

## INDIA

### RASHTRIYA MADHYAMIK SIKSHA ABHIYAN (RMSA) 1<sup>ST</sup> JOINT REVIEW MISSION

#### STATE REPORT: (Punjab) (January 14 -20, 2013)

##### 1.1. Introduction

The 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Review Mission team comprising of Ranjana Arora (GOI representative) and Shabnam Sinha (World Bank) visited Punjab from 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013 to review progress towards overall goals and objectives of RMSA with special reference to planning and appraisal processes and civil works with overall assessment of implementation of program interventions.

The mission met with the Principal Secretary, Education, Mr. Ashok Kumar Gupta, Mr. K S Pannu, SPD, RMSA and Director General School Education, Ms Surekha Thakur, ASPD (Civil Work), Mr. R.M. Goyal, and the RMSA team members at the state level, including district officials in-charge of key interventions in RMSA. The JRM team visited the districts of Amritsar, Ferozepur, Muktasar and Taran Taran and benefited from interactions with the District Project Coordinators (DPCs), district level RMSA functionaries, school principals, teachers, students, parents and SDMC members. The Mission records its deep appreciation of the kind hospitality of the state of Punjab and the cooperation in undertaking the Mission.

##### 1.2 Overview and Key Issues

The mission would like to place on record its appreciation of the efforts of the state in providing physical access to secondary schools through focused attention on strengthening and upgradation of upper primary schools to the secondary level. As this area progresses, the state may also need to pay attention to the needs of the existing secondary schools that are in dire need of minor and major repairs especially for ensuring safety and security of the students. There are some districts that have large populations of SC categories. However, there is a need for more disaggregated data gathering for SC and muslim children. The achievement levels of secondary board examinations seem to be on a declining trend since 2009. The state may need to unravel this issue and develop strategies for quality improvement focused on enhancing the student learning levels. The mission was happy to note that the state is planning to take up a baseline study of the achievement levels of children coming out of SSA schools post Class VIII for evaluation of their entry levels for the secondary stage. Innovative use of *Edusat* in terms of providing access to additional coaching to senior secondary students for pre-medical and JEE was noted. These facilities may be used for broader curriculum support for access to diverse options. The mission recommends that the use of SITs, ROTs and other modalities may be streamlined so that its strategic use is ensured and duplication of hardware in many places avoided.

The state needs to provide special emphasis and drives for training at all levels on decentralized school based planning for realistic AWPB preparation. Prioritization of planned activities especially that for minor and major repairs is critical to prepare the schools to receive large number of secondary students.

### **Planning and Appraisal Process**

The state reported that the planning process was carried out by planning teams at village, cluster, districts and state levels with capacity building exercises like seminars, workshops and field visits to orient and prepare the teams to formulate secondary education plans. Districts prepare and consolidate their plans based upon School Mapping /SEMIS data or information collected from schools. The mission was informed that plans prepared by various districts are then combined and compiled into State Annual Work Plan for RMSA. The planning process uses school mapping exercises based on GIS supported by distance matrix/SEMIS. GIS mapping is linked to the state portal e-Punjab and plots schools not only against physical location but against more disaggregated dynamic parameters. The state finds this very useful in planning as the GIS goes beyond just spatial information and provides detailed information through links to the e-Punjab portal. Punjab has initiated a process of grading schools in A,B, C and D categories (on pre-identified parameters like focus on SC/ST categories, girls, Student Classroom Ratio, PTR, provision of toilets, etc) and the GIS provides information on these schools by their grades.

The state mentioned that they found the UDISE system very useful as separate DISE and SEMIS had in many cases led to duplication of data and information. Support provided by TSG in helping the state in the planning process was especially appreciated. The District Planning Coordinators had received a 2 days training in New Delhi that had also been helpful. Each of the 216 blocks has its SSA MIS coordinator who helps in monitoring and digitizes data. One of the issues that inhibited the planning process had been the late release of GOI funds after PAB approvals. In the year 2011-12, the recurring grant was received on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, making it very difficult for the state to undertake its activities like teacher training, paying teacher salaries etc. during the course of the year. However, the mission was informed that the minor repair grants were released to the state under release of recurring grants every year where as the major repair grants also released to the state under creation of capital assets against the approval for the year 2010-11 & 2011-12. It would be useful to have closer coordination between the MHRD and the state for fund releases.

