# Exploring how gender and equity issues are addressed in the evaluation and review processes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

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# Executive Summary

Almost all the stakeholders would agree that India has made significant progress in the field of elementary education. Along with that, there is also a widespread acknowledgment that there are persistent social, economic and gender gaps in achieving universal elementary education (UEE). In order to understand how GOI has been tracking achievements of gender and equity goals in elementary education, this desk review was conceptualized with a particular focus on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

In 2001, the Government of India (GOI) had launched Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan with the specific purpose of achieving universal elementary education. One of the main goals of SSA was to bridge gender and social gaps at primary education level by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010. While SSA program is primarily financed by the Government of India, three external Development Partners (DP) also contribute funds towards SSA, namely World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU). Being a partnership program, a six monthly review, known as the Joint Review Mission (JRM), is carried out by the GOI and DP. This study is a review of 17 SSA JRM reports and research studies commissioned under SSA from 2004 to early 2013. The main purpose of this study was to review how gender and equity goals have been tracked and addressed by the government and donor partners through the JRM processes of SSA. In addition, following questions have also been explored in this study:

- How is equity and gender understood within SSA framework?
- Is the focus of JRM on input variables, process indicators and/or output indicators?
- To what extent does it include teaching-learning process and curriculum related issues?
- Does it also look at teacher deployment, teacher attitude and practices, and teacher training? If yes, in what ways?
- Is the experience of schooling taken into consideration? In particular, issues of caste/community based inclusion and exclusion; child abuse (physical, emotional, sexual); and corporal punishment?

- What has been various gender related issues that have been flagged in SSA JRM and recommendations made over the years?

**Main observations made in SSA JRM**

SSA JRM processes have been extremely successful in highlighting positive changes that have taken place in the field of education under SSA program. There has been a steady increase in the literacy rates of both male and female and there has been an overall increase in the enrolment of girls and children from SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities. Along with enrolment, impressive progress has also been made to decrease the number of OOSC and drop outs, and to improve school infrastructure and facilities. Many schemes have been introduced to increase school enrolment and retention of students such as Mid-Day Meal scheme, free textbooks, uniforms and bi-cycles to students, bridge and remedial courses for OOSC, programs like KGBVs and NPEGEL to increase enrolment among girls, and many more. More teachers are getting hired including female teachers, new teaching methodologies are being adopted, and efforts are being made to increase the role of community and SMCs in the overall management of schools.

Since 2005, JRM reports have also raised a number of issues. For example, children belonging to migrating families and urban poor have been hardest to reach and continue to remain the most challenging group. JRM have also reported a steady increase in the private school enrolment and decline in government school enrolment. This phenomenon has been noticed even in backward areas. Number of single teacher schools continues to remain high and hence, multi-grade classrooms are a common sight in many blocks and districts. It has also been noticed that traditional methods of teaching are largely used in classrooms and very little time is being spent on child-centric activities. On several occasions, JRM reports have raised the issue of poor content of teacher training programs and a lack of focus on gender and equity issues in these training programs.

However, even though JRM mechanism is valuable in providing periodic feedback to the government and donor partners, it has done little to enhance our understanding of how and under what circumstances do children not only attend school but learn. In addition, JRM reports leave many questions unanswered, such as:

- Who are learning, what are they learning and at what level they are;
- Who do not have access to upper primary schools and why;
- Reasons for low learning levels of children in different circumstances and different kinds of schools;
- What systems are in place to measure teacher accountability and teacher attitude / practices in the classroom;
- Composition and qualification of teachers in remote and tribal areas;
- Quality of school infrastructure and facilities in remote and tribal areas;
- What is the behaviour of teacher towards students from various social and economic background and CWSN;
- How exclusionary or discriminatory practises towards children and women teachers are being addresses by schools; and
- Within all of the above, how gender relations, stereotypes and prejudices play out?

**Main areas of concern**

It has been long established that gender, social and economic status has a strong influence on the education level of a child. A child is at a greater disadvantage if he/she is living in rural areas and belongs to a poor family. This situation becomes worse if a child is a girl and especially an older girl. Therefore, addressing gender and social equity issues in education requires a framework that can capture heterogeneous gendered realities and multiple disadvantages, which are influenced by factors such as location (rural, urban, remote, tribal etc.), identity (caste, cultural, religion, occupation), socio-economic status of the family, which type of schools (government or private) children are enrolled in, ability and disability and within all this, gender relations.

All these factors intermesh with each other and not only influence formal access to schools but more importantly, how children are treated inside the school, their ability to participate actively in school activities, ability to learn in school and the kind of support they get or do not get at home and within their community. Consequently, it would be fair to say that achieving equity goals in education requires work simultaneously on several fronts at the same time and cannot be one-dimensional. Unfortunately, the biggest draw back of JRM mechanism is that

location, social–economic situation, caste/community, gender and other dimensions of equity have been discussed and tracked separately. This is partly due to limited understanding and articulation of equity under SSA. To give an example, gender has been equated with girls and boys have been completely excluded from the discussion.

JRM reports are also weak when it comes to making connections between learning achievement with various socio-economic factors such as occupation, family income, caste, religion, and education level of parents. For example, first generation learners are at a greater disadvantage due to limited support in schoolwork at home. Likewise, discussion on CWSN, urban poor and children belonging to migrant families remains superficial. We know very little about this group or who constitutes this group. Finally, there is absolutely no discussion on the issues of street children, children with HIV/AIDS, child labourers (full time, seasonal or part-time), children living in areas of conflict or children affected by war or natural disaster and those who have been a victim of physical, mental and sexual abuse.

A main reason for the lack of in-depth analysis of various indicators in JRM reports is mainly due to the methodology adopted. Field visits, which are a part of every alternate JRM, include school level interaction. However, most school visits are a planned exercise and schools are informed about the visit well in advance. Another important drawback is that JRM is mostly data driven. There is more emphasis on input indicators. Implementation processes and outcomes do not receive adequate attention. Additionally, JRM relies mainly on 3 sources of data – DISE, SES and NAS. There is reluctance on the part of the government to look at data from other sources such as independent studies and reports. In fact, on many occasions, studies, commissioned by SSA and JRM, have not been taken referred to in main JRM reports.

All this makes the JRM mechanism less than satisfactory in tracking equity and gender issues. While the JRM processes have been extremely valuable to the donor partners in generating periodic reports, it has not facilitated an in-depth understanding of persisting inequalities. In particular, it does not throw light on how location, social identity, economic situation, gender and ability intermesh to reinforce multiple disadvantages. Equally, it does not help policy makers, administrators and the larger education community to understand why our school system is not able to

neutralize multiple disadvantages and give all children an equal opportunity to learn and to develop as confident citizens.

**Recommendation**

A ten-day rapid mission does not provide enough time to discuss in-depth specific issues and concerns that influences gender and equity issues. Hence, in our report we have made the following recommendations:

1. JRM methodology could draw upon and build on the insights provided by qualitative and quantitative empirical research. Equally, the JRM process needs to give equal weightage to 'official' research studies commissioned by SSA and independent research studies;
2. An annual mission of longer duration could result in in-depth analysis of various issues;
3. These annual in-depth missions could involve people who are working directly with schools, teachers and communities (for e.g. researchers or NGOs) and also make room for international education community;
4. Finally, each JRM could focus on a few critical questions or themes and work towards unravelling all dimensions.

We do acknowledge that large-scale programs are difficult to review. Hence, in order to enrich the process, each JRM should focus on specific issues or questions and also bring together a larger team that could spent at least two-weeks in 10-12 states during each mission. In addition to that, India has a large and rich pool of researchers, practitioners and administrators and also people who are actively engaged in issues related to social equity and gender justice. Reaching across disciplines and involving people who can bring a feminist and equity perspective would enrich the whole process.

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| ABL: | Activity Based Learning |
| AIE: | Alternative and Innovative Education |
| ASER: | Annual Status of Education Report |
| AWPB: | Annual Work Plan and Budget |
| BRC: | Block Resource Centre |
| CAL: | Computer Aided Learning |
| CCE: | Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation |
| CRC: | Cluster Resource Centre |
| CWSN: | Children With Special Needs |
| DFID: | Department for International Development |
| DIET: | District Institutes of Education and Training |
| DISE: | District Information System of Education |
| DP: | Development Partners |
| DPEP: | District Primary Education Program |
| EdCIL: | Educational Consultants India Limited |
| EFA: | Education for All |
| EGS: | Education Guarantee Scheme |
| EI: | Education Initiatives |
| GER: | Gross Enrolment Ratio |
| GOI: | Government of India |
| GPI: | Gender Parity Index |
| IDRC: | International Development Research Centre |
| JRM: | Joint Review Mission |
| KGBV: | Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhalaya |
| LEP: | Learning Enhancement Program |
| MHRD: | Ministry of Human Resource Development |
| MI: | Monitoring Institutions |
| NAS: | National Achievement Survey |
| NCERT: | National Council of Educational Research and Training |
| NCF: | National Curriculum Framework |
| NSS: | National Sample Survey |
| NSSO: | National Sample Survey Organization |
| NPEGEL: | National Program for Education of Girls at Elementary Level |
| NUEPA: | National University of Educational Planning & Administration |
| OOSC: | Out of School Children |
| PAB: | Project Approval Board |
| PS: | Primary School |
| PTR: | Pupil Teacher Ratio |
| RTE: | Right to Education |
| SC: | Schedule Caste |
| SCR: | Student Classroom Ratio |
| SES: | School Education Statistics |
| SMC: | School Management Committee |
| SSA: | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan |
| ST: | Schedule Tribe |
| STC: | Special Training Centres |
| TLM: | Teaching Learning Material |
| TSG: | Technical Support Group |
| UPS: | Upper Primary School |
| VER: | Village Education Register |

# Section 1: The backdrop

It is now widely acknowledged that India has made significant progress in the field of school education in the last sixty-six years. In 1951, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was 42.6 (boys - 60.6, girls - 24.8) at primary level and the percentage of girls enrolled in primary schools was mere 28.1%. We have come a long way since then. In 2011, GER was 116 (115.4 for boys and 116.7 for girls) at primary level (SES, 2007; GOI, 2012). Equally significant is that independent non-governmental sources also report that close to 96% of children between 6 to 11 years are enrolled in school (ASER, 2013) and that close to 95% of children can access a primary school within 1 km distance. Furthermore, since 2004, "pupil teacher ratios have fallen by nearly 20% (from 47.4 to 39.8); the fraction of schools with toilets and electricity has more than doubled (from 40% to 84% for toilets and 20% to 45% for electricity); the fraction of schools with functioning midday meal programme has nearly quadrupled (from 21% to 79%); and the overall index of school infrastructure has improved by 0.9 standard deviation (relative to the distribution of the school infrastructure index in 2003)" (Muralidharan, 2013). Likewise, the National Sample Survey (NSS), a periodic survey conducted by the Indian government also reveals a positive trend, "the overall proportion of 6-10 year olds not attending school has declined from around 28% in 1993-94 to around 8% in 2009-10. While the proportion of 6-10 years boys declined from 23% to 7% during the same period, the decline has been most significant among girls - from 34% to 9% in a period of 15 years. The gender gap between boys and girls has declined from around 11% in 1993-94 to around 2% in 2009-10. Similarly, in the 11-13 years age group, the gender gaps in the proportion of children not attending was around 17 percentage points in 1993-94 which has now declined to around 2% in 2009-10" (Sankar, 2013 forthcoming).

Yet, despite impressive gains in enrolment rates and formal access to school within walking distance, there is a sense of disquiet about what these figures actually mean. The last ten years have thrown up many evidences of poor learning outcomes across the country (Desai et all, 2010; ASER Reports, 2005 to 2013; Educational Initiatives, 2009; Probe Revisited, 2006; Bhattacharjea, Wadhwa & Banerji, 2011; Jhingran, 2011; Mukherji & Walton, 2012; Muralidharan, 2013). Contradictory information on prevalence of child labour and the real extent of children who are out of school adds to prevailing scepticism about India's achievement. Daily press reports of domestic

child labour (mainly girls), or bonded child workers (mainly boys) in shops and roadside eateries, small factories and sweat shops adds to this sense of scepticism. In addition, the inability of our education system to ensure that teachers actually attend school and teach for the prescribed time remains a huge challenge. In fact, the situation remains particularly worse for girls and children from socially disadvantaged communities who attend government schools. Hence, in order to understand how GOI has been tracking achievements of gender and equity goals in elementary education, this desk review was conceptualized with a particular focus on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Universal Elementary Education).

## Evolution of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

After independence, the Government of India (GOI) initiated several policies to address various issues in the field of education. National Policy of Education (1986) was an important turning point followed by the Jomtien declaration on 'Education for All' (EFA) in 1990[1]. During this period, the government collaborated with select international donors and launched a number of basic education projects in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. In 1994, the Government of India launched the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP – see Annexure 1) covering most states in India. After the Dakar declaration in 2000, Government of India formulated a National Plan of Action for EFA, which was finalised in 2002. This was reviewed in 2005-06 and strategies were reformulated for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan in 2007 and Twelfth Five-Year Plan in 2011 (GOI, 2008)

In 2001, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) the flagship programme to achieve universal elementary education was launched with the following objectives (GOI, 2002):

i. All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'to School' camp by 2003;
ii. All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007;
iii. All children complete eight years of schooling by 2010;
iv. Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life;
v. Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010;
vi. Universal retention by 2010.

[1] http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/en-conf/Jomtien%20Declaration%20eng.shtm

SSA program is also funded by the government, along with significant contributions from the World Bank, DFID and the Delegation of the European Union. With the introduction of SSA, all smaller elementary education projects, state-specific initiatives and joint UN system projects were merged into SSA. By 2003, this program emerged as the umbrella program of the government in elementary education. In 2010, the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) 2009 came into effect. This legislation generated considerable momentum within the government and in civil society. Thirty-two States and Union Territories of India have incorporated the Act into the state legislative framework and have adopted the norms prepared by GOI. The SSA framework was harmonised with RTE and the government started bringing out an annual status of implementation of RTE.

## This study

Government of India launched Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2001, with the specific purpose of achieving universal elementary education. The Government of India primarily finances SSA program and three external Development Partners contribute funds to the GOI resource pool for SSA. Being a partnership program, a six monthly review is carried out by the GOI and DP, known as the Joint Review Mission (see Box 1).

**Box 1: Evolution of JRM mechanism**

Joint Review Mission emerged in 1994 in the District Primary Education Project of the Government of India. It was designed as a periodic evaluation mechanism in which the Development Partners (DPs) consisting of the World Bank, The European Commission, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), UNICEF and the Royal Government of the Netherlands nominated experts to review progress of DPEP, along side an equal number of experts nominated by MHRD, GOI. This team would review progress made towards achieving the goals of DPEP by reviewing the data base of the program (DISE and SES), research studies commissioned by the government and DPs, independent research studies done in the last one year and progress reports presented by GOI and the state governments. The JRM team was divided into eight state teams and each team would visit one of the eight states, wherein they would interact with the state government, visited couple of districts and held discussions with state level institutions.

In 2001, GOI decided to phase out DPEP and introduced the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Initially the SSA program was fully funded by GOI. However, by 2004 three DPs were invited to participate, namely The World Bank, DFID and Delegation of the European Union. In 2005, SSA adopted the JRM mechanism. Like the DPEP JRM, SSA JRM also included equal number of nominees from both DPs and GOI. However, one significant change was introduced in the SSA JRM mechanism. SSA JRM is a six monthly exercise alternating between a field based review and a desk review of data and reports.

