



BUDGET BRIEFS

Vol 13/Issue 1

Samagra Shiksha Gol, 2021-22 (Pre-Budget)

Samagra Shiksha - an integrated scheme for school education, is Government of India's (Gol's) school education programme extending from pre-school to senior secondary stages. The scheme was launched in April 2018 to ensure equitable and inclusive quality education.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, this brief uses government data to analyse Samagra Shiksha performance based on:

- Past trends in allocations, releases, and expenditures, and the potential impact of the pandemic on finances;
- Component-wise budgets, with a focus on Information and Communications Technology (ICT); and
- Readiness of schools following the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, and the push towards digital education.

Cost share and implementation:

Funds are shared between Gol and state governments in a 60:40 ratio. For the eight states in the North Eastern Region (NER), and Himalayan states, this ratio is 90:10. Union Territories (UTs) are fully funded by Gol.

HIGHLIGHTS

₹ 99,312 cr

Gol allocations for Ministry of Education (MoE) (erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development) in FY 2020-21

₹ 38,751 cr

Gol allocations for Samagra Shiksha in FY 2020-21

SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

- At the start of Financial Year (FY) 2020-21, Gol had allocated ₹38,751 crore to Samagra Shiksha as per Budget Estimates (BEs). This was a 7 per cent increase from the Revised Estimates (REs) for FY 2019-20. Allocations, however, were 16 per cent lower than projected demand of the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- Release of funds to states, as a share of Gol allocations, were declining even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY 2018-19, 95 per cent of allocations were released. This decreased to 89 per cent in FY 2019-20. In FY 2020-21, till October 2020, only 29 per cent of Gol's allocations had been released to states.
- As with releases, expenditures by states out of their approved budgets have been low and declining. Expenditures dropped from 64 per cent in FY 2018-19 to 59 per cent in FY 2019-20. In FY 2020-21, potentially due to low releases, states had spent only 26 per cent of their total approved budgets during the first seven months.
- Despite a push to use more Information and Communications Technology (ICT), only some states such as Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Odisha have prioritised ICT infrastructure in their Annual Work Plan and Budgets. In 2018-19 academic year, 28 per cent government and government-aided schools had computers, and 12 per cent had internet connections.

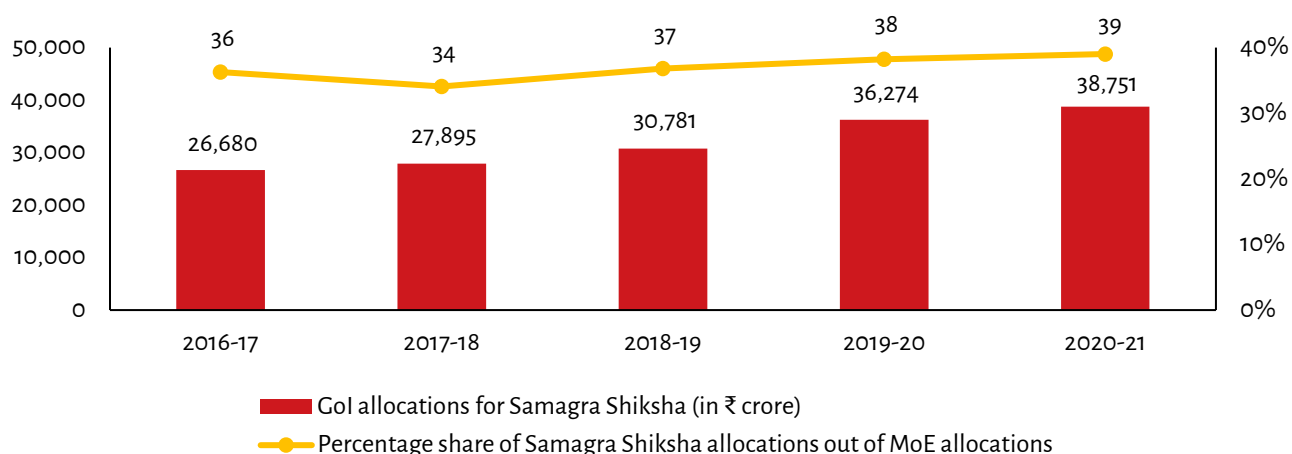
TRENDS IN OVERALL ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

- In FY 2018-19, Government of India (GoI) launched Samagra Shiksha—an integrated scheme for school education, with an aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education to all children from pre-primary to higher secondary stages. Samagra Shiksha is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) (earlier Ministry of Human Resource Development). The scheme integrates three erstwhile school education schemes, namely: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and Teacher Education (TE).
- Two important events in FY 2020-21 had an impact on school education in India. First, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of schools since March 2020, and pushed for a shift towards digital education. Second, the National Education Policy (NEP) was released in July 2020, with a vision to universalise school education by the year 2030, including pre-primary education. Samagra Shiksha will be an important vehicle to help fulfil this vision. This brief looks at trends in school education finances under the scheme, and the potential impact of both these events on provisioning of public education.

GoI Allocations

- As per FY 2020-21 Budget Estimates (BEs), ₹38,751 crore was allocated for the scheme - a 7 per cent increase over the previous year's Revised Estimates (REs), which stood at ₹36,274 crore.
- Allocations have remained below those projected by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) or even the MoE. In FY 2018-19, the first year of the scheme, the CCEA had approved an outlay of ₹34,000 crore, but the revised allocations stood at ₹30,781 crore. Similarly, the allocations were ₹4,726 crore less than those projected in FY 2019-20 REs.
- In FY 2020-21 BEs, while the MoE had projected a demand of ₹45,934 crore, actual allocations were 16 per cent lower.

