

FOURTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(2019-2021)**

FIFTY FIFTH REPORT
(Presented on 4th July, 2019)



**SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

2019

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On

**Paragraphs relating to General Education Department
contained in the Report of the Comptroller and
Auditor General of India for the year ended
31st March, 2014 (General & Social Sector)**

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(2019-2021)

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts, having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report, on their behalf present the Fifty fifth Report on paragraphs relating to General Education Department contained in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31st March, 2014 (General & Social Sector).

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector) was laid on the Table of the House on 23rd March, 2015.

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 1st July, 2019.

The Committee place on records their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them by the Accountant General in the examination of the Audit Report.

Thiruvananthapuram,
1st July, 2019.

V. D. SATHEESAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

REPORT

GENERAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Performance Audit of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Kerala (SSAK)

INTRODUCTION

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a flagship programme of the Government of India (GOI) launched in the year 2000-01. In Kerala, the implementation of the programme was started in 2002-03. This comprehensive programme is being implemented with the objectives of universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning levels of children in the 6 to 14 age group. SSA also focused on providing Inclusive Education to all CWSN (Children With Special Needs) in schools. SSA ensures that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided quality Inclusive Education. The programme also aimed at identification of Out Of School Children (OOSC) and developing context specific strategy to provide special training for them. The programme seeks to open new schools and construction of additional classrooms, toilets and drinking water facilities to strengthen existing school infrastructure. It envisages enhancing the capacity of teachers by providing periodic teacher training and through academic resource support. It also provides text books and support for learning achievement. After the enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009), the SSA framework for implementation was revised to align various provisions under SSA with the legally mandated norms, standards and free entitlements mandated by the Act.

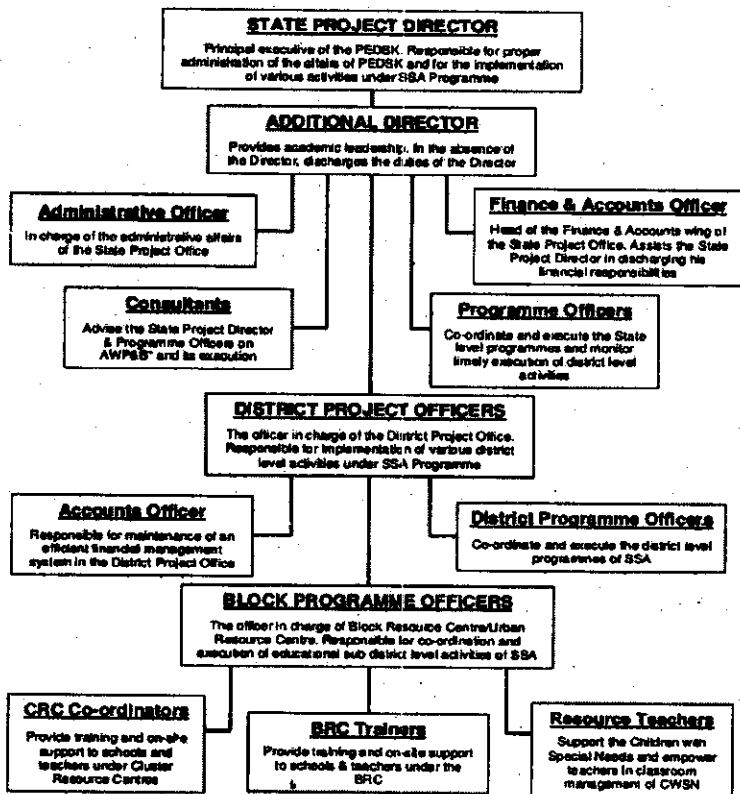
The State followed a four year primary education cycle from class I-IV and a three year upper primary cycle from class V-VII. While Standards I to IV were categorized as Lower Primary Section, Standards V to VII were categorized as Upper Primary Section and Class VIII was attached to High School Section. The 2011 census ranked Kerala first in the country in total literacy rate (93.91 per cent) and female literacy (91.98 per cent). The gap in literacy rate between male and female which stood at 6.34 per cent as per the 2001 census, when the SSA was launched was reduced to 4.04 per cent during the 2011 census.

Organisational Setup

The programme is implemented in Kerala by a State Implementation Society viz., PEDSK. At State level, the State Project Director was responsible for implementation of the programme. The district level functions were implemented

by District Project Officers. Teachers were provided academic resource support by 168 Block Resource Centres¹ (BRCs) and 1385 Cluster Resource Centres² (CRCs). The organisational set up of PEDSK is given in the organogram given in Chart.

Chart 2.1
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan - Kerala
ORGANOGRAM



* Annual Work Plan & Budget

- 1 Block Resource Centres-Unit at block level (In the state the unit is at sub educational district level) to provide training and on-site support to schools and teachers. In urban areas, BRCs are called as Urban Resource Centres.
- 2 Cluster Resource Centres-Unit at cluster level to provide training and on-site support to schools and teachers.

Audit Objectives

With a literacy rate of 93.91 per cent, Kerala ranks first in the country in literacy rate and hence the Performance Audit of SSA focussed only on the effectiveness of SSAK's interventions in specific areas of:

- bridging of gender and social category gaps in providing elementary education and providing Inclusive Education to Children with Special Needs (CWSN);
- getting Out of School Children in the age group of 6 to 14 to attend schools;
- improving the quality of education.

Audit Criteria

Audit findings were benchmarked against the criteria derived from the following documents:

- SSA Framework for implementation strategies based on Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (Framework).
- Manual for Planning and Implementation of Inclusive Education in SSA for education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN).
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009).
- The Kerala Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011 (Kerala RTE Rules, 2011).
- SSA Manual on Financial Management and Procurement.
- PEDSK Rules and Regulations.
- Annual Work Plan and Budget approved by Project Approval Board, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), GOI.
- Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 (PWD Act, 1995).

Scope and Methodology of Audit

The Performance Audit on 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', Kerala (SSAK) covering the period 2009-2014 was conducted from December 2013 to September 2014. The Performance audit on SSAK evaluated the planning and implementation of various interventions³ in the State to achieve the overall objectives of the programme. Five⁴ out of 14 districts in the State were selected for audit using Stratified Simple Random Sampling method. The district of Wayanad was additionally included in a survey on "Out Of School Children (OOSC)" conducted by Audit as it has been recognised as a backward region and residents in the district face special challenges as compared to the rest of the State. The State Project Directorate of SSA, District Project Offices, 21 Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and 84 schools (42 Government and 42 Government aided) were selected for test check. Audit methodology included interviews with parents/guardians of OOSC and sample beneficiary survey of CWSN in the selected BRCs (Appendix III). Prior to the commencement of audit, an Entry Conference detailing the scope, audit objectives, etc., was held on 30 April 2014 with the Secretary, General Education Department. The Exit Conference was held on 8th December 2014 in which audit findings were discussed.

Finances of the Programme

The expenditure on the programme was to be shared between Government of India (GOI) and the Government of Kerala (GOK) in the ratio of 60:40 during 2009-10 which was later revised to 65:35 during 2010-2014. The GOI share was released directly to PEDSK in the State in two instalments. GOI would release an adhoc grant in April every year up to a maximum of 50 per cent of actual funds utilized by PEDSK in the previous year, pending approval of the Annual Work Plan & Budget. The adhoc grant was to be adjusted while releasing the subsequent instalment due to the State, as per approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget for the year. The State share was released to PEDSK by the Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) and GOK.

3 Inclusive Education, Academic Support through BRCs/CRCs, supply of textbooks/uniforms, infrastructure development, etc.

4 Emakulam, Kasaragod, Pathanamthitta, Thiruvananthapuram and Thrissur.

Table : Year-wise details of Receipt and Utilisation of Funds

(in crore)

Year	Approved Outlay	Unspent Balance of Previous Year	GOI Release	GOK Release	13th FC Grant	Other Receipts	Total Fund Available	Expenditure	Unspent Balance at the end of the year	Expenditure against approved outlay (Per cent)	Unspent Balance (per cent)
2009-10	212.65	34.47	119.90	72.29	0	1.67	228.33	193.00	35.33	90.76	15.47
2010-11	432.19	35.33	196.61	108.55	25	2.75	368.24	251.26	116.98	58.14	31.77
2011-12	476.37	116.98	170.22	115.06	27	9.88	439.14	249.96	189.18	52.47	43.08
2012-13	523.02	189.18	134.49	127.88	28	7.92	487.47	399.22	88.25	76.33	18.10
2013-14	402.94	88.25	208.01	120.68	29	6.44	452.38	410.87	41.51	101.97	9.18
Total	2047.17		829.23	544.46	109	28.66	1975.56	1504.31		73.48	

(Source: Year-wise Annual Reports of SSAK 2009-10 to 2013-14)

The above table shows that the expenditure against approved outlay during 2009-2014 was 73.48 per cent and the expenditure against total receipts was 76.15 per cent.

The expenditure during 2010-11 was low as additional allocation obtained could not be utilised due to non-issue of order for appointment of substitute teachers by GOK and non-notification of RTE rules which was a condition for purchase and supply of school uniform. Similarly, the expenditure during the year 2011-12 was low due to delay in issue of order for appointment of substitute teachers and part time teachers by GOK.

[Audit paragraph 2.1 to 2.6 contained in the Report of C&AG of India for the year ended 31st March, 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

1. The Committee enquired whether the existing norms were revised after the notification of RTE Act. The State Project Director, SSA replied that expenditure for appointment of substitute teachers and providing of uniforms were met from the budget of SSA. When the Committee enquired about the appointment of substitute teachers, Director, SSA replied that Headmaster could appoint the substitute teachers by relieving his class charge in the schools if the number of students in the upper primary sections are more than 100 and that of lower primary sections are more than 150. He added that the Government of India had provided fund for the payment of salary to substitute teachers.

2. The Committee was of the opinion that SSA was implemented for enhancing the learning levels of minority communities and Children With Special Needs. Regarding the dropouts in schools, the Committee noticed that out of 128 children identified, 100 belonged to SC/ST Communities. The Committee raised a series of criticism against the school dropouts. The State Project Director SSA informed that SSA could not expend the allocation during first year due to non-notification of RTE rules which was a condition for purchase and supply of school uniforms and could not appoint teachers due to the non-issue of order for appointment of substitute teachers by Government of Kerala.

3. To the query of the Committee regarding utilisation of fund during the fagend of the financial year, the State Project Director, SSA replied that the expenditure against the available fund was 85.12% and the expenditure against the total outlay was 60.95%. The Secretary, General Education department informed that, the allocation could not be utilised fully, since there was delay in proper releasing of fund from Local self Government institutions to SSA Projects and the late sanctioning of fund during March. The non-utilisation of fund resulted in increase in the opening balance and that would cause shortage in allotment by Government of India. Proper utilisation of fund could be possible only on the timely allocation of fund and the department directed SSA during the year to inform the Project details to Local Self Government Department. The Committee

pointed out that regarding the deduction in Government of India release, the problem could be solved by deducting the outlay from the plan fund of LSGIs. Then the Secretary General Education department added that it could be done as in the case of RMSA. The Committee then enquired whether any specification was included in plan fund SPD, SSA replied that eventhough there were specification in plan fund, the allocation would be recieved only in the month of March.

4. The Committee criticized that when the Government releases fund to local self Government institutions in instalments, panchayats divert the fund initially to other heads without allocating to SSA Projects. If the fund remained unutilized with LSGIs, they would increase the expenditure by giving it to SSA. However if the LSG institutions needed fund for other matters, they did not allot fund to SSA projects. The Secretary, General Education department supplemented that by non allocating fund in time, an amount to the tune of ₹120 crore was being lost by the state in every year.

