

*Final Report*  
Evaluation Study  
of Grant-in-Aid  
for Voluntary  
Agencies  
Running Ashram  
Schools in  
Maharashtra  
Volume I –  
Study Findings

22 December 2017



22 December 2017

To

Shri Vijay Aher  
Director  
Department of Economics and Statistics  
Government of Maharashtra  
Mumbai – 400001

**Reference:** Work Order EVL/1116/ ASA/188 dated 30/03/17 regarding submission of Final Report for Evaluation Study of Grants-in-Aid for Voluntary Agencies running Ashram Schools in Maharashtra  
**Subject:** Submission of Draft Final Report

Dear Sir,

We are pleased to submit herewith the Final Report for the “Evaluation Study of Grant-in-Aid for Voluntary Agencies running Ashram Schools in Maharashtra”. The Report comprises of 3 volumes as follows:

Volume 1: Study Findings  
Volume 2: Tools of Data Collection  
Volume 3: Qualitative data from Stakeholder Consultations

We are thankful for the kind co-operation and support rendered by DES for execution of the study.

Best wishes,  
For and on behalf of PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited (PwC)

**Authorized Signatory:**



Name and Title of Signatory: Ashok Varma, Partner  
PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited  
Floor – 17, Building – 10C, DLF Cyber City,  
Gurgaon – 122002, India  
E-mail: [ashok.varma@in.pwc.com](mailto:ashok.varma@in.pwc.com)

PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, Building 10 C, DLF Cyber City, Gurgaon – 122002, India. T: +91 124 330 6025 / 330 6000, F: +91 124 330 6999, [www.pwc.com/in](http://www.pwc.com/in)

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The Evaluation Study of Voluntary Agencies Running Ashram Schools in Maharashtra report is a synthesis report of the evaluation of the aided Ashram schools scheme implemented by Tribal Development Department. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), Planning Department, Government of Maharashtra engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited (PwC) to undertake the study and preparation of analytical report.

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We extend our gratitude to the Director and Additional. Director, DES and other officials for their guidance and cooperation throughout the study. The support of DES has been instrumental in the successful completion of the study.

# Abbreviations

AADR	Average Annual Drop-out Rate
ATC	Additional Tribal Commissionerate
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
CDP	Community Development Programme
Co-Ed	Co-Education
CTC	Central Tripartite Committee
D.Ed	Diploma in Education
DES	Directorate of Economics and Statistics
DISE	District Information System for Education
DSES	Department of School Education and Sports
DWCD	Department of Women and Child Development
EBB	Economically Backward Block
EMRS	Eklavya Model Residential Schools
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoI	Government of India
GoM	Government of Maharashtra
GSTES	Gujarat State Tribal Education Society
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IEDC	Integrated Education for Disabled Children
ITDA	Integrated Tribal Development Authority
ITDP	Integrated Tribal Development Project
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
LAN	Local Area Network
LWE	Left Wing Extremism
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDM	Mid-Day Meal
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIL	Modern Indian Language
MIS	Management information system
MITRA	Maharashtra In-Service Teacher Resource Application
MoM	Minutes of Meeting
MoTA	Ministry of Tribal Affairs
MPLAD	Member of Parliament Local Area Development
MSCERT	Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training
MSK	Mahila Shiksha Kendra
NAS	National Achievement Survey
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NEP	National Education Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NITI Aayog	National Institute for Transforming India Aayog
NPE	National Policy on Education
NPEGEL	National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level
NSQF	National Skills Qualification Framework
NTAC	National Tribal Advisory Council
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
OBC	Other Backward Caste
OMTES	Odisha Model Tribal Education Society
OoSC	Out of School Children
PESA	Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas
PO	Project Officer
PoA	Programme of Action

PPP	Public Private Partnership
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
PVTG	Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups
PWD	Persons With Disability
RMSA	Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCA	Special Central Assistance
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SCSP	Scheduled Caste Sub Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDMC	School Development and Monitoring Committee
SMC	School Management Committee
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSC	Senior Secondary Certificate
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STP	Special Training Programmes
TDD	Tribal Development Department
TET	Teacher Entrance Test
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TLM	Teaching-Learning Material
TRTI	Tribal Research and Training Institute
TSP	Tribal Sub Plan
TTWREIS	Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society
UDISE	Unified District Information System for Education
UEE	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UT	Union Territory
VO	Voluntary Organisation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

# *Executive Summary*

## *Background*

The Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. (PwC) in March 2017 to conduct an empirical study on the “Evaluation of Scheme for Grant-in-Aid for Voluntary Agencies for running Ashram Schools”. It is envisaged that the outcomes of the study and recommendations would contribute towards strengthening policy and programmatic initiatives for quality education of tribal students in the state. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To study scheme design for consistency, feasibility and effectiveness
- To evaluate physical and financial progress of the programme since last decade
- To evaluate the availability, capacity and adequacy of basic infrastructure and available facilities in Ashram Schools
- To study level of education in ashram schools are as per the norms of State Council Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Pune
- To study reduction of dropouts for both boys and girls at primary and secondary level with its causes
- To identify bottle necks, lacuna, catalysts, challenges, barriers and constraints in the ground implementation of this scheme and suggest remedies

## *Methodology*

Mixed Method Study Design was applied to conduct the study. It comprised secondary research as well as primary data collection applying qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data was collected from Voluntary Organisations (office bearers) and Schools (principals, teachers and wardens) through structured questionnaires using Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) tool while qualitative data was collected through consultations with Project Officers and Additional Tribal Commissioners. Total coverage of the study is: 157 NGOs, 157 schools and 1,576 respondents across 14 districts under the Tribal Sub-Plan area. The data was processed and tabulated using SPSS and findings were drawn and triangulated through qualitative analysis and literature review. Standard protocols were followed for quality assurance throughout the process of data collection and processing.

## *Context*

Maharashtra has ST population of 10.5 mn (9.35% of the total population of state and 10% of the total ST population in the country; Census 2011) and is largely concentrated in 15 out of 35 districts of the state. The communities are comparatively more primitive and deprived than the ST counterparts. As in the case of rest of the ST communities in India, the ST in Maharashtra are also characterized by isolation from mainstream, socio-economic deprivation, low educational development and conflicts due to alienation from land and natural resources, which are traditionally main sources of livelihood for these communities. The low socio-economic development and diversity is also a challenge for delivering school education since the learning needs of the first generation tribal learners are different from the mainstream and it is difficult to align schooling systems to the needs of each of the tribal community. It is on this background that the Ashram School Programme stands out, since it was originally conceived and designed to cater to the educational needs and challenges exclusively for the tribal population.

## *Policy framework for the education of tribals and Ashram School Programme*

Although there are no exclusive policies for tribal education at present, the policy framework for mainstream education has evolved as a unified and inclusive one, responsive to the education goals and targets of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) related to education, gender equity and inclusion. The Constitution of India mandates free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years and 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002, under Article 21 A recognised ‘Education’ as a

Fundamental Right. Subsequently, the Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53; Kothari Commission, 1964-66, National Policy on Education, 1968 / 1986; Draft National Policy on Education, 2016, Plan of Action, 1992 and Right to Education Act 2009 have highlighted in varying degree the need for contextualization of the curriculum content, use of tribal dialects in teaching, introduction of vocational education and adopting inclusive approaches for delivering quality education.

The erstwhile centrally sponsored Ashram School Programme (merged under the Umbrella Scheme for Education by Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 2015) launched in 1974, by design, incorporates the various elements for education of tribal students as mentioned in the various policies and guidelines. The programme, being implemented in 22 states has further evolved in response to the local needs thereby leading to different programme modalities across the states.

'Grant-in-Aid to Ashram schools for welfare of Scheduled Tribes' was started by the Education Department, Government of Maharashtra and the first aided Ashram school was opened in 1954 in Jawhar tehsil, Thane district. The scheme was transferred from Education Department to the Directorate of Social Welfare to Tribal Development Corporation and by 1975-76 to the Directorate of Tribal Development, Nashik. At present, 529 Government Ashram schools and 556 aided Ashram schools have been set up under the Centrally Sponsored Ashram School Programme and *Scheme for Grant-in-Aid to VOs running Ashram Schools* of the Tribal Sub Plan<sup>1</sup> respectively. Except for the administration at school level and budget, the implementation for schools under both schemes are same.

### ***Trends in School Education of Tribals in Maharashtra***

In the context of school education of the ST, currently the communities have much better access to free / education irrespective of location of residence. This is mainly attributed to the expansion in access to schools through Tribal Sub-Plan in Schedule 5 areas (tribal areas) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with thrust on universalization of elementary education. During 2015-16, out of total enrollment of 224.68 lakh in the state, 24.52 lakh (10.9%) were ST students (UDISE, 2015-16).

However, in case of all other key indicators, the ST lag behind the general population. The average retention from class I to XII among ST (87.8) is significantly lower than the state average (97.7) and dropout rate is higher (7.42) compared to state average (3.8) (UDISE 2014-15, 2015-16). Although the gap has reduced progressively over last decade, the current gap is still high. Similarly, the achievement level assessed under National Achievement Survey (NAS) for various years for class III, V, VIII and X show that the ST in Maharashtra have been consistently performing lower than the state average.

### ***Access, infrastructure and environment of study schools***

The analysis of data of study schools indicated that the schools served catchment area in the radius of average 360 km and were accessible by road. The schools have limited access to good transport facilities. . About 50% schools are located in vulnerable locations with implications on safety of the students. However, adequate precautions such as compound walls, training for first aid, etc. are not established in majority of the schools.

The study schools have adequate classrooms, but the hostels are overcrowded. Over 80% of girls and boys hostels are situated in the premises of the school itself. Almost all study schools have access to water supply, through several sources such as open wells, tanks, hand pumps. However, safe drinking water is available in only 27% of the schools while 24x7 electricity is available in 61% schools. Sanitation facilities are inadequate, and only 14% of the schools dispose waste in covered pits. A total of 83% of study schools are deficient in learning facilities such as library, laboratory, computers, etc.

The issues related to health and safety are a major concern in the light of 344 deaths amongst tribal students between the years 2005-06 and 2016-17 across all aided Ashram schools. In the study schools, health camps are irregular and adequate precautions are not taken for controlling prevalence of communicable diseases.

<sup>1</sup> TSP Programmes are financed by the following sources: (i) Tribal Sub Plan funds form State/UT Plans and Central Ministries/ Departments, (ii) Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub Plan, (iii) Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution to the States/UTs, (iv) Funds through Central Sector Schemes, (v) Funds from Centrally Sponsored Schemes & (vi) Institutional Finance



## Quality of Education in Study Schools

The curriculum adopted by the study schools, is same as schools in non-tribal areas, like government Ashram Schools in the state. Contextualised content on tribal culture and history or primers in tribal dialects are not available. Majority teachers and principals opined the need for revising the curriculum content for meeting the needs of tribal students. Vocational education is not being conducted in any of the schools, although it is mandated in the Ashram School Programme guideline.

95% of the teachers adopt lecture method for classroom transaction. Only 7% teachers use tribal dialect while teaching to substantiate the explanation from textbooks. 73% of teachers have received some form of training and support to capacity development. Adequate teaching learning material is not available in most of the schools. About 73% teachers have received training and majority of the participants (82%) found the training sufficient and relevant.

High absenteeism, high dropout, inadequate infrastructure and learning facilities, isolation from mainstream education system, lack of support from management for new initiatives, etc. are perceived as key issues by majority stakeholders.

## Management and Accountability of VOs

Majority (58%) of the VOs are registered as 'Trust' and others as 'Society'. About 70% manage 1 Ashram school, 20% have 2-5 operational Ashram schools under their administrative purview and 10% have 6 or more Ashram schools operational. All VOs are involved in one or many education sector specific interventions. Among them, 18% also implement projects related to health while 7% are involved in skilling. Only 35% of the VOs have professionally qualified staff i.e. graduates or post graduates in social work discipline. Office bearers from 42 VOs (1/3<sup>rd</sup>) reported that they faced difficulties in recruiting qualified staff and retaining them for supporting Ashram School activities. Shortage of non-teaching staff, dissatisfaction regarding salaries and high absenteeism emerged as key areas of concern. Similar issues were faced in case of teachers and wardens also.

Among the 84% office bearers facing issues related to adequacy and timely availability of grants, more than 70% cited challenges such as inadequate amount and delay in disbursement/reimbursement. About 28% find the funding process complex and cumbersome. 58% VOs have computerized systems of accounting and financial management, and also had clerical staff and / or computer operators. Remaining 42% VOs continue to maintain the accounts manually, indicating lack of adequate systems and processes in place for the purpose of financial management. 73% VOs are non-compliant on the regulations for financial management. Study revealed weak monitoring mechanisms at school, and at VO and PO levels. There is lack of computerised records, functional MIS and monitoring through quarterly school visits by the PO.

## Recommendations

### 1. Operational guidelines for Ashram Schools need to be strengthened with regulatory provisions for VOs running Ashram Schools

The Ashram school guidelines need to incorporate the specific aspects related to the responsibilities, norms and accountability of VOs with respect to systems and processes to be adopted and adhered to by the VOs. This could comprise of appointment of at least one qualified staff at the VO to co-ordinate and oversee the ashram school management and provide requisite operational support; instituting appropriate systems and processes for financial management and grievance redressal and action to be taken in case of non-compliance by the VOs. ITDP officials need to be empowered to take requisite action at ITDP PO level in case of non-compliance to the guideline.

### 2. Infrastructure needs to be upgraded and measures need to be taken (in the form of School Health and Safety Programme) on priority from health and safety perspective

Both remedial and precautionary measures need to be undertaken at school, VO and policy level for dealing with the sensitive issues related to healthcare and safety of students. Infrastructure of the schools needs to be assessed from the health care and safety perspective. The schools requiring safety measures such as CCTV, upgradation and repairing of compound walls, sanitation facilities, access to safe drinking water, provision of uninterrupted power supply (if required, through solar system), repairs for maintenance, etc. need to be

shortlisted and VOs need to be provided financial support (in case of additional budget required) for time-bound upgradation. The Civil Works Cell constituted at the Secretariat level for undertaking construction and upgradation could provide the requisite technical and operational support for the same.

A State-level Committee for Health and Safety at Ashram Schools could be constituted comprising of key stakeholders from the Secretariat, Commissionerate, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) and State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) amongst others. The committee could recommend specific measures for instituting systems and processes for ensuring healthcare and safety of students at both government and aided Ashram Schools in the state. Regulatory and precautionary measures need to be developed and disseminated at an earliest to all VOs and Ashram Schools. Also, the POs could disseminate the same in monthly meeting of schools and VOs at the block level and follow-up for compliance both through review meetings and visits of schools in the jurisdiction. Appropriate School Health and Safety Programme needs to be designed and implemented and technical support of UNICEF could be leveraged for the same.

### **3. Monitoring mechanisms need to be strengthened; data of status of implementation / activities to be made available on periodic basis**

The Ashram School MIS needs to be made GIS and web-enabled so that access could be provided upto school level to ensure bottom-up collation of MIS data on periodic basis. The VOs need to make arrangement of functional computer for official use at school and VO office, in cases where these are not available at present. Once the MIS is fully functional with added features, the computer operators / staff responsible for data entry and accounting at Ashram Schools and VO could be provided training at PO level.

The Ashram School guidelines need to incorporate protocols for monitoring at all level coupled with requisite support to be provided to Schools and VO in case of non-compliance. Provisions need to be incorporated for taking appropriate action in case of non-compliance by the VO. Computerised Records of the review meetings, visit reports and progress reports need to be maintained at the respective levels, and also uploaded on MIS for ready reference as and when required.

### **4. Phased measures are essential for improving quality of education in terms of provision of learning facilities, ICT enablement, provision of contextualised curriculum and capacity building / handholding of teachers**

A 360 degree quality framework needs to be developed for measuring and monitoring quality of education delivered at the aided as well as un-aided (Government run) Ashram Schools. The framework needs to cover the indicators related to infrastructure, staffing, health and safety, adoption and use of appropriate and contextualized teaching methodologies, capacity building of teachers and learning outcomes of students.

Efforts need to be made for availability of existing contextualised curriculum content upto class IV, and developing additional content as required. The content developed through SSA, Maharashtra and capabilities of Tribal Language Cell of MSCERT could be leveraged for the purpose. Proficiency of teachers from tribal background in the respective dialects from Ashram Schools and the Resource Pool of Department of School Education and Sports at state, district and block level could be utilised. The initiative of TDD for life skill education of students in Government Ashram Schools to be delivered in collaboration with Department of Women and Child Development, could be further extended to the aided Ashram Schools also.

Learning facilities such as library, laboratory and ICT labs need to be provided in every school. To start with, in case of schools where Computer labs are available, the elearning content may be provided on priority, and teachers need to be oriented for usage of the content to maximum possible extent. Other interventions may be rolled out in a phased manner depending on feasibility and availability of funds.

Customised capacity building programme needs to be designed for the teachers, comprising of both training, handholding and supportive supervision. A special focus is required on English teaching since the ST students are consistently performing lower than general population, as well in developing skills in activity based learning (ABL) pedagogy.

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**5. Systemic measures for facilitating convergence with relevant stakeholders and collaborations for technical support need to be undertaken at state level**

Functional and ongoing collaboration / convergence needs to be facilitated with line departments such as Department of School Education and Sports, Directorate General of Technical Education, Women and Child Development, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, SCPCR, etc. through active linkages and reinforcement through requisite Government Resolution or Notification. Establishment of a State Level Advisory Committee could be established to serve as a forum for facilitating convergence. Experts / Academicians from the field of tribal education and representatives of Civil Societies with proven track record of impactful programmes in tribal education could also be members of the Committee.

A state-level Five-year Perspective Plan for Ashram Schools could be developed in consultation with the line departments, technical agencies and key stakeholders. This will provide a definitive roadmap for the TDD to steer the process of designing and implementing interventions / programmes for strengthening Ashram Schools in a time bound and systematic manner

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background of the study

The Tribal Development Department (TDD), Government of Maharashtra (GoM) has been undertaking measures at policy and programmatic level for the educational development of tribal communities in the state. Context-specific and quality school education is instrumental not only for laying down foundation for the overall socio-economic development of these communities, but also in reducing the disparities between the mainstream population and the marginalised communities over a period.

In case of tribal areas in Maharashtra, the school education upto secondary level is mainly imparted through the 1,085 state-run and aided residential ashram schools exclusively set up for the tribal students. The ashram schools continue to face challenges such as inadequacies of infrastructure, high dropout, low retention, issues related to health and safety and lower learning outcomes compared to general population.

While the operational rules and regulations for government and aided schools remain the same, evidences from some of the previous studies<sup>2</sup> and visits by TDD officials<sup>3</sup> reveal that the compliance with guidelines has been lower and provision of facilities has been inferior in aided schools compared to state-run schools. Since 556 (51%) out of total 1,085 Ashram Schools are aided with substantial enrollment of over 1.87 lakh students, it is imperative for the TDD to identify the causes underlying the issues and undertake corrective measures in time bound manner.

On this background, the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), on behalf of TDD, engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. (PwC) to conduct an empirical study on “Evaluation of Scheme for Grant-in-Aid for Voluntary Agencies for running Ashram Schools” in March 2017. It is envisaged that the outcomes of the study and recommendations would contribute towards strengthening policy and programmatic initiatives for quality education of tribal students in the state. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To study scheme design for consistency, feasibility and effectiveness
- To evaluate physical and financial progress of the programme since last decade
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- To study level of education in ashram schools are as per the norms of State Council Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Pune
- To study reduction of dropouts for both boys and girls at primary and secondary level with its causes
- To identify bottle necks, lacuna, catalysts, challenges, barriers and constraints in the ground implementation of this scheme and suggest remedies

The following sections elaborate on the context and methodology adopted for the study.

## 1.2. The context of School Education of Tribal Students in Maharashtra

**Tribal population in Maharashtra:** Maharashtra has ST population of 10.5 mn (9.35% of total population of state and 10% of total ST population in the country; Census 2011) and is largely concentrated in 15 out of 35 districts of the state. The tribal communities comprise of 42 Scheduled Tribes (ST), including 3 Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG), which are comparatively more primitive and deprived than the ST counterparts.

The tribal groups differ in numerical strength, settlement history, geographic location and means of livelihood, access to natural resources, language, culture, human development, political empowerment and developmental aspirations. Further, each tribe is an endogamous group, whose interaction with other tribal groups and the general population is limited. The dialects also differ widely, with some of them having close resemblance with the vernacular language (Marathi), while others are completely unique. The habitations are also widely scattered, sparsely populated and in case of tribes such as Pawara, Koruku and Gond, the habitations are not even accessible

<sup>2</sup> Study on Ashram Schools by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, 2016

<sup>3</sup> TDD, 2017

by road. As in case of rest of the ST communities in India, the ST in Maharashtra are also characterized by isolation from mainstream, socio-economic deprivation, low educational development and conflicts due to alienation from land and natural resources, which are traditionally main sources of livelihood for these communities.

**Status of school education of ST:** In the context of school education of the ST, currently the communities have much better access to free / affordable education irrespective of location of residence. This is mainly attributed to the expansion in access to schools through Tribal Sub-Plan in Schedule 5 areas (tribal areas) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with thrust on universalization of elementary education. During 2015-16, out of total enrollment of 224.68 lakh in the state, 24.52 lakh (10.9%) were ST students (UDISE, 2015-16). Among them, about 2.72 lakh were enrolled exclusively in the government and aided Ashram Schools in the remote tribal areas (TDD, 2015-16). The remaining students are dispersed across the state, and enrolled in both government and private (aided / unaided schools). The Gross Enrollment Ratio is also comparable with general population upto elementary level.

However, in case of all other key indicators, the ST lag behind the general population. The average retention from class I to XII among ST (87.8) is significantly lower than the state average (97.7) and dropout rate is higher (7.42) compared to state average (3.8) (UDISE 2014-15, 2015-16). Although the gap has reduced progressively over last decade, the current gap is still high. Similarly, the achievement level assessed under National Achievement Survey (NAS) for various years for class III, V, VIII and X show that the ST in Maharashtra have been consistently performing lower than the state average (detail analysis in chapter 3).

**Challenges in education of ST:** The overall trends indicate that although access has been achieved in case of ST, low retention, high dropout and lack of quality of education continue to remain a daunting challenge. This is further compounded by systemic issues such as lack of adequate learning facilities and infrastructure in schools, inadequate qualified teachers, inconsistencies in curriculum in the context of ST and language barriers. School education is also impacted by issues such as low socio-economic development and low educational levels among the ST communities and isolation from the mainstream which fall beyond the ambit of interventions for school education.

The situation of ST students from the tribal areas is much more adverse since the intensity of issues affecting their education is more intense, compared to their rural and urban counterparts. Considering the absolute number of students undergoing education, especially in the tribal areas, it is imperative to undertake time-bound measures to resolve the challenges. This is critical from point of view of overall development of the tribal communities, and hence calls for urgent attention of the policy makers and practitioners.

**The context is central to the present study conducted by PwC:** The context of the overall situation of the education of ST and initiatives for improvement lie at the core of the study. Various social, systemic, programmatic and policy dimensions have been analysed in the light of historical trends and challenges in educational development, finally culminating in the concrete recommendations.

In doing so, the historical trends in the education of ST vis-à-vis general population in Maharashtra and other comparable states i.e. Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh across the key indicators for school education have been analysed, underlying causes for the trends have been probed and overall quality of education delivered in the ashram schools has been assessed. For this purpose, in-depth analysis of secondary data, evidences from the sample survey and findings from the studies conducted on Ashram has been conducted. The following section throws light on the methodology adopted for the study.

### **1.3. Methodology**

The study was conducted at state level in phased manner over a period of 6.5 months. Consultative and collaborative approach was adopted for the study, wherein the DES and TDD were consulted consistently at every critical stage of the study.

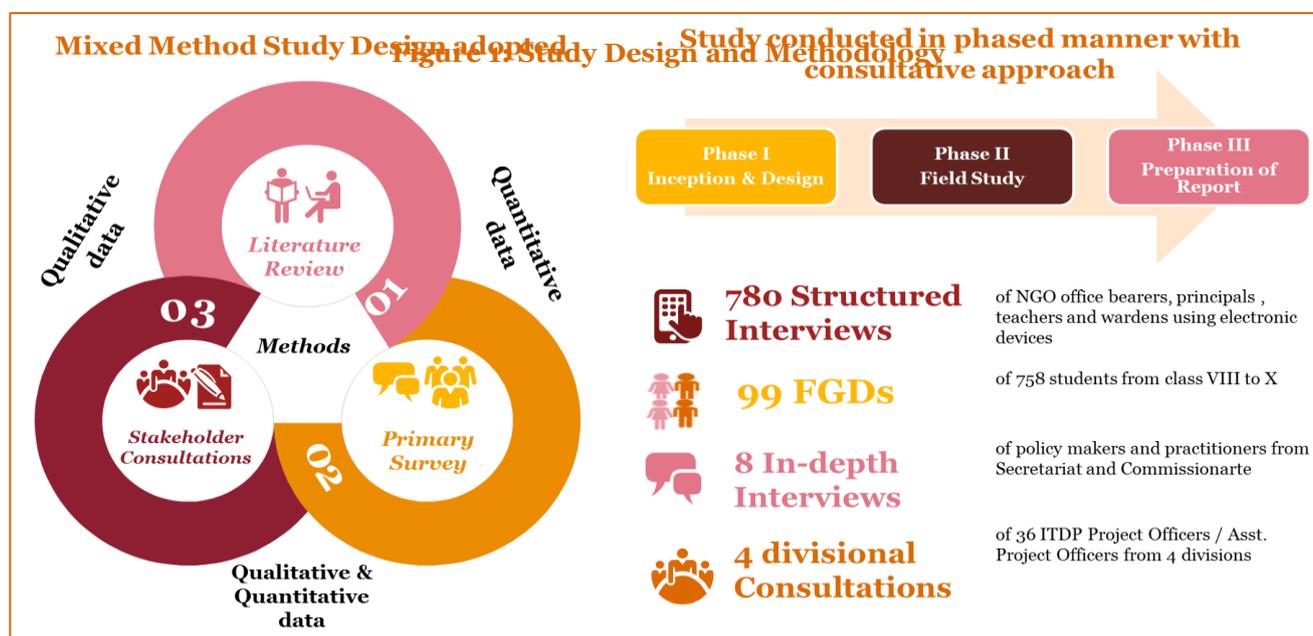
**Study area:** The study was conducted in 11 out of 15 districts with significant tribal population (four districts with prevalence of left wing extremist activities were excluded due to risks in data collection). The districts comprised of Ahmednagar, Amravati, Dhule, Jalgaon, Nagpur, Nanded, Nandurbar, Nashik, Raigarh, Thane and Yavatmal.

**Sampling:** NGOs running Ashram Schools under the scheme to be evaluated were considered as primary sampling unit (PSU). These districts comprised of 287 NGOs running 384 ashram schools. Among these, 156 were selected by adjusting the estimated sample size with respect to total population of NGOs using population correction factor. One secondary school per NGO was selected for adequate representation of schools.

**Selection of Respondents:** Considering the goals and objectives of the study, all major categories of key beneficiaries and stakeholders were covered. These comprised of NGO office bearers, principals, teachers, students, ITDA Project Officers and officials from Commissionerate and Secretariat. All respondents, except students were selected by applying Purposive Sampling Method, while the students from class VIII to X were selected by Simple Random Sampling Method.

**Study design, data collection and analysis: Mixed Method Study Design** was adopted for the study. The design comprises of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, thereby enabling flexible approach for the study and scope for triangulation of findings. It comprised of:

- Intensive literature review and policy analysis;
- Secondary data compilation, analysis and benchmarking based on key indicators;
- Qualitative and quantitative data related to school infrastructure of 156 schools through School Observation Checklist and an android-based app
- Quantitative data collection through survey of NGO Office Bearers (156), Principals (156), Teachers (312) and Wardens (156) using semi-structured questionnaires and android-based app;
- Qualitative data collection through 99 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with students (792) and 4 divisional consultations with 36 ITDA Project Officers using FGD guide and Consultation Guide respectively;
- Qualitative data collection through interviews of officials from Secretariat, Commissionerate and



Additional Tribal Commissioners (4) using In-depth Interview (IDI) Schedule.

Thus, qualitative and quantitative data was collected from 1,576 respondents. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The quality assurance protocols were adhered to throughout the process of data collection and analysis. **A technical note on Methodology is enclosed in annexure 1.**

## 1.4. Limitations of the study and caveats

The empirical findings of the study are based on the sample survey of 156 out of 556 aided Ashram Schools. These may be generalized only in the context of aided schools, and do not necessarily apply to the government Ashram Schools since several variables related to infrastructure, staffing, funding, etc. differ between the two category of schools.

During the course of the study, secondary data related to the physical and financial progress of the scheme was not available as required for the past 10 years for all divisions, as specified in the Terms of Reference of the study. Hence, the analysis related to this aspect of the programme could not be conducted.

The Maharashtra State Council of Education, Research and Training (MSCERT) has conducted learning assessment from class I to VIII across all government and aided schools in the state, including Ashram Schools in the year 2015-16 and 2016-17. However, clean and segregated data for Ashram Schools was not available during the course of the study. Resultantly, the analysis on learning outcomes has been presented based on the findings of National Achievement Survey (NAS) conducted on sample basis by the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT) for the subjects of English, Marathi and Maths for class III, V, VIII and X.

In case of explanations for underlying causes of issues related to tribal development in general, quality of education in ashram schools and challenges faced by ST students, references have been made to external studies and reports of committees constituted by the Government of Maharashtra. This is in addition to the empirical findings from the sample survey. The reference to external studies have been made to provide insights in the larger context on inclusive education. Related citations have been provided in the footnotes as well as sections in the report acknowledging the references made. The findings are limited to the objectives and mandates of the respective studies and reports.

## 1.5. Structure of Report

The Study Report is structured in 7 chapters. The coverage and broad content of the chapters is summarised below.

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<p><b>Introduction:</b></p> <p>The first chapter summarises the purpose and intended outcomes of the study, sets the context of tribal education and provides summary of methodology (technical note on methodology enclosed in annexure 1)</p>
	<p><b>Review of Policy Framework and Programmes for Education of Tribals</b></p>
	<p>The second chapter presents review of policy framework in the backdrop of tribal education, relevance and appropriateness of Ashram School Programme design along with critical overview of various guidelines issued by TDD from time to time</p>
	<b>Chapter 2</b>
	<p><b>State-level Trends in Education of Tribal Students</b></p>
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<p>The third chapter provides an insight in the historical trends in the key indicators for education of ST and current status of the education of ST vis-à-vis national averages for ST and benchmarking against comparable states.</p>
	<p><b>School Environment</b></p>
	<p>The fourth chapter elaborates on the aspects related to access, adequacy and quality of physical infrastructure and environment of the school and gaps therein vis-à-vis compliance with</p>
	<b>Chapter 4</b>

guidelines and RTE 2009, based on findings of sample survey. The findings are supported by secondary data analysis at the state level.

### Quality of Education

#### Chapter 5

The fifth chapter primarily focuses on the analysis of soft components of overall quality of education delivered through aided ashram schools and associated challenges. It encompasses aspects such as curriculum, pedagogy, co-curricular activities, student-teacher interaction, community participation, nutrition, etc. The good practices from other states are summarised as appropriate in relevant sections.

### Management of NGOs

#### Chapter 6

The Chapter 6 presents study findings on the functioning of the NGOs running ashram schools and key aspects related to human resources, funding, processes, governance, compliance and monitoring. The key issues and bottlenecks in effective management of schools are highlighted.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### Chapter 7

The chapter summarises findings of the study and presents concrete recommendations for strengthening the scheme vis-à-vis challenges identified.

## 2. Review of Policy Framework and Programmes for Education of Tribals

India is home to 834 communities of indigenous people. The Scheduled Tribe (ST) population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. With a population of more than 10.2 crores, India has the single largest tribal population in the world. This constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011).

Education is one of the primary agents for transforming the situation of tribals and providing opportunities for mainstreaming. Policy framework for school education of ST is considered important not only because of constitutional obligation, but as a crucial input for overall development of tribal communities as well as reducing the socio-economic gaps between the ST and other social groups. With India being a signatory to SDG, formulation of targeted policies and programmes for development of ST gains critical importance.



### Highlights

- There is no exclusive policy for the education of ST. However, the education policies formulated during last 3 decades have specific provisions for educational development of ST.
- Specific provisions for education of tribals have been incorporated in the overall policy framework for school education in India. Conscious efforts have been made to facilitate mainstreaming of the ST through inclusive approaches for education since independence. The key provisions involve ensuring access to schools in tribal habitations, setting up Ashram Schools aligned with learning needs of tribal students, imparting education in local dialect, contextualization of curriculum, setting up of residential schools, incentives for attendance, enhancing community participation in school management, incentivizing education of girls, scholarships, etc. Employment of ST teachers and training of non-ST teachers for multi-lingual education.
- The major programmes for school education such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Mahila Samakhya, Eklavya Vidyalaya, etc. have specific provisions for promotion of education of ST children.
- The Ashram School Programme (merged under the Umbrella Scheme for Education, MoTA) is the single largest programme designed exclusively for the education of tribal students. By design, the programme was conceived as holistic and exclusive intervention for improving access to schools to STs especially in remote areas. It was envisaged that provision of residential schools near tribal habitats would also help in reducing dropouts, increasing retention and improving learning outcomes over a period.
- Ashram School Programme in Maharashtra has been successful in providing near-universal access to school education in remote areas, reducing dropout and contributed to enhancing literacy among tribals in the state.
- Challenges such as lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of availability of contextualised curriculum content, low learning outcomes among ST students, high absenteeism and dropout, etc. persist across the state.

## 2.1. Policy framework for school education of Tribals

The welfare policies in India, introduced since independence, have been largely inclusive. Development of tribal communities have been given due consideration in Constitution of India and subsequent five year plans. Several initiatives have been taken by GoI for studying the issues of tribals and harmonizing the policies and programmes for tribal development. Notable among these are **provisions in Five Year Plans; approach of Tribal Sub-Plan, 1974; Draft National Policy for Tribals, 2007 and National Tribal Advisory Council, 2015. The policy initiatives have provisions for education of tribals as a major intervention for their holistic development.** The relevant policies are elaborated in annexure 2.

Education has been an integral part of the policy framework for overall tribal development since 1950's. Over a period of 70 years, the strategies and approaches for tribal development have evolved into more holistic framework from perspective of promoting inclusion and equity. **The policies and programmes have also been responsive to the global initiatives such as Millennium Development Goals (MDG), 2015 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) framed by United Nations.**

At present, **there is no exclusive policy for the education of ST. However, the education policies formulated during last 3 decades have specific provisions for educational development of ST.** Education is also identified as one of the key focus areas for tribal development in policy and programmatic initiatives for overall tribal development. **The focus has also shifted from expansion of access to quality of education, contextualization, gender equity and adoption of more inclusive approaches in education delivery as a whole.** The ripple effect is seen on the several initiatives taken by state governments such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The section highlights the cross-cutting theme of education of ST across various policy initiatives for education.

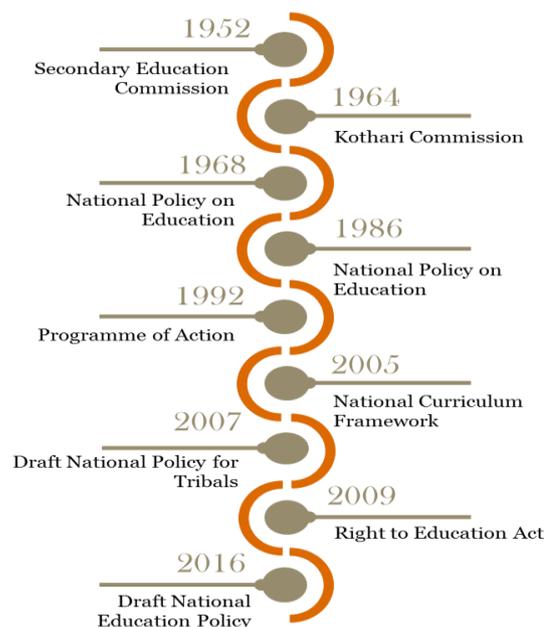
### Key Provisions for Tribals in Policy and Planning for School Education

*Specific provisions for education of tribals have been incorporated in the overall policy framework for school education in India. Conscious efforts have been made to facilitate mainstreaming of the ST through inclusive approaches for education since independence.*

*The key provisions involve ensuring access to schools in tribal habitations, setting up Ashram Schools aligned with learning needs of tribal students, imparting education in local dialect, contextualization of curriculum, setting up of residential schools, incentives for attendance, enhancing community participation in school management, incentivizing education of girls, scholarships, etc. Employment of ST teachers and training of non-ST teachers for multi-lingual education.*

*Source: NPE 1968, 1986, 2016; PoA, 1992; RTE, 2009; Reports of Education Commissions, 1953, 1966*

Figure 2: Chronology of Key Policy Initiatives



**Constitutional provisions:** Education has been accorded vital importance in the Constitution. The Directive Principle under Article 45 of the Constitution seeks to provide **free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years.** Article 350 A directs that every state and every local authority has to provide **adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education** to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.

The 86<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002, under Article 21 A recognised **‘Education’ as a Fundamental Right.** It includes Education in the Concurrent List, which meant sharing of responsibility between the Central Government and the states in education delivery. It also made **Central Government**

**responsible to reinforce the education reforms, maintain quality and standards** (including those of the teaching profession at all levels) and study and monitor the educational requirements of the country.

**Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53:** The Commission was appointed to study the problems in secondary education in the country in a comprehensive manner. Among the several recommendations for strengthening secondary education, the Commission recommended that the **mother tongue or the regional language should generally be the medium of instruction throughout secondary school stage** subject to the provision that for linguistic minorities, special facilities should be made available.

**Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission), 1964-66:** Towards the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> Five Year Plan, a need was felt for comprehensive review of the education system with a view to initiate a fresh and more determined effort for educational reconstruction. This led to appointment of the Education Commission to advise GoI on the national pattern of education at all stages and in all aspects. Post rigorous study of the problems in education system, the Commission **recommended systemic reforms and programmes for educational reconstruction in terms of systems, quality and equity**. The key recommendations of the Commission were incorporated in the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986.

**National Policy on Education (NPE), 1968; 1986 and Draft NPE, 2016:** The policy was first conceived as a result of deliberations on the report of Education Commission 1964. NPE, 1968 mandated compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years, as specified in the Constitution of India. It also stated that suitable programmes would be developed to reduce the prevailing dropout and stagnation in schools.

The policy emphasized **“equalization of educational opportunity” and correct regional imbalances in provision of educational facilities**. It recognized the need for intensive efforts to expand education in tribal areas. The policy emphasized that **facilities for secondary education should be extended expeditiously to areas and classes which have been denied these in the past**.

**NPE was further amended and adopted by the Parliament in 1986 and further modified in 1992.** One of the key thrust areas of the policy were on **universal access, retention** and substantial improvement in quality of elementary education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. The Policy laid **special emphasis on the removal of disparities** and to equalize educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied. An important development in the policy towards education of tribals came with recommendations of the NPE 1986, which specified, among other things, the following:

- Priority to open primary schools in tribal areas
- Need to develop curriculum and devise instructional material in tribal language at the initial stages with arrangements for gradually adopting to regional languages.
- The curriculum at all stages of education to be designed to create awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people as also of their enormous creative talent.
- Promising ST youths to be encouraged to take up teaching in tribal areas
- Ashram schools/residential schools to be established on a large scale in tribal areas
- Incentives schemes to be formulated for the STs, keeping in view their special needs and lifestyle

Further, **the Draft NPE 2016 recommended some of the key policy and programmatic interventions for strengthening education of tribals**. These comprised of

- Education for tribal children should be under the State Education Department that has greater expertise in the domain of education
- In Ashram schools, in many remote pockets, the teachers also live on campus. It will be useful to link a nearby well-functioning integrated higher secondary school/ Kendriya/ Navodaya Vidyalaya or other full-fledged secondary school to have regular operational, advisory, mentoring arrangements
- Opportunities for skill education need to be woven in the education streams in tribal areas
- School timings in tribal areas need to be made flexible to suit local needs

**Programme of Action (PoA), 1992:** The PoA was developed for laying down a framework for implementing NPE 1986, modified in 1992. It provides a broad strategy within which detailed schemes will be subsequently drawn up with reference to the local context of various states. The PoA also comprises of **significant recommendations for strengthening education of tribals**, as follows -

- Provision of primary school or other appropriate institution for every ST habitation

- An integrated Educational Complex to be responsible for total education in every tribal area serving all children in the age group 3-14 and adults in the age-group 15 and above.
- Teachers to conduct enrolment drives at the start of every academic year to enroll all SC/ST children.
- Incentives to ST families to send their children, especially girls to school.
- Children from tribal communities to be taught through the mother tongue in the earlier stages in primary school. Teaching/ learning material in the tribal languages to be prepared providing for a transition to the regional language by Class III.
- Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarship rates to be linked with the increase in the cost of living index and scholarships to be provided through bank/post office.
- Books of proven quality including classics from Indian and foreign languages will be abridged, adapted, translated, reproduced and made available at subsidized rates to children in SC/ST communities.
- Where teachers are not available in schools located in SC/ST localities, crash programmes for giving suitable training to eligible persons from SCs/STs to be started and the eligible to be appointed.
- Education in tribal areas to be linked with outdoor activities.
- Adequate coaching to be provided at early stages so that they can participate in sporting activities and competitions.
- Improvement in the standards of hostels for SC/ST students is essential and special attention has to be paid to the nutritional need of the students.
- Monitoring of education in SC/ST areas will be entrusted to the local community/village education committee with adequate representation of SC/ST members, especially women. The local community will take the total responsibility of planning the educational facilities in SC/ST areas.

**Compulsory Education Acts presently in force in States / UTs**

**At present, compulsory education acts are in force in 19 states.** *The Bombay Primary Education Act, 1947 is the oldest, while the Sikkim Primary Education Act, 2000 is the most recent amongst the state legislations for compulsory education.*

*Source: NEUPA, 2013*

**National Curricular Framework (NCF), 2005:** The NCF prepared by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) aims to bring about a significant shift towards schools and systems that are child-friendly and inclusive, and teaching-learning processes that are more based on a constructivist approach, responsive to each child's needs.

The NCF emphasized the **use of multi-lingual education** and **use of local dialects as medium of instruction in tribal pockets** and highlighted the **need for developing appropriate curriculum content for tribal students**. It also suggested **use of oral lore and local craft in transacting curriculum** in classroom and conducting co-curricular activities related to environment, art and culture.

**The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, (RTE) 2009:** The RTE was a consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A of 86th Constitutional amendment. RTE specifies that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. It specifies the duties and responsibilities of government, local authority and parents in providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.

Despite not making specific references to scheduled tribes, it mandates that the government ensures that **children from weaker/disadvantaged sections are not discriminated against**, while enrolling in or pursuing elementary education. It provides for **development of curriculum in accordance with the values mentioned in the Constitution**, and ensure the all-round development of the child, building on the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a **system of child friendly and child centered learning**.

**National Monitoring Committee on Education Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes set up by MHRD, 2012:** The Committee was set up at MHRD following the recommendation of National Advisory Council of Planning Commission in 2011. The committee has been **mandated with the task of monitoring education of SC / ST under MHRD initiatives**.

**Sub-Committee for Drafting of Guidelines for Implementation of SCSP and TSP, MHRD, 2012:** The sub-committee organized three national level stakeholder consultations and presented concrete **recommendations for implementation of SCSP and TSP in context of education**. A group of experts

also visited best practices in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Based on the recommendations of sub-committee and visits to best practices, **guidelines were framed for implementation of SCSP and TSP under MHRD**. The guidelines also suggested that the **National Monitoring Committee on Education Development of SC, ST and PWD, assisted by Standing Committee should also function as a nodal unit to monitor implementation of SCSP and TSP**.

## 2.2. Programmes for School Education of Tribals

School education up to secondary level is imparted to tribal students both through mainstream programmes supported by MHRD and Department of School Education of respective state governments, as well as through exclusive interventions for tribals and vulnerable girls through MHRD and Department of Women and Child Development. Both type of programmes are summarised below, highlighting specific provisions for tribals as cross-cutting theme.