GOI ALLOCATED ₹38,751 CRORE TO SAMAGRA SHIKSHA FOR 2020-21, AN INCREASE OF 7% OVER 2019-20 BUT LOWER THAN THE PROJECTED DEMAND



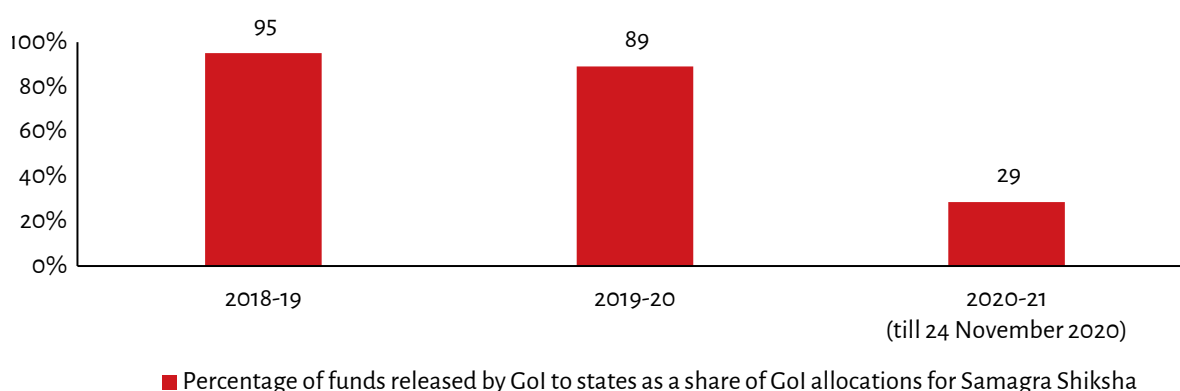
Source: Union Expenditure Budget, Volume 2, MoE, Department of School Education and Literacy, Department of Higher Education, FY 2017-18 to FY 2020-21. Available online at: www.indiabudget.gov.in. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Note: (1) Figures are Revised Estimates (REs), except for FY 2020-21, which are Budget Estimates (BEs). (2) Figures for FY 2016-17 and FY 2017-18 are a summation of SSA, RMSA and TE.

Gol Releases to States

- Release of funds by Gol has been decreasing over the years. In FY 2018-19, 95 per cent of Gol's total allocations for Samagra Shiksha were released to the states. In FY 2019-20, while allocations increased in absolute terms, the share released to states declined further to 89 per cent.
- At the start of FY 2020-21, to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school education, states were directed to spend their unspent balances from previous years, amounting to ₹6,200 crore. An ad hoc grant of ₹4,450 crore was also released in the first quarter.
- Pace of releases, however, has been slow. Till 24 November 2020, a total of ₹11,054 crore was released, accounting for only 29 per cent of Gol allocations for FY 2020-21 BE.

ONLY 29% OF GOI ALLOCATIONS FOR 2020-21 WAS RELEASED TILL 24 NOVEMBER 2020

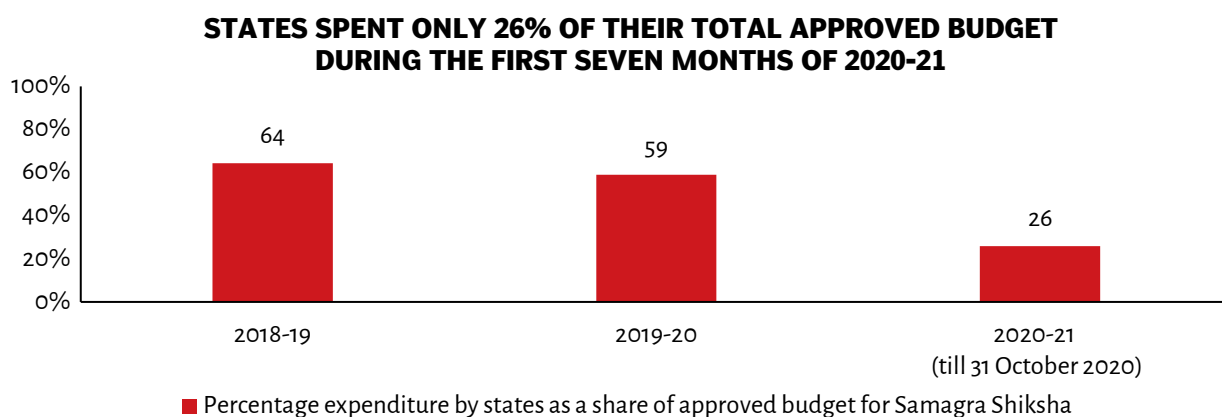


Source: (1) Gol allocations: Union Expenditure Budget, Volume 2, MoE, Department of School Education and Literacy, FY 2019-20 to FY 2020-21. Available online at: www.indiabudget.gov.in. Last accessed on 10 January 2021. (2) Gol release for FY 2018-19: RTI response by MHRD dated 18 December 2019. (3) Gol release for FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21: RTI response by MoE dated 26 November 2020.

Expenditures by States

- Expenditure can be measured in two ways: a) as a share of total approved budgets; or b) as a share of total available funds, which takes into account funds actually released by both Gol and state governments.
- Approved budgets are based on proposed Annual Work Plan and Budgets (AWP&Bs) submitted by individual state governments. These proposed budgets are approved by the Project Approval Board (PAB) for Samagra Shiksha under MoE, after consultations and negotiations with states. Total approved budget for a state includes both Gol and state shares for the specific financial year, as well as the unspent balance or spillover from the previous year.
- Funds available for a state, on the other hand, include the funds actually released by both Gol and the State government, and the spillover from the previous year.
- Given that expenditure can be impacted by both the quantum and pace of fund release, expenditures as a proportion of funds available is a better metric to understand utilisation. Unfortunately, data on funds available are not publicly accessible. Thus, calculations for this brief have been done as a proportion of approved budgets.

- Utilisation of approved budgets has been low and declining over the years. In FY 2018-19, 64 per cent of the total approved budget (including spillover from the previous year) was spent. This further declined to 59 per cent in FY 2019-20. In FY 2020-21, potentially due to low release, states had spent only 26 per cent of their total approved budget during the first seven months i.e. till 31 October 2020.