The state had borrowed funds from other state government sources to make good these shortages. Non recurring grants for 2011-12 were received in November of 2012, though the state continues its civil works activities by borrowing from state departments. Punjab managed to complete most of its civil works component. The spillover will be made good once the state is able to pay back its dues to other departments. The state also shared that there was a need for increasing the MMER funds from the present 2% to help the state in using more consultative and effective planning processes.

222 schools have been upgraded from upper primary to secondary level and 1034 teachers appointed. Teachers are recruited by the State Recruitment Board. Teacher Eligibility Test passed candidates are selected- the state pass rate for TET is only 6%. However, the mission noted huge teacher shortages in the schools in the border district of Taran Taran- owing to the fact that teachers do not wish to stay in difficult conditions and took transfers to urban areas. Women teachers found it difficult to attend to school in these areas, citing harassment and security reasons. In the secondary school in Jhuggian Nattha Singh on Pakistan border, the school was running without a teacher and there was only one teacher who had been co-opted from a far off school. All classrooms were teacher-less as all recruited teachers had left. The teacher and Lab assistant were staying in the classrooms. Such cases need to be monitored carefully as schools cannot be without teachers due to terrorizing and harassment by local elements.

The state has institutionalized a monitoring mechanism with an **Inspection Cell** that monitors program implementation and quality parameters. Punjab University is the identified monitoring body under RMSA. The visiting mission found that there was a need for greater efforts in making the planning process more need based and decentralized. Visits to the schools showed that there were issues emerging in the area of school infrastructure, provision of amenities like toilets, etc. that could have been taken care of had the planning been more school based and decentralized. Setting priorities for asking for much needed funds, especially for toilets and other safety measures at the school level would help prioritize necessary requirements and associated funding for the same. There is a great need for orienting school functionaries and SMDCs on planning.

While there was no evidence on any monitoring tools being used, the state did have a process of monitoring project implementation. At circle level, three CEOs (Circle Education Officers) were assigned the work of monitoring, and in the districts bordering Pakistan, special teams had been formed. The District Engineer (Civil Works), Junior Engineer (Civil Works) inspects the works being done under RMSA and send the on-line report to the head office for further action. The state did not use any structured results framework.

The mission found that the state was concerned about monitoring of the learning achievement levels of the students- especially those entering Class IX- fearing that with the doing away of tests and the no-detention policy under RTE, schools may receive children who do not possess the requisite learning levels for the secondary level. The state has developed some basic assessment tools with key indicators to assess children who seek admission into the secondary level to create a baseline of the same.

### ***Achievements and Good Practices***

The state under the leadership of the SPD has taken pains to garner support from various stake-holders and has been using these to supplement government funds with those. This is expected to go into the area of quality improvement and school upkeep. Innovative modes of using additional funds are appreciable. Community service has been pressed into action through volunteerism.

### ***Concerns***

There is need for dedicated efforts to orient at recurrent intervals, all key policy planners like state and district administration, SMDCs, engineers and teachers on planning and appraisal. Greater understanding of holistic school level planning that encompasses issues of access, equity especially gender concerns, CWSN issues and quality improvement requirements is needed.

### ***Recommendations***

- *Decentralized planning processes need significant strengthening, The mission recommends that the state may take up immediate training of teachers, SMDCs, civil works personnel and district level personnel on AWPB preparation with special reference to prioritization of using minor and major repairs grants.*
- *The mission feels that it is important to make arrangements for teacher accommodation in the border blocks that are facing very difficult conditions areas with relevant norms evolved.*

- *Rationalization of teacher positions is needed immediately to reduce concentration of teachers in urban areas. This needs to be factored in the AWPBs of the 5 border districts of Punjab. Convergence with other central ministries could be explored.*
- *Better coordination between central and state governments will be required to complete all formalities in time for enabling timely release of funds.*

