**Table 8.1: Statement showing entitlements of children**

Entitlements	Provision	Children's entitlements
Free supply of Uniform	Paragraph 6.8.1.1. of Samagra Shiksha Framework/ Guidelines of OSEPA (September 2018)	(i) Two sets of uniforms for all girls and all children belonging to SC/ST/BPL families (ii) One pair of shoes and two pairs of socks to all children of Government schools.
	GoO SME Department's circular (22 December 2017)	Two sets of uniforms to all boys belonging to APL families reading in Government schools and all children of Government aided schools
Free Textbooks	Rule 4 (2) (d) of RTE Rules, 2010	Textbooks to all children of Classes I to VIII
	GoO, ST & SC Development Department circular (9 December 2015)	Free textbooks to ST/SC students of Classes IX and X of Government and Government aided schools
Bicycle incentive	Chief Minister's Free Bicycle Distribution Scheme, 2011	Incentive of ₹2,600 to students of Class IX for purchase of bicycle
School bag incentive	GoO, SME Department's circular (29 December 2017 and 1 October 2021)	Children of Classes I and II studying in Government and Government aided schools
Free and compulsory education	Section 12 (1) of the RTE Act, 2009	Free and compulsory education to at least twenty-five <i>per cent</i> children, belonging to the Weaker Sections and Disadvantaged Group (WS&DG)

## 8.1 Supply of Uniform

Under the modalities of distribution of uniforms, State Project Director, Odisha School Education Programme Authority (SPD, OSEPA) allocates grants for school uniform to the District Project Co-ordinators (DPCs), who in turn credit the same into the account of the School Management Committee (SMC), as per the number of students' enrolment in the respective schools. The SMC is responsible for the procurement of uniforms, shoes, socks and distributing the same amongst students by a specified date. The entire process is to be done under the supervision of DEO and DPC at district level. At the block level, supervision is done by BEO and by Cluster Resource Centre Co-ordinator (CRCC) at cluster level, so as to ensure that no child is deprived of his/her entitlement.

Audit noticed that the State supplied free uniform to 214.98 lakh (98 *per cent*) students out of 218.49 lakh students, eligible during 2018-23. However, 3.51 lakh students (including highest number of 1.18 lakh students of Sundargarh district) were deprived of the benefit due to non-release of grant by the State during 2018-19.

In case of the four sampled districts, 10,574 (three *per cent*) out of 3,89,708 eligible students of the six sampled blocks were deprived of the benefit, during 2018-23 (**Appendix 8.1**). Audit noticed that neither the Head Master (HM) of the sampled schools brought this issue to the notice of the DPC-cum-DEO/BEO for providing additional grant nor did the DEO/BEO ensure supply of free

uniforms to all eligible students, due to which eligible students were deprived of their free entitlements.

While noting the audit observation for future reference, the Department stated (October 2024) that number of students eligible for uniform was based on the data available in the UDISE+, whereas the students to whom uniforms had been distributed was based on the actual number of students, who received the uniforms from the schools.

### **8.1.1 Delayed distribution of uniforms**

The guidelines issued by OSEPA stipulate that uniforms should be distributed amongst students by a specified date of the respective year.

Audit noticed that in 71 out of 77 of sampled schools of 12 blocks, uniforms were distributed to eligible students by the schools with delays ranging between one to 520 days from the stipulated dates, during 2018-23. The schools stated late receipt of grant from DPCs as the reasons for delayed distribution of uniforms. The sampled school-wise details of delayed distribution of uniforms is detailed in *Appendix 8.2*.

The Department assured (October 2024) that steps would be taken for distribution of uniform, without any delay at any level.

## **8.2 Supply of Textbooks**

Rule 4 (2) (d) of Odisha RTE Rules, 2010 stipulates supply of free textbooks to all students of Classes I to VIII. Further, the Scheduled Tribe & Scheduled Caste Development (SSD) Department, GoO had decided (December 2015) to provide free textbooks to all ST/SC students of Classes IX and X of Government and Government aided schools from the academic year 2016-17. In this connection, Audit observed the following:

### **8.2.1 Delayed supply of free textbooks for elementary students**

The Director, Textbook Publication and Marketing (TBP&M), Odisha is responsible for printing and supply of Nationalised Text (NT) books for Classes I to VIII based upon the requirements placed by OSEPA. The TBP&M was required to supply the books at Block/ NAC points by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March of a particular year, so that books would be available to the students at the start of the academic session (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> April of academic year). The Additional Block Education Officer-cum-Block Resource Cluster Co-ordinator /Block Education Officer (ABEO-cum-BRCC/BEO) were responsible for receipt of books from the TBP&M and distribution of books to the schools in time. The Headmasters of the schools were responsible for distribution of books to the students within 24 hours of receipt of books from the ABEO-cum-BRCC/BEO.