Source: (1) Expenditure for FY 2018-19: RTI response by MHRD dated 18 December 2019. (2) Expenditures for FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21: RTI response by MoE dated 24 November 2020. (3) Approved budget for FY 2018-19: RTI response by MHRD dated 27 December 2018. (4) Approved budgets for FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

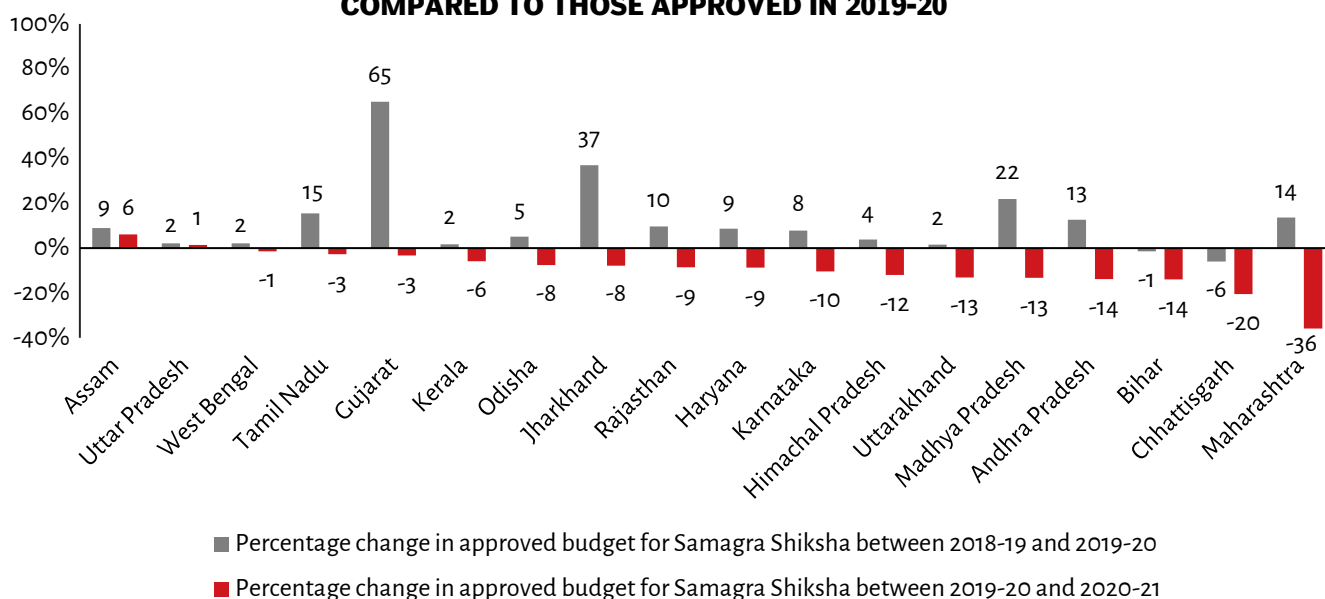
Note: (1) Approved budgets include spillover from previous year. (2) Samagra Shiksha figures for FY 2019-20 exclude Punjab, and those for FY 2020-21 exclude Puducherry, for both approved budgets and expenditures.

STATE-WISE ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

Total Budget Approved

- The decrease in spending is against the backdrop of already declining approved budgets. On average, for most states, approved budgets declined in FY 2020-21 compared to the previous year. For instance, in FY 2019-20, among 18 large states, approved budgets had increased as compared to the previous fiscal year in all states except Bihar and Chhattisgarh. The maximum increase was in Gujarat at 65 per cent.
- The trend reversed in the following year. In FY 2020-21, except for Assam and Uttar Pradesh, approved budgets decreased for 16 large states compared to the previous year. The decline was steepest in Maharashtra at 36 per cent.
- In Chhattisgarh, while approved budgets decreased by 6 per cent between FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20, the decline was considerably higher at 20 per cent in the following year. Similarly, for Bihar, as compared to a decline of 1 per cent in FY 2019-20, budget was lower by 14 per cent in FY 2020-21.

MOST LARGE STATES EXPERIENCED A DECLINE IN BUDGETS APPROVED IN 2020-21 AS COMPARED TO THOSE APPROVED IN 2019-20

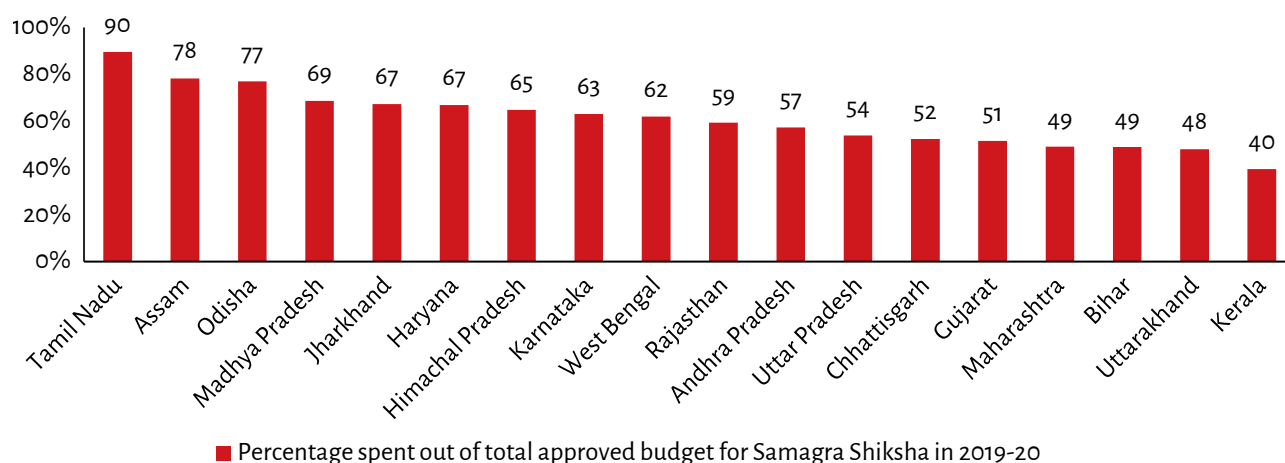


Source: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Expenditures as Share of Approved Budgets

- State-wise analysis of expenditures as a proportion of approved budgets during FY 2019-20, gives an indication of the fund utilisation situation prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In FY 2019-20, Tamil Nadu spent 90 per cent of its approved budgets, the highest among the 18 large states. Other states with relatively high rates of utilisation were Assam (78 per cent), Odisha (77 per cent), and Madhya Pradesh (69 per cent). However, it is important to note that 99 per cent of Tamil Nadu's total expenditures were incurred in the last five months of the financial year. Similarly, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh carried out 73 per cent and 70 per cent of their total expenditures during the last five months of FY 2019-20.