Since its first mission in 2005, 17 Joint Review Missions have been held till January 2013. SSA JRMs are held twice a year, in the months of January and July. In January, members of the mission visit select few states and in July, a desk review is undertaken. Each JRM consists of members from both GOI and DP and is alternatively led by one of them. For each JRM, the members decide Terms of Reference and a checklist is prepared, which basically includes a list of items, under each goal, that needs to be reviewed by the members.

At this point, it is important to note that SSA has various mechanisms for concurrent and periodic monitoring. A Project Approval Board (PAB) reviews progress and approves annual SSA plans that are presented by the State Governments. This internal GOI mechanism serves as a tool for GOI to keep track of progress and also be apprised of problems and concerns at the state level. In addition, GOI has also nominated recognised research institutions in 28 states to monitor progress on the ground. The reports of the Monitoring Institutions (MI) are taken into consideration when annual work-plan and budget (AWPB) is approved. This is an internal GOI mechanism to get periodic feedback on the status of implementation of SSA. However, PAB and AWPB are not positioned as 'evaluation process' and are essentially viewed as internal monitoring mechanisms of GOI. On the other hand, SSA JRM is regarded as an intense monitoring and evaluation mechanism. In fact, different government departments and independent organizations such as Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Teacher Education (CSSTE), Mahila Samakhya Programme of GOI, the Secondary Education Mission of the government (Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan) and Pratham have adapted the SSA JRM mechanism.

## Objective of this study

This desk review was conceptualized with the purpose of systematically scanning SSA JRM reports (from 2005 to 2013), research and case studies commissioned by SSA during the same period in order to understand how gender and equity goals have been tracked and addressed in JRM reports. As discussed in the preceding section, gender and equity (social, economic, location) have been taken together in this study. This is because gender relations are intermeshed with social and economic inequity and location exerts a strong influence on both (see Annexure 2 on Education and Equity). Another aim of this study is to track the recommendations made in each SSA JRM and action taken report based on these recommendations. Keeping this in mind, the main objectives of this study are as follows:

- How the gender and equity goals of SSA understood are monitored?
- Is the focus of on input indicators, implementation processes and / or output indicators?
- To what extend have classroom practices, teaching-learning process and curriculum related issues addressed from a gender and equity perspective?
- To what extent have issues related to teacher deployment, teacher attitude and practices, and teacher training addressed from a gender and equity perspective?
- Has the everyday experience of schooling of children taken into consideration?
- What have been various gender related issues that have been flagged in SSA JRM?
- In what ways does it addresses issues of caste/community based discrimination and inclusion/exclusion in various school activities and classroom processes?
- In what ways have abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) and corporal punishment been addressed in JRMs?

In addition to the above questions, the review process also looked at JRM processes that influence how gender and equity are tracked, namely:

a. On what basis states, to be visited, are selected;
b. What happens during the school visit; what is observed and not observed;
c. Who decides what data should be reviewed and how data from various sources are analysed and reviewed;
d. To what extent studies commissioned by SSA and other independent research studies are discussed;

The objective of this study was formulated to understand in what ways the JRM process has been able to assess whether SSA have been able to reach the equity objectives that were set in 2001 including introducing strategies specifically designed to improve the participation of the most disadvantaged in education. This inquiry is guided by the understanding that bridging gender and equity gaps is an overarching goal of SSA.

## How SSA JRM is organised

Since, SSA was primarily conceptualized by MHRD, limited numbers of donor partners were invited to be on board by the government. In addition, government is the main funding agency for SSA program and financial contribution by donor partners is very small for this program. As a result, the intensity of involvement of donor partners has been considerably less and in the last few years (especially since 2010), some donor partners have diversified their funding to include secondary education (Key Informant Interviews 2013).

Since the first SSA JRM in January 2005, seventeen Joint Review Missions have been held till January 2013. They are held twice a year, in the months of January and July. In January, members of the mission visit select few states and in July, desk review is undertaken. Each JRM consists of members from both GOI and DP and is alternatively led by one of them. For each JRM, team members decide Terms of Reference and a checklist is prepared, which basically includes a list of items, under each goal, that needs to be reviewed by the members. Many key informants shared that the terms of reference and data/information sources to be used by the JRM team is primarily decided by MHRD, GOI.

Some of our key informant interviewees revealed that JRM is the only mechanism through which the India offices of donors partner convey information on progress made to their headquarters. Given that all donor partners actively participate in the JRM missions, alongside independent experts and GOI nominees, JRM reports are taken seriously. Donor agencies also believe that the JRM mechanism brings in some degree of rigour in periodic monitoring and evaluation processes. A significant amount of data and information is generated and this is carefully scrutinised by the JRM missions. Equally significant is that the JRM recommends in-depth research studies, some of which are commissioned by the government and some by the donor partners through the technical assistance fund, and findings of these studies are supposedly presented in the JRM. Several informants also feel that SSA JRM is a good opportunity to highlight and showcase good initiatives and practices.

As already stated, January missions are field-based mission. MHRD and the donor partners identify sets of states to be visited. Usually the JRM team visits at least 2 states from south of India, one state from North East, along with central Indian states

like UP and Bihar and some states from the West and the North. In quantitative terms, there are 8 states that get 80% of the SSA funding and therefore, these states are visited more frequently. Table 1.1 lists key states that have been visited more often during the field visits. One of the key informants from the government shared that states to be visited during field-visit are usually decided by the MHRD. Within each states, districts to be visited are chosen by the state government. During field visits, state governments make a presentation to the team, which is followed by 2 days of school visits and 2 days of report writing. School visits are usually planned in advance. However, there have been instances wherein JRM team have visited schools that have not been in the itinerary (for e.g. 2012 mission in Gujarat). During interviews, one informant shared that,

> "it is normally a planned exercise and since I have been a part of this, I can say that it is easier to say that you can go at random and go and visit any school. States are very open on that. But how do you do that? You have a very limited time, you don't know the geography of the area and so you have to be depended on the state. And also, the states know that certain district would be covered during a JRM, so they alert the whole district. It becomes almost impossible to venture out on your own because there is no time and it is a very tight schedule".

**Table 1.1: States mostly covered in JRM field visits**

| States | JRM field visits | Number of times visited |
|---|---|---|
| Andhra Pradesh | 3rd, 5th, 13th, 17th | 4 |
| Bihar | 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th | 6 |
| Chhattisgarh | 3rd, 7th, 11th, 15th | 4 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 1st, 5th, 9th, 11th, 13th | 5 |
| Maharashtra | 1st, 7th, 13th, 17th | 4 |
| Rajasthan | 3rd, 7th, 11th, 15th | 4 |
| Tamil Nadu | 1st, 7th, 11th, 15th | 4 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 1st, 3rd, 5th, 9th, 13th, 17th | 6 |
| West Bengal | 1st, 3rd, 7th, 9th, 11th, 15th | 6 |

## Another context - Engendering policy through evaluation:

The International Development Research Centre is a Canada based organization that supports various research and evaluation programs in various developing countries (IDRC, 2013[2]). One of their latest project is "Engendering policy through evaluation: Uncovering exclusion and challenging inequities in India". The objective of this

[2] http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Regions/Asia/Pages/ProjectDetails.aspx?ProjectNumber=106427

project is to enable researchers to use gender sensitive approaches in order to understand how gender issues are being addressed through various programs and policies in India. This project is jointly supported by IDRC, New Delhi and Ford Foundation, New Delhi and is anchored by the Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi. A number of meta-evaluations and research on evaluations are being supported under this project, namely:

- Meta Evaluation of MGNREGA from a gender lens;
- Research project on State Evaluation and Accountability Mechanisms from the Perspective of Feminist, Gender and Equity criteria;
- A comparative research project on Evaluations Conducted on the Irrigation Sector in Maharashtra; and
- A reflective research project on Applied Evaluation Approaches through a feminist lens.

It is hoped that the insights gained from a number of meta-evaluations and research on evaluation would enrich our understanding of evaluation processes from a feminist lens.

## Limitations of this study

There were a few of limitations to this study:

a. In the following sections, we have commented that findings of many research studies, commissioned by SSA and donor partners, were not shared in the JRM reports. This is partly due to the fact that there was no way to ascertain which research studies/documents were shared and discussed during JRM meetings. It could be possible that some of these studies were discussed during meetings but their findings were not included in the final national report.
b. Our findings are largely based on the national reports. During the review process, all state reports were not available to us. Consequently, our findings focuses, to a great extent, on the 17 Aide memoires.
c. Finally, we don't know to what extent recommendations made in JRM reports are received by different states and what measures have been undertaken by each states to bridge gender and equity gaps in schools. We were informed that several states take state level de-briefing meeting recommendations very seriously. This may or may not be reflected either in the national action taken report or the national aide memoire.

## Process of review

1. As a first step, all JRM reports (all 17 JRM Aide memoire and all available state reports) were scanned. We then developed a matrix for meta-analysis and entered key information from the JRM reports (Table 1.2). This formed the base document for analysis. A summary of the meta-analysis done is given in Table 1b below (See Annexure 4 for analysis on access, learning & teaching).
2. We then reviewed various research studies commissioned by SSA and tried to ascertain how findings of these research studies were received in the JRM.
3. We also reviewed independent studies and surveys done on SSA or on elementary education in the last 10 years (from 2003 to 2013) in order to ascertain how the findings or insights gained from these studies were received in the JRM.
4. Finally, we conducted key informant interviews with people working in DPs and those who had participated in more than 4 JRMs. It is important to note that several members of the DPs and GOI did not agree to be interviewed. Only 12 current and past members agreed to be interviewed on the condition of anonymity. During the interviews, most of then specifically requested that they do not want to be quoted in the report.

**Table 1.2: What is discussed and what is missing in JRM reports**

| | All children | Gender (Boys/Girls) | Social group (SC/ST/Muslim) | Location (Urban/Poor) | CWSN (general) | Children from migrant families | Urban poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Enrolment** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | Discussed | Discussed but no data given | Discussed but no data given |
| **OOSC** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | Limited discussion | Limited discussion |
| **Drop out rates** | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Attendance** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Retention** | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | No discussion | Referred occasionally | Referred occasionally | Referred occasionally |
| **Transition from PS to UPS** | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Completion rate** | Referred occasionally | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Govt. vs private school** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Drinking water** | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Toilet** | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Ramp** | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Learning levels** | Discussed | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | Mentioned once | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Special training centers** | Discussed | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **Bridge courses** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **Residential schools** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **PTR** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Multi-grade schools** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Single teacher schools** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Availability of teachers** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Type of teachers (regular/para)** | Only overall data has been given | | | | | | |
| **Female teachers** | Data on total no. of female teachers is given occasionally; Low female teacher ratio in remote, tribal areas has been discussed only a couple of times | | | | | | |
| **Teacher qualification** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Referred occasionally | No discussion | No discussion |

# Section 2: Gender and equity in SSA JRM

## Indicators used in SSA JRM reports

One of the main goals of SSA is to achieve universal elementary education by bridging gender and social disparities. To achieve this goal, SSA program has focused on various input based, process based and outcome-based indicators (Table 2.1). This section gives an overview of the indicators used in JRM reports to discuss various gender and equity related issues.

**Table 2.1: Input, Process & Outcome based indicators**

| Input based indicators | Process based indicators | Outcome based indicators |
|---|---|---|
| **Enrolment**<br>• Data is mainly disaggregated by gender, social group, CWSN, location (urban/rural – sometimes), govt. vs. private school (occasionally)<br>• Information on innovation strategies to improve enrolment<br>**Attendance**<br>• Data is mainly disaggregated by PS & UPS, grade (sometimes), state (sometimes).<br>**Incentives, to increase enrolment**<br>• Free textbooks<br>• Free uniforms<br>• Bicycles to girls<br>• Aids and appliances to CWSNs<br>• Mid Day Meals (occasionally discussed)<br>**Interventions/programs introduced for girls and marginalized groups**<br>• KGBV & NPEGEL for girls;<br>• EGS (now discontinued) & AIE centres for remote areas;<br>• Residential schools for Tribals/Dalit;<br>• Madrasas for Muslims;<br>• Residential schools<br>• Bridge courses and remedial classes<br>• Special training centres | **PTR**<br>• Data is disaggregated by PS & UPS; districts (sometimes)<br>**Pedagogy**<br>• ABL methodology<br>• TLM<br>• CAL<br>**Teacher effectiveness**<br>• Teacher training<br>• Training for special educators<br>• Challenges of multi-grade classroom, single teacher schools<br>• Time on task<br>**Curriculum & textbooks**<br>• Bi-lingual textbooks esp. in Urdu and tribal languages<br>• Inclusion of gender issues in curriculum<br>• Alignment of curriculum acc. to NCF framework<br>**Classroom processes**<br>• Inclusion/exclusion of students in both school and classrooms (occasional reference)<br>**SMC**<br>• Roles and responsibilities of SMC members | **OOSC – data is disaggregate by**<br>• Gender<br>• Social group<br>• Migrants and urban poor (sometimes)<br>• CWSN (occasionally)<br>• Location (rural/urban)<br>**Retention rate – data is disaggregate by**<br>• Grade<br>• Gender<br>• Social group (occasionally)<br>**Drop out rate - data is disaggregate by**<br>• Grade<br>• Gender<br>• Social group (occasionally)<br>**Transition rate - data is disaggregate by**<br>• PS to UPS<br>• Grade<br>• Gender<br>• Social group (occasionally)<br>**Completion rate**<br>• Data is disaggregated by PS & UPS<br>**Learning levels**<br>• Information sometimes include learning levels by gender and social |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **School infrastructure & civil works**<br>• No. of schools & classrooms sanctioned & constructed<br>• Toilet facilities (within it for girls and CWSN)<br>• Drinking water facilities<br>• Ramps for CWSN<br>• Playground & boundary wall (occasionally)<br>• Blackboard & libraries (sporadically)<br>• Availability of land<br>**Teacher recruitment – data is disaggregated by**<br>• Gender (sometimes)<br>• PS & UPS (occasionally)<br>**School Management committee**<br>• Structure of SMC<br>**Finance**<br>• Mainly on utilization of funds | **BRCs & CRCs**<br>• Capacity building and training | group |

## Data sources used by SSA JRM

While the number of indicators tracked in SSA JRM is fairly exhaustive, it is important to note that the JRM process relies mainly on data from District Information System of Education (DISE). Apart from DISE, some missions refer to Selected Educational Statistics / School Education Statistics (SES) of MHRD, GOI and National Sample Survey (NSS). During field visits, team members, sometimes, also look at the data generated by Village Education Register (VER).

1. DISE was initiated in 1994 (under DPEP) and it collects district-wise data on indicators such as - number of schools, student-classroom ratio (SCR), pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), enrolment at different levels and in all grades (this disaggregated by social group and gender), average repetition and drop out rates, retention and completion rates, data on under-age and over-age children, number of single teacher schools, number of female teachers, data on school facilities such as drinking water, toilets, boundary wall etc. Most child-related and teacher-related data is disaggregated by social group, gender and rural / urban. However, some data (for example, data on CWSN or contract teachers) is not always disaggregated.