### 2.2.1. Programmes under various Ministries / line departments

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), MHRD, 2001 - ongoing:** The SSA is a flagship programme of MHRD for Universalization of Elementary Education. SSA interventions include inter alia, opening of new schools and alternate schooling facilities, construction of schools and additional classrooms, toilets and drinking water, provisioning for teachers, regular teacher in service training and academic resource support, free textbooks and uniforms and support for improving learning achievement levels / outcome. Post notification of the RTE Act, SSA approach, strategies and norms have been modified consistent with the RTE, 2009

Since inception, SSA has significantly contributed to improving access to elementary education. SSA also involves specific provisions for strengthening education of ST, as follows:

- SSA recommends that the enrolment of disadvantaged groups, including tribal children be part of state-level institutional reforms.
- District-level mapping of needs must account for tribal areas.
- One of the aims of SSA in promoting community participation in schools is the involvement of Tribal Autonomous Councils, along with other community-level institutions, in school management.
- The concept of 'micro-planning' is aimed at ensuring the participation of tribal communities in School Management Committees (SMC) and as community teachers and organizers. Local governments can create their own interventions in this regard.
- SSA also lays down guidelines for the engagement of experts on tribal education.

#### **Achievement of SSA- I(2001-06) in context of Education of ST**

*SSA has opened 1,33,000 primary schools and 1,06,000 upper primary schools from the date of reference of Seventh All India Survey (30th September 2002). Most of these schools have been provided to unserved habitations and tribal habitations are clearly benefited from it, thus, achieving almost universal access at primary level.*

*Source: Tribal Development Plan, SSA – II, 2007*

The revised implementation framework of SSA, 2011, specifies the following measures:

- Recruiting native speakers to teach in tribal language
- Developing educational materials in local language using local resources
- Establishing resource centres for training teachers in MLE
- Sensitization of teachers to tribal cultures and practices
- Incorporating local knowledge in curriculum and textbooks
- Involving community members in school activities
- Using textbooks in mother tongue at the beginning of primary education
- Providing special training to non-tribal teachers to work in tribal areas

#### **Strategies for ST under SSA**

*Under SSA – II, 74 districts with high tribal concentration have been identified for focused and targeted intervention and 52 districts identified by Ministry of Tribal Affairs are being targeted for focused attention for girl's education, infrastructure, and convergence with Ministry of Tribal Affairs. A provision of INR 15 lakhs is made to each district for special innovative activities to promote education for Scheduled Tribes, comprising of, but not limited to: Enrolment and retention drives; special camps and bridge courses; setting up special models of Alternative Schools; monitoring attendance; remedial / coaching classes; providing a congenial learning environment inside and outside the school.*

*Source: Tribal Development Plan, SSA – II, 2007*

**Special components under SSA for Girl Education with focus on ST and marginalised communities: Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)** was launched in 2004 and merged with SSA in 2007 as special programme for ensuring access and providing quality education to girls predominantly from SC / ST in EBB. A minimum of 75% girls enrolled are to be from ST, SC, OBC and Minority Communities. The scheme is being implemented in 27 states. Total 3069 KGBVs were sanctioned with a capacity of 6.13 lakh seats (KGBV Evaluation Report, NITI Aayog, 2015).

**The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)** programme, special focus is on education of girls from ST communities. The scheme is targeted to Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB) where the level of rural female literacy is less than the national average and the gender gap is above the national average, as also in blocks that have at least 5% ST population and where the ST female literacy rate is below 10%.

**Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), MHRD, 2009 – Ongoing:** The programme was launched for universalization of secondary education by 2017 (GER of 100%) and achieve universal retention by 2020. It aims to provide a secondary school within a reasonable distance of any habitation, which should be 5 kilometer for secondary schools and 7 -10 kilometers for higher secondary schools. It also focuses on improving quality of secondary education resulting in enhanced intellectual, social and cultural learning. RMSA has components for ICT @ Schools, Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC); Strengthening of Boarding and Hostel facilities for Girl Students of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools (Access and Equity); Quality improvement in schools and vocational education.

#### **Special provisions for ST under RMSA**

- *Apart from receiving priority in outreach, tribal areas are also to be brought under GIS mapping for establishing new schools and updating existing schools.*
- *Schools in EBB and tribal blocks are to have at least two vocational trades for students.*
- *State governments are also encouraged to reduce drop-out rates among tribal students, along with improving access to secondary education.*
- *Special coaching camps for students in Left-Wing Extremism affected districts is suggested as an intervention.*

*Source: RMSA Framework, MHRD, 2009*

**Mahila Shiksha Kendra under Mahila Samakhya, Ministry of Women and Child Development, 1990 - ongoing:** The Mahila Shiksha Kendra (MSK) set up under Mahila Samakhya Scheme launched in 1988. Aligned to the commitment of ‘education as an agent of basic change in the status of women’, MSKs emerged as a key intervention within the Mahila Samakhya Programme in the early 1990’s to help women above the age of 18 with 3Ls: gain functional Literacy; Learn Life-skills and Leadership. Over a period, the intervention evolved and MSKs are providing a residential learning opportunity for girls and women who are denied of educational opportunities, either partially or fully. MSK focuses on the quality provision of holistic and gender sensitive education and is designed to create a cadre of aware, educated and trained women who could play a role in the development of educational activities at the village level. Majority beneficiaries of MSK are ST and girls in need of care and protection.

**Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA); 1998 - ongoing:** The MoTA introduced the scheme in order to provide quality, residential education and enhanced access to higher education opportunities. The EMRS focus on meeting the differential needs of the ST students and provide conducive environment for learning. EMRS are set up in the States/UTs with grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution of India. Currently, 161 EMRS have been set up in 26 states with enrollment of more than 52,000 ST students (MoTA, 2017).

While the above programmes focus on education of tribals to variable extent, the Ashram School Programme is the single most focused programme for proving quality and contextualized education to tribals, like EMRS, but with larger capacity and coverage. The next section elaborates on the genesis, design, achievement and scope for improvement in the programme.

### **2.3.2. Ashram School Programme**

**Genesis of Ashram School Programme:** The original conception of education institutions for tribal students was initiated in pre-independent India by Thakkar Bapa, a Gandhian activist, who started an Ashram School in

Mirakhedi in the Panchmahal district of Gujarat. These Ashram Schools were set up with the aim of creating freedom fighters and social workers<sup>4</sup>.

The concept of Ashram School has been derived from the traditional Indian Gurukuls and the Gandhian philosophy of basic education in which the teacher and the taught live together and have a close interaction with the purpose of helping the students in the development of a complete personality and in honing their capacities.

In the sixties, Ashram schools were started on an experimental basis. After their initial success they have become a popular Government measure for imparting the education to the tribal people. Ashram Schools were introduced as a programme in 1974, and since 1990-91, they have been established in Tribal Sub Plan areas as a 50-100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme to improve literacy rates and provide a conducive learning environment and residential facilities to tribal students, including those from Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)<sup>5</sup>. Ashram schools target remote rural areas which are low on educational resources, and mainstream schools cannot be established. They are an exclusive initiative for tribal students.

Moreover, Ashram Schools serve as a means to check the problems affecting tribal education namely non-enrolment, dropout and poor quality of students. It further aims at improving the life styles of tribal children with better facilities and proper guidance. By virtue of being established in remote areas, Ashram Schools aim to develop local educational resources and promote enrolment and retention. The residential nature of the schools enables students to get uninterrupted access to education. By organizing extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, they aim to provide a conducive environment for learning. Not only providing formal education, the Ashram schools are also expected to provide craft-based or vocational education in the field of agriculture, horticulture, spinning and other trades.

*The National Education Policy, 1986 recommended the establishment of Ashram Schools, Anganwadis, non-formal and adult education institutions in tribal areas, as urgent measures to bring Scheduled Tribes on par with the rest of the population.*

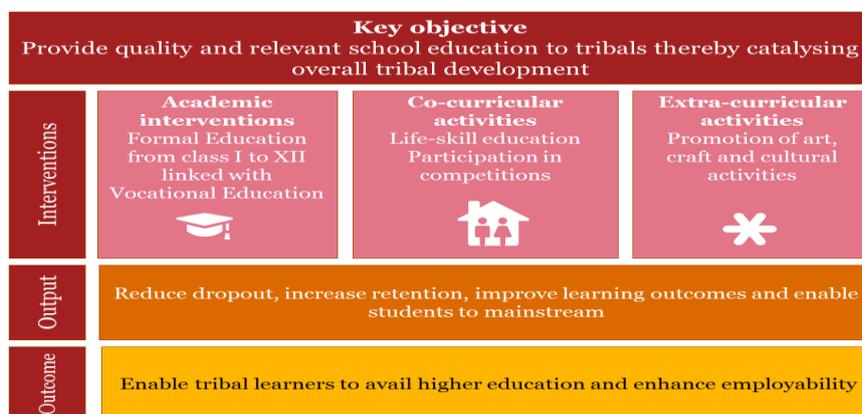
### Ashram School Programme Design:

The Programme was conceived as holistic and exclusive intervention for improving access to schools to STs especially in remote areas. It was envisaged that provision of residential schools near tribal habitats would also help in reducing dropouts, increasing retention and improve learning outcomes over a period.

Initially, the intent was to provide ‘relevant’ elementary education to the ST in consonance with their life and culture. But over a period, it has been scaled up to class XII. The curriculum and pedagogy is expected to be aligned with the needs of first generation tribal learnings. The programme has components for life-skill education, vocational education and extra-curricular activities comprising of sports, art and culture. The schools are expected to provide a conducive environment for overall development of the ST students.

Regarding the pattern of school, curriculum and assessment, the model is the same as that of schools under the state board and Department of School Education. In the states of Assam, Odisha and Chhattisgarh, multi-lingual education is adopted upto class 4. In case of Jharkhand, multi-lingual text books have been developed during 2016-17, and is being adopted from the academic year 2017-18. Except for these states, the content and medium of instruction remains same as the first language followed in the respective state.

**Figure 3: Ashram School Programme Design**



<sup>4</sup> Introduction in Mishra, B C, Alhadini Dhir (2005). Ashram Schools in India: Problems and Prospects. Discovery Publishing House. New Delhi

<sup>5</sup> Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India

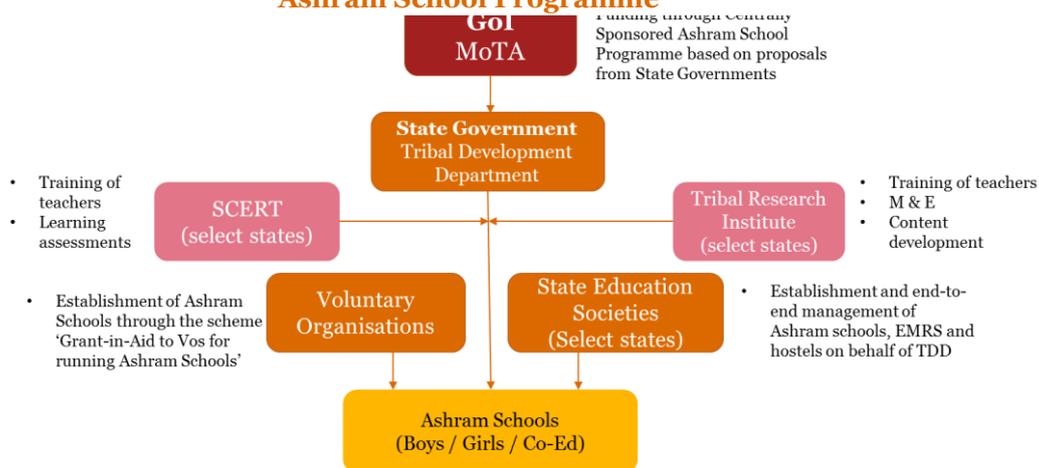
**Norms for setting up Ashram Schools:** The norms are developed from point of view of enhancing access to education for ST in remote areas, as seen from the following:

- Ashram schools should be opened in the areas of high tribal concentration and a good number of school going children in the age group of 6-14 years are available.
- School should be located in a radius of a few kilometers (distance not specified) of the population in backward / scheduled areas.
- In the villages where there are already Government run Primary schools and Middle schools, the Ashram schools should be opened to provide hostel facilities to the students coming from a distance of 3 km or more.

**Funding:** The programme is largely centrally sponsored, with need-based funds granted to states for setting up Ashram Schools, both through Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and through the scheme of Grant-in-Aid to Voluntary Agencies for Tribal Welfare. Under the programme, 100% for capital expenditure is provided by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) for construction of schools in LWE areas and Ashram schools for girls and 50% of capital expenditure is provided for boys schools. Remaining 50% share and recurring expenditure has to be borne by the state. The state share can be substituted through Member of Parliament Local Area Development (MPLAD) Scheme also.

**Operational modalities:** While the overall programme framework and interventions through Ashram Schools have remained unchanged, several modifications have been made in operational modalities by the state governments for enhancing effectiveness of the programme. The commonly adopted modalities are depicted in the figure given below.

**Figure 4: Operational Modalities for implementing Ashram School Programme**



The MoTA guideline for Ashram School Programme provides flexibility to state governments for adopting the most suitable mechanisms for operationalising the programme. As a result, variation is observed from state to state in the pattern of implementation. For example, in the case of states such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, the programme is implemented directly by the Tribal Development Department for majority of the schools. Some schools are also managed through voluntary organisations under the scheme “Grant-in-Aid to VO for running Ashram Schools”.

In case of Gujarat, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, autonomous societies have been formed by the Tribal Development Departments for managing the EMRS and Ashram Schools, and some schools are managed through VOs. The respective societies manage 20 to 250 Ashram Schools (in addition to EMRS and hostels), undertake staffing, monitoring, teacher training and co-curricular activities. In addition to these two modalities, Gujarat also has a Public-Private-Partnership Model for either adopting entire school or sponsoring specific interventions across schools (such as meals or teacher training).

Comparison of interventions adopted through the state societies indicates that these are more holistic compared to state and VO managed models. It also implies that the quality of education delivered through the society-run schools could be better than those run by state / VO, with exceptions.

**Table 1: Comparison of models adopted for managing Ashram Schools**

Particulars / Interventions	State / VO managed school model	Schools managed by State Societies
States reviewed	Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh	Gujarat, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh
Managing entities	Department of Tribal Development, VOs engaged by department	Gujarat State Tribal Education Society (GSTES); Odisha Model Tribal Education Society (OMTES); Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TTWREIS) Gurukulam – AP Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society
Number of schools managed	300 nos. to 500 nos.	20 nos. to 250 nos.
Curriculum and medium of instruction	State board curriculum, same as rest of the schools under Department of School Education Medium of instruction same as rest of the government schools	State Board Curriculum same as rest of the schools under Department of School Education Odisha: Multilingual content for class 1 to 3
Staffing	Appointment through Teacher Entrance Test (TET)	Appointment through separate tests and interviews conducted by panel appointed by the societies
Teacher training	Intermittent trainings through State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT)	Periodic trainings through the society or expert agencies engaged by the society
Co-curricular activities	Participation in local competitions for science and sports	All above states: Participation in competitions in science and sports and life skills Telangana: Special classes for English; summer camps Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha: Coaching classes for competitive exams Gujarat: Do-it-yourself Science Kits, art and cultural clubs, house systems
Monitoring	Offline monitoring through Commissionerate / ITDA Project Offices	Offline monitoring through State Education Societies, Commissionerate / ITDA Project Offices Online monitoring through dedicated MIS

Source: TDD, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, 2017; GSTES, 2017; OMTES, 2017; Gurukulam, 2017; TTWREIS, 2017

### 2.3. Implementation of Ashram School Programme in Maharashtra

In pre-independence era, a few social organisations <sup>6</sup> voluntarily attempted to focus on education of tribal children through Ashram schools and hostels. It was in the post-independence period, tribal education through Ashram schools was conceived by the State as a formal mechanism for education delivery after the recommendations of Vandreakar Committee (1947), appointed by the Government of Maharashtra with the assistance of Shri Acharya Bhise.

Following this, the scheme of ‘Grant-in-Aid to Ashram schools for welfare of Scheduled Tribes’ was launched by the Department of Education and the first aided Ashram school was opened in 1954 in Jawhar tehsil, Thane district. The success of this school encouraged the Government to open more aided schools in tribal areas and a

At present, total **1,085 schools** have been set up with enrollment of **4,43,790 students**. Out of these, 54% are girls. About **6,510 teachers** are currently employed in the system.

Source: TDD, 2017

<sup>6</sup> Gokhale’s Bharat Sevak Samaj in Pune (1905); Barve’s Bhil Seva Mandal in Nandurbar (1918); More’s Adivasi Shikshan Prasarak Mandal (1938); Acharya Bhise’s Adivasi Seva Mandal Thane (1940) (Source: TRTI, Pune)

total of 125 Ashram schools were opened, including the 24 aided Ashram Schools by the year 1972. During this period the scheme was transferred from Education Department to the Directorate of Social Welfare to Tribal Development Corporation and by 1975-76 to the Directorate of Tribal Development, Nashik (Adivasi Vikash Bhawan).

At present, 529 Government Ashram schools and 556 aided Ashram schools and schools have been set up under the Centrally Sponsored Ashram School Programme and *Scheme for Grant-in-Aid to VOs running Ashram Schools* of the Tribal Sub Plan<sup>7</sup> respectively. Except for the administration at school level and budget, the implementation for schools under both schemes are same.

**Ashram School Guidelines, TDD:** The TDD issued detailed operational guidelines in 2005-06, specifying the objectives, coverage of the programme, modalities for various government departments and guidelines for community participation and governance. It also lays down in detail the admission policy and pre-requisites for funding. However, a lacunae observed in these guidelines was with respect to specific roles devised and assigned to different functionaries at school level, particularly in case of aided schools. This has strong implications on accountability taken by different functionaries at school level in routine activities and in case of emergencies.

The guidelines are being revised in 2017. The draft guidelines as shared, are more refined in terms of defining the roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders from state level to school level, specifies the process of monitoring to be adopted at various levels, lays down specific roles and functions of the Ashram School Committee and Student – Teacher Committee and defines actions to be taken for ensuring health and safety of the students. It also highlights need for curriculum reforms and use of multi-lingual education to be adopted in Ashram Schools. The TDD is in the process of finalizing the guidelines and will be notified thereafter. Nuances of the final revised guidelines will have to be critically analysed to ensure that it caters to both Government and Aided Ashram schools appropriately.

**Programme design, curriculum and assessment:** Technically, the model adopted for the Ashram School is expected to be consistent with the overall Ashram School Programme. It was observed during the course of study that the academic cycle, curriculum, medium of instruction and assessment systems adopted in the Ashram Schools in Maharashtra is identical as the mainstream schools under the Department of School Education and

#### ***Plan for introducing life skill and adolescence education in Ashram Schools in 2018-19***

*The TDD plans to introduce life skills and adolescence education in government Ashram Schools in collaboration with Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) through the Rajmata Jijau Mother-Child Health and Nutrition Mission under Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). Under the initiative, 30 master trainers will be trained at state level, who, in turn will impart training at divisional level to 6 staff (4 teachers and 2 wardens (including two female teachers and one female warden) from Ashram and EMRS schools. The school staff will further conduct sessions for students from class VI to XII in respective schools in three cycles spread over 10 weeks on various aspects related to health, nutrition, WASH and life skills for adolescents. A budget of INR 2.31 crores has been sanctioned for training 3258 school staff in 109 batches.*

*Source: TDD, November 2017*

Sports (DoSES). The recent initiative of the TDD for introducing life skill and adolescence education covers only Government Ashram Schools. Thus, apart from providing free access to residential schools, it does not serve the purpose of delivering 'relevant' and context-specific quality education for the tribals.

**Key changes in programme design:** According to the original programme design, Ashram Schools are required to provide residential education from class I onwards. However, in the light of 100% access to elementary education under RTE, 2009, primary /elementary schools have been set up under DoSES even in the tribal areas, which provide education and all other facilities except residential facilities free of cost. Hence, it is now possible to accommodate the younger children in day schools, so that they can not only stay with their families, but it also reduces the risk of Ashram Schools in accommodating small children who find it difficult to take care of themselves on their own. Hence, from 2015-16 onwards, TDD has initiated reducing the primary

<sup>7</sup> TSP Programmes are financed by the following sources: (i) Tribal Sub Plan funds form State/UT Plans and Central Ministries/ Departments, (ii) Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub Plan, (iii) Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution to the States/UTs, (iv) Funds through Central Sector Schemes, (v) Funds from Centrally Sponsored Schemes & (vi) Institutional Finance

classes in Government Ashram Schools and encouraging the community to take admission of younger children in Zilla Parishad Schools. This process is yet to be initiated in aided schools.

TDD also plans to rationalize schools, i.e. combine 2 to 3 schools with enrollment less than 200 in single campus (forming ‘Ashram School Complex’), and if possible, shift these to new, better equipped campuses closer to peri-urban areas. It is envisaged that this will help in exposing students to environment beyond the remote tribal areas and offer services of better quality. To a certain extent, this may also help in resolving the issues such as high absenteeism among teachers, which is generally due to reluctance / lack of adjustment with life in remote areas.

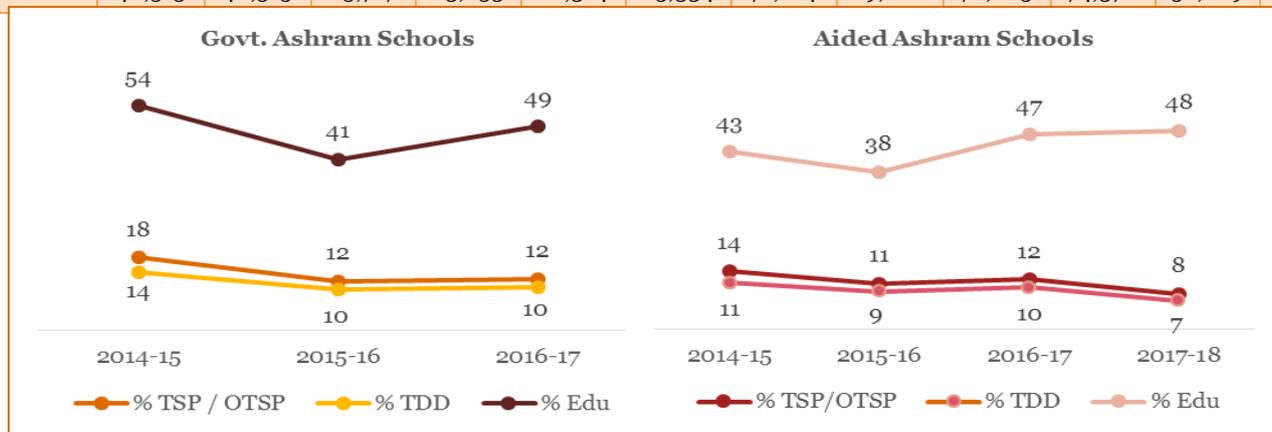
**Funding and budget:** The funding for capital expenditure for setting up schools is received from MoTA (100% for schools for girls and schools in LWE areas, 50% for schools for boys) while the recurring expenditure is met through the state budget of TDD.

The Government Ashram Schools under the Umbrella Scheme for Education of Tribals, receive a grant @ 2000 per child for recurring expenditure and 100% grant for salary and capital expenditure. Under the scheme of Grant-in-Aid to VOs running Ashram Schools, grants are given to VOs selected according to the Ashram School guidelines for setting up and running Ashram Schools. At present, the aided schools under VOs receive grant @ Rs.900 per child per month for residential living, food and other provisions; 100 % grant on account of the salary of the teaching and other staff, as well as contingency and maintenance. Any additional funds required are to be raised by the VOs through their own resources.

The trend in budget and expenditure of Ashram Schools over past six years shows that between 2012-13 to 2016-17, the budgetary allocation for Government Ashram Schools has been increased by 84% (INR 42,800 lakh in 2012-13 to INR 78803 lakh in 2016-17), while in case of Aided Ashram Schools, this has been increased by 88% (INR 40515 lakh in 2012-13 to INR 76215 in 2016-17). During 2017-18, the budget for Aided Ashram Schools was reduced to INR 52,669 lakh due to underutilization of funds in previous 4 years. The average utilization of funds has been 92% for government and 98% for aided ashram schools. On an average, the total Ashram School budget formed more than 95% to total budget of TDD for education schemes, about 26% of TSP and 21% of overall TDD budget over past 6 years. There has been a gradual rise in overall budget for the Ashram School programme, indicating growing emphasis of the department on strengthening school education (table 2, figure 5).

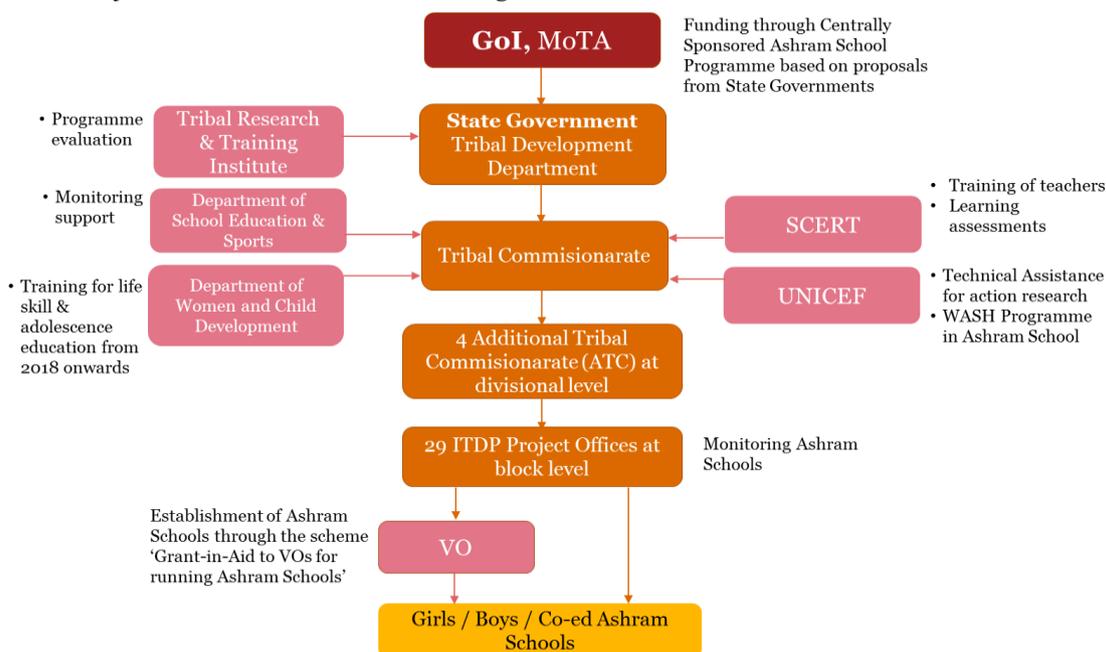
**Table 2: Budget and Expenditure for Government and Aided Ashram Schools (INR ‘lakh)**

Particulars	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Budget	Exp										
<b>Government Ashram Schools</b>												
Salary	31,793	31,793	45,593	44,284	51,116	43,928	46,271	42,470	48,981	45,543	-	-
Other	11,007	11,007	28,345	25,880	31,366	34,068	30,403	25,074	29,821	23,889	-	-
Total	42,800	42,800	73,938	70,164	82,482	77,995	76,674	67,544	78,803	69,432	-	-
<b>Aided Ashram Schools</b>												
Salary	29,933	29,933	46,122	44,805	47,380	48,873	51,488	51,057	55,860	54,417	41,976	41,976
Other	10,583	10,583	19,595	18,448	18,934	16,461	19,676	18,752	20,425	19,952	10,693	10,693
Total	40,515	40,515	65,717	63,253	66,314	65,334	71,164	69,808	76,285	74,370	52,669	52,669



**Figure 5: Proportion of Ashram School Budget in TSP / OTSP. Education and Total budget of TDD (%)**

**Operational modalities:** The policy level aspects and planning is undertaken at the State level at Secretariat, Tribal Development Department, while budgeting and implementation of the programme is entrusted to the Tribal Development Commissionerate at Nashik, which is responsible for the implementation of all schemes under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). The Commissionerate is further supported by four Additional Tribal Commissionerates (ATC) at the divisional level at Thane, Nashik, Amravati and Nagpur respectively. Under the direct administrative control of the four additional Commissionerates there are 29 Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP)<sup>8</sup> delineated to integrate various schemes and services at the block level. The



operational mechanism is depicted in the diagram given below.

**Figure 6: Operational Mechanism for implementation of Ashram School Programme in Maharashtra**

The role of ITDP is to oversee the Ashram schools, (both government and aided). A major portion ( about 40%) of the ITDP budget is utilized for running Ashram Schools. The ITDP's are headed by a Project Officer (PO) who is supported by two/ three Assistant Project Officers, one Planning Officer, one/ two Education Extension Officers (usually promoted teachers of government Ashram schools) and administrative staff.

Further TDD is supported by UNICEF, for providing technical assistance for action research and implementation of WASH project in Government Ashram Schools. The intervention is currently being piloted in four schools. TDD has also collaborated with Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) for introducing life skills and adolescence education through the Rajamata Jijau Mother-Child Health and Nutrition Programme under Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).

**Monitoring mechanisms:** The responsibility of off-line monitoring is mainly entrusted to the POs, wherein the staff is expected to make regular field visits for supervision of schools in jurisdiction. According to the Ashram School Guideline 2005-06, during the field visits, they are expected to review the situation of infrastructure, attendance, quality of teaching, quality of meals, etc. and interact with school staff, teachers and students and provide appropriate feedback to the school authorities for improvement. A visit report is also to be prepared. The Project Officer is expected to convene a monthly review meeting with the principals of all schools in the jurisdiction for the purpose of monitoring and grievance redressal.

The Education Extension Officers (EEO) are expected to monitor the educational outcomes at aided and government Ashram schools both. However during the consultations at PO level of all divisions, it emerged during the interactions that the educational outcomes are not monitored. Passing/ Transition rate of students of X and XII are the only indicator or which data is gathered at PO/ATC level. It was also found that POs/ EEOs are constrained in taking frequent visits on account of the responsibilities<sup>9</sup> for execution of all schemes under TSP, Some PO's are also understaffed and hence the PO staff are over burdened with work and only need-based visits are conducted by the POs/ APOs/ EEOs.

The School Management Committee, comprising of 75% parents among members, is also empowered to monitor the functioning of the schools, attendance, quality of meals, infrastructure, etc. A web-based Management Information System (MIS) has also been developed at the Secretariat level but it is not yet fully functional.

## ***2.4. Relevance of the present Ashram School Programme and consistency with policy framework with reference to Maharashtra***

The original Ashram School Programme envisaged provision of 'relevant' and quality education to the tribal students for their holistic development. The policy framework for school education also highlights the need for making suitable modifications in academic cycles, curriculum and medium of instruction, pedagogy, etc. to align with the first generation tribal learners.

However, the review of programme framework, desk research and stakeholder consultations undertaken during the course of the present study reveal that in the present form, the Ashram School Programme has been able to

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<sup>9</sup> ITDPs also provide for maintenance allowances for ST students studying professional courses and living in hostels, implementing schemes for pre-metric scholarships for state tribal students, establishment of Model schools for Scheduled Tribe students, Eklavya Model English Medium Residential Schools, Cash awards for meritorious students of Standards 10 and 12, Cash awards to Ashram Schools, Computer training for students and teachers of Government Ashram Schools, in-service training programmes, training tribal students for military and police jobs, motor vehicle driving training centres for Scheduled Tribes, etc

meet the objective of increasing access and reducing dropout rates. However, it is not appropriately aligned to the specific needs of the tribal learners, and hence falls short of providing conducive environment for their holistic development. The section elaborates on various dimensions of this issue and challenges in addressing them.

**Enhanced access to school education, reduction in dropout rate:** The Ashram Schools have been set up in remote areas and close to tribal habitats, and are providing residential facilities along with free meals, textbooks, stationery, uniforms, etc. This has enabled lakhs of tribal students to avail school education since 1950's. This has also helped in reducing dropout rate and increased enrollment of tribal girls, as seen from the historical data of MHRD and DISE. This has also contributed to the impact of efforts of increase in literacy rate among tribal population through universalization of elementary and secondary education.

**Lack of relevant curriculum content and teaching learning material:** The overall policy framework for education, especially NPE, 1986/1992; NCF, 2005; RTE, 2009 and Ashram School Guidelines, TDD, 2005 have strongly recommended contextualization of curriculum and usage of tribal dialects as medium of instruction upto primary level in the context of education of tribals. Using the tribal dialect as a medium to transact the state curriculum, particularly for the first few years, and introducing the state language gradually as the child becomes comfortable in the school environment, can yield positive results (Dasera, 2009).

While it is challenging to develop contextualized curriculum specific to 42 tribes found in Maharashtra, it is necessary to introduce atleast supplementary study material and multi-lingual dictionaries for teachers in dialects such as Warli, Katkari and Gond which are spoken by sizable tribal population. However, efforts in this direction are not evident in Maharashtra, and the curriculum content as well as medium of instruction continues to be same as other mainstream schools in state. This is likely to affect to impact the level of interest and academic achievement tribal learners who tend to perform lower than the non-tribal students as evident across the National Assessment Survey (NAS) conducted by National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) during various years (more details in chapter 3).

**Inconsistency of academic regime:** The academic regime is same as the mainstream schools i.e. June to March, with breaks during November and April to May. This does not coincide with the socio-cultural life of most of the communities, which have festivals or seasonal work at farms during specific period of the year. This also leads to high absenteeism for long durations, especially among students from upper primary level onwards who are a helping hand in farming activities.

#### **Significance of contextualization of curriculum**

*Research in child development and pedagogy has indicated that a young child learns concepts better if these are embedded in contexts that are meaningful i.e. contexts that are local and familiar. Under the government program Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), words, terminologies, messages, topics reflected in the syllabus and textbooks are most often alien to tribals, and can reinforce their "differing" identity. The new National Curriculum Framework however recommends a plurality of textbooks, meant to create a theoretical space for local specificity.*

*Source: Dasera Report, 2009*

#### **Implications of non-alignment of school with needs of tribal learners**

*It is generally found that since standardised approach is followed in education delivery, there is 'cultural discontinuity' between school environment and social life of the children back home in case of tribals. The problem was first pointed out by the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Commission in 1987 and later, by the framers of the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. Citing authoritative studies, the latter document claims that, in the event of school environment and functioning being in tune with the tribal cultural life, performance of the student is better.*

*Source: Report of the Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes 1986-87; National Curriculum Framework, 2005, Position Paper, National Focus Group on Problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Children, NCERT, 2007*

**Lack of vocational education:** Introduction of vocational education for tribals at school level is recommended in the policy framework and is also an integral part of RMSA. In case of tribals, this is all the more critical since it can equip them with skills for gainful livelihood in event of not being able to continue higher education (the probability is high in case of tribal students especially due to socio-economic and cultural challenges).

While process of integrating vocational education aligned with National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) has been initiated in secondary schools run under DSES from 2015 onwards now operational in 514 schools (The Hindu, October 2016), it is yet to be introduced in any of the Ashram Schools.

Further, on 3rd May 2017, MHRD has notified revised pattern for vocational education under the Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (within RMSA). The students will now be able to opt two different vocational courses (one during IX to X and other during XI to XII) instead of one single course for four years. Provisions have also been made to allow progression within same trade. Total 100 job roles have been identified and Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE) has been instructed to restructure curriculum in consultation with Sector Skills Councils. This scheme is applicable to Ashram Schools which provide education upto higher secondary level.

**Systemic challenges:** In Maharashtra, unlike DoSES, the TDD is more geared towards implementation of programmes related to overall tribal development rather than education. As a result, TDD lacks infrastructure and technical resources required at policy and implementation level for delivering quality education. In such event, active convergence with DoSES and other technical agencies is required and appropriate systems and processes need to be instituted for facilitating such convergence. However, such mechanisms for convergence are not yet instituted and the Ashram Schools are managed through the TDD and VOs in isolation. The BRC/CRC facilities have not been extended to Ashram schools (aided and government) for continuous monitoring of the schooling activities. As a result, it is challenging to several specialized interventions in Ashram Schools which could make the education for tribal students more holistic and relevant.

Stakeholder consultations at ATC and PO level revealed that the PO of ITDPs do not have powers for any decision making with respect to functioning of aided Ashram schools. For most basic decisions for even one Ashram School, the PO is required to take approval of ATC / Commissioner. In case of Government Ashram schools, the procurement is centralized at the Commissionerate level which is time consuming.

The administrative powers accorded at PO level are inadequate for timely decision making on issues that occur in running and maintenance of Ashram schools. This often results in a gap in supervision and ensuring accountability of NGO owners/ school functionaries.

Apart from this, there is lack of adequate staff at PO level to monitor all the schools in jurisdiction regularly. This also affects the quality of education delivered at Ashram Schools and compliance with mandatory norms. The VOs and schools also face challenges in retaining adequate staff since it is difficult to find qualified persons / teachers in tribal areas and non-tribal professionals are reluctant to work in remote areas and absenteeism is high among the teachers also. This challenge is difficult to deal with, unless intensive capacity building is undertaken and measures are opted for retaining staff and motivating them to work in remote areas.

**Lack of teacher trainings in tribal context:** The trainings for teachers of Ashram Schools is conducted through MSCERT itself, mainly when the curriculum is modified. However, apart from that, any other trainings are not being conducted at present, whereas there is an utmost need for capacity building of teachers for adopting pedagogy suitable for tribal learners and transacting multi-lingual curriculum (MSCERT, 2017).

A portal has been launched by MSCERT in 2016 ([www.ms-cert.maharashtra.gov.in](http://www.ms-cert.maharashtra.gov.in)) especially for providing learning resources for teachers, sharing good practices and mapping demand

*A diagnostic study conducted by TISS-UNICEF, 2015 cites that 'CEO of ZPs (whose jurisdiction is within the district) has more powers of administrative sanctions than even the Tribal Commissionerate, much less the PO, ITDP, who has very few independent powers, whether administrative or financial'.*

for trainings by teachers from government and aided schools, irrespective of parent department, i.e. applicable to Ashram Schools also. On an average, training requirements are posted by 8,000 teachers from schools under DoSES. The trainings for teachers are being designed by MSCERT based on the demand raised. However, such demand is not raised from Ashram School teachers (MSCERT, 2017), indicating that they are left out of the ongoing training programmes.

**Need for integrated MIS for Ashram Schools:** There is a lack of comprehensive database of schools and robust monitoring system in case of Ashram School. U-DISE does capture data on several indicators related to school education from Ashram Schools also, but the disaggregated data according to type of schools is not readily available. Apart from that, certain parameters are unique to ashram schools, such as quality of hostel infrastructure and staff quarters, quality of meals served throughout the day, aspects related to health and safety, etc. which are currently not captured through U-DISE. This also makes it difficult to monitor the Ashram Schools and adherence to RTE, 2009.

### 3. Education of Tribals in Maharashtra

The policies and programmes introduced for general school education in India, by design, have incorporated specific interventions for the educational development of tribal communities to ensure equal opportunities for tribals to access quality school education. Apart from this, tribal-focused programmes also have been introduced to address the specific needs of the tribal learners. Over a period, there has been an increasing thrust on inclusive approaches for reducing the disparity both in access to education as well as enhancing quality of education delivered across the programmes.

In order to understand if the policies, approaches and programmes adopted have rendered intended results, it is essential to analyse the trends in key indicators for school education and analyse the factors leading to the change in trends. The chapter presents relevant analysis and comparison between trends for ST and general population with reference to Maharashtra based on secondary data. Wherever applicable, the trends in comparable states have also been highlighted. The comparable states (Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh) have been identified based on the size of total and ST population of the state.



#### Highlights

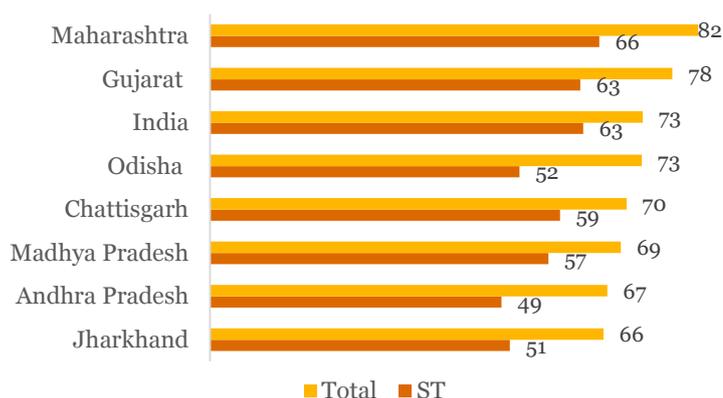
- Currently, over 1.04 lakh primary and 0.25 lakh secondary schools (government, private aided and private unaided) have established in Maharashtra, a massive 70% increase from 37,062 schools in 1960-61. The total enrollment stands at 2.24 crore and 9.75% (2.19 lakh) among them are ST.
- The TDD schools, at the primary and upper primary level have adequate space for building and classroom but are deficient in sanitation, drinking water, electricity and learning facilities such as library. The secondary schools are better equipped while the shortage in infrastructure is glaring at the higher secondary level.
- There are adequate number of teachers at all levels in case of TDD schools, compared to other schools since the PTR is better than the norms (less 30 at primary, secondary and higher secondary, 40 at upper primary). In case of secondary and higher secondary, PTR is better than other schools.
- Education level of teachers in TDD schools and other schools is nearly comparable. The data indicates that in both type of schools, majority teachers (44%) are graduates, while proportion of undergraduate teachers is slightly more in TDD schools (37%) compared to other schools (33%).
- GER for both ST and other students gradually reduces with increasing levels, with lowest GER in higher secondary level. Between Primary and Higher Secondary, the GER reduces significantly by 52 percentage points for ST and 30 percentage points for state average.
- The trend in dropout rate in Maharashtra indicates significant reduction from 2012-13 to 2016-17 in both general (2.9 and 1.1 respectively) and ST group (8 and 3.8 respectively). The gap between general and ST has also halved in last 5 years (figure 10). The gender-wise variation indicates marginally higher dropout among girl students compared to boys in case of general population.
- The learning outcomes as measured in National Assessment Survey indicates that ST students performed at par with general students in class III and V, but the achievement drops in VII and X.
- The transition rate of general category students has improved from 96% to 100% by 2014-15 and has been maintained thereafter, while in case of ST, the rate of improvement has been higher.
- The trend in performance of ST and general students in Class X from 2013-14 to 2015-16 indicates that there is an improvement of 10 to 12 percentage points (75% to 85%) in performance of ST girls and boys. Girls have performed marginally higher than boys although the absolute number of girls appearing for the exam is lower than boys. The proportion of ST students passing in Class X is lower than the general category. The performance of general category has from 82% to 92% in the corresponding period.

### 3.1. Trends in literacy among tribal population

Literacy is an important indicator of development among tribal groups. At the national level, there has been **substantial improvement in the literacy of the ST. It has increased from mere 9% in 1961 to 63% in 2011** (Census 1961; 2011). Increased focus on improving literacy rates during post-independence period through National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), 1978 and its upgradation to National Literacy Mission (NLM) in 1990 and universalization of elementary education has contributed significantly to the overall literacy status in 7+ age group (UNESCO, 2005). However, as indicated by Census 2011, the **gap in literacy between the ST (63%) and general population (73%) and gender gap in literacy within ST (male 72%; female 52%) continues to be a daunting challenge.**

**In case of Maharashtra, the improvement in literacy rate among both general (82%) and ST population (66%) is encouraging,** and is currently better than the national average (Census 2011). A significant improvement in literacy among ST is noted in last three decades (37% in 1991 to 66% in 2011) and continues to lead in literacy among the six other comparable states (figure 6, table 2). **This is also attributed to relatively rapid socio- economic and demographic changes between 1980 and 2000** (NIEPA, 2002).