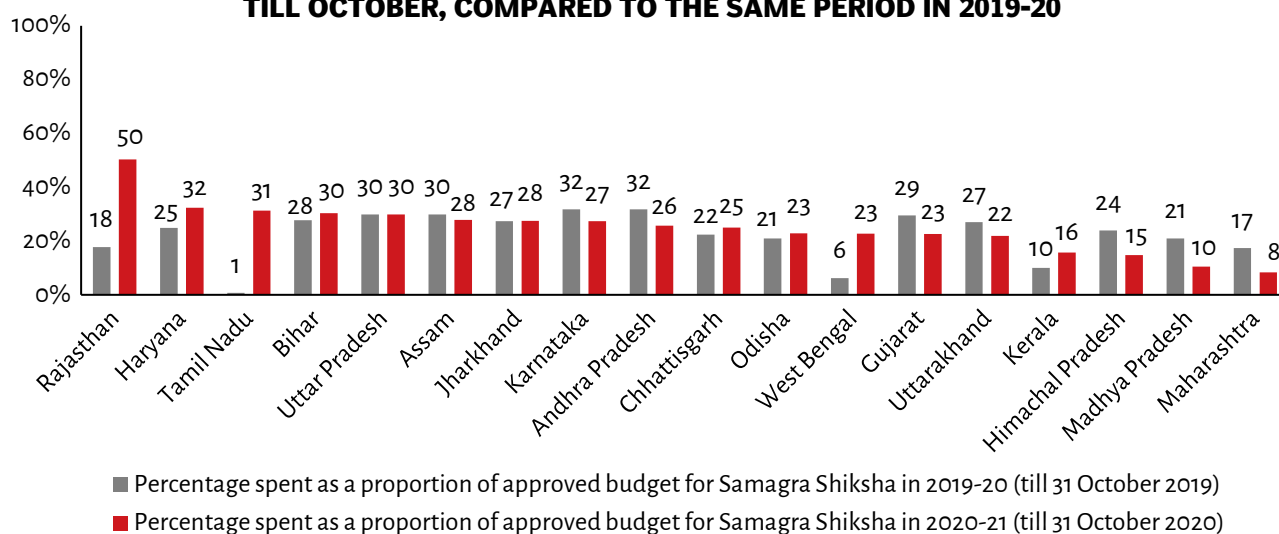
AMONG 18 LARGE STATES, EXPENDITURE AS A SHARE OF APPROVED BUDGET IN 2019-20 WAS HIGHEST IN TAMIL NADU AND LOWEST IN KERALA



Source: (1) Expenditures: RTI response by MoE dated 24 November 2020. (2) Approved budget Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

- In order to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the pace of expenditure, a comparative analysis was undertaken on the share of approved budget spent from April to October in 2020, as against the same period in 2019.
- In FY 2020-21, during the first seven months i.e. till 31 October 2020, 17 large states had spent less than one-third of their approved budgets except for Rajasthan. Interestingly, the utilisation rate for most states during the same period in FY 2019-20, was not very different, and all 18 states had spent less than one-third of their approved budgets during this period. In fact, eight states in FY 2020-21, had spent relatively higher shares of their budgets till October than spent till the same month of FY 2019-20.
- Rajasthan stands out, having spent half of its approved budget in the first seven months of FY 2020-21. This was only 9 percentage points lower than the proportion spent during the entire of FY 2019-20. Similarly, while Tamil Nadu had spent only 1 per cent of its approved budget between April to October in FY 2019-20, it spent a much higher share of 31 per cent during the same period in FY 2020-21.
- The two states that had the lowest proportions of expenditure till October 2020 were Madhya Pradesh (10 per cent) and Maharashtra (8 per cent).
- While expenditure as a share of approved budgets was similar across both years, the total quantum of funds spent was lower in FY 2020-21 for 11 out of 18 large states, including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. On the other hand, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu spent more funds in FY 2020-21 till October than the same period in FY 2019-20.

8 STATES SPENT A HIGHER SHARE OF APPROVED BUDGETS IN 2020-21 TILL OCTOBER, COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN 2019-20