## **Civil Works**

### Planning of Civil Works

The state informed that planning for Civil Works was a bottom-up approach with the actual requirement for the school infrastructure being sent from field level to State Project Office via District Project Coordinators. The district level nodal body for execution of civil works is the District Educational Development Committee (DEDC) headed by Deputy Commissioner. The state utilizes the services of the Engineering wings of government departments for implementation and supervision of Civil works. The Punjab Urban Development Authority (PUDA), Panchayati Raj department, Mandi Karan Board and the Public Works Department (PWD) were used for civil works. The mission found that most works were executed by the Panchayati Raj department and those were of very good quality. The state has not built any new schools under RMSA and uses grants only for school strengthening (addition of classrooms, libraries and Laboratories in existing secondary schools) and up-gradation (addition of secondary block in upper primary schools to meet the norm of a secondary school within 5 kilometers of a habitation).

All procurement above Rs.10 lacs is done through government departments assigned the work. Procurement of all works over Rs. 10 lacs is done through tendering through newspapers and information to societies/bodies of contractors. Contracts are awarded to the lowest tender and technical specifications were provided in the tender- generally as per PWD specifications and bids are accepted only from empanelled contractors. There is no publication in newspapers for tenders below Rs. 5 lacs. All contracts above Rs.1 crore are tendered through e-tendering process (not *nic* certified yet). All tenders above Rs 20 lacs are accepted by the Superintending Engineer and those above Rs. 50 lacs are accepted by a technical committee at the state level. The state has a Common Schedule of Rates that is Rs. 1000 per square foot. State has not found bundling of use as that leads to lack of accountability and the packets of contracts are not too large that should justify such bundling. The contractor that is awarded the contract is expected to locate a site laboratory in the school to monitor progress of works. The state shared that the RMSA norms for construction were found to be inadequate for Punjab where the unit cost was higher than even that at the national level. More often than not, the shortfall is met through community contribution or through corporate funding/donations. In rural areas like Rataul Rohi the cost of strengthening of a school science lab, library, two classrooms and toilets was Rs.20,78286 out of the released amount of 25, 86000 and in Mishri Walan, within the released amount basket ball playground is also constructed for secondary stage students. The state has taken up innovative strategies for civil works.

The state identifies sites for new/upgraded schools as per norms of having a secondary school every 5 kilometers as well as the demand and enrolment numbers. The mission noted that all strengthening and upgradation was taken up in areas where there was a heavy demand for the same and large numbers of children enrolling into the schools created. School mapping and population projection exercises are undertaken, the state informed. The mission noted that minor grants for school maintenance could be accessed only after 5 years in case of a new construction. *It would be a good idea to build in a maintenance clause for 5 years in the construction contract with a minor percentage allocation so that the schools remain in very good condition.*

The mission was impressed to note the quality of the work undertaken both for strengthening and upgradation. The quality of materials was of good quality, standard finish and sturdy dimensions. Electricity switches were installed and working. Soil testing and design specifications were undertaken by state Engineering colleges and though the area is not prone to earthquakes, plinth beams have been provided in the schools from the foundation up till the door and often the roof levels. *National Building Code* and the PWD Manual are followed as the defining guidelines

The quality of the secondary schools that have not been upgraded is very deficient. The mission visited a secondary school in the border district of Punjab (Taran Taran) and found that the entire school was out in the open attending a religious discourse during class hours. The building was very dilapidated; classrooms were dark, damp and dingy; naked electric wires were hanging from the ceiling and drinking water units were in the midst of rotten water cesspools. There seemed to be a complete lack of awareness in the school authorities on RMSA norms for minor and major repairs and they had not asked for the same in their AWPBs. It appears that training and orientation of school authorities and SMDCs on RMSA norms and grants that can be availed of are completely missing. Existing schools need to make better use of minor repair grants. While each school has a School Management Development Committee (SMDC) that carries out civil work, the mission is of the view that there is a need for a much greater coordination and consultation at the decentralized level especially at the school level to ensure that the exigent requirements of civil works are factored into the AWPBs. There is also a need for training of the SMDCs, school authorities on prioritizing their requirements. School authorities need much more clarity on provisions of funds under SSA and RMSA. The state informed that sometimes released funds go to schools where requirements had already met with funds from different source and if school informs the district/state authority well in time, state transfers this fund to needy school. The state also informed that no grants were released by GOI for minor and major repairs. This is an area of immediate concerns and funds are required.

