

School Education Department

2.2 Implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act)

Executive Summary

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) became operational with effect from 01 April 2010 to make elementary education (Class I to VIII) a fundamental right of all children. The Act provides that all children in the age group of six to fourteen years have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school within three years of the enactment of the Act. The Performance Audit of implementation of the RTE Act was conducted (April - July 2017) covering the period from 2012-13 to 2016-17.

There was significant shortfall (50 per cent) in release of funds by GoI and the State Government as compared to the budget approved by Project Approval Board (PAB) during 2014-17. There were considerable delays in release of funds by GoI as well as the State Government to the Telangana Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Society (TSSA).

In Government Primary Schools, the enrolment declined by 1.12 lakh during 2014-17. On the other hand, in case of Private Primary Schools, enrolment increased by 0.61 lakh during the same period. The enrolment in Government Upper Primary Schools decreased by 0.20 lakh, whereas enrolment increased by 0.03 lakh in Private Upper Primary Schools. There was high dropout rate of students during transition from class I to VIII in respect of SC/ST boys and girls. Fourteen to 26 per cent children at Primary level and 21 to 47 per cent in Upper Primary level scored less than 40 per cent during the years 2014-17.

Child tracking system was not in existence in the State and thereby continuity of education of children in one school or other could not be ensured. Under Inclusive Education to Children with Special Needs (CWSN) ₹15.42 crore (35 per cent) of funds approved by PAB were only spent during 2014-17. The State had not implemented provisions of RTE Act and the State Rules with regard to 25 per cent reservation for disadvantaged group children in private unaided schools.

The benefit of transport allowance for attending neighbourhood schools was denied to 44,412 eligible/identified children in the State during 2014-15 and 2016-17. The schools were largely deficient in basic infrastructural facilities/amenities. Seventy five per cent of the schools in the State had no basic infrastructural amenities.

2.2.1 Introduction

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, popularly known as Right to Education (RTE)³⁷ Act, became operational with effect from 1 April 2010 to make elementary education (Class I to VIII) a fundamental right of all children. The RTE Act is

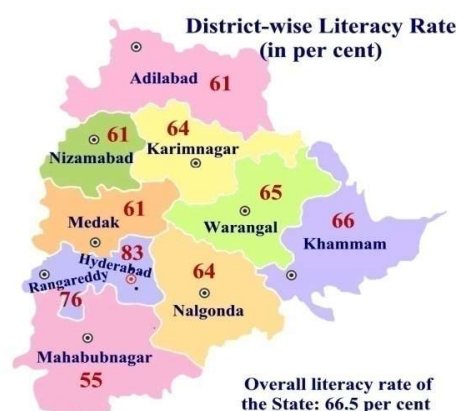
³⁷ along with the enabling Article 21A of the Constitution of India

implemented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD), Government of India (GoI) as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

The RTE Act provides that all children in the age group of six to fourteen years have a right to free³⁸ and compulsory education³⁹ in a neighbourhood school⁴⁰ within three years of the enactment of the Act. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) run by GoI, is the main vehicle for implementing the provisions of the RTE Act.

The State of Telangana came into existence as a separate State with effect from 2 June 2014 as per the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. The erstwhile Government of Andhra Pradesh issued the Andhra Pradesh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (AP RTE) Rules, 2010, which came into effect from 1 April 2010. The AP RTE Rules were deemed to have been adapted⁴¹ to the State of Telangana with effect from 2 June 2014.

The total population of the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years in the State was 45,76,393 (Boys: 23,50,757 and Girls: 22,25,636) for year 2016-17. As per census 2011, the overall literacy rate of the State of Telangana was 66.5 per cent (Rural: 57 and Urban: 81 per cent). In pursuance of RTE Act, 2009, the Government was to take various initiatives, for universalisation of elementary education. These included strengthening of existing schools, opening of new primary schools and provision of transport facility in remote and un-served habitations in the State.



Source: Educational statistics 2015-16, SSA

During 2014-17, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) ranged from 115 to 126 per cent at Primary level. At Upper Primary level, the GER ranged from 85 to 100 per cent.

2.2.1.1 Organisational Setup

The Organisational setup from Government level to School level is as depicted below.

State Government	• Special Chief Secretary to Government • School Education Department
Head of the Department	• Commissioner & Director of School Education and - Ex- Officio State Project Director, Telangana Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Society
District	• District Educational Officer and - Ex- Officio District Project Officer, Telangana Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Society
Mandal	• Mandal Educational Officer
School	• School Management Committee • Head Master

³⁸ as per the SSA Framework for Implementation 'free education' is defined as 'removal of any financial barrier by the State that prevents a child from completing eight years of schooling'

³⁹ as per the SSA Framework for Implementation 'compulsory education' is defined as 'obligation of appropriate government to provide free elementary education and ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the six to fourteen years age group'

⁴⁰ school within a walking distance of 1 km and 3 km of neighbourhood for Classes I to V and VI to VIII respectively

⁴¹ as per Section 101 of the AP Reorganisation Act read with GO Ms No.45 dated 1 June 2016 issued by Law Department, Government of Telangana

2.2.2 Audit Framework

2.2.2.1 Audit objectives

Performance audit of the RTE Act was carried out to verify whether

- the RTE Act achieved its objective of making elementary education as a fundamental right for all children between age group of 6-14 years by 31 March 2013 (in districts of Telangana region of erstwhile combined State);
- the funds allocated were utilised in an economic and efficient manner;
- the RTE Act was implemented and monitored in a planned manner; and
- the associated Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators were tracked.

2.2.2.2 Audit Criteria

Audit findings were benchmarked against criteria sourced from the following:

- Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
- Telangana State Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2010 (State RTE Rules)
- Orders, Notifications, Circulars, Instructions and Guidelines issued by MoHRD (GoI)/ State Government with respect to RTE Act/RTE Rules
- Annual Work Plans and Budgets prepared by the Telangana Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Society (TSSA)
- Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) data
- Financial Code, Budget Manual
- Goal 4 of Sustainable Development Goals as envisioned by the United Nations

2.2.2.3 Audit Scope and Methodology

The Performance Audit was conducted during April-July 2017 covering the period 2014-15 to 2016-17 (in the sampled districts, however, for the period 2012-13 to 2016-17). Audit methodology involved scrutiny of records of:

- Commissioner and Director of School Education and Ex-officio State Project Director (SPD), TSSA (hereinafter referred to C&DSE)
- District Educational Offices (DEOs) and Ex-Officio District Project Offices (DPOs) of three selected erstwhile districts of Khammam, Rangareddy and Warangal
- Four Mandal Educational Offices (MEOs) (three rural & one urban) and 30 schools (20 Government/Specified Category⁴² schools and 10 Aided schools) in each sampled district (*Appendix-2.7*).

Physical verification of the 90 test-checked schools⁴³ was also conducted. Audit also collected information from offices of the Secretariat department at Government level and the State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT).

⁴² in relation to a school means the residential schools including KGBVs, TREIS, Telangana State Model Schools, etc.

⁴³ two sampled Aided schools were non-functional during 2014-17 in Khammam district

An Entry Conference was held with C&DSE in December 2016 wherein audit objectives, methodology, scope, criteria and audit sample were explained. An Exit Conference was held with Government representatives in December 2017 to discuss the audit findings. The responses of C&DSE and the Government have been incorporated at appropriate places in the report.

Audit Sample

The districts were selected by Probability Proportional to Size without Replacement (PPSWOR) method. In each sampled district, three rural and one urban mandals along with 30 schools⁴⁴ were selected for test-check using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement (SRSWOR) method.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the cooperation and assistance rendered by the officials of the School Education Department during the conduct of the Performance Audit.

Audit findings

2.2.3 Planning

The budget proposals under SSA are prepared in the form of Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B), covering all the interventions specified in the SSA norms. Annual Work Plans, to achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education, were to be prepared from the district level. The District and State Annual Work Plans were to be prepared based on the guidelines of the MoHRD, GoI with reference to the Act. Preparation of Annual Work Plan should be based on identification of problems through a household survey conducted by the School Management Committee (SMC). The AWP&B of each State/UT is then reviewed and approved by the Project Approval Board (PAB) constituted by the MoHRD.