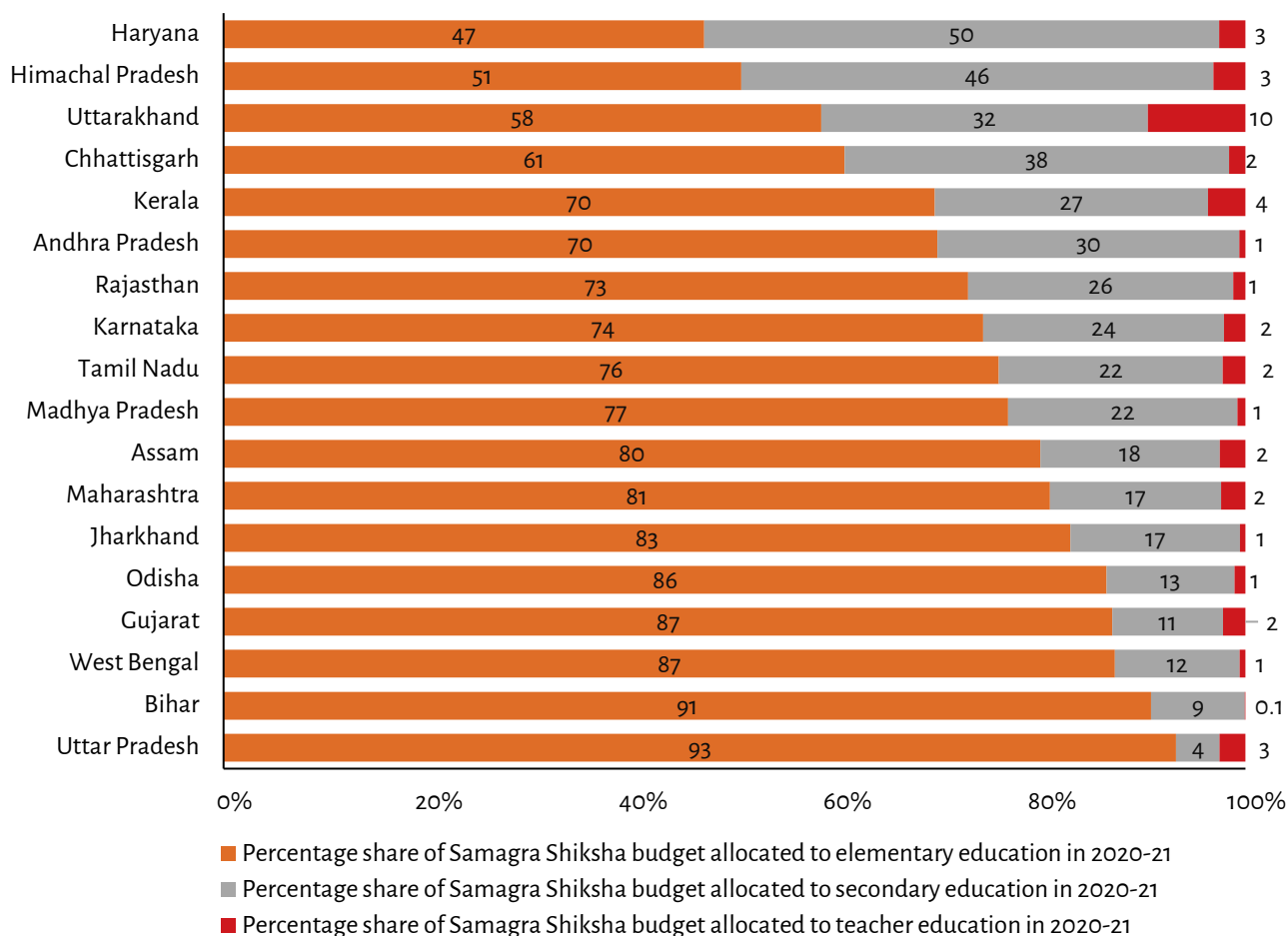
Source: (1) Expenditures for FY 2018-19: RTI response by MoE dated 18 December 2019. (2) Expenditures for FY 2019-20: RTI response by MoE dated 24 November 2020. (3) Approved budget for FY 2018-19: RTI response by MoE dated 27 December 2018 (4) Approved budget for FY 2019-20: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

COMPONENT-WISE BREAK UP OF APPROVED BUDGET

- In FY 2020-21, a majority 79 per cent of the approved budget (including spillover from the previous year) was for elementary education. This was 2 percentage points higher than the proportion in FY 2019-20. Budgets approved for TE remained the same in both years at 2 per cent. Secondary education accounted for 19 per cent of the total approved budget in FY 2020-21 (down from 21 per cent in FY 2019-20).
- There are, however, wide variations across states. The states with significantly higher proportions of budgets allocated for elementary education included Uttar Pradesh (93 per cent), Bihar (91 per cent), West Bengal, and Gujarat (87 per cent each).

- Among 18 large states, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh prioritised secondary education by allocating 50 per cent and 46 per cent of their approved budgets, respectively. This was followed by Chhattisgarh at 38 per cent. For most states, the share of budget allocated to TE was between 1 per cent and 3 per cent. Uttarakhand allocated the highest share (10 per cent), followed by Kerala (4 per cent).

79% OF APPROVED BUDGET FOR SAMAGRA SHIKSHA IN 2020-21 WAS FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, WHICH WAS 2 PERCENTAGE POINTS HIGHER THAN IN 2019-20



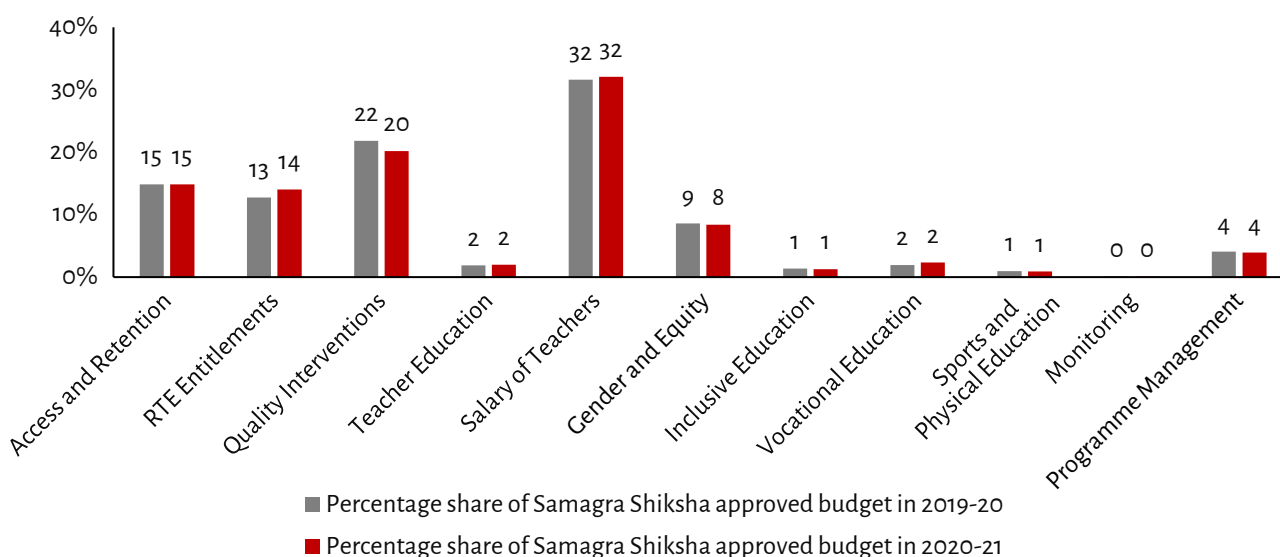
Source: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Intervention Components