2. Select Educational Statistics (SES) or now known as School Education Statistics (SES) is an annual publication of Department of School Education and Literacy (DSE&L), MHRD. Data sent by the state governments is collated and presented under SES. SES includes data on enrolment (numbers and enrolment rates), drop out rates, number of schools and teachers, PTR and Gender Parity Index (GPI), which is disaggregated by social group and gender.
3. All India School Educational Survey is conducted by NCERT. There have been 8 surveys so far and the last survey was done in 2009. This survey collects data from recognized schools (government and private) and collects information on location, teacher deployment, infrastructure and facilities etc. Since this survey is conducted once in six or seven years, it is not always used in JRM reports. However, 7th and 8th surveys gave information on the time period just before the launch of SSA and after the launch. Hence, these surveys are usually referred in JRM reports.
4. Village Education Survey / Village Education Register is also maintained at the school level. This has location specific information on total number of school going children in the catchment area of the school and those enrolled in schools (all types, including residential schools, private schools). The data is maintained for every child and is available by age group, community and gender.
5. National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) has been conducting nation-wide sample surveys on various socio-economic aspects since 1950. NSS, conducted by the Ministry of Statistics, collects data on various socio-economic aspects such as labour force participation, fertility, mortality, population growth, family planning, employment, education etc. Till date, there have been three rounds that have specifically covered education – 42nd round (1986-87), 52nd round (1995-96) and 64th round (2007-08). In the 64th round, data was collected on indicators such as literacy rate, distance of household from schools, enrolment and attendance rate, proportion of students getting free education and educational incentives, percentage of students never enrolled, and percentage of students who drop out of school system. In addition, there is always some data related to education in almost all rounds.

If we look at the above data sources, range and type of information that is collected by each source varies with each other. Nevertheless, data that is available today is tabulated and made available to the public in a short span of time. This is

particularly true with DISE data. However, notwithstanding the impressive turn-around period and the fact that raw data has a lot more information, data on different indicators are not triangulated and tabulated with each other. Another significant factor that influences what data is used and how it is presented in JRM is the composition of the team and priority areas identified by the government. For example, if there is a JRM team member whose main focus is CWSN then, there is likelihood that the JRM report would use all available information on CWSN including data from various surveys and independent studies.

## Indicators presented

Scanning seventeen JRM reports, we found that the following information is presented and discussed in most JRM reports. Each of these indicators has been discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

**Table 2.2: Information given under each indicator in JRM**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Access** | • Enrolment – class-wise as well as level-wise (primary, upper primary) disaggregated by social group and gender.<br>• Survey findings on out-of-school children (OOSC);<br>• Information on average dropout; retention; attendance and transition rates.<br>• Opening of new schools and school infrastructure. |
| **Learning process** | • Student assessment carried out by NCERT;<br>• Curriculum and textbook related information,<br>• Purchase and use of TLM;<br>• Pedagogy and classroom processes – for example activity based learning (ABL), child-centred pedagogies |
| **Teachers and teaching** | • Hiring of teachers – regular and contract (earlier para teachers);<br>• Number of female teachers;<br>• Pupil-teacher ratio (PTR);<br>• Teacher attendance;<br>• Teacher training;<br>• Academic support system (BRC, CRC related) |
| **Community** | • Whether SMC and VECs have been constituted;<br>• Structure of SMC and VEC;<br>• Role of community, SMCs, VECs, and civil society; |
| **Program Management** | • Convergence with different departments and NGOs for community mobilisation, enhancing school quality and providing school facilities; civil works and infrastructure |
| **Finance** | • Finance – allocations of GOI,<br>• Allocation of state-government share,<br>• Expenditure |

## Access

Providing universal access is one of the basic tenets of education. It is also widely acknowledged that a healthy discussion on access is possible when it moves beyond the realm of enrolment and physical infrastructure and includes other dimensions of schooling experiences such as availability of teachers, quality of books, teaching-learning process and whether schools are functioning properly. However, as evident from Table 2.2, in JRM reports, discussion on access is limited to data on enrolment, out of school children (OOSC), drop out rates, retention, attendance, transition from primary to upper primary school and school infrastructure. Within these, most information is presented according to national, state or district level data. Only occasionally, this data is further given for blocks and clusters. Furthermore, data is not always tabulated according to location, social group and gender. This means that even though disaggregated data on each indicator is available (for e.g. in DISE), it is not presented in a composite manner. Table 2.3 lists various issues that have been tracked and addressed under access in JRM reports and issues that have been left out from the discussion.

**Table 2.3: How access related issues are tracked and presented in JRM**

| Indicator | Main observations made under JRM | What is missing from JRM discussion |
|---|---|---|
| **Enrolment** | • Increase in overall enrolment rates across gender and social groups;<br>• Narrowing of gender gap in enrolment<br>• Low enrolment rates in upper primary schools (UPS);<br>• Decrease in enrolments in government schools<br>• Enrolment data on CWSN, urban poor and children belonging to migrating families | • Discussion on local enrolment trends and differences between schools that are located in remote locations with those that are well connected<br>• Juxtaposing enrolment data with attendance and drop out rates to get a more realistic picture by location, social group, gender<br>• Reasons for low enrolment rates in UPS and which children are not going to UPS?<br>• Reasons for increase in enrolment in private schools?<br>• Which children have more access to private schools and which children are going to govt. schools?<br>• CWSN, among them the situation of children with different kinds of disabilities and who is left out<br>• Which children are completing elementary education? |
| **OOSC** | • Overall rate of OOSC including girls, CWSN, and various social groups such as SC, ST, Muslims<br>• Various strategies to target | • Location specific presentation of data on OOSC, especially with respect to areas that are remote, inaccessible or conflict prone;<br>• Reasons for not being in school |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | most vulnerable groups<br>• Existing discrepancy in OOSC data, because there is no uniform definition of OOSC | • No information on profile of students who are being admitted to Special Training Centres.<br>• Challenges of urban poor, migrant children etc. |
| **Drop out** | • Overall drop out rates disaggregated by gender and social group<br>• Drop out rates are highest from grade 5 to grade 6<br>• No uniform definition of drop out<br>• Reasons for drop out – poverty, domestic work, sibling care, migration | • Areas where drop out rates are highest<br>• In depth analysis of reasons for dropping out of schools including teachers' attitude towards students, unable to cope with failure etc.<br>• Drop out rates in government versus private schools<br>• Linking drop out rates with learning outcomes |
| **Retention** | • Overall retention rate;<br>• Retention of girls, SC/ST and Muslim children remains low<br>• Retention of students, especially in upper primary is a challenge<br>• Growth of unrecognized private schools is making it difficult to determine actual retention rate; | • Reasons for low retention rate according to gender and social groups<br>• Factors that facilitate or impede successful transition and retention |
| **Attendance** | • Overall attendance rate<br>• Sporadic and persistence absenteeism<br>• Reasons for absenteeism – migration, ill health, distance, discrimination, irrelevant teaching methods | • Detail discussion on reasons for absenteeism according to gender and social group, by location and seasonal issues such as monsoons<br>• Reasons missing – inadequate facilities in schools, teacher shortage, overcrowded classrooms, household work, sibling care, child labour |
| **Transition** | • Transition rate from PS to UPS;<br>• Main reason include non availability of UPS and socio-economic reasons, esp. for girls | • Reasons for low transition rate by location, social group, gender etc. |
| **School infrastructure** | • Access has been understood mainly from the point of view of physical access.<br>• Emphasis on overall growth in school infrastructure<br>• Functioning toilet for girls and CWSN continues to be a challenge<br>• Ramps for CWSN | • Huge variations in school facilities in areas where there are high proportion of children from disadvantage background<br>• Quality of ramps, toilets and drinking water facilities<br>• No. of schools complying with RTE norms |

**Enrolment**

Almost all JRM reports refer to the achievements made since 1990. The 17th JRM (2013) cites that nearly 199 million children (DISE, 2012) are currently enrolled in

schools. In addition, not only there has been an increase in the overall enrolment rates, but there also has been a significant increase in the overall enrolment of girls, children from various social groups, and children from economically weaker sections of the society.

However, JRMs have also observed that enrolment rates in upper primary level are still low. Even though ratio of PS to UPS is 2.22 (DISE, 2011-12), there are huge inter-state and intra-state differences. While rural-urban disparities have been discussed, what is conspicuous by its absence is the analysis of enrolment in UPS by location within rural areas or urban settlements. For example, more than 57% primary schools and 56% upper primary schools in rural areas are located more than 10 km away from BRC (calculated from DISE 2011-12). If one were to do an analysis of enrolment rates in relatively remote areas and compare them with schools that are located less than 10 km distance from BRC, JRMs could have gained a greater insight into where UPS enrolment is very low. It is important to note that even though there is information on location of schools, this information is not leveraged to get a better understanding of how location related equity issues are played out when it comes to enrolment at upper primary level.

Similarly, most JRM reports have mentioned that enrolment rates at UPS are lower than enrolment rates at PS. It is a well documented fact that one of the main reasons for low enrolment rates at upper primary level is low completion rate in primary schools and even when children are able to formally complete primary school, transition to a new school remains a problem in small villages and habitations (Ramachandran, 2004; Jha and Jhingran, 2005). In addition, there is little discussion on children who are not able to complete primary school and which children are able to complete PS but do not move to UPS. In fact, in their paper, Pritchett and Pande (2006) have argued that completion rates are low at primary level, and the percentage is particularly low for girls and children from economically weaker sections. There could be many reasons for this including household work, sibling care, illness, poor quality of school, migration, exclusion etc. According to Boissiere (2004), if parents consider the quality of schools to be poor or feel that their children are not learning, they may choose to not enrol their or in some cases, remove their children from the schooling system. Such reasons could have a direct impact on the

completion rate and yet, JRM reports are largely silent on discussion on reasons for low completion rate.

Furthermore, over the past few years, there has been a steady drop in enrolment rates in government schools and a steady increase in enrolments in private aided and unaided schools. This phenomenon was first acknowledged in 3rd JRM report (2006) and according to 17th JRM (2013) report, government school enrolment has decreased from 151m in 2007-08 to 147m in 2011-12, while private school enrolment has increased from 34m in 2007-08 to 52m in 2011-12. As a matter of fact, there has been an increase in private schools enrolments even in backward districts (16th JRM, 2012). This phenomenon has a lot of implications.

- First, there is a prevalent assumption that private schools provide better quality education and have lower PTR, which presumably means greater attention to students by teachers (Goyal and Pandey, 2009).
- Second, significant numbers of poor parents are opting for private schools, despite high school fees (Goyal and Pandey, 2009; PROBE Revisited, 2006). Again, there is a belief is that private schools are 'better' because teachers are more regular and that students have marginally higher learning levels in private schools (PROBE Revisited, 2006).
- Third, it is a common perception that children from well to do and usually upper caste families have more access to private schools, due to relatively high costs of private schools. Within this, boys will have more access to private school education than girls. According to PROBE (1999) and PROBE Revisited (2006), many parents are still unwilling to invest (in other words, send girls to fee paying private schools) in girls due to existing patriarchal beliefs in the society.

All these 3 issues impact enrolment rates of girls and boys in government schools and yet, we didn't find any discussion in JRM reports.

Most JRM reports have noted that enrolment rates of girls have been steadily increasing in government schools. Admittedly, a significant increase has been largely due to various interventions and strategies that have been introduced, at both state and central level. However, could it be possible that increase in the percentage of girls' in government schools is due to the fact that more boys are enrolling in private schools? If such were the case, this can create a serious gender imbalances in both

private and government schools. Therefore, it is important to analyse data according to the demographic profile of students on the basis of gender, social group and location in both government and private schools in order to effectively compare enrolment rates in both government and private schools. In fact, some disaggregated information has been captured under DISE, but unfortunately, SSA JRM often refers to the overall data (see Box 2), which tends to mask a lot of gender and equity related issues. Consequently, we do not know who has access to private schools and who doesn't; what is the completion rate in PS and UPS according to gender and various social groups; and what is the profile of students who are attending schools that are located in remote areas (i.e. more than 10 km from BRC).

**Box 2: Excerpts from 17th JRM, Aide Memoire (2013)**

3.14 According to DISE data for 2011-12, 199 million children are enrolled in elementary education and enrolment trends, as illustrated in Figure 3.2 below, show that this has been increasing steadily at upper primary level since 2005-06. As reported in the 16th JRM report (2012:18), there has been some stagnation at primary level since 2007-08, due possibly to a decline in the child population and the reduction in the number of over-age and under-age children attending primary schools. (p. 11)

3.15 Girls' enrolment levels are overall showing a positive trend, with girls sharing 45% or more of the total enrolment in all States, with an overall average of 48.56%. (p. 12)

4.1 The gender gap at primary level has reduced to 3.18 percent in 2010-11, from 4.08 percent in 2003-04. In the case of upper primary schools, the reduction is considerable: from 8.8 percent in 2003-04, to 3.22 percent in 2010-11. The retention rate of girls at primary level was 75.94% in 2011-12. The transition rate of girls at upper primary level has improved considerably: from 74.15% in 2003-04; to 87.32% in 2010-11. (p. 20)

Finally, discussion on groups such as CWSNs, urban poor and children belonging to migrant families is largely limited to enrolment data, which is highly inconclusive. Equally significant is that, apart from data on CWSN who have been identified and who have been enrolled into school, there is hardly any discussion on gender, social group and types of disabilities with respect to CWSN. For example, we don't know whether boys and girls get equal opportunity to attend regular schools, what happens to children with severe disabilities (mental, physical, neurological) and if there are any discriminatory practices observed against CWSNs. Other barriers include lack of adequate numbers of special educators available to all schools, teacher capacity to work with children mental disability, facilities for home schooling for severely disabled children and cultural norms and stigma related to disabled children. In fact, there is consensus within the government that provisions for children with disabilities are clearly insufficient. According to 12th Plan Working Group Report (Oct 2011), "Neither the school system nor other institutional

mechanisms are equipped or geared to address needs of mentally disabled children" (paragraph 21.8). As a result, in the 12th Plan approach paper, the Planning Commission of India has specifically called for the need to go beyond enrolment data to address the issue of access to schooling of CWSN.

In conclusion, while SSA JRMs have flagged various issues from time to time, it does not dwell into variations between states, districts, and blocks and within them equity issues related to gender, location, socio-cultural profile and income.

**Out of school children (OOSC)**

Information on OOSC forms an important indicator to assess progress towards reaching gender and equity goals of SSA. However, data on OOSC has been a contentious issue because the donors and government do not always agree on the numbers[3].

16th JRM report (2012) refers to Human Development Report (2011) to highlight that the number of OOSC students is highest in ST community among different social groups and highest in Muslim community among all religious groups. However, disaggregated data on OOSC according to location and gender within social group has been infrequently discussed in JRM reports. For example, by and large most discussion on OOSC in JRM is limited to interventions such as bridge courses, KGBV and NPEGEL and innovations such as free uniforms and bicycles. This is rather unfortunate because there is a lot of information in public domain that analyses various reasons for children dropping of school, including work burden of children in poverty (PROBE, 1999; Probe Revisited, 2006; SRI-IMRB, 2009; Sankar, 2007 and

[3] Data on OOSC is collected by different agencies and it is not always possible to triangulate. Equally, the definition used for "out of school" children has not yet been standardised across different surveys. Currently, there are three data sources - (1) MHRD estimates OOSC on a yearly basis by conducting a detailed household child census. As per this data, at present (in 2012-13 academic year) there are around 3 million OOSC among 6-14 years old, well below the target of 5.1 million. (2) MHRD commissioned third party/independent household surveys every few years to measure the number of OOSC. The first such survey (2005) estimated that the number of OOSC was around 13.4 million. In 2009, second independent survey indicated that the number of OOSC had reduced to 8.1 million. The third independent household survey (2012-13) is still underway. (3) Independent National Sample Survey (NSS) data is carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). While data from the latest NSS round (2011-12) are not available, number of OOSC fell by 2.37 million annually between 2007-8 and 2009-10, and past trends would indicate that the OOSC would fall to around four million by 2011-12 – again exceeding project targets. In addition to these, independent surveys also estimate children in school. As per ASER (Pratham) surveys, around 4.3% of rural 6-14 years in India were out of school in 2008 while, in 2012 this proportion had come down to 3.5% (World Bank, 2013).

