

Equity and Social Inclusion

1.1 Background- vulnerable groups and dimensions of inequity:-RMSA emphasises not only on access to quality secondary education for Special Focus Groups (SC, ST, Minority, Girls and CWSN), but also on removing social and gender disparity in secondary education. Marginalized students including those belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Minority communities, girls and children with special needs (CWSN) particularly with poor socio-economic background and residing in difficult terrain, tribal areas and educationally backward blocks are more vulnerable. Hence special focus is needed for development of multi-pronged strategy to address their concerns.

As far as the participation of girls at secondary level is concerned, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Girls at secondary level has improved from 58.70 in 2009-10 to 76.47 in 2013-14. However still, some States like Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Nagaland, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand have yet to achieve the national average of GER for girls. The ratio of girls to Boys enrolment at the secondary level in 2013-14 stood at 0.90. (Source School Education Statistics, 2013-14, NEUPA)

As per Flash Statistics UDISE - 2013-14, published by NUEPA, national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the secondary level is 76.64. During the same period GER for Scheduled Tribes students at secondary level is 70.20 and GER of Scheduled Caste students at secondary level is 78.73 which is higher than the national average. It is also observed that GER of SC girl students at the secondary level in 2013-14 is 79.38 which is higher than the national average and GER of ST girl students is 70.11.

1.2 Planning strategy for educationally vulnerable /disadvantaged groups: preparation of equity action plan:- For the effective planning and implementation of strategies to improve participation, retention and learning levels of SC, ST, Minority and Girl students, following steps are recommended:

1.2.1 Identification of Disadvantaged Groups: To identify the educationally disadvantaged groups in the State/UT, analysis of educational indicators like Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), Drop-out Rate, Retention Rate, Gender Parity Index (GPI), Gender gap etc. under different social category groups should be carried out with special reference to the geographically disadvantaged areas like Special Focus Districts (SFDs), Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs), Left-wing affected areas, districts with low female participation and high drop-out and districts with high gender gap and low Gender Parity Index (GPI). List of Special Focus Districts and EBBs is available on the website of the Ministry www.mhrd.gov.in and that of RMSA www.rmsaindia.org.in

The planners should also attempt to look beyond the pre-defined category of deprived communities such as those affected by natural disasters, relocated communities, riot affected areas, critical urban areas etc.

Research studies/identification surveys conducted by any educational institution, civil society organisations, SMDCs and any other agency or Institution may also be utilized for identification such groups.

1.2.2 Need Assessment: The next critical step for preparation of equity action plan is to determine, with the involvement of community members, teachers, civil society organisations etc, the factors that are adversely affecting the education of these identified groups. The process should be scientific and not perception based. After determining the critical factors, need assessment should be carried out in terms of requirement of infrastructure, teachers, teaching learning materials, remedial coaching, hostel facilities, transport facility, scholarship etc to address the gaps .

1.2.3 Strategizing for Addressing Gaps: In view of the fact that there are multiple interwoven factors that cause an un-equitable condition and therefore the strategies aimed at addressing the situation also need to be set of multi- dimensional activities. Interventions addressing different dimensions (like societal perception, teacher, availability of schooling facilities etc.) should be drawn and included in the Annual Work Plan.

1.2.4 Project based Proposals: RMSA calls for the development of Project-based strategy which would be evidence-based and outcome oriented. Multiple interventions can be clubbed under this project-based model for the achievement of goal within a stipulated timeframe.