- To achieve its overall goal of ensuring quality education to each child, a number of interventions are undertaken as part of Samagra Shiksha. These interventions can be grouped under 11 broad components as per the scheme guidelines: (i) Access and Retention; (ii) Entitlements as per Right to Education Act (RTE Entitlements); (iii) Quality Interventions; (iv) Teacher Education; (v) Salary of Teachers; (vi) Gender and Equity; (vii) Inclusive Education; (viii) Vocational Education; (ix) Sports and Physical Education; (x) Monitoring; and (xi) Programme Management.
- Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, AWP&Bs were delayed for all states in FY 2020-21. Plans for most states were approved by MoE between July and August 2020 (23 states in August and 7 states in July 2020).

- To understand the pandemic's impact on the different components, a component-wise break up of approved budgets (including spillover) for FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21 was done. Thirty-three states and UTs were considered for analysis. Puducherry, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, and West Bengal had to be excluded due to non-availability of component-wise budgets or spillover in one or both years.
- Even though most states finalised their AWP&Bs after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country, the overall composition of budgets across components remained almost the same in FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21.
- 'Salary of Teachers' constituted the largest share of approved budgets under Samagra Shiksha in FY 2020-21 at 32 per cent, same as in FY 2019-20. This was followed by 'Quality Interventions' (20 per cent); 'Access and Retention' (15 per cent); and 'RTE Entitlements' (14 per cent).

A LITTLE LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF SAMAGRA SHIKSHA BUDGET IS ALLOCATED TOWARDS 'SALARY OF TEACHERS', FOLLOWED BY 20% FOR 'QUALITY INTERVENTIONS'



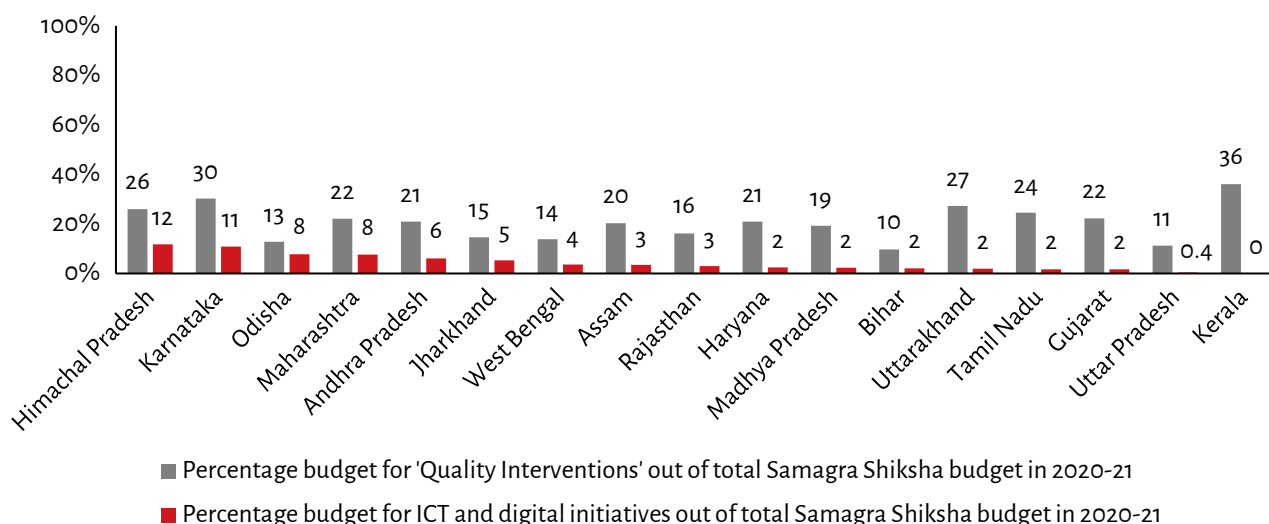
Source: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Quality Interventions and ICT Infrastructure

- In FY 2020-21, school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increased emphasis on digital education. During the year, GoI has taken up several initiatives to continue grade-specific teaching by sharing digital content with students using ICT, and through platforms such as television, radio, mobile phones, and online portals. In May 2020, GoI launched PM eVIDYA, an all-encompassing programme to impart education through digital platforms. The programme includes other platforms such as 'DIKSHA', 'SWAYAM', 'e-Pathshala', and the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER), to provide e-content for school education. Moreover, the MoE has released a set of guidelines, called PRAGYATA, on digital education, recommending optimum screen time for children, and tips on coping with mental stress, among others. In August 2020, the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) released guidelines to help overcome learning gaps of children using various alternative means – radio, TV, smartphones, and other media.