All schools need better toilet facilities especially for girls at the secondary level who are adolescent going through a challenging phase requiring clean and hygienic toilet facilities. The mission found that many schools did not have this provision, as the AWPB prepared had not asked for additional toilets especially in schools that were strengthened with RMSA grants. In most schools visited, the toilets were either not in use or were locked.

### ***Achievements and Good Practices***

The mission would like to place on record its appreciation of the vision of the state in making a model infrastructure for the secondary school so that all additions can follow an overall architectural pattern as and when the extensions happen. This would provide whole school approach rather than piecemeal additions of classrooms.

The mission was happy to see that some of the schools visited had components of environment friendly elements like water harvesting units, plantations and green-houses. The state informed that they had received recently the Environment Management Framework. The state has undertaken appreciable efforts to supplement government funds through leveraging of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds of large corporates/philanthropists/ Non Resident Indians especially in school infrastructure enhancement. Punjab has 24 *Adarsh* schools (classes I-XII) constructed under PPP model, where free education is being given to all the girls and boys from I to XII.

### ***Concerns:***

The state has 5 districts that are in the bordering areas with Pakistan. Secondary schools have been provided as per RMSA norms but in many cases there was a secondary school within 7-8 kms (Zafar Kot)

and in some cases with-in 12-13 kilometers (Hussaini wala) of a habitation. The mission noted that considering the difficult terrain, lack of safety for girls travelling long distances to school, there is merit in relaxing the norms of opening secondary schools in blocks of districts that are immediately next to the border. The mission was happy to note that the MHRD has already taken this into account and, the PAB has already relaxed the enrollment criteria norms in case of Punjab for the areas adjoining to the border.

***Recommendations:***

- *The state has shared **Guidelines for Civil Works** with SMDCs. The state may wish to disseminate this on a larger scale as the mission in its interaction with SMDCs did not find evidence of their having information on or access to these materials.*
- *Large scale capacity building of SMDCs, district, state and civil works functionaries on planning for civil works. Special training materials and brochures having RMSA norms in user friendly formats may be shared with the SMDCs and school teachers/Principals for them to benefit from them especially minor and major repairs.*
- *Survey of availability of usable/functional toilets for girls including orientation of teachers to be sensitive to the special needs of adolescent girls for access to clean hygienic toilets*

**Progress towards the achievement of Goals**

**Goal 1: To improve access to secondary schooling**

The state has 7454 secondary schools out of which 3349 are government schools (1466 are higher secondary) and 3642 are government unaided schools. The GER is 69.36% (67.88% for boys and 71.03% for girls) with a GPI of 0.84. As per state data, the NER is 48%. The transition rate from upper primary to secondary is 91.52% and completion rate is 88.61%. Pupil Teacher Ratio is 14.07. Density of secondary schools per 10 km is 1.10- an area of concern that indicates that there is a need for careful planning to meet the RMSA norms of having a secondary school within 5 kilometers range. SEMIS data informs that there are 81.96% toilets for girls. The mission however, could not find evidence of functional toilets for girls in many schools visited and in most cases, the tiles were locked. The state has received approval for upgradation of 222 schools from upper primary to secondary and it has completed 178 schools and 44 are under progress. There are 62.61% regular teachers in schools and 64.24% contractual teachers. The state has recruited 1034 teachers and in the process of recruiting 596 more.

The transition rate from upper primary to secondary (all management) has increased from 89.04% in 2010-11 to 91.52% in 2011-12(state data). GER has increased from 63.17 in 2010 to 77.64 in 2011-12(state data). The Mission observed good enrollment and attendance in Class IX in most of the schools visited (40-60 students per section). Mission interaction with parents of students in school and the community members revealed that opening of secondary schools in SC dominated areas has helped a large number of SC students especially girls access education within 5 kms of the habitation.