**Figure 6: Trend in Literacy in Maharashtra and Comparable States – ST and all Social Groups (%)**

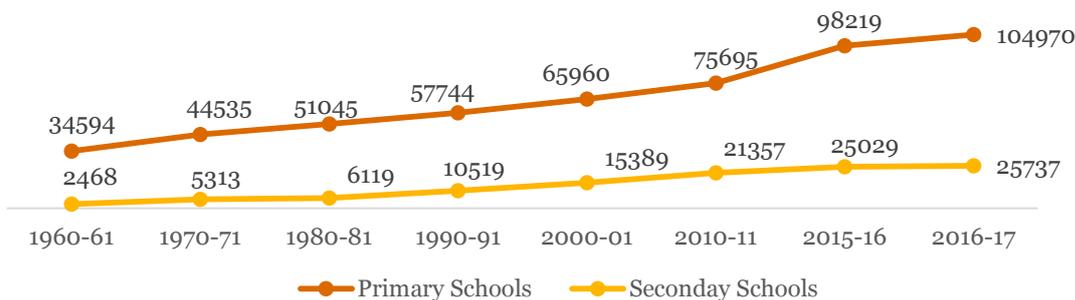


**Table 3: Trend in Literacy in Maharashtra – ST and all Social Groups (%)**

		1991	2001	2011
Male	All	77	86	88
	ST	49	67	74
Female	All	52	67	76
	ST	24	43	57
Persons	All	65	77	82
	ST	37	55	66

### 3.2. Access to School Education for Tribal Students

Access to school education has significantly expanded after launch of SSA in 2001 followed by RMSA in 2009, wherein massive infrastructure has been created for universalizing access to elementary and secondary education respectively. This has also benefitted the tribal areas. Currently, over 1.04 lakh primary and 0.25 lakh secondary schools (government, private aided and private unaided) have been established in Maharashtra, a massive 70% increase from 37,062 schools in 1960-61. **The total enrollment stands at 2.24 crore and 9.75% (2.19 lakh) are among them are ST.**

**Figure 7: Growth in number of schools established in Maharashtra – 1960-61 to 2016-17**

Source: Economic survey of Maharashtra 2016-17; DISE 2016-17

**Availability of schools in tribal areas:** Regarding availability of schools in tribal areas, a large number of schools have been set up under SSA and RMSA, complemented by the by government managed residential Ashram schools as well as aided residential Ashram schools under the aegis of the Tribal Development Department in the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)<sup>10</sup> area, which essentially cover the remote tribal pockets. Over 9,524 schools (including 1079 Ashram Schools) have been established. Among the Ashram Schools, 328 Government Schools have been upgraded upto higher secondary level (table 4).

**Access to schools:** Regarding achievement in key indicators for access to schools in terms of density of schools, availability of school per 1000 child population and ratio of upper primary to secondary schools, Maharashtra has achieved a near universal access in non-tribal areas. In case of tribal areas, it is seen that the proportion and density of the schools is comparatively lesser than the non-tribal areas, but in absolute terms, there has been increased access to schools both through provision of new schools and upgrading the existing schools to secondary and higher secondary level (table 5).

According to RTE, 2009, access to primary school should be available within 1 km of habitation while RMSA norms defines norm for setting up of secondary school or upgradation of upper primary to secondary within 5 km radius of habitations in general and 3 km radius in hilly areas.

**Table 4: Number of schools in tribal habitations**

Year	TDD		DSES
	Govt.	Aided	ZP managed schools
2007-08	449	507	8,445
2016-17	529	550	NA

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2016-17; ATC Commissionerate Nashik, Thane, Amravati, Nagpur

**Table 5: Access to school upto elementary level in Maharashtra – ST and All Social Groups**

Indicators	2014-15		2013-14	
	All	Tribal	All	Tribal
Density of Schools per 10 sq.km.	3.41	0.05	3.15	0.04
Availability of schools per 1000 child population	6.38	0.10	5.90	0.08
Ratio of primary to Upper Primary Schools/Sections	1.92	0.95	1.90	0.94

Source: Education Development Index, DISE, 2013-14; 2014-15

<sup>10</sup> 15 of the 35 districts of Maharashtra fall in TSP areas viz. Thane, Raigarh, Nashik, Dhule, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Pune, Amravati, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Gondiya, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli and Nanded.

Although access to school education has improved over a period for both tribal and general population, it is realized that input/ access based approach to education alone will not help in attaining objectives of meaningful education. It needs to be complemented by initiatives for enhancing quality and learning outcomes. An important gap in the Ashram School system is partial implementation of initiatives under SSA, RMSA and RTE, 2009 and lack of mechanisms for teacher training, improving overall quality of education imparted and monitoring, as analysed in detail in chapter 2.

### 3.3. Status of School Infrastructure

A growing body of research has found that school facilities can have a profound impact on both teacher and student outcomes. With respect to teachers, school facilities affect teacher recruitment, retention, commitment, and effort. With respect to students, school facilities affect health, behavior, engagement, learning, and growth in achievement.

Quality of facilities is an important predictor of teacher retention and student learning. The physical and emotional health of students and teachers depend on the quality of the physical location, which makes establishing safe, healthy buildings essential. Thus, researchers generally conclude that without adequate facilities and resources, it is difficult to serve large numbers of children with complex needs. (Center for Evaluation and Education Policy Analysis, 2015).

#### **RTE, 2009 norms for school infrastructure**

All-weather building consisting of:

- i. At least one class-room for every teacher and an office-cum-store-cum-Head teacher's room;
- ii. Barrier-free access;
- iii. Separate toilets for boys and girls;
- iv. Safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children;
- v. A kitchen where mid-day- meal is cooked in the school;
- vi. Playground;
- vii. Arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or fencing

**Situation of school infrastructure:** The RTE 2009 also lays down specific norms for infrastructure and facilities for schools. A comparison of DISE 2015-16 data for all levels of schools between TDD run schools and state average show that the TDD schools, especially at the primary and upper primary level have adequate space for building and classroom but are deficient in sanitation, drinking water, electricity and learning facilities such as library. The secondary schools are better equipped while the shortage in infrastructure is glaring at the higher secondary level (table 6).

Since the Ashram Schools are residential and several are located in remote areas with inadequate access to health facilities, availability and maintenance of facilities is all the more critical from the perspective of health, safety and overall

wellbeing of the students in addition to academic development.

**Table 6: Status of Infrastructure in TDD Schools and other schools in Maharashtra**

Indicators	Primary		Upper Primary		Secondary		H.SC.	
	TDD	All	TDD	All	TDD	All	TDD	All
Single teacher schools (%)	4.6	5.4	20	10	0	0.7	0	1.4
Student Classroom Ratio	12	22	24	18	27	35	11.7	65
Building	100	99	100	100	100	100	100	100
Girls Toilet	90	100	100	150	100	101.3	100	103.4
Boys Toilet	91	90	100	99	100	99	100	99
Drinking water	86	100	100	100	100	100	0	100
Electricity	86	91	80	90	100	95	0	97
Ramp	41	89	80	67	75	68	0	55
Library	59	95	40	83	100	96	0	94
Computer	46	36	40	80	100	91	0	78
Playground	77	84	60	86	100	95	100	92
Boundary wall	68	76	80	79	50	85	0	88

Source: DISE, 2015-16

### **Deaths of 1,077 Ashram School (Government and VO run) students in 15 years attributed to health, safety and infrastructure issues**

From 2001-02 to 2015-16, a total of 1,077 student deaths occurred, out of which 50% were girls. Among these, 793 were probed by the Salunkhe Committee appointed by the TDD to study the underlying issues. The committee found that in 2/3<sup>rd</sup> cases, the cause of death was unclear. While ashram schools failed to produce any data related to 12% deaths, for over 17% deaths it was "unknown cause." For 13% it was "sudden death" and 23% students passed away due to "severe illness". The cause of death was not mentioned in 67% death certificates. In the cases where the cause is mentioned it included drowning, snake bites, major and even minor illnesses, most of which could be managed or prevented.

In majority Ashram Schools, was seen that the hostels are overcrowded and infrastructure was poor. There was a lack of healthcare facilities, safety measures, cots, mosquito nets, life skill training, recreational and sport facilities at residential schools. Compound walls were missing leading to open access to miscreants. Electricity, apart from regular failure was rarely used due to lack of bulbs and tube-lights.

Source: Salunkhe Committee Report to Governor, 2016

### **Status of Infrastructure in Government Ashram Schools (findings based on survey of 1000 Ashram Schools)**

Many Ashram Schools are located deep inside forest areas. Mishaps or encounters with wild animals are likely to happen. Most Ashram Schools are not equipped with even basic amenities like toilets, bathrooms, safe drinking water, etc. The study teams found the Ashram School infrastructure be in a dilapidated condition. Most schools are unable to maintain even basic hygienic conditions. These schools face several problems during the rainy season. In fact, the study teams observed that most of the Ashram Schools looked like traditional tribal huts and many schools did not have even benches/desks for the students. Even high school students had to sit on kachcha (earthen) floor in the classrooms. There were no tables and chairs for studying and cots to sleep on. Facilities like TV which would help students to learn about the world outside were absent. As a result, there is very little opportunity for the students to develop a modern worldview.

Source: TSP – A Diagnostic Study, Tata Institute of Social Science, 2015

## **3.4. Staffing**

All categories of staff i.e. teaching, non-teaching (support staff) and administrative, teachers have maximum and direct influence on the academic progress and behavioral traits of students owing to the sustained contact with them. In the context of Ashram Schools, the school staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a more sensitive role compared to day schools since they collectively shoulder the responsibility not only for education, but also for overall well-being and safety of average 250 students in the school. Hence, the quality, commitment and motivation of the staff and their continued development is very critical. The aspects related to the availability, adequacy and quality of teachers and availability/ adequacy of non-teaching staff are elaborated further.

### **Availability and adequacy of teachers:**

Maharashtra has a policy of 100% direct recruitment of teachers, either regular or contractual. The same rules are applicable in case of Ashram Schools also, with a difference that contractual teachers are called as 'Shikshan Sevak' and are generally regularized after 3 years.

### **Norms for Teachers**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> (RTE, 2009)**

Admitted children	No. of teachers
Upto 60	2
61 to 90	3
91 to 120	4
121 to 200	5
Above 150	5 + 1 head teacher
Above 200	PTR not to exceed 40

#### **6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> (RTE, 2009)**

At least one teacher per class so that there shall be at least one teacher each for Science and Mathematics; Social Studies; Languages  
 PTR : 35  
 Where admission of children is above one hundred  
 i. A full time head-teacher;  
 ii. Part time instructor each for Art Education; Health and Physical Education and Work Education

#### **Secondary (RMSA)**

PTR: 30

Data of DISE 2015-16 indicates that there are adequate number of teachers at all levels in case of TDD schools, compared to other schools since the PTR is better than the norms (less 30 at primary, secondary and higher secondary, 40 at upper primary). In case of secondary and higher secondary, PTR is better than other schools. However, average number of teachers is lesser in TDD schools than other schools at upper primary and higher secondary. This is also due to lower enrollment of ST students compared to students in general category.

**Gender parity among teachers:** Specific measures have been undertaken to recruit female teachers for Government-managed schools at elementary level during the past few years. The norm of 50 per cent of all teachers recruited under SSA to be female teachers has resulted in considerable improvement in the proportion of female teachers in schools and in the number of female teachers per 100 male teachers (Education for All, 2014).

In case of primary level, it is considered desirable to have female teachers, since they are considered better equipped to teach younger children (Manjekar, 2013). Especially in case of co-ed and girls Ashram Schools irrespective of level of school, it is necessary to have gender balance among teachers since the students are residential. This is also to ensure conducive and safe environment for girls and their overall well-being. In this context, it is observed that at the primary level, the proportion of female teachers is much lesser in TDD schools (2%) compared to other schools (24%). At other levels also, proportion of female teachers is very low, and at higher secondary level, female teachers are not available at all in TDD schools (table 6).

**Table 7: Availability of teachers in TDD and other schools**

Level	PTR		Avg. No. of Teachers		% Female Teachers	
	Tribal	All	Tribal	All	Tribal	All
Primary	14	24	4	3	2	24
Upper Primary	40	21	2	4	0.3	0.1
Secondary	21	27	5	5	0.1	3.9
Higher Secondary	12	44	3	12	0	2.9

Source: DISE (2015-16)

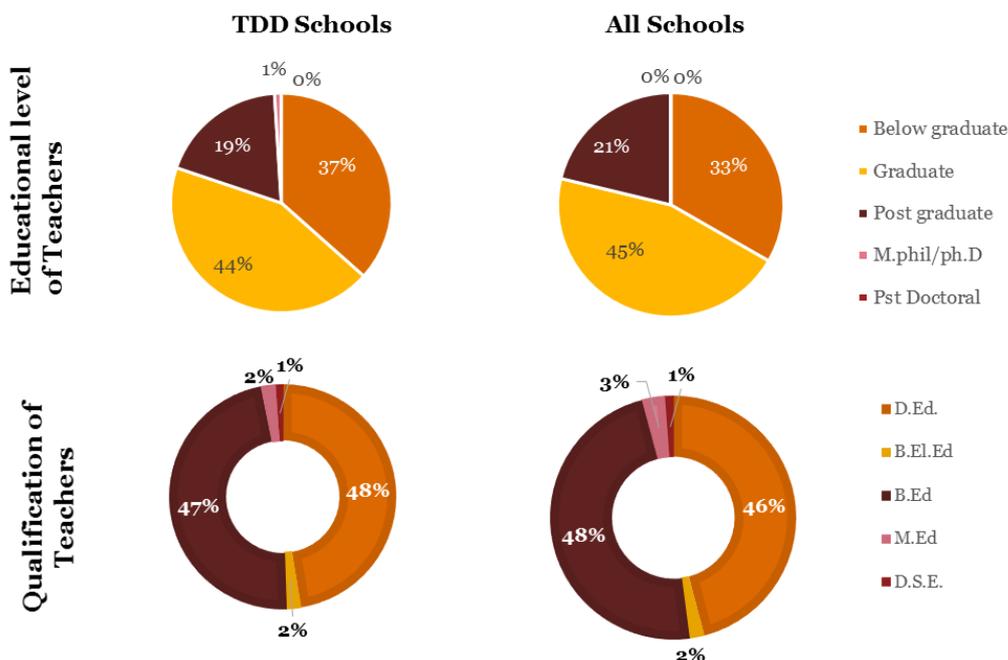
**Qualification of teachers:** The quality of teachers is not only vital to overall quality of education, but also an important determinant of learning outcomes of students. Hence, it is essential that the teachers be well qualified and trained with requisite skills for effective facilitation of the teaching-learning process.

Analysis of qualification of teachers in this context, reveals that education level of teachers in TDD schools and other schools is nearly comparable. The data indicates that in both type of schools, majority teachers (44%) are graduates, while proportion of undergraduate teachers is slightly more in TDD schools (37%) compared to other schools (33%).

Regarding qualification of teachers, majority teachers (48%) from TDD schools hold Diploma in Education (D.Ed) followed by 47% teachers who hold Bachelors in Education (B.Ed). Only 2% are post graduates in Education. This is consistent with the overall trend in school education in the state (figure 8).

However, availability of adequate and qualified teachers by itself does not guarantee delivery of quality education or improved learning outcomes of students. Competency of teachers and teacher effectiveness also have significant bearing on quality of education and learning outcomes, for which appropriate data is not available in context of TDD schools.

**Figure 8: Educational level and Qualification of Teachers in Maharashtra: TDD and other Schools**



**Competencies of Teachers have more positive impact on Students' Learning compared to qualification and experience**

A meta study of independent researches published between 1990 and 2010 to investigate which specific school and teacher characteristics, if any, appear to have strong positive impacts on learning and time in school— shows that the effect of teachers' level of education on learning outcomes is ambiguous. Of the 13 estimates analysed, 10 were statistically insignificant, two were significantly positive and one was significantly negative. Similarly, the evidence of the effect of teachers' experience on learning outcomes was weak. In contrast, direct measures of teachers' competencies showed a positive impact on students' learning, implying that improving a teacher's content knowledge is more likely to increase student achievement.

Source: School Resources and Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries: A review of Literature from 1990 to 2010; Gleuwe; Hanushek, Humpage; Ravina; 2011

### 3.5. Enrollment and Dropout among ST Students

The gender-segregated trends in enrollment and dropout rate also reflect the aspects related to school participation across all levels. During post-independence period, the massive efforts made for universalization of elementary education have led to significant increase in enrollment. However, the expansion in elementary education has not been translated into gains in secondary education, with enrollment trends remaining comparatively lower than elementary level. The dropout is higher at secondary level, and the trend is acute for ST students (MHRD, Selected School Statistics, 2014; DISE, 2014-15 – 2015-16). This is true for Maharashtra as in case of other states, with Kerala and UTs being an exception. The section highlights the trends and causes thereof with reference to Maharashtra.

**Enrollment of ST students:** The DISE Data indicates by 2015-16, **total 24.45 lakh ST students were enrolled** in school from class I to XII across the state in Maharashtra. Among these, nearly 50% students are enrolled in government schools followed by private aided and unaided schools. Also, the trend of marginal

increase in enrollment in private schools is also noticed, which is more likely to an urban phenomena since most of private schools, especially unaided are concentrated in urban areas. **This is mainly attributed to expansion in access to elementary education and also growing awareness about education at the community level. The annual enrollment drives and growing community participation also contribute to the same.**

In terms of GER across all school levels, in case of Maharashtra, it is seen that the **GER for both ST and other students gradually reduces with increasing levels**, with lowest GER in higher secondary level. **Between Primary and Higher Secondary, the GER reduces significantly by 52 percentage points for ST and 30 percentage points for state average** (table 8). Gender-wise GER indicates marginally higher GER among girls for both ST and other social groups upto elementary, with trend reversal in secondary and higher secondary (table 9).

Similar trend is observed for the comparable states, with a marginally higher GER than Maharashtra upto secondary level. One of the major reasons for the trend is increasing dropout after upper primary for both ST and general population, with dropout in ST being much higher.

**Table 7: Number of ST students enrolled in Maharashtra (Class I-XII)**

Type of school	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Govt.	1,451,443	1,211,840	1,216,600	1,199,438
Pvt. Aided	730,027	856,604	1,021,390	1,060,795
Pvt. Unaided	138,896	115,726	162,063	185,660
Total	2,320,366	2,184,170	2,400,053	2,445,893

Source: DISE, 2012-13 to 2015-16

**Table 8: Gender-wise Gross Enrollment Ratio, Maharashtra: ST and all Social Groups, 2015-16**

State	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary		Secondary		H. Sec	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
ST	98.31	97.58	95.44	97.55	97.25	97.57	78.06	71.55	48.42	43.88
All	97.86	97.60	97.44	101.38	97.70	98.98	93.61	92.52	68.74	66.74

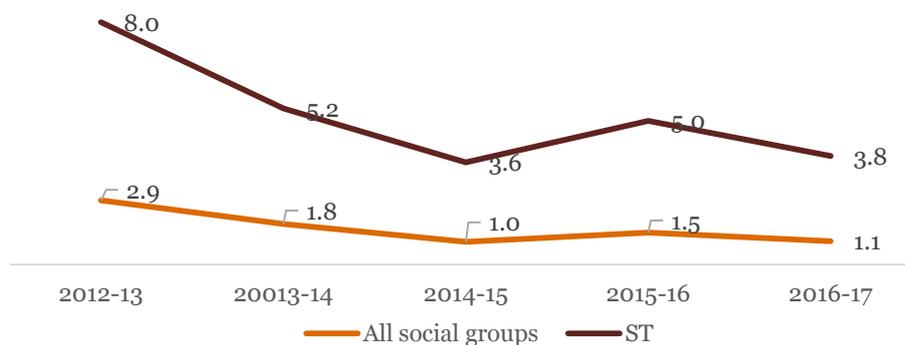
Source: DISE 2015-16

**Table 9: Gross Enrollment Ratio – ST and all Social Groups, 2015-16**

State	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary		Secondary		H. Sec	
	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All
Maharashtra	98	98	96	99	97	98	75	90	46	68
Gujarat	101	97	92	96	98	97	68	74	37	43
Madhya Pradesh	94	94	92	94	93	94	65	80	28	45
Jharkhand	119	109	97	103	112	107	63	74	41	48
Odisha	113	104	94	94	107	100	69	80	NA	NA
Chhattisgarh	99	100	100	102	99	100	85	92	47	54
Andhra Pradesh	98	84	79	81	92	83	66	76	55	60
India	107	99	97	93	103	97	75	80	43	56

Source: DISE, 2015-16

**Dropout Rate:** The trend in dropout rate in Maharashtra indicates **significant reduction from 2012-13 to 2016-17 in both general (2.9 and 1.1 respectively) and ST group (8 and 3.8 respectively).**

**Figure 9: Annual Average Dropout Rate at Elementary Level, Maharashtra: ST and All Social Groups**

Source: DISE 2012-13 to 2016-17

The gap between general and ST has also halved in last 5 years (figure 10). The gender-wise variation indicates **marginally higher dropout among girl students** compared to boys in case of general population. However, in case of ST, the dropout rates are nearly at par for both boys and girls (table 10). Data also indicates that the **dropout rate in Maharashtra is lower than the national average as well as other comparable states** for both ST and general population (table 11).

The reasons for higher dropout among ST have been reiterated in several reports and studies. The leading reason is the **poor economic condition** of the ST families, compelling them to withdraw children from school, especially from upper primary level onwards to support in economic (mainly farming) activities or aid in **household chores**. Frequent migration also leads to early dropout of the students. Apart from that, **socio-cultural factors such as child marriage** contribute to dropout among ST girls. **Lack of interest and sense of alienation also contributes to the dropout** (TRTI, 1989; National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, 2012; TISS, 2015)

**Table 10: Gender-wise Dropout Rate in Maharashtra: ST and all Social Groups, 2015-16**

Category	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary		Secondary		H. Sec	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
ST	2.81	2.48	4.23	6.56	3.32	3.89	20.87	20.61	4.71	4.90
All	1.26	1.25	0.89	2.83	1.12	1.84	13.11	12.58	2.02	1.60

Source: DISE 2015-16

**Table 11: Dropout Rate, 2015-16**

State	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary		Secondary		H. Sec	
	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All
Maharashtra	3	1	5	2	4	1	21	13	5	2
Gujarat	3	1	9	6	5	3	31	25	8	7
Madhya Pradesh	9	7	15	9	11	8	35	25	8	NA
Jharkhand	9	5	12	9	9	7	28	24	10	3
Odisha	7	3	9	4	7	3	18	30	7	NA
Chattisgarh	6	3	9	6	7	4	25	21	4	3
Andhra Pradesh	14	7	12	5	13	6	17	16	4	NA

Source: DISE 2015-16  
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State	Primary		Upper Primary		Elementary		Secondary		H. Sec	
	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All
India	7	4	9	4	7	4	25	17	NA	NA

### 3.6. Learning outcomes and academic achievement

There has been a growing realization that the policy and programmatic efforts aimed at expanding access to education would not render desired results if, at the end of each stage of education, pupils have not acquired appropriate knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to prepare them for life. As a result, there has been an increasing focus on enhancing quality of education at all levels through curriculum reforms, teacher development, conducting periodic learning assessment of students and instituting systems and processes for strengthening the process of planning for education delivery as well as monitoring effectiveness and quality. The trends in learning outcomes and academic achievement as reflected by National Achievement Survey, transition and performance of students in class X and XII are further elaborated.

**Learning outcomes:** The National Achievement Survey (NAS) results for Maharashtra during Cycles 3 (2014) and Cycle 4 (2015) give a measure of how students, both ST and general, performed with respect to learning outcomes.

**Class III results indicate that ST students performed on par with the overall state score in Language, and more importantly, the ST score was higher than the state score in Maths.** In Class V, **ST students performed lower than general** in language, Maths and Environmental Studies, with largest gap is seen in reading comprehension. **In class 8, except in Maths, ST students performed lower in all the other three subjects, with wider gap in Language. Class X results are mixed.** ST students scored higher than the total score in English, Science, Social Science, and on par with the state score in Mathematics. In Modern Indian Language (MIL), ST students score lower than the state score.

It is seen that **in class III, V, and VIII, irrespective of the student category, performance in Maths is comparatively lower than language. In case of ST, student performance indicates that they are able to keep up pace with general population in Maths and Science, but consistently lag in case of language.** The gap in language is wider in English in Class X.

Literature on education of tribals reveals that language or medium of instruction is a critical factor. Tribal students at the primary or pre-primary level may find learning in a language other than their mother tongue difficult. Another factor is that of contextualized curriculum, which is connected with learning ability and achievements. Teaching-learning gaps tend to widen in the higher grades as the complexity of the curriculum increases, and hence require more attention is required (Bhatra, 2015).

The NCF, 2005; RTE, 2009; Approach Paper for 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, Implementation Framework of SSA, 2011, etc. have consistently highlighted the need for multi-lingual education for the tribal students in class I and II. This has formed the rationale for policy on Multi-Lingual Education efforts in states like Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand.

#### National Achievement Survey (NAS)

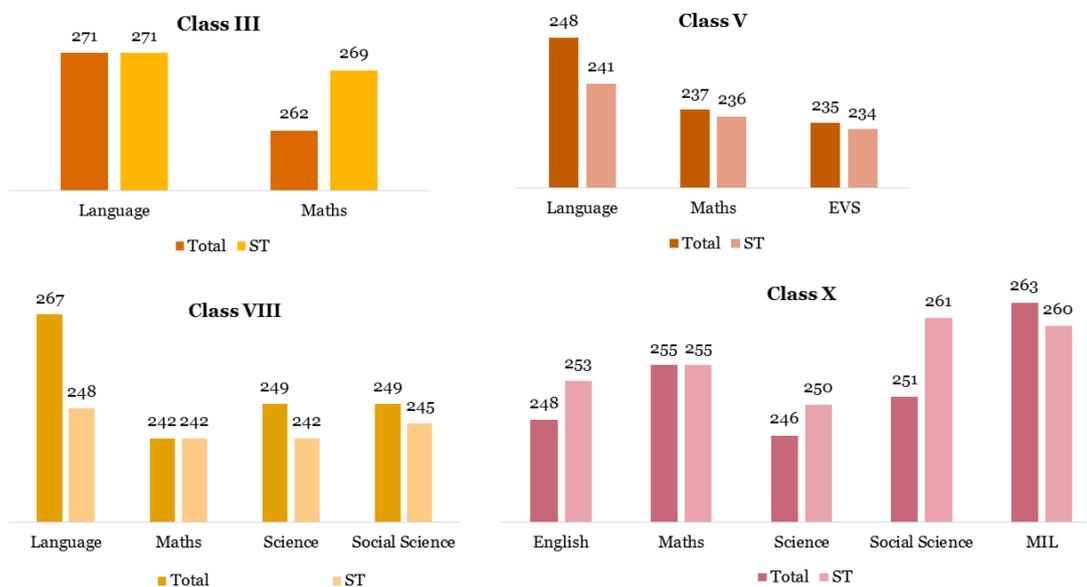
*To monitor improvement in children's learning levels and to periodically assess the effectiveness of the education system as whole in terms of student learning, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been periodically conducting National Achievement Surveys (NAS) since 2001 for Classes III, V and VIII. The purpose of these surveys is to obtain an overall picture of what students in specific Classes know and can do and to use these findings to identify gaps and diagnose areas that need improvement. This information is used to formulate policies and interventions for improving student learning.*

*The National Achievement Survey (NAS) provides information on the 'spread' of learning performance rather than 'mean average' scores. Some of the key aspects of the NAS are as follows:*

- *NAS assesses the students' abilities in languages, mathematics, science, etc.*
- *The focus of the assessment is at classes VIII & X and is subject wise*
- *NAS uses international good practice of "Item Response Theory (IRT)", which measures the true ability of students to respond correctly to different levels of difficulty in tests*

*Source: NCERT, 2001*

**Figure 10: NAS Outcomes, Average Scores for ST and Total**



Source: National Achievement, Survey, 2014, 2015

### Causes and Implications of Low Learning Outcomes

A major concern in elementary education is the poor level of student learning—both scholastic and co-scholastic/non-cognitive. Evidence suggests that learning outcomes for children in Indian schools are far below corresponding class levels in other countries, and that the learning trajectories for children who remain in school are almost flat. Clearly, the additional time spent by students in school as they move from one class to another is not translating into much improvement in learning levels.

At the heart of the issue of quality are the weak teaching processes and transactions between teachers and learners that are neither child-friendly nor adopt child-centred approach to curriculum. The capacity, motivation and accountability of teachers to deliver quality education with significant and measurable improvements in learning outcomes of students need to be critically and urgently addressed. Similar challenges of quality of learning also exist at the secondary and higher education levels. Dropout rates in secondary and higher education continue to be high, especially for socially excluded and economically marginalised groups of learners.

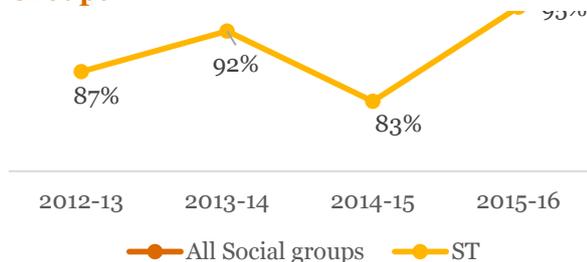
Poor quality of education resulting in weak learning outcomes at each stage of education is the central challenge facing the Indian education sector today. This is particularly disturbing since both macro- and micro-level evidence suggests that what matters for both national economic growth as well as individuals' ability to participate in this growth process is not the total years of education as much as the quality of education and value-addition for each successive year in school as represented by continuously improving learning outcomes and skills.

Source: 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, Planning Commission

**Transition Rate:** The flow of students from one level of education to another i.e. 'transition' is an integral part of education development. This is considered to be a good indicator of balanced or unbalanced development of education between two levels. The points or levels of transition also signify change in terms of change in difficulty level of the curriculum, environment, peer group, and physical and emotional development of the students, and

consequently, their learning needs also. Successful transition from one level to other level also implies that the students have been able to acquire knowledge and skills required at the next level.

**Figure 11: Transition Rate – Elementary to Secondary, Maharashtra: ST and all Social Groups**



The trend in transition rate in Maharashtra between ST and general group from elementary to secondary indicates an improvement for both categories. Over a period of four years from 2012-13 to 2015-16, the **transition rate of general category students has improved from 96% to 100% by 2014-15** and has been maintained thereafter, **while in case of ST, the rate of improvement has been higher. The transition rate has increased from 87% to 95%, and the gap has halved between the two categories** (figure 11). Comparison between transition rates by gender indicates marginally lower values for girls (1% to 4%) in

both categories in all three levels. However, the rate drops with each progressive level (table 12).

Comparison of transition rates of Maharashtra with other comparable states and national average indicates significant reduction in transition rates from primary to higher secondary. In case of Maharashtra, this is 15 percentage points for general and 27 percentage points for ST. However, in spite of this, the state has higher performance among both ST and general categories by 9 to 10 percentage points than national average at all three levels. The gap between other comparable states and Maharashtra varies, but the state has higher rate at all levels.

The lower transition rate from secondary to higher secondary is attributed to high dropout at secondary level, thereby leading to less number of students being able to enroll in higher secondary. Since the proportion of dropout among girls is marginally higher than boys in both categories, the transition rates also tend to follow the same trend.

**Table 12: Gender-wise Transition Rate, Maharashtra – ST and all Social Groups, 2014-15**

State	Primary – Upper Primary		Elementary-Secondary		Secondary – Higher Secondary	
	B	G	B	G	B	G
ST	97.31	97.01	95.69	90.78	74.80	74.61
All	98.71	98.61	NA	96.27	85.70	84.70

Source: DISE, 2014-15

**Table 13: Transition Rate, Maharashtra and Comparable States, 2014-15**

State	Primary – Upper Primary		Elementary-Secondary		Secondary – Higher Secondary	
	ST	All	ST	All	ST	All
Maharashtra	97	99	93	99	75	85
Gujarat	94	98	79	86	44	57
Madhya Pradesh	81	89	70	81	45	57
Jharkhand	77	84	76	79	56	58
Odisha	82	91	88	93	40	NA
Chattisgarh	90	94	81	87	54	60
Andhra Pradesh	77	91	88	94	76	72
India	88	90	84	91	59	69

Source: DISE, 2014-15

**Performance of students in Class X and XII:** The board exam of Class X and XII mark key milestones in career cycles, since performance at these levels also determine mobility towards general higher and / or technical education.

The trend in performance of ST and general students in **Class X** from 2013-14 to 2015-16 indicates that the number of students appearing the exam for class X has increased steadily, and there is an **improvement of 10 to 12 percentage points (75% to 85%) in performance of ST girls and boys**. Girls have performed marginally higher than boys although the absolute number of girls appearing for the exam is lower than boys. **The proportion of ST students passing in Class X is lower than the general category**. The performance of general category has from 82% to 92% in the corresponding period.

Analysis of data of students appearing examination for Class XII from 2013-14 to 2015-16 indicates specific career choices. About 50% of ST and 70% of general students who passed Class X opted to continue education up to higher secondary. It is likely that the remaining would have dropped out of the formal education and absorbed into informal sector, with a possibility of few students opting for short term courses. Among the students who continued education, barely 1% to 5% opted for vocational or other streams. About 55% to 60% ST students opted for Arts stream, 25% to 30% opted Science and remaining were admitted in commerce. The proportion of girls opting Arts was higher. In case of students from general category, the proportion of students opting Science stream was 10% to 15% higher than ST, with marginally higher proportion of girls opting for Arts.

The performance of students in **Class XII** indicates significant improvement in passing rates among students from both categories, with **ST students showing higher rate of improvement (~ 40% to 50 %) compared to general (~ 30% to 40%) across all streams**. The improvement of ST students in one single year between 2013-14 and 2014-15 is noteworthy (~ 40% in 2013-14 to 80% + in 2014-15). Girls in both categories and all stream performed marginally higher than boys.

**Table 14: Performance of Students in Class X Board Exam in Maharashtra – ST and all Social Groups**

Indicator	2013-14				2014-15				2015-16			
	ST		Total		ST		Total		ST		Total	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Total students appeared	61,387	49,830	813,320	694,193	64,279	53,325	821,778	690,969	67,919	56,554	838,406	711,283
% students passed	75.2	75	82.2	84.6	84	85.1	88.7	91.5	85.6	87.8	90	92.4

Source: DISE 2013-14 to 2015-16

**Table 25: Performance of Students in Class X Board Exam in Maharashtra – ST and all Social Groups**

Stream		2013-14				2014-15				2015-16			
		ST		Total		ST		Total		ST		Total	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Arts	Total appeared	20,622	16,802	175,040	174,799	22,608	18,589	186,332	186,597	20,641	17,601	183,768	184,892
	% passed	38.1	42.3	42.9	61.5	82.5	86.8	83	89.4	81.1	83.8	83.2	89.2
Science	Total appeared	9,361	6,372	192,255	139,957	11,266	7,629	228,150	162,645	10,944	7,163	238,565	171,002
	% passed	49.8	53	63.1	89.4	89.8	96.7	92	94.9	90.2	97.5	93.3	95.6
Commerce	Total appeared	3,203	2,592	120,975	113,128	36,88	3014	140834	135,949	3,618	3,294	142,209	137,507
	% passed	44.6	54.6	56.9	64.8	91.2	100	87.2	90.9	84.9	85.6	88.3	93.2
Vocational	Total appeared	1,041	453	26,967	8313	1226	563	30672	10,594	1,031	438	25,809	8,091
	% passed	54	49.7	60.1	39.2	86.8	87.6	88.5	90.1	80.4	90.2	84.8	93.9
Other	Total appeared	82	52	3,145	2,610	158	85	4,945	4,193	154	136	5,746	4,860
	% passed	40.2	32.7	43.4	48.4	82.3	100	82	81.8	100	100	91.3	91.1

Source: DISE 2013-14 to 2015-16

## 4. Infrastructure and Environment of Study Schools

The analysis of state level trends in education of tribal students indicate that a significant number of students (4.47 lakh) are enrolled in Ashram Schools, and apart from academics, their overall well-being also depends on the facilities and school environment since these are residential schools. In this context, the field study delved deeper into the availability and adequacy of infrastructure, school environment, measures taken for health care and safety of the students. The findings are elaborated in the subsequent sections.



### Highlights

- About 50% schools are located in vulnerable locations with implications on safety of the students. However, adequate precautions such as compound walls, training for first aid, etc. are not being taken in majority schools.
- All schools are connected by road but in case of 25% cases, the roads are not usable during rainy seasons.
- The schools have limited access to good transport facilities, either those of school or public.
- The schools have adequate classrooms, but hostels are overcrowded. In case of boys' hostel, 88% are located in school premises, while girls hostels are situated in school premises in 82% schools.
- Almost all schools have facilities water supply, mainly overhead tanks or hand pumps or both. However, safe drinking water is available in only 27% schools. 24x7 electricity is available in 61% schools. Only 14% schools dispose waste in covered pits.
- Only 30% of schools have reported to have libraries, 17% of which do not have seat capacity but books can be borrowed from them. All schools have reported to provide study related books and stationery to students. 40% schools have computer lab.
- Several Ashram Schools are not equipped with even basic amenities like functional toilets, safe drinking water etc. The study teams found the Ashram School infrastructure of toilets in a dilapidated condition. Most schools are unable to maintain even basic hygienic conditions. These conditions become more inconvenient during the rainy season.
- Over 75% schools have improved construction and basic amenities and 44% have upgraded residential facilities.
- While it is mandatory to conduct monthly health check-ups, only 18% schools conduct the camps regularly. For diagnosis and treatment of minor illness or injuries, the schools are currently dependent on doctors on call basis/ ASHA workers on nearby PHC/ CHC for assistance. Emergencies are known to occur in Ashram Schools due to lack of timely medical support leading to worsening of situation, snake and scorpion bites and injuries. The gravity of issues is reflected in 344 deaths of students occurred in aided schools last ten years (2006-07 to 2016-17).

### 4.1. Access to schools and connectivity

To ensure inclusive education for tribal children, special provisions have been under ongoing programmes for school education under MHRD and State Department for School Education and Sports (DSES), while exclusive programmes have been introduced for tribal students through MoTA. Among the first category are Zilla Parishad Schools, Local body schools, KGBV, JNV, etc. accommodating students in rural / urban areas from tribal and non-tribal communities. The second category comprises of Eklavya and Ashram Schools set up by MoTA in habitations located in relatively inaccessible hilly or forested areas with limited educational infrastructure. One of the prime objective for inception of the residential Ashram school programme was to cater to the children of such inaccessible/ remote or backward places, where there are no educational facilities.

Difficult geographical terrains and ecological barriers of tribal areas have been one of the foremost challenges of the government in integrating tribal children in formal mainstream education systems. Hence, *creating model experiments in the fields in which government is not yet prepared to enter* was one amongst the envisaged

threefold role of VO in implementation and administration of tribal development programmes.<sup>11</sup> VO run Ashram schools were henceforth encouraged to be opened on demand basis, in both tribal population concentrated locations where government functions and remote/ inaccessible locations.

**Accessibility of schools:** Analysis regarding **maximum distance between the school and the farthest village from where the students are enrolled, it has been found that the average distance to the farthest village is 360 kms.**

An immediate concern of mobilizing and admitting tribal students from very far distances in Ashram schools is that majority of these children are from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds and their parents are unable to visit them often.

Large distances exacerbate the situation further as parents seldom go to the school in order to interact with the school staff or meet the teachers in order to understand the performance of their child. Since there are no regular systems of calling in Ashram school hostels, parents remain unaware of the well-being of their children. Thus, parents of tribal children who generally avoid interacting with teachers on account of their low literacy further remain excluded from the process of educational development of their children.

*A NUEPA, 2013 national study<sup>1</sup> conducted in tribal areas of 9 states observed that the average distance from study sample villages to the nearest Ashram Schools was 3.6 km in case of Maharashtra. Thus, mobilizing and admitting children in Ashram schools from far off locations, despite of presence of other schooling systems including Zilla Parishad schools, Government Ashram schools needs to be analysed.*

*Consultation with ATC / PO revealed that sometimes during inspection visits if the enrolment is found to be more than attendance rate, Ashram School functionaries often cite that since students reside far away they extend their stay/visits to home for longer durations. Thus, strict standards need to be devised in restricting the coverage area of aided Ashram schools not only in interest of students who could be integrated in formal equally good education systems that are closer to home, but also for cautious utilisation of State grant for the development of the tribal community.*

**Table 16: Number of villages covered by aided Ashram**

No. of villages	% schools
1 to 25	45.5
26 to 50	45.5
51 to 75	5.8
76 to 100	3.8

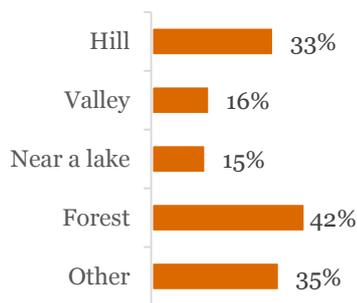
**Location of schools and resultant vulnerability / risks in study schools:** Out of total 157 schools covered in the study, 57 are located near hills, valleys, forests or large water bodies. Operating residential schools for children in locations in proximity of such locations calls for establishment and execution of strict safety norms.

However, findings confirm that there is need for more meticulous planning for ensuring safety and security in 50% of schools located in vulnerable locations. For instance 29 schools, in vicinity of forests have no fencing or merely hedge fencing. Lack of such safety norms in the past have resulted in deaths of children.

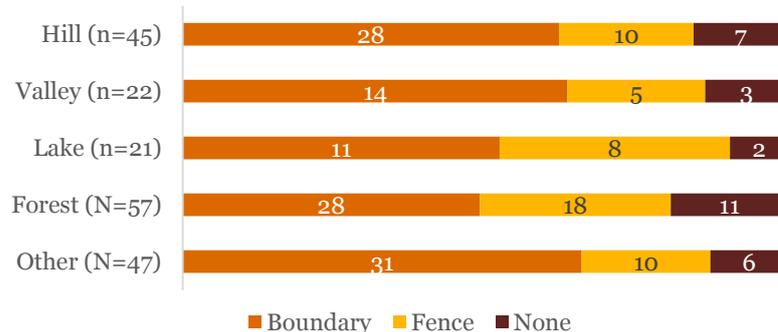
*It emerged from Divisional Consultations that in Maharashtra, the location of Ashram Schools is planned based on a Perspective Plan. It involves a school mapping exercise (mapping number of schools against the proportion of the population they are servicing) to identify locations which require residential Ashram schools. Other key factors for facilitating setting up and functioning of schools such as access by road, availability of land, water, electricity, etc. are taken into consideration. Effort is made to set up residential schools (government / aided) so that students from inaccessible locations can also avail school education upto secondary level. Discussions revealed that all the current 1085 (529 government and 556 aided) Ashram Schools were set up until 2011-12 and no new schools have been sanctioned after that.*

<sup>11</sup> Study of working of aided Ashram schools run by voluntary organisations in the Maharashtra State, Tribal research and Training Institute, Pune, Maharashtra, Publication 1988-89

**Figure 12: Geographical locations of schools**



**Figure 12: Safety systems in schools in vicinity of natural resources**

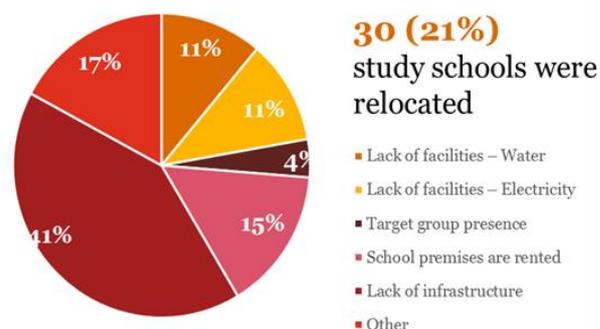


During 2011 to 2016, 195 children have been reported to have died in Aided Ashram schools. In some 25%, snake bites have been reported as the cause of death, while in remaining ones, cause of death has remain unidentified.

Source: Tribal Development Commisionarate, 2017

**Relocation of schools:** Total 20% of the study schools were re-located from the original approved area of setting up and operating Ashram schools according to the Principals. Lack of infrastructure and basic amenities such as water and electricity were key reasons for relocation in case of 60% re-located schools. With respect to this change, there is also a lack of awareness amongst the principals on the standard guidelines/ mechanism for approval for relocation. Close to 70% of principals, informed that the approval for change could be obtained at the Project Office level. It is indicative of lack of orientation to school principals of standard guidelines for aided Ashram schools.

**Figure 14: Reasons for relocation of Schools (% schools, n=30)**



**Connectivity by road:** About 90% schools covered in the study are connected with motorable road from the main road. The facility of all-weather roads was available to only 50% schools. Inhibiting factors such as rains, thick forests, hinder access for approximately 40% of aided Ashram schools.