2011). Children with disabilities make up significant proportion of OOSC. According to the Planning Commission report (2011, paragraph 21.8), among total disabled children identified in 2005, 34.19% were out of school, and this proportion remained at 34.12% in 2009.

In fact, a main issue with OOSC is the huge discrepancy in data in different studies (SRI-IMRB, 2009; NSS 66th Round, 2009-10). As stated in the preceding paragraph, this is largely due to the fact that there is no agreed common definition of OOSC across states. Even though this issue has been raised since 1st JRM report (2005) and has been highlighted subsequently in many JRMs, no concrete steps have been taken as yet to agree on a common definition. Given the wide variations across states and agencies in defining who is out of school, calculating the actual number of OOSC remains a daunting task.

JRM reports have also highlighted various strategies that have been adopted to address the needs of OOSC which includes residential special training centres, non-residential special training centres, seasonal hostels for children from migrant families and home-based education for CWSN children. However, there is no discussion on the scale of such interventions (for e.g. in how many states such programs have been implemented?) or what has been their impact in reducing the numbers of OOSC. There is also little analysis on whether such interventions have been sustainable (for example, seasonal hostels for migrant communities). Under SSA, special training centres (STC) have been set up to provide academic support to OOSC so that they are able to enrol into age appropriate classes. However, there is no discussion in JRM reports on the profile of children who are being admitted into STCs and progress made by these students once they enter regular schools and most importantly, how many of them drop out again and re-enrol in the STC year after year. Gender dimension of the issue of OOSC has also received little attention and this is particularly worrying because out-of-school girls tend to be invisible when they are engaged in domestic work.

In fact, enormity of this issue has been succinctly captured in the Twelfth Plan by Planning Commission (2011). According to the document, "Disadvantaged groups are worse off with the dropout rates for SCs and STs higher than the national average. Of particular concern is that some of the most educationally backward

States (Uttar Pradesh [UP], Bihar, Madhya Pradesh [MP] and Jharkhand) have the lowest student attendance rates (below 60 per cent). While there has been a decline in the percentage of out-of-school children (OOSC) across gender and social categories, Muslim, scheduled caste (SC) and scheduled tribe (ST) children need greater and focused attention. The number of OOSC who are physically or mentally challenged remains a cause for concern. The proportion of disabled out-of-school children in 2005 was 34.19 per cent and remained unchanged at 34.12 per cent in 2009. It is important to note that the maximum numbers of OOSC are those with mental disabilities (48 per cent), followed by children with speech disabilities (37 per cent)" (paragraph 21.6, 21.7, 21.8). Additionally, many research studies have highlighted issues surrounding OOSC (IMRB, 2010; PROBE Revisited, 2006). Yet, apart from data and information on various interventions, there is hardly any follow-up discussion in JRM reports on measures that needs to be undertaken to address the issues of OOSC.

**Drop out**

Similar to OOSC data, data on drop out rates is also contentious in JRM reports (see Table 2.4). This is largely due to the fact that like OOSC, there is no common agreed definition on who is considered as a drop out and this issue has been repeatedly raised in JRM reports. According to 16th JRM (2012), "One of the problems with the data collected at present by DISE is the lack of clarity and uniformity in defining what constitutes a dropped out child" (p. 20). For e.g. in Rajasthan, a child is considered a dropout if he/she remains absent for 45 days, while in Kerala, if a child is absent for 2 weeks, he/she is considered a drop out (14th JRM, 2011). Hence, data on drop out rates remains inconclusive in JRM reports.

**Table 2.4: Drop out rates by different data sources**

| Data Source | Annual Average Drop out Rate: Primary % |
|---|---|
| Drop out study | 1.4 |
| DISE | 8.1 |
| SES | 7.1 |
| OOSC Study | 5.4 |

Source: Taken from Table 9, 10th JRM Report (2009)

Furthermore, reasons for drop out are often referred as blanket issues without any in-depth analysis. To cite an example, 10th JRM (2009) report states, "It is evident from the dropout study that retention is first and foremost an equity issue with SC,

ST, Muslim children and girls most at risk of dropout. Based on the study the main causes of dropout include: poverty; domestic work; sibling care; migration of the family; lack of interest; own illness; repeated failure; unsatisfactory teaching; unsuitable school location" (p. 27). However, there is no reflective analysis in any JRM reports on whether there is a pattern of drop out rates according to locations, how drop out rates are linked to learning outcomes, in what ways teacher behaviour is resulting in drop outs and which children are more likely to drop out due to teacher attitude, etc.

Likewise, we don't know the status of drop out rates in remote areas or whether drop out rates also consider students who have moved to private schools. Similarly, we know that drop out rates are highest after grade 5 (Drop out study, SSA, 2009; 16th JRM, 2012). But we don't know which children are dropping out, whether there are more boys or girls, whether drop out rates are higher in some locations and why are they dropping out. Finally, just like the case with STCs (discussed under OOSC), JRM reports are silent on the status of children who have been enrolled into bridge courses. Most children who enter bridge courses are either OOSC or have dropped out of regular schools. But we don't know what happen to children after they re-enter regular schools, and whether they drop out again? If yes, who are these children and why they continue to drop out of schools again and again?

**Retention**

Over the years, it has been noted that girls, especially older girls and children from SC, ST and Muslim groups have lowest retention rate. There has also been a persistent challenge in retaining children, especially in upper primary level. According to 17th JRM (2013), retention rate at primary level is 75.94%, which means that around 24% of children enrolled in grade 1 have either dropped out or are repeating grades and have not reached grade V. However, from JRM reports, we don't know why these children are repeating grades or dropping out. Also, there is no information on whether some of these students have dropped out from the school system completely or they have joined private schools. In fact, in some JRM reports, it has been argued that due to insufficient clarity on reasons for dropouts, it is difficult to suggest 'context specific strategies' (10th JRM, 2010) that would help in increasing retention rate. However, this point is debatable because some reasons have been cited in 10th JRM report itself (see section on drop outs). Similarly, there

have been many studies including studies commissioned by SSA (2010a, 2010b) that have cited various reasons for dropouts and low enrolment.

Furthermore, in few JRM reports, it has been recommended (for e.g. 9th 2009; 12th JRM, 2010) that there is a need for focussed strategies for most vulnerable groups, SC/ST and Muslim children, older girls, CWSNs, children affected by migration and urban poor. In fact, in these reports, there have been discussions on ways to improve retention rate. For example, by specifically targeting most vulnerable children in districts where transition rate from primary to upper primary is less than state average (9th JRM) and by converging with National Rural Health Mission to address child health issues (12th JRM, 2010). Unfortunately, most of these recommendations are often repeated in JRM reports but in reality, there is not much evidence of what actions have been undertaken to improve retention rate.

**Attendance**

Along with low retention rates, low attendance rate in schools is another area that has been flagged many a times in JRM reports. In many JRM reports, it has been highlighted that student absenteeism is a huge issue, in both PS and UPS. In fact, in some reports (for e.g. 11th JRM, 2010; 16th JRM, 2012), it has been argued that the problem with attendance data lies in the fact that it is often recorded as an overall average rate, which does not reflect the real scenario. For example, many states are reporting more than 90% student attendance (6th JRM, 2007; 16th JRM, 2012). We also know, from 14th JRM report (2011), that low attendance rates have been recorded among children from disadvantaged groups. However, we don't know anything about locations where attendance is low, whether girls are more absent or boys, whether attendance varies according to social or occupational groups or if there are seasonal variations in attendance.

In order to understand the complexity of low attendance rates, it is important to analysis reasons for absence. This is because there are basically 2 main types of student absenteeism - (i) students who are enrolled in schools but do not attend schools at all (persistent absenteeism); and (ii) students are temporarily absent from schools (sporadic absenteeism). One way to analyse this difference, which has been often emphasized in JRM reports, is to disaggregate data on persistent and sporadic absenteeism by gender, social group, and by location. Also, this differentiation is

important because strategies required for regular attendance would be different for students who are absent on a regular basis as compared to students who are absent sporadically (16th JRM, 2012). Since no such data is available, there isn't much evidence of strong recommendations on ways to tackle student absenteeism in JRM reports.

Nevertheless, some JRM reports (13th & 14th JRM, 2011) have mentioned reasons for absenteeism, namely migration, ill health, social distance, discrimination, irrelevant teaching methods etc. Apart from these reasons, there are other issues that have been discussed in other studies such as lack of adequate facilities in school; teacher shortage; overcrowded classrooms; household work and sibling care; and participation in agricultural and other income generating activities (World Bank 2004; SSA, 2009a; SSA 2009c). Equally significant is the prevalence of seasonal child labour, especially girls, in cottonseeds farms (Jandhyala, 2011). Unfortunately, information or insights gained from these studies have not been taken on board in JRM reports.

**School infrastructure**

In most JRM reports, physical access has been explained with respect to providing adequate number of schools and classrooms, STCs and basic facilities such as drinking water, toilets and ramps. In the following paragraphs, each of these indicators has been discussed in detail.

Schools and classrooms: According to many JRM reports, increase in access has been made possible through opening of primary and upper primary schools, alternative education centres, residential and non-residential bridge courses, residential hostels, provision of early childhood care and education. OOSC girls are being reached through KGBVs and till recently, children in remote habitations were reached through EGS/AIE (now discontinued) centres. In many areas, transport allowance is also being provided to children to help them reach the nearest school (17th JRM, 2013). However, JRM reports mainly highlights the overall growth with respect to school infrastructure and discussion on regional differences in quality of access has been largely ignored. To illustrate, several studies (World Bank study, 2003a; PROBE Revisited, 2006) have presented evidence that there is a considerable difference in the quality of school infrastructure, especially in areas where there is a high proportion

of SC/ST community. But we do not find this sort of analytical discussion in JRM reports.

Number of schools complying with RTE norms: Another area where JRM reports have failed to highlight a realistic picture is the number of schools that are complying with the physical infrastructure norms as stipulated under the RTE Act[4]. According to 14th JRM report (2011), more than 70% government schools and more than 85% private schools are complying with at least 5 out of 9 physical facilities, as stipulated under the RTE Act. However, according to PAISA report (Accountability Initiative, 2012), only 15% government schools are complying with all norms. This is a huge difference and one could argue that the interpretation of RTE norms could have been different in both reports or maybe methodology adopted by both reports were different. Even then, this is a considerable difference and it cannot be ignored. In fact, many newspaper articles[5] have also highlighted the number of schools who are not complying with RTE norms. Yet, we don't find their reference in any JRM reports.

Drinking water: While most states have reported that schools are providing adequate drinking water (10th JRM, 2009; 12th JRM, 2010; 17th JRM, 2013), it remains to be seen whether this supply is regular and safe.

Toilets: A major challenging area, which has been acknowledged in most JRM reports, is the lack of adequate functioning toilets for girls and CWSN, especially in upper primary schools. At present, a toilet is considered functional if even one seat is working and even though, it has been recommended that definition of functioning of a toilet needs to be changed (12th JRM, 2010), not much progress has been made so far in this direction. Further, provision of facilities/infrastructure is not presented in relation to the number of students in each school. Therefore, a school with over 300 children may have one toilet for girls and one for boys. Can this be interpreted as having adequate toilet facilities?

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4 http://www.rtemaharashtra.org/index.php/rte-schools/88-norms-for-schools-and-school-facilities-quality

5 http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-07-22/mumbai/40726865_1_new-schools-space-crunch-rte-act
http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/education/rte-deadline-ends-many-schools-yet-to-implement-norms/article4569409.ece

Ramps: While many schools have constructed ramps for physically challenged students, their quality remains a challenge in many states. From JRM reports, it is unclear whether the approach to ramp is wheelchair friendly or is the ramp too steep, etc.

Special Training Centres: Under SSA program, Special Training Centres (STC) have been started with the purpose of mainstreaming OOSC into formal schools system and enabling children to be admitted into age appropriate classrooms. However, a major challenge that has been reported in many JRMs is that there is no common understanding regarding eligibility criterion of children enrolled in these centres. In some instances, for e.g. in Chhattisgarh, it was noted that younger children (4-6 year old), either orphaned or abandoned by families were included in STC (15th JRM, 2012). Additionally, majority of these children need support even after they have been mainstreamed into regular schools. While this has been acknowledged in some reports (e.g. 15th JRM, 2012), no focused study has been commissioned by JRM on this issue.

With the implementation of RTE, it was discussed in the 12th JRM (2010) that the definition of access needs to move beyond the realm of physical infrastructure and should include other dimensions of school as whether teaching-learning is happening in school, availability of teachers, availability of books and material and most importantly availability of a school that functions regularly. However, till early 2013, i.e. up until 17th JRM report, discussion on physical infrastructure had not been integrated issues related to quality and equity.

## Learning and teaching

Along with improved access, equity and retention, quality of schooling experience is also closely linked with improved learning outcomes. As 11th JRM (2010) succinctly states, "Universal enrolment, attendance, retention and inclusive education are necessary components to ensure equity in education, however, it is ultimately the quality of the schooling experience for the children, the classroom processes and activities and improvement of learning levels that are of essence in achieving education of equitable quality and moving towards the goals of Education for All" (para 3.70). While the statement holds true, ironically, in most JRM reports, approach

to learning and teaching, as a main component of quality, has been extremely fragmented (see Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5: Issues related to Learning and Teaching**

| Indicator | Main observations & concerns raised in JRM | What is missing from JRM discussion |
|---|---|---|
| **Student assessment and learning outcomes** | • Large scale evidence of rote learning<br>• Increasing use of CCE as a continuous assessment tool. However, there is confusion regarding CCE itself and how it is being rolled out;<br>• Learning levels are low, especially among disadvantaged groups (using NAS of NCERT)<br>• Various learning interventions that have been implemented to increase learning levels | • Reasons for low learning levels<br>• In what ways various interventions have increased learning levels of students<br>• Learning levels of students in government versus private schools;<br>• Analysis of learning levels by location and triangulating it with single teacher schools/two teacher schools, PTR etc.<br>• Not acknowledging independent learning assessment surveys. |
| **TLM, curriculum, textbooks** | • Most states are changing their curriculum acc. to principles of NCF<br>• Increasing use of bilingual languages in textbooks | • Not much discussion on the status of inclusion of gender and equity issues in curriculum<br>• Are textbooks being delivered in time? |
| **Classroom processes** | • Innovations such as CAL, ABL, pictorial dictionary, mobile libraries etc.<br>• Traditional methods of teaching largely employed by teachers | • What kinds of inclusion and exclusion practices are prevalent in schools and classrooms? |
| **Recruitment of teachers** | • No. of single teachers schools continue to remain high | • No information on location where most single teachers schools are situated<br>• No information on composition and qualification of teachers<br>• No data on special education teachers |
| **Female teachers** | • Steady increase in the number of female teachers over the years<br>• Proportion of female teachers in educationally backward areas is not known | • Discussion surrounding gender discrimination of all kinds in hiring of regular and contract/para teachers<br>• No discussion on deployment of female teachers, with respect to location or type of school;<br>• Safety and other related issues of women teachers posted in remote or inaccessible areas |
| **PTR** | • Low PTR ratio, especially in remote & tribal areas;<br>• High PTR in the most populous states where PTR could go to over 100 students per teacher | • There is no information on whether schools with high PTR have also high no. of contract teachers and/or are single teacher schools?<br>• What is the composition of students in schools that have high PTR ratio? |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Teacher training** | • Data on no. of teachers who have been trained and yet to be trained<br>• Extensive use of traditional methods in teacher training programs<br>• Poor content of training programs<br>• Lack of focus on equity and gender issues in training programs | • Limited discussion on impact of training on teaching & learning process;<br>• No discussion on the content of training programs, how the needs of teachers are being ascertained and problems that are being faced by teachers in multi-grade classrooms |
| **Attendance & accountability** | • Insufficient time being spent on child-centric activities<br>• Insufficient data on teacher accountability | • No analysis of whether the accountability and effectiveness of regular and para teachers are different / same |

**Learning outcomes**

While there are general comments on the learning levels, data on learning levels of students has not been tracked systematically in JRM reports. Additionally, even though most JRM reports (3rd JRM onwards, 2006) have commented on the low learning levels of students, reasons for low learning levels have not been addressed at all in any reports. There could be 2 possible reasons for this. Firstly, as mentioned above, a main limitation of JRM mechanism lies in its reluctance to refer to different sources of data. Often, data, only, from NCERT's National Achievement Survey (NAS) is referred to in JRM reports for measuring learning levels of children and NAS does not capture reasons for low learning levels.

