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भारत सरकार
शिक्षा मंत्रालय
स्कूल शिक्षा और साक्षरता विभाग
शास्त्री भवन
नई दिल्ली — **110 115**
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-110 115

D.O. No. 18-94/2020-IS-15

Dated: 7th January, 2021

Respected Ma'am /sir,

As you are aware, nearly 250 million children have been affected due to school closures due to COVID-19 throughout the country. Although the Centre and States/UTs have taken several steps to ensure continuity in their learning and for preventing loss of learning and drop out as far as possible, some challenges remain that are being dealt with and are likely to face us even after schools re-open.

2.   In order to mitigate the impact of these challenges, it is necessary for every State/UT to devise a proper strategy in order to prevent increased drop outs, lower enrolments, loss of learning and deterioration in the gains made in providing universal access, quality and equity in the recent years. Ministry of Education has prepared a set of guidelines for States and UTs regarding steps that need to be taken in this regard (copy enclosed), along with the State-wise data regarding Out of School Children (OoSc) wherein the difference in identification of OoSC through Estimate using rates of 75th round NSS education survey of 2017-18 and data obtained from States may be seen and identification of OoSC for 6 to 17 years age group may be carried out.

3.   I, therefore, request you to take necessary action on the points mentioned in the guidelines to ensure that our children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on school education in the country. Also, you are requested to share a monthly report on the action taken against each of the mentioned items by the 10th of every month, with the Department of School Education and Literacy.
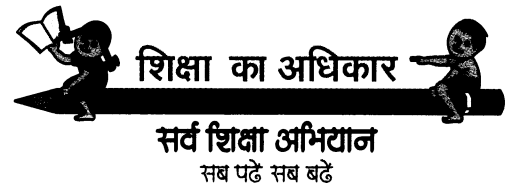
With Regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Maneesh Garg) 7|1|21

Encl: As above

Education Secretaries of all States and UTs.

YEARS OF
CELEBRATING
THE MAHATMA

शिक्षा का अधिकार
सर्व शिक्षा अभियान
सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

Guidelines for Out of School Children and mitigation of loss of learning

Nearly 250 million children have been affected due to school closures due to COVID-19 throughout the country. Although the Centre and States/UTs have taken several steps to ensure continuity in their learning and for preventing loss of learning and drop out as far as possible, some challenges that are being dealt with and that are likely to face us even after schools re-open are:

- Loss of learning as all children do not have access to online/digital learning resources as well as to other media such as Television or radio.
- Reverse migration from cities to the villages and subsequent return of the migrant families back to the cities with the opening up of the economy, causing a disruption in children's education.
- Instances of child labour in an attempt by families to augment their income in view of the impact on household earnings and simply because children are at home.
- Apprehension amongst parents against sending their children to schools even in the event of the schools re-opening as evident from the low attendance in many areas where schools have partially re-opened.
- Child marriages may also be seen in view of financial constraints faced by the parents along with an uncertain future and simply because girls/children are not being seen doing anything being at home.
- Psychological impact on the children due to increase in stress levels, lack of interaction with peers and lack of outdoor activities.
- Increase in drop out and out of school children as a result of combination of the above factors.
- Higher impact is likely on the vulnerable sections of the population such as girls, SC, ST and CWSN students.

In order to mitigate the impact of these challenges, it is necessary for every State/UT to devise a proper strategy in order to prevent increased drop outs, lower enrolments, loss of learning and deterioration in the gains made in providing universal access, quality and equity in the recent years.

Some of the suggested steps that need to be taken in this regard are as follows:

A. GUIDELINES AND NORMS

1. The guidelines on admissions and education of migrant children circulated vide this department's letter no. 18-19/2020-IS-15 dated 13th July, 2020, must be strictly adhered to and data shared with the department.