**Table 17: Access to school by Road**

Facility	% schools
Motorable road upto school from the main road	87
All weather road	50
Not usable during rains	22
Not usable in all seasons	20

**Access to basic and other services:** Access to facility of public services such as presence of post office, gram panchayat and Anganwadi centre for more than approximately eighty percent schools is within 5 km. The access to facility of institutional health services have been found to be minimal, with close to only one fifth aided Ashram schools having a PHC/CHC/SC and only two fifth of total aided Ashram schools having a private clinic/ doctor

within a distance of 5 km. As per NUEPA, 2013 national level study in tribal areas of 9 States about 59 % of the sample villages (sample schools) had a PHC within a distance of 5 km, 32 percent villages had a Post Office within 5 km and 30 percent villages had a bank available at a distance of less than 5.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 18: Distance of Study Schools from key facilities (N=157)**

Facilities	% schools		
	Within 5 kms	Between 5 to 10 kms	Above 10 kms
Bank	12	56	32
PHC/ CHC/ SC	18	70	12
Motorized transport stop (Bus stand etc.)	64	34	2
Anganwadi centre	92	7	1
ATM	50	45	5
Post office	84	15	1
Gram Panchayat office	98	1	1
Private Clinic/ Doctor	39	60	1

## 4.2. Availability and adequacy of infrastructure

The Ashram Schools, both aided and government are mandated to provide the following basic and auxiliary facilities to students as per the Ashram school guidelines:

- Education Section/ Academic section
- Section for Student Hostel with sanitation arrangement
  - Separate residential / hostel facilities to be provided for girl students
  - The guidelines do not specifically mention about dedicated facilities for boys
- Section for Teachers Residence with sanitation arrangement
- Classrooms, office, library, laboratory, playground
- Dining hall, store room, kitchen,
- Washrooms and water supply for other daily chores should be provided in the hostel
- Nutritious food and clean drinking water
- Uniforms, text books, stationery
- Electricity
- Connecting road
- Security arrangements (watchman) and boundary walls

In the following section we discuss the status of infrastructure in aided Ashram schools. With respect to facilities and amenities, presently, State Government is providing support for infrastructure of upto 3 lakhs for construction and bears the recurring costs such as building rent, per student reimbursement of fixed amount (INR 900-930 as reported) for provisions such of food, uniform, text books, stationery etc. to students.<sup>13</sup>

As reported by principals, about 75% of Ashram Schools are established on own land of the VOs. 20% of schools have been established on leased or rented private lands. The average rent for leased/ private land is approximately INR 60,000 per annum. Further, most schools which incurred rent for buildings, chose to not share information with the study team (approximately 30%). Of the schools which reported the rent, the range is between from INR 35000 – 75000.

<sup>12</sup> Assessment of Available Facilities for Primary and Upper Primary Education in Predominantly Tribal Areas in Nine States, NUEPA Research Repos Publications Series (NRRPS/002/2016), K. Sujatha

<sup>13</sup> Besides these the Tribal Development Department also provides for funds under two more heads: contingency fund and staff salary to the Aided Ashram schools.

**Ownership status of land and buildings at aided Ashram schools:** The Ashram School guidelines do not have any area wise specifications for school premises. As reported, it has been found that average area of Ashram schools is upto 3.4 acres, with average built up area of 1.5 acres.

The area specified for establishing a JNV is fixed at 30 acres approx.

Source: Perspective plan NVS: 2017

**Table 19: Availability of land and building**

Ownership status	Reported
<b>Ownership of land of school</b>	
Government (In %)	1
NGO (In %)	77
Leased private land/ Rented (In %)	21
Average monthly rent for land (In INR)	61,100
Minimum rent (In INR)	9,975
Maximum rent (In INR)	2,50,000
Government provided funds for creation of infrastructure (In %)	3
<b>Ownership of hostel building</b>	
NGO (In %)	69
Rented (In %)	6
Did not report (In %)	25
Monthly Rent for hostel	Reported by only 2 schools of 9
Minimum rent (In INR)	35, 100
Maximum rent (In INR)	75,000

**Table 20: Area of playground and built-up area**

Area	In acres	Built up area	In acres	Playground area	In acres
Average	3.4	Average	1.5	Average	2
Minimum	0.4	Minimum	0.2	Minimum	0
Maximum	15	Maximum	5	Maximum	11

#### 4.2.1. Number of classrooms and multi grade teaching

**Table 21: Number of Classrooms**

Range of classrooms	Number of schools
7 to 10	73
12 to 14	67
17 to 20	11
21 to 27	6

46% of schools have upto ten classrooms only and 42% have 12-14 classrooms. Most schools were observed to have classrooms of different sizes. Rooms were observed to be of inadequate size in several schools.

However data has not been gathered on how many schools had benches/desks for the students but field observations

suggest that the proportion of such schools is very small. Even high school students had to sit on kachcha (earthen) floor in the classrooms.

**Table 22: Multigrade classrooms**

Number of classrooms in which multi grade teaching was done	Number of schools
Upto 3 classrooms	3
Upto 4 classrooms	7
Upto 5 classrooms	42
Not reported	8

Multi grade teaching was observed in 40% schools (60) i.e. the reported schools do not have separate rooms for each class. Amongst the reported cases, it was most commonly reported for primary grades, and in a few cases for middle school also.

The school building has 14 classrooms, 3 laboratories, one computer room, one library, display areas, administrative and faculty rooms. Various school activities are planned around a central multipurpose landscaped quadrangular space.

Source: Perspective plan NVS: 2017

### 4.2.2. Hostel rooms

**Table 3: Percentage of schools with number of living rooms**

Number of rooms	% of schools (For boys, N= 157)	% of schools (For girls, N =156)
1 to 3	48	62
4 to 5	32	29
5 to 7	20	9

Approximately one third of schools had upto 3 rooms/ halls for all the boys enrolled. The proportion of lesser rooms/ halls for girls was higher wherein 60% of schools have only upto 3 rooms/ halls and only ten percent reported to have upto 7 rooms in comparison to 20% schools.

The students’ strength of schools is 560 with hostel facility provided for all students. There are six hostel buildings, each accommodating 96 students. In all four hostels are for boys and 2 are for girls. Each hostel shall have four dormitories having 24 beds, segregated but well secured toilets and living accommodation for two house-maters to look after the children.

Source: Perspective plan NVS: 2017

On an average, upto 30 boys live in a room (wherever rooms are available), average 90 boys in a hall and 110 girls live in a hall. Overcrowding of students observed during field visits and the situation has not improved much from the observations made earlier during previous evaluations.

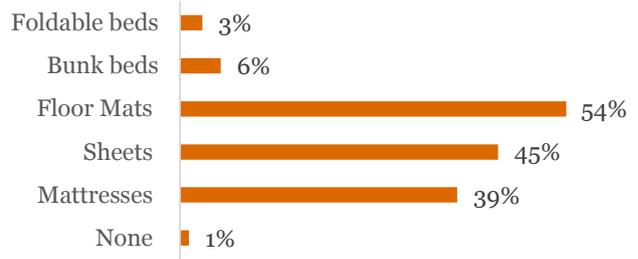
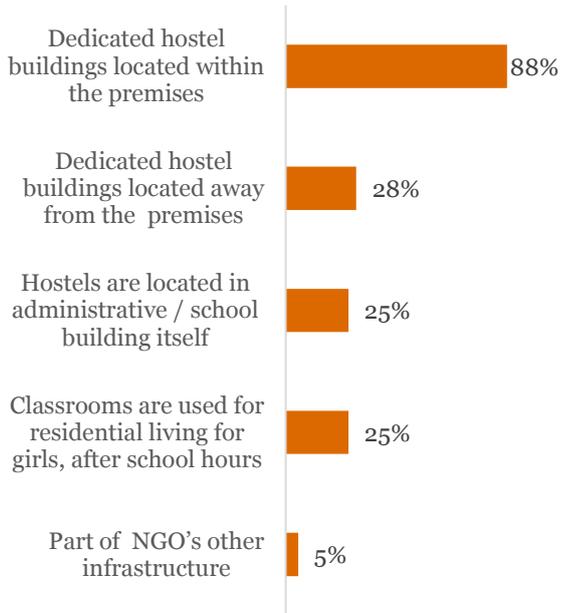
The Parliamentary Standing Committee 2014 on Ashram schools had made recommendations, keeping in view the overcrowding of tribal students in schools and hostels and urged the Ministry to fix the norms for sharing of rooms by the students in Ashram Schools in consonance with RTE regulation and introduce a student friendly policy. When compared to other residential schooling systems for instance JNV, the average number of students a room is 24 students. The norms are same for boys and girls.

During the pilot phase of the study, it was observed that due to presence of one female warden, girls are preferred to be adjusted in one-two rooms closest to the warden in a few schools, as it becomes easier from the perspective of vigilance and monitoring at night for them. Apart from lack of space, lack of female staff also contributes to the issues of overcrowding.

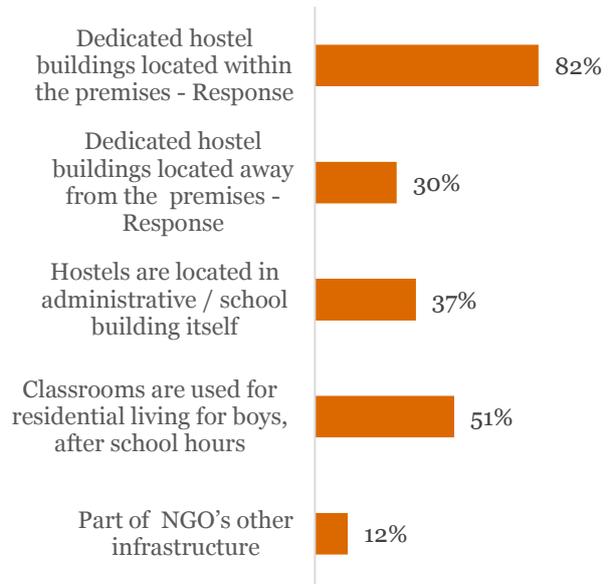
**Figure 15: Facilities for sleeping**

Of the total halls available for boys and girls, approximately half of the study Ashram schools have reported classrooms being used for residential purpose for boys and one fourth for girls. 20% schools have reported to also use multipurpose halls for residential purpose for both boys and girls i.e. halls which are used for dining/ studying etc. on a daily basis, apart from everyday living.

**Figure 16: Location of the hostel for girls**



**Figure 17: Location for hostel for boys**



Only 10 % schools have reported to have beds/ cots for students to sleep on. Majority of schools have only floor mats/ sheets available for students to sleep on. Since aided Ashram schools are located in hilly areas and in a few in vicinity of forests as reported in the section above, sleeping arrangements on the floor may not be a comfortable arrangement for students on account of cold or risk due to presence of insects/ scorpions

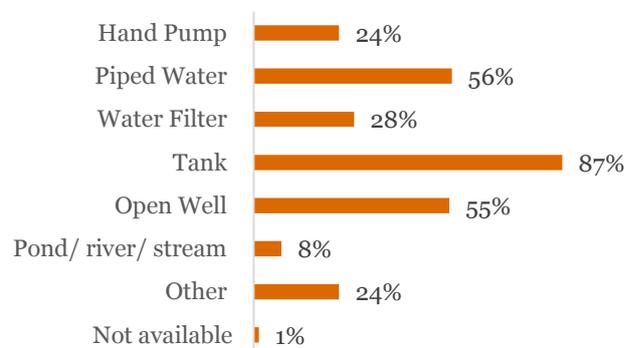
### 4.2.3. Basic amenities

Provision for toilet facilities, electricity and access to clean drinking water are the bare minimal requirements for improvement in the quality of schools.

**Water supply:** Of the total Ashram schools surveyed, close to ninety per cent have water storage facilities in common tanks, located near school/hostel building. Open wells also found to be prominent drinking water source in almost half of the schools indicative of the limited infrastructure for access to clean potable drinking water.

The water facilities have been observed to be common between hostel and classrooms in 75% cases. The distance of water facility in almost half schools from the nearest classroom is in the range twenty metres and of farthest classroom is in range of upto 75 metres in 60% schools. Observations when made as per the hostels, the nearest water facility is in the range in 50% schools is

**Figure 18: Drinking water sources**



approximately upto 40 meters away. The findings may be viewed in the light of difficulty/ inconvenience faced by students in accessing drinking water during rains or at night in dark (in case of not well lit up open areas) in case of the observed schools.

**Availability of power:** About 60% of schools have reported to have electricity provision for 24 hours, whereas 40% schools face issues of load shedding upto eight hours or even intermittent supply. Power supply through grids are main sources of electricity in 95% schools, the remaining 5% use solar power. Approximately 60% of schools have a single phase connection whereas the remaining have three phase connection. The common pathways are lit up bulbs in case of 65% schools and, solar powered lamps are used in 25% schools. The remaining schools have no lighting systems in common pathways.

Regarding sufficiency of facilities for power supply, 70% of school functionaries opined that these were adequate. However field observations suggest that in case of 90% schools it was not enough and the school campuses dimly lit in the late evenings on the day of the survey. Playground are lit up adequately or dimly lit up in 40% schools.

**Situation of sanitation:** About 30% of schools practice safe disposal of waste through provisions such as covered pits or trash cans. On the other hand, 70% aided Ashram schools have unsafe mechanism for waste disposal i.e. in uncovered pits within or outside campus. Unsafe waste disposal has severe health implications for residents of aided Ashram schools including students and staff. Standard practices should be advocated and made compulsory across schools through guidelines.

With respect to provision for toilets, Several Ashram Schools are not equipped with even basic amenities like functional toilets, safe drinking water etc. The study teams found the Ashram School infrastructure of toilets in a dilapidated condition. Most schools are unable to maintain even basic hygienic conditions. These conditions become more inconvenient during the rainy season. 75% schools have separate toilet provisions for teachers and students according to school functionaries. However on observation by field teams, it was found to be true in case of 65% schools only. Of these, in 56% schools, there were 1 or 2 toilets for teachers. The remaining 35% schools have common toilets for teachers and students. Also, in 10-15% schools, toilets for boys and girls were common.

For students, upto 8 toilets were available for boys in 95% and 64% for girls. Of the total toilets for boys, 30% were not in a usable condition as observed, on the day of the survey. For girls, this proportion was as high as 45% (for toilets not being in a usable condition).

#### 4.2.4. Learning facilities

Amongst other facilities at school level, only 30% of schools had libraries, 17% of which do not have reading room. These schools reported provide study related books and stationery to students. Regarding provisions for a computer lab, 40% schools have reported to have computer laboratories. Of these, 40 % have upto 5 computers. The remaining have more than 5 computers.

Figure 19: Status of electricity

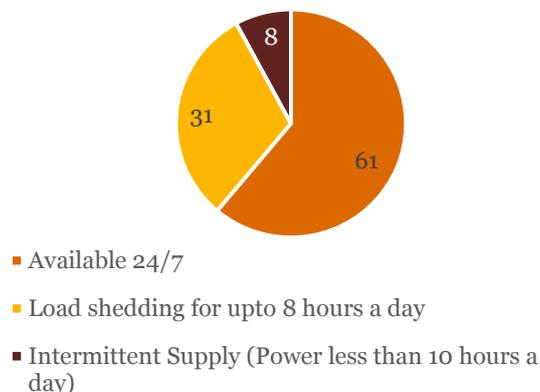
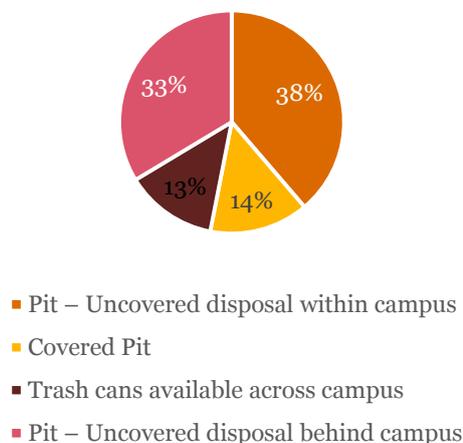
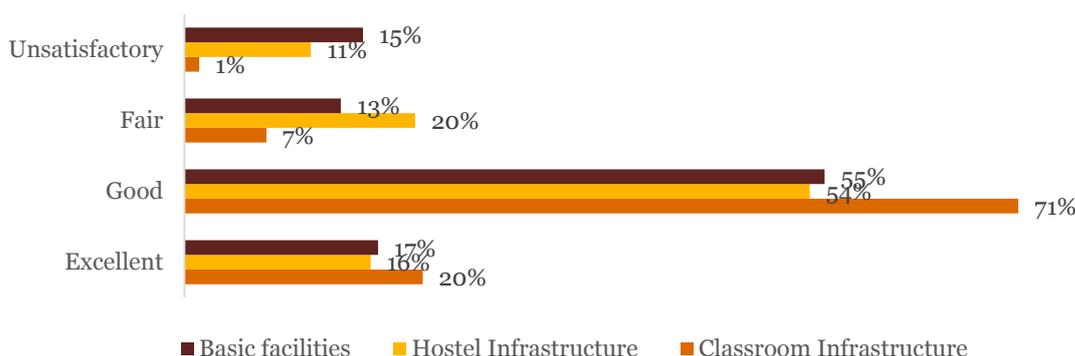


Figure 20: Waste disposal mechanism

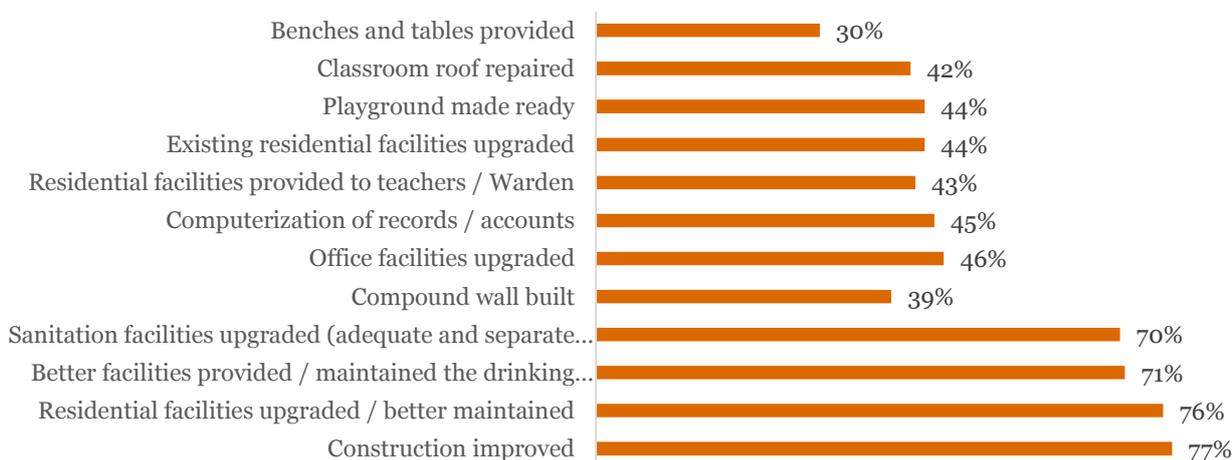


**Figure 21: Opinion on status of infrastructure (N=157)**



As reported, several improvements as captured below have been done in the last five years. But study findings indicate that there are many gaps required to be addressed at school level to be fully equipped for creating conducive learning and living environment.

**Figure 22: Improvements made in the last five years**



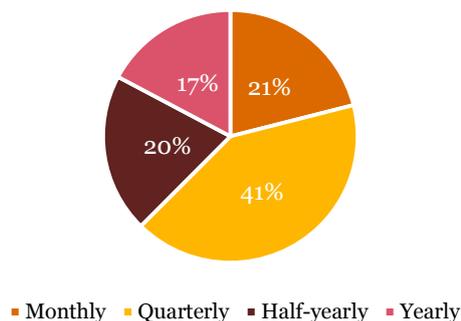
### 4.3. Quality of meals served

According to the school profile data, wardens are reported to be responsible for procuring food items in **one-third** of schools. Half of all wardens interviewed also mentioned that one of their responsibilities was procuring groceries/ration. With respect to source of groceries/food items, more than half of the wardens stated that they procure from local whole-sale grocery shops. 98% of all schools surveyed have reported to have store-rooms for food-grants and raw materials, however field observation and photographs indicate for 3% schools to not have a separate store room.

Regarding food inspections, it was found that such inspections are infrequent and irregular. Ideally, these are expected to be conducted on weekly basis. However, in majority schools (41%), this is done on quarterly basis, followed by monthly frequency 21% schools and half yearly inspections in 20% schools.

Although the responses varied, consultations with divisional officials from the TDD showed that Project Officers only conduct a quarterly inspection of school infrastructure, facilities and activities, including quality of meals. According to the response of schools, inspections for checking quality of meals were undertaken by government officials (28%, department could not be specified by the respondents) or ITDP PO or District Education Officers from Zilla Parishad (19%) of schools reported that officials (Project Officers/Education Officers) from TDD conducted food inspections. In certain cases, Food Inspection Officers and Medical Officers from the Food and Drug Department and Health Department conducted food inspections, as per the schools. Some schools also reported that internal food inspection by the VO office bearers were conducted. However, these were very small in number (3% of total schools). This points to the need for VOs to be more involved consistently in the monitoring process.

**Figure 23: Percentage of Schools by Frequency of Food Inspections (n=157)**



#### 4.4. Health-related Systems and Processes

Health and safety of students in any residential schooling system are of paramount importance and hence, both preventive and curative health care needs to be practiced and promoted at school level. Appropriate systems need to be instituted for dealing with emergencies. In case of Ashram Schools situated in remote areas, it could turn out critical and possibly fatal, since it is challenging to find transport and medical care at short notice.

Prevalence of communicable diseases is high among the students in Ashram Schools, mainly on account of lack of safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation facilities. Behavioral issues such as open defecation and low awareness about health and hygiene also contribute to the dismal situation of health care at schools. Emergencies are also known to arise due to snake and scorpion bites especially among schools situated close to forest areas. Apart from this, lack of timely transport and unavailability of medical staff on time in remote locations are few other challenges common in tribal areas often leading to emergencies which could have otherwise been avoided.

*The current Ashram school guidelines have the following specified with respect to health:*

- Monthly health camp will be mandatory through Mobile Health Unit
- Mobile health unit to keep records of underweighted / malnourished children and school needs to take appropriate measures for improving their condition
- Health status of students to be communicated to parents within 15 days of check-up and within 24 hours if serious illness is diagnosed
- In case of illness requiring urgent treatment / care, the student should be taken to nearest PHC under supervision of head teacher /warden and should be handed over to parents at an earliest

In this context, a major gap found in this current set up is that detailed protocols are not available in the guideline for ashram schools regarding process to be adopted in case of specific health issues and assigning responsibility at school level for dealing with emergencies. Since overseeing students in the campus is the responsibility of warden, the task is left to the warden. Other programmes such as SSA and JNV Guide for Perspective Planning 2017-18 have detailed guideline for school health and safety<sup>14</sup>.

**Health Check-up:** While it is mandatory to conduct monthly health check-ups, only 18% schools conduct the camps regularly. In case of remaining schools, checkups are conducted on quarterly basis (48%) and half yearly / annually (29%). Principals of total 64% reported that records were maintained for check-ups and for emergencies, but no such evidence was found to support this. Remaining 36% schools do not maintain records (figure 24).

**First Aid:** All schools are required to maintain first aid kits and it is implied that the staff is appropriately trained to administer the same. Findings indicate that the kits were available in all study schools, but there was no formal

training imparted or any specific staff assigned the responsibility for first aid. Majority of schools (73%) reported that a teacher administers first aid followed by doctors or nurses from PHC, if they are available. Students administer first aid in case of 17% schools (figure 24).

**Minor illness:** For diagnosis and treatment of minor illness or injuries, the schools are currently dependent on doctors on call basis/ ASHA workers on nearby PHC/ CHC for assistance. Regarding availability of doctors, only 11% of schools reported immediate availability of medical practitioners, while doctors are known to be available on call from PHC in rest of 89% schools (figure 24).

**Health emergencies:** Emergencies are known to occur in Ashram Schools due to lack of timely medical support leading to worsening of situation, snake and scorpion bites and injuries. In such cases, immediate and appropriate first aid is critical and the affected student / person needs to reach medical facility urgently.

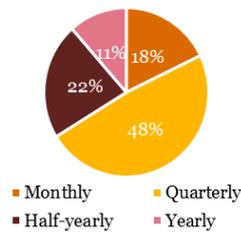
However, it was seen that the schools are not adequately equipped to deal with such emergencies. The staff is not trained enough to administer first aid in critical cases, and it is difficult to find transport. Only 32% schools have their own vehicle at their disposal, while in case of remaining schools, personal vehicles of staff or those from nearest village (mostly 2 wheelers) are used. Total 39% schools reported having used ambulance. The loss of time in availability or transport or ambulance could also be fatal (figure 24).

The gravity of issues is reflected in 344 deaths of students occurred in aided schools last ten years (2006-07 to 2016-17)<sup>15</sup>. In this context, the Salunkhe Committee Report, 2015 and Parliamentary Committee Report, 2013-14 have highlighted the negligence of school management in taking preventive and precautionary measures and failing to institutionalize facilities for health and safety. A PIL in Maharashtra

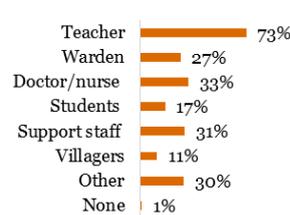
*In the residential school evaluation of 2013-14 JNV's and KGBV's were found to have systematic health monitoring systems in place. Norms for JNVs include:*

- Appoint part-time doctors to visit JNVs for two hours every day on all working days on payment of Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees twenty thousand only) per month in respect or on pro-rata basis or honorarium basis
- Appointment of Counsellor Rs.1,500/- per Visit  
Dentist/ Eye Specialist will be paid Rs. 700/- per

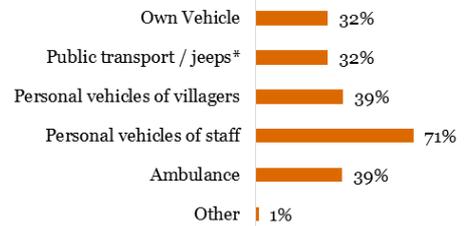
**% Schools by Frequency of Health Checkup (n=157)**



**% Schools by Person Administering First Aid (n=157)**



**% schools by Transport Option during Health Emergencies (n=157)**



(Nambiar, 2013) had noted that posts of staff meant to ensure good health for students in ashram schools remained unfilled even 15 years after the posts were created.

**Adolescent education and behavior change:** Interventions for raising awareness on adolescence health and life skills are vital especially in ashram schools since the students are from educationally deprived background and do not have access to scientific and appropriate information in this context. However, the present system does not address this need. The situation is further aggravated due to lack of behavior change regarding personal hygiene and lack of adequately maintain sanitation facilities at school.

**Care during illness and recovery:** Visits to schools and verification revealed that the schools do not have separate medical or recovery room for resting of sick student and his / her recovery. The student/s with illness are left in dormitory for rest. In case of communicable diseases, this also poses significant risks to other students also, especially since the dormitories are generally overcrowded.

**Figure 24: Key issues related to health and safety at Ashram Schools**

<sup>15</sup> Data collected from Commissionerate, Nashik, 2017

## 4.5. Hostel/Safety-related Systems and Processes

Safety and security is a critical element of any residential school as it not only helps the students feel secure and confident in a new environment but also ensures that parents who are trusting aided Ashram schools and sending their children to not feel worried. The existing situation of infrastructure for safety: lack of security guards, CCTV cameras and proper boundary walls indicates the scope for lapse in existing security systems. From the perspective of system, mere specifications of having boundary walls/ fencing and deploying security guards in not adequate. At present, there are no standard clauses in the guidelines on creating robust security systems for children and residents in school campus. Safety and security of girls is a major concern in others, especially in absence of protocol on presence and responsibilities of of male staff at school, both teaching and non-teaching.

A good security system for residential schools would comprise of both technology tools such as CCTV and people responsible for safety to monitor the security set up on a daily basis and can be reached out in case of emergencies. Since it is mandatory for warden to stay in the hostel for overseeing children in the existing set up, monitoring security systems is assumed to a responsibility of wardens, male warden particularly. With this perspective, the warden respondents were interviewed to understand their accountability towards safety and the system back-ups created, if any.

In this context, more than half of all wardens stated that there was no designated person to act as warden-in-charge and teachers fill up for wardens on a rotation basis. This is also corroborated from the response of teachers. Of the teachers who stated that they were involved in non-academic work (32%), 94% stated that one of their responsibilities / activities was supervision of hostels. Only in 10% schools, wardens exclusively managed the hostels.

It was also found in cases where the teacher is the warden-in-charge, more than 75% of wardens stated that warden-in-charge stays overnight. However, it was found that in 20% schools, teachers acting as warden-in-charge either do not overstay or only oversee during the day and support staff (swayampaaki / kamathi / other residential staff) takes over in the night. In cases of wardens-in-charge in general, contrary to the wardens' responses, 67% reported that it is mandatory for them to stay overnight, whereas 32% reported that they oversee during the day and the support staff (swayampaki/cleaning staff) oversee at night (figure 26).

Several flaws are observed in the current infrastructure from point of view of security. The toilet facilities are outside hostel rooms/ buildings, playgrounds / open areas / corridors are not very well lit at night, several schools have mere fencing and not boundary walls in hilly terrains, and installed CCTV cameras are majorly non-functional. Even if one school has gap in it security systems, it puts threat to life of 400 students on an average.

The Standing Committee Report on Ashram Schools, 2013-14 recommended that the '*officials working as Hostel Superintendents should be imparted special training and be properly sensitized so that they can deal with various exigencies, including security related issues, in running of the Ashram Schools and can contact the civil and police authorities at the time of need. The police officials should pay special attention to these schools including periodic patrolling of school premises and surrounding areas*'.

Figure 25: Percentage of Warden-in-charge (n=155)

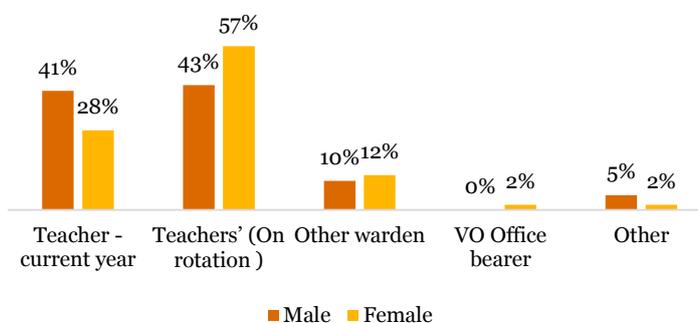
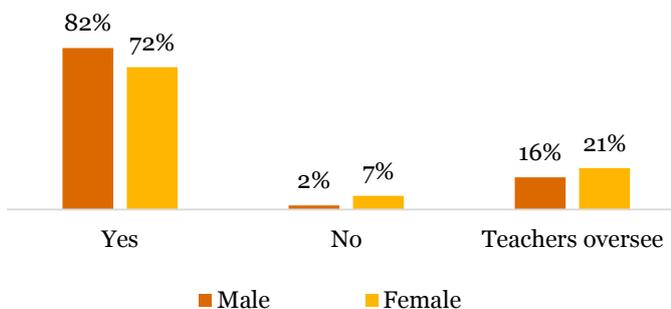


Figure 26: % Warden-in-charge staying back at night (n=156)



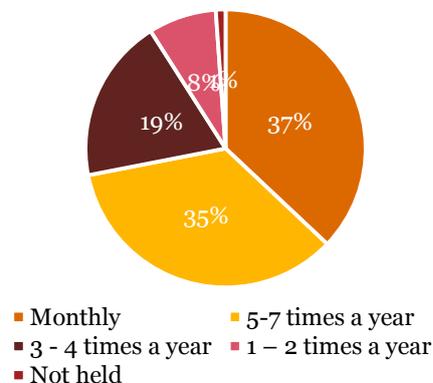
## 4.6. Compliance with RTE Mandate of constituting SMCs

With respect to membership strength, more half of schools had more than 16 members in their SMC (n=90). More than half of all SMCs had more than five female members. According to RTE Act, the SMC must have at least 16 members in primary level, and 18 in secondary level. Thus, only half of the schools surveyed fulfil the RTE mandate for the primary level at least. Only 53% SMCs maintain registers.

64% of SMCs have more than five female members. However, 71% of SMCs do not have any pairs of parent members. With regard to representation of socially and economically disadvantaged groups, slightly less than half of SMCs are reported to have more than 10 members in each category. 83% of schools reported that they have 1-2 members from the panchayat or urban body. However, due to the lack of register / records in half of SMCs, this could not be verified.

More than one-third of schools report that their SMCs meet on monthly basis, followed by 35% meeting 5 to 7 times a year. More than half of the schools (56%) reported that the MoMs of SMC meetings are signed by at least seven people. About 60% of the schools reported that the SMC members participate in or support school events. However, this also needs to be viewed in light of the fact that only half of the schools maintain SMC registers, and information regarding activities was not found in registers, in case of half of the registers.

**Figure 27: % Schools by Frequency of SMC Meeting (n=89)**



## 5. Quality of Education

Access, quality and equity are pillars of school education. Whereas adequacy of infrastructure mainly address the aspects related to access, with some impact on overall school environment, it is the nature of curriculum, availability and quality of teachers, pedagogy which have maximum impact on the quality of education. In the context of Ashram Schools, few more aspects gain importance, such as contextualization of curriculum, use of tribal dialect in transacting curriculum and use of co-curricular activities. Most important is the alignment of overall schooling system with the unique needs of the first generation tribal learners, making it motivating and aspirational for the students to retain them and impart both knowledge and skills needed for mainstreaming.

While chapter 4 dealt with the 'hard components' of the ashram schools, chapter 5 takes a deep dive into the key 'soft components' encompassing the quality of education imparted and challenges therein.



### Highlights

- Total 70772 students are enrolled in the 157 study schools. 7441 teachers are employed and total staff strength is 14,759.
- The curriculum adopted for study schools, is same as schools in non-tribal areas, like other ashram schools in the state. Contextualised content is not available. About 7% of teachers have made efforts to contextualize the curriculum with local tribal culture. 57% of Principals and 77% of teachers feel the need for a revision in the present curriculum. About 24% of teachers use the tribal language and dialect in the class
- 95% of the teachers interviewed resort to the traditional method of classroom teaching, 58% claim to also include activity based education techniques and role plays. 34% of teachers claim to use audio-visual media for teaching, 52% use the materials provided by the State Education Department, 38% prepare their own materials.
- According to the principals interviewed, only 48% of schools provide teachers with computers for educational purposes and 44% provide access to computers for students.
- 73% of teachers have received some form of training for capacity development. Among the teachers who have undergone training, 82% felt that the training was sufficient and 94% felt that it was relevant to the subjects they teach in class.
- Schools do not have specific plans/initiatives for improving the performance of teachers or students. 21% of principals responded that though they do not have specific plans, frequent trainings for teachers should be given and 11% of principals responded that students should be given counselling sessions.
- 60% teachers claimed that co-curricular activities are undertaken in school. Among such activities, the focus seemed to be on sports (74%), music (40%), dance (38%), yoga (34%) and artwork (24%).
- Vocational education is not being conducted in any of the schools, although it is mandated in the Ashram School Programme guideline.
- High absenteeism, high dropout, inadequate infrastructure and learning facilities, isolation from mainstream, lack of support from management for new initiatives, etc. are perceived as key issues by majority stakeholders.

### 5.1. Enrollment and staffing

**Enrollment:** There is a significant variation between class I to XII in the enrollment data as from the school records. A trend can be observed across the years, that the enrolment is highest for middle school and starts to decline from high school onwards, reducing to almost one third in senior secondary schools. This finding highlights the need to capture the data dropouts, transitions and transfer data formally at aided Ashram school level to be able to analyse if the students continue their education and what possible measures are required to be taken.

**Table 24: Enrollment data, as reported from school records (FY 2014-17)**

Year	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
I.	3705	2655	<b>6360</b>	3596	2873	<b>6469</b>	3269	2637	<b>5906</b>
II.	3562	2819	<b>6381</b>	3624	2603	<b>6227</b>	3469	2687	<b>6156</b>
III.	3743	2696	<b>6439</b>	3607	2766	<b>6373</b>	3609	2664	<b>6273</b>
IV.	3677	2722	<b>6399</b>	3766	2710	<b>6476</b>	3559	2758	<b>6317</b>
V.	4041	3038	<b>7079</b>	4018	3030	<b>7048</b>	3854	2922	<b>6776</b>
VI.	4046	3001	<b>7047</b>	4228	3059	<b>7287</b>	3899	3086	<b>6985</b>
VII.	3959	2830	<b>6789</b>	3980	2897	<b>6877</b>	3978	2948	<b>6926</b>
VIII.	3912	2565	<b>6477</b>	3816	2646	<b>6462</b>	3705	2643	<b>6348</b>
IX.	3754	2322	<b>6076</b>	3880	2495	<b>6375</b>	3856	2525	<b>6381</b>
X.	3513	2130	<b>5643</b>	3561	2132	<b>5693</b>	3594	2302	<b>5896</b>
XI.	1883	1022	<b>2905</b>	2056	1294	<b>3350</b>	2094	1335	<b>3429</b>
XII.	1789	907	<b>2696</b>	1812	1011	<b>2823</b>	2026	1353	<b>3379</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>41584</b>	<b>28707</b>	<b>70291</b>	<b>41944</b>	<b>29516</b>	<b>71460</b>	<b>40912</b>	<b>29860</b>	<b>70772</b>

On an average a strength of 46 students have been reported at primary school level. The average strength in school are in the IX and Xth grade of about 118 students which drastically falls to 32 in higher secondary senior schools.

**Table 25: Average strength reported at different levels of schooling**

Class	Average Male	Average Female	Average Total
Class I to IV	30	16	46
Class V to VIII	85	25	110
Class IX to X	102	16	118
Class XI to XII	25	7	32

**Table 26: Staffing in aided ashram schools (2016-17)**

Category	Total Staff		
	Approved	Filled	Vacant
Principal and teaching staff	7994	7598	396
Male Warden	565	506	29
Female Warden	547	394	153
Support staff	6607	6261	376
Total	15713	14759	954

Source: Ashram school data from ATC Commissionerate Nashik, Thane, Amravati, Nagpur

## 5.2. Student Performance and Participation

Regarding about regarding student performance, it was observed that **majority of teachers felt that female students outperformed the male students on various parameters of participation in class.**

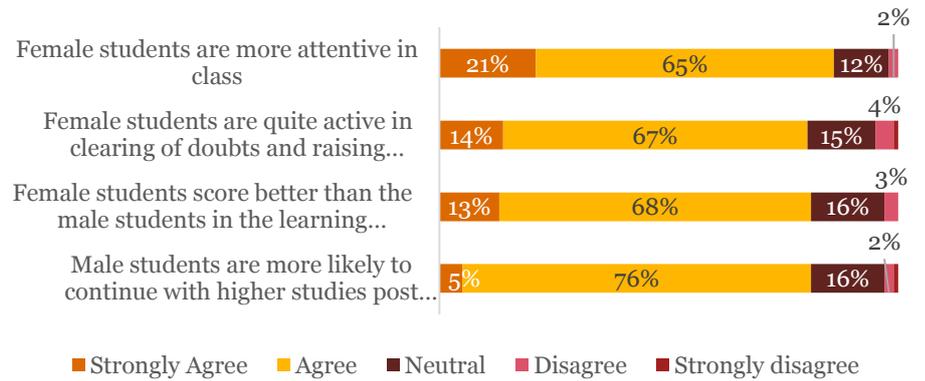
For instance, female students were more attentive in class (86%), and more proactive in clearing doubts and raising questions (81%) and that they scored better in learning assessments as compared to their male

counterparts. However, 81% of the teachers also felt that male students had a better chance of pursuing higher studies as opposed to female students. A similar scenario emerged in the diagnostic study on Tribal-Sub Plan (TSP) in Maharashtra conducted by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. It showed that though tribal girls had a higher attendance and performance record, their enrolment in higher studies was much lower compared to boys (TISS, Tribal Sub Plan in Maharashtra - A Diagnostic Study 2015).

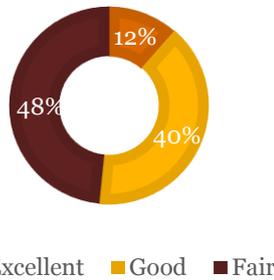
In trying to understand the performance of students, about half of the principals (48%) rated the performance as fair but about 96% of NGO trustees rated the performance between excellent to good.

According to majority principals (86%) bethat the student performance had improved in the SSC examination. About 74% responded that there is increased participation from students in competitions and events conducted and 58% of principals reported that increased number of students participated in inter-school competitions like sports and exhibitions.

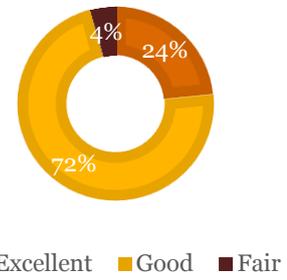
**Figure 28: % teachers as per their opinion regarding student participation (N=314)**



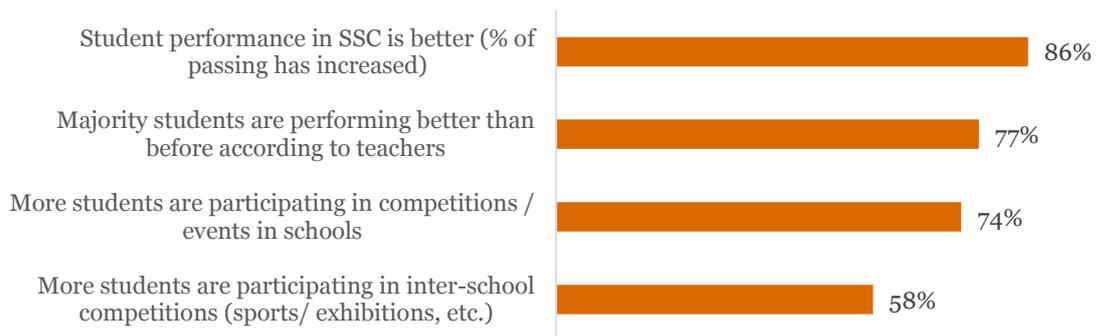
**Figure 29: Percentage of Principals as per their opinion on performance of students (N=157)**



**Figure 30: Percentage of NGO Trustees as per their opinion on performance of students (N=145)**

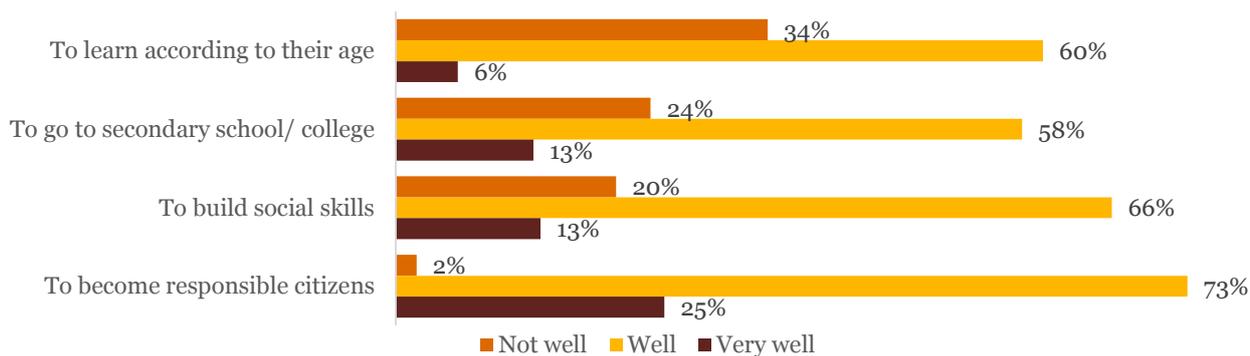


**Figure 31: Opinion of Principals on performance of students in academic activities (% , N=157)**



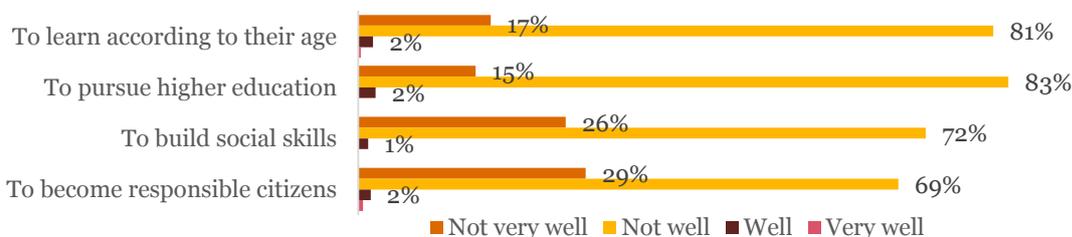
**Principals and teachers expressed varying opinion in the ability of the school to prepare the students for different paths.** Total 58% of principals interviewed believe that that the education imparted at their respective schools prepared students well to pursue secondary education or college. Though 60% of them responded that the school helped the students to learn according to their age, 34% opined that the school did not help the students in learning according to their age.

**Figure 32: % Principals perceiving school is able to prepare students for the following (N=157)**



The teachers, on the other hand, appeared to be more skeptical about the ability of schools to prepare children – about 98% felt that the school did not help students to learn according to their age, and expressed that it does not prepare them for a future pursuit of higher education, help build social skills or to grow as responsible citizens.

