



## RASHTRIYA MADHYAMIK SHIKSHA ABHIYAN (RMSA) IN INDIA

The Government of India, in recognition of the multiple challenges to secondary education, launched a centrally-sponsored programme in 2009, called the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). The RMSA aimed to provide universal access to secondary education by 2017, with universal retention / completion by 2020.

The RMSA was highly consistent with the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy for FY 2013-17. Key outcomes included improved market-driven skills for productive employment, better access and quality of education, including for excluded groups. The project objectives and components included i) Improving the Quality of Secondary Education Activities in terms of recruitment of additional teachers, in-service teacher training, capacity development of local institutions to support quality improvements, provision of core infrastructure and learning material for secondary schools, and development of a student assessment system, ii) Improving Equitable Access to Secondary Education Activities included construction and upgrading of secondary schools, girls' hostels in educationally backward blocks, and separate toilet facilities for girls and boys, iii) Improving Accountability of Secondary Education Activities included strengthening of School Management Development Committees, iv) Developing Innovative Approaches to Secondary Education Activities included sub-projects to pilot or scale up innovations to improve secondary education.

### Project Objectives and Components

- The Project was designed to provide support to the Government of India entire RMSA Framework through a Sector- Wide Approach (SWA) as under:
  1. Improving the Quality of Secondary Education: Activities included recruitment of additional teachers, in-service teacher training, capacity development of local institutions to support quality improvements, provision of core infrastructure and learning material for secondary schools, and development of a student assessment system.
  2. Improving Equitable Access to Secondary Education: Activities included construction and upgrading of secondary schools, girls' hostels in educationally backward blocks, and separate toilet facilities for girls and boys.
  3. Improving Accountability of Secondary Education: Activities included strengthening of School Management Development Committees.
  4. Developing Innovative Approaches to Secondary Education: Activities included sub-projects to pilot or scale up innovations to improve secondary education.

### Outputs

The documented outputs of the RMSA framework are as under:

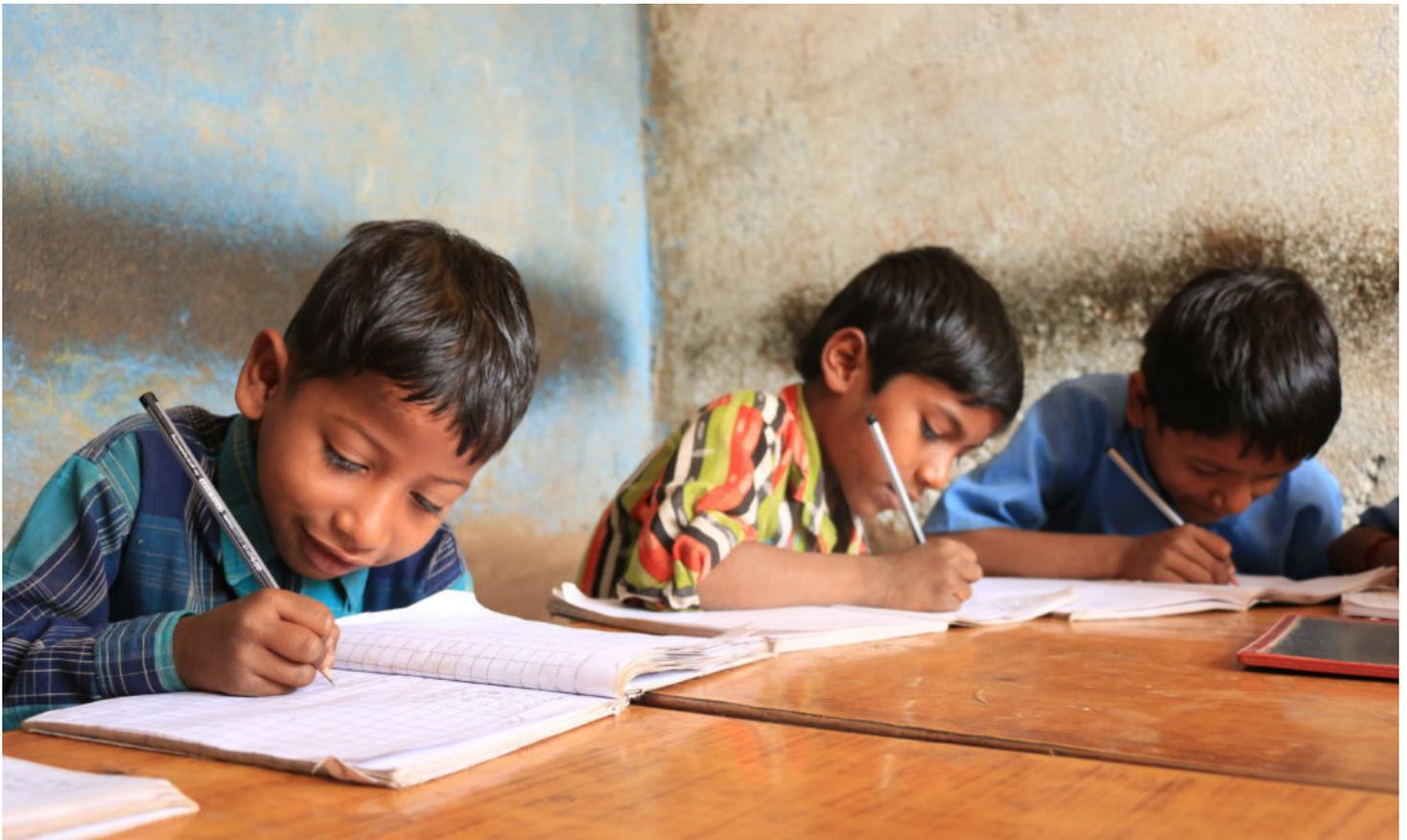
- Construction of 12,682 new secondary school facilities, of which 11,310 had become functional as of the

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end of the project and had a total enrolment of 1.47 million students. These schools were to be mainly in underserved areas, based on school mapping exercises and data from the education management information system.