2. The residential and non-residential special trainings have been approved under Samagra Shiksha, for nearly 8 lakhs Out of School Children already identified this year. While it may not be possible to undertake residential trainings till the situation normalizes, **the non-residential mode of training may be continued through volunteers, local teachers, or other modes adopted by the states/UTs. They can visit the village/households of the identified children in the present situation with adequate safety precautions and consent of parents. In case it is required, the residential trainings may be got converted into non-residential mode for which separate proposal may be sent to the Department of SE&L.**

3. For Children with Special Needs for whom **Home Based Education** has been approved, the same may be continued through volunteers/special educators visiting the homes of these children with adequate safety precautions and consent of the parents. The scope of home-based education may be expanded to larger number of Children with special needs.

B. IDENTIFYING OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

4. States and UTs should conduct a comprehensive **door-to-door survey** by involving teachers, BRCs/CRCs with the help of SMCs to prepare a database of school-going age children; this database may be maintained and updated regularly to ensure that all children are enrolled and to identify out of school children, at the beginning of the next financial year.

5. As per the **75th round household survey by NSSO in 2017-18**, the number of estimated OoSC in the country in the age group of 6 to 14 years is 96.93 lakh, whereas as per AWP&B data received from States/UTs, it is only 11 lakh. There is a stark difference in this identification of OoSC. Further, there are an estimated 3.11 crore out of school

children in age group of 6-18 years. Also, as stated in NEP 2020, it must be a top priority of the country to bring Out of school children back into the educational fold as early as possible, and to prevent further students from dropping out, with a goal to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio in preschool through secondary school by 2030. Therefore, States and UTs should carry out proper identification of OoSC **for 6 to 18 years age group,** so that no child is left behind. The state wise details of Number of OOSC in different age groups as per NSSO estimation and that identified by the states is enclosed at **Annexure-A.**

C. ENROLMENT DRIVES AND AWARENESS GENERATION

6. **Enrolment drives may be conducted at the beginning of next academic year such as *Praveshotsav, Vidya Chalo abhiyan, school chalo abhiyan,* Back to school campaign etc.** These may be conducted not only for new admissions but also for welcoming existing children back to school.

7. Parents' trust can be restored, and fears allayed for bringing children back to school through continuous dialogues between schools and parents. Awareness generation and dialogues need to be undertaken among parents and community for enrolling children in school and sending them regularly when the schools re-open. **Media and Community Mobilization funds under Samagra Shiksha must be utilized for this purpose.**

8. Practicing COVID-19 appropriate behavior is no longer a choice, but an imperative. With the lockdowns ending, and even after we have a vaccine, focus on sustaining the practice of the 3 Corona appropriate behaviors- wear mask, keep 6 feet distance and washing hands with soap frequently and as needed must be emphasized upon. A continuous campaign must be undertaken for the same. **IEC material for the same including animation film, posters, infographics and wall painting designs has been shared vide this department's letter no. 27-2/2020-IS-9 dated 06th November, 2020.** Hand hygiene is a key condition for schools to re-open and operate safely. Safe reopening of schools includes access to hand hygiene, clean drinking water and safe sanitation, for which necessary steps may be taken before opening of schools. **Budget provisions made under Samagra Shiksha under Composite School Grants, Safety and security in schools and for teachers must be made use of in this regard.**

D. STUDENT SUPPORT WHILE SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED

9. Students to be provided requisite support including counseling, large-scale awareness programs and targeted home visits; Also, adequate publicity to be given to the **Manodarpan web portal (http://manodarpan.mhrd.gov.in) and tele-counselling number (8448440632)** so that the students can get access to counseling services and get psychosocial support. These numbers need to be communicated to all students through SMS, WhatsApp and guided on how to use the same.

10. Distribution of **Educational Materials and Resources, supplementary graded material, workbooks, worksheets** etc. may be undertaken, in addition to textbooks, with easy instructions, with the help of teachers, BRCs/CRCs to support home-based education to ensure continuity in learning.