Audit noticed that the TBP&M supplied the books at Block points with delays ranging between 90 and 198 days, during 2018-23, from the stipulated dates of supply. Due to this, the distribution of books to students at various schools got further delayed. Audit observed that while placing the order with TBP&M for printing and supply of books, OSEPA had not incorporated any penalty clauses to ensure timely supply of books, thereby allowing TBP&M to supply books at its convenience. The year-wise delay in supply of books at Block points during 2018-23, is indicated in *Table 8.2*.

**Table 8.2: Delayed supply of free textbooks at Block points by TBP&M for elementary students, during 2018-23**

Year	Due date of supply of books by TBP&M at block point	Last date of supply of books by TBP&M at Block point	Delay in supply of books by TBP&M at Block point (in days)
2018-19	15.3.2018	13.6.2018	90
2019-20	15.3.2019	23.7.2019	130
2020-21	15.3.2020	22.9.2020	191
2021-22	15.3.2021	29.9.2021	198
2022-23	15.3.2022	26.9.2022	195

(Source: Records of OSEPA)

Audit noticed that out of 77 sampled schools in 12 blocks of six districts, imparting elementary education (Classes I to V), 23 to 37 schools distributed books to students with delays ranging between four and 417 days, after the start of the respective academic years, during 2018-23, as detailed in **Appendix 8.3**.

Thus, due to delayed availability of NT books, the access to timely educational needs of the students was compromised.

### 8.2.2 Short supply/ partial receipt of textbooks for elementary students

Audit noticed that OSEPA placed indent with TBP&M for printing and supply of 1,318 lakh books at Block/NAC points, during 2018-23.

However, TBP&M printed 1,228.26 lakh books and supplied 1,223.54 lakh books with a shortfall of 94.46 lakh (seven *per cent*) against the total requirement, as shown in **Table 8.3**.

**Table 8.3: Non-supply of Text Books by TBP&M for elementary students during 2018-23**

(Figures in lakh)

Year	Books required for printing & supply	Books printed	Books supplied by TBP&M	Books not supplied by TBP&M
2018-19	272.20	260.09	258.56	13.64
2019-20	261.25	253.66	252.05	9.20
2020-21	296.72	253.89	253.89	42.83
2021-22	242.32	222.10	221.34	20.98
2022-23	245.51	238.52	237.70	7.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,318.00</b>	<b>1,228.26</b>	<b>1,223.54</b>	<b>94.46</b>

(Source: Information provided by TBP&amp;M)

Audit further noticed that, during 2018-23, in nine out of 12 sampled blocks, against the requirement of 40.16 lakh books for all the schools, 39.90 lakh books were available with blocks for distribution to the schools. However, some subject specific books were supplied less than the requirement, while some other books were supplied more than the requirement. Therefore, the blocks distributed 39.22 lakh books to the schools, keeping the 0.68 lakh books in stock which were supplied more than the requirement as detailed in **Appendix 8.4**. This resulted in partial distribution of books to students and overstocking of books received excess. Even in one sampled block (Semiliguda) despite requests (May 2018 to June 2021) of the BEO for requirement of 32,827 textbooks during academic sessions 2018-22, the DPC, Koraput had not made any efforts to supply the books.

Out of 77 sampled schools in 12 blocks, Audit observed that, in 46 schools of 10 blocks, 31,356 out of 36,565 eligible students were distributed full sets of

books, 960 were distributed partial sets of books, whereas 4,249 had not been distributed any books during 2018-23, due to non/ less receipt of full sets of books from 12 blocks against the requirement, as detailed in **Appendix 8.5**.