Secondly, as Pritchett and Pande (2006) have argued, there has been little documentation of learning levels in government schools in India. Whatever little government documentation is there, the results are hardly compared with other independent studies such as ASER. Consequently, even though some JRM reports (11th JRM, 2010; 16th JRM, 2012) have commented that learning levels of children from disadvantaged groups are low, there are no discussions on reasons for low learning levels, even though many studies (e.g. PROBE Revisited, 2006; Reardon, 2011) have discussed these reasons at length. In his paper, Reardon (2011) has argued that income of parents has a bearing on the achievement levels of a child. According to him, there is a substantial achievement gap between children from high and low-income group families. For example, well to do families are more likely to invest more in the education of their children, either through tuitions and/or by sending them to private schools. In addition to low income, factors such as social group,

educational level of parents and gender of a child also influence the educational outcomes of a child. In fact, parents with low or no education level are less likely to help their child with schoolwork (PROBE Revisited, 2006). Additionally, many examples have been given in PROBE Revisited (2006) to highlight that teachers often marginalize children from socially disadvantaged communities, which again has a negative influence on the learning outcomes of children. But we don't see such references in JRM reports.

JRM reports have also discussed various programs and interventions that have been introduced under SSA to improve learning achievement levels such as Learning Enhancement Program (LEP), on-site teacher training, teacher support/supervision through BRC/CRCs, quality monitoring tools, measurement of teachers' attendance and time on task. It has also been noted in many JRM reports that most states are providing remedial teaching and long-term bridge courses. But, what is not discussed are: (i) scale of these programs; (ii) profile of students who are benefiting from these interventions; and (iii) what resources have been allocated for the implementation of such interventions. It also remains to be seen the extent to which remedial teaching is addressing the fundamental issue of low learning levels among children.

Finally, up until 2010, learning outcomes were not discussed and it was not one of the 'must do' items in JRMs. However, in the 12th Five-Year Plan by Planning Commission (2012), there is a huge focus on learning outcomes. The report states that learning of children will be, "measured, monitored and reported independently at all levels of school education with a special focus on ensuring that all children master basic reading and numeracy skills by class 2 and skills of critical thinking, expression and problem solving by class 5" (Vol. II, p. 51). In line with the 12th Plan, 17th JRM report (2013) has recommended that independent studies should be commissioned by the government to measure learning outcomes of students. Hopefully, in near future, we will have more information to analyse learning outcomes of children from different locations, social groups, situations, disability and gender, along with strategies that would be required to improve the learning outcomes of children.

**Student Assessment**

In most JRM reports, NCERT's NAS finding is accepted as the official data to evaluate students' learning levels. It captures data of students studying in government and government-aided schools and estimates are generated at both national and state level. In 2003, NAS data revealed that there was a distinct gender and rural gap in learning achievement. Unfortunately, this gap still persists. Furthermore, interpreting NAS data is a daunting task as the data give is highly technical and since, assessments done by other independent or non-governmental organizations are not tabled in JRM reports, discussion on student assessment in JRM reports remain biased.

Even though it was discussed in NCF (2005), it was only after the enactment of RTE in 2010, that Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was introduced as a mechanism to assess students' performance. The main purpose of CCE is to evaluate students' learning levels at various intervals and provide remedial measures to improve their performance[6]. At present, more than 20 states and UTs have introduced CCE in schools. However, there is lack of clarity with regards to implementation of CCE at various levels and this issue has been raised in many JRMs. For e.g., instead of focusing on continuous evaluation along with regular assessments, many states are focusing on semester and unit tests, which has increased the academic pressure on students (15th JRM, 2012). Similarly, many teachers have reported that CCE involves filling out many forms and this has only increased their administrative workload. They also feel that this format is not child friendly. Hence, it has been argued in JRM reports that more effort and training is required to explain the concept of CCE to both parents and teachers (17th JRM, 2013).

**TLM, Curriculum, Textbooks**

In order to increase enrolment rates, especially among girls and children from disadvantaged groups, many strategies were formulated. At present, all children under SSA are being provided free textbooks. However, along with free supply of textbooks, it has been mentioned in the 17th JRM report (2013) that it is also equally important that these textbooks are child-friendly and comprehensible to children.

[6] http://www.cbse.nic.in/cce/index.html

In addition, JRM reports have mentioned that there is a need for revision in order to make them more inclusive. For example, after the DPEP program, it took almost a decade before SSA commissioned another gender review of textbooks (done by TSG, EdCIL in 2012 and the draft has not yet been presented in the JRM). Further, no such review has taken place with respect to caste and community and hence, we don't know how specific communities are represented in textbooks (for example, tribal groups, Muslims etc.). Equally, the rich geographical diversity of India also does not find a place in textbooks.

As a matter of fact, all states are required to change their school curriculum and textbooks according to the principles of National Curriculum Framework (2005) and should include social issues such as "poverty, child labour, illiteracy, caste and class inequalities in rural and urban areas" (p. 52). While many states have aligned or are in the process of changing their curriculum, it is still a huge challenge for some states (15th JRM, 2012). Having said that, JRM reports are weak on highlighting some key examples that demonstrates in what ways gender and equity issues have been interlinked with the curriculum or in what ways gender and SC/ST stereotypes have been removed from the textbooks (World Bank study, 2004a).

**Recruitment of Teachers**

A major part of student learning and achievement largely depends on the effectiveness of teacher and one of the first steps to map this effectiveness is recruitment of teachers. According to RTE norms, there should be a minimum of 2 teachers in a school, which has 1-60 students. However, according to DISE (2011-2012), 11.47% primary schools in rural India are single teacher schools and in some states, these figures are more than 20%. For e.g. in Arunachal Pradesh, percentage of single teacher primary schools is close to 60.35%, 21% in Assam, 31.34% in Rajasthan and 24.02% in Uttarakhand (Flash statistics, DISE, 2011-2012). Even though JRM reports have highlighted the challenges of single teacher schools and multi-grade classrooms, recommendations to tackle such issues are largely limited to the need to recruit more teachers. Further, there are hardly any discussions on areas/locations that are under-served. One report (12th JRM, 2012) does mentions the issue of teacher recruitment in under-served areas and makes a recommendation that states need to ensure that teachers should remain in such areas for at least a minimum period. However, not only we don't know what is the 'minimum' period or how many

teachers are deployed in under-served areas, there is also no way of knowing how many of these teachers actually go to schools.

Moreover, if we look at the distribution of schools, about 71% single teacher schools are located more than 10 km from BRCs (Analysed from DISE, 2011-2012, see Annexure 3). Hence, it is possible to infer that not only remote locations are more likely to have single teachers schools, there is also likelihood that schools in remote locations have poor facilities. In addition, there is no information on the composition and qualification of teachers who are being recruited in these schools. This is a huge equity challenge, which has been overlooked in JRM reports. Similarly, while most JRM reports have mentioned the total number of teachers that are recruited each year, it does not take into account disaggregated information on these teachers in terms of gender, social group and location (even though this information is available in DISE). In fact, the situation is worse when it comes to data on special education teachers. This is because there is no data on the number of special education teachers that have been recruited (even DISE does not collect data on special education teachers).

**Female teachers**

It is generally believed that female teachers can have a significant influence on girls' enrolment and retention in schools. Education Commission reports of the government (1965 onwards) have reiterated this belief. However, in JRM reports, recruitment of female teachers has been mainly discussed in the form of data and not from a perspective of their plausible role in enrolment and retention of girls, especially older girls.

Currently, total distribution of female teachers is 41.78% at primary level and 41% at elementary school level in rural areas (Analytical Report, NUEPA, 2011-2012). However, this percentage reduces drastically to 25.7% in Madhya Pradesh; 24.8% in Rajasthan, 25.7% in West Bengal and 20.4% in Tripura. Furthermore, when we look at schools that are located more than 10 km from BRC (Analysed from DISE, 2011-2012, see Annexure 3) percentage of women teachers is lower in remote locations. In fact, earlier JRM have acknowledged that low female teacher ratio is a huge challenge in many areas, especially educationally backward and remote areas (5th JRM, 2007). But this discussion has not been followed-up in later reports. In addition,

we don't know whether female teachers are being discriminated during recruitment process and in what ways; and whether any safety measures that have been put in place for female teachers, especially in remote areas.

**Pupil Teacher Ratio**

Another issue that has been repeatedly mentioned as a huge challenge is high PTR, especially in schools that are located in remote and tribal areas. Almost 40% primary schools and 30.58% upper primary schools in rural areas are struggling with adverse PTR ratio (NUEPA, 2011-2012). On the other hand, according to ASER data (2012), only 42.8% schools are meeting PTR norms, as set under RTE. Even though there is a discrepancy in both data sources, on several occasions, JRM reports have highlighted the issue of adverse PTR in several districts. They have also pointed out that even though state average might be low, there are huge variations within districts and blocks. PTR situation is worse when it comes to children with special needs. According to 11th JRM (2010), on an average, one special teacher educator is available for 60 severely disabled children. However, in none of the JRM reports there is any discussion on adverse PTR issue from a perspective of gender and equity. It is quite plausible that schools with high PTR are single teacher or multi-grade schools and are more likely to have children with low learning levels. Consequently, the issue of adverse PTR cannot be looked only in terms of numbers and location, but needs to take into account other surrounding issues such as hiring and training of teachers, time-on-task (discussed in the following section), school infrastructure etc.

**Attendance and accountability**

Even though many studies have been conducted to measure teacher effectiveness (Pritchett and Pande, 2006; SSA, 2010d), there is insufficient discussion on teachers' accountability in JRM reports. According to the Time-on-Task study that was undertaken in 2006-07 (SSA, 2010d), 80% of total teacher time is spent in classroom activities. On the other hand, in multi grade classrooms, teachers usually focus on one grade and as a consequence, students from other grades spend nearly 65% of their time in non-academic activities. The study also revealed that more than 50% of total instructional time is spent on traditional teaching practices and only about 24% time is spent on child-centric activities. While the 8th JRM report (2008) does

acknowledge the results of Time-on-task study, it does not address some pertinent questions such as what is the difference between the accountability and effectiveness of regular and contract teachers (also referred to as para-teachers) and what are the learning levels of children, especially in multi-grade classrooms.

Absenteeism is another issue that has been found to be particularly common among regular teachers. For example, in their study, Pritchett and Pande (2006) have argued that even though primary school teachers in India are given better remuneration compared to some other countries, yet, absenteeism is highest among Indian primary school teachers. Similarly, other studies have found high attendance and engagement rate among contract teachers as compared to regular teachers, even though the former are paid poorly (Muralidharan and Sundaraman, 2008; Goyal and Pandey, 2009). Incidentally, in 2009, SSA commissioned a research study on para-teachers. Yet, we don't find many references to these studies or their findings in JRM reports.

**Teacher training**

Teachers are one of the main determinants of quality of education. Encouraging teachers to perform well is a complex process that not only involves teacher recruitment, but also includes good working environment, regular training and professional development, and adequate remuneration. In addition, as already discussed in preceding paragraphs, there are issues surrounding single teacher schools and multi-grade classrooms that needs to be addressed in order for teachers to perform well. All these issues are intertwined and have a huge impact on teachers' performance and motivation. Yet, as 17th JRM (2013) acknowledges, discussion on teachers focuses mainly on the training aspect, which includes mapping total number of teachers who have been trained or are yet to be trained.

A major issue observed with teacher training, in JRM reports, is the didactic nature of training process. Largely traditional methods are employed in training programs and as pointed out in the 6th JRM (2007), there is a persistent use of lecture based training methods with little focus on participation, reflection and skill development. In most JRMs, it has also been observed that there is little evidence of critical evaluation of the impact of teacher training in classrooms. Based on these observations, repeated recommendations have been made in JRM reports that there is a need to evaluate the impact of teacher training programs in order to assess

classroom process and student learning achievement (9th JRM, 2009). In fact, 12th JRM (2010) had reported that a study on teacher effectiveness had been commissioned but the results of that study has not been discussed in subsequent JRM reports.

Another issue that has been frequently highlighted in JRM reports is the poor content of teacher training programs. Even though most training programs focus on areas such as CWSNs, RTE Act, use of TLMs, understanding of NCF, along with different subject matter, yet these areas are addressed separately. In addition, some reports have argued that despite a 28% increase in teacher training programs, most teachers have not undergone any training on inclusive education (13th JRM, 2011). In fact, this is one area where JRM has repeatedly argued that there is a need to revitalize teacher-training programs because they are increasingly becoming routinized (11th JRM, 2010). Some JRM reports have also suggested that training programs need to go beyond the subject matter and focus more on gender and equity issues (6th JRM, 2007; 7th JRM, 2008; 8th JRM, 2008; 14th JRM, 2011), challenges of multi-grade classrooms (4th JRM, 2006) and leadership aspect (13th JRM, 2011). Unfortunately, even though these recommendations have been made regularly in JRM reports, very little progress has been made in this area. There is also little discussion on the role of DIET, BRC and CRC in the teacher training process, in particular, what is their role in assessing the training needs of teachers, provide on-site training or working with teachers on specific issues/concerns. Equally, orientation and training of CRC and BRC on gender, social equity, discrimination, inclusion-exclusion is yet to be taken on board.

### Role of SMCs

Community participation and SMC involvement has been positioned as an important strategy to achieve equity goals of SSA. The belief is that by involving people, especially women and parents from disadvantage groups, it would help bridge the gap between school and the community. Having said that, while JRMs have mention that women and parents from minority communities do not always participate actively in SMC meetings, hard reality is that JRM does not dwell into ways in which gender and equity issues influences how SMCs are constituted, how meetings are conducted and whether members are oriented and trained to function effectively.