**Figure 33: % Teachers who felt the school is able to prepare students for the following (N=157)**



The study also attempted to capture students’ opinion on the performance and support of teachers through focus group discussions (FGDs). Discussions indicated that in spite of all the shortcomings, students appear to be at ease in the Ashram School environment. They responded that teachers were always ready and available to support them in both academic and non-academic issues. Students in most cases said that they approach teachers for clearing doubts. The major suggestion offered by students was to improve access to computers and labs.

### 5.3. Curriculum – effectiveness and relevance in tribal context

Since the socio-cultural milieu of tribal students is vastly different from what students from urban and rural areas experience, contextualizing the curriculum to their setting is necessary. Instead of approaching this field as a challenge, it needs to be looked at as an opportunity to assimilate the rich tribal folklore and knowledge. This can add value and not only help in contextualizing the curriculum but also help preserve the lesser known aspects of tribal culture which have been mostly passed down orally through generations (Mishra 1996). The NPE 1986 and NCF 2005 also argue for a curriculum for ST children that is contextualized to their needs.

All Ashram schools follow the curriculum developed by MSCERT till class VIII and curriculum developed by SBSE, as explained in detail in chapter 2. Since the overall curriculum is not specifically aligned with the tribal context, there is need for effort from the side of teachers, principals and the VOs running Ashram Schools to make the curriculum relevant to tribal students.

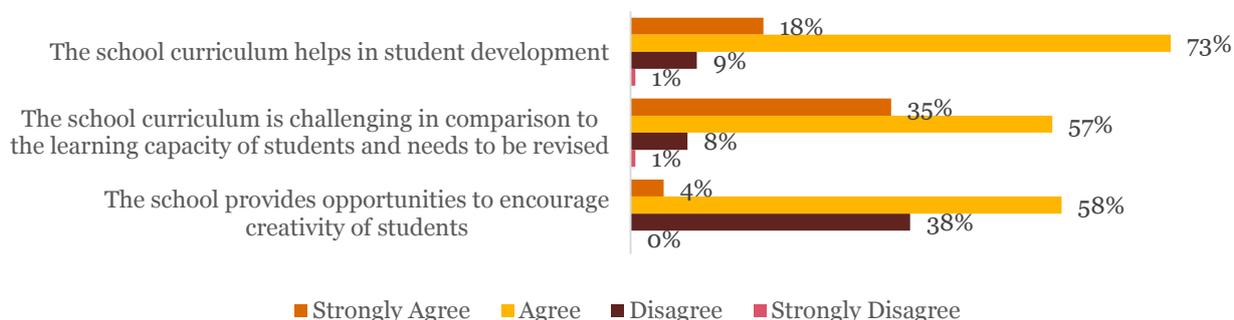
The 2016 NUEPA report on education in tribal areas shows that 80% of primary school teachers and 60% of upper primary teachers surveyed in Maharashtra felt that the curriculum was suitably aligned to tribal culture and needs of the tribal students (Sujatha 2016). However, the same study notes that only 40% of primary teachers and 20% of upper primary teachers were of the opinion that examples from tribal life and culture were included in the textbook lessons. Thus, it can be seen that there needs to be increased awareness among teachers on what

constitutes contextualizing and how it can be done. This can be increased by training teachers in tribal culture and heritage thereby allowing them to better understand and incorporate it into the pedagogy.

In our study, it was noted that only **about 7% of teachers have made efforts to contextualize the curriculum with local tribal culture.** Those who undertake such efforts resort to a variety of methods like teaching the history of the local tribes, teaching in the local language and by incorporating other tribal cultural practices in the curriculum. The efforts of these teachers need to be recognized and the material developed and techniques used by them could be further made available to other teachers to promote such good practices.

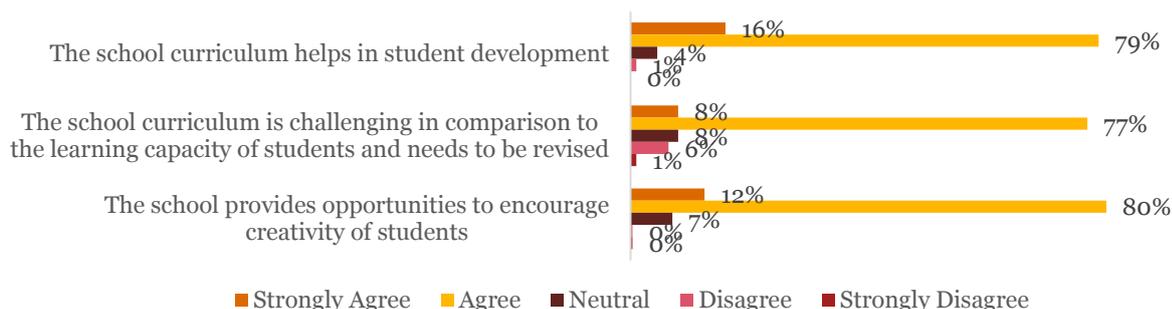
**57% of Principals and 77% of teachers sense the need for a revision in the present curriculum.** The school curriculum can be deemed effective when it helps in student development and provides for their creativity to grow. As per the opinion of the school principals on the curriculum, a majority responded that it is adequate for student development (18% strongly agree and 73% agree that the curriculum helped in development). However, a 92% believe that the curriculum needs to be revised as it was too challenging compared to the learning capacity of students.

**Figure 34: Percentage of Principals as per their opinion on the following (N=157)**



The teachers have a similar opinion on the effectiveness of the curriculum. Though about 95% of teachers agreed that the curriculum helped in student development, 85% also felt the need to revise it as it did not accommodate the learning capacity of students. The teachers (92%) felt that the school environment provided ample opportunities to encourage the creativity of students. The opinion of a majority of principals and teachers that the curriculum was too challenging for the students and needed to be revised was a matter of concern and requires appropriate intervention.

**Figure 35: Percentage of Teachers as per their opinion on the following (N=314)**

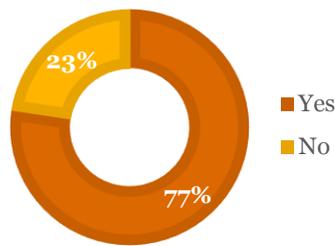


### 5.3.2. Perception of teachers regarding contextualization of content

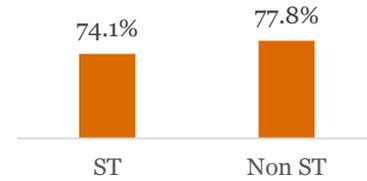
Since a large number of teachers themselves hail from a non-tribal background, they do not completely understand the need to contextualize the curriculum and make it relevant to the needs of tribal children (CBPS, Residential Schooling Strategies: Impact on Girls' Education and Empowerment 2015). Various research reports note how this inability of teachers from a non-tribal background to relate to the tribal setting makes them neglect the need for integrating the local context, culture and history in the classroom activities (Mishra 1996).

The survey revealed that 77% of teachers feel the need for specific inputs to align pedagogy to the learning needs of tribal students. However, as opposed to what the above studies say, the tribal and non-tribal teachers felt a similar need to contextualize their teaching techniques – 78% of non-ST teacher and 74% of ST teachers have responded positively on the need for specific teaching methods to help tribal students.

**Figure 36: % teachers who think pedagogic requirements for teaching tribal children require specific inputs (N=314)**



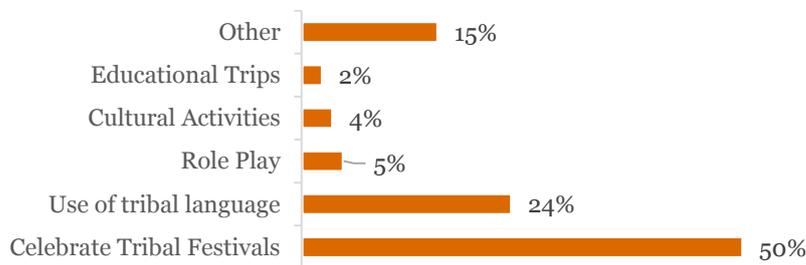
**Figure 37: % teachers who think pedagogic requirements for teaching tribal children require specific inputs – Social Category-wise**



N1=27; N2=287

About 31% of teachers responded that they have tried to include the tribal culture and knowledge as part of the pedagogy. The efforts made in this regard include celebrating tribal festivals, using tribal language in the school and other activities like role play.

**Figure 38: Details of the efforts made by teachers to include tribal culture and knowledge in their pedagogy (N=84)**



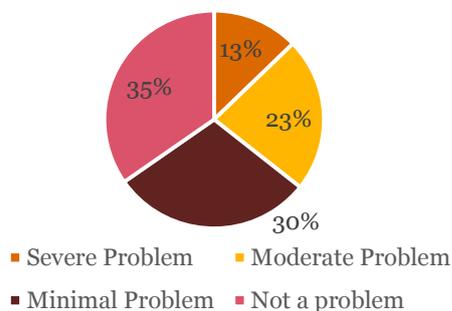
## 5.4. Medium of instruction

With respect to primary education, the NPE 1986 and the PoA 1992 advocate the use of the local dialect or the tribal language spoken in the area as a medium of instruction.

In the study, we tried to understand the use of tribal languages in the classroom through estimating teachers’ acquaintance with it. The teachers interviewed as part of the study claim to be highly acquainted with the local dialect – 86% claim that they can understand the dialect spoken in the school location and 73% can speak the dialect. As was noted in section 6.2.1, about 24% of teachers responded that they use the tribal language and dialect in the class in order to contextualize the curriculum.

**Programme of Action (PoA), 1992:** *The PoA is one of the first policy documents to state in detail the ideal process to be followed in educating tribal students. It lays down that in the initial stages of primary schooling, children from tribal communities must be necessarily taught in their mother tongue. By the time the child reaches Class III, necessary TLM should be prepared by the teachers such that they have an easy transition into the regional language.*

**Figure 39: Opinion of Teachers on students belonging to different tribal communities and having different languages of communication (N=314)**



The number of teachers who have received training on aspects related to local culture and traditions of the tribal population is only 4%. Though the TDD has taken initiatives in this regard, these need to be scaled up to extend the benefits to more teachers. When asked about the challenges faced in the classroom, about 65% of teachers said that they faced a severe to minimal problem in managing a multi-lingual classroom. , tribal language/dialect training and pedagogical methods to handle multi-lingual classrooms can also be imparted to teachers.

## 5.5. Pedagogy and its alignment with learning needs of tribal children

According to report on ‘Strategies of Tribal Education for Intervention’, the attitude of the teachers in the classroom has great bearing on what the student comprehends. It reveals that non-ST teachers who are unfamiliar with the context often are unconcerned whether the child comprehends what is taught in class and simply dismiss tribal students as being unable to cope with the syllabus and textbooks followed (Mishra 1996). Teacher attitudes to teaching and the pedagogy followed thus have a direct effect on the quality of learning. The fast-paced growth of technology has also made digital literacy an important component of education. ICT systems cannot just augment teacher efforts at teaching, but can also help in student development as a whole. In this section we focus on teaching methodologies, the use of additional material for teaching, digital infrastructure and teacher efforts to localize the content for ST students.

### 5.3.1. Teaching methodology

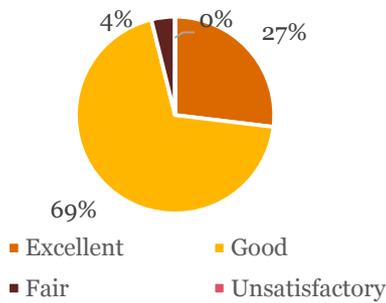
To increase student participation in class and to retain them in schools, the teaching methodology needs to be student-oriented and activity-based. The success of Activity-based learning in improving education quality in states like Tamil Nadu show the need for a change from the traditional classroom based teaching, especially in the primary classes (Hariharan 2011).

**Though about 95% of the teachers interviewed resort to the traditional method of classroom teaching, 58% claim to also include activity based education techniques and role plays.**

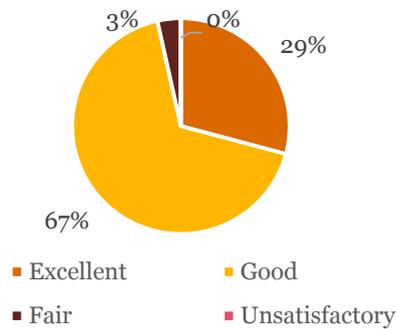
34% of teachers claim to use audio-visual media for teaching. The opinion of Principals and NGO Trustees on the quality of teaching is largely satisfactory – 96% of principals and 97% of NGO Trustees felt the teaching quality ranged between excellent to good.

*The recent research in school education is increasingly highlighting the importance of teacher effectiveness more than the qualification and certification of teachers. Students of most effective teachers make excellent academic progress regardless of their prior achievement levels. Also, as the level of teacher effectiveness increases, the lowest achieving students are the first to benefit (Hanford, 2017).*

**Figure 40: Percentage of Principals as per the Quality of Teaching (N=156)**

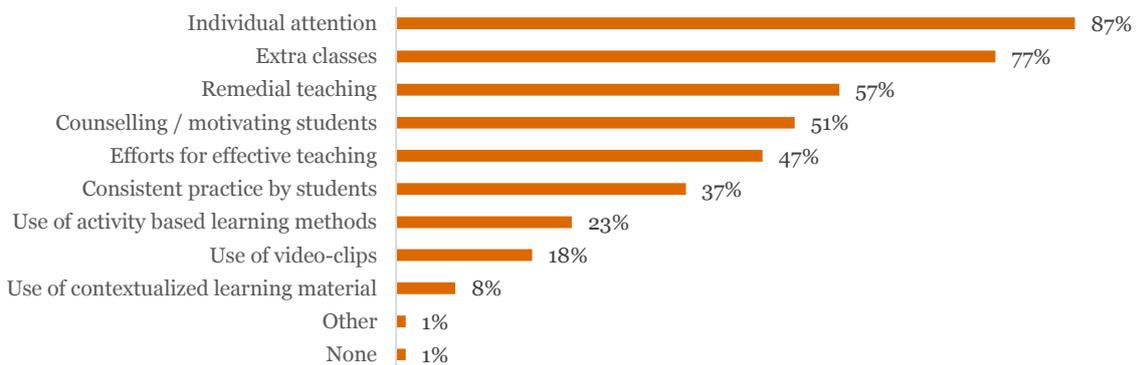


**Figure 41: Percentage of NGO Trustees as per the Quality of Teaching (N=144)**

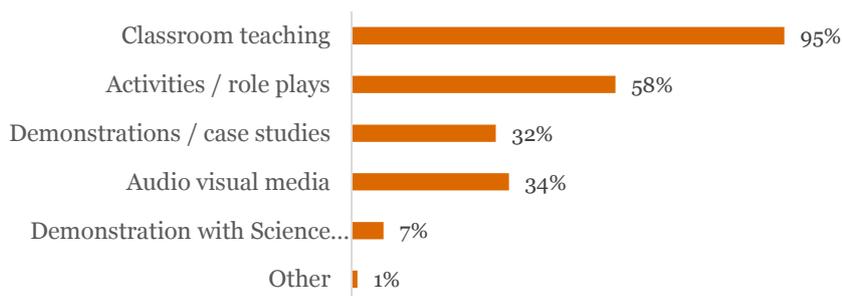


Over 42% of teachers handle between 6-8 classes every day. This could be a reason why a majority of them seem to adopt the classroom teaching method as the amount of time available to conceptualize and use other innovative pedagogical techniques is much lesser. 87% of the teachers interviewed claim they provide individual attention to students to enhance performance. The other methods they resort to include taking extra classes (77%), remedial teaching for poor performing students (57%) and counselling to motivate students (51%).

**Figure 42: Percentage of Teachers as per the specific efforts undertaken for enhancing performance of students (N=314)**



**Figure 43: Percentage of Teachers as per the teaching methodology used by them in class (N=314)**



**Need to orient teachers of Ashram Schools for teaching tribal students**

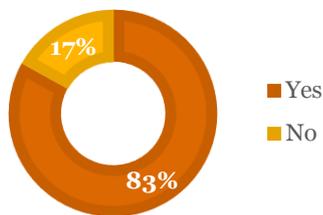
Dasra’s 2009 report (Bagai & Nundy, 2009) brings out the need for attitudinal change among teachers to appreciate the abilities of tribal students and treat them on par with others, teacher training with respect to tribal education, as well as familiarity with tribal languages to better reach children. The Right to Education Framework for Implementation also states that tribal language speakers are to be used to educate tribal children (MHRD, 2011) other than using learning resources in tribal languages.

Source: Report on Education of Tribals, Dasra, 2009; RTE, 2009

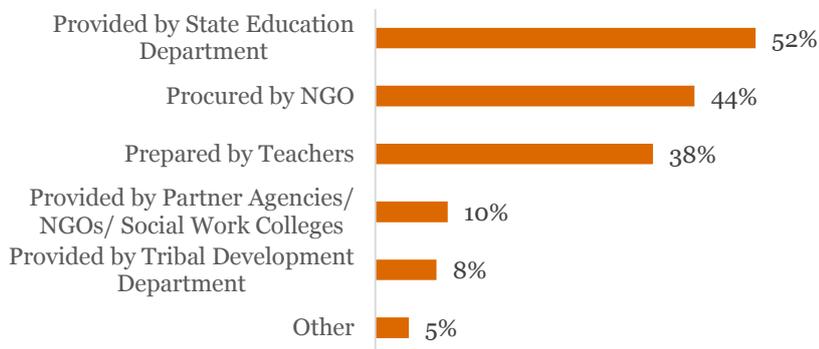
**5.3.3. Availability and use of Teaching Learning material (TLM)**

Teaching Learning Material plays an important role in the transmission of knowledge in the classroom. Research studies show how the development of contextualized TLM based on local tribal dialects and other picture-based charts and primers have a positive impact on classroom understanding in tribal schools (Bagai and Nundy 2009). However, the preparation of contextualized TLM has been a challenge owing to the diversity experienced in the state. Most of the teachers in the study (83%) have access to TLM. Though 52% use the materials provided by the State Education Department, 38% prepare their own materials.

**Figure 44: Percentage of Teachers as per availability of TLM (N=314)**



**Figure 45: Percentage of Teachers as per their access to TLM (by N=261)**



The research conducted by NUEPA in 2016 however shows that the usage of TLM by teachers is low – though a majority of teachers have access to TLM, only 72% of primary and 79% of upper primary students said that the teachers use TLM such as charts and maps in class (CBPS, Residential Schooling Strategies: Impact on Girls’ Education and Empowerment 2015).

Despite the widespread availability of TLM, teachers face a difficulty in the provision of TLM to students. Over 60% of teachers say that providing TLM is a severe to minimal problem. However, the opinion of the Principals and NGO Trustees on the quality of TLM is satisfactory – 76% of principals and 93% of Trustees rated the TLM used by schools between good to excellent.

**Contextualizing the Syllabus through TLM:**

*In the Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh, supplementary TLM has been prepared using the local cultural forms such as folktales, songs, proverbs and riddles specifically for tribal children. This has been seen to improve the teaching efficacy in schools.*

Source: (Bagai and Nundy 2009)

### 5.3.4. Availability and usage of Digital Infrastructure

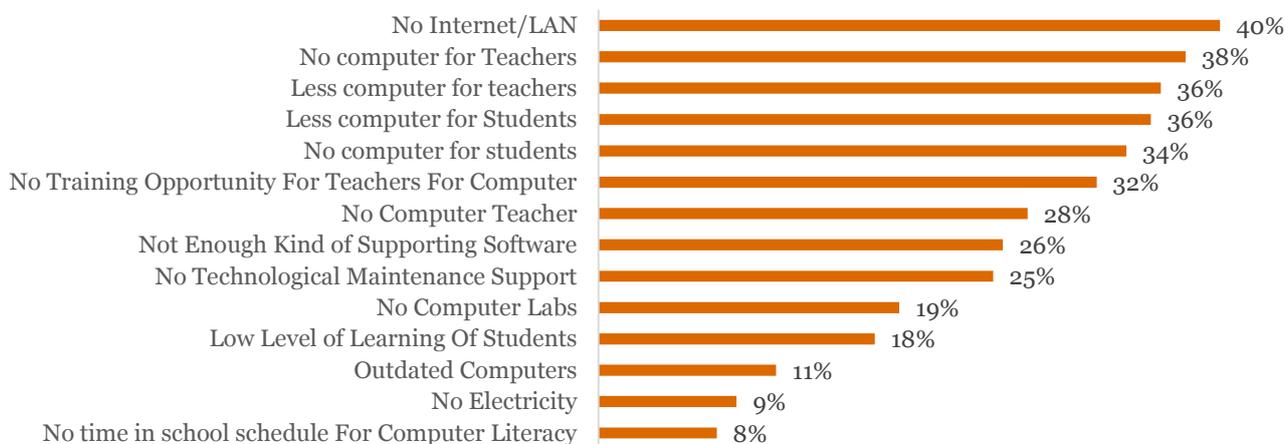
Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is incomplete without digital literacy. In a tribal environment, though the access and availability of ICT infrastructure might be an issue, several interventions show that ability of ICT to transform the education landscape even among marginalized communities. A government of Tamil Nadu’s initiative was to encourage digital literacy among tribal schools by training teachers and providing computers

The availability and accessibility to computers across Ashram schools is quite low. According to the principals interviewed, only 48% of schools provide teachers with computers for educational purposes and 44% provide access to computers for students.

The presence of dedicated computer teacher is also low among the Ashram schools. Only 37% of 157 principals interviewed said they have computer teachers. About 30% of them mentioned that they face difficulty in hiring computer staff.

The schools also face challenges when it comes to imparting technology driven education. The major problem according to 40% of teachers is the non-availability of internet/LAN facility in school. The sufficiency of computers is stated to be another problem – 38% of teachers do not have access to computers whereas according to 36% teachers, the schools do not have sufficient computers. The lack of opportunities for teachers to be trained in operating computers has also been another issue as reported by 32% of teachers. As already noted above, the lack of computer teachers also contributes as a factor in hindering technology driven education (28%).

**Figure 46: Percentage of teachers as per obstacles in the process of a technology driven education (N=314)**



**Game-based Mobile Learning:**

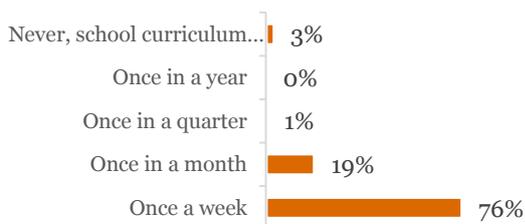
*Students’ ability to adopt and use digital technology and learn from it was tested in a study by a group of researchers from Stanford University. The study was based in six marginalized communities in India, including a tribal community from Gujarat. The findings show that the capacity of children to self-learn how to operate mobile phones and learn mathematics through games is high. The children were able to work as a group and solve incrementally challenging problems on their own.*

*This points to how the very presence of digital infrastructure can aid in learning and the need for such low-cost methods in marginalized settings. (Kim 2011)*

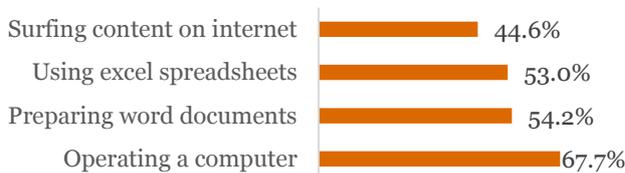
Though, according to principals, less than half of the schools have computers for teachers, the number of teachers who claim to use computers is much higher. Of the 274 teachers interviewed, 91% claim to make use of the computers in the school for educational purposes. The topics covered under computer education range from teaching students to operate the computer (68%), preparing word documents, excel spreadsheets and surfing for content on the internet.

Overall, a majority of teachers claim to use computers and internet weekly for purposes like audio-visual demonstrations (76%), gathering resource material to support class room learning (77%) and as a medium of communication with the student for tasks like homework, feedback, submissions, etc. (75%).

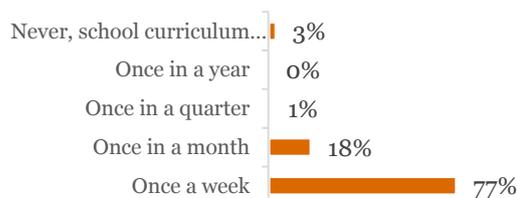
**Figure 48: Percentage of Teachers as per usage of computer/internet as a medium of instruction such as for audio visual demonstrations (N=242)**



**Figure 47: Topics taught on computer to students based on Teachers' responses (N=287)**



**Figure 49: Percentage of Teachers as per usage of computer/internet to gather resource material to support class room learning (N=243)**

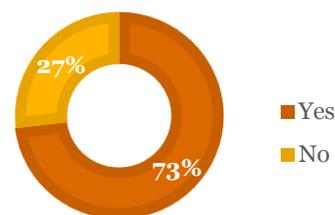


### 5.3.5. Training received by teachers

In-service teacher training is one of the proven methods to improve teacher quality and also help in the professional development of teachers. The state education and tribal development departments have both taken efforts in this regard to keep the teachers updated. However, not all teachers seem to be covered through these trainings. The 2016 survey by NUEPA shows that in Maharashtra, about 28% of teachers in tribal areas have never attended any training after having been recruited as teachers (Sujatha 2016).

In our study, we found that 73% of teachers have received some form of training for capacity development. Among the teachers who have undergone training, 82% felt that the training was sufficient and 94% felt that it was relevant to the subjects they teach in class. When questioned on how the trainings could be improved, some suggestions that came up include including teachers in the training decision making process to understand their personal training needs, provision of books and other content based on the training received and a more audio-visual based training methodology to be adopted.

**Figure 50: Percentage of Teachers who have received in-service training (N=313)**

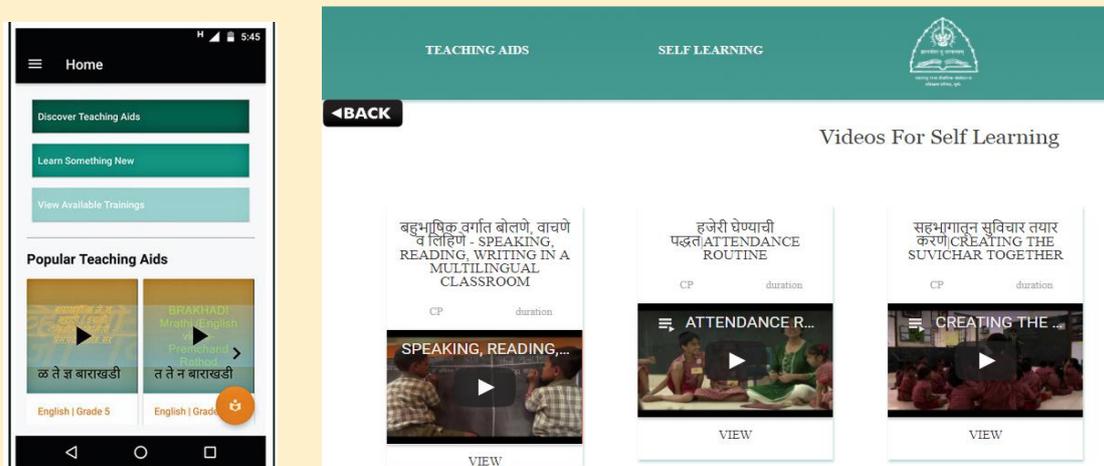


Recognizing the importance of teacher training and to provide scope for teacher professional development, MSCERT has designed a portal and a mobile based application to give teachers greater access to content and provide a scope for teachers to update their knowledge at their own pace. The details of the initiatives are summarised in the box given below.

## MSCERT TEACHER EDUCATION AND MITRA APP

**Context:** In-service teacher training is an important yet time and cost consuming process that has direct effects on improving the quality of education imparted by teachers. In Maharashtra, recognizing this need and to allow teachers to learn at their own pace, the MSCERT Teacher Education Portal has been developed. It aims to provide all teachers easy access to high quality teaching learning resources and promote a culture of independent and self-paced learning.

**Intervention:** Leveraging on the potential of ICT in improving the skills of teachers, the portal ([mscert.maharashtra.gov.in](http://mscert.maharashtra.gov.in)) offers several teaching resources and self-learning videos for the teachers. Once teachers register using their U-DISE code, they can access the content for free. It also provides inputs on using teaching aids in the classroom, innovative pedagogical techniques, using MS Office and managing multi-lingual classroom setup. The videos and content are available in both Marathi and English and helps the teachers in contextualizing their teaching to the student needs. The MITRA (Maharashtra In-Service Teacher Resource Application) App is a bilingual mobile application which allows the advantages of the portal to be accessed via smartphones. It also permits teachers to upload their own videos for use by the wider community (Pune Mirror 2017).



### 5.4.1. Challenges in teaching-learning process and initiatives of schools in resolving them

The research conducted on education for ST students throws up a number of challenges that need to be addressed to bridge gaps in the education process. Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale (2009) in their study on primary schooling in Nandurbar district, through interactions with teachers and parents, reveal that teacher shortages, absenteeism and a general lack of resources are major challenges to teaching-learning. From the perspective of teachers, it emerged that administrative work and in-service training left little time for teaching in itself; and parents felt that teachers often did not come to classes, and students otherwise had difficulties in understanding what the teacher taught. Student attendance was also claimed to be affected by teacher availability/attendance (Chattopadhyay and Durdhawale 2009).

The NUEPA study (2016) of tribal schools in nine states identifies language barrier as a reason for low involvement in studies, from interaction with teachers. A smaller percentage of teachers also identified lack of interest on the part of parents as a reason, as well as lack of a conducive home environment. Social constraints also seem to play a role in whether and how much students are interested in participating in classroom learning. Socio-economic factors such as engagement in agriculture was also a factor. Parents brought up different issues: teacher absenteeism and language barriers (Sujatha 2016).

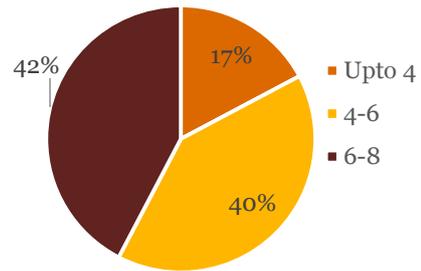
A TISS (2014) study on socio-economic issues facing the Katkari tribe in Maharashtra also identify language barriers as a hindrance (TISS 2014). With respect to the Katkari tribe, a lack of Katkari teachers is also cited as a

factor. Interviews with Ashram School teachers bring out attitudinal issues: teachers feel that Katkari students lack motivation for studies, and do not feel that putting effort into teaching them is worthwhile. Discrimination against Katkari children by teachers/Principals was also gleaned from interactions with students. Gautam (2003) in his report on Janashala identifies the twin problems of negative attitudes in non-tribal teachers, and the school medium of instruction not being familiar to students (Gautam 2003).

The academic load of most teachers in Ashram schools is very high. Over 42% of teachers handle 6-8 periods every day and another 40% handle between 4-6 periods. This points to how in most of the schools, no specific subject teachers are available and a single teacher covers all the major subjects. A heavy teaching workload has been shown in many studies to contribute to an indifference to the occupation as a whole and decreased interest in adopting new and improved methods of teaching to help students (CBPS 2015).

The survey findings show that the schools do not have specific plans/initiatives for improving the performance of teachers or students. 21% of principals responded that though they do not have specific plans, frequent trainings for teachers should be given and 11% of principals responded that students should be given counselling sessions.

**Figure 51: Average number of periods handled by Teachers in a day (N=314)**



### A-VIEW (AMRITA VIRTUAL INTERACTIVE E- LEARNING WORLD)

**Context:** When the Maharashtra State Education Department updated the Class 5 syllabus, it had to subsequently train the teachers on handling the new curriculum. The number of teachers to be reached and the time it would take for this task was a huge challenge.

**Intervention:** The Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training (MSCERT) introduced the concept of training teachers through live online lectures with the support of IIT Bombay and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham. The trainings were completed for over 35,000 candidates across 500 centres within a short span of 6 days.

**Impact:** If this training session was rolled out using conventional means, the amount of time, money and resources required to train 35,000 teachers would be enormous. Scaling down the time and resources required, helped minimize costs and maximize the reach of training.



Source: (The Hindu 2015)

## 5.6. Co-curricular activities and access of students for learning opportunities

According to many great educationists and thinkers, co-curricular activities provide opportunities for the pursuit of established interests and the development of new interests. They educate students for citizenship through experiences and insights that stress leadership, fellowship, cooperation and independent action. Extra-curricular activities in the form of sports, arts, yoga, music etc. are integral for strengthening learning and generating greater confidence among students. Participation in any form of extra-curricular activity is vital for physical, emotional and cognitive well-being of students. They also create an enabling environment that support development of inter-personal skills, creativity, life-skills, team work, leadership, problem solving skills etc. With an objective to holistically develop the personalities of students, Ashram schools are also expected to provide opportunities for different types of extra-curricular activities.

An analysis of various residential schools reveal that Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) have separate allocation for sports and extra-curricular activities (Rs 300 per student per year) as opposed to Ashram Schools where there is no separate provision. It is important to note that even though KGBVs did not have specific budget provisions for sports or co-curricular activities, there was considerable representation in district and state level sports meets from KGBVs especially in the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. (Centre for Budget and Policy Studies 2015)

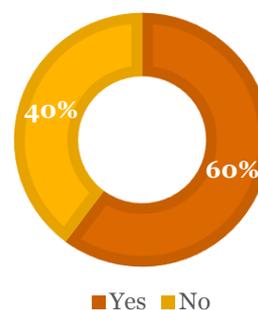
### 5.6.1. Status of Non-academic activities in Ashram Schools of study districts

In order to understand the nature of co-curricular activities in the Ashram Schools of study districts, teachers were asked to report about different types of non-academic subjects taught in the school.

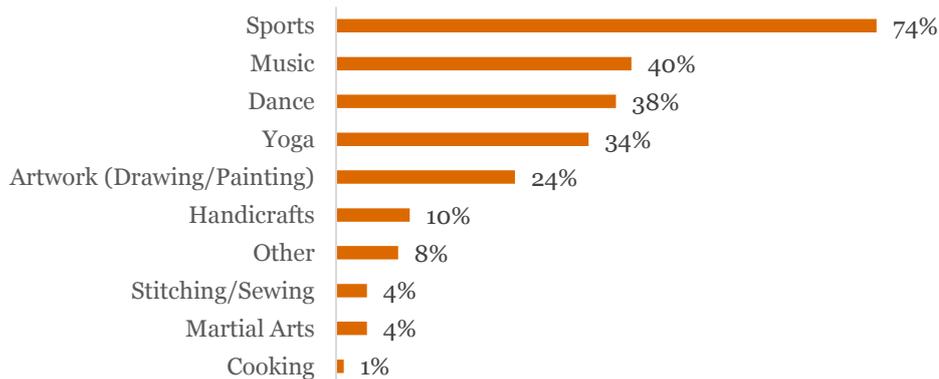
60% teachers claimed that co-curricular activities are undertaken in school. Among such activities, the focus seemed to be on sports (74%), music (40%), dance (38%), yoga (34%) and artwork (24%). Discussions with the students also revealed that there was dedicated time allotted during the day, for physical education and the most commonly played games included kho-kho, kabbadi and cricket.

These findings are in alignment with the 2016 NUEPA report which states that among schools in tribal areas in Maharashtra, sports and games are the most widely pursued co-curricular activity (50%) followed by music and dance (30%) and gardening (12%) (Sujatha 2016).

**Figure 52: Percentage of teachers on whether non-academic subjects taught in the school (N=314)**



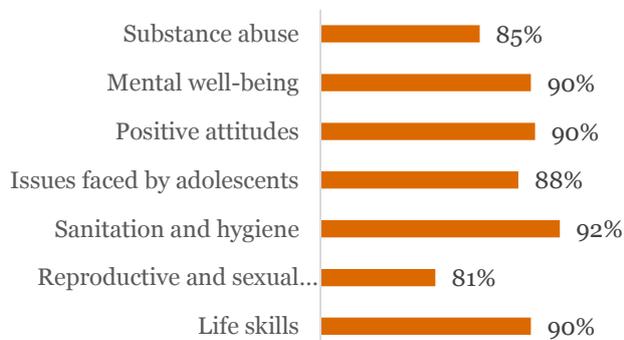
**Figure 53: Percentage of Teachers as per the Non-academic subjects taught in the school (N=189)**



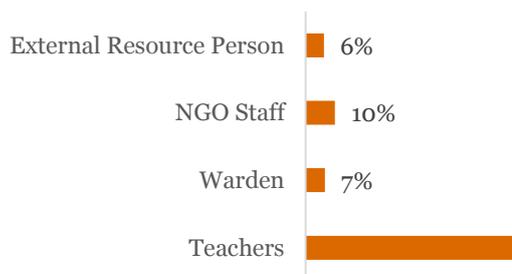
The opinion of stakeholders regarding performance of students in non-academic subjects reflects that about 85% of principals and 94% of NGO Trustees rate the student performance between good to excellent.

Apart from extra-curricular activities, dedicated sessions on life skills are also deemed important. These may be viewed as ‘as a range of psycho-social and cognitive abilities that equip children to make informed decisions and choices, manage their emotional well-being and communicate effectively’ (Central Square Foundation 2015) are In this context, responses of teachers were sought Study findings reveal that the schools conduct sessions on a variety of topics for adolescent students such as Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) (81%), sanitation and hygiene practices (92%), mental well-being (90%), life-skills (90%), substance abuse (85%) etc. In a majority of cases (76%), the teachers claimed that they themselves conducted these sessions and only in about 7% of cases, an external resource person was engaged. Since the topics are diverse and sensitive in nature, engagement of specialized agencies would be critical. In the absence of specialized agencies, it may be worth exploring that, trainings related to these topics are organized for the teachers so that they are better equipped to handle the topic and interact effectively with the students.

**Figure 54: Percentage of Teachers on the sessions conducted for adolescents on the following topics (N=259)**



**Figure 55: Percentage of Teachers on who conducted the sessions for adolescents (N=310)**



## 5.7. Vocational Education

Apart from providing formal education, Ashram schools are also expected to provide craft-based or vocational education in the field of agriculture, horticulture, spinning, carpentry and other trades. The idea of promoting vocational education is to prepare the students from remote tribal areas to be able to generate their own livelihood opportunities.

Maharashtra was one of the first states to stress on the creation of a Vocational Education Center to train in crafts like tailoring, bamboo work, carpentry, etc. as part of the Ashram School Complex, way back in 1972 (Sujatha 1990). Policies and guidelines have highlighted the need for vocationalising education in Ashram schools – the Planning Department, Maharashtra in the report on ‘Balanced Regional Development Issues’ stress on the

creation of vocational education programmes for tribal youth focusing on ‘the newly emerging opportunities in agriculture, fisheries, agro-industries, forestry, horticulture, biodiversity, water and energy management and local industry’ (Planning Department 2013).

The Inputs for the Draft New Education Policy also stresses on the importance of vocationalising secondary education across all schools (MHRD 2016). The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, 2013-14 has also recommended introduction of vocational education the Ashram Schools with a view to providing more professional and career oriented options to the students.

However, despite the constant emphasis of various policies and programmes, the commitment of Ashram Schools to impart skill training is not evident. Several studies show that the teachers usually use the periods allotted for craft/skill training for general education (Garnaik and Barik 2012). It is also seen that most Ashram schools do not even employ specific teachers for craft/vocational education (Sujatha 1990).

*Experiences from other residential model of schools such as KGBVs, have revealed that the advantage of additional time that residential schools offer, can be capitalized upon effectively to introduce courses on skill development. For instance, in Rajasthan, vocational component in KGBVs has been linked with National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) whereby all KGBVs serve as AVI (accredited vocational institution) (Centre for Budget and Policy Studies 2015)*

Divisional level consultations also revealed that under the Grant in aid model of Ashram Schools, the VOs have little or no incentive to introduce vocational skills for children. In the light of the limited amount of grant allocated, provision of vocational skills are only seen as additional expenditure. The biggest difficulty in imparting vocational education in tribal schools as per several studies is the unavailability of trained persons who can teach students these skills (Mishra 1996). Research also shows that there is a need for contextualizing the courses offered as part of vocational education and re-aligning it to the aspirations of the students and the local employment opportunities (Sujatha 1990).

### 5.5.1. Opinion of stakeholders on Vocational Education

In the light of the importance of vocational education, opinion of school staff regarding vocational education was sought. The study found that a majority of the teachers and principals felt the need for vocational education to be offered in Ashram schools – 94% of principals and 87% of teachers agreed that students should be trained in vocational courses.

During interaction with the students as part of FGDs, it emerged that one of the areas which required major focus and improvement was to have opportunities for vocational and skill training in various trades indicating that students have clear interest in learning new skills and trades. Thus, as far as vocational skill training is concerned, while principals and teachers felt it was important for preparing the students for sustainable economic alternatives, the students also expressed interest in pursuing skill training, clearly suggesting that there is need for NGOs to intervene in this regard by recruiting teachers for specific skills and allocating sufficient time during the day for students to learn specific trades.

It is important to understand that the Government of Maharashtra has laid emphasis on the need for vocationalising education through its Directorate of Vocational Education and Training which offers a bifocal programme for higher secondary students focusing on vocationalising education. This initiative could be modified to suit the needs of Ashram school students by adding more crafts that suit their aspirations and context.

**+2 BIFOCAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, DIRECTORATE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, MAHARASHTRA**

**OBJECTIVE:** To motivate students to go create self-employment opportunities and to support those who opt for employment after completion of +2 level education this scheme of was introduced.

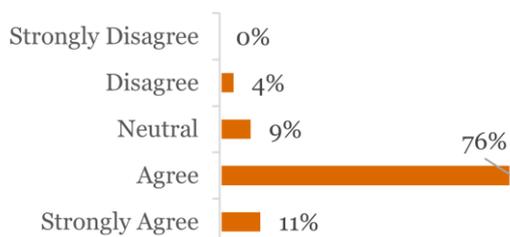
**SCHEME DETAILS:** The scheme, introduced in the State from the academic year 1978-79, trains students as skilled or semi-skilled craftsmen through the Craftsman Training Scheme. To accommodate these courses and allow students to get certified in their respective skill, the Maharashtra State Board has introduced subjects under the scheme in 6 different groups – Technical, Commerce, Agriculture, Home Science, Fisheries and Paramedical.

**REACH:** The bifocal courses are being conducted in 1035 Institutes (50 Government, 320 Private Aided and 665 Private Self Finance Jr. Colleges) in the State with the strength of 110000 students. The students pursuing bifocal Vocational Courses are in a position to enter the world of work or to go for higher education vertically in their Vocational field.

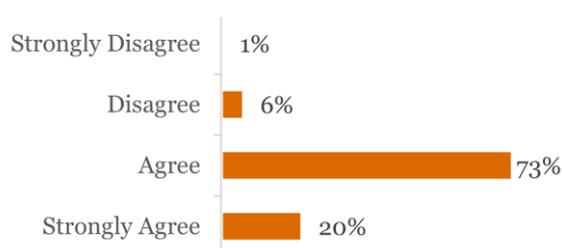
**Initiatives for quality education of tribal students introduced by Department of School Education in Andhra Pradesh**

- PUNADI, a quality enhancement programme was jointly developed by the Department of Tribal Welfare, SSA and SCERT, and was introduced in schools to develop basic competencies in Telugu, English and Life Skills in tribal children studying in classes 3 to 9. About 2.5 lakh students of these classes in Ashram Schools, and other residential schools have been covered under PUNADI.
- MLE programme has been introduced in 7 districts to provide education in mother tongue in 8 languages along with Telugu. Snehbala cards were introduced for Activity Based joyful learning.
- Focus was on providing good school environment with clean toilets, ramps, drinking water, electricity etc. Innovative activities like post box, honesty box and news bulletins were also introduced.
- Children are regularly assessed on fortnightly basis by the teachers. Online tracking of students' performance has been introduced and a baseline test was also conducted.
- Another programme QuEST (Quality Education for ST children) has been introduced for achieving subject specific competencies in classes 6 to 10. A sum of Rs 18 crore was allocated for this programme in 2012-13.
- Teacher handbooks (Deepika) and student Workbooks (Abhyasikas) were provided to teachers and students under SSA and RMSA.
- To enhance academic performance of students a 90-minute period was designed with first 45 minutes devoted to teaching and the next 45 minutes to practice.
- The government has also introduced a Child Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) and has also provided Mobile Health Units for schools under a recently introduced Rajiv Bala Sanjivani programme.

**Figure 56: Percentage of Teachers as per their opinion on the need for imparting vocational skills and crafts training (N=314)**



**Figure 57: Percentage of Principals as per their opinion on the need for imparting vocational skills and crafts training (N=157)**



## 5.8. Key challenges

**High absenteeism:** Typically, livelihood activities of tribal communities include agricultural cultivation wage labor (farm and non-farm labor), collection of forest produce, fishing etc. For those families engaged in agriculture, the harvesting season often falls during the academic cycle and subsequently students are required to support their families by missing classes. Hence, in order to provide education to tribal students, one needs to look beyond the conventional methods of improving quality and also focus on how the schooling can be modified to fall in line with the livelihood activities of the students’ families.