### Case study

During JPI (August 2023) of Government Upper Primary School (GUPS), Patuli under Bhandaripokhari block of Bhadrak district, Audit noticed that 550 NT books received by the school for distribution to 110 students, during the academic session 2020-21, were lying with the school without distribution. The school authorities did not give any convincing reply for non-distribution of these books.



Picture 8.1; dated: 28.08.2023  
NT Books received for 110 students (2020-21) kept in School almira without distribution to students at GUPS, Patuli under BEO, Bhandaripokhari

The Department did not offer any specific views with regard to delayed and short supply of text books.

### 8.2.3 Delayed supply of free textbooks to ST/SC secondary students

Paragraph 6.8.1.2 of SSIF prescribes that the State should ensure supply of required textbooks before the start of the academic session.

The SSD department shall place indent for supply of textbooks to the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Cuttack. BSE, in turn, is required to supply the textbooks at the district points. The DEOs, the District Welfare Officers (DWOs) being the district level authorities of the schools under the SME Department and SSD Department, through the HMs are responsible for distribution of text books to the students of their respective schools.

Audit noticed that the SSD Department and Director of Secondary Education (DSE), SME Department placed the indent with the BSE with delays ranging from 31 to 268 days after the start of the respective academic sessions, during 2018-23. Due to delayed placement of indents (for Text Books for Secondary classes – IX and X), BSE supplied textbooks to the district points with delays ranging between 56 and 312 days, after the start of the academic session. Audit also noticed the following:

- **Distribution of books to schools:** In five out of six sampled districts, due to delayed receipt of books at the district points, the books were supplied to SC/ST students of schools after delays ranging between 84 and 322 days (2018-23). The sampled district-wise delayed supply of books and distribution of books are given in **Table 8.4**.

**Table 8.4: Delayed supply of textbooks to ST/SC secondary students in sampled districts**

District	Delay in supply of books by BSE to DEO and DWO (in days)	Delay in distribution to schools including delay by DEO and DWO (in days)
DEO,Bhadrak	93-292	119-304
DEO,Koraput	92-239	107-247
DWO,Koraput	0-65	84-253
DEO,Nabarangpur	134-296	142-300
DWO,Nabarangpur	0-272	Not available
DEO,Sambalpur	93-153	139-158
DEO,Sonepur	105-322	130-322

(Source: Records of DEO and DWO)

- **Distribution of books to students in sampled schools:** In 12 out of 46 sampled Secondary schools, the books were distributed to the SC/ST students of Secondary classes with a delay ranging from 21 to 333 days due to late receipt of books after the academic session.

Though timely supply of the textbooks to the students was required to be ensured at all levels, specific timeline had not been set for placement of indents by the SSD and SME Departments and delivery of textbooks by the BSE, keeping in view the commencement of academic sessions. As a result, students were deprived of getting the books at the beginning of the academic session.

The Department stated (October 2024) that advance indent is placed with BSE for supply of books, keeping in mind tentative figures of students for supply of books, in order to avoid delays. The reply is not acceptable as Audit had noticed delays ranging from of 31 to 268 days in placing indent by the Department with the BSE, during 2018-23.

#### **8.2.4 Short supply of free textbooks to ST/SC Secondary students**

The SSD department shall place indent for supply of textbooks to the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Cuttack. BSE, in turn, is required to supply the textbooks at the district points.

Audit noticed that as per the indent placed by the SME and SSD Departments, BSE supplied 303.58 lakh books at the districts points for 25.42 lakh ST/SC students of Classes IX and X, during 2018-23. Despite supply of indented books by the BSE, in 20 out of 46 sampled Secondary schools, of 10,493 eligible students, 8,576 students were distributed full sets of books, while 469 students were distributed partial sets of books. Further, 1,448 SC/ST students were not distributed any books during 2018-23, due to non/ less receipt of full sets of books by the schools against the requirement, as detailed in **Appendix 8.6**.

Audit further noticed that in order to supply books to 435 ST/SC students reading in six schools of the Koraput district, the DWO sought (March 2019) permission of the Department for utilization of the available interest money/contingency money with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency, Koraput towards supply of the books. However, in the absence of any response of the Department, the DWO failed to supply the requisite books, resulting in deprivation of educational support to the students.



Audit observed that the State, district, block as well as school authorities failed to ensure timely supply and distribution of requisite books, due to which the eligible students were deprived of their educational entitlements.