Under the RTE Act, every government and government-aided schools are required to constitute School Management Committee (SMC). Members of SMC should include parents, head master, community members and a student. Further, 50% members should be female and committee should also have representation from SC, ST, and other minority communities. Since the beginning of SSA JRM process, there has been a continuous focus on the role played by community and civil society in the functioning and monitoring of schools. According to JRM reports, SMC members in most states have a general idea about their roles and responsibilities, in particular, about school maintenance grants, budgets for additional classrooms, various grants for children, monitoring of MDM, etc. JRM reports have also focused on the role played by SMC members to improve functioning of school, enrolling OOSC, ensuring regular attendance of teachers, monitoring civil works and MDMs etc. However, there are some serious challenges that most SMC members have been facing.

Even though 50% positions in SMCs have been reserved for women, few women were found taking leadership position (15th JRM, 2012). It has also been reported that most women and parents from minority communities don't participate actively in SMC meetings. According to a study (Singh, 2011) commissioned by SSA, a possible reason for such behaviour is that meetings are usually preceded by 'influential' members, who are often males. Similarly, in 16th JRM (2012), it was reported that many members, especially those from disadvantaged communities, are often in owe of school authorities. Finally, it has also been reported that many SMC members often do not have information on how committees should be formed and what are the roles and responsibilities of SMC members (Pandey, Goyal, Sundararaman, 2011).

In order to help SMC members perform their roles effectively, many JRM reports have suggested that there is a requirement for intensive training. Along with information on functioning of SMC, training programs also need to include issues of CWSNs, bullying, discrimination, corporal punishment, understanding RTE norms, how to monitor teacher effectiveness and learning levels of children etc. (various JRM reports). In fact, it has been argued that timely and relevant information could significantly increase the participation of SMC members, which in turn, could lead to

increase in accountability of schools and teachers (Pandey, Goyal, Sundararaman, 2011). In a study by Pandey, Goyal, & Sundararaman (2011), it was found that the participation of community members increased significantly, after they ran an information campaign wherein they provided relevant information to various stakeholders. To cite an example, after a successful information campaign, engagement of SMC members in both Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh increased, leading to significant improvement in teacher effectiveness and functioning of school committees.

**Finance**

According to Jhingran and Sankar (2009), state governments are responsible for nearly 80% of all expenditures in the field of elementary education. However, most of this budget goes into paying salaries and incurring other recurrent expenditures. Therefore, a prime focus of SSA program is to provide additional support to state government so that they can meet respective elementary education needs in order to reduce educational disparities (Jhingran and Sankar, 2009). However, in almost all JRM reports, section on finance mostly deals with money received by each state and expenditures made. There is not a lot of information on how this money is being spent on various innovations and strategies that are being implemented for children from disadvantaged groups. Further, there is not much information on the status of allocation of funds according to districts that are grappling with high PTR, high rate of OOSC, inadequate infrastructure facilities etc. In fact, Jhingran and Sankar (2009) have rightly argued in their paper that there needs to be a higher financial allocation to districts and blocks that are way behind in achieving universal elementary education.

Apart from the indicators that have been discussed above, on several occasions, JRM reports have also discussed various other indicators. They include innovations such as Computer Aided Learning (CAL) and Activity Based Learning (ABL); roles and responsibilities of BRCs and CRCs especially with regards to providing academic support to schools and teachers; and convergence with various NGOs and other departments for better provision of resources such as clean drinking water, benefits to CWSN etc. However, in this paper, these aspects have not been discussed in detail because these indicators have not been looked from a gender and equity point of view.

## Summing up

"Despite many gains during the Eleventh Plan, education in India faces several challenges. The country's mean years of schooling at 5.12 years is well below the other emerging market economies. A matter of particular concern is the steep dropout rate after the elementary level. The sharp drop-off in enrolment at the middle school level and the increasing enrolment gap from elementary to higher secondary suggests that the gains at the elementary level have not yet impacted the school sector as a whole. Disadvantaged groups are worse off with the dropout rates for SCs and STs higher than the national average... While enrolment levels at the elementary level are generally high, studies of student attendance show that there is considerable variation across States in the percentage of enrolled students who are attending school on any given day during the school year. Of particular concern is that some of the most educationally backward States (Uttar Pradesh [UP], Bihar, Madhya Pradesh [MP] and Jharkhand) have the lowest student attendance rates (below 60 per cent). There has been a substantial increase in the availability of teachers at elementary level during the past few years and if all the teacher posts sanctioned under both Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and State budgets are filled, the pupil–teacher ratio (PTR) at the national level will almost be 27:1. The challenge, however, lies in correcting the imbalance in teacher deployment. The number of schools that do not comply with the Right to Education (RTE) norms for the required PTR is fairly high. School-wise analysis based on District Information System for Education (DISE) 2009–10 indicates that 46 per cent of primary and 34 per cent of upper primary schools have poor PTRs. Another serious challenge is the presence of teachers without professional qualifications approved by the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE), as is required under the RTE Act. There are about 8.1 lakh untrained teachers in the country with four States—Bihar, UP, Jharkhand and West Bengal—accounting for 72 per cent of them..." (Planning Commission, Government of India. 2011, paragraph 21.6, 21.7, 21.8)

This review process reveals that gender and equity related issues have been superficially tracked in addressed in JRM reports. The way in which data has been presented, the manner in which various research studies have been discussed (or not discussed), and lack of attention to detail indicates that most of the indicators, mentioned above, doesn't do justice to the SSA goal on bridging gender and social gaps. Input indicators like enrolment, number of schools, infrastructure, number of teachers etc. remain important indicators to measure progress towards achieving equity goals of SSA. However, not only these indicators but also other indicators such as retention or teacher recruitment have been discussed separately in JRM reports and not as a part of quality and equity continuum. Additionally, issues such as diversity in the classroom or social gap between teachers and children and issues of exclusion and discrimination are not integrated with an analysis on equity and quality. All these issues have been discussed in detail in the next section.

# Section 3: The JRM process

If one were to take a long view, there is no doubt that India has made significant progress in the field of education in the last 60 years. There has been a steady increase in the literacy rates of both male and female and there has been an overall increase in the enrolment of girls and children from SC, ST, OBC and other minority communities. Along with enrolment, impressive progress has also been made to decrease the number of OOSC and drop outs, improve school infrastructure and facilities. Many schemes have been introduced to increase school enrolment and retention of students such as Mid-Day Meal scheme, free textbooks, uniforms and bi-cycles to students, bridge and remedial courses for OOSC, programs like KGBVs and NPEGEL to increase enrolment among girls, and many more. More teachers are getting hired, new teaching methodologies are being adopted, and efforts are being made to increase the role of community and SMCs in the overall management of schools. In this regard, SSA JRM reports have been quite successful in highlighting positive changes that have taken place under SSA program.

Yet, despite the progress, there are still persistent gaps in achieving the spirit of UEE i.e. every child in school and learning. This situation is particularly worse for girls and children from socially disadvantage communities who attend government schools. Consequently, even though JRM mechanism is valuable in providing periodic feedback to the government and donor partners, it has done little to enhance our understanding of how and under what circumstances do children not only attend school but learn. In the following paragraphs, two aspects have been discussed in detail – understanding of equity issues under SSA JRM and issues with the JRM mechanism. These two aspects are important because they illustrate why bridging gender and equity gaps still remains an elusive dream under SSA.

## Understanding of equity issues under SSA JRM

The biggest draw back of JRM mechanism is that location, social–economic situation, caste/community, gender and other dimensions of equity are not triangulated with educational indicators gathered in DISE. This is partly due to limited understanding and articulation of equity under SSA. Equity is mainly understood as creating "equal opportunity" under SSA (MHRD, 2010). The definition itself is inconclusive because it does not specify what 'equal opportunity' means. Does it mean that all children

will have equal access to a physical school, that all children will be treated fairly and equally in classroom, that all children will have equal access to all resources and basic minimum facilities and most importantly, that all children will get an equal opportunity to learn? It remains unclear.

It has been long established that gender, social and economic status has a strong influence on the education level of a child (Table 3.1). A child is at a greater disadvantage if he/she is living in rural areas and belongs to a poor family. This situation becomes worse if a child is a girl and especially an older girl. However, the situation is not better for boys as well. In specific situations and communities (like coastal communities engaged in fishing), boys may be at a greater disadvantage as they are summoned to accompany their fathers out into the sea. Similarly, in many cases, boys are sent on short-term bondage to pay off family loans (Ramachandran, 2004). All these conditions lower the chances of children getting good quality education.

**Table 3.1: Different children, different chances**

| | |
|---|---|
| Rural/Urban | Less likelihood of rural children enrolling in pre-school and completing primary school |
| Income | Poor children have lower chances across location, gender, and caste. This includes children from urban slums. |
| SC | Lower chances than non SC/ST children for all measures including pre-school and regular school enrolment |
| ST | Even lower chances than SC |
| Gender | Disparities increase as girls grow older and affect completion and repetition rates |
| State | Children from northern and eastern states are less likely to enrol in pre-school, primary school and completion |

*Taken from World Bank (2004). Reaching out to the child: An integrated approach to child development. Report No. 29695 (p. 34).*

Other factors such as caste, family income, parent's occupation, and education level of parents also contribute significantly towards educational inequalities (Ramachandran and Saihjee, 2002). Similarly, first generation learners are at a greater disadvantage because of limited support in schoolwork at home. All these factors exert a significant influence on access, attendance, completion and learning achievement. Yet, JRM reports are weak in analysis when it comes to making connections between learning achievement to various socio-economic factors.

Likewise, discussion on CWSN, urban poor and children belonging to migrant families remains superficial. We know very little about this group or who constitutes this group. With respect to CWSN, JRM reports are largely restricted to the number of children that have been identified and enrolled in schools and various incentives that have been provided to them. JRM reports have also acknowledged that identification of children and training of special educators continues to remain a major challenging area. However, we don't know the gender and social group composition of CWSN, we don't know which children among CWSN have more access to schools, what are various inclusive practices in place for CWSN, and what is the attitude of teachers and other children towards CWSN.

Similarly, we know that children belonging to migrating families and urban poor are hardest to reach. However, beyond some state-specific initiatives that have been introduced to address the educational needs of this group, not much is known. Finally, there is absolutely no discussion on the issues of street children, children with HIV/AIDS, child labourers (full time, seasonal or part-time), children living in areas of conflict or children affected by war or natural disaster and those who have been a victim of physical, mental and sexual abuse. A possible reason for limited discussion on this group could be due to the fact that there are no visible policies or guidelines in place under SSA. Equally, there is a hesitation to talk about the workload of children, even those who are enrolled in schools but are frequently absent due to seasonal or after-school work.

Going further, access and quality intermeshes with equity, but again, these indicators have been addressed individually. Admittedly, it has been indicated in many reports that there is a need to link quality with equity, but so far, inputs on gender and equity remain isolated from other goals. A possible reason could be absence of concrete definition of "quality" under SSA framework. Consequently, broadly what we do know from SSA JRM reports includes:

- Data on enrolment, out of school children, retention, drop out, attendance, transition and completion rate;
- Information on strategies and interventions that have been introduced for girls and children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Data on school infrastructure and facilities, for e.g. toilet, ramps etc.;

- Total number of children being targeted through bridge courses and residential schools;
- Overall learning levels among children;
- Information on school curriculum and textbooks;
- Data on teachers who have been appointed, including total number of female teachers;
- Data on total number of teachers trained

However, there is no way of discerning:

- Who are learning, what are they learning and at what level they are;
- Who do not have access to upper primary schools and why;
- Reasons for low learning levels of children in different circumstances and different kinds of schools;
- What systems are in place to measure teacher accountability and teacher attitude / practices in the classroom;
- Composition and qualification of teachers in remote and tribal areas;
- Quality of school infrastructure and facilities in remote and tribal areas;
- How various discriminatory practices towards children and women teachers are being addressed by schools;
- What is the behaviour of teacher towards students from various social and economic background and CWSN; and
- Within all of the above, how gender relations, stereotypes and prejudices play out?

**Issues and concerns**

As mentioned in the beginning, SSA JRM mechanism was introduced to inform both GOI and DP about the progress being made under each SSA goal. The mission is held twice a year and consists of members from both GOI and DP. While the mechanism has brought a lot of issues on the forefront, there are some major flaws in the methodology that has resulted in lack of in-depth analysis of various indicators, which has already been discussed in preceding sections.

Field visits are a part of every alternate JRM and GOI, along with DP, identify states to be visited each year. Unfortunately, within states, it is up to each state to decide

which districts and blocks that will be visited. During the interview, some key informants had commented that due to time constraint, most school visits are a planned exercise. Further, mostly schools that are easily accessible by good roads are frequently visited. In some cases, districts are informed beforehand about the visits. Hence, observations made during school visits may not be a true representation of the reality.

Another weakness of JRM mechanism is that it is mainly data driven. There is more emphasis on input indicators and implementation processes and outcomes do not receive adequate attention. Consequently, discussion on gender and equity is reduced to data on enrolment of boys and girls, closing the gap in enrolment and listing of quantitative achievements in special schemes for girls.

Thirdly, recommendations made by the JRM are not binding on the state governments. Over the last 8 years, some issues have been raised over and over again. For example, JRMs have repeatedly asked for a rigorous study on the impact of teacher training on teaching learning processes and ultimately learning outcomes of children. It has also been recommended that all data presented in JRM needs to be disaggregated by location, social group and within them gender. Further, there has been a demand to expand the coverage of all private schools under DISE. These issues are yet to be tackled with rigor and seriousness that it merits.

Equally significant is the fact that over the years JRM has recommended many in-depth studies such as a study on inclusion and exclusion in the classroom; a study on effectiveness of VEC (Village Education Committee) and SMC; a study on contract teachers etc. However, we were informed that even though most of these studies are presented in the mission, issues raised in these studies are often skimmed over after formal presentation. Consequently, we do not find any reference of these studies in JRM reports.

Finally, there is reluctance on the part of the JRM to look at data from different sources. GOI is comfortable with using DISE data and is also willing to look at data generated by NSSO (National Sample Survey Office). But, triangulation of information on socio-economic indicators and caste/community with education participation of children remains a challenge (Sankar, 2008). Despite the fact that

DISE collects information on equity indicators such as location, there is no analysis of data on PTR, multi-grade classrooms and single teacher schools. Similarly, data generated by other independent reports such as ASER Surveys, EI studies on learning (2010), PAISA report (2012) are often ignored. Even studies that other government departments accept such as NCAER's HDI survey (Desai et all, 2010) or the Right to Food campaign studies on Mid-Day Meal[7] are not discussed during the JRM because they have not been 'officially sanctioned' (Key informant interviews, 2013).

[7] http://www.righttofoodindia.org/mdm/mdm_surveys.html

# Section 4: Going forward

There is little doubt that exploring gender and social equity issues is not easy in a country like India. We perhaps know a lot more today than we did at the start of DPEP in 1994 and SSA in 2003. Going forward, the ultimate goal of SSA is not only to ensure that children enrol in school, but also that they learn regardless of their gender, ability, social identity and economic status. The key to learning lies with teachers and teaching learning processes. This is one issue that has been skirted in most JRM reports. There is a little discussion on how the system can make sure teachers attend school regularly and teach children with love and affection and not discriminate or exclude some children.