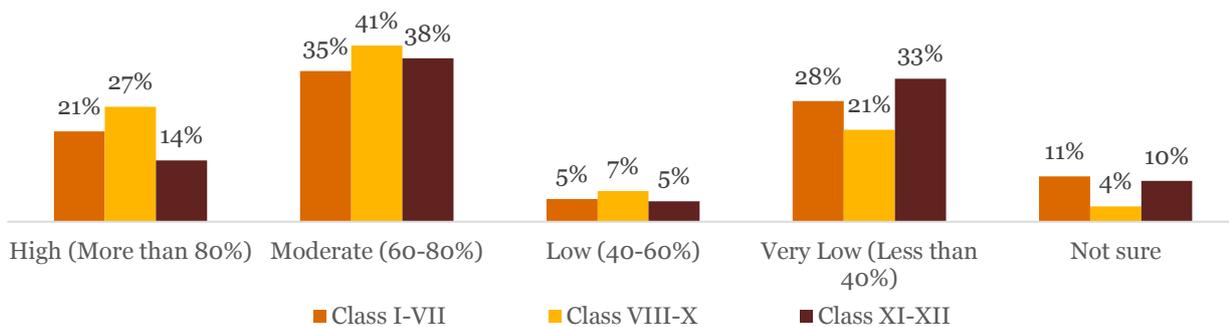
In our study, we tried to understand if the academic cycle and pattern is suitably aligned with the needs of the tribal students by studying the trends in attendance. It has been noted that tribal students who accompany their parents when they migrate are the most vulnerable as it affects their education and drop-outs are really high (Smita 2008).

The study findings showed that there is some disturbance in the academic cycle with respect to the agricultural seasons and migration patterns. **Around 19% of teachers commented that student attendance is affected when the harvesting/sowing takes place and 16% are of the opinion that it is affected when families migrate for economic activities.**

**According to 28% teachers, average attendance of students at upper primary was less than 40% during harvesting/sowing seasons.** For classes 8-10 and 11-12, 21% and 33% of teachers provided feedback that the attendance falls below 40%. Similarly, during the migration period, 31% of teachers noted that attendance is less than 40% for classes 11-12 and 24% of teachers said it falls below 40%.

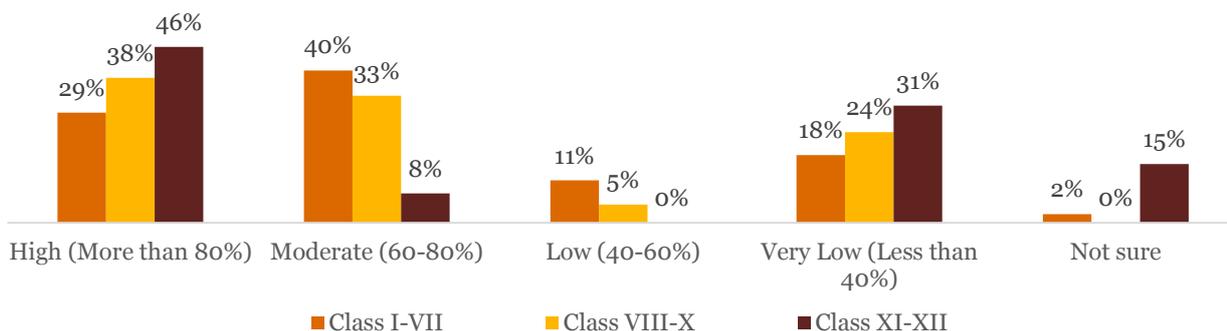
A study commissioned by NUEPA that maps distress seasonal migration and its effects on students’ education in India identifies a pattern of migration in Maharashtra where people migrate from the arid regions to work in the cooperative sugar factories in the state during the harvest season (Smita 2008). Over 650,000 labourers migrate from central to western Maharashtra for sugarcane harvesting each year, which puts the number of school going children (between the ages 6-14) affected by migration at about 200,000.

**Figure 58: Average attendance of students across different educational levels during the harvesting / sowing season as per Teachers' opinion (N=59)**



N1=57; N2=56; N3=21

**Figure 59: Average attendance of students across different educational levels during migration period as per Teachers' opinion (N=49)**



N1=45; N2=42; N3=13

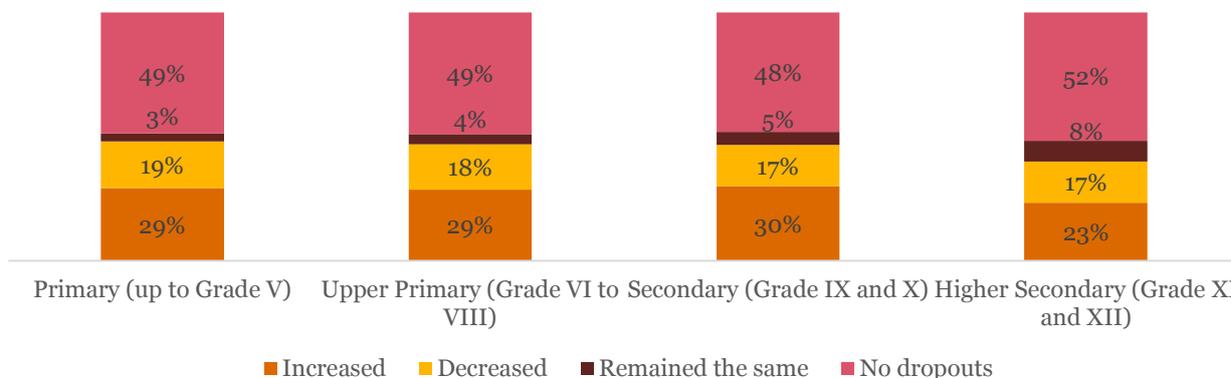
The problem of migration has been noted in the 2013 report of the Planning Commission of Maharashtra – it mentions that following the provisions of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, ‘special seasonal hostels or other arrangements should be made’ for tribal students and children of seasonal migrants (Planning Department 2013). Other states that have made an effort in this regard include Gujarat where the migrating children are tracked through a software and are offered classes in the locations they migrate to.

**High dropout:** The issue of dropouts for tribal children has been a chronic problem to deal across the country owing to various factors like migration, early marriages and involvement in farm/agricultural work. The Maharashtra Human Development Report, 2012 notes that in the state, ‘the dropout rate is very high for children belonging to the ST, with female children facing a comparative disadvantage’ (Jayachandran 2012). Several other studies within Maharashtra (TISS reports at district level/ a specific tribal community specific level), cite findings on dropouts. However during our interaction with TDD officials and school functionaries most programme stakeholders maintain that there are no drop-outs in aided Ashram schools.

*The reasons for students dropping out according to the teachers in most cases have been linked to economic activities. The pressure to start earning is cited as the reason by over 40% of teachers and engagement in agriculture activities is stated by 25% of them. There is also a noted pressure to get married early as 16% of teachers feel this has also been a contributing factor in dropouts.*

For instance, about half of the principal respondents interviewed as part of the study reported that in their opinion that there are no dropouts in their schools. On the other hand, approximately one third of Principal respondents reported that the number of students dropping out of school has increased – for classes I to Xth and close to one fifth principal respondents felt that there has been an increase in dropouts 11-12.

**Figure 60: Percentage of Principals as per their opinion on Dropouts**



N1=150; N2=147; N3=133; N4=60

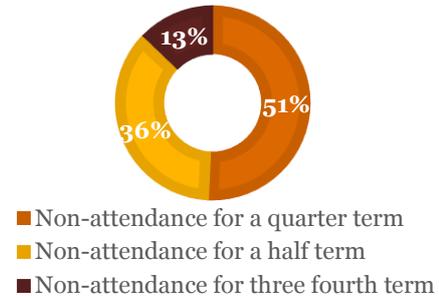
When further probed on at what stage is a student considered to be a dropout in aided Ashram schools, almost half of the Principal respondents reported that a student is considered as a dropout when she/he does not attend school for a quarter of term. Remaining Principals responded that students are considered to be dropouts only

after half or three fourth of a term. This discrepancy in understanding the definition of dropouts is an evidence for lack of clarity on behalf of Ashram School heads/ functionaries in recording and reporting dropouts at School/ District/ State level. This also explains the lack of data availability of drop-outs in the Ashram school model at the PO Office/ State level. Any attempts to clarify and record dropouts on behalf of NGO's may also be viewed in the light that reimbursements to NGO's are given based on per child calculations and it may be in their interest to not report it.

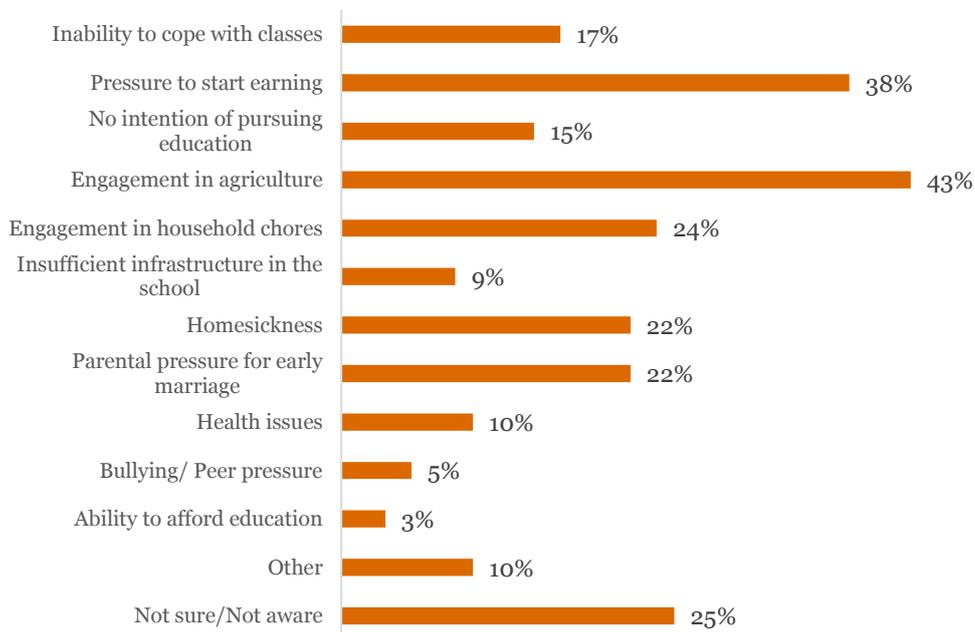
Also, from the findings it could be inferred that in the latter cases (student dropouts defined after six to three fourth term), despite of having been missing classroom sessions for time in the range of half to three fourth term, students are still allowed to sit for exams and graduate to the next class. The government's 'no detention policy' in this regard does more harm than good as it also enables in non-checking of the learning outcome of such students who have missed majority of classes and yet get promoted to the next class, based on merely attempting the exam.

When school functionaries were probed on what have been the reasons of dropouts in past, in most cases, the most prominent reasons cited has been the pressure to start earning. Over 38% of principals and 41% of teachers cited this as the reason for drop out. 43% of principals and 26% of teachers also responded that students' engagement in agricultural activities was the another reason for dropouts. Other major reasons include engagement in household chores, inability to cope with classes and homesickness. Among female students, there is a pressure to get married early which over 74% of teachers claim leads to dropout.

**Figure 61: Percentage of Principals on when a student is considered a dropout (N=140)**



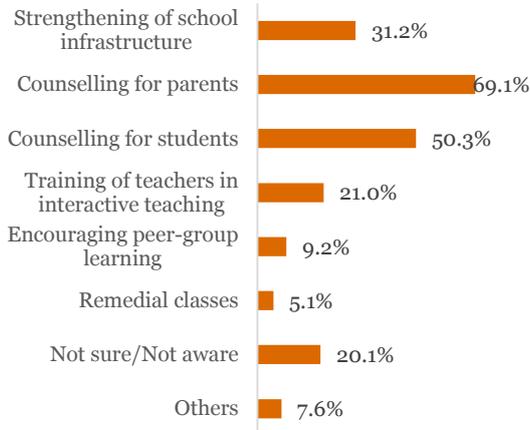
**Figure 62: Percentage of Principals on reason for dropouts (N=157)**



Among the above reasons given for dropout, 39% of teachers felt that there is still no appropriate intervention designed for dealing with the challenge due to the financial pressure to start earning and 26% said more effort is needed to stop dropouts due to engagement in agriculture activities.

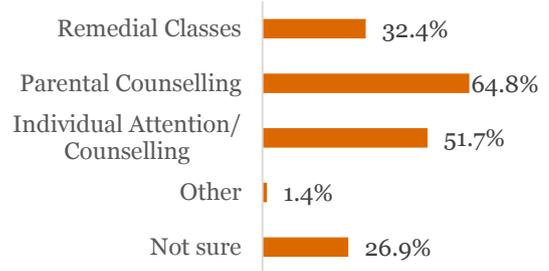
**Figure 63: Percentage of Principals as per efforts taken to reduce dropouts in the school (N=157)**

About 65% of principals claim they conducted parental counselling sessions as a measure to reduce dropouts. Other efforts include individual student attention (52%) and remedial classes for students falling behind in their academics (32%).



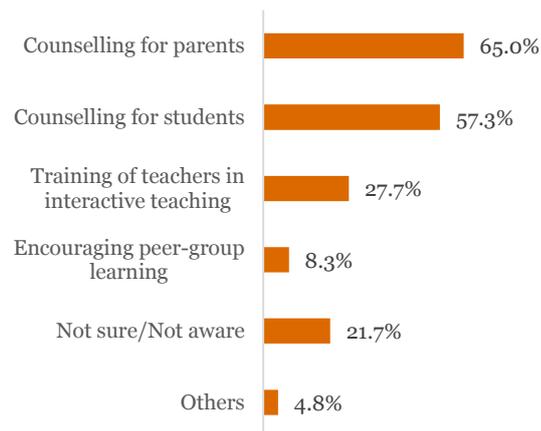
Similarly, among teachers, about 70%

claim to conduct counselling for parents, 50% said they counselled students on the importance of education and about 20% reported to have tried more interactive classroom approaches. Among the measures adopted, 65% of teachers felt counselling parents students was most beneficial apart from trying more interactive learning methods in classrooms.



**Figure 64: Percentage of Teachers as per efforts taken to reduce dropouts in the school (N=157)**

**Figure 65: Percentage of Teachers as per the most effective efforts taken to reduce dropouts in the school (N=157)**



### **Migration Card and Migration Monitoring System for Monitoring and Reducing Dropouts, Gujarat**

**Context:** There is a high degree of intra and interstate migration that falls during the academic year in Gujarat where children migrate with their parents for economic activities. These children face trouble rejoining schools and coping up with the lessons and several of them drop out of schools.

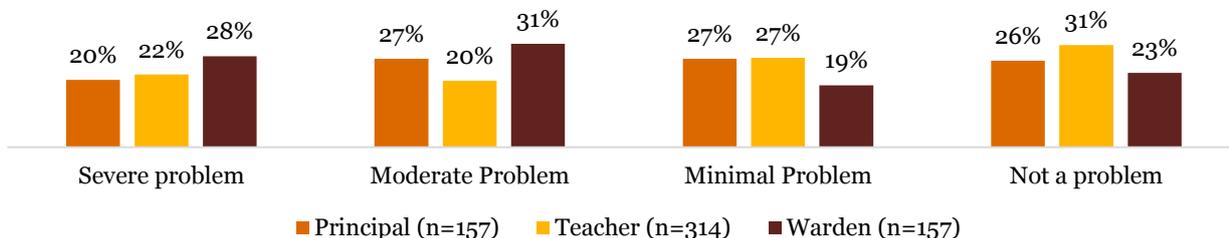
**Intervention:** As part of this initiative, SSA Gujarat has issued migration cards to all students aged 6-14 who migrate during the year. The cards are tracked through a migration monitoring software collated at the cluster and block levels. To ensure that their education is not affected, the children migrating intra-state are covered in seasonal hostels at their domiciles while inter-state migrant children are covered under the Tent Special Training Programmes (Tent STPs). The Tent STPs are temporary schools set up at the worksites of their parents where the children are taught by 'Bal Mitras' who are special teaching volunteers drawn from the local population. This system allows the education system to keep a track of migrating children in real time as the data is updated online. It also gives students the possibility of writing their examinations at either the migrated place or their initial school.

**Impact:** Since its inception in 2011, the number of children covered under this initiative has tripled as of 2013. The initiative has managed to bring down the level of dropouts and offers better support to students who would otherwise be left behind in their learning capabilities.

District Name	IN Migrant	Directly received	Enrolled	Feedback Pending	OUT Migrant	Enrolled	Feedback Pending	Untraced
AHMADABAD	532	225	100	207	325	325	0	0
AMRELI	378	313	0	65	326	313	13	2
ANAND	21	0	4	17	0	0	0	0

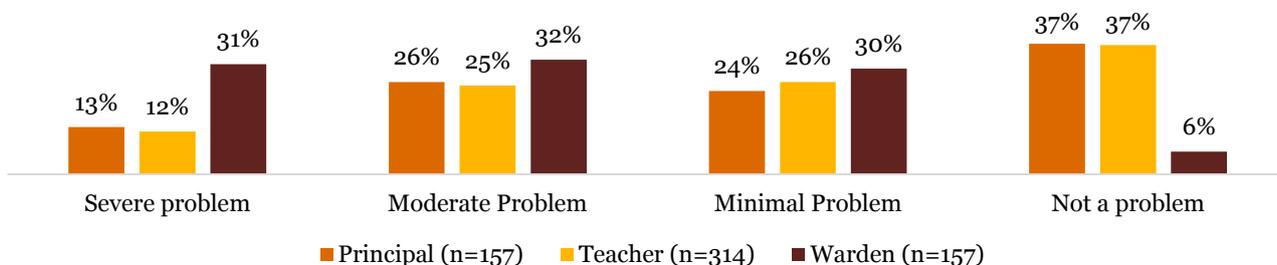
**School Infrastructure:** About 20% of Principals and teachers and 25% of wardens reported that inadequate maintenance of school infrastructure was a severe problem. However, the respondents were evenly distributed over the four categories used to define problems: ‘Severe’, ‘Moderate’, ‘Minimal’, and ‘Not a Problem’.

**Figure 66: Inadequate Maintenance of School Infrastructure - % Response**



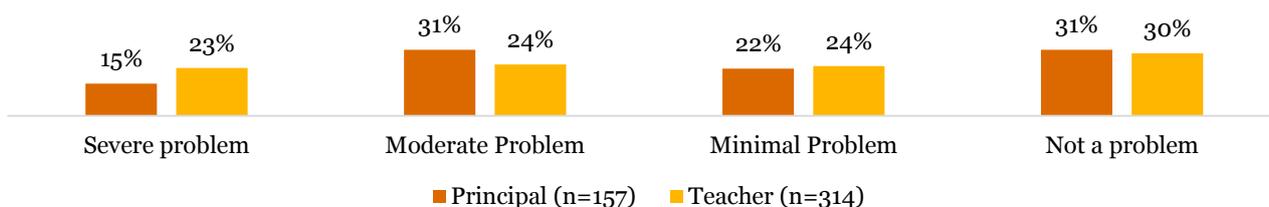
With respect to residential facilities, while only slightly more than one-tenth of Principals and teachers felt that inadequate maintenance was a severe problem, nearly one-third of wardens stated that it was a severe problem.

**Figure 67: Inadequate residential facilities / lack of maintenance - % Response**



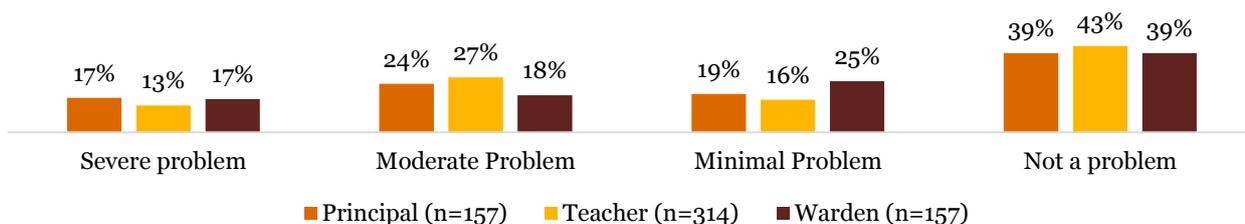
Less than 20% of Principals and 20% of teachers stated that adequacy of learning facilities like labs and libraries were a severe problem (figure 68). However, around one-fifth of both Principals and teachers stated that adequacy of learning facilities was not a problem.

**Figure 68: Learning facilities such as lab, library, etc. - % Response**



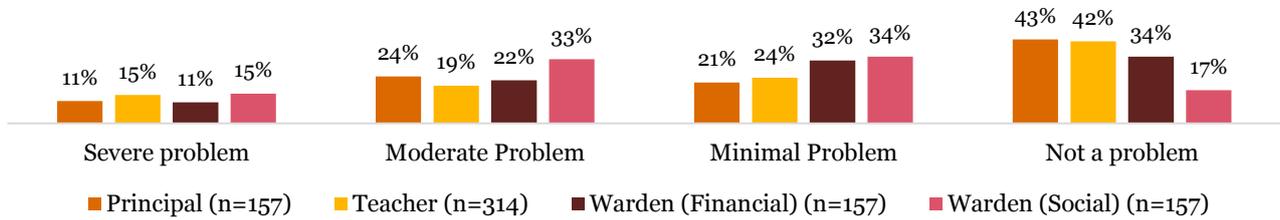
**External Environment/Constraints:** about 10% of principals, teachers and wardens stated that isolation from the mainlands / mainstream was a severe problem. 25% of both Principals and teachers stated that it was a moderate problem. Slightly less than one-fifth of wardens stated the same.

**Figure 69: Isolation from mainlands / mainstream - % Response**



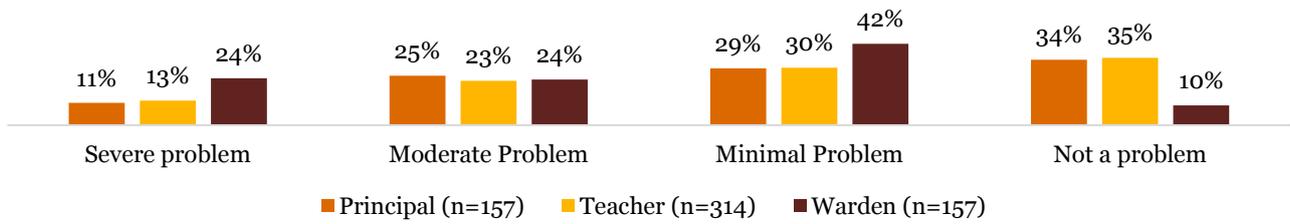
With respect to factors that affect students, less than 20% of Principals, teachers and wardens stated that they were a severe problem. Wardens were asked about financial and social factors separately, and the distribution of responses show that they report social factors to be more significant than financial factors.

**Figure 50: External factors that affect students (Financial and Social) - % Response**



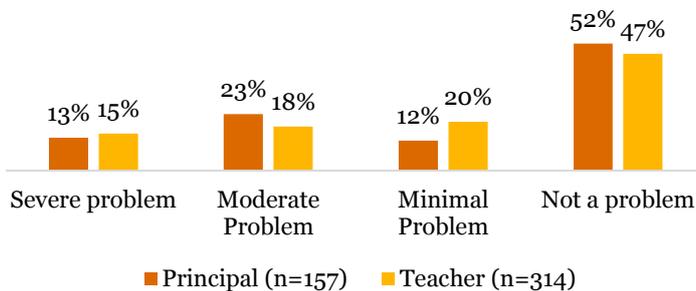
Similarly, less than one-fifth of Principals and teachers reported that students belonging to different communities and having different languages of communication was a severe problem (figure 7.72). Almost one quarter of wardens stated that it was a severe problem.

**Figure 51: Students belonging to different tribal communities and having different languages of communication - % Response**

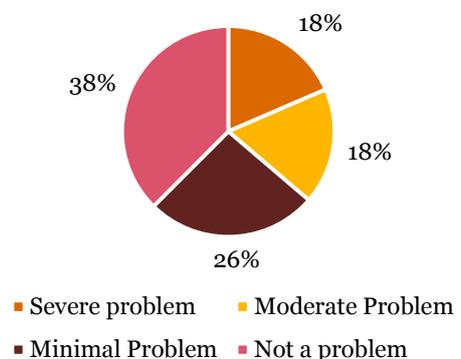


**Resources:** While slightly more than half of Principals stated that availability of textbooks/stationery was not a problem, less than half of teachers stated so. The remaining half of teachers stated that it was at least a minimal problem. This data also needs to be considered in the light of more than eight in ten schools reporting to offer free textbooks/notebooks. Teachers were asked about availability of teaching-learning materials, and slightly less than one-fifth stated that it was a severe problem. At least three-fifth of teachers stated that it was at least a minimal problem.

**Figure 52: Delay in availability of textbooks / stationery to students - % Response**



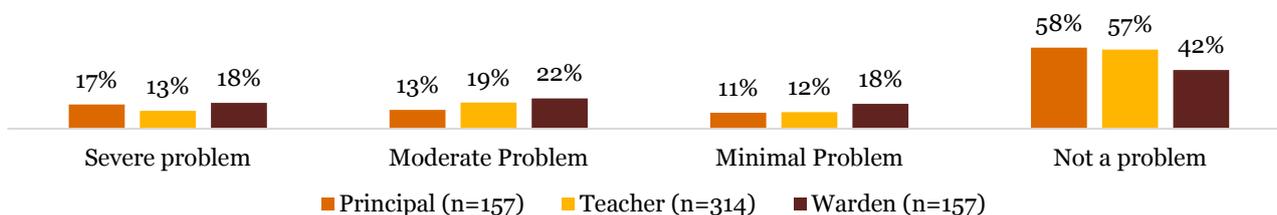
**Figure 53: Provision of Teaching-learning material - % Teachers (n=314)**



**Working Environment:** About 40% of principals, wardens and teachers stated that administrative tasks constraining times with students and academic tasks was not a problem (Figure 7.75). However, while more than of teachers felt that it was at least a minimal problem, around three fifths of Principals and wardens stated that

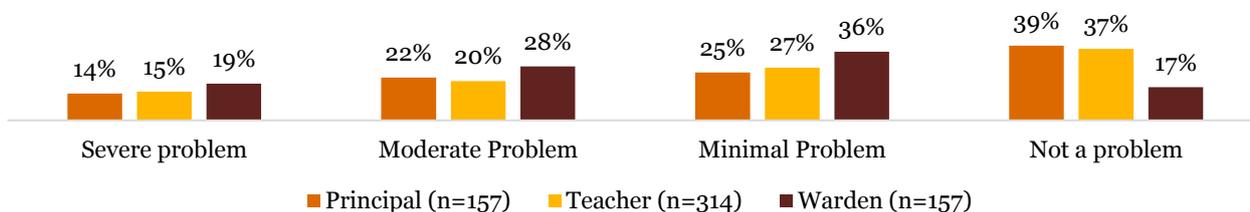
it was at least a minimal problem. This might be an indicator that teachers may be affected by administrative work to a greater extent.

**Figure 54: Low salary / low increments - % Response**



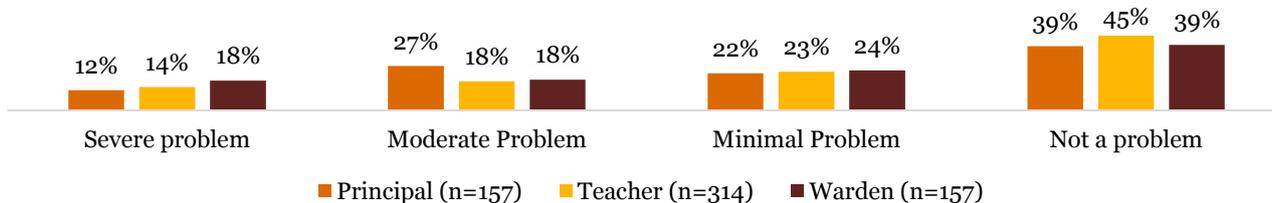
A greater proportion of teachers and wardens stated that less opportunities for learning at least a minimal problem (figure 55). Almost one-fifth of wardens stated that it was a severe problem, with 15% of principals and teachers stating the same.

**Figure 55: Less opportunities for learning - % Response**



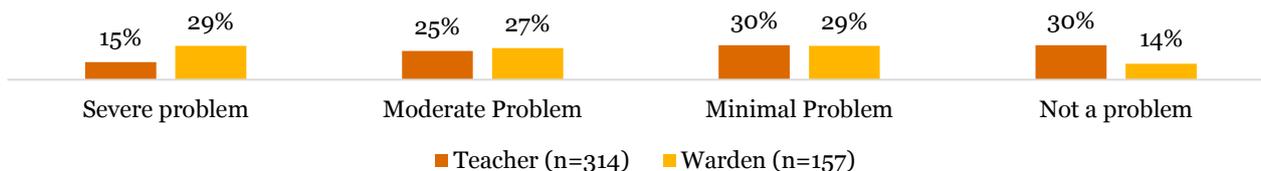
Teachers and wardens were asked about opportunities for training, and a greater proportion of wardens stated that less opportunities for training was a severe problem, than teachers (figure 56). More than one-third of teachers stated that it was not a problem.

**Figure 56: Administrative tasks constraining time with students and academic tasks - % Response**



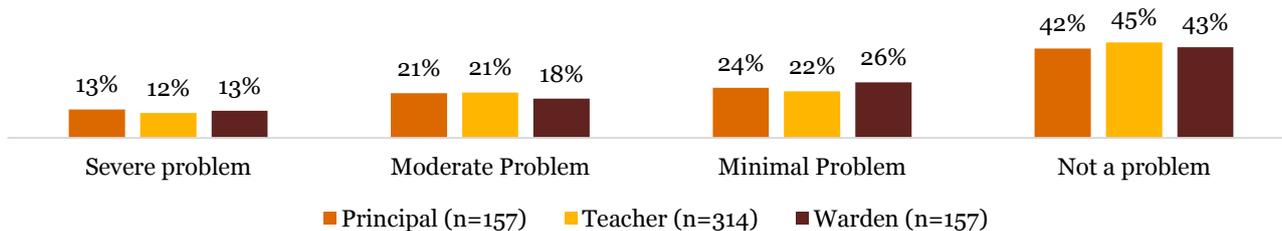
When asked about low pay/increments, more than half of principals and teachers stated that it was not a problem, whereas only 14% of wardens stated the same (figure 57). A greater percentage of Principals stated that low pay was not a problem, than the other two types of respondents. Thus, wardens consider it more of a problem/challenge.

**Figure 57: Less Opportunities for Training - % Response**



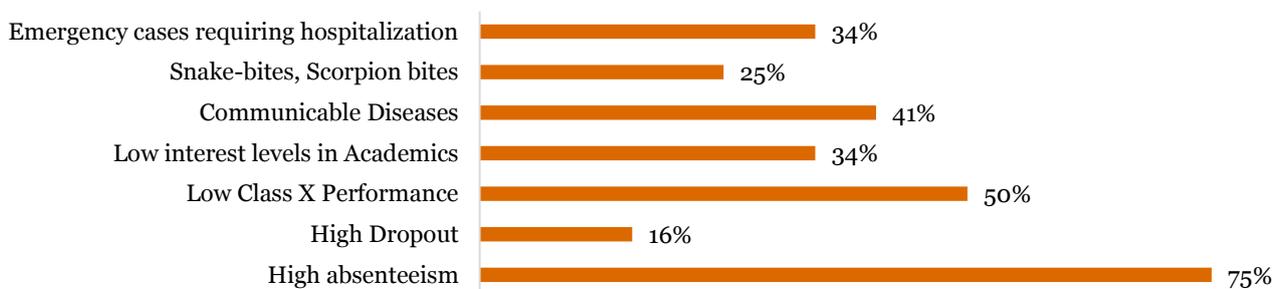
12% to 13% of principals, teachers and wardens stated that lack of support from the school management for new initiatives was a severe problem (figure 58).

**Figure 58: Lack of support from school management for new initiatives -Response**



**Issues in Managing Students:** Only **22%** of VO Office Bearers stated that they faced issues in managing Ashram School students. However, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, issues of drop-out, absenteeism, health issues and are prevalent in the study schools. 75% of Office Bearers reported that high absenteeism among students was a challenge. 41% of them also acknowledged that health issues were challenge, along with low levels of interest, among others.

**Figure 59: Percentage of VO Office Bearers by Challenge related to students (n=32)**



**60%** of Office Bearers reported that ensuring strict attendance of teachers was a measure undertaken to face the challenges with students. **32%** also reported that introducing interactive learning methods was also a measure. However, the challenges with respect to students require interventions from different perspectives.

## 6. Management of Schools by NGOs and Governance

The objective of engaging VOs in managing Ashram Schools is from the perspective of leveraging social and developmental orientation of the organisations and their outreach in the tribal communities for enhancing access to school education in remote areas. The VOs are expected to have accountability in managing the schools and ensure provision of all basic facilities, safe environment for students and quality education both through grants under the scheme and mobilizing funds through other resources.



### Highlights

- Majority (58%) VOs are registered as Trust and others as society. About 70% manage 1 Ashram school, 20% have 2-5 operational Ashram schools and 20% have 6 or more Ashram schools operational. In terms of interventions, all VOs are involved in education sector. Among them, 18% also implement projects related to health while 7% are involved in skilling.
- The profile of project staff of VOs indicates that only 35% VOs have professionally qualified staff i.e. graduates or post graduates in social work faculty. Over 50% VOs have contractual staff. 1/4<sup>th</sup> of staff has less than 1 year of experience, while over 50% staff has 1 to 3 years of experience.
- Office bearers from 42 VOs (1/3<sup>rd</sup>) reported that they faced difficulties in recruiting qualified staff and retaining them for supporting Ashram School activities. Shortage of non-teaching staff, dissatisfaction regarding salaries and high absenteeism emerged as key areas of concern. Similar issues were faced in case of teachers and wardens also.
- 43% VOs had consistent difficulties in recruiting teachers for language and computer science. According to the office bearers of these VOs, the difficulty is mainly on account of unwillingness of qualified teachers to work in tribal areas.
- Total 69% principals stated that in case of warden shortages, teachers take turns as wardens-in-charge on a rotation basis. 48% of principals also mentioned that in case of shortage in male wardens, female wardens acted as in-charge, and 31% reported that the process was likewise followed for shortage in female wardens.
- All VOs receive grants for meeting recurring expenditure @ INR 900 per student in accordance with the Ashram School Guidelines. However, 94% of VO office bearers and 90% of principals find the amount insufficient to meet the monthly expenses of a student. About 50% of office bearers and principals recommended revision in norm and increase in the amount of grant @ INR 2000-3000 per student. According to 70% principals, funds are received on quarterly basis as per the norms, however, there is delay in receipt of funds by at least three months (41% principals) with in case of 25% schools, the delay is 6 to 12 months.
- Among the 84 % office bearers facing issues related to adequacy and timely availability of grants, more than 70% cited challenges such as inadequate amount and delay in disbursal/reimbursement. About 28% find the funding process complex and cumbersome.
- 58% VOs have computerized systems of accounting and financial management, and also had clerical staff and / or computer operators. Remaining 42% VOs continue to maintain the accounts manually, indicating lack of adequate systems and processes in place for the purpose of financial management. 73% VOs are non-compliant on the regulations for financial management
- Study revealed weak monitoring mechanisms at school, VO and PO level. There is lack of computerised records, functional MIS and monitoring through visits almost on quarterly basis by PO.

## 6.1. Profile of Voluntary Organisations (VOs)

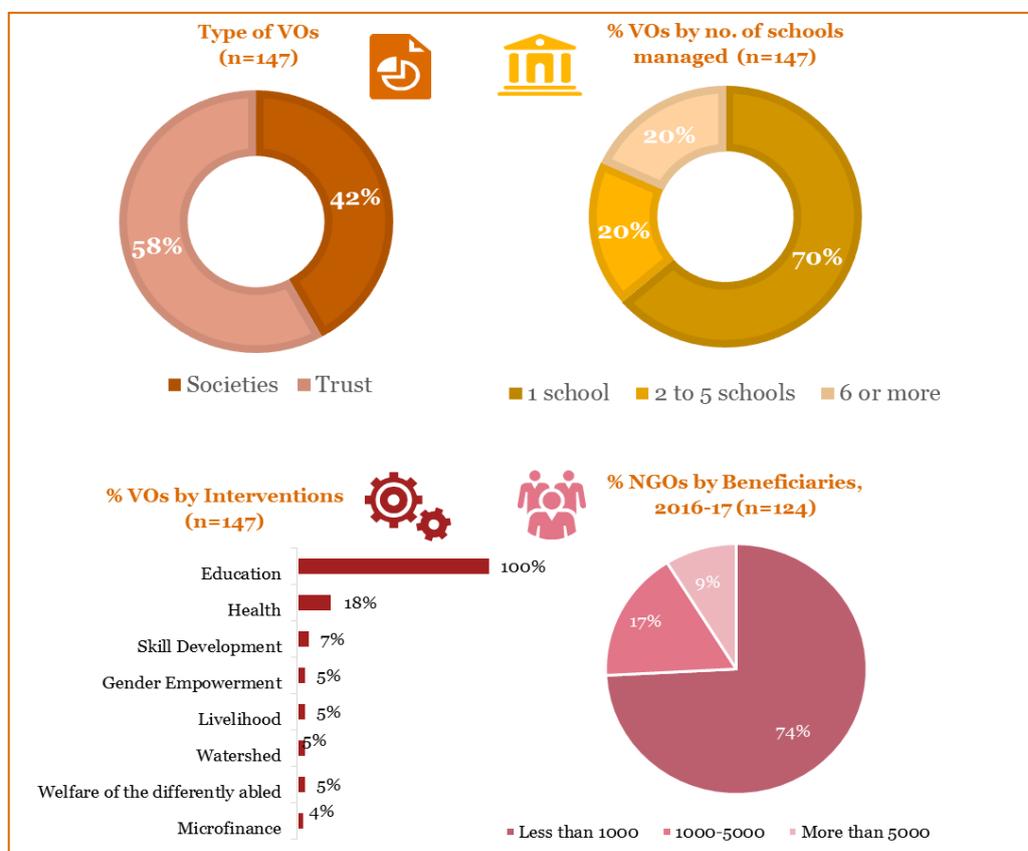
A total of 147 VOs managing sample 157 aided Ashram Schools were covered under the study with adequate representation by type of organization, number of schools managed, type of interventions and number of beneficiaries covered during 2016-17.

Among the VOs, majority (58%) are registered as Trust and others as society. The type of organization is important in the context of the study, since the organisational functioning has direct bearing on the management and quality of schools. Contrary to the trusts, the organisations registered as societies are subject to more legal binding for systematic functioning, governance and democratic decision making. These are more likely to be stable as an organisation. As a result, societies are preferred choice of organizations for providing grants / funds / financial assistance by funding agencies or financial institutions. Thus, schools managed by societies are more likely to be better managed compared to those managed by trusts.

About 70% manage one Ashram school, 20% have 2-5 operational Ashram schools and 20% have 6 or more Ashram schools operational. In terms of interventions, all VOs are involved in education sector. Among them, 18% also implement projects related to health while 7% are involved in skilling. About 21% of have been recognized for their work at the district level while 23% received awards at the state level for social service in the respective focus areas (figure 80). Interaction with the representatives of the VOs and schools revealed that the VOs have not been able to leverage their capabilities and expertise in areas of health, skills, etc. to enhance the quality of education delivered at Ashram Schools or for overall well-being of the students.

In terms of scale of operations, majority (74%) were able to reach maximum upto 1000 beneficiaries across all projects / interventions undertaken (figure 80). Further, 90% VOs have presence in one district of the state while remaining work in upto two districts, of which around 2.5% work in states other than Maharashtra, such as Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

Figure 80: Profile of VOs studied



## 6.2. Availability and Management of Human resources

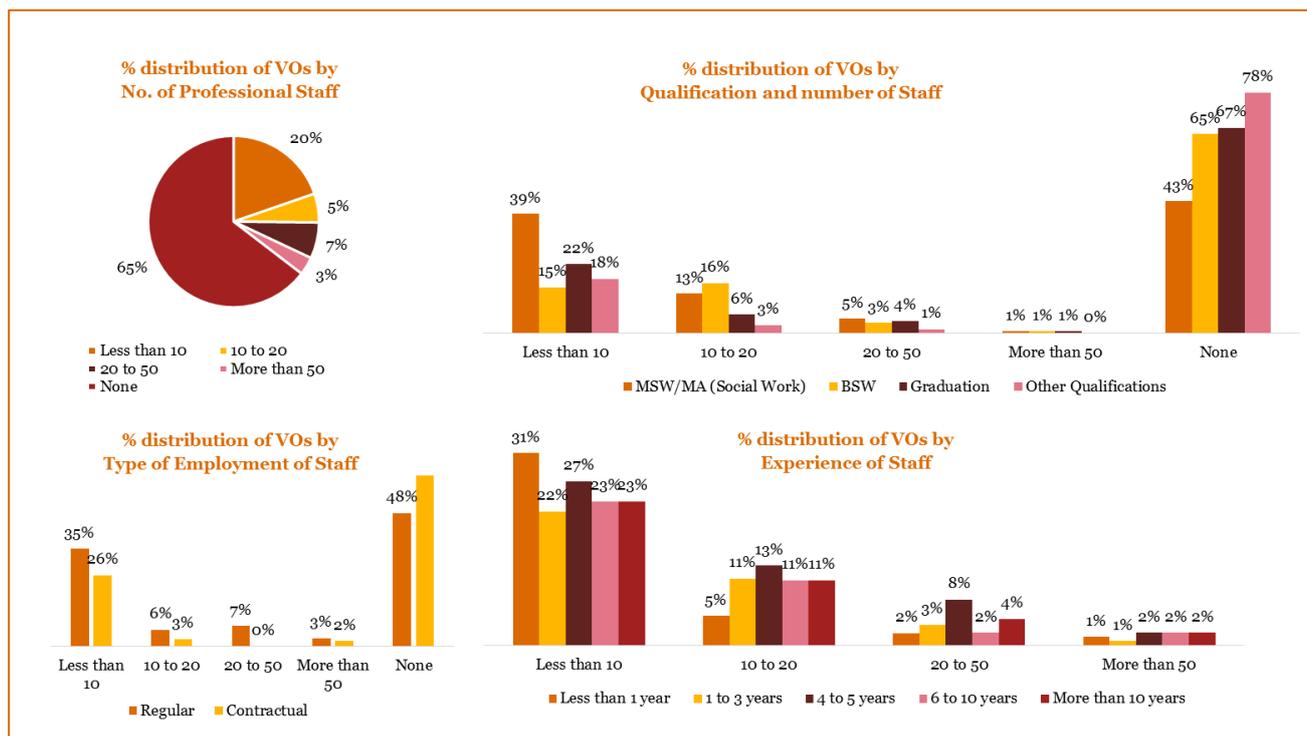
**Profile of project Staff with VOs and related challenges:** In the context of Ashram Schools, it is important that the staff of the VOs (other than teachers) associated with the schools are trained and well oriented to work with tribal communities and also sensitized to the specific educational needs of tribal children, challenges faced by them and their socio-cultural context. Hence, the professional qualification and experience of staff needs to be looked into.

The profile of project staff of VOs indicates that only 35% VOs have professionally qualified staff i.e. graduates or post graduates in social work faculty. Over 50% VOs have contractual staff. 1/4<sup>th</sup> of staff has less than 1 year of experience, while over 50% staff has 1 to 3 years of experience (figure 81).

Staff with specialized in social work are generally groomed and more suited for development context, but at the same time, the role of experience cannot be undermined either. However, in this case, human resource profile of the VOs clearly indicates that in case of majority VOs, the staff lack both specialization and experience. This is bound to impact the overall management and interventions for tribal students through Ashram Schools.

This highlights the need to apply the eligibility criteria of availability of adequate qualified staff for selection of VOs for managing Ashram Schools. Appropriate induction, orientation and refresher training of the staff also needs to be made mandatory to ensure that the staff is adequately oriented and sensitized regarding education of tribal children and related issues of tribal development.