5. The Committee analysed that delay occurred in proper releasing of fund from local self Government institutions to SSA Projects and hence major activities of SSA lacked focus and it caused reduction in further Government of India release. The Committee stressed that all measures would be taken for the timely release of funds to SSA from LSG institutions.

6. The Committee directed the Education department to inform the project details including the beneficiaries well in advance to LSGD and to deduct the total outlay from the original plan fund and to earmark it for SSA in the same manner as it was done in the case of RMSA. The Secretary, General Education department added that they would inform it to SSA and would take steps to improve the coordination between SSA and LSGD.

7. The Finance and Accounts officer, SSA, informed the Committee that the Government of India would release fund for uniform and salary to teachers through supplementary budget. Usually the amount would be granted in three instalments. Even in the current year against an amount of ₹ 338 crore due from GOI, only ₹ 135 crore would be given as central contribution for the scheme as per the approved minutes.

8. Considering the deduction in Government of India release and the utilisation of fund by RMSA through advance deduction of grant from the plan fund, the Committee decided to recommend that there should be a system for the timely allotment of fund for the SSA schemes through advance deduction of the outlayed amount from the plan fund well before releasing to LSG institutions in the same manner it was done in the case of RMSA.

Conclusions/Recommendations

9. The Committee observed that delay in proper releasing of fund from local self government institutions to SSA projects and hence major activities of SSA lacked focus and it caused reduction in further Government of India fund release. So the Committee directs the LSG department to take necessary steps for timely release of funds to SSA from LSG institutions without diverting it to other heads.

10. The Committee directs the Education department to inform the project details including the beneficiaries well in advance to LSGD and to deduct the total out lay from the original plan fund and earmark it for SSA in the same manner as it was done in the case of RMSA. The Committee recommends that there should be a system for the timely allotment of fund for the SSA scheme through advance deduction from the plan fund well before releasing to LSG institutions.

Audit Findings

Bridging of gender and social category gaps and Inclusive Education for Children With Special Needs

Bridging of gender and social category gaps in elementary education was one of the goals of SSA. Consequently, SSA aimed at reaching out to girls and children belonging to SC, ST and minority communities. Besides, SSA was also contributing to inclusive education of Children With Special Needs.

Gender and Social category gaps

Though bridging the gender and social category gaps in elementary education was one of the major objectives of SSA, District Project Officers in test checked districts stated that no study or survey to assess the gender or social category gaps in education had been conducted. SSAK in its Annual Reports for the years 2009-10 to 2013-14 reported that enrolment of SC/ST children was at par with general category. It was stated that there was no gender gap or social category gaps as evidenced from enrolment, retention and dropout rates.

Audit however noticed that the reports published by the ST Development Department and the SC Development Department of the State (studies conducted during 2008-2010 and 2009-2010 respectively) revealed that 23.93 per cent of ST children either dropped out or discontinued studies. Among SCs, the report of the department stated that 9.75 per cent of the children dropped out at the school level.

There was also a preponderance of SC/ST among the OOSC tracked by Audit. Out of 128 OOSC identified by Audit, 100 belonged to ST and SC communities. Two children belonging to SC community were not sent to school by their parents because they were members of an organisation which taught their children as per their own syllabus. In order to retain children in schools, activities like vocational training, sahasava⁵ camp, training in martial and folk arts, exposure trips, training in bicycle riding, personality development camps, padanaveedu⁶, parental awareness, etc., were conducted in the test checked districts. Despite SSAK implementing these initiatives, the high percentage of children remaining out of school among different disadvantaged and social category groups at the elementary level of education is an issue of concern.

In the Exit Conference (December 2014), the Secretary did not agree with the number of OOSC reported by SC Development and ST Development Departments and stated that the figures required examination. The observation of the Secretary is not acceptable and can only be termed as presumptive in view of the fact that SSAK had not conducted any household survey to determine the number of school dropouts and did not possess reliable data on enrollment, retention and dropouts of children.

[Audit paragraph 2.7 and 2.7.1 contained in the Report of C&AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

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- 5 Sahavasa camp: Camps conducted to help children to mingle with others and to face different life situations. Moral values were conveyed to them in the camp through games and activities.
- 6 Padanaveedu: Neighbourhood learning centres organized to focus on SC/ST and minority students who lack learning environment at home. Under the guidance of education volunteers these students get a space and help to improve their studies.

11. To the query of the Committee, regarding the gender and social category gaps, the Secretary, General Education Department informed that in Kerala, the total enrolment of girls is naturally lower compared to boys. She also added that margin could be lowered with the help of local bodies.

12. The Committee observed that the report of SC/ST department revealed that 23.93% of ST children either dropped out or discontinued their studies and among SCs 9.75% of the children dropped out at the school level.

13. The Committee was aggrieved to note that the SSA had no mechanism to determine the number of school drop outs in every year and opined that it was also an important audit observation.

14. The Committee noted that the drop out of children at the elementary level of education is an issue of concern. The Committee directed the department to conduct a detailed survey every year to determine the enrollment and drop out of children. The Committee also suggested that a particular area should be focused and remarked that a short term plan was essential in this regard.

15. The Director of Public Instructions informed that SSA had conducted learning classes in all tribal habitats like 'ooruvidhyakendrams'. The tribal department appointed well educated persons as mental health teachers in Wayanad district to help children who had language difficulties. He also added that corner meetings, involvement of NGOs and LSGs, incentives etc. could be organised by SSA to ensure attendance of all students in schools.

16. The Secretary, General Education department informed that SSA was proposing a new strategy in the state to cover the tribal children. She added that survey had been conducted and SSA decided to build two boarding houses at Edamalakkudi and Nilambur by utilising the SSA-Tribal fund since there was more out of school children in that area. The main purpose of building boarding houses would be to teach out of school students.

17. When a member of the Committee remarked that it would be better to provide temporary job on rotation basis to mothers of children in the boarding schools, the Secretary, General Education Department assured that it would be implemented at both Edamalakkudi and Nilambur.

18. DPI informed that by co-operating with the Tribal Department, classes were being conducted in all evenings at all tribal habitats. In addition to that, Tribal department appointed educated people from tribal areas as Mental Health Teachers in order to help students who had language disability.

19. The Committee observed that lack of proper action plan was one of the hurdles in the implementation of the programme. The Committee directed SSA to implement short term and long term plans to retain the children in the schools and directed the department to take measures to determine the number of school drop outs.

20. Regarding the audit paragraph the Committee directed that at every BRC there should be a mechanism for equal distribution of the budget allocation based on the number of beneficiaries. The Committee noted that there were huge number of children who were not able to attend the BRCs. The Committee opined that although the centre was planning to wind up the SSA framework, SSA programme had actually strengthened the existing school infrastructure in the state.

21. The State Project Director, RMSA, informed the Committee that the secondary school level functions were implemented by the IED cell, which was under the DPI. Eventhough the IED cell was integrated to RMSA scheme, the distribution of scholarship was monitored by the IED Cell itself. The distribution of scholarship by the IED cell was never approved by the Central Government and also by many disability centres. The Central Government would reduce the amount in accordance with their share in fund. Since the amount allotted to various state Governments were less, the state Government have to allocate the balance share additionally. As the UCS furnished by IED cell were defective, new schemes had not been approved for four years. Funds were provided based on the figures approved by Centre and not on the basis of the list of IED cell, which resulted in the exclusion of more eligible students.

22. When the Committee wanted to know the difference between SSA and RMSA, the State Project Director RMSA informed that RMSA covers ninth to twelfth standards and the SSA also covered the students of eighth standard. To the query of the Committee regarding the scholarship distribution, State Project director replied that the Central Government approved the IED cell on January,

and the plan was approved for distribution of scholarship according to the number of students in the previous year, but it would vary in succeeding years. The Secretary, General Education department informed that almost ₹10 crore was needed for the scholarship distribution in ninth to twelfth classes.

Conclusions/Recommendations

23. The Committee finds that the drop out of children at the elementary level of education is an issue of concern and opines that SSA had no mechanism to determine the number of school drop outs every year. The Committee directs the department to conduct a detailed survey every year with special focus to particular localities to determine the enrollment and drop out of children.

24. The Committee observes that lack of proper action is one of the major hurdles in the implementation of the programmes meant to prevent school drop outs. The Committee directs SSA to implement short term and long term plans to retain children in schools and directs the department to take measures to determine the number of school dropouts.

25. The Committee remarks that high percentage of children remain out of school among different disadvantaged and social category groups at the elementary level of education and recommends to evolve a mechanism for distribution of budget allocation on the basis of the number of beneficiaries in every BRC.

26. In order to retain children in schools, the Committee directs the department to take steps for providing temporary jobs on rotation basis to mothers of children in the boarding schools, in all tribal habitats.

Inclusive Education for Children With Special Needs

The term 'Children With Special Needs' (CWSN) refers to children who are challenged with various problems such as that of vision, hearing, speech, orthopaedically impaired, learning, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, autism and multiple disability. Inclusive Education (IE) is intended to enable CWSN to attend regular schools like other children. Besides, it was also important that these children receive all the support they need to learn adequately. The key thrust of SSA was on providing IE to all CWSN in general schools. The SSA Manual for CWSN, April 2003 (SSA Manual) stipulated that expenditure up to ₹ 1200 per year

could be incurred on a child with minimum of 40 per cent disability in line with the Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act 1995 (PwD Act 1995). This was later revised to ₹3000 per year, per child from 2010-11 onwards. The total number of children identified as CWSN and expenditure per child during the years 2009-2014 is given in Table.

Table : CWSN-Expenditure per child

Year	No. of CWSN	Budget allocation (₹ in Lakh)	Budgeted Rate per CWSN (in ₹)	Expenditure (₹ in Lakh)	Expenditure per CWSN (in ₹)
2009-10	125017	1125.15	900.00	1139.92	911.81
2010-11	122157	2809.61	2300.00	2297.41	1880.70
2011-12	124854	2994.93	2398.75	2056.04	1646.75
2012-13	164094	3445.97	2100.00	2653.22	1616.89
2013-14	178201	2370.07	1330.00	2156.01	1209.88

Projection of higher number of CWSN

Since the budget allocation for Inclusive Education was based on the number of CWSN, Audit noticed a tendency to inflate the number of CWSN in the Annual plans formulated by SSAK as explained below:

- As per the 2011 census, there were 5377882 children in the State in the age group 5 to 14 with 66519 disabled children, (1.24 per cent). The number of CWSN covered by SSAK during the years 2010-2014 was 1.84 to 2.68 times of 2011 census data.
- The Directorate of Public Instructions (DPI) had furnished the number of students in Government and aided schools with 40 per cent or more disability in the category of Visually Impaired (VI), Hearing Impaired (HI), Orthopedically Handicapped (OH) and Mentally Retarded (MR). The number of children reckoned as CWSN by SSAK in the above category was 2.3 to 3.2 times more than the CWSN reported by the DPI during the period 2009-2014.

The Project Approval Board of MHRD while approving the Annual Plan of SSAK for 2014-15 also expressed concern on the data on CWSN and advised sample check. On sample checking, it was found that children with mild problems like those using spectacles had been included resulting in the number of CWSN being inflated.

The Secretary, General Education Department admitted in the Exit Conference (December 2014) that a sample check of five per cent of CWSN by SSAK led to reduction of CWSN this year (2014-15) and stated that instructions had since been given to follow the screening process meticulously.

As the sample check has resulted in reduction of number of CWSN from 178201 during 2013-14 to 136206 during 2014-15, it is reckoned that SSAK had irregularly obtained ₹5.08 crore on 41995 non-existent CWSN at ₹1210 (average expenditure per CWSN during 2013-14) per CWSN. As similar instances of obtaining ineligible assistance on non-existent CWSN in the preceding years cannot be ruled out, the issue needs to be investigated.