Equally, we are wary of taking on board remedial teaching and on-going supplementary support required by children from underprivileged families and communities. There is mounting evidence that more and more children are forced to attend private tuitions and that this adversely affects the education of very poor and among them, girls. This is primarily because either parent's do not have enough money to pay for tuitions or they would rather send boys for tuitions. There is also considerable evidence that suggests that teachers are pressurized to complete the syllabus regardless of whether children are learning or not. Research shows that in the absence of regular teaching-learning process or in a situation where majority of children do not have basic language or mathematic skills, focused efforts are required to help these children to acquire basic skills (Muralidharan, 2013). For example, there is evidence that suggests that after-school learning programs and focused early reading programs can make a huge difference (Banerjee, Banerji, Duflo, Walton, 2012). Additionally, we need to work out ways by which teachers are motivated, maybe through incentives and disincentives, so that they ensure that every child in their classroom is learning. Along with that, there is also a need to clearly define "equity" and "quality" in order to create measureable goals to bridge gender and equity gaps.

Finally, in order to address equity and gender issues more seriously under JRM mechanism and to create a stronger monitoring and evaluation process, we feel that it is necessary to re-conceptualise the JRM process and re-work on the methodology. Keeping this in mind, we propose the following recommendations:

a. The JRM process needs to triangulate information from difference sources and on different dimensions of schooling experience and move towards a more holistic understanding and appreciation of equity and quality. Being an independent mechanism SSA JRM should go deeper into systemic issues that frame realisation of equity and quality goals of SSA. Given the overwhelming evidence from diverse sources, it is possible to initiate a culture of reflection.
b. Research studies commissioned by SSA, as a follow-up to JRM, needs to be taken more seriously and as evidence, that informs evaluation. Equally, many more agencies and institutions should be encouraged to conduct research across the country. Independent research is valuable and with some persuasion and reflection, it could be brought into the ambit of the JRM.
c. Instead of a 6-monthly mission, an annual exercise for a longer duration could result in in-depth examination of various issues. It would give the team an opportunity to spend more time in a district, visit randomly selected schools and interact with teachers, parents and the community, and hence, get an insight into the real situation. Equally important is to involve people who are working directly with schools, teachers and communities (for e.g. faculty from universities, educational researchers or NGOs) in the JRM process. It would provide greater insight into field realities.
d. Finally, in order to create a more effective mechanism, rather than exploring all the issues, each JRM could agree on a theme. For e.g., social equity can become a theme for a mission and various indicators such as access, learning, teaching, finance, program management and role of community can be discussed under the aegis of the larger theme.

While acknowledging that large scale programmes are difficult to review, focusing on specific issues or questions in each JRM and also bringing together a larger team that could spent at least two-weeks in at least 10 to 12 states in each mission could enrich the process. In addition to that, India has a large and rich pool of researchers, practitioners and administrators and also people who are actively engaged in issues related to social equity and gender justice. Reaching across disciplines and involving people who can bring a feminist and an equity perspective to the table would enrich the whole process.

The overarching learning from this modest desk review is that systemic capacity and functioning need to be brought to the centre-stage for the provision of high quality elementary education for all children and in particular, to bridge gender and social gap in all dimensions of education[8]. Therefore, the JRM process needs to recognise the centrality of systemic reform and focus on core issues within the system. In conclusion, gender and equity are not supplementary goals of SSA; they are actually overarching goals. Unless this perspective is foregrounded we will not be able to achieve the goal for education for all.

[8] "The elementary education system in India is situated in the context of stark social inequities, a fact which needs to be appropriately recognized. At present, the hierarchical ordering of the system on the one hand, and the illegitimate exercise of power by privileged individuals through the informal system on the other, aligns the system to serve, rather than counter these inequities. To a great degree, systemic reform and a better functioning state-run education system will address the question of inequity, because the inadequacies of the system affect the poor the most. Children from better-off families move to private schools, or supplement schooling with tuition, and it is the poor who bear the brunt of the poor functioning of the system. If government schools improve, even poor children will be able to access good education, like their better-off counterparts… General improvement across the system is unlikely to be enough and the system will need to move towards countering social inequities in more specific ways. At present, a dual approach is visible across the system. On the one hand there are measures that counter inequities, such as midday meals, free textbooks, scholarships for SC/ST and other poor students etc. Such provisions are essential. A further reduction in household expenditure, i.e., a more complete provision in the form of notebooks and other teaching-learning material to poorer children would be an important aspect of equity. Better implementation of such programmes is also necessary… On the other hand however, these measures to counter inequity are negated by the fact that the quality of schools tends to build upon existing inequities by providing lesser quality schools to poorer children. This negates the student benefits provided. In fact, scholarships provided by a school that does not function well amounts to a general subsidy to the family and not an increase in educational opportunity. At the same time, the education of children from marginalized communities requires a greater degree of skill, and teachers teaching such communities need to be trained rigorously. Children from such communities may need more support in terms of teaching learning materials etc. Thus schools from children from marginalized communities may need more, and not less than average funding. This is in stark contrast to the present situation where the quality of the school tends to 'match' the socioeconomic status of students, rather than ensuring that the social deprivations faced by these students are countered with their education. Sharma and Ramachandran. 2008.

# Annexure 1: The DPEP Programme

The District Primary Education Programme was initiated as a part of the larger Social Safety Net Credit Adjustment Loan under the Structural Adjustment Programme of the World Bank to India in 1991. Taking off from the policy guidelines in NPE 1986 and drawing upon the experiences of a range of primary education programmes, the DPEP Guidelines of 1994 stated that holistic planning and management is necessary to achieve universal primary education and that it 'should incorporate a gender perspective in all aspects of the planning and implementation process'. The guidelines recognises the importance of mainstreaming gender and making it an integral part of DPEP. It also recognizes the need for gender focus in tackling problems of access, retention and achievement levels and the importance of reaching out to children from most disadvantaged groups/communities. In this program, educationally backward districts with female literacy below the national average were taken as the priority districts. Equally, the program stressed on education for socially disadvantaged groups. The goals set by DPEP were:

- Reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievements between gender and social groups to less than 5 per cent;
- Reduce overall primary dropout rates for all students to less than 10 per cent;
- Raise average achievement levels by at least 25 per cent over measured baseline levels by ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40 per cent achievement levels in other competencies for all primary school children; and
- Provide access for all children to primary schooling or its equivalent non-formal education.

These goals bring out the programme's intent to increase coverage of girls, improve their academic achievements and reduce gender disparities in respect to enrolment, retention and learning achievements. Essentially, DPEP adopted a two-pronged strategy to meet gender and social equity goals, namely:

a. Make the education system more responsive to the needs and constraints of girls and children from disadvantaged communities; and
b. Create community demand for girls' education and enabling conditions for greater participation.

In pursuance of these objectives, DPEP created monitoring systems and structures to track gender and equity issues. The information and monitoring system of DPEP consisted of the following:

- PMIS (Project Management Information System) to capture inputs such as teacher deployment, civil works, training, research completed, expenditure and reimbursement – thereby tracking both physical and financial information;
- DISE (District Information System for Education) to capture enrolment, teacher deployment, classroom and performance indicators like Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio, repetition rates, student classroom ratio and pupil teacher ratio. The data was to be disaggregated by gender and SC/ST; and
- Bi-annual Joint Review Missions, research studies and, most recently, household surveys to estimate the number of out-of-school children to enable the government and donor partners to assess progress towards short-term, medium term and long-term development objectives.
- The DPEP MIS cell based in NIEPA developed the **Index of Gender Equity** and **Index of Social Equity** to track progress towards gender and social equity objectives and this continues to be a mandatory exercise in reporting on progress.

By 2001, DPEP was operational 18 states and 271 districts after taking into account recent bifurcations and trifurcations in districts and the carving out of three new states.

Source: Vimala Ramachandran, 2004

# Annexure 2: Equity and education

When India gained Independence in 1947 and during the formulation of the Indian Constitution, political leaders of that time debated the notion of equity and equality. Discussing the notion of equality, Jawaharlal Nehru said (in the Constituent Assembly on December 13, 1946)[9],

> "...at this stage, it is surely desirable that we should give some indication to ourselves, to those who look to this Assembly, to those millions in this country who are looking up to us and to the world at large, as to what we may do, what we seek to achieve, wither we are going. And I wish this House, if I may say so respectfully, should consider this Resolution not in a spirit of narrow legal wording, but rather look at the spirit behind that Resolution. Words are magic things often enough, but even the magic of words sometimes cannot convey the magic of the human spirit and of a Nation's passion...[The Resolution] seeks very feebly to tell the world of what we have thought or dreamt of so long, and what we now hope to achieve in the near future..."

The "spirit" of equality referred to by Nehru and Ambedkar during the constitutional assembly debates involved going beyond the formal mechanisms like equality before the law or the right to vote and moved towards creating a level playing field for the most disempowered and disadvantaged in our society. Various forms of affirmative action, including the reservation policy of the government, seeks to correct centuries of discrimination through proactive means in education, employment, land allocation and other benefits that the state announces from time to time. Equally, the "spirit of equality" also includes adherence to the right against discrimination, which means that overt and subtle forms of exclusion in the forms of untouchability, abuse, derogatory comments and stereotypes are punishable under legal provision made to combat atrocities against historically disadvantaged groups.

Taking the "spirit of equality" as the guiding maxim, this study goes beyond formal notions of equality. The various dimensions of equality are:

- Social identity – belonging to specific disadvantaged groups like SC and ST (within them the Maha Dalit – being the excluded within the excluded), minority communities like Muslims and those who are disadvantaged because

[9] http://www.indiankanoon.org/doc/548244/

of following certain occupations (sex work, rag pickers) that alienate them / exclude them from active membership in civil society.

- Gender – being a boy or girl could mean different things in different situations, communities and locations. Analysis of ASER data from 2006 to 2011 reveals that there is a consistent gap between percentage of boys and girls enrolled in private schools (all types, aided and unaided) with many more boys being sent by parents to fee paying private schools (Bannerji and Wadwa, 2011).
- Location – where a particular group of people are situated determines what kind of access they have. For example, remote desert villages in Jaiselmer or in Ladakh; remote tribal habitations in Chhattisgarh or Jharkhand; areas prone to seasonal flooding along the banks of rivers like the Brahmaputra in Assam, areas that experience frequent conflict along international borders or in conflict prone zones within the country, new unrecognised urban slums that cater to new migrants and so on.
- Disability is yet another dimension that leads to differential access, differential treatment and in many situation total exclusion from educational processes.
- Poverty, migration and related economic issues remain one of the most important markers of inequality.
- Health and physical situation is another important axis of inequality. In recent years, the situation of families who are HIV positive has been highlighted. However, when we look at health related issues among children, some health conditions like scabies lead to exclusion of children in the classroom and on the playground. Equally, persistent hunger and malnutrition has now been recognised as an important marker of inequality and exclusion.
- Educational level of parents, siblings and other significant care givers in the family.

All of the above intermesh with each other influencing not only formal access to schools but more importantly, how children are treated inside the school, their ability to participate actively in school activities, ability to learn in school and the kind of support they get or do not get at home and in their community (Bhattacherjea, Wadhwa, Banerji, 2011). Formal or physical access is just one dimension of equity. Many researchers (Balgopalan and Subrahmanian, 2003; Ramachandran, 2004; PROBE Revisited, 2006; Nambissan, 2009; Ramachandran and Naorem, 2012) have pointed out the persistence of differential behaviour of teachers

and administrators towards children from specific social groups or economic status or gender.

Coming to grips with gender and social equity issues in education requires a framework that can capture heterogeneous gendered realities and multiple disadvantages. Gender is embedded within a complex social and institutional structure in India. Therefore, it is necessary to look at gender inequalities in education within the broader framework of social, economic and location specific inequalities on the one hand and the prevailing school system on the other. A global study on girls education summarised the issues: "Already excluded because of their gender, many girls face multiple barriers, making it more difficult for them to enrol in and complete primary school and continue on to secondary school...reaching excluded girls generally means higher costs and alternative policies and strategies because their needs differ from those of majority population" (Lewis and Lockheed, 2007, p. 19-20)

Feminist scholars and those working on social exclusion have tried to tease out the texture of exclusion by identifying the levels, the sources and also the forms of exclusion. While the government has provided schools in most areas, discrimination or non-inclusion takes different forms for people from different social groups / locations. The illustrative grid below (Table 4.1) attempts to capture the heterogeneous gendered and social realities that frame educational participation in India. Given the complex inter-relationship between the social and economic situation of children and the situation that is obtained in the school it is globally acknowledged that achieving equity goals in education requires work on several fronts at the same time. It could be said that this is an unrealistic expectation especially in a country where inter-departmental and inter-ministerial coordination is not easy. As a result, our ability to achieve gender and equity goals of an education programme cannot be one-dimensional.

Researchers working on inequality in different spheres of social and political life invariably comment on how education could help children overcome disadvantages that they inherit. Many contemporary research studies discuss "teacher indifference (towards) or outright discrimination (against children from minority groups) as well as school policies, such as the medium of instruction being the state language rather than tribal languages or Urdu (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002; PROBE Team 1999).

Increasing reliance of schools on parental input may be another means through which generational disadvantage may persist. Parents with similar educational and economic backgrounds may still differ in their interpersonal, cultural and social skills of transferring educational and income gains onto to their children. This difference could lie between first-generation parents (dalits, Muslims, adivasis) with high income and education levels and, say, high-caste Hindu parents, with a tradition of good quality education going back many generations in their families…" (Desai and Thorat, 2011) Furthermore the HDI survey done by NCAER points out that "educational discontinuation rates – at primary and upper primary levels is highest among ST, followed by SC and Muslims, then OBC and a huge drop in discontinuation rates when it comes to forward caste Hindu. These observations are consistent with the finding from international literature on comparative education (Raftery and Hout, 1993; Shavit and Blossfeld, 1993), which also notes greater inequalities in education at early stages. Unfortunately, public policies, when it comes to addressing educational inequalities, tend to focus more on higher education instead of on early education, possibly because they are easier to address (Desai and Thorat, 2011).

While the education department may not be able to tackle poverty or migration or displacement or conflict it could address the multitude of issues enable a child to attend school, learn and emerge from it as a confident and happy child. This study tried to explore school level factors that could actively promote gender and social equity goals, namely:

1. Formal access to a functioning school, enrolment of all children in school;
2. Regular attendance of children, and efforts to ensure this;
3. Teachers present regularly and in stipulated numbers; and teaching. Here the question that begs attention is whether the teachers are focusing on completing the curriculum or are focused on children's learning.
4. Remedial / supplementary / focused support for children who need it, especially children who are not able to keep pace, long absentees and children who are not able to cope due to unfamiliarity with school language
5. Conducive school environment – infrastructure available and functioning (toilets, water), safe building and protection from extreme weather,
6. Access to books, stationary and other learning material; sports material available for use of all;

7. Children have proper clothes to wear (uniforms) to school, being extremely important for the very poor and among them for girls;
8. Teacher friendly, positive attitude (non-discriminatory, no prejudices), child-friendly and has necessary training to perform her / his task as teacher;
9. Absence of all forms of violence and abuse (mental, physical, emotional, sexual);
10. Provision of mid-day meal of good quality, nutritious and served without any overt or subtle forms of discrimination / exclusion;
11. Regular (or continuous) assessment and feedback to children, monitoring their learning and support to children who need it (those whose mothers / care giver is either not literate or has very basic literacy skills) or when needed; and
12. Textbooks and learning material free of gender and social / community biases.