**Figure 81: Staff Profile of VO (other than teachers)**



**Importance of Orientation of Project Staff in context of Residential School Programmes**

Evidence also emerges from learnings of other residential school programmes. Intensive orientation of on-field personnel of KGBVs in 2007-08 showed positive impact with respect to health and curriculum of children in the subsequent evaluation in 2013. Considering the positive impact, it is recommended for States Governments to take responsibility for conducting intensive orientations as a part of residential schooling strategy, so that those implementing the programme at the grass roots level understand the principles of the programme. The requirements need to be effectively communicated to build accountability of field personnel/ supporting agencies to ensure co-ordination between them and departments for such programmes.

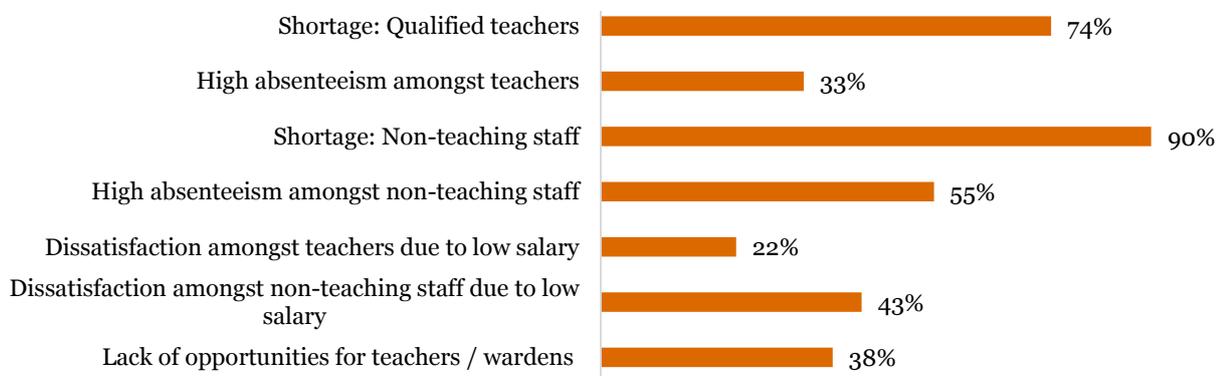
In case of SSA, RMSA and Navodaya Vidyalayas, separate budgetary provisions have been made for training of staff (other than teachers also). However, in case of Ashram School Guidelines, such a provision or mandate is not mentioned explicitly.

Source: ‘Colloquium on Girls Education and Empowerment’ 2015 organised by Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS) Bangalore, 2015; Parliamentary Standing Committee Report for Ashram School, 2013

**Challenges pertaining to staffing (project staff and teachers):** Interaction with VO office bearers revealed several challenges related to staffing. Office bearers from 42 VOs (1/3<sup>rd</sup>) reported that they faced difficulties in recruiting qualified staff and retaining them for supporting Ashram School activities. **Shortage of non-teaching staff, dissatisfaction regarding salaries and high absenteeism emerged as key areas of concern. Similar issues were faced in case of teachers and wardens also** (figure 82).

The finding highlights the need to closer analysis of all key institutional parameters for the 42 VOs, since similar issues related to staffing are found in both project staff and school staff. This has serious implications on the functioning of all the schools managed by these particular VOs. Over 70,000 students are enrolled in 157 schools managed by these 42 VOs. Considering the situation of staffing, it is likely that both education and overall well-being of the students is or would be impacted negatively.

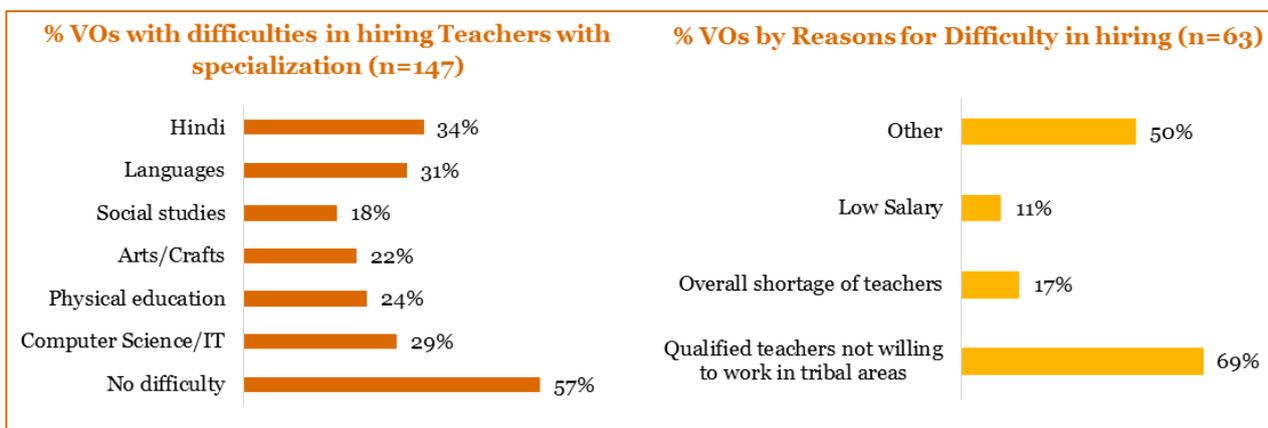
**Figure 82: Key Challenges faced by VOs related to Staffing : % VOs (n=42)**



**Availability and recruitment of teaching staff:** The recruitment of teachers is done by a committee comprising of comprising of VO office bearer, Project Officer, Education specialist/ expert (invited by the VO representatives) and Principal. Interaction with the principals revealed that out 147 principals interviewed, only 1/3<sup>rd</sup> were aware about the correct process of recruitment.

About 57% of VOs do not face any challenge in recruitment of teachers at any level or subject. In case of remaining 43% VOs, majority had consistent difficulties in recruiting teachers for language and computer science. According to the office bearers of these VOs, the difficulty is mainly on account of unwillingness of qualified teachers to work in tribal areas (figure 83).

**Figure 83: Challenges faced by VOs in hiring Teachers**



**Measures undertaken for resolving staffing challenges:** The VOs and schools managed by the respective VOs have attempted to resolve the staffing challenges to certain extent. About 64% of VO office bearers reported appointment of contractual teachers until the state government fills the vacant posts, while in case of 36% VOs, less qualified teachers were appointed in the process to meet the immediate requirement.

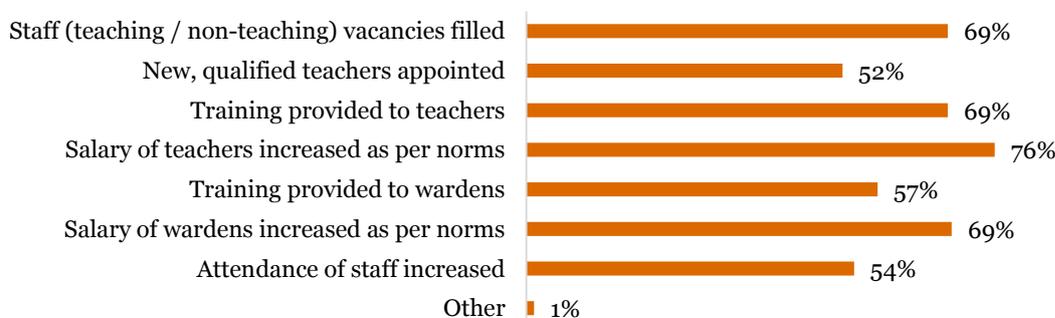
The initiatives taken at the school level in last five years were also explored to understand the measures adopted to resolve challenges related to shortage of qualified teachers and high absenteeism among them. In this context, about 69% principals respondent that adequate teachers have been appointed as per the norms. A significant proportion of schools also ensured participation of teachers (69% schools) and wardens (57% schools) in requisite trainings. More than 70% schools increased salary of teachers and wardens as per norms. With these measures, 54% of the schools were able to improve attendance of the staff at school (figure 84).

Regarding availability of non-teaching staff, 1/3rd principles admitted shortage of non-teaching staff for sanitation and they planned to recruit the same in near future.

*One possible solution to the problems of teacher absenteeism and unwillingness to work in tribal areas, can be that of community-based teachers at the elementary level. A TISS study on primary schooling suggests that teachers at elementary level be chosen from the community, and be accountable to the community (Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale, 2009). Incidentally, a similar mechanism was followed in Community Schools in Andhra Pradesh, where primary teachers were selected, paid and monitored by the community (Sujatha, 1999).*

**Findings from Consultations with ATC / PO**  
**During consultations with Department staff, it was reported that observations have been made on poor conditions of sanitation during inspections and field visits and instances of children having to clean their own rooms have emerged in the past.**

**Figure 84: Measures taken by schools for resolving staffing challenges (% principals, n=157)**



However field observations and findings in previous sections indicate that there is a significant gap with respect to staff and the current PTR is still disproportionate. It was further reported by that in almost three fifth schools trainings have been provided to teachers and wardens. More than three fifth of teachers stated that they had undergone training, however only 30 % wardens cited that they have undergone training/ orientation.

**Meeting shortages of teachers:** Enquiries were also made to understand the approach used to address situations of teacher and warden shortage. Almost half of the principals stated that a fully qualified teacher was hired on part-time basis. Other most commonly opted measures include use of substitute teachers, increasing class sizes, assignment of classes to other subject teachers/staff. (Figure 85).

Total 69% principals stated that in case of shortage of wardens, teachers take turns as wardens-in-charge on a rotation basis. 48% of principals also mentioned that in case of shortage in male wardens, female wardens acted as in-charge, and 31% reported that the process was likewise followed for shortage in female wardens.

Thus, the majority of schools report that in case of non-availability of warden, the responsibility of hostels is dealt with by the teachers. The majority of wardens (67%) also reported that teachers stay overnight in cases where they are wardens-in-charge (chapter 4, Hostel/Safety-related Systems and Processes).

**Process for facilitating transfers:** Interaction with teachers revealed that about 15% of them had raised requests for transfer in previous year. Among them, the request was granted in case of 16% teachers. In case of remaining ones, there was uncertainty about the time required for the decision at VO level. Further, 83% of teachers also did not know, or could not articulate the factors that determined acceptance of transfer requests by the authorities.

It emerged during the preliminary interactions with department officials that in aided ashram schools there is no provision for transfer of teacher unless the VO running the aided schools has more than one school. The approval of the transfer in such cases is at the discretion of the VO office bearer. Thus, it is evident that there are no network systems between different NGO's running aided Ashram schools, wherein if a teacher/ warden has any geographical preference they could be mapped and placed with the aided Ashram schools of another NGO if it is a mutually beneficial proposition for all parties involved. There lies a scope in the existing set up to create a mutually beneficial network of NGOs running aided Ashram school to leverage support from each other.

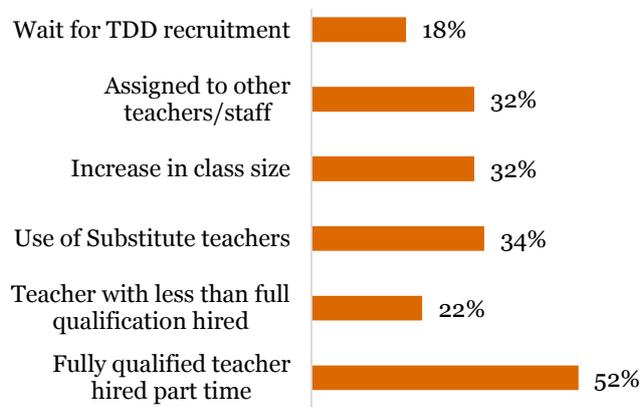
Since there is a limited scope for transfer, the study questionnaire posed a question on whether the functionary in question would want to raise a transfer to be able to gauge the need for having a system that at-least has provisions to facilitate it. In this instance, 33% of 264 teacher respondents stated that they would like to raise a request for transfer. A major reason cited for these cases was the school being far away from home or their families, or low accessibility of the school.

### 6.3. Sources and adequacy of funding

Responses pertaining to funding received for Ashram School students show that all VOs receive grants for meeting recurring expenditure @ INR 900 per student in accordance with the Ashram School Guidelines. However, 94% of VO office bearers and 90% of principals find the amount insufficient to meet the monthly expenses of a student. About 50% of office bearers and principals recommended revision in norm and increase in the amount of grant @ INR 2000-3000 per student.

**Availability of funding:** Majority schools (84%) received the latest instalment of funds in 2017, while 10% of them had not received the funds for 2017-18 until mid year. Funds from the State Government to the schools in the last three years show that more than half of the surveyed schools have received amount between INR 20 lakh to INR 50 Lakh (table 27). With respect to utilization of funds, more than 90% schools had fully utilized funds,

**Figure 85: Measures undertaken for meeting shortage of teachers (n=157)**



during last three financial years (table 28). According to 70% principals, funds are received on quarterly basis as per the norms, however, there is delay in receipt of funds by atleast three months (41% principals) with in case of 25% schools, the delay is 6 to 12 months (figure 86).

According to the Ashram School Guidelines, the VOs are expected to meet the balance funding requirement by mobilizing their own resources. In this context, about half of trustees and principals responded that the balance funds are raised through individual and institutional donations.

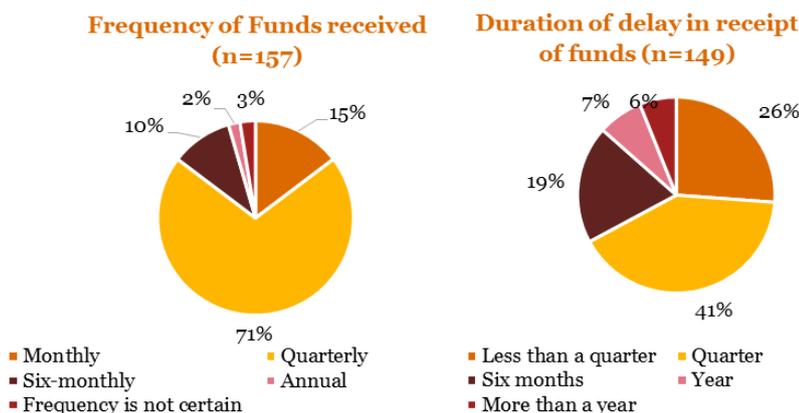
**Table 27: Funds received by Schools from TDD (% Principals, n=147)**

Amount (INR)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Upto 10 Lakh	3	1	2
10-20 Lakh	16	12	14
20-50 Lakh	60	54	56
More than 50 Lakh	20	32	25

**Table 28: Utilization of Funds by Schools (% Principals)**

Particulars	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
	N=143	N = 141	N=137
100% utilisation of funds	94%	96%	93%

**Figure 86: Availability of Funds to Schools (% principals)**

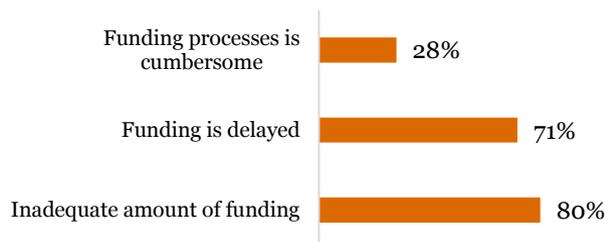


**Perceptions regarding adequacy of funding:** Analysis of issues related to funding based on responses of VO office bearers and principals reveal systemic bottlenecks in the process. Among the 84 % office bearers facing issues related to adequacy and timely availability of grants, more than 70% cited challenges such as inadequate amount and delay in disbursal/reimbursement. About 28% find the funding process complex and cumbersome.

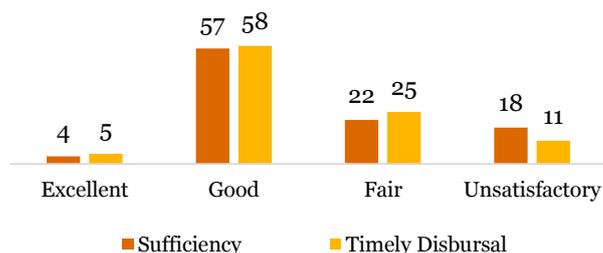
Similarly, more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> principals felt that the adequacy and availability of funds is unsatisfactory. Several Of the 22% (35) of principals who had suggestions for improving funding, more than 70% of principals suggested that funding be increased. The issues related to funding, in terms of both adequacy and timely availability need urgent attention, since this can seriously compromise the basic facilities and services available to the students and residential staff, thereby impacting their overall well-being, and consequently, the educational outcomes.

*Qualitative findings from regional consultations which indicate that fund mismanagement at the level of Trusts is prevalent. The role of the NGO in ensuring sufficient funding also needs to be enhanced.*

**Figure 87: Issues related to funding (% office bearers, n=122)**



**Figure 88: Sufficiency and timely disbursal of funds (% principals, n=157)**



### 6.4. Expenditure at Ashram School

The grant-in-aid from TDD for Ashram Schools is meant to cover basic costs such as building rental and staff salaries. The remaining expenditure is to be borne by the VO. In this context, the data related to expenditure was collected from Ashram Schools.

It can be seen that some schools spend more than Rs. 50 Lakh on building rental, salaries of staff, and consumables for residential facilities. However, the majority of schools spend less than Rs. 10 Lakh in each category. Less than INR 5 lakh was spent by most of the schools in last three years for maintenance and transport.

*Regional consultations brought out the lack of accountability of NGOs with respect to maintaining quality facilities in the schools. There is no clear mechanism or process by which they are penalized for improper maintenance, or given norms or guidance with respect to budgeting. This is an area which needs further strengthening.*

**Table 29: Recurring Expenditure at Ashram Schools**

S No	Category	Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1	Building Rental	None	25%	17%	23%
		Less than 10 Lakh	55%	51%	55%
		10-20 Lakh	14%	19%	11%
		20-50 Lakh	6%	13%	11%
2	Building Maintenance	None	25%	25%	23%
		Less than 10 Lakh	75%	75%	77%
3	Procurement of Computer	None	31%	31%	29%
		Less than 10 Lakh	69%	69%	71%
4	Training of Teaching Staff	None	60%	56%	54%
		Less than 5 Lakh	27%	30%	32%
		More than 5 Lakh	13%	16%	14%
5	Salaries of staff (teaching, non-teaching, administrative, other support staff)	None	3%	1%	1%
		Less than 10 Lakh	5%	5%	5%
		20-50 Lakh	9%	5%	4%
		More than 50 Lakh	83%	89%	90%
6	Consumables for residential facilities (grocery, stationary, bedding (if any) etc.)	None	2%	1%	1%
		Less than 10 Lakh	31%	33%	33%
		10-20 Lakh	5%	3%	6%
		20-50 Lakh	43%	27%	33%
		More than 50 Lakh	19%	28%	27%
7	Furniture and fittings	None	24%	17%	16%
		Less than 5 Lakh	76%	83%	84%

S No	Category	Year	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
8	Procurement of Teaching Learning Material	None	11%	10%	9%
		Less than 5 Lakh	88%	89%	90%
		More than 5 Lakh	1%	1%	2%
9	Purchase of School Uniform	None	3%	0%	2%
		Less than 5 Lakh	93%	93%	90%
		More than 5 Lakh	4%	7%	8%
10	Expenditure on Transportation	None	9%	8%	10%
		Less than 5 Lakh	91%	92%	90%
11	Training of Non-teaching/Administrative staff	None	67%	63%	71%
		Less than 5 Lakh	20%	19%	8%
		More than 5 Lakh	13%	19%	21%
12	Electricity	None	2%	1%	4%
		Less than 5 Lakh	97%	98%	94%
		More than 5 Lakh	1%	1%	2%
13	Total Expenditure	None	1%	0%	1%
		Less than 10 Lakh	32%	3%	4%
		10-20 Lakh	59%	0%	1%
		20-50 Lakh	6%	6%	5%
		More than 50 Lakh	3%	91%	89%

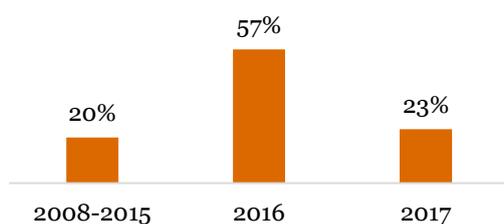
### 6.5. Compliance with norms and regulations

The extent of compliance measures are followed by VOs vis-à-vis mandatory norms were reviewed under the study. In this context, the relevant areas pertaining to record keeping, reporting and audits were discussed with the office bearers and documents were also collected for validating the responses.

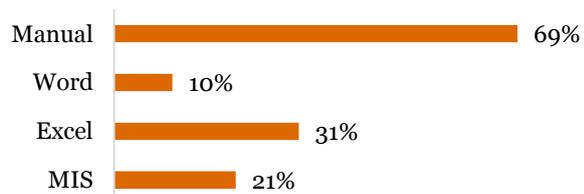
About 88% to 92% office bearers reported that progress reports and annual reports were prepared and audits were conducted on annual basis as per regulations applicable to the respective type of VOs (trust / society). However, data collected from VO records indicated that only 23% VOs had last audit conducted in FY 2016-17 while 57% had it in FY 2015-16. Remaining 20% had the audit in FY 2014 – 15 or prior to it. Thus, 73% VOs are non-compliant on the regulations for financial management which is an areas of serious concern since it has immediate legal and financial implications.

Regarding systems for record keeping, it was found that total 58% VOs have computerized systems of accounting and financial management, and also had clerical staff and / or computer operators. Remaining 42% VOs continue to maintain the accounts manually, indicating lack of adequate systems and processes in place for the purpose of financial management. Similarly, in case of maintaining documentation and non-financial data, 21% VOs have appropriate MIS in place while 38% maintain the data in excel. A significant proportion (69%) maintain the data and documents manually. Thus, majority VOs managing the Ashram Schools under the study are not only non-compliant on key regulations and acceptable norms for functioning but also lack systems and processes for efficient functioning and monitoring.

**Figure 89: Year of last Audit Conducted (% VOs, n = 143)**



**Figure 90: Percentage of NGOs by Method of Record Keeping (n=121)**



## 6.6. Mechanisms for Monitoring

Monitoring mechanisms in school is important not only for maintaining and enhancing quality of education delivered and performance of school, but also from point of view of accountability, governance and compliance with norms. In this context, the Ashram School Guidelines 2005-06 have specified the systems and processes for monitoring.

The guidelines clearly specify and delineate the role of principals, VO office bearers and ITDP officials in monitoring the functioning and performance of the school. In addition, the officials from Department of School Education and Sports (DoSES) are also required to monitor Ashram Schools as per the guidelines. However, the modality for monitoring is not specified in the guideline.

The role of community in monitoring the school activities and management has been instituted through RTE, 2009, and is applicable to Ashram Schools also. Monthly meetings of SMCs at school and their participation in identifying and resolving issues at school level has been mandated under the Act.

### 6.7.1. Monitoring mechanisms at school level

**Monitoring attendance of students and teachers:** According to 64% of principals, biometric equipment for attendance of students has been installed, and 83% of them have used / tested the equipment. About 64% principals mentioned availability of biometric equipment for tracking attendance of teachers and that the equipment was being used regularly.

**Maintenance of records and reporting to ITDP Project Office:** The guidelines require that total 46 types of records should be maintained at school level and updated regularly, pertaining to attendance of student and staff, dropout, performance of students, infrastructure and facilities, health check-ups, meetings held, financial management, visit book, etc. Formats for each of these have also been specified.

During the visits to schools selected under the study, discrepancies in maintaining records was observed. The records related to dropout were not maintained, and it was unanimously claimed that dropout do not occur any more.

Annual Activity Reports are neither maintained nor prepared at the school level. Also, there is not specific system or templates devised for reporting to PO. The schools submit data to PO mainly comprising of class-wise enrollment, recruitment, expenditure, etc.

It is thus seen that adequate documentary evidence / records are not being maintained which makes it difficult to monitor the performance of the schools and compliance with mandatory norms, especially those related to quality and safety which are more critical in the Ashram School context.

**Involvement of principals in monitoring:** The role of principals in monitoring as the head at institution/school level, frequency of routine monitoring and gain insights on what aspects of school functioning are being monitored. It was found that the principals interacted maximum with the teachers, warden and clerical staff. Principals interact on a less frequent basis with the students and community members/SMC than with other stakeholders.

**Table 30: Interaction of Principals with Staff, VO and Community**

Frequency	VO Office Bearer	Teachers	Warden	Clerical Staff	Support Staff*	Students	Parents / SMC
Daily	31%	92%	94%	91%	90%	55%	6%
Once in two days	11%	5%	5%	5%	6%	26%	4%
Once in a week	44%	4%	1%	3%	3%	19%	20%
Once in a few weeks	15%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	71%

Principals were further asked about the topics discussed with various stakeholders such as teachers, non-teaching staff, wardens, students, parents/community and ITDP officials. This section of the interview involved both - recording their natural responses first as it came, followed by prompting them with options after the preliminary responses to see if they would include prompted responses as a discussion pointer. This was done with the purpose to gain insight on which topics do they recall (indicating their preferred performed tasks), and which ones had to be reminded. The difference between the response and prompted percentages indicate the proportion of natural responses of the Principals (i.e. percentage of respondents who did not have to be prompted of that particular topic of interaction).

Majority principals (80% to 89%) responded that interact with teachers pertaining to quality parameters of education, such as performance of students, availability of teaching aids and quality of teaching. Over 70% also discuss about aspects related to attendance, maintenance of facilities, non-academic tasks, etc. (figure 91). However, most of these responses were prompted, thereby suggesting that during the interaction with teachers, these topics may or may not be discussed regularly.

Over 75% principals discuss aspects related to school management and quality issues with wardens also. The interaction revolves around challenges faced by them in discharging their duties, maintenance of vehicle at the school level and nature of their interaction with students. Educational support and food supplies in hostels also emerged as discussion topics with wardens. It was observed that interaction of principals with non-teaching staff is likely to be limited, since 75% of them had to be prompted on responses. It comprised of discussion on tasks related to their basic responsibilities such as quality of meals, maintenance of facilities, etc. However, more than 75% of principals had to be prompted in each topic, indicating possibility of irregularity in the interaction.

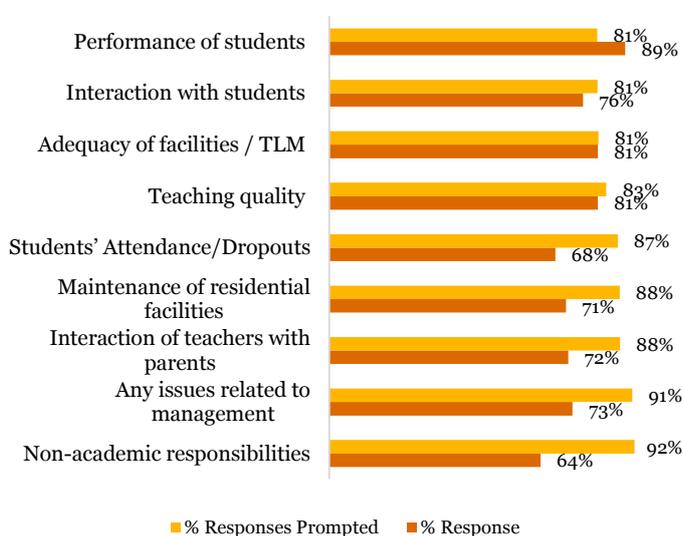
In case of interaction of principals with students, the natural responses indicated that they mostly discuss more about school environment, comprising of issues such as discrimination/bullying, support provided to students in case of need/ illness, and their problems. The response to prompted topics showed moderate interaction regarding academic aspects such as study habits, quality of teaching and comfort level of students in hostels.

Regarding communication of principals with parents/ SMC members or community, maximum natural responses indicated interaction on aspects related to attendance and incentives for attendance and availability of uniforms and stationery to the children. Less than 50% respondents mentioned discussion on education of children.

In the context of interaction with ITDP officials, maximum natural responses of principals comprised of topics related to challenges faced by the school and difficulties in compliances. On being prompted, more responses were obtained such as problems in funding, recruitments, construction status and academic performance of students.

From the preferred topics of interaction of Principal respondents, inferences can be drawn on the aspects of programme being monitored at school level. The focus is mainly on quantifiable outputs such as status of incentives/provisions given, compliances, constructions, etc. Very few principals pay attention to monitoring academic performance of students and teaching methodologies. These aspects reflect low emphasis of principals on academic rigour in the school.

**Figure 91: Interaction of Principals with Teachers**



**Model of JNVs for Monitoring at School level**

JNV's have school level committees constituted as cited below:

- Maintenance and Repairs committee
- School complaints Committee
- Purchase advisory committee
- Mess committee
- Vidyalaya MC: which includes district officials for reviewing the performance of JNVs

Source: JNV Annual report 2016, (All committees have student representation)

### 6.7.2. Monitoring of Ashram Schools by VO and TDD

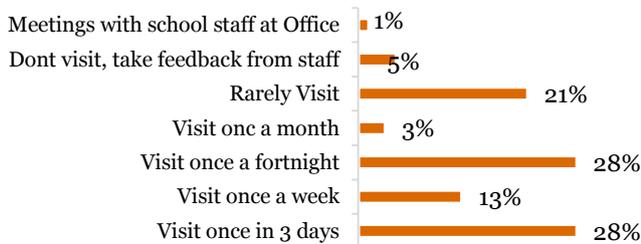
Regular monitoring and providing need-based support for resolving issues related to quality and functioning is one of the key responsibilities of the VOs running Ashram Schools. Considering the sensitivity of the school environment on account of various factors such as being situated in remote locations, large number of residential students, inadequacies of residential staff, etc. it is necessary to monitor the schools not only through meetings and review of records but also frequent physical visits for verification and interaction with student, staff and community.

Similarly, the ITDP offices are also accountable for monitoring the schools and their performance, and have an important facilitative role in maintaining / enhancing education delivery. The Education Extension officials are required to make periodic visits to the schools, verify the facilities and their maintenance, interact with the staff and students and provide need-based support to the school for improvisation. They are also required to furnish visit report to PO in specified format according to the guideline.

The section elaborates on the monitoring of schools by VO and ITDP based on the responses of office bearers, school staff and consultations with ATC / PO. However, since the records and documentation at Ashram Schools and PO level is not maintained meticulously, it was not possible to triangulate the findings from interaction.

**Monitoring by VO:** 92% of VO office bearers reported that they were involved in overseeing the administration of Ashram School activities on a regular basis. Over 25% stated that they visited the Ashram School once in three days, while 25% visited once in a fortnight. About 20% do not visit schools regularly, but only hold meetings with the school staff at the VO Office (figure 92).

**Figure 92: Frequency of School Visit by VO Office Bearers (n=145)**



Interaction of office bearers with school and PO is one of the measures of understanding involvement of the VO in functioning of the school and its monitoring. Regular / frequent interaction not only helps in timely identification of issues and addressing them but also in preventing practices that can affect functioning of the school as well as ensuring compliance. In this context, findings reveal that only 30% of the office bearers regularly interact with the school staff and students, i.e. on weekly basis. About 43% of them meet or interact the PO officials on monthly basis. Also, the interaction with community is minimal, with 14% office bearer interacting with parents / community on weekly basis.

Interview of principals supported the responses of the office bearers to certain extent. About 14% of them received excellent support from the VOs, while half found it less supportive.

**Table 31: Frequency of Interaction of VO Office Bearers with various Stakeholders (n=145)**

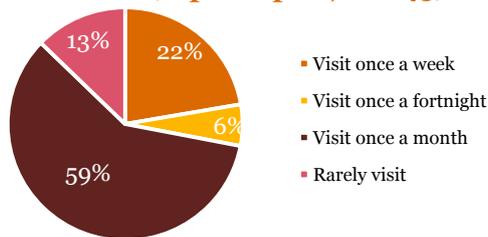
Freq. of Interaction	Principal	Teachers	Warden	Students	Clerical Staff	Support Staff	Parents/Community	PO
Weekly	30%	29%	32%	28%	27%	26%	14%	6%
Fortnightly	3%	7%	3%	8%	3%	6%	4%	5%
Monthly	13%	26%	21%	30%	26%	29%	39%	43%
Quarterly	1%	2%	0%	5%	2%	5%	15%	22%
Half-yearly	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	6%	13%
Yearly	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	6%	4%

**Monitoring by ITDP PO:** As per the mandate for responsibilities regarding Ashram Schools, the PO staff is required make regular visits and conduct monthly review meetings of all Ashram Schools in the jurisdiction.

In this context, half of the principals reported monthly visit to school by PO officials, while 20% responded that the PO officials rarely visit school (figure 93). This is contradicted by regional consultations, which suggest that officials **only conduct a quarterly inspection** of the Ashram School facilities.

In absence of requisite documentary evidence such a record of visits of visit reports, it is difficult to verify the frequency and outcomes of the visits by POs. The overall situation reflects the need for systematic mechanism for monitoring of schools by POs and maintenance of requisite documentation and records at schools, VO and PO so that the quality of education delivered, functioning of schools and compliances at school level and can be monitored and corrective measures can be taken by the responsible authorities / staff. This is of utmost importance for enhancing the accountability and governance of VOs in managing the schools.

**Figure 93: Frequency of visit to school by PO Officials (% principals, n= 145)**



**Method for enhancing accountability of VOs**

*One possible method for ensuring public accountability for both NGOs and government officials is that of ‘Shiksha Samvad’, wherein an education dialogue takes place within school authorities, block-level or district level officials, and community members in a public forum. The outcomes of the dialogue are made public, and all stakeholders are able to participate in tracking the progress of schools (Bhatty, Saraf, Varma, & Parash, 2015).*

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The policy initiatives for the education of tribals and design of Ashram School Programme is aligned to the unique needs of the tribal learners, several challenges are faced at the implementation level. In case of Maharashtra, the TDD is the key provider of school education in the tribal and remote areas through 1085 Ashram Schools, out of which 556 are aided Ashram Schools under the Scheme for Grant-in-Aid for VOs running Ashram Schools. The role of TDD has centered on instituting policy and regulatory measures, providing funding for infrastructure and education delivery and introducing need based interventions to address specific needs of the ashram schools and the tribal students. However, the study has revealed that the efforts need to be further strengthened at both policy and programmatic level so that the Ashram Schools are enabled to meet the intended objectives. The chapter summarised the key challenges and presents appropriate and specific measures to address the same.

### i. Operational guidelines for Ashram Schools need to be strengthened with regulatory provisions for VOs running Ashram Schools

of the Revised Draft Guidelines, 2017 under finalization by the department are comprehensive and provide operational processes to be followed by the VOs as well as stakeholders such as Commisionarate, ITDP Project Offices, staff of school (administrative, teaching and non-teaching) was reviewed closely. It is seen that the activities to be conducted at school and norms are described in detail. Precautions for health and safety of students have been included and formats for various records to be maintained at school level are also provided.

The guidelines provide norms and detailed processes to be followed at TDD / ITDP and school level, applicable to both government and aided schools. However, operational guidelines for instituting standardised systems and processes at VO level and process for monitoring are not addressed adequately. It is implied that the responsibility of managing school and overall well-being of students is mainly the responsibility of the school, while the accountability of VO in this context is not specified.

**Recommendation:** The Ashram school guidelines need to incorporate the specific aspects related to the responsibilities, norms and accountability of VOs with respect to systems and processes to be adopted and adhered to by the VOs. These need to comprise of:

- Appointment of at least one qualified staff in VO to co-ordinate and oversee the ashram school management and provide requisite operational support
- Adopt automated system for accounting and record keeping, including MIS (aspects related to MIS elaborated in next recommendation) and norms for financial management, such as conducting external annual audits.
- Specific responsibilities of Trustees in support school management and monitoring need to be elaborated, along with periodicity of visits and tasks to be undertaken during the school visits.
- Grievance redressal mechanisms and levels of escalation along with timeline for redressal need to be incorporated.
- Specific and time-bound disciplinary and legal action to be taken against the VOs in case of non-compliance at ITDP, Commisionarate and Secretariat level respectively need to be incorporated.
- ITDP officials need to be empowered to take requisite action at ITDP PO level in accordance with the guideline.

*The Revised Framework for Implementation of SSA, 2011 could serve as a good reference in the context of strengthening guidelines for Ashram Schools. This is available on:*

<http://www.ssa.nic.in/docs/SSA-Frame-work.pdf>

## ii. Infrastructure needs to be upgraded and measures need to be taken (in form of School Health and Safety Programme) on priority from health and safety perspective

Findings of the present study and investigations undertaken by Salunkhe Committee in 2015 and TISS in 2015 have highlighted the need for undertaking urgent measures in Ashram Schools for instituted from the perspective of health care and enhancing safety and security of the students. This was specifically in light of high number of death toll of students in a period of last 15 years. The possibilities of the interventions / programme being impacted due to worsening situation cannot be denied. This calls for urgent and specific measures at all levels.

**Recommendations:** Both remedial and precautionary measures need to be undertaken at school, VO and policy level for dealing with the sensitive issues related to health care and safety of students. Following key measures could be considered:

- Infrastructure of the schools needs to be assessed from the health care and safety perspective. The schools requiring safety measures such as CCTV, upgradation and repairing of compound walls, sanitation facilities, provision of uninterrupted power supply (if required, through solar system), repairs for maintenance, etc. need to be shortlisted and VOs need to be provided financial support (in case of additional budget required) for time-bound upgradation. The Civil Works Cell constituted at the Secretariat level for undertaking construction and upgradation could provide the requisite technical and operational support for the same.
- A State-level Committee for Health and Safety at Ashram Schools could be constituted at state level comprising of key stakeholders from Secretariat, Commissionerate, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) and State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) among others. The committee could recommend specific measures for instituting systems and processes for ensuring health care and safety of students at both government and aided Ashram Schools in the state. Further, the committee could also support and oversee implementation of recommended systems and measures on periodic basis, and suggest corrective course of action if need be.
- Regulatory and precautionary measures need to be developed and disseminated at an earliest to all VOs and Ashram Schools. Also, the POs could disseminate the same in monthly meeting of schools and VOs at the block level and follow-up for compliance both through review meetings and visits of schools in the jurisdiction.
- A holistic 'School Health and Safety Programme' could be designed and implemented in phased manner after piloting in one of the most affected districts such as Amravati or Nashik. The existing collaboration of TDD with UNICEF for technical assistance may be leveraged for the purpose. The progress in the programme needs to be monitored by aligning it with the monitoring mechanisms as elaborated in recommendation on monitoring.

*The following guidelines may serve as reference for designing school health and safety programme / enhancing health and safety at Ashram schools:*

*School Health Programme launched in Gujarat under SSA in collaboration with Civil Society*  
[http://www.schoolindia.org/article/anand\\_b.htm](http://www.schoolindia.org/article/anand_b.htm)

*School Health Programme in Assam in convergence with National Health Mission*  
<http://www.schoolindia.org/article/assam.html>

*The National Disaster Management Guidelines – School Safety Policy, 2016*  
[http://www.ssa.nic.in/docs/NDMA\\_guide.pdf](http://www.ssa.nic.in/docs/NDMA_guide.pdf)

*Unicef Interventions on WASH in Schools*  
<http://unicef.in/Whatwedo/39/Clean-India-Clean-Schools>

*School Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Education*  
[http://www.mdws.gov.in/sites/default/TechnoteSSHE\\_o.pdf](http://www.mdws.gov.in/sites/default/TechnoteSSHE_o.pdf)

### iii. **Monitoring mechanisms need to be strengthened; data of status of implementation / activities to be made available on periodic basis**

Findings of the study at programmatic and field level reveal that the monitoring mechanisms, both online and offline require strengthening at all levels, from school and VO to administration. At present, the appropriate records are not being maintained either school and VO level or PO level. Consequently, at any point of time, if data on status of implementation of the scheme is required, it is challenging to make it available on real-time basis. Apart from this, the roles and responsibilities of VO, PO, and Commissionerate in monitoring are not clearly defined in the guidelines. The Ashram School MIS, at Secretariat level, is not yet fully functional which also makes online monitoring challenging. Recommendations in this context are as follows:

- The Ashram School MIS needs to be made GIS and web-enabled so that access could be provided upto school level to ensure bottom-up collation of MIS data on periodic basis. Daily updates may not be feasible due to lack of uninterrupted power supply. This also implies the VOs need to make arrangement of functional computer for official use at school and VO office, in cases where these are not available at present. Once the MIS is fully functional with added features, the computer operators / staff responsible for data entry and accounting at Ashram Schools and VO could be provided training at PO level.
- As highlighted in the first recommendation, the Ashram School guidelines need to incorporate protocols for monitoring at all level coupled with requisite support to be provided to Schools and VO in case of non-compliance. Provisions need to be incorporated for taking appropriate action in case of non-compliance by VO. Computerised Records of the review meetings, visit reports and progress reports need to be maintained at the respective levels, and also uploaded on MIS for ready reference as and when required.

*Some states have developed and deployed School Management Systems, such as Jharkhand, Gujrat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, etc. Links to two of these are as follows:*

*School Management Information System, Department of School Education and Literacy, Jharkhand*  
<http://repository.ssashagun.nic.in/ssa/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/e-vidya-vahini--school-management-monitoring-system-jharkhand.pdf>

*School Management Information System, SSA, Gujarat*  
<http://sms.ssa Gujarat.org/>

### iv. **Phased measures are essential for improving quality of education in terms of provision of learning facilities, ICT enablement, provision of contextualised curriculum and capacity building / handholding of teachers**

The analysis of primary and secondary data regarding quality of education, comprising of review of both hard and soft interventions at school and VO level reflects that the quality of education requires further strengthening in terms of availability and use of learning facilities, application of ICT, contextualization of curriculum content, teacher effectiveness and enhancing learning outcomes of the students. Measures are needed at both programmatic and implementation level. The following measures are recommended in this context:

- A 360 degree quality framework needs to be developed for measuring and monitoring quality of education delivered in the aided Ashram Schools (which could also be extended to Government Ashram Schools with appropriate modifications). The framework needs to cover the indicators related to infrastructure, staffing, health and safety, adoption and use of appropriate and contextualized teaching methodologies, capacity building of teachers and learning outcomes of students (as measured by MSCERT through foundation, formative and summative assessment of students). The schools could be graded on annual basis on these parameters and targeted support could be provided to schools requiring improvement. In case of higher performing schools, these could be promoted at 'learning sites' for other schools in vicinity. The results of Grading / school

performance and learning assessment of students should be made available / disseminated in time-bound manner so that the results / outcomes can be utilized at the school level appropriately.

- Efforts need to be made for availability of existing contextualised curriculum content upto class IV, and developing additional content as required. The content developed through SSA, Maharashtra and capabilities of Tribal Language Cell of MSCERT could be leveraged for the purpose. Apart from this, proficiency of teachers from tribal background in the respective dialects from Ashram Schools and the Resource Pool of Department of School Education and Sports at state, district and block level could be further leveraged for the purpose. The TDD could have active collaboration with MSCERT for the purpose.
- The initiative of TDD for life skill education of students in Government Ashram Schools to be delivered in collaboration with Department of Women and Child Development, could be further extended to the aided Ashram Schools also. Online and offline arrangement also needs to be made to compile feedback of teachers and students about application of the learnings of life skills at school and individual level so that the intervention could be further strengthened.
- Learning facilities such as library, laboratory and ICT labs need to be provided in every school. To start with, in case of schools where Computer labs are available, the elearning content may be provided on priority, and teachers need to be oriented for usage of the content to maximum possible extent. Other interventions may be rolled out in phased manner depending on feasibility and availability of funds. The approach of ‘regional saturation of interventions’ i.e. implementing all relevant interventions at a time in schools concentrated in particular district is recommended, so as to achieve maximum possible impact and benefit of the interventions.
- Customised capacity building programme needs to be designed for the teachers, comprising of both training, handholding and supportive supervision. A special focus is required on English teaching since the ST students are consistently performing lower than general population, as well in developing skills in activity based learning (ABL) pedagogy. For this purpose, resource persons / experts in education of tribal students need to be engaged. And capacity building programme could be designed based on comprehensive Training Needs Assessment (TNA) of the teachers. Further, the programme may be rolled out using the existing mechanisms for MSCERT adopting cascading model. The portal for training and resources for teachers could be further enhanced by developing and uploading contextualised content and tools for teachers of Ashram Schools.