***Concerns:***

Considering the overwhelming demand for secondary schools, it is important that the existing schools are strengthened significantly to be able to provide a clean and safe learning environment to students. The attention of the state needs to be provided on existing secondary schools that do not fall under either strengthening or upgradation categories.

### ***Recommendations***

- *The state may undertake on a priority basis a survey of facilities available at the existing secondary schools and a detailed analysis of minor and major repairs required in them. This has special reference to safety, hygiene, toilets (especially for girls).*

### **Goal 2: To bridge gender and social gaps**

#### **A. Gender gaps**

Gender parity index at secondary stage is found 0.84 as per SEMIS data indicating need for special efforts to ensure that more girl students come to schools and stay. For this, special drive for gender sensitivity for girls and for women teacher is needed. The mission was concerned to note that in the school in Taran Taran (Jhuggian Natha Singh), all women teachers had left the school due to harassment by the *sarpanch*. Such incidents need immediate reporting to authorities and action taken. Although through community mobilization practices, girls started getting enrolled in class IX even in remote rural area, the state informed that much more mobilization is needed more schools need to be upgraded. This has special reference to areas with a difficult terrain. In such cases (border districts) relaxation of norms for providing girls schools even within a distance less than 5 kms may be needed as requested by parents and the community.

As KGBV hostels have been found to be of immense value at the elementary level, it would be useful for the state to consider setting up KGBVs for secondary girls in border blocks, as girls face immense security problems in reaching schools that are far away from their homes.

Govt. of Punjab has provisioned free education to girls up to tertiary stage for reducing the gender gap and empowering girls, Karate classes for girls was undertaken in most schools. In some of the schools visited, the mission was impressed to note that girls had received prizes for fencing and other martial arts training.

#### ***Good Practices:***

The state has also implemented a policy that girls are free from any harassment/eve teasing from outsiders. Police patrolling parties are put in place outside the school premises at these times for security of the girls.

#### ***Recommendations:***

- *Special programs on girls and women's issues may be started targeting teachers, district level functionaries and SMDC members. The state may tie with women's organizations for starting these programs.*
- *The mission would like to urge the MHRD to consider setting up upgraded KGBVs in difficult blocks in border districts*

#### **B. Social Gaps: Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Muslim Minority**

The share of SC population is 28.9 % of the total population. The state has been making efforts to upgrade a good number of upper primary schools into secondary in SC dominated areas for providing SC children access to secondary education. The enrollment of SC children has increased in the last three years. The enrollment of SC children was 179669 in 2010-11, 217072 in 2011-12 and has increased to

230699 in 2012-13. In 2012-13 the state has upgraded 36 schools into secondary out of total 149 in SC dominated areas. Out of 81 schools, 17 are proposed for up gradation in SC dominated areas in the year 2013-14.

State officials informed the mission that the state offers five schemes to provide nominal financial support to SC/OBC children. These include state education welfare scheme for SC and OBC (up to 10<sup>th</sup>) in which Rs 40/month is being given to girls and Rs. 30/month to boys; a special scheme for SC girls which has a provision of Rs. 50 per month; *Vimukt Jaati* Scheme providing Rs. 40 per month to children belonging Vimukt castes; Free examination for SCs; 'Honhar Vidyarthi' scheme on result basis (scholarship to selected 6 brilliant students(3 boys and 3 girls) in each block. The mission felt that there is need for awareness generation among teachers and students regarding these schemes to help them avail of the same.

***Recommendations:***

- *There is need for more disaggregated data on the status of SC/ST/minority and girl students (in these categories) at the state level The mission recommends that the state mat tie up with a research organization or the Monitoring Institute assigned for SSA to prepare a data base on the students in these categories at the secondary level.*

**C. Children with Special Needs:**

The state reported that there have been efforts taken up for CWSN under the IEDC scheme but the mission was concerned to note that there was little or no appreciation of the special needs of CWSN children in the schools visited. While the state has 1.3% schools exclusively for CWSN, the regular secondary schools had not dynamic provision for in-class support of such children. Most schools had ramps constructed. However, in the interaction with teachers, the mission noted that there was no appreciation of CWSN issues. The state needs to take up identification drives for CWSN children in each school and orientation of teachers on special needs. The mission noted in a school in Taran Taran that there was a child with visual impairment who was made to sit at the last bench in the class. The teacher was unaware that the child had vision problems until the mission pointed it out.