The above inputs and processes, if delivered and monitored with care, would lead to meaningful access to education. The literature on education, for over fifty years now, underscores the importance of both formal inputs in the form of buildings, books, teachers etc. but also the criticality of processes and the everyday experience of teaching and learning in a school and the family environment (including access to reading material). Unfortunately, many content and process issues are not easily amenable to standardised quantitative indicators. For example, ensuring an environment that is free of prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping children on the basis of gender, caste, community, disability or parental occupation is now accepted as being as important as the daily routine of teaching and learning. These issues have been discussed across the world and the rich global experience on de-segregation of schools and making the integrated schools genuinely inclusive and welcoming to all could help India meaningfully address these difficult issues.

**Table 4.1: Heterogeneous gendered realities**

| School factors<br><br>Social Factors | Formal access to school / enrolment | Regular attendance of children | Teacher available and teaching; availability of women teachers | Conducive school environment , library, play ground, functioning toilets, safe drinking water | Access to books, stationer; free of gender / social biases | Proper clothes to wear to school | Teacher attitude / prejudice / practices child friendly | Absence of abuse, punishment, harassment (physical, mental, emotional, sexual) | Mid-day Meal – nutritious and clean | Learning assessment, feedback, encouragement, remedial support when needed | Sport and extra curricular activities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Location: remote, mountains, desert, inaccessible | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Social identity / community | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family occupation | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Educational level of family, especially mother or care giver | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child labour - seasonal / periodic / regular | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Migration – seasonal, distress | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Displacement – natural and man made | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Conflict | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Violence – at home, in school, in society | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disability | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Health | | | | | | | | | | | |

# Annexure 3: Some indicators by location

**Table 4.2: Schools with adverse PTR by distance from BRC**

| State/UT | Total Schools with adverse PTR | Schools with distance (Percentage) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 5 Km. | Between 5 - 10 Km. | More than 10 Km. |
| A & N Islands | 12 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 91.7 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 9120 | 27.0 | 34.7 | 38.3 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 2150 | 13.8 | 14.4 | 71.9 |
| Assam | 20644 | 7.1 | 22.0 | 70.9 |
| Bihar | 58367 | 23.7 | 45.1 | 31.2 |
| Chandigarh | 43 | 90.7 | 7.0 | 2.3 |
| Chhattisgarh | 12424 | 8.2 | 11.9 | 80.0 |
| D & N Haveli | 189 | 3.7 | 17.5 | 78.8 |
| Daman & Diu | 29 | 20.7 | 41.4 | 37.9 |
| Delhi | 1270 | 33.0 | 44.3 | 22.8 |
| Goa | 364 | 7.7 | 29.4 | 62.9 |
| Gujarat | 7375 | 11.0 | 23.2 | 65.8 |
| Haryana | 4912 | 20.0 | 35.7 | 44.4 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 1407 | 5.1 | 9.5 | 85.4 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 3197 | 14.2 | 32.0 | 53.8 |
| Jharkhand | 26175 | 13.0 | 32.5 | 54.5 |
| Karnataka | 8714 | 6.0 | 11.6 | 82.3 |
| Kerala | 270 | 18.5 | 27.0 | 54.4 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 61789 | 5.8 | 13.6 | 80.6 |
| Maharashtra | 12743 | 15.7 | 16.6 | 67.7 |
| Manipur | 494 | 9.1 | 21.1 | 69.8 |
| Meghalaya | 1021 | 10.7 | 15.8 | 73.6 |
| Mizoram | 232 | 7.8 | 4.3 | 87.9 |
| Nagaland | 305 | 11.8 | 9.8 | 78.4 |
| Odisha | 21213 | 10.5 | 22.9 | 66.7 |
| Puducherry | 13 | 15.4 | 23.1 | 61.5 |
| Punjab | 6317 | 16.7 | 33.1 | 50.2 |
| Rajasthan | 32840 | 6.1 | 11.0 | 82.9 |
| Sikkim | 44 | 15.9 | 22.7 | 61.4 |
| Tamil Nadu | 9008 | 15.2 | 30.8 | 54.0 |
| Tripura | 494 | 19.0 | 33.6 | 47.4 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 93823 | 17.7 | 37.0 | 45.4 |
| Uttarakhand | 6086 | 5.6 | 15.1 | 79.3 |
| West Bengal | 22480 | 27.1 | 38.9 | 33.9 |
| **Total** | **425564** | **14.4** | **28.1** | **57.5** |

Source: DISE 2011-12, tables prepared by MIS Unit, SSA TSG, EdCIL

**Table 4.3: Single Classroom Schools by distance from BRC**

| State/UT | Total Schools | Schools with distance (Percentage) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 5 Km. | Between 5 - 10 Km. | More than 10 Km. |
| A & N Islands | 9 | 11.1 | 22.2 | 66.7 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 20423 | 21.3 | 36.1 | 42.6 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 910 | 17.4 | 16.9 | 65.7 |
| Assam | 7277 | 6.9 | 22.5 | 70.6 |
| Bihar | 2237 | 27.5 | 43.0 | 29.5 |
| Chhattisgarh | 1227 | 5.6 | 10.5 | 83.9 |
| D & N Haveli | 17 | 0.0 | 11.8 | 88.2 |
| Goa | 223 | 8.1 | 25.1 | 66.8 |
| Gujarat | 685 | 8.2 | 15.5 | 76.4 |
| Haryana | 319 | 26.0 | 35.1 | 38.9 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 640 | 6.1 | 13.3 | 80.6 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 3046 | 22.3 | 29.8 | 47.9 |
| Jharkhand | 350 | 17.4 | 35.1 | 47.4 |
| Karnataka | 2847 | 6.4 | 14.7 | 78.9 |
| Kerala | 73 | 21.9 | 21.9 | 56.2 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 4071 | 6.6 | 13.3 | 80.1 |
| Maharashtra | 3677 | 6.1 | 12.3 | 81.6 |
| Manipur | 51 | 3.9 | 15.7 | 80.4 |
| Meghalaya | 1231 | 7.2 | 16.9 | 75.9 |
| Mizoram | 14 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Nagaland | 29 | 44.8 | 10.3 | 44.8 |
| Odisha | 2932 | 9.9 | 20.0 | 70.1 |
| Puducherry | 14 | 42.9 | 35.7 | 21.4 |
| Punjab | 401 | 23.7 | 29.2 | 47.1 |
| Rajasthan | 1773 | 13.4 | 15.9 | 70.7 |
| Sikkim | 15 | 20.0 | 33.3 | 46.7 |
| Tripura | 137 | 10.9 | 25.5 | 63.5 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 1214 | 53.6 | 24.3 | 22.1 |
| Uttarakhand | 345 | 5.5 | 13.3 | 81.2 |
| West Bengal | 2529 | 27.3 | 36.3 | 36.5 |
| Total | **58716** | **16.1** | **26.5** | **57.4** |

Source: DISE 2011-12, tables prepared by MIS Unit, SSA TSG, EdCIL

**Table 4.4: Schools with single Teacher by distance from BRC**

| State/UT | Total Schools with adverse PTR | Schools with distance (Percentage) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 5 Km. | Between 5 - 10 Km. | More than 10 Km. |
| A & N Islands | 10 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 90.0 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 5500 | 21.5 | 34.9 | 43.6 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 1865 | 13.3 | 15.2 | 71.5 |
| Assam | 9219 | 4.5 | 18.0 | 77.5 |
| Bihar | 2500 | 26.1 | 40.8 | 33.1 |
| Chhattisgarh | 3195 | 10.3 | 7.1 | 82.7 |
| D & N Haveli | 70 | 0.0 | 8.6 | 91.4 |
| Daman & Diu | 2 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| Delhi | 2 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| Goa | 346 | 7.2 | 29.2 | 63.6 |
| Gujarat | 236 | 11.0 | 16.5 | 72.5 |
| Haryana | 389 | 16.7 | 36.5 | 46.8 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 927 | 2.7 | 7.7 | 89.6 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 2160 | 14.3 | 30.2 | 55.5 |
| Jharkhand | 5356 | 10.9 | 28.8 | 60.3 |
| Karnataka | 4117 | 3.6 | 10.6 | 85.8 |
| Kerala | 58 | 10.3 | 13.8 | 75.9 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 19296 | 3.5 | 10.4 | 86.1 |
| Maharashtra | 1962 | 8.9 | 9.8 | 81.2 |
| Manipur | 349 | 7.2 | 17.8 | 75.1 |
| Meghalaya | 209 | 4.3 | 14.8 | 80.9 |
| Mizoram | 29 | 6.9 | 10.3 | 82.8 |
| Nagaland | 63 | 7.9 | 9.5 | 82.5 |
| Odisha | 4858 | 9.0 | 14.8 | 76.2 |
| Punjab | 1847 | 13.6 | 29.2 | 57.2 |
| Rajasthan | 15378 | 4.5 | 8.4 | 87.1 |
| Sikkim | 32 | 12.5 | 15.6 | 71.9 |
| Tamil Nadu | 1649 | 7.3 | 24.6 | 68.0 |
| Tripura | 63 | 15.9 | 30.2 | 54.0 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 14968 | 23.4 | 30.4 | 46.3 |
| Uttarakhand | 3846 | 3.7 | 10.3 | 86.1 |
| West Bengal | 1768 | 25.8 | 35.9 | 38.2 |
| **Total** | **102269** | **10.3** | **18.5** | **71.2** |

Source: DISE 2011-12, tables prepared by MIS Unit, SSA TSG, EdCIL

**Table 4.5: Percentage of Female Teachers by distance from BRC**

| State/UT | Percentage of Female Teachers by distance from BRC | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Overall % Female tchs. | Less than 5 km. | Between 5 and 10 km. | More than 10 km. |
| A & N Islands | 56.3 | 62.1 | 57.0 | 50.2 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 41.0 | 49.3 | 38.0 | 33.7 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 35.8 | 47.3 | 37.5 | 28.0 |
| Assam | 32.2 | 48.3 | 31.9 | 27.5 |
| Bihar | 40.8 | 45.2 | 39.7 | 38.2 |
| Chandigarh | 74.4 | 74.5 | na | 67.3 |
| Chhattisgarh | 32.4 | 54.0 | 38.9 | 27.7 |
| D & N Haveli | 54.0 | 72.7 | 75.6 | 33.0 |
| Daman & Diu | 66.5 | 66.9 | 68.5 | 63.5 |
| Delhi | 62.4 | 65.1 | 62.6 | 57.1 |
| Goa | 76.9 | 82.8 | 78.1 | 73.0 |
| Gujarat | 48.1 | 61.5 | 53.3 | 43.1 |
| Haryana | 41.4 | 59.0 | 40.8 | 35.6 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 36.0 | 53.9 | 44.3 | 30.3 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 36.7 | 49.0 | 34.7 | 28.6 |
| Jharkhand | 26.1 | 41.4 | 26.5 | 20.8 |
| Karnataka | 48.0 | 66.1 | 56.6 | 41.9 |
| Kerala | 71.7 | 71.7 | 72.7 | 70.8 |
| Lakshadweep | 46.4 | 47.8 | na | 44.4 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 30.9 | 54.4 | 36.5 | 25.7 |
| Maharashtra | 39.0 | 57.0 | 47.6 | 32.0 |
| Manipur | 46.1 | 57.4 | 50.8 | 39.8 |
| Meghalaya | 50.2 | 61.1 | 55.7 | 46.5 |
| Mizoram | 40.9 | 53.6 | 44.9 | 34.3 |
| Nagaland | 38.8 | 52.0 | 46.3 | 30.7 |
| Odisha | 38.5 | 56.4 | 41.6 | 31.7 |
| Puducherry | 56.5 | 59.5 | 56.1 | 52.2 |
| Punjab | 58.1 | 69.1 | 58.5 | 52.7 |
| Rajasthan | 28.7 | 49.3 | 35.1 | 24.8 |
| Sikkim | 43.9 | 54.0 | 47.9 | 37.9 |
| Tamil Nadu | 68.5 | 77.1 | 70.0 | 64.1 |
| Tripura | 25.7 | 35.3 | 25.7 | 20.4 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 44.2 | 50.8 | 44.6 | 41.1 |
| Uttarakhand | 43.0 | 62.9 | 50.6 | 38.7 |
| West Bengal | 33.9 | 43.1 | 31.2 | 25.7 |
| **Total** | **40.5** | **52.1** | **42.5** | **34.6** |

Source: DISE 2011-12, tables prepared by MIS Unit, SSA TSG, EdCIL

# Annexure 4: What is discussed and what is missing from JRM

**Table 4.6: Illustrative example on access related indicators**

| Indicators | Gender (boys/girls) | Social group (SC/ST/Muslims) | Social groups (boys/girls) | Location (Rural/Urban) | Location (Remote/Hilly /Tribal) | CWSN (general) | CWSN (acc. to disabilities) | Children from migrant families | Urban Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Enrolment** | Discussed | Discussed | Limited discussion | Limited discussion | Rarely discussed | Discussed | No discussion | Recognized as a challenging area; no data given | |
| **Govt. vs private school enrolment** | Overall discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Rarely discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Attendance** | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Absenteeism** | Rarely discussed | Rarely discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | High absent rate; no data given | No discussion |
| **Drop out rate** | Discussed | Limited discussion | Rarely discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **OOSC** | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | Limited discussion |
| **Retention** | Discussed | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Rarely discussed | No discussion | Rarely discussed | Rarely discussed |
| **Transition from PS to UPS** | Discussed | Limited discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Completion rate** | Rarely discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Availability of school** | Discussed including data on KGBV, NPEGEL | Discussed including data on EGS, AIE | Mainly data on KGBV, NPEGEL | No discussion | Mainly data on EGS, AIE | Discussed including home schooling | | Bridge courses; residential schools | |
| **Availability of PS within 1 km** | Has not been discussed separately for any particular group | | | Limited discussion | | Has not been discussed separately for any particular group | | | |
| **Availability of UPS within 3 km** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Drinking water facility** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Toilets** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Ramps** | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |

**Table 4.7: Illustrative example on learning and teaching related indicators**

| Indicators | All children | Gender (boys/girls) | Social group (SC/ST/Muslims) | Location | CWSN | Children from migrant families | Urban Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning levels** | Discussed | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | Mentioned only once | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Availability of textbooks** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Incentives** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | Discussed | Limited discussion | Limited discussion |
| **STC** | Discussed | Not specifically according to gender or social group but under broader category of children from vulnerable groups | | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **Bridge courses** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **Residential schools** | Discussed | Discussed | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Discussed | Discussed |
| **PTR** | PTR has been usually discussed in terms of PS and UPS and only occasionally, according to rural/urban | | | | | | |
| **Single teacher school** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Multi-grade classroom** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **No. of teachers** | Not discussed in relation to any particular group. Only overall data is given | | | | | | |
| **No. of female teachers** | Overall data on female teachers is given occasionally. Issue of low female teacher ration in remote & tribal areas has been discussed a few times. | | | | | | |
| **Teacher qualification** | Discussed | No discussion | No discussion | No discussion | Limited discussion | No discussion | No discussion |
| **Teacher training** | Overall data on number of teachers trained and yet to be trained is given regularly. Discussion on issues of gender and equity as a part of training program has been discussed often. | | | | | | |
| **Time on task** | Discussed as an overall issue and not according to any specific group. | | | | | | |
| **Attitude & behavior of teachers** | Not discussed at all. | | | | | | |

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