- The NEP, 2020 has also called for increased usage of ICT in school education during the pandemic, as well as in post-pandemic times.
- The funds allocated for ICT and other digital initiatives under Samagra Shiksha, fall within the 'Quality Interventions' component. Other activities under this component include support at pre-primary level, assessment of learning at national and state levels, academic support through Block Resource Coordinators (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs), Learning Enhancement Programmes (LEP), in-service teacher trainings, and strengthening of libraries.
- Given the specific focus on ICT in FY 2020-21, the budget for ICT and digital initiatives was analysed separately from rest of the budget on 'Quality Interventions'. ICT and digital initiatives refer to digital hardware (computers and digital boards), software including operating systems, and related furniture for both elementary and secondary levels of education.
- On average, across 35 states and UTs (excluding Puducherry and Chhattisgarh due to lack of data) in FY 2020-21, 4 per cent of the approved budget was allocated for ICT and digital interventions, and 17 per cent for 'Quality Interventions' excluding ICT.
- Kerala allocated the highest share of its approved budget to 'Quality Interventions' excluding ICT in FY 2020-21 at 36 per cent, followed by Karnataka (30 per cent). Interestingly, while Kerala did not allocate any budget for ICT and digital initiatives, the share of approved budget for ICT in Karnataka was relatively high at 11 per cent. Other states with a relatively high share of approved budget for ICT and digital initiatives included Himachal Pradesh (12 per cent), Odisha (8 per cent), and Maharashtra (8 per cent).
- In contrast, the share of approved budgets for 'Quality Interventions' was lowest in Bihar (10 per cent), followed by Uttar Pradesh (11 per cent). Bihar and Uttar Pradesh also had low proportions of their approved budgets allocated for ICT and digital interventions at 2 per cent and less than 1 per cent, respectively.

IN 2020-21, 4% OF TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET WAS FOR ICT AND DIGITAL INTERVENTIONS IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



Source: Samagra Shiksha PAB minutes for FY 2020-21. Available online at: <https://seshagun.gov.in/pab-minutes>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

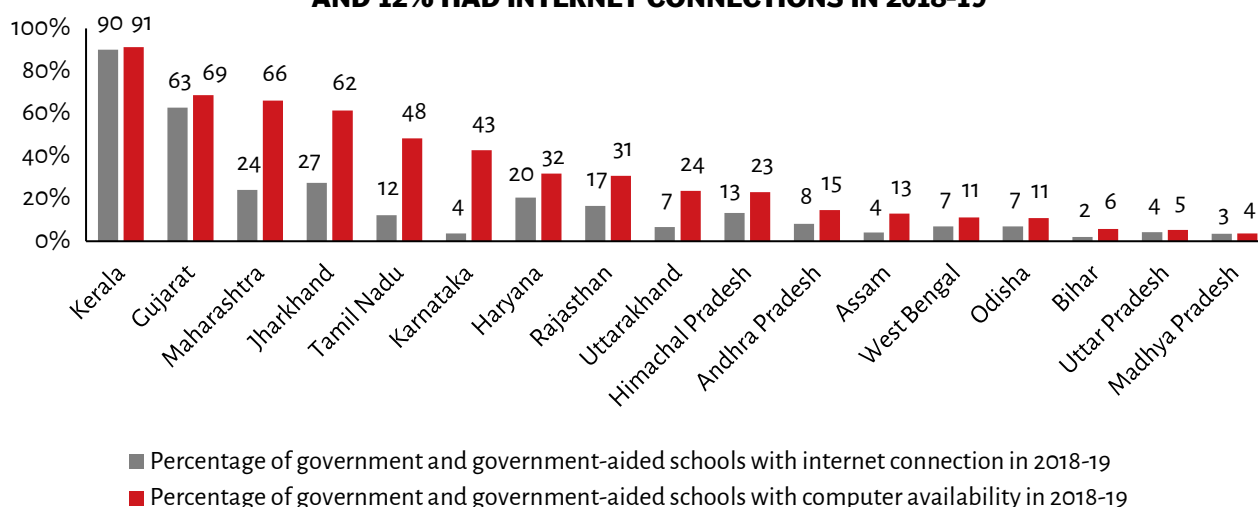
- Another key activity under ‘Quality Interventions’ is the in-service training of teachers and school heads. Under Samagra Shiksha, GoI launched a national mission in August 2019 to improve learning outcomes at the elementary level through an integrated teacher training programme called NISHTHA – National Initiative for School Heads’ and Teachers’ Holistic Advancement. The aim of this training is to motivate and equip teachers to encourage critical thinking in students, practice learner-centred pedagogy, learn about school safety and security, use ICT in teaching-learning, and conduct regular school-based assessments. Subsequently, NISHTHA Phase-II was introduced for secondary school teachers in FY 2020-21.
- Due to the pandemic, the remaining training under NISHTHA was to be conducted online by the NCERT in FY 2020-21. Financial support of up to ₹1,000 per teacher for procuring pen-drives with pre-loaded content and modules, printing of modules, and high-speed data packs, was to be provided to teachers on successful completion of the training course. All states have allocated budgets for online teacher training as part of the NISHTHA programme, at both elementary and secondary levels, in their AWP&Bs for FY 2020-21.
- The creation of e-content for students, and capacity building of teachers on usage of the online portal DIKSHA, are categorised under ‘Teacher Education’. State AWP&Bs also include allocations to enable teachers to utilise e-learning resources.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

ICT Infrastructure in Schools

- The pandemic increased the dependence on ICT, and teachers are expected to make its extensive use for teaching. However, the availability of ICT infrastructure in government and government-aided schools before the pandemic was quite poor in most states. As per the Unified District Information System for Education (U-DISE) Plus, of the total government and government-aided schools in India, only 28 per cent had computers and 12 per cent had internet connections in academic year 2018-19.
- Among 18 large states, schools in Kerala were most equipped, with around 90 per cent schools having computers and internet connections. The share of schools with an internet connection was second highest in Gujarat at 63 per cent. For most other states, this was less than 30 per cent. The three states with the lowest share of schools with internet connectivity or computers were Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh.