Audit observed in the three test-checked districts that all the districts prepared the annual plans based on household surveys every year and submitted them to the C&DSE. It was further observed that the State Government had prepared AWP&B and submitted them to PAB in time annually.

2.2.4 Financial Outlay

2.2.4.1 Budget and Expenditure

The fund sharing ratio between the Government of India and State Government was 65:35 up to the year 2014-15 which was revised to 60:40 from 2015-16. Budget is allocated under SSA. The approved amount of fund was released directly by the Central/State Government to State Implementing Societies⁴⁵ (SISs) up to the year 2013-14. From the year 2014-15 onwards, the Central share is released to the State. The State Government releases it along with their matching share to TSSA Society. The Society in turn releases to District Offices and therefrom to Unit Offices⁴⁶ through RTGS/NEFT⁴⁷. The fund flow chart is given below.

⁴⁴ 70 per cent of Primary/Upper Primary schools and 30 per cent of High Schools

⁴⁵ it is a TSSA society created under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Programme and functions under the administrative and financial supervision of State Government

⁴⁶ i.e. Mandal Resources Centres (MRCs), Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs) and Schools/SMCs

⁴⁷ Real Time Gross Settlement/National Electronic Fund Transfer



As per RTE Act, after approval of AWP&B of States by PAB, the Ministry (MoHRD) releases first instalment of Central assistance in April/May. The second instalment is released in September/October based on progress of expenditure incurred out of the first instalment.

During the period 2012-14, PAB approved a budget of ₹7,834.34 crore. Against this, ₹5,054.48 crore was released by the erstwhile Government of Andhra Pradesh to SSA Society. Out of this, the Society utilised an amount of ₹6,055.16 crore. Post-bifurcation (2014-17), against ₹2,693.55 crore released (PAB approved Budget: ₹5,360.41 crore) by the Telangana Government to TSSA, an amount of ₹2,851.01 crore had been utilised. The excess expenditure was met from out of the unspent funds in the previous years carried over to subsequent years. These included interest earned and retrieval of funds from subordinate offices/schools.

The year-wise details of funds made available as well as the expenditure under SSA during the period 2012-14 and 2014-17 are given in table below.

Table-2.9

(₹ in crore)

Year	Budget approved by PAB			Releases			Expenditure by SSA/TSSA Society
	GoI share	State share	Total	GoI	State	Total	
Combined State of AP							
2012-13	3084.81	1661.05	4745.86	1360.49	745.23	2105.72	3144.30
2013-14	2007.51	1080.97	3088.48	1797.15	1151.61	2948.76	2910.86
Total	5092.32	2742.02	7834.34	3157.64	1896.84	5054.48	6055.16
Telangana							
2014-15 (w.e.f. 2 June 2014)	1231.80*	607.55	1839.35	506.40 [#]	324.69	831.09	846.03
2015-16	1000.40	666.94	1667.34	428.84	252.27	681.11	759.15
2016-17	1112.23	741.49	1853.72	417.76	763.59	1181.35	1245.83
Total	3344.43	2015.98	5360.41	1353.00	1340.55	2693.55	2851.01

* includes ₹103.50 crore under General Head from 13th Finance Commission (FC) award proposed;

[#] includes ₹86.28 crore from 13th FC award

Source: Figures furnished by the C&DSE

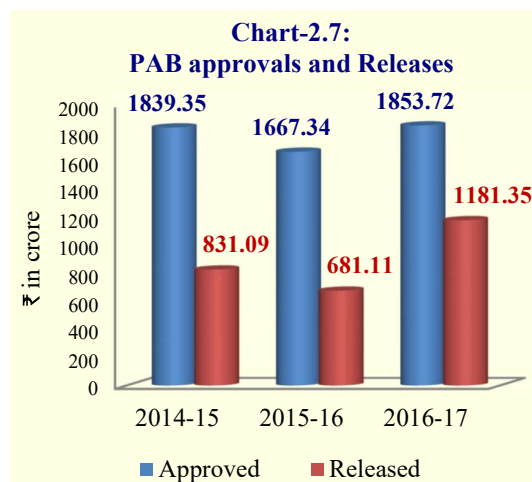
There was significant shortfall (50 per cent) in release of funds by GoI and the State Government as compared to the budget approved by PAB during 2014-17. Further, Audit observed that there were considerable delays in release of funds by GoI as well as the State Government to the TSSA Society. This resulted in the important interventions intended for benefit of eligible students in the State not being implemented as envisaged in the RTE Act, as discussed in *Paras 2.2.4.2 and 2.2.4.3* of this Report. The Department attributed (July 2017) the short release of funds to policy decisions of GoI and the State Government.

During Exit Conference (December 2017), Government accepted the Audit observation and attributed the short releases to the ways and means position of the Government.

2.2.4.2 Short release and delay in release of funds by GoI and State

It can be seen from Table-2.9 and the graph alongside that during the period 2014-17, ₹2,693.55 crore was released by GoI and the State Government, against ₹5,360.41 crore approved by the PAB. This resulted in short release of ₹2,666.86 crore (50 per cent) by GoI (₹1,991.43 crore) and State Government (₹675.43 crore).

The C&DSE replied (July 2017) that the short releases were due to policy decisions of GoI and the State Government.



GoI releases funds to Finance department of State Government which in turn releases funds along with State share to TSSA Society. Further, as per the norm, State Government is to release its corresponding share within one month of the receipt of the Central share.

During the period 2014-17, there were delays of up to seven months in release of funds⁴⁸ from the date of receipt of funds in Finance department of State Government to the date of receipt of funds by TSSA. There were also delays up to six months in release of State share of the funds. Government accepted (December 2017) the delays in release of funds but have not cited specific reasons for the same.

Audit observed that due to short/belated release of funds, the important quality interventions could not be implemented fully. These included Computer Aided Education, Trainings, Academic support, Interventions for Children with Special Needs (CWSN), Community Mobilisation, Special Training for Mainstreaming of Out of School Children (OoSC), Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP) and Research Evaluation Monitoring and Supervision (REMS) as discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

2.2.4.3 Major expenditure on Salaries, KGBVs and Civil works

All expenditure on quality education is bound to have a multiplier effect on learning outcomes. Out of total expenditure of ₹2,851.01 crore incurred during 2014-17, the major share of ₹2,108.76 crore (74 per cent) was on salaries, KGBVs and civil works (Appendix-2.8). Only ₹742.25 crore (26 per cent) was utilised on other quality interventions referred to in Para 2.2.4.2 above. The Department attributed this (July 2017) to short release of Central share and State share for the programme implementation.

Meagre expenditure on quality interventions has had the adverse impact on quality education. This resulted in low proficiency levels of children (Para 2.2.6.5 infra refers).

⁴⁸ both GoI and State shares in lumpsum

During Exit Conference Government cited short releases as being the reason for the low spending on quality interventions. It was, however, stated that funds were targeted towards priority interventions despite short releases from GoI.

2.2.5 Implementation of the Act

The activities/interventions to be implemented under SSA are to be aligned with the provisions of RTE Act as mandated in SSA framework, viz.

Category-I: Reimbursement against admissions under Section 12(1)(c) of RTE Act, free textbooks, provision of two sets of free uniforms, Inclusive Education, School Grant, Project Management, KGBVs⁴⁹ etc.;

Category-2: Transport allowance to children attending neighbourhood schools, Transport/Escort facility to CWSN, Special Training to OoSC, In-service Teacher Training, LEP, REMS, Community Mobilisation etc.; and

Category-3: Teachers' salary and Civil Works, etc.

2.2.5.1 Coverage of Schools

As per Section 3(1) of the RTE Act and sub-rule (1) and (4) below Rule 5 of State RTE Rules, the State Government shall establish a school within a walking distance of one and three kilometres of the neighbourhood for children in Classes I to V and Classes VI to VIII respectively.