The Department stated (October 2024) that steps were being taken for timely supply of books to the students.

### Recommendation 8.1

*Specific timelines should be set for placement of indents by the Department as well as for supply of books by the supplying agencies, and penalty should be levied in case of non-adherence.*

### 8.3 Students deprived of bicycle incentives

With a view to check dropout rates at Secondary stage and increase the transition rate from Secondary to Higher Secondary stage, the GoO introduced (2011) the Chief Minister's Free Bicycle Distribution scheme for Class X students of Government and Government aided schools. From 2016-17, the scheme was implemented for Class IX students, instead of Class X. Under the scheme, one-time incentive of ₹2,600 was given to each student for purchasing bicycle.

As per the modalities, based upon the student's enrolment, the DEO placed requirement of funds with the DSE, Odisha. Accordingly, DSE allotted funds to the DEO for disbursement of the amount to the bank accounts of the eligible beneficiaries electronically, as recommended by the school. The students were required to purchase the bicycle and DEOs were required to submit UC to DSE. The monitoring of the supply of free bicycles to the students was to be done by DEO/BEO.

#### 8.3.1 Eligible students deprived of incentives due to incorrect bank accounts

Audit noticed that 28.95 lakh students were eligible for bicycle incentives in the State, during 2018-23. While, 27.22 lakh students were provided with incentives, the remaining 1.73 lakh (*six per cent*) were deprived of the same, due to invalid / dormant bank accounts or no bank accounts. Audit observed that it was the responsibility of the Head Master (HM) to take steps for opening bank accounts of student beneficiaries for transfer of bicycle incentives electronically. Due to failure of the HMs in opening or validating bank accounts, the eligible students were denied these incentives during the years.

In six sampled districts, due to the lapses by the school authorities in ensuring valid bank accounts of eligible students, incentive amount of ₹1.59 crore had not been transferred to 6,132<sup>58</sup> eligible students (*one per cent*) on account of failed transactions during 2018-23 (**Appendix 8.7**). The DEOs did not maintain any records of failed transaction cases and their subsequent follow-up to ensure successful re-transfer of the amount to the intended beneficiaries.

The Department stated (October 2024) that due to invalid bank accounts, funds could not be transferred towards bicycle incentives, but after correction of bank

<sup>58</sup> Out of the total bicycle incentive of ₹109.78 crore, involving 4,22,223 eligible students, ₹ 1.59 crore had not been transferred to the bank account of 6,132 students

accounts, funds had been credited to 5,41,779 students during 2022-23. However, the remedial measures taken by the Department by correcting bank account numbers were not sufficient as 1.73 lakh students who were deprived of bicycle incentive during 2018-23, as pointed out by Audit, were yet to receive the incentive.

### 8.3.2 Eligible students deprived of the incentives due to non-submission of student particulars

Audit noticed that in the six sampled districts, 4.41 lakh students were eligible to get the bicycle incentive during 2018-23. However, DEO provided the incentives to 4.22 lakh students, due to which 0.19 lakh (four *per cent*) eligible students were deprived of the incentives.

Similarly, in 42 out of 46 sampled schools imparting Secondary education, 15,640 students were eligible to get bicycle incentives during 2018-23. However, 13,969 students were provided the benefit whereas 1,671 (11 *per cent*) were deprived of the benefit. Audit found that the HMs of the schools had recommended less number of students compared to the students eligible for the incentives, citing reasons of non-submission of detailed bank particulars by the students, late admission of students, *etc.*

The HM is required to check the bank accounts of the beneficiaries so as to ensure the receipt of incentives and purchase of bicycles by the students through collection of purchase bills.

Besides, the HM of none of the sampled schools had ensured actual receipt of the bicycle incentive by the students and purchase of bicycles by them through collection of purchase vouchers.

To ascertain the actual utilisation of incentive amount by the students, Audit collected feedback from 1,413 students of 34 sampled schools, who were in Class IX during the academic session 2022-23 and observed that out of 1,247 students, who were provided with the financial assistance, 778 beneficiaries had not purchased bicycles. Similarly, 413 beneficiaries mentioned insufficient incentive amount for purchasing the bicycle, 111 denied getting the assistance and 55 remained unaware of the scheme benefit, as indicated in **Table 8.5**.