11. **Classroom on wheels and classes in small groups at village level by volunteer teachers may be explored wherever possible.** A pool of grade-wise and subject-wise teachers who can help children both over phone and by visiting a group of children once a week or fortnight may be prepared. Some examples of this approach are *Padhai Tuhar Dwar* (Education at your doorstep) in Chattisgarh, *Hamara ghar hamara vidyalaya* in Madhya Pradesh and *Vidyagama* in Karnataka.

12. **Increasing the access of children to online/digital resources, DTH channel, radio, community radio and other digital modes, to reduce learning loss and allowing their smooth transition to school.**

13. Ensuring easy and timely access to the usual provisions of **uniforms, textbooks and MDM** would play an important role in ensuring that children continue in schools.

14. Timely provision of **stipend to enrolled CWSN girls** through DBT mode must be ensured.

15. Strengthen **child protection mechanisms** at the local level for reporting of violence against children and making them accessible to all children, especially since schools and other educational institutions are not functional.

E. STUDENT SUPPORT ON SCHOOL REOPENING

16. **School Readiness Module/Bridge Course** may be prepared and implemented in classrooms for initial one or two months for each grade. Once school reopens, the grade related syllabus should be undertaken only after the bridge course is completed, so that students can adjust to the changed school environment and do not feel the stress or left out, especially students who did not have access to alternate means of education.

17. Identification **of students across different grades based on their learning levels** can be done, especially for smaller classes, so that teachers can focus on those who need additional interventions.

18. Wherever states have amended their State RTE Rules to allow for detention in classes 5 and/or 8, they have given relaxation from detention this year. This would go a long way in preventing drop outs. **States may like to keep a watch on the situation for any further considerations to prevent drop outs until the pandemic related situation stabilizes.**

19. Two of the **most important skills** that a school going child needs to acquire and retain are the skills of **reading with comprehension and numeracy skills.** It is therefore important to do the following:

    a. Ensure that every child reads a lot, and **reads books beyond the syllabus**, that are grade appropriate and are both, interesting and challenging. For this, the schools may permit children to borrow books from school libraries, and or suggest grade appropriate links from open and free online resources such as- https://storyweaver.org.in/, https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/, etc.

    b. **Creative writing** is a great way to improve children's written language skills. Teachers and parents may encourage this fun and imaginative activity on a weekly basis. If schools have not reopened, States/UTs may consider permitting children to host their creative writing, duly recommended by the schools, on a common portal.

    c. States/UTs may consider giving one real-life situation based mathematical problem a day to each child to engage the child joyfully in mathematics. In this context, at least for grades 6-10, the **Five-Questions-A-week** hosted on DIKSHA by CBSE may be utilized. Also, identified mathematical games/board games/Apps may also be encouraged.

20. Implement **large-scale remedial programs/Leaning enhancement programmes** to mitigate learning loss and prevent exacerbation of learning inequality, with a focus on literacy and numeracy for primary-age children and accessibility accommodations for children with disabilities.

F. TEACHER CAPACITY BUILDING

21. Training of teachers, staff and students in Corona responsive behavior is essential. **A training module for the same has been developed in collaboration with UNICEF which will be launched on DIKSHA portal soon. All teachers must undergo this online training programme.**

22. Use of **Alternative Academic Calendar** prepared by NCERT for grade 1 to 12 will lead to joyful engagement of children in learning, therefore, teachers may be made aware of this calendar and trained on using it.