Out of total 25,660 habitations in the State, 556 (2 per cent) habitations with 4,909 identified children did not have Primary Schools (PS) within the prescribed distance of one kilometre of their neighbourhood as of March 2017. Similarly, 1709 (7 per cent) habitations with 19,380 identified children had no Upper Primary Schools (UPS) within the prescribed distance of three kilometres.

Government in its reply stated (December 2017) that since the above habitations in the State were having less than 20 children in the prescribed age groups, they could not be considered for setting up of schools as per existing stipulations. Government further stated that these children were attending other nearby schools and residential schools.

Audit, however, observed that during 2016-17, neither any effort was made to club habitations and provide transport nor was any transport allowance provided to children to attend neighbourhood school (*Para 2.2.5.8 refers*). Thus, the objective of establishment of neighbourhood schools was not fully achieved even after seven years of the commencement of the RTE Act.

2.2.5.2 Schools under Government and Private sectors

As of March 2017, 48.18 lakh⁵⁰ children in the age group of 6-14 years were enrolled in Government (including Local Bodies and Aided Schools) and Private Primary/Upper Primary Schools in the State. The year-wise details are given in table below.

⁴⁹ Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya

⁵⁰ includes 38,777 children enrolled in other schools like National Child Labour Project Schools, Urban Residential Schools, Madarsas, etc.

Table-2.10

Year	Schools with Primary Sections (Primary Schools) and enrolment				Schools with Upper Primary Sections (Upper Primary Schools) and enrolment			
	No. of Govt. PS	Enrolment in Govt. PS (in lakh)	No. of Private PS	Enrolment in Private PS (in lakh)	No. of Govt. Upper Primary Schools	Enrolment in Govt. Upper Primary Schools (in lakh)	No. of Private Upper Primary Schools	Enrolment in Private Upper Primary Schools (in lakh)
2014-15	24047	14.64	9014	16.64	9381	9.37	8957	7.82
2015-16	23910	14.17	9532	17.62	9402	9.33	9230	8.14
2016-17	24149	13.52	10163	17.25	9652	9.17	9861	7.85
Percentage change (+/-)	+0.42	-7.65	+12.75	+3.67	+2.89	-2.13	+10.09	+0.38

Note: (+)ve marked figures denote increase in percentage while (-)ve figures denote its decrease in the year 2016-17 with respect to the year 2014-15

Source: Records of C&DSE

It can be seen from the above table that:

- During the period of 2014-17, the number of Government (including Local Bodies and Aided) Primary Schools increased by only 0.42 *per cent* whereas Private Primary Schools increased by 12.75 *per cent*. However, in Government Primary Schools, the enrolment decreased by 1.12 lakh (7.65 *per cent*) during the period. On the other hand, in case of Private Primary Schools, enrolment increased by 0.61 lakh (3.67 *per cent*) during same period;
- Similarly, in case of Upper Primary Schools the number of Government schools increased by only 2.89 *per cent* whereas Private Upper Primary Schools registered a growth of 10.09 *per cent* over the same period. However, the enrolment in Government Upper Primary Schools decreased by 0.20 lakh (2.13 *per cent*), whereas enrolment increased by 0.03 lakh (0.38 *per cent*) in Private Upper Primary Schools.

Thus, the enrolment in Government schools was low when compared to Private Schools.

Government in their reply stated that Government Primary Schools had better coverage than their Private counterparts. The reply is not correct since the enrolment in Private Primary Schools was quite high as compared to Government Primary Schools as evident from the Table-2.10.

2.2.5.3 Retention, Dropout and Transition rates

Retention of children in school in general refers to the proportion of children continuing their school education through various stages. Dropout rate is the proportion of children who cease to continue their schooling due to various reasons personal or otherwise. Rate of Transition indicates the rate of up-gradation of children to the next grade after successful completion of the present grade.

As per the AWP&B for the year 2017-18, the retention, dropout and transition rates for the year 2016-17 (as per UDISE 2016-17) were as follows:

- The retention rate at Primary level was 92 *per cent* and Upper Primary level was 94 *per cent* in general. The retention rate of SC community was 95 *per cent* at Primary level and 97 *per cent* at Upper Primary level. In respect of children of ST community the retention was only 88 *per cent* at Primary level and 93 *per cent* at Upper Primary level;

- As regards the dropout rate, it was 8 *per cent* at Primary level and 6 *per cent* at the Upper Primary level. The dropout rate of SC community was 5 *per cent* at Primary level and 3 *per cent* at Upper Primary level. In respect of children of ST community, the dropout rate was high at 12 *per cent* at Primary level and 7 *per cent* at Upper Primary level;
- With regard to transition of children from Primary to Upper Primary level, it was 92 *per cent* in the State. It was 90 *per cent* in Rural areas and 96 *per cent* in Urban areas. In case of SCs the transition rate from Primary to Upper Primary level was 95 *per cent* while in case of STs it was 108 *per cent*⁵¹. Similarly, the transition rate for SC community in Rural areas was 89 *per cent* while the same for ST community was only 83 *per cent*.

High dropout rate of SC/ST children during transition from Class I to VIII

A high dropout rate was registered among SC/ST Girls and Boys during the transition from Class I to Class VIII as discussed below:

- The children who enrolled during 2010-11 and 2011-12 in Class I were to continue up to Class V (Primary level) during 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. Audit observed that the dropout rate at this level ranged from 16.10 *per cent* (girls) to 19.52 *per cent* (boys) in general. For ST boys and girls, it was as high as 38.19 *per cent* and 42.57 *per cent*. For SC boys and girls, it was as high as 22.40 *per cent* and 21.30 *per cent* respectively during the period 2014-15 to 2015-16 (*Appendix-2.9(i)*); and
- Similarly, the children who enrolled during 2007-08 and 2008-09 in Class I should have continued up to Class VIII (Upper Primary level) during 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. It was observed that the dropout rate at this level ranged from 28.93 *per cent* (girls) to 31.93 *per cent* (boys) in general. For ST boys and girls, it was as high as 52.89 *per cent* and 54.81 *per cent*. For SC boys and girls, it was as high as 32.58 *per cent* and 31.38 *per cent* respectively during the same period (*Appendix-2.9(ii)*).

Thus, the high dropout rate of students, particularly in respect of SC/ST boys and girls, defeated the main objective of RTE Act, i.e., enrolment, retention and providing quality education to maximum children in the targeted age group of 6-14 years.

During Exit Conference Government attributed the high dropout rate to socio-economic factors⁵². It was stated that seasonal hostels have been opened in places where parents migrate for their livelihood, to provide children uninterrupted education and suitable residential facility. Further, Government assured that a detailed study would be taken up in coordination with Tribal Welfare Department to reduce the dropouts.

⁵¹ more than 100 *per cent* was due to enrolment of children irrespective of their age group

⁵² engagement of children in seasonal works by their parents, problem of language faced by children of primitive tribal groups, non-participation of the community, lack of awareness among the parents on the importance of education, migration of families, non-availability of toilet facility in schools, non-availability of teachers in schools etc. It was further stated that the Headmasters and MEOs of all mandals were instructed to enrol the students in hostels to overcome the problem of children going out for earning

2.2.5.4 Child tracking system

According to State RTE Rules⁵³, Government may in consultation with the C&DSE evolve a child tracking system. This would monitor not only the academic progress of children in the schools, but also their retention, transition and migration.

The child tracking system was, however, not in existence in the State as of May 2017. Thus, there was no mechanism in place to monitor academic progress of children, their retention, transition and migration. As a result, continuity of education of the child in the same school or other could not be ensured. Further, his/her transition to higher grades could also not be tracked.

Best Practice

During 2016-17, Government initiated collecting child-wise information of all students using the AADHAAR. Information regarding 45 lakh children enrolled in Classes I to VIII has been collected and 42 lakh children (93 per cent) have been linked with their respective Aadhaar numbers. This facilitated in massive data cleaning, i.e., identifying and removing overlapping enrolment figures of 1.87 lakh children (4 per cent) out of 45 lakh children. The data cleaning exercise is also expected to arrest overlapping of expenditure on uniforms, textbooks, Mid-day Meal, etc.

However, child tracking system using AADHAAR as unique ID of a child was not in existence.