***Recommendations:***

- *The mission recommends a special school to school drive to identify children with special needs especially those with hearing impairment, visual impairment, orthopedic disabilities, learning disabilities and multiple disabilities with support from relevant medical specialists.*
- *It is recommended that the state may tie up with a research institute working in the area of CWSN and with agencies like RCI to address this area.*
- *The mission recommends that the data on CWSN may be prepared for presentation to the second JRM of RMSA*

**Goal 3: All children retained in education system**

The major issue that the state faces is not one of drop outs but of large enrolments at the secondary level. An issue of concern that the JRM wishes to put on record is that teachers articulated the fact that they were wary of accepting students from elementary schools as they were expected to have low learning levels since RTE had mandated doing away with tests. The state has instituted a baseline assessment study at Class IX to understand the remedial teaching requirements of low-performing elementary pass-

outs. This has implication for the elementary sector which is the feeder to the secondary schools. The state articulated the request and asked that it be put on record that RTE policy of not testing students (especially doing away of annual examinations) may be revisited to ensure quality learning outcomes and for monitor teacher accountability for the results. This is necessary for the success of RMSA.

***Recommendations:***

- *The mission recommends that there may be a more holistic view taken of the sector with curricular linkages for improving the quality of elementary school achievement levels to ensure inflow of children with robust learning levels to the secondary level.*

**Goal 4: Education of Satisfactory Quality**

**Curricular Reform**

One of the objectives under the major goal of quality in RMSA is reviewing curriculum to meet the NCF, 2005 norms. Punjab is introducing NCERT textbooks taking the copyrights from the Council and translating these books into Punjabi. The state has implemented Mathematics textbooks (NCERT) in class IX in the session 2012-13. However, implementation of textbooks in other subject areas is still in the process. The mission felt that school teachers and even the principals of secondary schools are not informed about the NCF-2005 vision and perspectives wherein school is now being accepted as a space where knowledge is created and the child is seen as the central point of all strategies and activities.

The mission observed that the schools were full of charts on the walls of the classroom, plenty of models in laboratories such as mathematics and science laboratories; Computer and EDUSAT Lab, etc. However, the pedagogy being practiced was not found centering on the child. Textbook and teacher talk dominated approach is observed in most of the school visited. There is a need to transition the discourse more towards teaching learning rather than provision of materials.

The mission would like to emphasize that mere adoption of the NCERT textbooks will not change the classroom culture, if the teachers are not trained or oriented to be able to use these textbooks appropriately. It would be important for the state to engage with the authors of the NCF (2005)/NCERT textbooks to understand the principles and then develop their own teacher manuals and training strategies for this purpose.

The mission felt that Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) has not been implemented at the secondary stage. Principals and teachers of schools have not received any training on this aspect and are not aware of CCE perspectives.

**Teacher Availability**

The secondary stage teacher is teaching from classes 6-10 as per the state policy. Although, the PTR as reported in SEMIS is 14.07 and SCR is 37, the mission observed overcrowded classrooms in most of the schools visited. Teachers also informed that they were overburdened and found it difficult to engage children in experimentation and other activities due to overcrowded classrooms.

In spite of improved PTR ratio as reflected, there appears to be shortage of subject wise teachers at the secondary stage. This reflects a need for efficient subject wise appointment, redeployment and rationalization of teacher positions to ensure that the norms for PTR under RMSA are met in meaningful and real terms.

## **Teacher Training:**

RMSA has a provision for five days of in-service training per teacher, per year. In the year 2012-13 the state of Punjab has provided training to 6700 teachers and further training of 6700 teachers is in progress. Although state has also got approval for the training of 438 new teachers, 683 master trainers and 25 Key Resource Persons, no initiative has been taken by the state on this. The state has also to train 3640 headmasters in 2012-13 as per the approval.