[Audit paragraph 2.7.2 and 2.7.2.1 contained in the Report of C&AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

27. The Director of Public Instructions informed the Committee that, the allotted expenditure per child was ₹3000 per year for medical equipments and for the appointment of teachers to provide academic support. He added that since SSA followed a zero rejection policy as per the financial norms of SSA, SSA identified 98664 children in the previous years and children having 40% disability could only be considered as CWSN.

28. The Secretary, General Education Department informed that eventhough learning disability is a real disability, it was very difficult to assess the extend of disability of a child even by a medical board. The child having learning disability could get assistive aid from a scribe for writing SSLC exam. The parents of CWSN always selected a brilliant student from the ninth standard as scribe. Hence CWSN child would get 100% mark in the SSLC exam. The Secretary also

requested that extent of learning disability of a child would be entered in the SSLC book. Regarding the non-availability of medical assessment records the committee directed to keep the records properly.

29. The Committee wanted to know the reason for reducing the budgeted rate of expenditure per CWSN in 2013-14 to ₹ 1330. The Additional Secretary, General Education department informed that the budgeted rate per CWSN was revised to ₹ 1330 per child from ₹ 1200 and later it was revised to 3000 per child. He added that the expenditure per child includes salary of resource teachers, medical equipments and resource support for providing spectacles. The Committee came to know that even half of the allotted amount could not be spent for the purpose due to increase in the number of students and allotment of low amount.

30. To the query of the Committee regarding the irregular budget allocation of ₹ 5.08 crore, the Director of Public Instruction explained that as per the SSA financial norms, the SSA incurs expenses on a child with a minimum of 40% disability and SSA would adopt zero rejection policy so that no child was left out of the education system. The Secretary, General Education department informed that allocation on CWSN was based on the percentage of disability and shortage of fund was the main problem faced by SSA.

31. The Committee was aggrieved to note the audit observation that failure of SSA to take children to assessment camps to determine the extent and type of their disability, resulted in denial of regular medical attention, appropriate support services and special training required by them. Therefore, the Committee directed that medical checkup should be properly conducted and those children who had disability certificate must be exempted from attending medical camp. As the children were forced to obtain certificate from the Medical Board each years the Committee suggested the department to fix the validity period of disability certificate upto a minimum of three or five years except those cases in which change might happen over a period of time.

32. The Committee decided to recommend that there should be a scientific methodology for the early detection of learning disability in children and opined that the DPI would resort the matter to Government. Then the Committee directed the General Education department to discuss the matter with health department for implementing this strategy.

Conclusions/Recommendations

33. The Committee directs the department to conduct proper and regular medical checkups and to keep track of medical assessment records of all CWSN to ensure that no child should be refrained from receiving eligible facilities.

34. The Committee observes that SSA do not take children to assessment camps that results in its failure to determine the extent and type of disability and due to this even MR children who need regular medical attention are denied appropriate support services and special training. Therefore the Committee directs that medical checkup should be properly conducted and children who already possess disability certificate must be exempted from attending medical camp. It also suggests that a general validity period of three or five years should be fixed for the disability certificates once issued except for the cases that have a chance for early change of status.

35. The Committee stressed the need for a scientific methodology for the early detection of learning disability in children and directs the DPI to resort the matter to Government. It also directs the General Education department to take up the matter with health department to streamline the procedure.

Lacunae in medical assessment of CWSN for IE

The SSA Manual advised adoption of standard tools for the purpose of initial identification of CWSN. Model check lists were to be used for initial screening of children. The Manual also stipulated that the extent of disability of a child was to be decided in an assessment camp or in a government hospital by a competent medical board. Each child identified in the initial screening was required to be assessed to determine the extent and type of disability, the development level of the child, the nature of support services required, assistive devices required and the most appropriate form of special training to be given to the child. BRCs in test checked districts failed to produce to Audit case sheets/prescriptions (medical assessment records) of all children stated to have been taken to these camps. Audit was therefore unable to obtain assurance that all identified children were indeed examined at assessment camps. Details of children reckoned as CWSN in 21 test-checked BRCs and the number of CWSN for whom medical assessment records were available are given in Table.

Table : Year-wise details of CWSN identified and availability of medical assessment records

Name of District	NO of test checked BRCs	Total No. Of CWSN									
		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
		No. Of CWSN	Assessment camp records available	No. Of CWSN	Assessment camp records available	No. Of CWSN	Assessment camp records available	No. Of CWSN	Assessment camp records available	No. Of CWSN	Assessment camp records available
Thiruvananthapuram	4	3947	1367	5461	1655	4154	1312	4775	1071	4859	1141
Pathanamthitta	3	1691	647	1595	780	1724	767	3029	496	2730	661
Ernakulam	5	3242	1609	3778	2024	3660	2325	6477	1421	6189	1546
Thrissur	6	3320	1074	3632	983	4669	1664	6248	1593	6357	2230
Kasaragod	3	1478	976	1581	1124	3197	2337	1877	1248	3515	1699
Total	21	13678	5673	16047	6566	17404	8405	22406	5829	23650	7277

(Source: Selected BRCs)

The wide variation between the number of CWSN identified and the number of CWSN for whom medical assessment records were available indicated that children were included in SSA programme without proper assessment as observed below:

- Seventeen of the 21 selected BRCs reported that assessment camps for Learning Disability (LD) were not conducted. Even though four⁷ BRCs stated that they had conducted camps for assessment of LD, there was no case sheet to confirm that the children were indeed examined in these camps.
- The details collected from 21 test checked BRCs revealed that medical assessment records in respect of 41.91 per cent to 56.85 per cent of Visually Impaired Children, identified during the years 2009-10 to 2013-14, were not available.

7 Chavakkad, Chittarikkal, Palode and Wadakkanchery.

- During 2013-14, there were 4213 identified MR children in 21 selected BRCs. However, medical assessment records were available only for 1214 MR children.
- The beneficiary survey of CWSN conducted by Audit confirmed that out of 792 children (Appendix III) covered in the survey, medical assessment records of 460 children (Learning Disability 210, Low Vision 205 and Hearing Impaired 45) were not available at the BRCs. Model check lists as stipulated by SSA were also not used for initial screening of these 792 children.

SSAK replied (December 2014) that children who were supplied assistive aids and children not requiring assistive aids were not usually taken to assessment camps every year. Hence, there was variation between the number of CWSN and the number of children in respect of whom medical assessment records were available. The reply is not tenable in view of the fact that assessment camps for LD were not conducted in 17 of the 21 BRCs test checked and even MR children requiring regular medical attention were not taken to assessment camps. Thus, the failure of SSA to take children to assessment camps resulted in failure to determine the extent and type of their disability besides inability to assess the change in degree of their disability over a period of time. Children were thus denied the appropriate support services and special training required by them.

Preparation of Individualised Education Plan

Individualised Education Plan (IEP) is a statement stating the needs, special services required and the possible achievement of a child having special needs within a specified time frame. It should also state the most appropriate learning environment for the child. The SSA Manual required preparation of the IEP jointly by the special teacher as well as the general teacher and constantly reviewed by the district/block level functionaries to monitor the individual performance of each child.

Data collected from 21 test-checked BRCs revealed that IEPs were prepared only in 0.76 to 2.27 per cent of CWSN during 2009-2014. No IEP was prepared in any of the 792 cases of CWSN covered in the beneficiary survey conducted by Audit. Failure to prepare IEPs has resulted in inability to review the progress and monitor the individual performance of each CWSN.

SSAK replied (December 2014) that considering the lapses in previous years, instructions were since issued to prepare IEP for all categories of CWSN and to examine them periodically.

[Audit paragraph 2.7.2.2 and 2.7.2.3 contained in the Report of C&AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

36. Regarding the audit para about the preparation of Individualised Education Plan, the Committee asked whether the IEP was being prepared and sought for the details of sufficient training, if any, given to the general school teachers for preparation of IEP. The state Project director, SSA replied that the details available with them would be furnished.

Conclusions/Recommendations

37. The Committee directs the department to furnish the details about the preparation of Individualised Education Plan and details of training given to the general school teachers for preparation of IEP.

Assistance to Visually Impaired

The SSA Framework for Implementation stipulated that all children requiring assistive devices should be provided with aids and appliances, obtained as far as possible through convergence with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, State Welfare Departments, National Institutions, ALIMCO⁸, voluntary organizations or NGOs. It was also stated that SSA funds could be used if aids and appliances could not be obtained through convergence.

⁸ Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India.

Braille is the most important literacy tool for early childhood students who are blind or severely vision impaired. In the absence of Braille, children have to learn by listening to lessons and clear grades with the help of scribes who can read out to them and write their exams. The probability of children without access to proper Braille reading and writing skills dropping out of schools are greater as they are dependent on external assistance. Following were the details of blind CWSN identified by SSA in selected districts during 2009-2014.

Table : Year-wise details of blind children under SSAK in selected districts

District	No. of blind children				
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Thiruvananthapuram	56	57	60	67	68
Pathanamthitta	0	0	0	8	4
Ernakulam	1	15	8	20	16
Thrissur	24	26	36	38	39
Kasaragod	5	10	65	32	65

(Source: District Project Offices of SSAK)

Audit noticed that the blind CWSN in the above districts were not provided with Braille Books, Braille Kits and audio equipment during 2009-2014. Braille kits and Braille text books were not supplied by SSA to any of the 14 blind children covered in the survey. However, four children received Braille kits from other sources.

SSAK admitted (December 2014) that it was not providing Braille Kits and Braille Books under the impression that the blind children received these materials from Kerala Federation of Blind through DPI and that steps have been initiated to make available the materials during 2014-2015. The reply indicates the failure of SSAK to effectively co-ordinate with other agencies to ensure that the blind children were provided with Braille assistive aids. Failure of SSAK to ensure that blind children obtained learning aids and the resultant difficulty of blind children to learn despite attending regular school is cause for concern.

[Audit paragraph 2.7.2.4 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

38. To a query regarding ensuring the availability of Braille kits to the blind students, the State Project Director, SSA replied that, SSA not only provided Braille kits and Braille books to the students, but also conducted Braille exams to blind or severely vision impaired students.

Conclusions/Recommendations

No comments.

Engagement of Resource Teachers for CWSN

Resource Teachers (RTs) were specially qualified teachers capable of teaching children with special needs in all settings. Their main role was to provide remedial assistance to a child in those content areas in which he/she is having comprehension problems in a regular classroom. These teachers were expected to assess CWSN, teach the use of aids and appliances, prepare teaching material, design specific teaching activities, provide remedial teaching, prepare individual education plan, monitor the performance of CWSN, etc. RTs also advise the general teacher on how to cope with the needs of special children in the regular classroom. It was envisaged that these RTs would travel from school to school in a block/cluster according to need.

The SSA Manual required that as far as possible, RTs were to be appointed from each area of disability viz., visual impairment, hearing impairment and mental retardation. The number of RTs needed in a block would depend on the size of the block and the number of CWSN in the block. The category wise details of the number of CWSN in test checked 21 blocks and the details of RTs engaged by SSAK and their deployment across blocks is given in Appendix III.

Audit noticed that SSAK failed to offer CWSN resource support as envisaged in the SSA Manual. In the 21 test checked blocks, 23650 CWSN were provided resource support by 189 RTs. Audit analysed the deployment of RTs with reference

to the various categories of CWSN in the 21 selected BRCs during the year 2013- 2014 and observed as follows:

- There were only nine RTs to attend to 9880 Visually Impaired in the test checked BRCs. In 15 of the 21 BRCs, 7041 Visually Impaired were not provided the services of trained RTs. In BRC Chavakkad, only one RT was deployed to provide resource support to 834 such children. Beneficiary survey conducted by Audit also revealed that 10 out of 14 blind children were taught by resource teachers who were not Braille trained.
- None of the 3990 children suffering from Learning Disability and 310 children suffering from Autism were provided with the services of qualified RTs.
- Children suffering from Cerebral Palsy (294) in 18 of the 21 selected BRCs were also not provided with services of qualified RTs.
- In 12 of the 21 BRCs test checked, 1699 children classified as Hearing and Speech Impaired were denied the services of qualified RTs.