2.2.5.5 Mainstreaming and Training of Out-of-School Children

As per Section 4 of Act, where a child above six years of age has not been admitted in any school or though admitted, could not complete his or her elementary education (commonly referred to as Out-of-School Children (OoSC)), then he or she shall be admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age. The Act further provides for Special Training in such manner and within such timelines as prescribed. Rule 4(1) of State RTE Rules mandates that the School Management Committee/Local authority⁵⁴ shall identify children requiring special training and organise such trainings.

During 2014-17, out of 0.54 lakh OoSC mainstreamed, 0.28 lakh were not provided training. Thus, as at the end of 2016-17, only 0.17 lakh (27 per cent) of identified OoSCs were mainstreamed by the Department in a class appropriate to his/her age as shown in Table-2.11.

Table-2.11

Year	Number of OoSC identified	Number of OoSC		
		mainstreamed by providing training	mainstreamed without training	not mainstreamed (per cent)
2014-15	78507	12483	4975	61049 (78)
2015-16	87600	9787	9782	68031 (78)
2016-17	64941	3575	13889	47477 (73)

Source: Records of C&DSE

Thus, failure to mainstream all the OoSC and provide them training, resulted in deprivation of education to 0.47 lakh children by the end of March 2017.

⁵³ sub-rule (6), (7), (8), (9) below Rule 7

⁵⁴ means Mandal Praja Parishads and Gram Panchayats as the case may be in their respective jurisdictions

During Exit Conference, Government stated that most of the OoSC belonged to madarsas. It was further stated that very few children from madarsas were mainstreamed as religious education was being imparted as per the choice of their parents.

2.2.5.6 Inclusive Education to Children with Special Needs

For Children with disabilities, the Government/Local Authority shall⁵⁵ endeavour to make appropriate and safe transportation arrangements for them to attend school and complete elementary education. Under Inclusive Education programme for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) the PAB approves important interventions⁵⁶ for strengthening of academic support to CWSN.

Against ₹43.51 crore approved by PAB, a meagre amount of ₹15.42 crore (35 per cent) only was released and the same was spent by the department during 2014-17. With regard to coverage of CWSN in the State, number of CWSN/teachers approved by PAB vis-à-vis the achievement under different sub-components is tabulated below.

Table-2.12

Intervention	Year	Number of CWSN approved by PAB	Number of CWSN covered	Number of CWSN not covered (per cent)
Transport allowance (@₹250 per month for 10 months in each academic year)	2014-15	8459	3077	5382 (64)
	2015-16	9537	6975	2562 (27)
	2016-17	11788	7260	4528 (38)
	Total	29784	17312	12472 (42)
Escort allowance (@₹250 per month for 10 months in each academic year)	2014-15	16767	3870	12897 (77)
	2015-16	10000	5364	4636 (46)
	2016-17	7000	5622	1378 (20)
	Total	33767	14856	18911 (56)
Aids & appliances	2014-15	17323	0	17323 (100)
	2015-16	11368	6355	5013 (44)
	2016-17	6953	0	6953 (100)
	Total	35644	6355	29289 (82)
Intervention	Year	Number of teachers approved by PAB	Number of teachers covered	Number of teachers not covered (per cent)
Training to teachers for CWSN	2014-15	22155	5586	16569 (75)
	2015-16	8671	4472	4199 (48)
	2016-17	7290	0	7290 (100)
	Total	38116	10058	28058 (74)

Source: Records of TSSA/Minutes of PAB meeting

It can be seen from above table, during 2014-17, transport allowance was not provided to 42 per cent and escort allowance to 56 per cent of CWSN. Further, aids & appliances were not provided at all to CWSN during the years 2014-15 and 2016-17. Training was not provided to 74 per cent of the teachers for CWSN.

⁵⁵ Section 3 of RTE Act read with Rule 5 (7) of State RTE Rules

⁵⁶ supply of Aids & Appliances including ICT (Information and Communication Technology) material, Transport allowance and/or Escort allowance payable @₹250/month for ten months in an academic year, Training to teachers, etc.

During Exit Conference (December 2017) Government stated that expenditure for CWSN was incurred to the extent of availability of budget. It was further stated that non-issue of pro-forma invoice by ALIMCO⁵⁷ for supply of aids & appliances in 2016-17 affected the implementation of the programme.

Thus, non-implementation of important interventions (under Inclusive Education scheme) to the identified CWSN deprived them of their right to pursue free and compulsory elementary education as envisaged in the Act.

2.2.5.7 Implementation of RTE Act (25 per cent reservation) in private unaided schools

The Act⁵⁸ and Rules framed there under stipulate that private un-aided schools shall admit in Class-I, to the extent of at least twenty-five per cent of the strength of that class, children belonging to the weaker sections⁵⁹ and disadvantaged groups⁶⁰ in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory elementary education till its completion.

In compliance of the Act provisions and the State RTE Rules, Government issued (July 2010)⁶¹ orders prescribing twenty-five *per cent* reservation of seats to the above category of children⁶². Government further specified quantum of fee⁶³ of ₹9,000 per annum for Urban and ₹7,800 per annum for Rural per child. Government would reimburse this fee to Schools in respect of the reserved seats.

During the period 2014-17, it was noticed that no expenditure was incurred by the Government towards reimbursement of fee in respect of disadvantaged group children studying in such schools. In fact, C&DSE had not even included the proposals in AWP&B.

Government in their reply (December 2017) expressed its inability to enforce the above stipulation as it would have an adverse impact on the enrolment, infrastructure and services of teachers in Government schools. It was stated that this involved a recurring financial burden of at least ₹218 crore per annum on State exchequer. Further, the request of State Government to review the provisions of the Act on the above cited grounds was stated to be pending with GoI.

The fact, however, remained that the provisions of the RTE Act as well as the Government orders with respect to 25 *per cent* reservation remained unimplemented in the State. In this context, Audit reviewed the position in other States. It was seen that these provisions of the Act were successfully being implemented in several other States like Bihar, Chhattisgarh, NCT of Delhi, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand.

⁵⁷ Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India

⁵⁸ Section 12(1)(c) read with Section 2(n)(iii) & (iv) of the Act

⁵⁹ refers to a child belonging to BC, Minorities and includes OCs whose parents' income does not exceed ₹60,000 per annum

⁶⁰ refers to a child belonging to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, orphans, migrant and street children, Children With Special Needs and HIV affected/infected children

⁶¹ GOs. Ms No.42 and 44 SE (PE Prog I) Department dated 30 July 2010

⁶² viz. Scheduled Castes (10 *per cent*); Scheduled Tribes (4 *per cent*) and to Orphans, HIV affected and disabled (5 *per cent*) and at the rate of 6 *per cent* to Weaker Sections viz. Backward Castes, Minorities and Other Castes whose annual income does not exceed ₹60,000 per annum

⁶³ fee being the same for both Primary and Upper Primary levels

2.2.5.8 Provision of transport facility to children attending neighbourhood schools

For children from small hamlets or any other place as identified by the State Government/Local Authority, where no school exists within the area or limits of neighbourhood specified in State RTE Rules⁶⁴, the Government/Local Authority shall make adequate arrangements. These inter alia included free transportation in relaxation of the limits specified in the Rules.

Transport allowance for attending neighbourhood schools has been fixed at ₹300 per month payable for 10 months in a year. The State Project Director (SPD) releases funds to the district authorities who in turn release them to SMCs. The transport charges are disbursed in cash to the parents of children from Classes I to VIII. The SPD requested (December 2015) the district authorities to take the opinion of parents with regard to supply of bicycles to the children of Classes VI to VIII in lieu of cash.

Best Practice

Audit observed in Warangal district (test-checked) that during 2015-16, the District Collector implemented the orders of SPD (April 2016) to provide bicycles free of cost to students of Classes VI to VIII. This will be as a one-time measure in lieu of providing transport allowance in cash as an innovative exercise to encourage them to attend school.

Out of 2,520 students identified for this purpose, 2,094 students were provided bicycles while 426 students (Class I to V) were paid in cash.