At the secondary stage generally subject –specific training is being provided by the state. The mission observed subject specific modules in mathematics, science activity book and a module for generic general skill developed by the state in collaboration with American India Foundation (NGO). The mission appreciates the efforts of the state in providing teacher support material to teachers receiving training. However, the modules are content dominated. Describing pedagogy in mechanical manner, these modules do not incorporate concerns related to gender, marginalised group, Children with Special Needs, art, health and work. Perspectives about child, school, teaching-learning and evaluation have not found space in these modules. There is a need to critically review these modules in view of implementation of NCERT textbooks in the state.

With regard to training of headmasters and teachers the mission found that vision of child, school and teaching- learning is not being taken care of. The content of the module is delivered in isolation from the student's need.

Punjab has registered the mobile numbers of every single teacher and other school staff and pay their mobile bills. Networking with teachers through mobile technology may be utilized not only to run school efficiently but also for sharing curricular and pedagogical issues.

## **Academic Support and Monitoring Systems**

The mission notes with concern that a mechanism for academic support to teachers from district level institutions needs to be put in place. Although the state informed that inspection teams regularly visits schools and get feedback, yet much efforts are needed on academic support and monitoring aspects.

### **Classroom practices**

The mission observed secondary classes in almost all the schools visited and found that teacher talk dominates the classroom. Students do not get an opportunity to share their views and questions. Hands on experiences are not given to students even though necessary material is available. The classes where children were using computer were being conducted in a mechanical manner. Learning was designed in linear manner. Students' engagement with themes was found missing in the classrooms.

**Pupil Assessment:** The state Board exams of the last three years showed that in 88.31% children from government schools and 74.07% from private schools passed the Punjab board exams taking the total pass percentage to 84.68%. In 2010, the total was 77.94% (81.33% for government schools and 66.84% for private) , in 2011, the pass percentage was 64.32%, (6.73% for government schools and 50.44% for private schools). The government schools have shown better trends than private schools. *However, overall, a decreasing trend in the pass percentage noted is a matter of concern and the state may need to pay special attention to quality improvement processes especially teacher training and institutional reform processes.*

**Student learning levels:**

Basic concepts in science and mathematics were found to be weak in students. Communication skills as well as understanding in Hindi language were satisfactory, considering that the students were from remote rural areas.

**Good Practices:**

Punjab has undertaken two major programs in 2012-13. One is PTA meeting for all the schools in Punjab on the same date deputing its eighty four functionaries to visit the entire district on this date and interact with parents and students. Majority of parents invited attended these meetings. A variety of malpractices in the school system were identified. Children specially girls shared their experiences of sex abuse if any and discussed their problems related to subjects and health. The second program was an anti-drug campaign in all the districts where children and teachers together made the community aware of the disadvantages of drug abuse through mass marches with slogans.

**Recommendations:**

- *The Mission recommends perspective building programs for secondary stage teachers and educational administrators on CCE in view of bringing examination reform at this stage.*
- *The Mission strongly recommends that all districts facing teacher shortages in schools may carefully assess the actual PTR/SCR situation at the classroom level and take up teacher rationalization processes effectively to address the uneven distribution of teachers, despite the overall PTR appearing to be low as per prescribed norms.*
- *The mission recommends that given diverse contexts and needs of teachers a variety of training modules and models (including that for leadership training for Principals) may be developed which could be offered to the districts to choose from as per their needs with institutional collaboration with SCERT/NCERT/NUEPA for orientation/training for the various stakeholders at the secondary stage.*
- *With improved availability of ICT facilities, more innovative approaches may be adopted for interactive and participatory teacher training through use of audio-visual media, computer aided learning, internet etc. These need to be however validated for academic appropriateness and validity of content.*
- *The mission recommends that state need to make effort in assessing learning levels of students in class IX and design teaching –learning process as per their need.*

**A. Program Management**

Punjab has constituted its Society for the implementation of *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* which has been registered under Societies Registration Act 1860 in the State of Punjab and was notified as a Society on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2009. It has been named the *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* Authority, Punjab. RMSA Punjab has constituted its General Body (headed by the Chief Minister) and the Executive Committee (headed by the Chief Secretary) with the requisite members.