State-wise data regarding Out of School Children (OoSC)

Sl. No.	State/ UT	Projected population of 2019 by age-groups				Estimate using 75th round NSS education survey of 2017-18 rates		OOSC from Source: AWP&B 2019-20 (6-14 yrs)
		6-10	**11-13**	**14-15**	**16-17**	**OOSC age 6 yrs to less than 14 yrs**	**OOSC age 6 yrs to less than 18 yrs**	
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	36,744	23,764	16,388	16,652	1,045	2,868	-
2	Andhra Pradesh	3,721,800	2,335,600	1,641,800	1,713,200	156,422	735,480	82,490
3	Arunachal Pradesh	143,976	100,241	69,041	63,851	18,619	43,055	932
4	Assam	3,179,000	2,029,800	1,355,000	1,360,800	145,096	843,384	86,094
5	Bihar	13,986,600	8,458,200	5,512,200	5,446,200	1,587,916	3,900,816	144,380
6	Chandigarh	107,806	65,515	46,291	49,955	2,642	7,527	3,658
7	Chhattisgarh	2,730,000	1,600,000	1,086,600	1,106,000	165,915	548,845	23,431
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	42,787	25,045	15,161	14,642	2,036	9,874	33
9	Daman and Diu	21,310	12,262	8,536	10,834	5,195	7,246	128
10	Delhi	1,505,000	928,400	658,800	690,200	105,753	230,816	44,932
11	Goa	125,406	78,397	53,790	54,297	244	355	204
12	Gujarat	5,737,200	3,446,400	2,359,000	2,412,000	360,895	1,581,660	67,135
13	Haryana	2,457,800	1,478,800	1,021,800	1,050,600	119,929	454,578	29,008
14	Himachal Pradesh	531,400	342,400	235,600	242,000	2,922	29,394	4,726
15	Jammu & Kashmir (UT)	1,175,200	861,400	560,200	548,800	49,113	183,736	11,762
16	Jharkhand	3,788,800	2,389,600	1,589,600	1,594,800	211,967	854,622	53,833
17	Karnataka	5,067,600	3,095,200	2,127,200	2,179,600	189,608	932,025	10,448
18	Kerala	2,477,600	1,528,800	1,033,000	1,046,200	923	37,699	4,039
19	Ladakh	27,592	17,632	12,289	12,414	1,080	4,102	
20	Lakshadweep	6,501	4,246	2,816	2,943	-	710	-
21	Madhya Pradesh	8,193,000	4,703,400	3,189,600	3,246,600	854,603	2,858,100	45,890

22	Maharashtra	9,260,400	5,906,000	4,053,000	4,144,000	323,949	1,415,630	**35,304**
23	Manipur	245,057	176,828	120,988	115,385	5,792	33,974	**2,541**
24	Meghalaya	320,639	216,291	139,434	138,933	11,355	76,228	**10,405**
25	Mizoram	97,585	66,082	43,937	46,476	3,301	12,973	**2,719**
26	Nagaland	197,521	140,751	95,345	96,275	13,871	51,516	**4,017**
27	Odisha	3,697,000	2,327,200	1,586,000	1,618,200	197,164	1,206,136	**10,216**
28	Puducherry	119,055	74,941	51,329	50,263	3,001	11,180	**36**
29	Punjab	2,125,400	1,343,600	948,600	991,200	85,817	363,577	**5,172**
30	Rajasthan	7,763,800	4,588,800	3,105,800	3,155,200	860,765	2,370,395	**113,094**
31	Sikkim	48,913	38,145	26,254	28,108	555	2,720	**267**
32	Tamil Nadu	5,269,600	3,251,400	2,238,000	2,295,000	38,362	503,518	**20,233**
33	Telangana	2,778,800	1,770,000	1,241,000	1,293,400	42,624	194,545	**21,266**
34	Tripura	280,921	204,280	137,432	146,987	3,799	42,120	**1,354**
35	Uttar Pradesh	23,036,800	13,435,600	9,321,200	9,683,600	3,619,394	9,683,261	**289,731**
36	Uttarakhand	922,600	602,600	420,000	435,200	21,639	85,579	**6,132**
37	West Bengal	7,220,200	4,680,200	3,251,800	3,364,000	480,319	1,820,090	**13,150**
	All-India	118,446,400	72,346,800	49,375,400	50,465,800	9,693,630	31,140,332	**1,148,760**