Audit observed the following:

- During the year 2014-15, the State identified 26,281 children for provision of transportation and submitted proposals to PAB for approval. However, due to non-issue of the notification by the State Government, no transport allowance was approved by the PAB;
- During 2015-16, transport facility for 15,406 children only was provided (funds released and utilised: ₹1.48 crore (32 per cent)) against the approved budget of ₹4.62 crore. The department attributed the non-utilisation of full budgeted funds to short release of funds from GoI/State Government.
- During 2016-17, 18,131 children were identified towards provision of transportation charges. The necessary notification⁶⁵ declaring 1,517 habitations as not having neighbourhood schools, was issued by the State Government in September 2016. However, GoI did not release funds for the purpose.

Government, during Exit Conference, admitted that transport facility could not be provided to the children for the years 2014-15 and 2016-17 due to non/belated issue of Gazette notifications by State Government and hence non-release of funds by GoI.

Thus, lack of concern on the part of the Governments in providing the envisaged transport facility to all 44,412⁶⁶ eligible/identified children led to denial of the benefit of transport facility to them.

⁶⁴ sub-rule (1) below Rule 5

⁶⁵ GO Rt No.129 SE (Prog I) Department dated 12 September 2016

⁶⁶ 2014-15: 26,281 students and 2016-17: 18,131 students

2.2.5.9 Pupil-Teacher Ratio

As per Section 25 of RTE Act, Government should, within three years from the date of commencement of the Act, ensure maintaining the prescribed Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR). PTR should be at one teacher for every 30 children for classes I to V and one teacher for every 35 children for classes VI to VIII in each school.

The overall PTR in the State was satisfactory, i.e., 1:22 for Primary Schools⁶⁷ and 1:20 for Upper Primary Schools⁶⁸, during 2016-17. However, an adverse PTR was reported to GoI through AWP&B for 2017-18, in 1,991 Primary Schools⁶⁹ and in 1,181 Upper Primary Schools⁷⁰. Further, in 5,806 PS there were 3,313 surplus teachers and in 4,433 Upper Primary Schools, there was shortage of 1,041 teachers.

Government in its reply stated that teachers from zero enrolment schools were redeployed to schools with high enrolment and 9,397 Vidya Volunteers were appointed during 2016-17 to mitigate the situation.

2.2.5.10 Creation of physical and educational infrastructure facility

Section 19(2) of the Act⁷¹ stipulated provision of separate toilets for boys and girls, at least one classroom for every teacher, a room for headmaster, barrier-free access, drinking water facilities, boundary wall and playground. Government shall take steps to fulfil such norms and standards at its own expenses, within a period of three years (i.e., by March 2013) from the date of implementation of the Act.

Physical infrastructure - Civil Works

Scrutiny of records of the C&DSE revealed that the time frame of three years for completion of various infrastructural facilities⁷² had not been adhered to. Out of 91,199 sanctioned civil works during 2001-02 to 2016-17, an aggregate of 21,564 works⁷³ (24 per cent) remained incomplete, of which 7,014 works relating to toilets and drinking water were in progress (March 2017).

As regards the status of spill over works (as of March 2017), C&DSE stated (July 2017) that the details (both physical and financial) would be obtained from district authorities and necessary action taken thereon.

Government in its reply quoted shortage of funds as the reason for non-completion of works in time.

Thus, the schools where the above works were incomplete still suffer from lack of basic physical infrastructure even after a period of seven years of the RTE Act coming into force.

⁶⁷ Class I to V - Number of children: 11.90 lakh and Number of teachers: 0.53 lakh

⁶⁸ Class VI to VIII - Number of children: 6.72 lakh and Number of teachers: 0.34 lakh

⁶⁹ out of 23,622 Primary Schools, i.e., 8 per cent

⁷⁰ out of 8,796 Upper Primary Schools, i.e., 13 per cent

⁷¹ where a school established before the commencement of the Act does not fulfill the said norms

⁷² school buildings, toilets, drinking water facilities, special lavatories for CWSN and Headmaster's room

⁷³ a total number of works-in-progress: 8,828 and number of works not yet commenced: 12,736

Availability of basic amenities

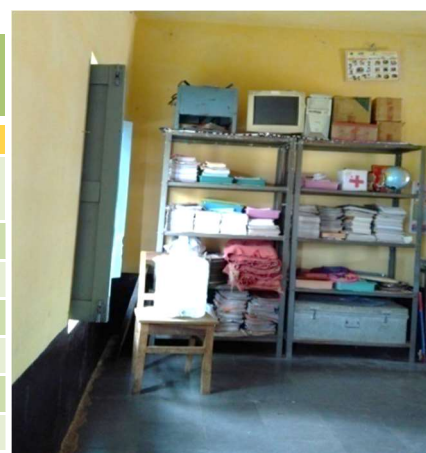
As per Schedule to Section 19 of RTE Act, no school shall be established or recognised by Government unless it fulfils the norms and standards specified therein.

The number of schools (out of 28,606 Government including Local Body schools) lacking basic amenities as of March 2017 is shown in the Table-2.13 below.

Table-2.13

Name of the amenity	No. of schools where facility did not exist (%)
<i>(as against a total of 28,606 schools)</i>	
At least one class room for every teacher and an Office-cum-Store	6643 (23)
Barrier-free access (ramps & hand-rails)	21547 (75)
Toilets	1261 (4)
Safe and adequate drinking water facility	0 (0)
Kitchen where Mid-Day-Meal is cooked in school	9192 (32)
Playground	12768 (45)
Boundary wall or fencing	11028 (39)
Library	888 (3)

Source: Records of C&DSE



Library in MPPS, Dandumailaram, Ibrahimpatnam mandal (9 June 2017)

It is seen from the above details that 75 per cent of the schools in the State did not have basic infrastructural amenities like *ramps and hand-rails*. Further, 45 per cent of the schools did not have playground and 39 per cent lacked boundary wall or fencing. The schools were, however, allowed to continue to function in violation of the provisions of the Act. Government claimed existence of library facility in 97 per cent of schools. It was, however, seen that the infrastructure provided in the libraries was poor without adequate study tables, closed cupboards and proper lighting.

Further, Audit found the following deficiencies in provision of basic infrastructural amenities in 88 test-checked schools in the sampled districts *vis-à-vis* UDISE data as given in Table-2.14 below.

Table-2.14

Audit findings	As per UDISE data		
Schools with at least one class room for every teacher and an Office-cum-Head Teacher's room not made available: 35 (40 per cent)	Not available		
Schools without barrier-free access (ramps & hand-rails): 66 (75 per cent)	66 (75 per cent)		
Schools without separate toilets for boys and girls: 22 (25 per cent)	Facility	Boys	Girls
	Toilets	5	2
	Urinals	28	23
	Running water in toilets	43	38
Schools without safe drinking water: 38 (43 per cent) However, C&DSE claimed that safe drinking water facility was provided to all the Government and Local Body schools (28,606) in the State	15 (17 per cent)		

Audit findings	As per UDISE data
Schools without play ground: 32 (36 per cent)	30 (34 per cent)
Schools without pucca boundary wall: 20 (23 per cent)	34 (39 per cent)
Schools without library facility: 14 (16 per cent)	3 (3 per cent)
Schools without electricity: 22 (25 per cent)	18 (20 per cent)

Source: Audit findings in test-checked schools and UDISE data

Thus, despite the lapse of seven years since implementation of the RTE Act, a large number of schools were deficient with regard to provision of basic infrastructural facilities/amenities.

Construction of kitchen-cum-store rooms

In 1,435 schools out of 25,991 schools in the State, Mid-Day Meal (MDM) was being served through centralised kitchens. In 24,556 schools MDM was being cooked in the school premises. Of the 24,556 schools, kitchen-cum-store rooms were available only in 14,138 (58 per cent) schools. Thus, 10,418 (42 per cent) schools did not have kitchen-cum-store rooms as of March 2017.