Audit analysed the profile of RTs to determine reasons for the skewed deployment of RTs. It was seen that 142 of the 189 RTs (75 per cent) had specialised in Mental Retardation (MR) even though only 17.81 per cent of the CWSN were categorised as Mentally Retarded. The disproportionately large number of RTs with specialisation in MR resulted in children with other disabilities being deprived of suitable resource support. Moreover, the number of RTs appointed was not commensurate with the number of CWSN. Despite the stipulation that the number of RTs needed in a block would depend on the size of the block and the number of CWSN in the block, SSAK admitted (January 2015) that no norms on ratio of CWSN to RTs had been fixed.

SSAK stated (January 2015) that from the next year onwards, posting of RTs would be made according to qualification in each category. It was also stated that most of the RTs were trained in the area of MR and that they had provided multi category training to equip the RTs to handle all categories of CWSN. During 2013-14 multi-category training was imparted for ten days to all RTs which was admittedly not sufficient. It further stated that it had since been decided to deploy RTs who have special training to support the blind in the next academic year.

The reply is not acceptable in view of the fact that SSAK failed to adhere to the stipulations contained in the SSA Manual which required appointment of RTs from each area of disability viz., visual impairment, hearing impairment, etc. Failure of SSAK to draft norms for determining the appropriate disability wise CWSN-RTs ratio resulting in its inability to provide academic support to large number of CWSN is inexcusable.

Functioning of Resource Teachers

The problem of inadequate number of RTs to attend to the requirements of CWSN was further compounded by the fact that out of 161 RTs for which the school visit details were available at BRCs, 139 RTs did not utilize even one third of the school working days for providing resource support to CWSN attending schools. While 15 RTs made school visits for only one to 20 days, 74 visited for 21 to 40 days and 50 RTs for 41 to 60 days during 2013-14.

Failure of RTs to make regular school visits deprived CWSN of the much needed support and resulted in payment of remuneration to RTs for services which they had not rendered.

[Audit paragraph 2.7.2.5 and 2.7.2.6 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

39. The Committee noted that 17.81% of the CWSN were categorised as mentally retarded, but 75% of the resource teachers were specialised for them. Then the Committee asked whether sufficient number of RTs were posted to support the blind and hearing impaired children, the state Project Director SSA, informed that the recruitment of teachers should be based on basic qualification, such as plus two with degree/diploma with special education etc and SSA had given training to them. Then the Committee observed that SSA failed to adhere to the stipulations required for appointment of resource teachers from each area of disability viz., visual impairment, hearing impairment, etc.

40. The Committee asked whether any norms on ratio of CWSN of RTs were prepared, State Project Director, SSA informed the Committee that one BRC requires 5 CWSNs and during previous year it was 8. The number of Resource Teachers approved by MHRD in Kerala were 795 and previously it was around 1800. The Government provided state fund and issued orders to appoint the excess teachers. He added that SSA had given training to all resource teachers on Braille writing and decided to deploy resource teachers to meet the needs of the blind children.

41. The Committee was of the opinion that teachers were appointed in all places irrespective of the number of CWSNs. Therefore the Committee decided to recommend that the number of resource teachers appointed should be commensurate with the number of CWSN.

Conclusions/Recommendations

42. The Committee observes that SSA failed to adhere to the stipulations required for appointment of resource teachers and directs that the department should take utmost care to train the resource teachers to support children suffering from each type of disability like blindness, hearing impairment etc.

43. The Committee remarks that same number of resource teachers are appointed in the BRCs irrespective of the number of CWSN trained there which results in uneven distribution of support services. The Committee suggests that the number of resource teachers appointed should be commensurate with the number of CWSN.

Enrollment and Retention in Schools

According to the RTE Act, 2009, which became operational from 1 April 2010, every child in the 6 to 14 age group shall have a right to free and compulsory education. SSA aims at universal access and retention of children.

Enrollment

Net Enrollment Ratio⁹ (NER) is an achievement indicator that reveals the level of enrollment of children of the age-group in schools. In its Annual Reports for the years 2009-10 to 2012-13, SSAK reckoned the NER of children in the age

9 The Net Enrollment Ratio is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled who are of the official age-group for a given level of education by the population for the same age-group and multiplying the result by 100.

group 6 to 14 in Kerala as 100 per cent. NER of 100 per cent was indicative of the fact that all children in the eligible age group were enrolled in schools. However, the annual report of SSAK for 2013-14 reported a lower NER of 85.48 for primary section and 82.26 for upper primary section. Since SSAK did not possess verifiable data on the actual population in the age group 6 to 14 and their school participation status, audit could not get an assurance about the accuracy of NER claimed.

School Mapping

The presence of a school at appropriate locations is an essential prerequisite to universal elementary education. Universal access to elementary education requires a school within the reasonable reach of all children. Rule 6 of the Kerala RTE Rules, 2011 define the limits of neighbourhood schools¹⁰ as one kilometre and three kilometres for children in class I to V and VI to VIII respectively. In order to obtain a clear picture regarding the availability of schools and to identify gaps and areas where new schools needed to be opened, SSA Framework for implementation (Framework) require States to map neighbourhoods and link them to specific schools. It was envisaged that school mapping would include (i) environment building in the village (ii) conduct a household survey (iii) preparation of a map indicating different households, the number of children in each household and their participation status in school (iv) preparation of a village/school education register (v) presentation of the map and analysis to the people and (vi) preparation of a proposal for improved education facilities in the village which would form the basis of the School Development Plan mandated under the RTE Act, 2009. The following were noticed in this regard:

- During 2009-2014, SSAK attempted school mapping twice; once in June 2010 by a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)-Maithri, which failed to provide a clear picture on the need for establishing more schools. Again school mapping was conducted during 2013-14 by SSAK themselves reckoning distance to neighbourhood school from a ward¹¹ as the criterion for identifying un-served areas. However, the annual plan for 2014-15

10 Neighbourhood Schools – Is a school located within the defined limits or area of neighbourhood, which has been notified by the State Government under the State RTE Rules.

11 Ward-Ward is the name called for the territorial area of a Local Self Government Institution for the purpose of election of a member.

prepared on this basis and submitted to MHRD was found defective as the number of wards with no school which was stated to be zero in 2011-12 and 2013-14 annual plan proposals, rose to 1107 and 1948 respectively in the annual plan proposals for 2012-13 and 2014-15. The MHRD, in the State Plan Appraisal Report also observed that the change in status of 'Access to school' as reported by SSAK was sudden and inexplicable. Thus the failure to conduct an effective school mapping exercise resulted in failure to possess accurate data on un-served habitations in the State.

- Audit observed that in areas where schools were not viable, SSA norms provided for alternative provisions like residential school and transportation facilities to enable children to obtain full time schooling. As per the Annual Plan 2014-15, SSAK proposed to provide transportation facility for easier access to schools to 3641 children who were living in un-served habitations. The proposal was not approved by MHRD citing the reason that the State had not defined the area/limits for children eligible to avail this provision. This has resulted in children being deprived of transportation facility, making it difficult for them to reach school.
- During the course of Audit, the audit team surveyed 128 OOSC. The survey revealed that 18 children did not attend the school as school was far away from places of their residence. Out of nine children who never enrolled in school, five did not enroll as the distance to the nearest school ranged between six and 28 kilometres.

The RTE Act, 2009 fixed a target of three years, up to 31 March 2013, for the establishment of neighbourhood schools. Even 20 months (November 2014) after the target time frame set by the Act, SSAK failed to conduct a comprehensive exercise to identify gaps and areas where new schools needed to be opened.

[Audit paragraph 2.8, 2.8.1 and 2.8.2 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

44. The Committee noticed that school mapping conducted in 2013-14 and 2014-15 were defective and when enquired about it the Special Project Director, SSA informed that they had calculated the distance of every school in Kerala and completed school mapping. Then, the Committee asked whether the state had defined area/limits for the children eligible to avail transportation. The Secretary, General Education department informed that according to Kerala RTE Rules, 2011, the limits of neighbourhood schools as one and half kilo metres and three kilometres. Then the Committee asked whether SSA had identified areas where new schools needed to be opened. The Secretary, General Education department informed the Committee that the Government had not taken any policy decision for the appointment of new teachers. The Committee directed SSA to identify locations to build new schools, schools that require upgradation, provision for availing vehicle facility, unaided schools for promising 25% free education and report to General Education department.

Conclusions/Recommendations

45. The Committee recommends that SSA should identify locations to build new schools, schools that require upgradation, provision for availing vehicle facility, and unaided schools for promising 25% free education and insists the General Education Department to furnish a detailed report on this.

Out of School children

A child is categorised as 'Out Of School' if the child is either not enrolled or has discontinued studies from the school. SSAK reported in its Annual Report for 2013-14 that Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) was 85.48 for primary section and 82.26 for upper primary section. Age-wise population data obtained from the Census department, Ministry of Home Affairs, GOI revealed that the population of children as per the 2011 census, in the five to nine age group (primary section) was 2555112 and that of children in the 10 to 14 age group (upper primary section) was 2822770. Thus, NER of 85.48 for primary section and 82.26 for upper primary section would show that at least 371002 children in the primary section and 500760 children in the upper primary section did not either enroll or had dropped out from schools. However, SSAK identified only 2188 OOSC in the age group of 6 to 14 in the State during 2013-14. The fact that there is no correlation between

the number of OOSC and NER, both arrived at by SSAK, indicates that the vital education data possessed by SSAK was unreliable and could not be used for planning purposes.

During the course of audit, we surveyed 128¹² OOSC in the age group of 6 to 14 and conducted interviews with the children or their parents/guardians in the five selected districts and Wayanad. While 119 children were drop outs from schools, nine had not enrolled in school. Of the 55 OOSC located in Wayanad district, one child dropped out of school due to Sickle cell anaemia, a health problem typical to the district of Wayanad. The details of OOSC are given in Table:

Table : Reason-wise details of Out Of School Children

Reason for being OOSC	Number of OOSC				
	ST	SC	Minorities (except Christians)	Others	Total
School far away	12	5	0	1	18
Poverty	2	2	0	3	7
Illness	7	1	1	5	14
Parents not interested	3	7	0	0	10
Child not interested	40	17	3	7	67
No transportation facility	1	0	0	0	1
Poor teaching /Absence of teachers	0	0	0	0	0
Lack of toilets/furniture in school	0	0	0	0	0
Other reasons	3	0	4	4	11
Total	68	32	8	20	128

(Source: OOSC Interview records)

12 Thiruvananthapuram -18; Pathanamthitta -3; Emakulam- 10; Thrissur -15; Kasaragod-27 and Wayanad -55

SSAK stated that the problem of OOSC was a serious issue and they were trying out new strategies like home visits, corner meetings, involvement of NGOs and local bodies, providing incentives, etc., to bring the children to school.

Multi Grade Learning Centres (MGLCs)

MGLCs are generally single teacher schools, functioning in remote and coastal areas, teaching children of Standards I to IV. SSA provided for opening of MGLCs as alternate schooling facilities for providing education to children in un-served habitations. They were envisaged as transitory measures to provide schooling till such time as regular, full time schooling facilities could be provided in the area concerned.

Mainstreaming of children in MGLCs

The RTE Act, 2009 stipulated providing of full time schooling facilities to all children. MGLCs therefore, had to be upgraded to regular schools and children studying there mainstreamed into full time schools in a time bound manner. The SSA Framework also provided for closure of such MGLCs which were not required to be converted into a regular school on account of an existing neighbourhood school. The Annual work plan & budget of SSAK for the year 2014-15 revealed that 321 MGLCs with 5797¹³ students were functioning in the State during 2013-14. One hundred and thirty four of these MGLCs with 2637 students were functioning in the test checked districts as detailed in Table.