**Table 8.5: Feedback of students of Class IX students of sampled schools on purchase of bicycle**

District	Feedback collected from sampled schools	No. of students from whom feedback collected	No. of students who got assistance	No. of students who did not purchase bicycle	No. of students who stated insufficient fund	No. of students who denied getting assistance	No. of students unaware of the scheme
Bhadrak	4	34	34	13	13	0	0
Koraput	7	448	343	104	81	52	53
Nabarangpur	8	542	496	348	291	46	0
Nuapada	7	301	298	284	12	3	0
Sambalpur	4	25	22	7	7	1	2
Sonepur	4	63	54	22	9	9	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>55</b>

(Source: Feedback from students of sampled schools)

Thus, due to ineffective implementation of the scheme by the State, districts and schools, the basic purpose of the scheme to reduce dropout rate and encourage students to complete Secondary education was not ensured.

#### **8.4 Students deprived of incentives for school bags**

In order to supply school bags to the students of Classes I and II reading in Government and Government aided Primary schools, during 2018-19, the SME Department, GoO sanctioned (December 2017) ₹17 crore under Gangadhar Meher Shikshya Manakbrudhi Yojana. The Director, Directorate of Elementary Education (DEE) was to draw and disburse (January 2018) the amount to the SPD, OSEPA to implement the scheme.

The SME Department approved (September 2018) the tender document for floating of e-tender. Accordingly, OSEPA floated (September 2018) e-tender and the Technical Committee recommended (5<sup>th</sup> January 2019) the single qualified bidder (M/s Om Shanti Traders, Nabarangpur) with its quoted price of ₹ 129.60 per bag. Meanwhile, the Department decided to make the procurement in a decentralised manner, giving priority to women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under Mission Shakti.

However, the department did not implement its decision and two years later decided (October 2021) to transfer the cost of school bags at the rate of ₹129.60 per bag, to the bank account of the student or parent/guardian of the student under the supervision of the DPC, Block Resource Centre Co-ordinator and Cluster Resource Centre Co-ordinator.

Meanwhile, OSEPA refunded (December 2021) the unutilised grant of ₹17 crore to the DEE. The DEE, based on the beneficiary list provided by the DPCs (2021-22), transferred ₹13.39 crore for 10.34 lakh eligible beneficiaries (between June to August 2022) to 30 DPCs, for transferring the amount to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Audit noticed that in six sampled districts, against the target of 1.83 lakh students, 1.20 lakh (66 *per cent*) were provided with assistance of ₹155.77 lakh. However, 0.63 lakh students were deprived of getting this benefit, due to wrong/dormant bank account details furnished by the schools and non-existence of bank accounts of the student/parent. It was noted that DPC (Nabarangpur district) had not transferred the school bag incentive to any of the 0.44 lakh eligible students, despite receipt of ₹56.86 lakh, without assigning any reason.

Thus, due to failure of the State in taking timely action, the benefit of the scheme had not reached the intended beneficiaries on time. This apart, inadequate supervision by the District and block level authorities, had resulted in deprivation of the benefit to eligible students.

#### **8.5 Free and compulsory education to children belonging to Weaker Sections and Disadvantaged Groups (WS&DG)**

As per Section 12 (1) (c) of the RTE Act, a private un-aided recognised school shall reserve at least twenty-five *per cent* of the seats in Class I for children belonging to the WS&DG in the neighbourhood and ensure free and compulsory elementary education. The DEOs/BEOs are required to spread awareness about the provision of the Act among school heads, parents, community *etc.*, through mobilisation and media activity for successful implementation of the scheme.

### 8.5.1 Shortfall in admissions of children belonging to WS&DG

Audit noticed that 4,265 to 4,344 private unaided recognised schools were running in the State during 2021-23 (the State did not maintain record for the year 2018-21). The total intake capacity of all those schools in Class I was 78,060 children. As per the norm, 19,515 (25 *per cent* of 78,060) children belonging to WS&DG were to be admitted in Class I. However, the schools had admitted 13,112 children, leading to a shortfall of 6,403 (33 *per cent*).