The Government decided to take up the construction of kitchen-cum-store rooms in rural areas under MGNREGS⁷⁴. Accordingly, the Finance department released (December 2016) ₹80.38 crore by adjustment to PD account of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development (PR&RD) Department. Similarly, ₹11.87 crore was released to savings account of SPD, SSA for construction of kitchen-cum-store rooms in urban areas. However, online status of MGNREGS reported a meagre expenditure of ₹93.61 lakh (for 700 works-in-progress) was incurred as of June 2017.

Government in its reply (December 2017) stated that works could not be taken up in 2014-15 and 2015-16 owing to the bifurcation of State. In 2016-17, the Government tied up with MGNREGS for construction works. It was observed that out of 7,674 kitchen-cum-store-rooms sanctioned in the year 2016-17, construction of as many as 7,398 rooms⁷⁵ (96 per cent) was pending. Government attributed this to delay in release of MGNREGS funds by Panchayat Raj Department.

In the sampled districts, 41 out of 88 test-checked schools (47 per cent) did not have a kitchen for cooking. The MDM was being cooked in the open under unhygienic conditions.

Thus, due to non-construction of kitchen-cum-store rooms, the objective of cooking food in a hygienic environment was unfulfilled.



In ZPHS (Boys), Edulabad, Rangareddy district MDM being cooked in open unhygienically (21 June 2017)

⁷⁴ Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

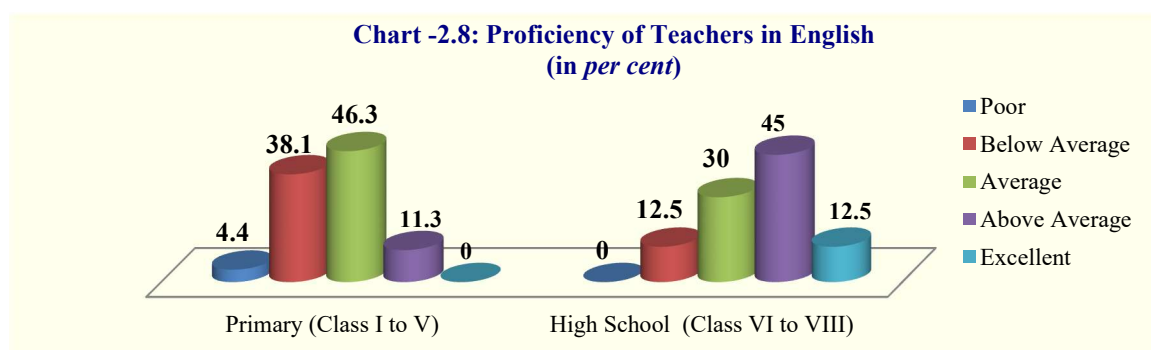
⁷⁵ In progress: 1,927 works and construction not commenced: 5,471

2.2.5.11 Shortfall in Teachers' Training

As per Section 9 of RTE Act, it is the responsibility of the local authority to provide training facility for teachers. As per Rule 25(2)(b) of State RTE Rules, the academic authority (SCERT) is to develop an In-service Teacher Training Design. As per Rule 22(3)(a), it is the duty of the teacher to participate in training programmes to improve his/her teaching skills for providing quality education to children.

Further, as per RTE roadmap⁷⁶, training of teachers should be completed within five years from the commencement of RTE Act.

Audit, however, observed shortfalls in teacher trainings which ranged from 20 to 40 per cent (Appendix-2.10).



Source: Study on the Proficiency levels of Teachers and Children in English Language

There was a Study on the Proficiency levels of Teachers and Children in English Language at Elementary Level (submitted⁷⁷ to TSSA Society for the year 2014-15). The overall proficiency level of the Teachers as per the report is depicted above.

It is evident from the above chart that 89 per cent of the Primary School teachers and 43 per cent of High School teachers had Average/Below Average/Poor proficiency levels.

Government during Exit Conference (December 2017) attributed the non-achievement of In-service Teacher Trainings to short release of funds by GoI and the State Government. Further, Government in its written reply, accepted the audit observation and stated (December 2017) that as most of the teachers recruited were from Telugu background, they lacked proficiency levels in English language. However, as a positive step in this regard, 14,914 teachers were trained in English language by SCERT⁷⁸ in the year 2016-17.

2.2.5.12 Zero enrolment and single teacher schools

As per the prime objective of RTE Act, Government should take effective steps for increasing enrolment for universalisation of primary education.

However, the number of schools with zero enrolment and those with enrolment of less than 15 and 30 students increased during 2014-17 as shown in Table-2.15 below.

⁷⁶ Para 1.5 of SSA Framework

⁷⁷ by Dr. R.V. Anuradha (Sr. Asst. Professor), Department of Education, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad

⁷⁸ State Council of Educational Research and Training

Table-2.15

Year	No. of schools with zero enrolment		No. of schools with enrolment of less than 15 students		No. of Schools with enrolment of less than 30 students		No. of schools with single teacher	
	PS	UPS	PS	UPS	PS	UPS	PS	UPS
2015-16	492	153	3043	864	8777	2179	1960	532
2016-17	559	234	3720	1140	9565	2511	2235	535
Increase in %	14	53	22	32	9	15	14	0.56

PS: Primary Schools; **UPS:** Upper Primary Schools. Source: Minutes of 248th PAB meeting dated 12 May 2017

In its reply (August/December 2017) the Department indicated the steps taken to increase the enrolment rate in schools. These are (i) a special enrolment drive was conducted in June 2017 and English medium sections were started on the demand of parents; (ii) teachers were being redeployed to schools with adverse PTR; (iii) Vidya Volunteers were engaged in single teacher schools and schools with adverse PTR⁷⁹ during the academic year 2017-18 and (iv) a proposal to merge schools based on enrolment to maintain PTR was moved but there was resistance to the concept at field level.

The steps taken by Government to increase the rate of enrolment in schools were yet to yield the desired results (December 2017).

2.2.5.13 Early childhood care and education not provided

RTE Act⁸⁰ mandates that Government have to make arrangements for providing free pre-school education for children above the age of three years. This is to prepare them for elementary education and to provide them early childhood care and education until they complete the age of six years.

The children in the age group of 3-6 years were taken care of by Anganwadi centres under the control of Women Development and Child Welfare Department (WD&CWD). Accordingly, pre-primary schools were not established by the Government. Government, through WD&CWD issued instructions (May 2017) for relocation of Anganwadi centres to Primary School premises to improve learning conditions of the children.

As of July 2017, 11,831 such Anganwadi centres (out of total 31,414 centres) were relocated to Primary School premises based on the Government orders. This is an innovation that ensures a school environment will be created for the children of Anganwadi centres.

2.2.6 Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

The RTE Act entrusts responsibility to the Department for providing schools, infrastructure, trained teachers, curriculum and teaching/learning materials. *SAC⁸¹ at the State level and School Management Committee (SMC) at school level are to monitor the implementation of provisions of the Act.*

⁷⁹ i.e., schools with high enrolment

⁸⁰ Section 11

⁸¹ State Advisory Council

2.2.6.1 State Advisory Council not constituted

The State Government shall constitute⁸² SAC (to be chaired by Minister-in-charge of School Education) consisting of members⁸³ from amongst persons having knowledge and practical experience in the field of elementary education and child development. SAC shall advise the State Government on implementation of the provisions of the Act in an effective manner. Business of the council mandates a meeting once in three months.

Audit, however, observed that SAC was not constituted by the Government as of December 2017.

As a result, the implementation of the provisions of RTE Act could not be reviewed at the apex level and corrective actions, if any, could not be suggested to the State Government for effective implementation of RTE Act in the State.

2.2.6.2 School Management Committees

A school shall constitute⁸⁴ SMC consisting of elected, ex-officio and co-opted representatives⁸⁵. As per State RTE Rules⁸⁶, SMC meetings are to be conducted once in two months and minutes and decisions of the meetings are to be properly recorded.

Out of 88 test-checked schools, in 62 schools, 509 SMC meetings (55 per cent) were not conducted against 930 meetings to be conducted as per norms during 2014-17. Thus, the mandate of SMC was not fulfilled to a great extent. Further, in the test-checked schools, only the MEOs and CRPs visited the schools and no other authority⁸⁷ inspected the schools.