Table : District-wise details of MGLCs

District	No. of MGLCs	No. of students
Thiruvananthapuram	23	271
Pathanamthitta	7	37
Ernakulam	7	157
Thrissur	2	10
Kasaragod	56	1433
Wayanad	39	729
Total	134	2637

(Source: Annual work plan & budget for the year 2014-15 of SSAK)

13 Scheduled Caste 498; Scheduled Tribe 2612, Minorities 2092 and Others 595

It was observed as follows:

- In May 2013, the Director of Public Instruction (DPI) submitted a proposal to GOK for upgrading 111 MGLCs (including 35 MGLCs of the 134 MGLCs) as Lower Primary Schools stating that land was available. Upgradation of these 111 MGLCs was pending as of November 2014. Failure to upgrade MGLCs resulted in children studying in these MGLCs without full-fledged schooling facility.
- In Thiruvananthapuram district, 14 MGLCs with 174 children (2013-14) out of the 23 MGLCs mentioned in the above Table, were functioning even though there were schools within reasonable distance. GOK had stipulated (March 2014) that for upgradation of MGLCs, the minimum requisite distance from the nearest Government/Aided school should be three Kilometres. Audit noticed that the distance between the 14 MGLCs and nearest schools was 0.5 to 1, 1.5 to 2 and 3 Kilometres for six, seven and one MGLCs respectively.

The Secretary, General Education Department stated in the Exit Conference that they were aware that educational volunteers working in some of the MGLCs were persuading parents to send their wards to MGLCs to avoid loss of their employment.

Failure of GOK to close down such MGLCs just to provide protection of employment of educational volunteers as stated by the Secretary is not acceptable since inaction of GOK has resulted in depriving children regular, full time schooling facilities as mandated in the RTE Act, 2009.

[Audit paragraph 2.9, 2.10 and 2.10.1 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

46. The Secretary, General Education department informed the Committee that as per the RTE Act, 2009 all MGLCs had to be upgraded to regular schools and children studying there were mainstreamed into full time schools in a time bound manner.

Conclusions/Recommendations

No Comments.

Quality of education imparted under SSAK

Supply of Text books

SSA envisaged providing text books, free of cost to all children of standards I to VIII studying in Government/aided schools. However, since GOK was supplying free books to students of standard I under State Plan, SSAK confined distribution of free text books to the children of standards II to VIII. SSAK fixed the upper ceiling for supply of text books at ₹ 150 per child at the Primary level and ₹ 250 per child at the Upper Primary level. During 2009-2014, SSAK had spent ₹ 248 crore under the intervention, 'Free text book supply'. Audit noticed that 69 per cent of the schools test checked did not maintain records of text books supplied to schools free of cost and distributed to students. Out of 83 test checked schools, 27 (33 per cent) reported that there was delay in supply of text books during 2013-14. One school¹⁴ did not respond.

The Kerala Books and Publications Society which prints and supplies the books stated that defective indenting by schools was the reason for delay in receipt of books in schools. The society suggested that the indents should be verified by Assistant Educational Officers/District Educational Officers for ensuring their correctness and print order should be proper for timely distribution of books.

SSAK replied (November 2014) that Text Book Department was responsible for distribution of books. SSAK further stated that it was only a funding agency and hence had no role in the printing and supply of text books. The reply is not acceptable since SSAK failed to ensure effective utilisation of its funds.

[Audit paragraph 2.11 and 2.11.1 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

¹⁴ Government Upper Primary School, Vellikulangara

47. To the query of the Committee regarding the timely supply of text books, the Secretary informed the Committee that the Kerala Books and Publication Society which printed and supplied text books and indents were verified by the DPI for ensuring the correctness and print order. SSA was only a finding agency and had no role in the printing and supply of text books. The Committee directed that SSA should prepare a calendar for the print order and indenting for the timely distribution of books.

Conclusions/Recommendations

48. The Committee directs that SSA should prepare a calendar for the print order and indenting for the timely distribution of books.

Assessment of learning levels of children

As per Rule 7 (1) of the Kerala RTE Rules 2011, it is the responsibility of the Government to monitor regularly the levels of learning of children in all Government, aided and un-aided elementary schools in the State and to conduct evaluation of learning outcomes in five per cent of the schools through an external agency and bring out annual reports on the quality of elementary education in the State. No such evaluation was conducted by the Director of Public Instruction during the period from 2011-12 to 2013-14.

At the instance of Audit, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Kerala conducted a study to assess the level of achievement of learners at the primary level. Sample population of children studying in Standards IV and VII were administered standardized tests in Malayalam, English, Mathematics and Science (Environmental Science for Std IV and Basic Science for Std VII) to assess learning levels since standards IV and VII were exit levels for lower and upper primary education system in Kerala. Even though the study envisaged testing children in five districts (Thiruvananthapuram, Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam, Thrissur and Kasaragod), SCERT had completed data analysis of only Thrissur district during finalization of this performance report.

The results of the study of achievement levels of children in Standards IV and VII in Thrissur district revealed as follows:

- Assessment of proficiency in writing and vocabulary skills in Malayalam of Standard IV students revealed that 33 per cent and 21 per cent of learners did not obtain even a single score in writing skills and vocabulary respectively. While performance of nearly 10 per cent of students in Mathematics was very low, only a negligible per cent attained expected level of performance in Environmental Science.
- Children in Standard VII performed poorly in Mathematics and Basic science.
- A significant number of children in Standard VII could not write in Malayalam.

The results of the study indicate the necessity for GOK/SSAK to address the problem of children not having the basic level of knowledge required for them to be able to cope with the learning requirements in the next higher grade.

[Audit paragraph 2.11.2 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

49. When the Committee enquired about the assessment of learning level of children, the Secretary, informed the Committee that the Government had taken steps to conduct evaluation of learning outcomes through SCERT. In order to assess the learning outcomes, the Government had conducted National Assessment survey twice and some special efforts had been taken to be applied in class rooms to enhance the learning levels of backward children.

Conclusions/Recommendations

No comments.

Academic support through Block Resource Persons

Teachers in Government/aided schools were provided academic resource support through a network of 168 Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and 1385 Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs). Cluster Resource Centres are sub-sections of

BRCs. Block Resource Persons (BRPs) were required to provide on-site support to teachers of schools under the BRC. BRPs include Block Resource Centre (BRC) Trainers and Cluster Resource Centre (CRC) Co-ordinators. CRC Co-ordinators were responsible to provide on-site support to teachers in their cluster¹⁵. Both BRC trainers and CRC Co-ordinators reported to the Block Programme Officer (BPO). There were 215 BRC trainers/CRC Co-ordinators in the 21 test checked BRCs.

Deployment of Block Resource Persons

The SSA Manual on Financial Management and Procurement required blocks having more than 100 schools and smaller blocks to be provided with 20 and 10 BRPs respectively in BRCs and CRCs put together. These BRPs were to be deployed in BRCs and CRCs as resource persons. Of the 21 selected BRCs, all except two (Kothamangalam and Kasaragod) had less than 100 schools, ranging from 35 to 93. Details collected from the selected BRCs for the year 2013-14 revealed that more than 10 BRPs were posted in nine of the nineteen BRCs having less than 100 schools. In Palode and Parassala BRCs having 77 and 71 schools, the number of BRPs posted was eight and 19. In the two BRCs having more than 100 schools, only eight BRPs per BRC were posted. Since the BRPs were required to provide academic support to teachers in the schools under the respective BRC, posting of BRPs without considering the number of schools indicated that the deployment of BRPs was not judicious.

The Secretary stated in the Exit Conference (December 2014) that the deployment of BRPs was a problem because they were reluctant to work in hilly and remote places. The reply of the Secretary is an admission of the helplessness of Government to deploy the BRPs across the State, based on the needs.

[Audit paragraph 2.11.3. and 2.11.3.1 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

15 A group of schools in a Panchayat/Municipality area.

50. When enquired about the steps taken for need based deployment of BRPs in hilly and remote places, the State Project Director replied that nobody was willing to work in remote places which resulted in shortage of BRPs. The Secretary informed that special training is being given to those schools for not going backward from the National achievement survey. The Committee directed the department to take a sample survey before November and the Secretary agreed to do so.

Conclusions/Recommendations

51. The Committee recommends that the General Education Department should take appropriate steps to ensure better performance of the state in the national achievement survey and sample surveys should be conducted once or twice before November every year.

Effectiveness of BRCs

The RTE Act mandates provision of training facilities as well as good quality education. BRCs and CRCs were the most critical units for providing training and on-site support to schools and teachers. Details collected from the 21 selected BRCs revealed the following.

- BRCs were required to function as repository of academic resources including Information and Communication Technology, science and math kits, teaching/learning material in different curricular areas, including pre-school material and material for CWSN. All the selected BRCs reported that academic resources available were not adequate.
- BRCs were to organize teacher trainings based on requirements of teachers observed during school visits. Sixteen of the test-checked BRCs did not maintain data on the training needs of teachers. In the absence of data on training needs, Audit could not assess whether the requirements of the school teachers were satisfactorily met.
- BRCs had to ensure regular school visits and on-site support by BRC trainers to address educational and other issues related to school development. Audit analysed the activities of 44 BRC Trainers in

19 selected BRCs who were in service during the whole of the academic year 2013-14¹⁶. It was noticed that the number of days spent by them for imparting training and school visits to provide on-site support to teachers were limited. Seventy three per cent of them spent less than 41 days for providing academic support to teachers during the academic year 2013-2014. Thus, BRC trainers who were expected to provide adequate academic support to teachers failed in their mission.

About the deficiency of on-site support, Secretary stated that the deficiency was due to engaging BRC trainers for other non-academic works and that the situation has improved this year. The engagement of BRPs in non-academic works and resultant inability to provide academic support to teachers is an unacceptable practice.

Functioning of CRC Co-ordinators

In the Annual Plan of SSAK for the year 2012-13, MHRD sanctioned the appointment of 1190 CRC Co-ordinators. The State Government introduced a comprehensive education package in 2011 for the appointment and deployment of school teachers in General Education sector. As part of the implementation of the package, Government approved (March 2012) the lists of teachers (1419) who had worked in aided schools and were retrenched from service due to reduction in number of divisions on account of decrease in number of students and also 127 specialist teachers (teachers trained in Music, Physical Education, Sewing, etc.). As the Annual Plan of SSAK for the year 2012-13 provided for appointment of 1190 CRC Co-ordinators, Government deputed the retrenched teachers including 127 specialist teachers for 10 days training. On completion of the training, these teachers were appointed as CRC Co-ordinators under SSAK. The State Project Director of SSAK further issued instructions (April 2013) to District Project Officers to retain the teachers appointed as CRC Co-ordinators, until further orders.

16 Mullassery and Anthikkad BRCs had no BRC Trainer with 10 months service during the academic year 2013-14.

Audit observed that since CRC Co-ordinators were required to provide on-site academic support to teachers, appointment of 127 specialist teachers as CRC Co-ordinators did not serve the intended purpose of providing on-site academic support to teachers. Audit also noticed that in the selected BRCs, 34 out of 124 CRC Co-ordinators had service of only up to three years in school and that 30 of them were retrenched prior to 2007-08, the academic year in which the curriculum was revised. Thus, their ability to provide on-site academic support to teachers was questionable. In the test checked BRCs, Audit noticed that out of 124 CRC Co-ordinators, 56 Co-ordinators (45 per cent) did not visit even a single school for providing on-site support during 2013-14. While on-site Support was provided by 33 Co-ordinators (27 per cent) for 1 to 10 days, 22 Co-ordinators (18 per cent) provided on-site support for 11 to 20 days:

Appointment of retrenched teachers with inadequate experience and posting of specialist teachers as CRC Co-ordinators indicate that the posts of CRC Co-ordinators sanctioned by MHRD were used to accommodate retrenched teachers. Besides, persons appointed as CRC Co-ordinators did not provide stipulated on-site support resulting in failure to achieve the intended objective of enhancing the capacity of teachers.