- Construction of 50,713 additional classrooms in existing secondary schools, of which 31,315 had been completed.
- The Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) did not report the number of teachers who were recruited; however, the project team subsequently reported that 76,297 teachers were recruited from 2009-2017. It was further noted about 500,000 additional teachers were needed, and that the project expected to support hiring of 100,000.
- Construction of 5,028 new schools and upgrading of 10,421 existing schools in Special Focus Districts (those with students from disadvantaged social categories).
- Construction of 1,148 girls' hostels with a total enrolment of 103,969 girls.
- Provision of school activities to support increased participation and performance of girls, including stipends, provision of toilet facilities, self-defence training in martial arts, adolescent well-being programmes, career guidance, and motivational camps.
- Development of gender sensitization modules for teacher training and gender awareness guidelines for education officials.





- The project team noted that Central and state government provided scholarships for students from disadvantage groups and with special needs, in order to address affordability barriers. Development of national system of student assessment at the secondary level, capable of tracking progress in learning achievements over time.
- Development of national curriculum standards.
- Remedial education for 2,241,800 students to enable them to pass into 9th grade.
- Construction of core infrastructure in secondary schools, including 14,424 toilet blocks, 8,647 drinking water facilities, 16,328 science labs, 11,295 computer labs, 15,989 libraries, and 17,900 art/craft/culture rooms.
- Development of in- service training modules for core subjects. The ICR did not report the number of teachers receiving training; however, the project team subsequently reported that over 2.0 million teachers, cumulatively, participated in in - service training from 2009-2017.
- Training for 79% of all School Development Management Committees to improve local accountability.
- Training of 3,526 State Resource Group members and 26,332 secondary school principals in leadership.

### Outcomes

The documented outcomes of the RMSA framework are as under:

- Total enrolment in secondary education increased from 28.3 million in 2009 to 39.0 million in 2017, falling short of the target of 40.3 million.
- The gross enrolment rate for secondary school increased from 58.5% in 2010 to 80% in 2017, falling short of the target of 87.4%. Sixteen states and Union Territories saw an average increase of 25%. The RMSA aimed at milestones of 75% gross enrolment by 2013 and 100% by 2017.
- The net enrolment rate for secondary education increased from 45.6% in 2013 to 51.6% in 2015/16.
- The gross access ratio (percentage of habitations having a secondary school or section within 5 km) increased from 68.2% in 2011/12 to 87.5% in 2016/17.
- The Gender Parity Index for gross enrolment increased from 0.94 in 2010 to 1.03 in 2016/17, surpassing the target of 0.98.
- The number of girls per 100 boys completing grade 10 improved from 79% in 2010 to 91.2% in 2017, falling short of the target of 93%.
- The proportion of secondary completers from Scheduled Castes (SCs) groups increased from 16.8% in 2010 to 18.4% in 2017, achieving the target of 18.3%. The gross enrolment rate for SC girls was 86.9%, and 83.9% for SC boys.
- The proportion of secondary completers from Scheduled Tribes (STs) groups increased from 6.0% in

2010 to 7.7% in 2017, achieving the target of 7.4%. The gross enrolment rate for ST girls was 75.38%, and 73.7% for ST boys. The proportion of teachers with professional qualification (B.Ed. or equivalent or above) increased from 83% in 2010 to 87% in 2017, achieving the target of 87%.

- The proportion of schools with specific teachers available to teach the five core subjects (Maths, Science, Social Studies, English, and Hindi) increased from 62.2% in 2009 to 87.7% in 2017. However, the proportion of schools with all subject-specific teachers available increased only from 21% to 24.6%, falling far short of the target of 40%.
- The teacher vacancy rate decreased from 26.0% in 2012/13 to 14.8% in 2016/17.
- The student - classroom ratio improved from 56 in 2010/11 to 46 in 2015/16.
- The gross secondary completion rate increased from 55.4% in 2009/10 to 64.5% in 2016/17.
- The graduation rate (the proportion of students appearing for grade 10 exams in relation to the number of students enrolled in grade 9 in the previous year) decreased from 74% in 2010 to 69% in 2017, falling short of the target of 88%.

### Development Outcome

The project was strongly aligned with the Government of India's priorities and programmes for the secondary education sector. The project generated substantial international interest in India's secondary education sector and a large amount of high-quality research was carried out so as to provide inputs into the sector programme. Institutional capacity was also bolstered, including in planning and budget management processes. Further, the RMSA led to the establishment of decentralized project offices, and training for school management committees. The government also instituted an external monitoring system by contracting various institutions (non-governmental organizations, state universities, and foundations) to visit a sample of schools and monitor program implementation. Several research studies were also carried out, including classroom process studies in Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan; curriculum studies; time-on-task studies in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh; a teacher study on teachers in nine states; a study on the impact of teacher training on the quality of teaching in secondary education; a study on the dropout factors in secondary education; a study on the impact of self-defense training in schools; and a study on the impact of vocational education.

The RMSA results framework and project indicators in terms of outputs and outcomes were wide-ranging and satisfactory.

### Acknowledgement

World Bank Report on RMSA.

(Disclaimer: The observations, views and opinions are for academic purposes only which have been given by the Author in her personal capacity and not in her official capacity.) ■

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