Non-conducting of SMC meetings/non-inspection by DEO/Dy. EO limited the department's capability to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of RTE Act.

Government accepted the audit observation and attributed non-conduct of meetings as stipulated and non-conduct of inspections to insufficient monitoring staff.

2.2.6.3 Collection of exorbitant fee by Private schools

Government issued orders (April 2016) for conducting inspection of private schools on the issue of collection of fee from students. The C&DSE, based on the High Court order

Best Practice

*In pursuance of Rule 27(2) (vi) of State RTE Rules, 2010, the erstwhile Government of Andhra Pradesh initiated and established (October 2011) a **Child Rights Cell (CRC) with Toll free No 1800-425-3525** in the Office of the SPD, TSSA, Hyderabad (whose activities are maintained by an NGO) to receive representations/grievances from public relating to problems being faced by the children and solve them.*

During the period 2014-17, 385 complaint calls were received over the toll free number from aggrieved parties. Audit, however, observed that 376 complaints were shown as settled although some of them were not fully resolved.

⁸² as per Section 34 of the RTE Act and Rule 28 of State RTE Rules

⁸³ not exceeding 15

⁸⁴ as per Section 21 of RTE Act

⁸⁵ **Elected:** three parents/guardians elected by parents/guardians of children in each class; **Ex-officio:** Head Teacher or in-charge-Head Teacher; **Co-opted:** two school supporters (educationists/philanthropists)

⁸⁶ sub-rule (5) (a) below Rule 19

⁸⁷ DEO, Dy. EO, Academic Monitoring Officer (AMO)

identified (April 2016) 174 private schools in Hyderabad, Rangareddy and Medak districts who collected exorbitant fee and submitted a report (March 2017) to the Government. The report stated the following:

- The schools were collecting fee⁸⁸ on various pretexts⁸⁹ apart from regular tuition fee and they were not incurring expenditure as per extant Government rules⁹⁰.
- None of the schools submitted its Annual Administrative Reports and Audited Accounts.

Show cause notices were issued (February 2016 to March 2017) to 91 schools. The final outcome was still awaited (December 2017).

Audit also found cases of conducting screening tests, collection of one time capitation fee and huge tuition fee, etc. constituting breach of provisions of the RTE Act. This also reflected lack of control of Government over the private unaided schools.

The above violations reflected the lack of regular inspections of the private schools and poor monitoring at C&DSE as well as Government level. This showed a deficient internal control mechanism in the department.

2.2.6.4 Submission of Annual Administrative Reports by private unaided schools

The Educational agency, i.e., Private unaided school shall submit⁹¹ Annual Administrative Report (AAR) to the competent authority every financial year by 30th September.

Audit, however, observed that the AARs were not submitted by any of the 3,791 private unaided schools in Khammam (474), Rangareddy (2,542) and Warangal (775).

Government accepted the audit observation. Government stated (December 2017) that instructions had been issued to DEOs to initiate action against the managements of private unaided schools who failed to submit AARs. Non-submission of AARs by private unaided schools and non-inspection of schools by inspecting authorities at regular intervals showed deficient internal controls.

2.2.6.5 Tracking of Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

The vision of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) is to ensure inclusive and quality education to all. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goal, the Department of School Education prescribed minimum proficiency levels for reading, writing and simple arithmetic (referred to as 3Rs) for the children of Classes II and III. Subject-wise minimum proficiency levels at the end of the Primary level and up to Class X were also prescribed.

⁸⁸ tuition fee collected per annum was ranged from ₹16,500 to ₹5.42 lakh and one-time Admission fee ranged from ₹30,000 to ₹1.00 lakh

⁸⁹ caution fee, admission fee, activity fee, lab and annual fee, etc. in contravention of the fee prescribed vide GO Ms No. 91 dated 6 August 2009

⁹⁰ prescribed vide GO Ms No. 1 Education dated 1 January 1994

⁹¹ as per Rule 20 of the Andhra Pradesh Educational Institutions (Establishment, Recognition, Administration and Control of Schools under Private Management) Rules, 1993 (GO Ms No.1 Education (PS-2) Department, dated 1 January 1994)

Proficiency levels in Reading, Writing and Simple arithmetic

School Education Department, after reopening of schools every year in the month of June, conducts a pre-test for all children. Remedial teaching would be organised thereon for the children who did not achieve the prescribed 3R's level of proficiency.

Audit observed that lack of proficiency levels in respect of 3R's was as high as 38 *per cent* and 39 *per cent* for Classes II and III respectively. The overall lack of proficiency levels of Classes II to VIII for the year 2016-17 was 31 *per cent*.

Government replied (December 2017) that remedial teaching was being conducted in all schools to the children who had not achieved proficiency levels under Learning Enhancement Programme.

A non-government organisation⁹² conducted voluntarily a household analysis in nine rural areas of nine districts (i.e., except Hyderabad) in the academic year 2016. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) brought out by it contained an analysis on the academic skills acquired by pupil in the rural government and private schools in the State. Their findings on the reading and arithmetic skills of students were as follows:

- With respect to Reading skills in Telugu, only 47 *per cent* children of Class V could read Class II level Telugu text. Only 76 *per cent* of children of Class VIII could read the same text. In respect of Reading skills in English, only 23 *per cent* children of Class V could read simple words and only 11 *per cent* of Class VIII children could read simple words.
- Children by grade and arithmetic level: Only 3 to 43 *per cent* of students of Classes I to VIII could do subtraction and 1 to 55 *per cent* could do division. Only 27 *per cent* of students of Class VIII could do subtraction and 55 *per cent* of them could do division.

Thus, learning level of children was not at par with the required levels putting the academic future of children in jeopardy.

Thus, much needed to be done by the Department to improve the proficiency levels of children in order to conform to the standards set up under SDG.

Government replied that a special 60 day programme known as Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP)-3R was designed for low performance children and implemented in the beginning of the academic year. Under this, remedial classes for children lacking 3Rs would be taken by teachers. During Exit Conference, Government stated that the performance of teachers was being evaluated every year and awards given to deserving teachers on Teachers' Day.

Performance of Children

Under Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat scheme for Classes I to VIII all children are to score⁹³ 40 per cent or above in all the subjects. Minimum grade-wise proficiency levels required for children in reading and mathematics have been prescribed in the scheme.

⁹² PRATHAM – website: img.asercentre.org

⁹³ as per State Achievement Survey and National Achievement Survey

Scrutiny of the data related to 'Performance of Children' (Appendix-2.11) showed that 14 to 26 per cent of children at Primary level and 21 to 47 per cent of children in Upper Primary level scored less than 40 per cent during the years 2014-17. Further, children who scored between 91 to 100 per cent ranged from 5 to 10 per cent for Primary level. It was 2 to 6 per cent for Upper Primary level. This reflected poor competitive levels of children in academics in Government (including Local body and Aided) schools. The Department accepted that there was lack of minimum proficiency levels of children in various subjects.

Thus, the objective of conforming to the standards set by the State Government, remained largely unachieved.

Shaala Siddhi (Evaluation for improvement)

*Shaala Siddhi*⁹⁴ is an instrument for school evaluation developed by NUEPA⁹⁵, MoHRD. The programme visualises 'School Evaluation' as the means and 'School Improvement' as the goal. It provided a clear road-map for each school to embark on a journey of Self Evaluation and External Evaluation, leading towards incremental school improvement with accountability. While the school as a whole should engage in the self-evaluation process, external evaluation is entrusted by the department to academic persons/institutes of their choice. It is to be implemented in all the Government and Aided schools in 2016-17. For the year 2016-17, PAB approved a budget of ₹2.33 crore. Against this, a meagre amount of ₹0.65 lakh only was spent.

Audit observed that as of December 2017, out of 29,549 Government and Aided schools (Primary, Upper Primary and High Schools) targeted in the State, 'Self Evaluation' (by schools themselves) was completed and the data uploaded in respect of only 8,585 schools. The remaining 20,964 schools had not Self Evaluated. Further, although inspections of schools were being conducted (with significant shortfalls) no 'External Evaluation' was conducted by the Department in any of the schools. Government in their reply stated that NUEPA would enable External Evaluation only after January 2018.