ONLY 28% OF GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT-AIDED SCHOOLS HAD COMPUTERS, AND 12% HAD INTERNET CONNECTIONS IN 2018-19

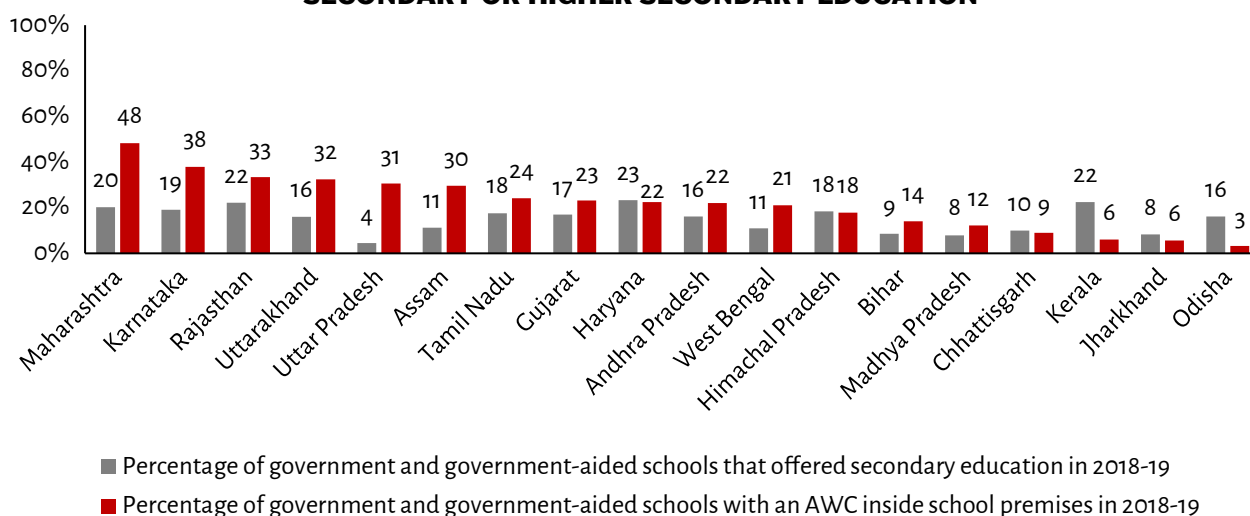


Source: U-DISE Plus portal. Available online at: <https://udiseplus.gov.in/#/home>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Provisioning of Pre-Primary and Secondary Education

- NEP, 2020 has set the goal of ensuring access to both pre-primary and secondary education to each child in India by the year 2030.
- However, the proportion of schools with secondary and higher secondary classes is low. At the all-India level, in 2018-19 (the latest year for which data are publicly available in U-DISE), only 13 per cent of government and government-aided schools offered secondary or higher secondary education. Among 18 large states, the top three states having schools with secondary or higher secondary grades were Haryana (23 per cent), Kerala (22 per cent), and Rajasthan (20 per cent). In contrast, Uttar Pradesh had the lowest proportion at 4 per cent, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand with 8 per cent each.
- Before Samagra Shiksha, the provisioning of pre-primary education through the government school education system was not part of MoE's policy objectives. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme, implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), provides Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) through Anganwadi Centres (AWCs).
- With the launch of Samagra Shiksha, many state governments have started to bring AWCs inside government school premises. In academic year 2018-19, the proportion of government and government-aided schools where AWCs were located within the premises was highest in Maharashtra (48 per cent), followed by Karnataka (38 per cent), and Rajasthan (33 per cent). In contrast, Odisha had only 3 per cent of schools with AWCs within their premises.

IN 2018-19, ONLY 13% OF GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT-AIDED SCHOOLS OFFERED SECONDARY OR HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION

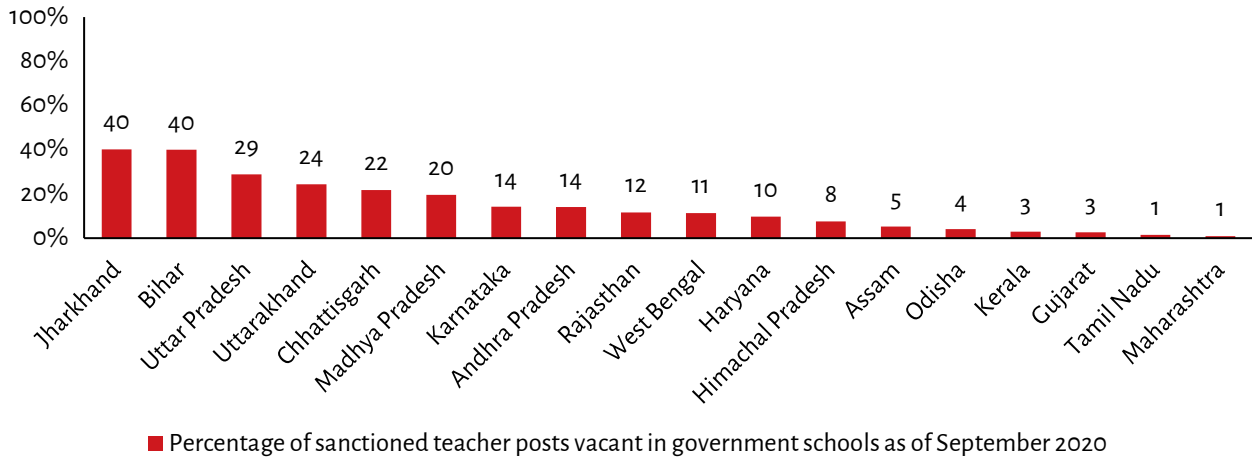


Source: U-DISE Plus portal. Available online at: <https://udiseplus.gov.in/#/home>. Last accessed on 10 January 2021.

Availability of Teachers

- During the pandemic, GoI released guidelines for teachers in government schools, to ensure that children adapt to distance-learning methods and follow safety measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. The NCERT also developed alternative academic calendars for students as well as teachers for Grades I to XII to engage students at home with educational activities. For students with limited digital resources, the NCERT guidelines recommended that learning materials be delivered to children's doorsteps by teachers and volunteers.
- Despite the critical role teachers are expected to play, 17 per cent of sanctioned posts for teachers in government schools were vacant as of September 2020. The proportion of sanctioned posts lying vacant was highest in Jharkhand and Bihar at 40 per cent each. In contrast, vacancy rate was lowest in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra at 1 per cent each in FY 2020-21.

TEACHER VACANCY RATE IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS WAS HIGHEST IN JHARKHAND AND BIHAR AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020



Source: Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1243 answered on 19 September 2020. Available online at: <http://164.100.24.220/loksabhaquestions/annex/174/AU1243.pdf>.