The Secretary stated in the Exit Conference (December 2014) that all CRC Co-ordinators were trained teachers and the effectiveness of specialist teachers working as CRC Co-ordinators would be examined. The fact however remains that retrenched specialist teachers appointed as CRC Co-ordinators would not be able to provide the required on-site academic support to teachers.

[Audit paragraph 2.11.3.2 to 2.11.3.3 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

52. The Committee noticed the audit observation that as the specialist teachers were not competent enough for providing on site academic support and training to school teachers, their appointment as CRC Co-ordinator defeated the very purpose of CRCs. The Committee enquired about the steps taken to ensure that retrenched teachers with inadequate experience and specialist teachers were

not posted as CRC Co-ordinators. The witness, Director of Public Instruction replied that, SSA appointed approximately 1300 CRC co-ordinators and had given induction training to them. He added that earlier the excess teachers in a district were posted as CRC Co-ordinators in other districts. But later, that practice was stopped.

Conclusions/Recommendations

No comments.

Free supply of uniform

School uniforms constitute an expense which poor families were often unable to afford, and thus became a barrier for many children to pursue and complete elementary education. SSA norms provided for supply of two sets of uniforms for all girls and boys belonging to SC/ST/BPL families in Government schools within a ceiling of ₹400 per child per annum. During 2012-13 and 2013-14, SSAK made the following provisions for free supply of uniform to all girls, SC/ST/BPL boys studying in Government schools.

Table : Details of Outlay and Expenditure on free supply of uniforms

Year	No. of Children	Amount provided in SSA Plan	Amount spent
2012-13	937901	37.52	29.36
2013-14	843472	33.74	29.20

(Source: SSAK)

Details of free supply of uniform in 42 test checked Government schools revealed that 1037 students in ten schools were not provided free uniforms during 2012-13. During 2013-14 also, 3450 children in 34 schools were not provided school uniforms. In eight schools, uniforms were issued in February and March 2014 i.e., just before the close of the academic year. The main reason for delayed supply or non-supply of uniform during the year 2013-14 was a delay of six months (December 2013) in issuing purchase guidelines.

The Secretary stated in the Exit Conference (December 2014) that delay in empanelling of vendors for supply of uniform during 2013-14 resulted in delay in issue of purchase guidelines. He further stated that from this year onwards each school would be permitted to identify suppliers for the procurement of uniform to avoid delay.

Conclusions

The objective of providing Inclusive Education to CWSN in general schools was not met. The CWSN were not medically assessed. Blind CWSN were not provided with Braille books, braille kits and audio equipment during 2009-2014. Resource Teachers to train CWSN were not qualified. A disproportionately large number of RTs were trained in MR resulting in children with other disabilities being deprived of suitable resource support. The functioning of the RTs was also not satisfactory. They did not prepare IEPs to monitor the individual performance of each CWSN. Majority of the RTs did not utilize even one third of the school working days to provide resource support to CWSN. Statistical information on the number of Out of School children available with SSAK was not reliable and therefore the high enrollment figures reported, cannot be accepted as correct. School mapping exercise conducted by SSAK in 2010 and 2013 for obtaining information on availability of schools for identifying areas where new schools needed to be opened was ineffective. Several MGLCs were functioning in Thiruvananthapuram district even though there were schools within reasonable distance. Necessary instructions were not issued to shut down these MGLCs and to mainstream the children in regular schools, to protect employment of educational volunteers. Tests on learning levels of children conducted at the instance of Audit revealed very poor learning levels indicating necessity for preparing them adequately for the next grade. Deployment of Block Resource Persons and CRC Co-ordinators to provide on-site academic support to teachers in Government/aided schools was not as per norms. Post of CRC Co-ordinators were used to accommodate specialist teachers and retrenched teachers with inadequate experience and resulted in failure to achieve the objective of enhancing the capabilities of teachers.

Recommendations

SSAK may:

- Take steps to conduct medical assessment of CWSN for monitoring progress and insist on preparation of IEPs;
- Prepare norms for engagement of RTs based on number of CWSN and nature of their disability and deployment across the State as per the need;
- Conduct household survey to identify all OOSC in the State and ensure their attendance in schools;
- Focus on enhancing the quality of teaching to ensure higher learning levels among children; and
- Engage only qualified BRC Trainers and CRC Co-ordinators and deploy them as per norms.

[Audit paragraph 2.11.4 to 2.13 contained in the Report of C & AG of India for the year ended 31st March 2014 (General & Social Sector)]

Notes received from Government on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II.

53. When enquired about the timely supply of uniforms, the Secretary replied that, during 2016-17, handloom clothes were supplied as school uniforms.

54. The Committee asserted that, the MHRD proposes a centralised pattern for enhancing the quality of teaching. But the situation in Kerala is different from North Indian States. The Committee further opined that the utilisation of funds would be more flexible to local requirements. If a proposal in this would be utilized, modern technology for capacity building could be used. The Committee opined that the SSA would take steps to enhance the quality of teaching to ensure higher learning levels among children and consolidate proposals from BRCs and DPIs and directed to send these proposals to MHRD.

Conclusions/Recommendations

55. The Committee opines that the SSA should take steps to enhance the quality of teaching to ensure higher learning levels among children and consolidate proposals from BRCs and DPIs and directs the department to send these proposals to MHRD.

Thiruvananthapuram,
1st July, 2019.

V. D. SATHEESAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

APPENDIX - I

SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Department Concerned	Conclusions/ Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1	9	Local Self Government Department	The Committee observed that delay in proper releasing of fund from local self government institutions to SSA projects and hence major activities of SSA lacked focus and it caused reduction in further Government of India fund release. So the Committee directs the LSG department to take necessary steps for timely release of funds to SSA from LSG institutions without diverting it to other heads.
2	10	General Education Department	The Committee directs the Education department to inform the project details including the beneficiaries well in advance to LSGD and to deduct the total out lay from the original plan fund and earmark it for SSA in the same manner as it was done in the case of RMSA. The Committee recommends that there should be a system for the timely allotment of fund for the SSA scheme through advance deduction from the plan fund well before releasing to LSG institutions.
3	23	General Education Department	The Committee finds that the drop out of children at the elementary level of education is an issue of concern and opines that SSA had no mechanism to determine the number of school drop outs every year. The Committee directs the department to conduct a detailed survey every year with special focus to particular localities to determine the enrollment and drop out of children.

1	2	3	4
4	24	General Education Department	The Committee observes that lack of proper action is one of the major hurdles in the implementation of the programmes meant to prevent school drop outs. The Committee directs SSA to implement short term and long term plans to retain children in schools and directs the department to take measures to determine the number of school dropouts.
5	25	General Education Department	The Committee remarks that high percentage of children remain out of school among different disadvantaged and social category groups at the elementary level of education and recommends to evolve a mechanism for distribution of budget allocation on the basis of the number of beneficiaries in every BRC.
6	26	General Education Department	In order to retain children in schools, the Committee directs the department to take steps for providing temporary jobs on rotation basis to mothers of children in the boarding schools, in all tribal habitats.
7	33	General Education Department	The Committee directs the department to conduct proper and regular medical check ups and to keep track of medical assessment records of all CWSN to ensure that no child should be refrained from receiving eligible facilities.
8	34	General Education Department	The Committee observes that SSA do not take children to assessment camps that results in its failure to determine the extent and type of disability and due to this even MR children who need regular medical attention are denied appropriate support services and special training. Therefore the Committee directs that

1	2	3	4
			<p>medical checkup should be properly conducted and children who already possess disability certificate must be exempted from attending medical camp. It also suggests that a general validity period of three or five years should be fixed for the disability certificates once issued except for the cases that have a chance for early change of status.</p>
9	35	General Education Department	<p>The Committee stressed the need for a scientific methodology for the early detection of learning disability in children and directs the DPI to resort the matter to Government. It also directs the General Education department to take up the matter with health department to streamline the procedure.</p>
10	37	General Education Department	<p>The Committee directs the department to furnish the details about the preparation of Individualised Education Plan and details of training given to the general school teachers for preparation of IEP.</p>
11	42	General Education Department	<p>The Committee observes that SSA failed to adhere to the stipulations required for appointment of resource teachers and directs that the department should take utmost care to train the resource teachers to support children suffering from each type of disability like blindness, hearing impairment etc.</p>
12	43	General Education Department	<p>The Committee remarks that same number of resource teachers are appointed in the BRCs irrespective of the number of CWSN trained there which results in uneven distribution of</p>

1	2	3	4
			support services. The Committee suggests that the number of resource teachers appointed should be commensurate with the number of CWSN.
13	45	General Education Department	The Committee recommends that SSA should identify locations to build new schools, schools that require upgradation, provision for availing vehicle facility, and unaided schools for promising 25% free education and insists the General Education Department to furnish a detailed report on this.
14	48	General Education Department	The Committee directs that SSA should prepare a calendar for the print order and indenting for the timely distribution of books.
15	51	General Education Department	The Committee recommends that the General education Department should take appropriate steps to ensure better performance of the state in the national achievement survey and sample surveys should be conducted once or twice before November every year.
16	55	General Education Department	The Committee opines that the SSA should take steps to enhance the quality of teaching to ensure higher learning levels among children and consolidate proposals from BRCs and DPIs and directs the department to send these proposals to MHRD.

Appendix-II

NOTES FURNISHED BY GOVERNMENT

ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON AUDIT PARAS OF THE REPORT OF THE C & AG ON GENERAL AND SOCIAL SECTOR FOR THE YEAR ENDED ON MARCH 2014 (CHAPTER II)

PERFORMANCE OF AUDIT OF SARVASIKHA ABHIYAN, KERALA

Para No.	Objection	Action Taken	Government remarks
2.6	Finances Of The Programme	<p>Annual Work Plan and Budget of SSA are prepared based on the DISE Data. There might be slight variation in the amount under approved outlay and expenditure incurred in each intervention due to various administrative reasons.</p> <p>During the year 2010-11 fund allotted for payment of Teachers salary by Government of India was 54.77 Crore. The Education Department is the appointing authority of the teachers. Due to delay in obtaining orders from Government the out lay could not be achieved.</p> <p>The free Uniform for students of Government Schools had been costed as 38.2 Crore during 2010-11. Due to delay in executing the format in purchase of Uniform by Government caused non distribution of Uniforms during that particular year and hence the amount could not be expended.</p> <p>During the year 2011-12 also there occurred shortage in the expenditure under Teachers salary. This was due to non utilization of fund proposed as salary of part-time instructors like art, craft physical education, work education etc. Now a days almost amount as per Approved outlay have been expended properly for achieving the objectives of the project.</p> <p>The enrollment of girl children is 49.4 % and there is no gender gap. Total enrollment of girls is marginally lower than that of boys. According to 2011 Census, there was 959 girls for 1000 boys. This may continue to reflect in enrollment due to lower number of girl children in Kerala.</p> <p>SSA Kerala is in the process of achieving 100 % enrollment, 0% dropout, 100 % retention and quality education. RTE Rules were implemented</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.7 & 2.7.1	SSA, Kerala did not possess reliable data on Out of school children (OoSC). Out of 128 OoSC surveyed by Audit, belonged to ST and SC Communities		Based on the report action may be dropped

	<p>in the State during 2011-12. The Study Report published by SC Development Department of State referred in the Audit Report relate to the years 2008-09 & 2009-10. SSA, Kerala has taken special measures to minimize the gender gap or social category gap since the implementation of the RTE Act in Kerala. SSA conducted house hold surveys through LSGs and Anganwadies and identified 2229 Out of School Children in the age group of 6-14 in the state during 13-14. The percentage of non enrollment during 2013-14 was 0.07%. During 2014-15 percentage of non enrollment was reduced to 0.02%. Major portion of ST students are living in forest area. Special Training for mainstreaming of Out of School-Children is conducted by SSA since 2014-15 in all district except Kollam, Alappuzha, Kozhikkode and Kannur. Lack of parental interest, physical disabilities of children, and distance of schools from the hamlet are, problems in the field which are being studied to overcome non enrollment. In order to attract and retain children in schools, activities like Sahavasa Camp, training in marshal and Folk arts, exposure trips , personality development Camps , Padanaveedu, parental awareness etc. were conducted by SSA. SSA has taken up this problem of Out of School Children as a serious issue and proposing new strategies to get the children back to school. Conduct household survey to identify all out of School children in the State, Corner meetings involvements of NGOs and LSGs, incentives etc. is being organized by SSA to ensure attendance of all students in schools.</p>	<p>Based on the report action may be dropped</p>
<p>2.7.2. 2.7.2.1</p>	<p>Inclusive Education for Children With Special needs- Projection of higher number of CWSN.</p> <p>The Variation in the data in relation to the census data is due to the following facts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SSA Kerala is taking detailed statistics of all suspected children up to Std VIII, in Government and Government aided schools and Special Schools. The data includes CWSN with mild and moderate disabilities. 2. IED cell in DPI collects data of CWSN with 40% or more disability. 	