1.3 Broad strategies and interventions:-

Issues	Special Focus Group	Factors	Broad Strategies		Expected Outcomes
			General	Specific	
Low enrolment at secondary level	Girls and SC/ST/OBC/Minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of school facilities • Distance factor • Negative attitude of parents and community towards girl's education • Lack of importance of education • Early marriage & Sibling care • Gender & Caste discrimination • Poor Economic conditions • Resettlement of habitations 	i. Community mobilization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness generation and sensitisation programmes for mobilising parents • Enrolment drives in critical areas • Counselling for parents and students • Training of SMDC members • Engaging Panchayat members 	i. Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up gradation of Upper Primary schools to secondary schools in SC/ST/Minority concentrated areas on priority basis. • Provision of Girl's toilets in secondary schools • Provision of Girls Hostels • Provision of transport facility • Empowering girls with Self Defence technique • Provision of employable skills at secondary stage to make education attractive. • Provision of teachers in language subjects 	Enhancing enrolment of Girls, SC, ST, OBC, Minority at Secondary level
High Drop-out/Low retention at secondary level	SC/ST/OBC/Minority & Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from habitation • Inability to cope with academic rigour • Poor Performance • Insensitive school 	i. Creating Equal Learning Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of School Readiness Programme for Secondary Education /Foundation course 	i. Educational facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility of Girls Toilet • Girls hostel 	Improvement of retention and Arresting Dropout of girls

Issues	Special Focus Group	Factors	Broad Strategies		Expected Outcomes
			General	Specific	
		environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender & Caste discrimination • Adolescent issues and Mismanagement sexual changes • Lack of female teachers • Poverty & Migration • Early marriage • Child labour • Lack of toilet and other facilities in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning through Open Schooling System • Adolescent and Life Skill Education • Counselling • Vocational skill • Special Coaching Camps for Students Affected By left Wing Extremism <p>ii. Provision of Teachers Quarters in case of remote location</p> <p>iii. Community Mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention Drives • Attendance Monitoring 	<p>ii. Availability of Female teachers in school: Rationalisation of teachers Deployment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment/ deployment of tribal language teacher 	
Low Learning levels at secondary level	SC/ST/OBC/Minority & Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor performance in Science and Mathematics • Biased curriculum • Poor Classroom transaction • Poor performance in examination 	Improvement of Learning levels of students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of Curriculum framework/syllabus/ textbook in as per National; Curriculum framework 2005 • Training of teachers on gender issues • Adolescent Education and Life skill • Vocational skills • Career Counselling 		Improvement of Learning levels of girls/SC/ST/OBC/Minority

1.4 Convergence and coordination:-For optimum utilisation of infrastructure and resources, greater linkage, convergence and coordination should be forged amongst schemes being implemented by different departments at the State, district, block & school level targeted towards SC/ST/Minorities/Girls etc .

Some such Schemes are listed below:

- 1. Ministry of Human Resource Development:** National Means cum Merit Scholarship, Incentive to girls for secondary education, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas. Details are available at <http://mhrd.gov.in/overview-secondary-education>
- 2. Ministry of Health and family Welfare:** School Health Programmed. Details are available at <http://www.mohfw.nic.in>
- 3. Ministry of Women and Child Development:** (a) Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls or SABLA (Adolescent Girls); Details are available at <http://wcd.nic.in/schemes/SABLA-guidelines141210.pdf>. (b) Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Boys (RGSEAB) – Saksham (Adolescent boys). Details are available at <http://wcd.nic.in>.
- 4. Ministry of Minority Affairs:** Scholarship Schemes including Pre-metric Scholarship, Post Metric Scholarship and Merit cum Means Scholarship. Details are available at www.minorityaffairs.gov.in
- 5. Ministry of Tribal Affairs:** Establishment of Ashram schools in Tribal Sub Plan areas, Establishment of Ekalavya Model Schools ,Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Hostels for ST boys and ST girls, Pre-Metric and Post Metric Scholarship Scheme, Up gradation of Merit of ST students at Secondary and Higher Secondary Stage :Details are available at <http://www.tribal.nic.in/>
- 6. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:** Pre Metric and Post Metric Scholarship for Scheduled Caste Students, Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatravas Yojna. Details are available at <http://socialjustice.nic.in/pdf/pmsscnew.pdf>

GOOD PRACTICES

Maharashtra: Kishori Utkarsh Manch:- Under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, as part of equity intervention ,Maharashtra has taken up the project of “**Kishori Utkarsh Manch**” with a view to reduce high drop-out of girls, address adolescent, gender and equity issues pertaining to girls and improve retention rate of girls at the secondary level.

Several activities have been clubbed under this programme including - awareness and motivational programmes for girls and parents, training of teachers on gender issues, career counselling, life skill education, adolescent education including issues of health and hygiene, self defence training and vocational training.