Thus, the implementation of Shaala Siddhi programme was very unsatisfactory despite availability of funds as the Department failed in its visualised goal of School Improvement.

2.2.7 Conclusion

The efforts made by the State Government in ensuring unique identity of children through AADHAAR authentication, establishment of a Child Rights Cell to address their grievances are innovative and commendable. Nevertheless, the implementation of RTE Act overall suffered in the State even after the lapse of seven years of its coming into effect. Majority of the provisions of the Act were not fully followed by the State Government. Only 50 per cent of the PAB approved funds (2014-17) were released under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – the main vehicle for implementation of the Act. Majority (74 per cent) of the total expenditure was incurred on Salaries, KGBVs and Civil Works; only 26 per cent was utilised on quality and other interventions under the programme.

⁹⁴ National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation (NPSSE) launched by GoI in November 2015

⁹⁵ National University of Educational Planning and Administration

Reservation of 25 per cent for disadvantaged groups and weaker sections envisaged in private un-aided schools was not implemented/enforced by the State Government. The Department could not mainstream all the Out-of-School Children and failed to provide special training to them as targeted which denied education to large number of children. Little progress was made by Government in setting up new schools which resulted in dependency on and flourishing of private schools. In this context, shifting the Anganwadi to school premises is an innovation that could raise the enrolment in Primary Schools.

The time frame of three years for completion of various infrastructural facilities such as school buildings, toilets, drinking water facilities, etc. had not been adhered to.

Enrolment in Government schools during the period 2014-17 showed a declining trend. The dropout rate in respect of SC/ST children was a matter of concern. State Advisory Council intended to advise the Government on implementation of the Act was not constituted in the State. School Management Committee meetings were not conducted regularly. Child tracking system was not in existence in any of the schools in the State. There was thus no mechanism in place to monitor academic progress of children, their retention, transition and migration. The prescribed minimum proficiency levels for 3Rs, i.e., reading, writing and simple arithmetic were not achieved.

2.2.8 Recommendations

- (i) The department should review all infrastructure plans to ensure completion of the pending works within reasonable time;
- (ii) The department should ensure a functional child tracking system to monitor academic progress, retention, transition and migration of children;
- (iii) State Government should pursue with GoI for timely/adequate release of funds and release its own matching funds. Priority should be given to incur expenditure on quality interventions;
- (iv) The department should ensure effective implementation of the Learning Enhancement Programme (3R's) for enhancing the minimum proficiency levels of children; and
- (v) The department should ensure regular monitoring/inspection of schools and conduct meetings of School Management Committees as prescribed.

During Exit Conference, Government assured of remedial action on the points raised by Audit. The recommendations made by Audit were also discussed and accepted by Government.

Appendix-2.7
(Reference to paragraph 2.2.2.3 page 41)

Details of selection of Districts, Mandals and Schools (Implementation of RTE Act)

S. No	District	Rural/Urban and Number of Mandals	Number and names of Mandals	Number of Government, Local body and Specified schools	Number of Aided schools	Total number of test-checked schools
1	Khammam	Rural-3	Thallada, Chunchupalli and Bhadrachalam	16	8*	24
		Urban-1	Khammam	4	2	6
2	Rangareddy	Rural-3	Ibrahimpatnam, Shamshabad and Ghatkesar	16	7	23
		Urban-1	Balanagar	4	3	7
3	Warangal	Rural-3	Geesugonda, Khanapur and Dornakal	16	7	23
		Urban-1	Warangal	4	3	7
			Total	60	30	90

* Two of these sampled Aided schools were non-functional during 2014-17

Appendix-2.8
(Reference to paragraph 2.2.4.3 page 44)

**Expenditure on Salaries, KGBVs and Civil works vis-à-vis
PAB approved Budget during 2014-17**

(₹ in crore)

Year	PAB approved Budget	Total Expenditure (Per cent to PAB approved budget)	Expenditure on			
			Salaries	KGBVs	Civil works	Other components (%t to Total expenditure)
2014-15	1839.35	846.03 (46)	404.50	104.01	117.98	219.54 (26)
2015-16	1667.34	759.15 (46)	17.41	243.89	240.01	257.84 (34)
2016-17	1853.72	1245.83 (67)	738.64	174.93	67.39	264.87 (21)
Total	5360.41	2851.01 (53)	1160.55	522.83	425.38	742.25 (26)

Source: Minutes of PAB and information furnished by C&DSE

Appendix-2.9
(Reference to paragraph 2.2.5.3 page 47)

Dropout rate at primary level (Classes I to V) and upper primary level (Classes I to VIII)

(i) Dropout rate at primary level

Academic Year		ALL			SC			ST		
	Enrolment	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2014-15	Class-1 (2010-11)	394187	369070	763257	68897	64946	133843	63583	60892	124475
	Class-V (2014-15)	317232	299129	616361	53531	51393	104924	39301	34969	74270
	Dropout rate	19.52	18.95	19.25	22.30	20.87	21.61	38.19	42.57	40.33
2015-16	Class-1 (2011-12)	384287	360229	744516	68284	64837	133121	61881	59289	121170
	Class-V (2015-16)	320625	302320	622945	52958	51047	104005	38830	35652	74482
	Dropout rate	16.6	16.10	16.30	22.40	21.30	21.90	37.25	39.87	38.53

(ii) Dropout rate at upper primary level

Academic Year		ALL			SC			ST		
	Enrolment	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2014-15	Class-I (2007-08)	410593	388805	799398	72182	68980	141162	64193	61065	125258
	Class-VIII (2014-15)	279502	270939	550441	48663	47331	95994	30242	27593	57835
	Dropout rate	31.93	30.31	31.14	32.58	31.38	32.00	52.89	54.81	53.83
2015-16	Class-I (2008-09)	403306	384916	788222	68566	66253	134819	63082	60632	123714
	Class-VIII (2015-16)	282791	273551	556342	47589	46882	94471	30904	27773	58677
	Dropout rate	29.88	28.93	29.42	30.59	29.24	29.93	51.01	54.19	52.57

Source: Educational Statistics 2014-15 and 2015-16

Appendix-2.10
(Reference to paragraph 2.2.5.11 page 55)

Status of teachers' trainings conducted during the period 2014-17

Year	Approved budget		Achievement		Shortfall
	Physical (No. of teachers)	Financial (₹ in lakh)	Physical (No. of teachers)	Financial: ₹ in lakh (%)	Physical (No. of teachers) (%)
2014-15	217405	1282.19	172841	330.73 (26)	44564 (20)
2015-16	177186	1160.23	169501	386.38 (33)	7685 (4)
2016-17	203592	1345.00	121828	628.42 (47)	81764 (40)

Source: Information furnished by C&DSE

Appendix-2.11
(Reference to paragraph 2.2.6.5 page 60)

Performance of children (Primary and Upper Primary classes) during 2014-17

(i) Primary classes (Class I to V)

Year	Total number of children enrolled	Total number of children appeared for final annual examinations	Number of children secured				
			A+	A	B+	B	C
			91 to 100 marks (per cent)	71 to 90 marks	51 to 70 marks	41 to 50 marks	0 to 40 marks (per cent)
2014-15	1278733	1240793	65441 (5)	208008	369246	269686	328412 (26)
2015-16	972346	972346	59521 (6)	177929	316386	210529	207981 (21)
2016-17	633141	633141	60859 (10)	178026	211780	95242	87234 (14)

(ii) Upper primary classes (Class VI to VIII)

Year	Total No. of children enrolled	Total No. of children appeared for final exams	Marks secured by children						
			A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	D
			91-100 (%)	81-90	71-80	61-70	51 - 60	41 - 50	35 - 40 (%)
2014-15	740173	713151	17422 (2)		66033		143132	149291	337273 (47)
2015-16	587253	587253	37337 (6)	53158	120441	100039	93682	59171	123425 (21)
2016-17	313482	313482	12175 (4)	23443	34492	46617	53821	55677	87257 (28)

Source: Information furnished by C&DSE