		<p>3. The observation of PAB to re check 5% data of CWSN has been completed. But in certain cases, errors were noticed and Districts were directed to rectify the mistakes and prepare list of eligible learners. In future strict measures will be taken to identify CWSN students in accordance with the degree of their disability.</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.7.2.2	Lacunae in Medical assessment of CWSN for IEP	<p>With the help of scientifically prepared and distributed check list, SSA enables identification of the disability of students from 2015-2016 onwards. "Snellian chart" is supplied to all schools to identify visually impaired and low vision students. As a result, children with moderate to profound category of low vision are being detected. Students with suspected mild to moderate low vision are attending Medical camps conducted by SSA at BRC level. Medical Camps are organized by SSA with the help of Specialists, to identify hearing impairment, visual defects, MR & LD category of CWSN. However the assessment of children with Cerebral palsy cannot be done due to the dearth of psychologists and neurologists in the Government sector. Parents of CWSN therefore go to medical boards at Taluk / district level and medical college hospitals for obtaining permanent disability certificates. These certificates are used for including these category of children under CWSN. Children who were supplied assistive aids and children not requiring assistive aids are not usually taken to Medical Camp for assessment every year. This is the reason for variation between number of CWSN and number of CWSN taken to Medical Camp as pointed out by the audit team.</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.7.2.3 & 2.7.2.4	Preparation of Individualized Education Plan and assistance to Visually impaired	<p>Regarding non availability of medical assessment records, BRC's will be instructed to keep the records properly. The IEP is intended to help CWSN to reach the educational goals more easily and directly. The IEP (Individual Education Plan) creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related service personnel and students to work together to improve their education of all students. It is the</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped

fundamental document for quality education of CWSN.

IEP were not prepared for every CWSN till 2013-14. RTS prepared IEP's only in respect of HBE(Home Based Education) children and some children attending remedial coaching during Saturdays. Hence the number of IEP's prepared was very low compared to the total number of CWSN. In respect of other CWSN, to whom resource teachers (RTs) provide resource support, the practice was that the RT's kept the details of CWSN such as Date Of Birth, address of parents, birth history, strength, weakness, goals to be achieved with themselves. These were not recorded in a structured manner and did not serve the purpose of preparation of IEP.

SSA Kerala has initiated steps to record IEP in a structured and transparent manner. SSA has conducted awareness programmes to school teachers to record IEP of students in a structured manner. The IEP prepared by the RTs is monitored at BRC by district and state level officials.

During 2014-15, RTs were asked to prepare IEP of all children to whom resource support is required with the help of general school teachers. Considering the lapses in the previous years in preparing IEP, State Project Office had already given direction to the districts to keep the IEP of all category of CWSN to be verified periodically by the BPOs District Programme Officers.

It is a fact that all visually impaired children identified and covered by SSA are not taken to medical camp every year. It is not necessary for them to attend medical camp every year if there is no change in their vision acuity. Hence the variation between the number of Visually impaired identified and number of Visually impaired students taken to medical Camp.

JRM noted that children who required spectacles have been counted as CWSN. Instructions have been given to DPO's to prepare the list of visually impaired students in order to avoid duplication in the number of CWSN.

	<p>Spectacles was the only assistive aid supplied by SSA. In some cases corrective surgery are also provided to the visually impaired students. Most of the children requiring spectacles also not require resource support. If their vision acuity is not changed supply of new spectacles will also not be required. This resulted in non provision of any kind of assistive service to Visually impaired as pointed by audit. However these children are not removed from the list of CWSN.</p> <p>SSA was not providing Braille kits and Braille books to the students, since SSA was of the impression that the blind children were receiving Braille kits from Kerala Federation of Blind through Director of Public Instruction. During 2014-15, SSA initiated steps to make available Braille books & Kits to the blind children at the cost of SSA procuring from Kerala Federation of Blind</p>	<p>The service of Resource Teachers deployed in each panchayat is not based on the number of schools in the panchayat. The main role of the Resource Teacher is to provide onsite support to general school teachers and needy CWSN, to minimize their disability. In addition to the above, the Resource Teachers are providing Home Based Education to students who are not attending regular schools due to their severe disability. RT's working under SSA in BRC's are allotted one day to attend Home-Based Education to CWSN in a week which is a school working day. In addition to the above duties, the RT's are doing remedial classes on Saturdays at CRC level.</p> <p>The Resource Teachers act as a link between Panchayat and BRCs, by attending PEC meeting, education planning meeting, parental awareness programmes, conducting Sahavasa Camp for CWSN. General Education authorities are posting Resource Teachers as scribe in the public examinations to help CWSN. The activities of Resource Teachers are being strictly monitored by thorough verification of their tour diary and online mechanisms from 2014-15.</p>	<p>Based on the report action may be dropped</p>
<p>2.7.2.5 & 2.7.2.6</p>	<p>Engagement and Functioning of Resource Teacher.</p> <p>Resource Teacher did not utilized even 1/3 of school working days to visit schools and provide resource support to CWSN</p>		

	<p>Most of the RTs working under SSA are trained in the area of mental retardation. In the beginning of SSA, due to the dearth of RTs in the areas of Hearing Impaired and visually impaired, the RTs from other areas were posted and they were provided multi category training to equip them to handle all category of CWSN. During 2013-14, SSA had given ten day training to all RTs on Braille writing. But it is insufficient. So it is decided to deploy RTs who have special training to meet the needs of the blind children in the next academic year.</p>	
2.8, 2.8.1	<p>2.8.1: NER is based on the projection of census data. No other data is available regarding the actual population in the age group 6 to 14. The total population includes number of children belonging to migrant families and children who study in other states and abroad also. This accounts for the decreased NER.</p> <p>SSA conducts a survey to locate the out of school children every year and provides a bridge course to such children in their mother tongue with the help of a volunteer (mostly one belonging to the migrant families) and finally they are enrolled in general schools.</p>	Enrollment and retention in Schools
2.8.2.	<p>Sava Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala has collected information from all the schools in Kerala, and based on the information (collected via B.R.Cs) SSA State Office have located their position in the Google Map with longitude and latitude values. The details are in our website www.keralassa.org. The second stage of school mapping is locating the nearest schools and their distances were also completed. This was named as 'School Distance Matrix.</p> <p>School Distance Matrix is used to find out the actual distance between schools. Prescribed format was given to schools. Walkable distance, road/driving distance of 10 nearby schools [primary, upper primary, secondary, higher secondary] were collected. The data was verified at CRC and BRC</p>	School Mapping

Based on the report action may be dropped

Based on the report action may be dropped

	<p>level. The Online software for this purpose was prepared and maintained by SSA Kerala.</p> <p>Based on the data collected Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Kerala has successfully mapped 17033 schools in Kerala and located the nearest primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in distance matrix. The software was completed in time as per scheduled time.</p> <p>The Next stage in school mapping is locating the distance between a habitation and schools. This is useful for the preparation and maintenance of Village Education Register (VER). SSA has prepared software for Village Education Register (VER) and Format for preparing VER. A formal training was given to Panchayath Committee for preparing and maintaining VER at district level during August 2014 by seeking support from LSGD and IT@School. The Sampoorna software now captures this information.</p> <p>SSA Kerala is also trying to locate unserved locations, prepare Social Mapping and furnish Population based reports for the completion of school mapping.</p> <p>Based on this information SSA will identify locations for build new schools, schools that require up gradation, provision for availing vehicle facility, unaided schools for promising 25% free education, to report to General Education Department.</p>	
Based on the re action may be dropped	<p>SSA had conducted a detailed survey for identifying Out of School Children (OoSE) during 2013-14. SSA identified 2229 Out of School Children in the age group of 6-14 in the state. There is variation in the population data of children under NER in the age group of 5 to 14 furnished as per 2011 census and by SSA. Repatriate children who are studying abroad were also included in the census data. Besides only 128 Out of School Children can be identified by the audit team after a thorough search in six forestry and</p>	2.9 Out of School Children

	<p>backward District. It revealed that number of Out of School Children identified by SSA could not be dis-regarded.</p> <p>The constitutional commitment on Universalisation of elementary Education by enrolling all children in the age group of 6-14 has been fulfilled by SSA. The retention of all children enrolled is another goal of R.T Act & SSA has already achieved. This goal has been achieved with strong involvement of PRTs in Kerala and enlightened parents.</p> <p>However Out of School Children is a challenge before SSA. SSA has taken several measures and new strategies to get the children back to schools. The SSA is proposing to conduct house hold surveys to identify all out of school children in the State with involvement of the NGOs & LSGD. A special programme of " School Chaleham" is launched by SSA for attraction the retention of all children in schools.</p>	
<p>2.10, 2.10.1</p> <p>Multi Grade Learning Centres (MGLCs) Mainstreaming of children in MGLCs</p>	<p>From the year 2011-12 onwards all MGLCs in Kerala were transferred under the administrative control of DPI . As per G.O. (Ms) 44/14/G.Edn. dated: 01-03-2014 Government have ordered to upgrade 111 MGLCs to LP Schools . SSA has to provide building and other infrastructure facilities to these schools on providing sufficient land by LSGD/Department. In convergence with DPI, SSA will take all possible steps for functioning of these LP Schools</p>	<p>Based on the report action may be dropped</p>
<p>2.11.1</p> <p>Quality of education imparted under SSA Kerala Supply of Text Books</p>	<p>SSA Kerala provides Free Text Books to Children to the STD I to VIII. The role of printing and distribution of Text Books vested with General Education Department under the supervision of Text Book Officer. It is true that there might be delay in supplying text books to the children due to the various administrative reasons which is beyond the control of SSA.</p> <p>The District Project Officers make the payment of cost of text books only after completion of distribution of text book in all schools in the districts. Final payment of cost of text books was made by March. The remittance was based</p>	<p>Based on the report action may be dropped</p>