GOI releases to the state are maintained in a separate bank account of RMSAA Punjab. Funds are received from GOI in two tranches. GOI releases funds to the state electronically and a significant number of districts further electronically release the funds to implementing agencies. The mission was informed that the state uses Manual for Financial Management and Procurement (FMP) for RMSA. Districts are authorized to incur expenditure with approval from the executive body in accordance with the FMP manual. The authorized auditor appointed by the Society audits the annual expenditure. The

utilization certificate then sent to the MHRD by the state governing council for further release. The district maintains the accounts in a double entry system.

The mission found that the state has been using the FMP manual for planning and financial issues. Planning teams are aware of the manual and have received training on the use of the Manual from TSG, MHRD. During interactions it emerged that the state plans its AWPB as per this manual and the RMSA framework. Some of the school Principals were aware of the manual and were undertaking fund allocation as per the Manual and the instruction of district core team members. However, many school Principals were completely unaware of the Manual and norms like minor and major repair grants. This was especially true for regular secondary schools that were not part of the strengthening or upgradation list.

The state has recruited 149 personnel for RMSA and 295 are yet to be recruited. The Finance department is headed by the Joint Controller (F&A). At the state level, out of the 6 positions sanctioned for FM, 4 have been filled up. At the district level, the situation is a matter of concern. Out of the 25 sanctioned positions, the 20 positions have been filled in. The position of 2 Audit staff has not been filled up. This is because the MMR funds are too little for the state to hire FM staff. At the State Project office, out of the 35 total sanctioned positions, 29 have been filled up.

As of September 2012, against a release of Rs. 7697.36 lacs, Rs. 5971.03 lacs were released to districts under the non-recurring grants. Under recurring grants, against a release of Rs.1546.96 lacs, the state released Rs, 764.51 lacs to the districts. There was unspent balance of Rs. 782.45 lacs. The state needs to take up filling up of vacant positions at the earliest.

The state informed that program implementation may become easier if there is a block level structure available for more effective implementation. The BEO/BRCC could take up functions under RMSA. GOI may consider the request of the state, as the gap between the school and the district in many large districts inhibits project implementation.

### ***Community Mobilization and Management***

SMDCs were found to be playing an important role as far as civil work and availability of other necessary physical resources are concerned. However the mission felt that there was a need for all SMDCs to be made aware of the norms of RMSA so that they are able to avail of the funding sources effectively and can plan for the same. It is important for the state to orient the SMDCs on the fact that monitoring of academic activities falls within their purview.

### ***Recommendations:***

- *Filling up of all vacant positions especially those in the FM category*
- *Greater coordination between the MHRD and the state government may be undertaken to ensure that funds are released on time so that the state is able to use the releases in the same financial year.*
- *The mission recommends that MHRD may consider delinking staff salary from MMR for sustainability and retention of project staff.*
- *The MHRD may consider collaboration with existing block level institutions for RMSA capacity building and academic coordination.*

### ***JRM Field Visit***

#### **Members**

1. Ms Shabnam Sinha. (Member of World Bank)
2. Ms Ranjana Arora (Member of GOI)
3. Ms Surekha Thakur ASPD (Civil Work, Govt of Punjab),
4. Mr. R.M. Goyal Govt of Punjab

#### **Field Visit Itinerary**

##### **15.01.2013**

- Mission Briefing meeting at Punjab Bhavan with Mr. K S Pannu, SPD, RMSA and Director General School and RMSA team
- Meeting with Principal Secretary, Education, Mr. Ashok Kumar Gupta,
- Travel from Chandigarh to Amritsar

##### **16.10.2013:**

JRM District Visit to Amritsar

##### **17.10.2013:**

JRM visit to three districts in two teams:

1. Ferozepur and Muktsar
2. Taran Taran

##### **18.01.2013:**

- JRM Wrap Up meeting with Mr. K S Pannu, SPD, RMSA and Director General School and RMSA team
- JRM departure to New Delhi