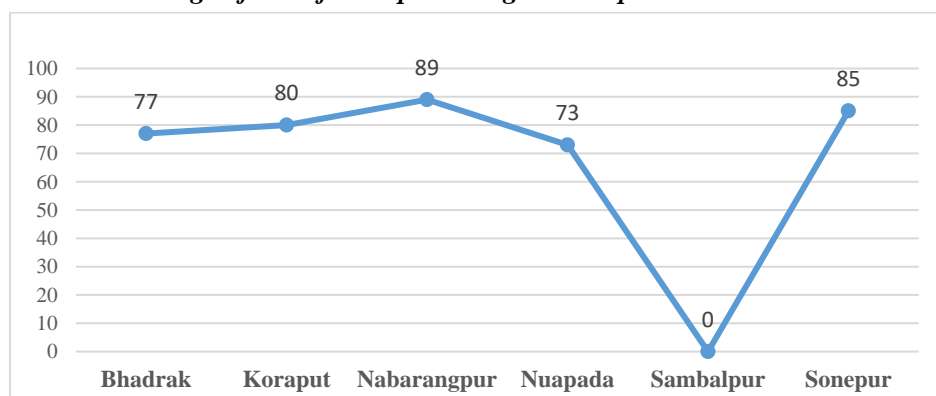
In the six sampled districts, 41 to 230 private unaided recognised schools were running during 2018-23. The intake capacity in these schools for Class I was 82,627 but, the schools had admitted only 7,797 students against the norm of 20,657 (25 *per cent* of 82,627) children, belonging to WS&DG. This resulted in a shortfall of 12,860 (62 *per cent*) during 2018-23. The shortfalls in the sampled districts ranged between 73 to 89 *per cent* during 2018-19 to 2022-23, as indicated in *Table 8.6*.

**Table 8.6: Shortfall in admission of children belonging to WS&DG in un-aided recognised schools of sampled districts, during 2018-23**

Sampled district	Number of unaided recognised schools (2018-23)	Total intake capacity in Class-I	Number of WS&DG children required to be admitted in Class I	Number of WS&DG children admitted in Class I	Shortfall ( <i>per cent</i> )
Bhadrak	162-230	22,207	5,552	1,274	4,278 (77)
Koraput	84-85	14,956	3,739	738	3,001 (80)
Nabarangpur	69	9,154	2,289	251	2,038 (89)
Nuapada	41-48	7,905	1,976	523	1,453 (73)
Sambalpur	81-185	18,564	4,641	4,641	0
Sonepur	93-104	9,841	2,460	370	2,090 (85)
Total	41-230	82,627	20,657	7,797	12,860 (62)

(Source: Information provided by DEOs of sampled districts)

**Chart 8.1: Range of shortfall in percentage in sampled districts**



(Source: Information provided by DEOs of sampled districts)

Similarly, the intake capacity of the 12 sampled unaided recognised schools in Class I was 2,180 students. The schools had admitted 247 children belonging to WS&DG instead of 545 (25 *per cent* of 2,180), leading to a shortfall of 298 (55 *per cent*) students. The percentage of shortfalls ranged between four to 98 *per cent* in sampled schools during 2018-23. Audit observed that due to non-creation of mass awareness among parents/communities of children belonging to WS&DG by the district, block and school authorities about the provision of

the Act, the schools had not received sufficient number of applications for admission from children of applicable categories. The feedback collected by Audit from 33 parents/ guardians revealed that 13 (39 *per cent*) parents/guardians were not aware of the provisions of the Act.

The Department did not offer any view with regard to shortfall in admissions of children belonging to WS&DG.

### **8.5.2 Collection of fees from children belonging to WS&DG**

Audit noticed that in violation of the provisions of Section 12 (1) of the RTE Act, three un-aided schools collected admission/re-admission/tuition fees of ₹1.23 lakh from 30 WS&DG children in three sampled districts.

As such, due to collection of fees by the schools, the WS&DG children were deprived of their right to free education, compelling the parents to bear the entire liability of education of their children.

Thus, the implementation of the provision of the Act to provide free and compulsory elementary education to children belonging to the WS&DG was not done in true letter and spirit.

#### **Recommendation 8.2**

*The communication and awareness measures should be carried out effectively to sensitise the Weaker Sections and Disadvantaged Groups about the provisions of the RTE Act to enable their children to avail the right to free education in the neighbourhood schools.*