2.11.2	Quality of education imparted under SSA Kerala- Assessment of learning levels of children	<p>on the 6th working day strength of students and the intimation received from the Text Book Officer.</p> <p>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has conducted Learning assessment through third parties like Universities, Regional Educational Centres (NCERT), SCERT and other reputed institutions. All the research reports are available in our website. All the studies indicate that some special efforts need to be applied in classrooms to enhance the learning levels of children. All the achievement studies revealed that these children are in a negligible percent. To enhance learning levels of children in primary and upper primary special focus is given to Reading, Mathematics, Science & Social science under LEP intervention.</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.11.3.	Academic support through Block Resource Persons	<p>Block Resource Centres(BRC's) have Trainers and Cluster Resource Centres(CRC's) for academic support in the Block. They are competent in giving on-site support to schools and teachers. Every Saturday all the members in a BRC assembled and up to noon they share their experience in the last week. After noon session will be on the planning for the next week based on the issues identified.</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.11.3.1	Deployment of Block Resource Persons	<p>Some BRC's do not have even a BRP other than the BPO. When SSA discussed the matter with DPOs they admitted that they are facing a lot of difficulties in deploying BRPs, CRCC's and RT's. Nobody is willing to work in remote places. Thus they are unable to take a judicious decision in deployment of BRC persons. However almost all the vacancies of resource persons in BRCs and CRCs were filled up by SSA norms.</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped
2.11.3.2	Effectiveness of BRCs	<p>All BRCs were provided with Computers/Lap tops with internet connection. Many BRCs have developed Blogs and invited/included schools and posted variety of photos, videos and texts to share others. All the BRCs maintain on line reporting of their field visits. Science kits, Maths kits, library with educationally important text books, TLMs developed by BRC/CRCCs and adapted materials for CWSN are provided in large number of BRCs.</p> <p>General teacher training Programmes are usually organized from the</p>	Based on the report action may be dropped

	<p>State (SCERT) on the basis of research or other analytic activities. But when BRCs organize teacher meetings, they have some feed back recorded in the Planning Book of BRCs.</p> <p>SSA Kerala sent a circular that all Saturdays (except 2nd Saturday) will be Review & Planning day and Friday of the 2nd week will be review day. BRC trainers have to visit schools and give on site support to teachers. In order to equip trainers and CRCCs, training is conducted. After their school visits they have to enter a brief report in an on-line monitoring tool. State officials and district officials can check the reports randomly. In addition to this, BRC personnel will engage in some other academic activities like Cluster/Block level camps competitions, exhibitions, surveys, trainings etc. On those days they can not visit schools.</p> <p>CRC Co-ordinators were posted by DDE in districts. While posting them they were deputed to be in charge of the cluster. SSA Kerala made them efficient in class monitoring by giving them 10 days of induction training. Now from 28-09-2015 onwards all the Trainers and CRCCs were deputed to school visit for 10 days continuously. After 10 days a two day meeting is arranged and the feed-back is collected.</p> <p>Specialized teachers as CRCCs cannot go alone to schools. So peer school visits were planned.</p>		Based on the report action may be dropped
2:11.3:3	Functioning of CRC Coordinators		Based on the report action may be dropped
2.11.4	Free supply of uniform		Based on the report action may be dropped

2.13 (1)	Take steps to conduct medical assessment of CWSN for monitoring progress and insist on preparation of IEPs.	Medical assessment camp of CWSN is conducted in every district during June-July every year for monitoring progress of their disability. The Resource Teachers were also directed to prepare IEPs to monitor the individual performance of each CWSN.	Based on the report action may be dropped
2	Prepare norms for engagement of RTs based on number of CWSN and nature of their disability and deployment across the State as per the need;	Most of the RTs working under SSA are trained in the area of MR. Due to dearth of RTs in the areas of HI & VI the RTs from other areas are posted and they were provided multi category training to equip them to handle all categories of CWSN. However norms for engagement of RTs is based on the number of CWSN nature of the disability.	Based on the report action may be dropped
3	Conduct household survey to identify all OoSC in the State and ensure their attendance in schools;	SSA Kerala has already conducted house hold survey to identify Out of School Children and ensure their attendance in school. The process is repeated every year.	Based on the report action may be dropped
4	Focus on enhancing the quality of teaching to ensure higher learning levels among children; and	Only qualified teachers are appointed as Trainers under SSA. There are also many programs under SSA for quality improvement such as Malayala Thilakom, Hello English, Maths and Science Enrichment Programme.	Based on the report action may be dropped
5	Engage only qualified BRC Trainers and CRC Co-ordinators and deploy them as per norms	Only qualified trained teachers were appointed as BRC Trainers for implementing various activities in the project. The CRC Co-ordinators were appointed after giving adequate training to equip them for the conduct of various activities in SSA.	Based on the report action may be dropped

Appendix-II

APPENDICES FROM AG'S REPORT

Appendix 2.1

Details of samples of beneficiary survey

(Reference: Paragraph 2.5; Page 15)

a. CWSN Survey

Sl. No.	Particulars	In State	Selected District/BRCs	Included in Beneficiary Survey
1	No. of Districts	14	5	5
2	No. of BRCs	168	21	21
Categories of CWSN				
1	No. of Visually Impaired	79320	9880	467
2	No. of Hearing Impaired	13384	1894	115
3	No. of Speech Impairment	8873	895	-
4	No. of Orthopedically Impaired	10622	1229	-
5	No. of Cerebral Palsy	7401	470	-
6	No. of Mentally Retarded	28451	4213	-
7	No. of Learning Disability	19541	3990	210
8	No. of Multiple Disability	8593	769	-
9	No. of Autism Spectrum Disorder	2016	310	-
Total No. of CWSN (2013-14)		178201	23650	792

b. OOSC Survey

District	No. of OOSC surveyed
Thiruvananthapuram	18
Pathanamthitta	3
Ernakulam	10
Thrissur	15
Kasaragod	27
Wayanad	55
Total	128

Appendix 2.2

Table showing number of CWSN in each category and RTs deployed

(Reference: Paragraph 2.7.2.5; Page 21)

Sl. No.	BRC	VI & Blind		HI & SI		LI		MR		LD		CP		Autism		MD		Total No. of CWSN	Total No. of RTs
		No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs	No. of CWSN	No. of RTs		
1	Kattakkada	972	0	143	7	88	0	257	6	49	0	42	0	22	0	12	0	1585	13
2	Palode	324	2	174	0	74	0	226	9	191	0	4	0	6	0	38	0	1037	11
3	Parassala	712	0	94	3	68	0	199	7	4	0	12	0	9	0	24	1	1122	11
4	Kaniyapuram	477	0	104	2	48	0	346	7	31	0	14	0	12	0	83	0	1115	9
5	Thiruvalla	333	0	150	0	22	0	129	3	304	0	0	0	3	0	24	2	965	5
6	Kenni	200	0	45	1	26	0	172	4	102	0	10	0	5	0	4	1	564	6
7	Adoor	556	0	174	1	27	0	190	5	188	0	20	0	13	0	33	3	1201	9
8	Kothamangalam	402	0	162	3	93	0	294	12	328	0	48	0	22	0	104	0	1453	15
9	Mattancherry	423	0	266	1	90	0	371	4	590	0	87	5	33	0	20	0	1880	10
10	Emakulam	273	0	116	0	56	0	275	10	430	0	55	3	59	0	33	0	1297	13
11	Muvattupuzha	165	0	131	0	26	0	343	5	192	0	13	0	5	0	6	0	881	5
12	N Paravur	220	1	54	1	78	0	129	8	124	0	34	3	21	0	18	0	678	13
13	Wadakkancherry	644	0	135	0	66	0	137	10	228	0	15	0	5	0	23	0	1253	10
14	Mathilakam	424	1	117	0	55	0	122	5	176	0	22	0	47	0	29	0	992	6
15	Chavakkad	834	1	154	0	56	0	131	9	165	0	8	0	10	0	11	0	1369	10
16	Mullasserry	275	0	59	0	31	0	43	5	55	0	0	0	2	0	13	0	478	5
17	Kodakara	731	0	125	0	69	0	194	10	245	0	22	0	23	0	56	0	1465	10
18	Anthikkad	497	2	48	1	16	0	41	5	155	0	8	0	6	0	29	0	800	8
19	Bekel	540	2	163	0	88	0	195	5	115	0	25	0	2	0	132	0	1260	7
20	Kasaragod	547	0	250	0	103	0	283	6	220	0	16	0	2	0	59	0	1480	6
21	Chittarikkal	331	0	125	0	49	0	136	7	98	0	15	0	3	0	18	0	775	7
	Total	9880	9	2789	20	1229	0	4213	142	3990	0	470	11	310	0	769	7	23650	189

VI - Visual Impairment (Low vision)

HI - Hearing Impairment

SI - Speech Impairment

MR - Mental Retardation

LI - Locomotor Impairment

LD - Learning Disability

CP - Cerebral Palsy

MD - Multiple Disability

No. RTs having Degree in Special Education

18

No. RTs having Diploma in Special Education

171*

Total

189

* includes 7 RTs having Diploma in Community Based Rehabilitation (DCBR)

Appendix 3.1
FDWs retained in schools due to lack of information about the beneficiaries
 (Reference: Paragraph 3.1.4; Page 84)

Sl. No.	Name of DEO	Name of School	No. of FDWs kept in school as students have left after the academic year
1	Thiruvananthapuram	GGHSS Cottonhill	144
2	Attingal	SSVHS Chirayinkil	4
3	Kollam	SNSMHSS Elampalloor	4
4		GLVHS Kadappa, Mynagapally	4
5		Vimala Hrudaya HS Pattathanam	6
6	Kottarakkara	GHS (Girls) Kadampanad	7
7		VGSS Ambikodayam HSS	1
8	Wandoor	GHS for Girls, Wandoor	8
9		RMHS Melattur	47
10		GHSS Pookottupadam	6
11		GHSS Thuvvur	1
12		GHSS Thiruvalli	5
13		HS Thachinganadam	1
14	Tirur	NMHSS Thirunavaya	9
15		GBHS Tirur	5
16		GHSS Kandanchery	1
17	Malappuram	National HS Kolathur	1
18	Palakkad	GHS Koduvayur	5
19		MHS Pudunagaram	5
20		KKMHS Vandithavalam	18
21		GHSS Muthalamada	49
22		GHS Alanaalur	5
23		GGHS Nenmara	16
24		HS Mundur	9
25		GHS Koppam	3
26		VMHS Vadavannur	5
27		Ottapalam	Govt. HS Cherpulassery
		Total	370

Appendix 3.2
List of schools where buildings were not completed and laboratories constructed
without adequate facilities
(Reference: Paragraph 3.2.4, Page 88)

i. List of buildings not completed/handed over

Sl. No.	Name of School
1	GBHSS Karamana, Thiruvananthapuram
2	GHSS Ormallur, Pathanamthitta
3	GHSS Vechoochira Colony, Pathanamthitta
4	GHSS Adoor, Pathanamthitta
5	GHSS Kadamanitta, Pathanamthitta
6	GHSS Alappuzha
7	GHSS Thanneermukkom, Alappuzha
8	Government Muhammedan's HSS, Alappuzha
9	GHSS Panjal, Thrissur
10	GHSS Cheruthurthy, Thrissur
11	Government Tribal HSS, Palakkad
12	GVHSS Tamil Chalai, Thiruvananthapuram
13	GVHSS Valathungal, Kollam
14	Government Model VHSS Boys Kollam
15	GVHSS Elanthoor, Pathanamthitta
16	GVHSS North Edapally, Ernakulam

ii. Laboratories constructed without electricity, wash basins, storage facilities, etc.

Sl. No.	Name of School
1	GHSS Kulathummel, Thiruvananthapuram
2	GHSS Thazhava, Kollam
3	GHSS Marayamangalam, Palakkad
4	GHSS Tholannur, Palakkad
5	GHSS Kadambur, Palakkad
6	PCNGHSS Mookuthala, Malappuram
7	GGHSS Madapally, Kozhikode
8	GHSS Pottasserry, Palakkad
9	GVHSS Vakkom, Thiruvananthapuram
10	GVHSS Anchal East, Kollam
11	GVHSS Kaipattoor, Pathanamthitta
12	GVHSS Nedumkandam, Idukki

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