*Some of the holistic models of residential education of tribal students are being implemented in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. Best practices in school education are also disseminated by MHRD. The details are available on:*

*Kalinga Institute of Social Science – Multi-lingual, relevant, contextualized, vocational education (class V onwards) from KG to PG for 32,000 students in single campus*  
<https://kiss.ac.in>

*Gurukulam – Residential schools promoting high quality education, sports, coaching for competitive exam, etc. for tribal students.*  
<http://aptwgurukulam.ap.gov.in/>

*Best practices portal of MHRD in school education*  
<http://ssashaqun.nic.in/>

*MSCERT Teacher Education Portal*  
<https://mscert.maharashtra.gov.in/TeacherPortal/>

#### **v. Systemic measures for facilitating convergence with relevant stakeholders and collaborations for technical support need to be undertaken at state level**

At present, the TDD systems lack the requisite technical expertise for designing and implementing specific measures for strengthening the Ashram School Programme, especially in the context of aided schools. As a result, it is challenging for TDD to implement a host of interventions in integrated manner. Also, except for two interventions for WASH and life skills for Government Ashram Schools, there is a

lack of much needed convergence with relevant stakeholders. This acts as a limitation in strengthening and scaling up of existing interventions also. The measures recommended are as follows:

- Functional and ongoing collaboration / convergence needs to be facilitated with line departments such as Department of School Education and Sports, Directorate General of Technical Education, Women and Child Development, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, SCPCR, etc. through active linkages and reinforcement through requisite Government Resolution or Notification. Establishment of a State Level Advisory Committee could be established to serve as a forum for facilitating convergence. Experts / Academicians from the field of tribal education and representatives of Civil Societies with proven track record of impactful programmes in tribal education could also be members of the Committee.
- A state-level Five-year Perspective Plan for Ashram Schools could be developed in consultation with the line departments, technical agencies and key stakeholders. This will provide a definitive roadmap for the TDD to steer the process of designing and implementing interventions / programmes for strengthening Ashram Schools in a time bound and systematic manner.

***Illustrations of convergence at national level, also operational at state level through respective departments in state:***

*MHRD and MDWS convergence for School Health and Sanitation, also operational in all states and union territories*

<http://mhrd.gov.in/swachh-bharat-swachh-vidyalaya-campaign>

*MHRD and Ministry of Health convergence for School Health Programme, also operational at state level in 16 states, including Maharashtra*

<http://testnrhm.mahaonlinegov.in/1309/School-Health-Program>

***Departments / Agencies with potential for collaboration in Maharashtra – indicative:***

*Department of school Education and Sports*

<https://education.maharashtra.gov.in/>

<http://www.msce.org.in/>

*Directorate of Vocation Education and Training*

<http://www.dvet.gov.in/>

*Department of Water Supply and Sanitation*

<https://water.maharashtra.gov.in/>

*British Council, for Teacher Training in English*

<https://www.britishcouncil.in/teach>

*Navnirmiti, for teacher training*

<http://www.navnirmiti.org/>

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# Annexure

## Annexure 1: Technical Note on Methodology

### Study design

A “**Mixed Method Study Design**” was adopted for the study. The data for the evaluation study was collected through research instruments that used a combination of quantitative and qualitative (i.e. mixed) methods. This was intended to provide both an objective as well as a subjective insight into a particular programme and was preferred as they triangulated evidence from a range of different data sources. Further, mixed methods aided in the understanding of why certain results had occurred as well to quantify the impact of the results, as mixed methods generate both a statistically reliable measure of the magnitude of the impact as well as a provide a greater depth of understanding of how and why the programme was or was not effective and how it might be adapted in the future to make it more effective.

### Study area and universe

The study area was the status of aided Ashram Schools run by voluntary organizations (NGOs). The sampling design comprises of sampling frame, sampling method and the statistically optimum sample size for the following:

- Selection of districts
- Selection of NGOs (Primary Survey Units) and Schools
- Selection of respondents

### Respondents

From each selected NGO, the respondents were selected and the data collection tools administered thus:

1. One in-depth interview with the head of the NGO,
2. From each selected school, one in-depth interview with the school principal
3. In-depth interviews with a school teacher and warden/warden-in-charge who are actively involved in day to day activity of the scheme implementation.
4. Focus Group Discussion with a group of 10-12 randomly selected students from each school.
5. Consultations with State-level and regional-level stakeholders

The table below illustrates number of in-depth interviews and focus group discussion conducted for the study.

Unit	Method	Sampling method	Sample size proposed	Sample covered
Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Districts with at least 8% - 10% of Tribal population</li> <li>• Total no. of aided Ashram schools should be 3% or &gt; of total schools</li> <li>• Districts with presence of left-wing extremism activities not selected</li> </ul>	Purposive	11	12
NGO's	Adjusted the estimated sample size with respect to total population of NGOs	Proportion to Population Size	156	147
Officials	Officials at Secretariat, Commissionerate, all 4 ATCs and 29 POs under jurisdiction of ATCs	Purposive	36	33
Principal	Principals of Primary and Secondary (as applicable) will be selected	Purposive	156	157
Teachers	One teacher each from Primary and secondary level would be selected (as applicable)	Simple Random	312	314

Unit	Method	Sampling method	Sample size proposed	Sample covered
Warden	Male / Female wardens will be selected as per their availability	Purposive	156	157
Students	Students at secondary / higher secondary level as applicable (min 10 from each school for 99 schools)	Simple Random	1560*	990
<b>Total Respondents</b>			<b>1,806</b>	<b>1798</b>

FGDs were conducted in 99 out of 156 schools since students in target group (secondary level) were not available due to Ganeshostav / Pola festival. Thus, 990 out of 1560 of the target sample was covered.

## Sampling plan

### Selection of districts

The following criteria were applied for selection of districts / study area.

#### Criteria:

- Tribal population in the District should be at least 8% to 10% of the total district population.
- Total number of aided Ashram schools within the District should be 3% or more out of total schools from 22 districts with tribal population.

Eleven districts were selected based on the above criteria. The table given below summarises the sampling frame for districts and selected districts.

Sampling frame for districts and final districts selected Categories of districts	Total No.	No. of Selected Districts
Districts with limited presence of tribal population (less than 25% of total population)	13	-
Districts with significant (8% - 10% and above) tribal population	11	11
Districts with tribal population more than 25% of total population and presence with LWE activities	3	-
Districts with minimal or no tribal population	6	-
<b>Total Districts</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>

\*Tribal population considered as per Census 2011

### Selection of NGOs (Primary Sampling Units) and Schools

Since the NGOs are the implementing agencies for the scheme, they were selected as primary sample unit for the study. A statistically robust sample of NGOs was estimated using the sampling formulae below. The sample size was estimated to provide statistically valid result of key indicators at 90% confidence interval with 5% margin of error.

$$N = Z^2 p \cdot q \frac{1}{E^2}$$

Where,

P the proportion of indicator to be estimated (Assume to be 0.5 to maximize the sample size)

Z is Z-score corresponding to level of significance, 90%

E is margin of error (0.05)

The net sample size estimated for the study using this formula is 268. Given that total 357 NGOs are implementing the scheme (Tribal Development Department, Government of Maharashtra, 2017), we further adjusted the estimated sample size with respect to total population of NGOs using population correction factor. The formula presented below was adopted to arrive at the final sample. **The sample was estimated at 156 NGOs.**

$$No = \frac{N}{1 + \frac{N-1}{U}}$$

Where,

U = 357

No = Final sample for the study

N = 268

### Sampling frame and distribution of NGOs and Schools

The 11 districts have over 287 NGOs and 481 schools. These formed the sampling frame for selection of NGOs and schools.

Entities	Particulars	Total
<b>NGOs</b>	NGOs from 11 proposed districts	<b>287</b>
<b>Schools</b>	I – XII	96
	I – X	295
	I – VIII	24
	I – VII	63
	VIII – X	3
	<b>Total Schools</b>	<b>481</b>

Source: TDD, 2015-16

The total sample size estimated for the study was distributed across the districts **in proportion to total number of NGOs implementing the scheme** in the district. One school from each NGO was selected; in case an NGO was responsible for running more than one school, one school was selected randomly. The table below illustrates number of NGOs and schools to be selected from each district.

S No	Districts	Total NGOs in the district	Proposed sample of NGOs	Total schools in the district	Proposed sample of schools (No)
1.	Ahmednagar	8	5	15	5
2.	Amravati	25	14	27	14
3.	Dhule	28	16	34	16
4.	Jalgaon	28	16	32	16
5.	Nagpur	18	9	20	9
6.	Nanded	23	12	23	12
7.	Nandurbar	20	11	51	11
8.	Nashik	56	30	79	30
9.	Raigarh	10	5	12	5
10.	Thane	34	19	51	19
11.	Yavatmal	37	20	40	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>156</b>

Source: TDD, 2015-16

## Tools of data collection

Attributing to these merits of mixed method, the following tools were used in the study:

### 1. Quantitative methods:

- Structured Interviews of Principals, Teachers and Wardens

## 2. Qualitative methods:

- In-depth Interviews with key stakeholders at State/ Commissionerate/Project Offices
- Consultation with ATC and POs
- Documentation of School profiles

The table below shows represents the use of the above mentioned **methods and key areas of enquiry**.

Stakeholders / Tools	Key probe areas
<b>Representatives from Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant policies/initiatives undertaken to encourage students retention in school</li> <li>• Government policies and schemes in education</li> </ul>
In-depth Interviews / Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives to ensure safe schools</li> <li>• Data: Enrolment, Retention, Transition</li> <li>• Key issues/concerns with schools and recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>School Governing Bodies / Trustees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision and mission of the NGO</li> <li>• Trends in development of the organization and school since inception</li> </ul>
In-depth Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives for strengthening quality of education</li> <li>• Initiatives for improving quality of education at school, innovations, etc.</li> <li>• Funding mechanism and fund flow</li> <li>• Governance structure and compliance with norms</li> <li>• Adequacy of infrastructure, learning facilities and human resources of schools established under the NGO</li> <li>• Interaction with School authorities, Government Officials, Community</li> <li>• Mechanisms for monitoring schools</li> <li>• Perceived impact of activities of NGO in education of tribal students and other allied activities</li> <li>• Key issues/concerns with schools and recommendations</li> </ul>
<b>Principals/</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General trends in enrollment, attendance, retention, transition and dropout</li> </ul>
Structured Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to retain students in school</li> <li>• Initiatives to ensure safety schools</li> <li>• Achievements of school</li> <li>• Support to teachers and wardens</li> <li>• Quality of education at school</li> <li>• Experience about motivation of teachers and wardens</li> <li>• Adequacy of infrastructure and learning facilities</li> <li>• Communication with board of trustees, community/parents</li> <li>• Community support &amp; expectations</li> <li>• Impacts and current shortcomings</li> <li>• Key issues/concerns and recommendations for further strengthening</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile of teachers – qualification, experience, etc.</li> <li>• Opinion about overall pattern of education, curriculum, medium of instruction, etc. in context of tribal children</li> </ul>
Structured Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methodology adopted</li> <li>• Perception of student response, learning and potential</li> <li>• Adequacy of infrastructure and learning facilities available at schools</li> <li>• Communication with students, community/parents</li> <li>• Non-academic responsibilities and its impact on academic tasks</li> <li>• Achievement of school</li> <li>• Key issues/concerns and recommendations for further strengthening</li> </ul>

Stakeholders / Tools	Key probe areas
<b>Wardens</b>  Structured Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile of warden - qualification, experience, etc.</li> <li>• Current roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Initiatives for well-being of students, enhancing overall schooling experience</li> <li>• Communication with management, teachers, parents / community</li> <li>• Opinion about overall school management</li> <li>• Key issues/concerns and recommendations for further strengthening</li> </ul>
<b>School Administration Staff</b>  School Profile and Checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data related to enrolment, retention, transition, dropout of students for past five years</li> <li>• School infrastructure</li> <li>• Availability of learning facilities</li> <li>• Profile of human resources – teaching and non-teaching</li> <li>• Mean marks of students in Annual examination at class 5th, 8th and 10th in last 5 years – Total, Marathi, English, Maths, Science</li> <li>• Average attendance and trends in attendance of students across all classes throughout academic year</li> <li>• Average attendance and trends in attendance of teachers across all classes throughout academic year</li> </ul>

## *Process of data collection*

### *Conducting In-depth Interviews and consultations with Government Officials*

The qualitative data was collected from Senior Officials and Administrators through In-depth Interviews and Consultations at ATC level. Considering the profile of respondents, these were conducted by experts in the Core Team and facilitated by the Support Team.

### *Conducting survey of NGOs and Schools*

Considering the variations prevalent amongst the various respondent groups in terms of demography, socio-economic profile, culture, economy, governance etc. it was important that field investigators adequately appreciate these variations and act accordingly while administering the instruments. Therefore, the field investigators were trained in a 3-day training program from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> August. The training sessions were undertaken by Key team members from PwC and members from the Survey Agency (Frameworks).

The inputs that emerged during simulation exercises on interaction with the field team in the training session were taken into consideration in finalising the tool. Instructions were provided to the team on all activities: from the time of reaching out to the Ashram schools over a phone call, to conducting and closure of the study on the day of survey. The steps to be followed while administering the tools were also detailed out and designed jointly with the field team.

The three day investigators' training covered the following:

- Background about the Ashram Schools programme
- Context of the evaluation study
- Key dimensions of the evaluation study
- Stakeholders who will be covered as part of the study
- Details on the instruments to be used
- Process of administering the instruments
- Ethical code of conduct
- Steps to maintain quality of information being collected
- Data recording and sharing protocols

A team of 10 members was placed in the field to cover a total of 156 Ashram Schools in 11 districts. Each enumerator covered 1 Ashram School per day, and in each School, 6 interview schedules and 1 FGD schedule were administered and completed. One information schedule which had been shared with schools by Adivasi Vikas Vibhag in advance was also collected on the day of survey. The team placement in the districts was as follows:

S.No.	District	Number of Ashram Schools	No. of Enumerators
1.	Nashik	30	6 Enumerators
2.	Dhule	16	
3.	Nandurbar	11	
4.	Thane	19	
5.	Rajgarh	5	
6.	Ahmadnagar	5	
7.	Jalgaon	16	
8.	Yavatmal	20	4 Enumerators
9.	Nanded	12	
10.	Amravati	14	
11.	Nagpur	9	

## Data compilation

The data of In-depth Interviews and Consultations were recorded on paper, and converted in soft copies. In case of surveys, digital tools (Tabs with pre-loaded survey application) were used. The geo-tagged data was captured on real-time basis through the tools and continued to be updated on real-time basis on the server as and when data was available for uploading online (depending on connectivity in remote areas).

## Plan for analysis

- 1. Preparing database structure:** The databased structure was created in SPSS
- 2. Analysis of qualitative data:** The qualitative data was compiled initially in word format. After quantification in SPSS and organized into themes, key findings were drawn out.
- 3. Analysis of quantitative data:** The quantitative data was captured on real-time basis through the digital devices. The data was further cleaned.
- 4. Data analysis:** Thereafter, the data was tabulated for studying basic trends and identifying outliers. The nature and quantum of outliers have also been studied, and rectified wherever required.
- 5. Triangulation of findings:** The findings from qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis and secondary data collected from field (e.g. profile of schools, staff, enrollment, attendance, dropout, etc.) and topline findings of desk were triangulated for ensuring accuracy and validity of findings.

## Quality assurance

The study was led by a senior PwC team member with more than 20 years of experience in multi-sector research designs and evaluating large scale development projects. The Education and M & E Experts were also involved in ensuring the data quality and provide support to the field team.

Further, study specific quality assurance initiatives were also implemented. These have been listed below:

- The in-depth interviews and consultations were conducted by the Core Team and Support Team itself.
- During the primary survey, 5% of the NGOs / schools covered by the investigators were accompanied on visits by field managers and support team.
- 10% of all visits made were back checked for conforming to the study protocols by field managers
- A training manual was developed for all investigators, ensuring that they had a reference document while conducting the study.

- Data collection for primary survey was conducted through digital devices. Since the geo-tagged data was compiled on real-time basis (or as and when internet connectivity was available), the quality of data was such that it could be verified online by experts and during the data collection process itself. Deviations / errors found, were verified and rectified during the data collection phase itself.
- Data entry was supported through electronic medium, which helps in reducing errors in data entry.
- SPSS was be used for data analysis, and also has analytical capabilities to identify errors / outliers which also helps in rectification of the same during the data editing / cleaning process.

## Assessment of Risk and Risk Mitigation

Risks	Mitigation Measures
Possibilities of lack of availability of some of respondents (especially trustees from Board of Trustees / Management Committee) since they are based out of locations at district or block level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance intimation of schedule to school authorities</li> </ul>
Possibilities of delays due to lack of timely availability of respondents from government line department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance intimation of study to government officials</li> <li>• Parallel interviews with field study</li> </ul>
Dispersed nature of sample units (i.e. NGOs) and Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NGOs are generally located in the district or block level while the schools are situated in remote areas and widely dispersed.</li> <li>• Spatial mapping of NGOs/ Schools to ensure optimum field plans that save time</li> </ul>
Quality control of large scale data and qualitative data and timely completion of survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality assurance mechanism initiated prior to launch of field study</li> <li>• Extensive training to field study team</li> <li>• Digital / electronic devices with pre-coded questions / responses used for data collection.</li> <li>• Collation of data on real time basis</li> <li>• Most of the qualitative data collected by support team / core team experienced in conducting qualitative studies</li> <li>• Support of M &amp; E expert for quality checks and monitoring the survey in addition to survey expert</li> <li>• Simultaneous undertaking of qualitative and quantitative study</li> </ul>

## Annexure 2: Note on Policy Initiatives for Tribal Development

**Constitution of India:** The Constitution of India itself laid down the foundation for policy initiatives for tribal development. The provisions made it a constitutional obligations for future governments to take appropriate measures for promoting equity and welfare of tribals. In the context of tribal welfare, the constitution primarily comprised of the following:

- Statutory recognition of tribal communities; creation of scheduled areas for the thorough development of the tribals and special representations in the parliament and government services
- According to the fifth schedule, Union Executive is given the power of giving direction to the States in matters relating to the administration of scheduled areas.
- Article 275 (1) of the constitution provides for grant-in-aid from the Union to the States for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes or for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas.
- Appointment of a Commission for Scheduled Tribe's for safeguarding their interests.

**Constitution under Article 275(1):** It makes a special provision in relation to the responsibility of the Union Government for tribal affairs. It is comprehensive, covering both developmental and non-developmental needs of the tribal areas and communities. The outlays under this provision are given as a grant (for both capital and recurring expenditure) and are a charge on the Consolidated Fund of India. **The provision implies convergence between different line Ministries / line departments for integrated tribal development, including education**

**Provisions for Tribal Development under Five-Year Plan regime, 1950 to 2017:** The tribal development programmes were introduced right from 1st Five Year Plan onwards, with emphasis on community development approach focused from 2<sup>nd</sup> Five Year Plan.

The landmark policy development occurred during 4<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, wherein **Tribal-Sub Plan (TSP) was launched in 1974, leading to provisions for convergence for integrated tribal development.** The TSP was further expanded during 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. In the 9<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan regime, programmes were initiated across women and child development, enhancing living standard, education, health care and skill upgradation of the tribal people without any gender bias.

The **11<sup>th</sup> Five Year plan focused on the approach of inclusive growth approach, according priority to reduction in disparities.** The **12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan brought out the need for reducing exclusion and disparities in education as well as strong focus on welfare of tribal and minority communities.**

### **'Panchsheel' Principals of Nehru for Inclusive Development, 1952**

- (i) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
- (ii) Tribal rights to land and forests should be respected.
- (iii) We should try to train and built up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
- (iv) We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.
- (v) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved

Source: Vidyarthi and Rai, 1985: 419

### Specific focus on tribal developed in Five Year Plans:

Five Year Plan	Key Focus Areas
1st Five Year Plan (1951-61)	Tribal Development Programmes
2nd Five Year Plan (1951-61)	Community Development Approach (Tribal Development Projects)
3rd Five Year Plan (1961-66)	Special Multipurpose Projects for tribal people. (Creation of TD Blocks).
4th Five Year Plan (1969-74)	Administrative frame programme implementation and protective measures (Tribal Development Agencies (TDA).
5th Five Year Plan	Total and Comprehensive view of the tribal problems and

Five Year Plan	Key Focus Areas
(1974-79)	coordination of sectoral programmes (Tribal sub-plan and creation of LAMPS)
6t h Five Year Plan (1980-85)	Integrated approach and large financial allocation (expansion of TSP).
7t h Five Year Plan (1985-90)	Beneficiary oriented programme and infrastructural development (intensive Tribal Development)
8t h Five Year Plan (1992-97)	A frontal attack on poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, organize state level tribal development cooperative corporations.
9t h Five Year Plan (1992-97)	Women and Child Development Programmes Improvement of living standard, education, health care and skill upgradation of the tribal people without any gender bias.
10 th Five Year Plan (2002-07)	Programmes for the Promotion of higher Education.
11 th Five Year Plan (2007-11)	Inclusive Growth Approach
12th Five Year Plan (2012 – 2017)	Focus on educational development of tribals and other minorities, reducing disparities

**Community Development Approach, 1952:** The Community Development programme was initiated in 1952 with the objective of securing fullest development of the area through increasing food and agricultural production. The CD programme also worked for the promotion of education, health and introduction of new skills and occupations so that the programme as a whole can lift the rural community to higher levels of economic organisation and arouse enthusiasm for new knowledge and improved ways of life. People's participation got a greater emphasis in CD programme. To make it a meaningful, the strategy was to evolve a common core of values and communicate to all the sections of the society through education of masses and folk media (Madan and Madan, 1983: 10-11).

**The Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, 1961:** It was set up under the chairmanship of Sri. U.N. Dhebar emphasized that the policies and programmes for tribal development are not to disturb the harmony of tribal life but simultaneously work for their advance, not to impose any thing upon the tribals but work for their integration as members and part of the Indian family. It also stressed an integrated approach. According to them, "problem of economic development for the bulk of the tribals cannot be solved unless that resources of land, forests, cattle wealth, cottage and village industries are all mobilized in an integrated basis."

A study team appointed by the Planning Commission headed by P. Shilu Ao opined that "the aim of tribal welfare policy should be defined as the progressive advancement, social and economic betterment of tribals with a view to their integration with the rest of the community on a footing of equality within a reasonable distance of time".

**Introduction of Tribal-Sub Plan (TSP), 1974:** The TSP was introduced during 5<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan to ensure adequate flow of plan resources for the development of Scheduled Tribes. In 2006, guidelines were framed by Planning Commission on the formulation, implementation and monitoring of TSP.

**National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas (Sivaraman Committee), 1980:** The Committee recommended the "Sub-plan approach" with suitable adaptation for other backward areas for the better planning and development.

**(PESA), 1986:** Every Gram Sabha shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution. The Gram Sabha shall approve of the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level. PESA endows powers and authority to enable them to function as institutions of self-government, to control over local plans and resources for such plans including tribal sub-plans.

**73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment, 1992:** The centre transferred fourteen subjects: primary and secondary education all these subjects are important from tribal development point of view and the transfer should take place expeditiously. But we would single out primary and secondary education as the most important.

**Guidelines for monitoring TSP, 2006** Guidelines were framed by the Planning Commission on the formulation, implementation and monitoring of SCSP and TSP, and issued to 62 Central Ministries/Departments. The guidelines mandated the Ministries / Departments to earmark funds under TSP from the plan outlay in proportion to the percentage of Scheduled Tribe population in the country in 2001 (8.2

%, Census 2001). Also, only those schemes were to be included under the head which ensure direct benefits to ST individuals or families.

Regarding monitoring mechanisms, **a dedicated unit had to be constituted in every Central Ministry/Department for the welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes.** This would act as nodal unit for ensuring fund allocation, formulation and implementation of TSP. A Central Tripartite Committee (CTC), constituted in Planning Commission in 1999 will review implementation of TSP and resolve policy issues if any.

**Initiatives for harmonizing policies and programmes for tribal development:** The Government of India constituted various Committees and Task Force from time to time to review the policies and programmes for tribal development, both at national level and for reviewing specific states<sup>16</sup>. Among these, the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, 1961, emphasized that **the policies and programmes for tribal development are not to disturb the harmony of tribal life but simultaneously work for their advance.** The stakeholders are to work for integration of tribals in mainstream.

**Draft National Policy on Tribals, 2007:** For the first time after the country became Independent, the Government of India is proposing the formulation of a National Policy on Scheduled Tribes. The policy seeks to bring Scheduled Tribes into the mainstream of society through a multipronged approach for their all-round development without disturbing their distinct culture. **It lays special emphasis on formal school, higher and technical education for tribals, among other interventions for socio-economic development of tribals.**

**National Advisory Council of Planning Commission, 2011:** The Council was set up by Planning Commission to advise on policy matters related to tribal development. The Council studied the issues related to tribal development in the country and made recommendations for strengthening TSP implementation as well as instituting mechanisms across related Ministries / Departments for channelizing funds and initiatives for tribal development.

**Standing Committee formed to carry out objectives of the National Monitoring Committee for Education of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and persons with disabilities, 2012:** The Committee was constituted on the 27 July 2012 with Prof. Sukhadeo Thorat as the Chairperson, and the Economic Advisor, Department of Higher Education, as the Convener.

#### **Policy Initiatives of Andhra Pradesh for Tribal Development**

*The State achieved an important milestone with enactment of "Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan (Planning, Allocation and Utilization of Financial Resources) Act.No1 of 2013. It is the pioneer state to initiate such legislative intervention.*

*Andhra Pradesh has also been able to bring about **effective convergence with various like departments for planning, budgeting and implementing interventions for tribal development.***

*It has also **deployed an integrated e-Governance System** that helps in effective monitoring of the tribal development programmes (including education schemes for ST).*

*Source: Tribal Sub-Plan, Andhra Pradesh, 2016-17; www.aptribes.org*

**National Tribal Advisory Council (NTAC), 2015:** The Council was set up under the chairmanship of Prime Minister for real time monitoring of various tribal development programmes and schemes in the country. The NTAC was expected to meet twice a year for the review. **Education was identified one of the key focus areas for the high level committee.** The council replaced the erstwhile National Advisory Council of Planning Commission.

**Initiatives for forming pro-people policies and planning under NITI Aayog (2015 onwards):** During 2015, the 65 year old Planning Commission was replaced by National Institute for Transforming India (NITI Aayog). It is envisaged that NITI Aayog would act as a national level think tank on policy matters and serve as a platform of the GoI to bring States to act together in national interest, and thereby fostering Cooperative Federalism.

During 2016-17 a major initiative has been taken to facilitate the process of decentralized planning and implementation of pro-people policies and programmes at state level. Guidelines were issued to for formation of Vision 2030, 3 year Action Plans and 7 year Strategies aligned with SDGs. **Education and Inclusion are key focus areas in the action plan and strategies.** This is not only expected to help the states in implementation of programmes and

<sup>16</sup> Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, GoI, 2002 - 2004

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schemes across all the sectors effectively, but also aid in monitoring and achieving the SDGs.

**Need for strengthening policies and planning for tribal development with special focus on education:** While exclusive policies for tribal development have been introduced and approach for development planning is more inclusive in this decade compared to previous regime, several gaps still remain to be addressed.

The formulation and implementation of the Sub Plans have been deficient and fallen short of meeting their objective both at the Centre and in the states (National Advisory Council, 2011). **The need for reforming planning and implementation of TSP** has also been reiterated in the Approach Paper for 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and recommendations of NAC, 2011, to bridge the gaps on development indicators **(with special focus on education and income generation)** between ST and other social groups. However, such reforms are evident mainly in the state of Andhra Pradesh (in form of TSP Act, 2013 and convergence, but nodal units are not set up in related departments); other states are yet to initiate such reforms.

The guidelines issued by Planning Commission in 2006 mandated **62 Ministries / Departments to set up dedicated unit to monitor implementation of TSP. However, except for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), MHRD and Tribal Development Departments (TDD) of the states, such units are not evident.** This hinders the much needed process of convergence required for effective implementation of TSP.

**The process of planning for SCA to TSP needs to be streamlined across the concerned line departments, bottom-up and need-based, so that the resources can be appropriately allocated to the most needy areas according to the local requirement.** However, in absence of enabling systems and processes, it is challenging to adopt such an approach. As a result, except for the Convergence model of Integrated Tribal Development Authority (ITDA), Andhra Pradesh, other states have not been able to facilitate this. **This is a matter of concern from point of view of education of tribals also, since several interventions, especially those related to infrastructure development for education in scheduled areas is undertaken through SCA to TSP.**

### Annexure 3: Record of Death of Students in Government and Aided Ashram Schools in Maharashtra

GOVT. School

शासकीय आश्रमशाळेतील सन २००१-०२ ते सन २०१५-१६ मध्ये मृत्यू झालेल्या विद्यार्थ्यांची संख्या. (३० मार्च २०१६ पर्यंत )

शासकीय  
Students  
death.

अ.क्र.	वर्ष	मृत्यू पावलेल्या विद्यार्थ्यांची एकूण संख्या	शेरा
१	२	३	४
१	२००१-०२	२९	
२	२००२-०३	२८	
३	२००३-२००४	५६	
४	२००४-२००५	४८	
५	२००५-२००६	५२	
६	२००६-२००७	५७	
७	२००७-२००८	६९	
८	२००८-२००९	७७	
९	२००९-२०१०	९४	
१०	२०१०-२०११	११२	
११	२०११-२०१२	८८	
१२	२०१२-२०१३	८३	
१३	२०१३-१४	१०९	
१४	२०१४-१५	९९	
१५	२०१५-१६	७६	
एकूण		१०७७	

स्वयंसेवी संस्थामार्फत चालविण्यात येत असलेल्या अनुदानित आश्रमशाळेतील सन २००६-२००७ ते सन २०१५-१६ मध्ये मृत्यू झालेल्या विद्यार्थ्यांची संख्या. aided

अ.क्र.	वर्ष	मृत्यू पावलेल्या विद्यार्थ्यांची संख्या	शेरा
१	२	३	४
१	२००६-२००७	२१	
२	२००७-२००८	१२	
३	२००८-२००९	१६	
४	२००९-२०१०	१४	
५	२०१०-२०११	२१	
६	२०११-२०१२	२२	
७	२०१२-२०१३	३६	
८	२०१३-२०१४	४६	
९	२०१४-२०१५	५१	
१०	२०१५-२०१६	३६	
११	२०१६-१७	६९	
		३४४	

## **Annexure 4: Good Practices in Education of Tribal Students in India**

### **i. Janashala Programme**

#### **Background and Objectives**

The Janashala Programme was an effort initiated in 1998, as a collaboration between the Government of India and five United Nations agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA. The aim was to achieve Universal Elementary Education. Janashala was operational in nine states: Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. 139 blocks were identified based on indicators such as female literacy, prevalence of child labour, and concentration of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe populations. Janashala was a community-driven effort, wherein primary education was decentralized, with the aim of expanding access to primary education for the following target groups:

1. Girls
2. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe children
3. Working children
4. Children with disabilities
5. Children from other marginalized, impoverished groups

#### **Relevant Interventions**

Janashala's key interventions include:

1. Tribal language textbooks at the start of primary education, with contextualized curriculum for tribal children
2. Special emphasis on out-of-school and drop-out children in remote tribal areas
3. Training for non-tribal teachers to work in tribal areas, including in tribal dialects
4. Community teachers
5. Development of Bridge Language Inventory
6. Establishment of Anganwadis and Balwadis in tribal areas to relieve girls of childcare duties
7. Involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions like Village Education Committees in primary schools to increase sense of ownership in ST communities

#### **Implementation Mechanism**

Micro-planning at Community level:

- Janashala programme uses participatory techniques in each village community to identify out-of-school children, gender-related challenges, and facilitate the setting up of committees which then enroll children in schools
- Community support is provided for the establishment of schools in the form of provision of land, and monetary contributions to teacher salaries, etc.
- Communities themselves run schools with support from Janashala officials, in school-less habitations where such schools are possible

#### **Coverage**

In 2003, the programme covered 30 lakh children, 58,000 teachers, and 18,000 schools. Out of the 139 blocks, 75% had substantial tribal population.

#### **References**

Ministry of Human Resources Development (2003). "A Promising Start: Processes and Interventions of the Janashala Programme". New Delhi: Gautam, Vinoba (2003). "Education of tribal children in India and the issue of Medium of Instruction: A Janashala experience". New Delhi

## **ii. Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement**

### **Background**

Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement was founded in 1984 by Dr. R. Balasubramaniam with the aim of mobilizing grassroots action in the health, education and community development sectors. They also aims to build a stronger civil society through their work. They work in Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Part of the organization are Viveka Tribal Centre for Learning, a semi-residential school and Vivekananda Institute for Leadership Development, which is the base for their urban interventions, in Mysore. The latter also offers a 2-year course in Development Management, and is the site of training programs for government officials and development professionals.

### **Relevant Interventions**

1. **Viveka Tribal Centre** provides affordable education for students from tribal communities. These students often happen to be first-generation learners, and come from tribal communities within Karnataka. The school offers a curriculum that is affiliated with the Karnataka State School Board, but incorporates learner-centric elements:
  - Teaching style varies according to the learning style of each child
  - Students learn about tribal culture and history
  - Curriculum is also a blend of vocational training with regular teaching
  - Fine arts are also part of the curriculum
  - Classes 1-4 follow an ‘open classroom’ model, which is meant to mimic open spaces, which tribal children are used to
  - Classes do not follow fixed seating arrangements; children learn in groups
2. **Premavidya** offers technology-aided learning programs and mobile science labs that are implemented in schools with learners from poor backgrounds.
3. **Science Education Programme**, targets elementary and secondary students in rural areas. Mobile Science Labs and learning resources are available at the community level, and are also used to train teachers.

### **Coverage**

While the Viveka Tribal Centre has 406 students, the Premavidya programme has reached 229 schools in 6 districts of Karnataka. More than 47,000 students have benefitted from the program. Science Education Programme is being implemented in one taluk in Mysore district, covering 98 schools.

### **Funding Mechanism**

The School is partially funded by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The organization’s other sources of income are CSR funding, individual and institutional donations.

### **Partnerships**

SVYM has partnered with several government agencies and departments, including the Department of Science and Technology, Indian Council for Agricultural Research, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and the Government of Karnataka. It also has CSR partners and linkages with academic and research institutions across the globe.

### **References**

Dasra (2009). “Tribal Education: A Fine Balance”. Mumbai  
 SVYM website: svym.org  
 SVYM Annual Report 2015-16



### **iii. Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre**

#### **Background**

Rishi Valley Rural Education Centre (RCE), is the rural education outreach wing of Rishi Valley, Krishnamurthy Foundation. The organization is based in Andhra Pradesh, with its work focused in the Chittoor district. RCE runs Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources, a residential middle school for local students, and twelve satellite elementary schools in nearby villages. The aims of RCE are:

- Promotion of village-based education
- Promotion of Multi-Grade Multi-Level methodology (MGML)
- Drawing working children into the school system
- Involvement of community in school management

#### **Relevant Interventions**

In RIVER and its satellite schools, RCE has been promoting a **child-centric curriculum**:

- Peer-learning – students learn in groups or alone, but peer-to-peer interaction is encouraged, with the teacher playing a facilitating role
- Activity-milestone-ladder learning – different types of activities: Introductory, Re-enforcement, Evaluation activities, Remedial activities, Enrichment make up a milestone, and a set of milestones are organized along a learning ladder. Each child knows his or her place in the ladder, and is given the resources (teacher, group learning) to advance
- Ladder learning covers classes 1 to 4, and is how Language, Science and Mathematics are organized
- Self-paced learning – students are encouraged to learn at their own pace

In its **satellite schools**, community or government land is taken for the construction of the school, and with inputs from the community, the same is partially used to create green spaces. Communities have a stake in the functioning of these schools, and

#### **Coverage**

RCE covers 12 tribal villages in Chittoor district. Through capacity building initiatives, RCE has also trained teachers in Karnataka through the Nalli Kalli programme, and spread the MGML methodology to Kerala, Pondicherry, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Chhattishgarh, West Bengal and Maharashtra. RCE has also partnered with UNICEF to develop an MGML package for twelve states under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan.

#### **Funding Mechanism**

The RCE program receives funding from the Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Scheme of Assistance under Experimental and Innovative Programmes. Sir Ratan Tata Trust and Rockefeller Foundation have donated money to the outreach programmes. In addition, proceeds from the Rishi Valley School go annually to RCE's efforts.

#### **Partnerships**

RCE has partnered with the Integrated Tribal Development Authority (ITDA), UNICEF, Nalli Kalli Programme, DPEP Kerala, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, and Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai to reach out to schools.

#### **References**

Dasra (2009). "Tribal Education: A Fine Balance". Mumbai

Rishi Valley website: [rishivalley.org/rural-education-centre](http://rishivalley.org/rural-education-centre)

## **iv. Adivasi Academy/Bhasha**

### **Background**

The Adivasi Academy was founded by Bhasha a grassroots research and publications organization in Tejgadh, Gujarat as a centre for promotion of tribal culture, arts and language. It is also a formal teacher training institution.

### **Relevant Interventions**

The Adivasi Academy offers:

- Teacher training programs in tribal education
- Post-graduate Diplomas in subjects related to tribal development, including Rural Healthcare, Adivasi Studies, Rural Journalism, Indigenous Knowledge, and Culture and Development
- Tribal Resource Centre to document cultural and artistic resources of tribal communities over the country

In addition, Bhasha also runs **Vasantshala**, a non-formal education centre, to mainstream tribal Out of School Children from migratory families and admit them to government schools. The bridge programme of Vasantshala uses tribal language as medium of instruction to transition students.

### **Coverage**

Bhasha's activities in healthcare and education are concentrated in Chotadeupur district in Gujarat. However, their People's Linguistic Survey of India and research on tribal art, culture and music span several states in the country. Bhasha's **Vaacha** museum is a collection of such resources.

### **Funding Mechanism**

Bhasha has received funding from the Ministries of Tribal Affairs, AYUSH, UNICEF, institutional and individual donors.

### **Partnerships**

Due to Bhasha's research activities and policy work, partnerships have been formed with Central Government Ministries and UNICEF.

### **References**

Dasra (2009). "Tribal Education: A Fine Balance". Mumbai  
 Bhasha Research and Publications website: [bhasharesearch.org](http://bhasharesearch.org)  
 Bhasha Annual Report, 2015-16

## **v. Bal Sansad**

### **Background**

Bal Sansad, or Children's Parliament, is a state-powered initiative found in several Indian states including Jharkhand, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. Its aims include cultivating democratic values in students from an early age, and initiating socially conscious action. The Bal Sansad models in these states predate MHRD's plan to make it a national-level programme.

### **Relevant Interventions**

Bal Sansad allows students and their elected leaders to participate both in school management as well as social outreach programs, like campaigns for Out-of-school children, civic values, social issues, health and hygiene. During such activities, students develop connections with the community they live in. In day-to-day activities, Bal Sansad leaders may be involved in taking attendance, conducting daily prayers, helping teachers with co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and maintaining overall discipline.

### Coverage

Bal Sansad is the term used in the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. However, these student-run bodies are found in several states.

### References

Tisdall, E. Kay, Gadda, Andressa M and Udi Mandel Butler (2014). “Children and Young People’s Participation and its Transformative Potential: Learnings Across Countries”. Palgrave Macmillan, London Page 106 [https://books.google.co.in/books?id=gB9vBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA106&lpg=PA106&dq=bal+sansad+program&source=bl&ots=Z\_esftvTqb&sig=X9zBMKR8qdtATb7KMri5ZzMm3mE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=oahUKEwjz\_MTiku3WAhVIyyYKHS1-BawQ6AEIXTAI#v=onepage&q=bal%20sansad%20program&f=false]

Life Education and Development Support (LEADS), Oxfam India:

<https://www.oxfamindia.org/partnersdetail/587>

“Centre Working on Bal Sansad Programme: Smriti Irani”. *Times of India*, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

[https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Centre-working-on-Bal-Sansad-programme-Smriti-Irani/articleshow/52190532.cms]

## vi. Tribal Education Societies

### Background

Tribal Education Societies are found in four states: Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat. They run schools for tribal students. In Gujarat, the Society is tasked with the management of Eklavya and Ashram Schools. The major objective is offering quality education that enables students to pursue higher education and brings them on par with mainstream education. Telangana has two such Societies: one for Social Welfare, and another for Tribal Welfare.

The Boards of these Societies usually include the Tribal Welfare Minister, Secretaries from the department, high-ranking officials of state Education Boards. In the case of Telangana and Odisha, the members also include educationists and representatives from tribal communities.

### Relevant Interventions

The Telangana Societies run both schools and junior colleges, while the other three Societies run Ashram Schools. The Gujarat Society is also tasked with establishing Eklavya Model Residential Schools. In addition, initiatives such as teacher training programs to regularly update pedagogy, augmentation of libraries and general infrastructure, promotion of soft skills, technology-aided education and conferences are also undertaken.

### Funding

The Societies are government-funded.

### References

Gujarat State Tribal Education Society [https://eklavya-education.gujarat.gov.in/circulars-and-notifications]

Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society

[<http://www.tgtwgurukulam.telangana.gov.in/index.html>]

Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society [<http://www.tswreis.telangana.gov.in/>]

Odisha Model Tribal Educational Society [[www.omtes.org](http://www.omtes.org)]

## **vii. Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS)**

### **Background and objectives**

Located in Odisha, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is the world's largest residential educational institution for indigenous tribal children. Founded by educationist and social entrepreneur Achyuta Samanta in 1993 with only 125 tribal children, KISS has now grown to 30,000 students belonging to 62 poor tribal communities (including 13 primitive tribal groups). Majority of these children are first generation learners and belong to poverty stricken marginalized families.

KISS started as an effort towards mainstreaming indigenous children, experiencing socio-economic challenges such as lack of access to schools, illiteracy, malnutrition, child labour, growing Maoism/ insurgency concerns, etc. amongst tribes in the poverty stricken districts of Odisha. Within this context, KISS provides holistic education from Kindergarten to Post graduation (KG to PG), vocational training, food, accommodation, health care and all other basic necessities to the students.

### **Relevant Interventions**

KISS implements mainstreaming schooling and higher education programmes, vocational training and soft skills programmes and social welfare projects such as those on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, promotion of vernacular language, trainings, etc (these are conducted in collaboration with various external organisations).

Mainstream schooling and higher education programmes offered by KISS are:

1. KISS- Vernacular education: KISS is affiliated with the Board of Secondary Education, Odisha and offers courses from class 1 to 10th. KISS is also affiliated with the Board of Higher Secondary Education, Odisha
2. KISS- CBSE education: Mainstream CBSE curriculum is taught from classes 1 to 8 in English medium and currently has 800 students enrolled
3. Higher education programmes (graduation and post-graduation) are offered by their sister institution- Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) in Arts, Sciences and Commerce streams.

### **Vocational training at KISS:**

- **Vocational training courses at KISS:** Vocational training at KISS links education with productivity, economic development & individual prosperity. Every student (Class 7<sup>th</sup> onwards) undergoes vocational education in one of the 50 trades offered as per his or her talent.

KISS offers courses in 50 trades ranging from medical assistant, computer training, arts and crafts to food processing. Most trades are taught through self-pace learning, including "Tribal Art". The institute also facilitates participation in art competition and festivals, organizes annual exhibition wherein in handicraft is sold and sale proceedings are deposited in bank account of respective students which is given to them when they leave the Institute or in times of need as applicable. If the students are unable to migrate for work or find suitable employment options, they are still able to start their own micro-enterprises in their village.

- **'Earn While you Learn' programme:** The trades are designed to impart necessary occupational skills among tribal students to mould them into successful entrepreneurs & make them fit in the job market. As a part of this programme, the surplus amount after sale of these products are distributed to the students involved. During their training in the Vocational Training Institute at KISS, each student has the opportunity to earn about Rs.1000 each. They typically send these earnings back to their families in the villages.

- **Specific trainings to prepare students for competitive exams:** KISS also provides coaching classes to students to hone their skills and to appear in various competitive examinations, The students are currently being given classes for Civil Services, Railway, Banking, English speaking, etc. which has resulted in students getting jobs in Government establishments, Corporate organizations etc.
- **Soft skills training:** KISS also imparts soft skills training to students to improve their communication and language skills. Additionally, they are also imparting 'Multi-lingual education' at school level to bring ST students from different communities on same platform
- **Guidance / Counseling for students to cope with mainstreaming**

### **Implementation mechanisms and funding pattern**

The key source of funding for KISS is KIIT itself. About 5% of total revenue of KIIT is donated to support KISS. Branches of KISS Foundation have been established in UK and USA as well. Other sources of funding include donations, CSR funds, proceeds of sale of student-made products, etc.

### **Impact**

The students have benefitted from this policy of KISS and have done well in academics and co-curricular activities. The academic performance of the students in the board examinations for the last 5 years has been 100%. The Year 2015-2016 was no different and student did exceptionally well in the board examinations. KISS recorded 95% result compared to the State average of 85% in the 10th Annual Board Examination (BSE), Odisha-2016.

### **Key accolades conferred on KISS**

- **Special Consultative Status with the UN-ECOSOC** (in 2015) is the highest recognition to a non-government organization from the United Nations.
- **Among top 500 NGOs of the world and 10 best NGOs of India** as per 2016 rankings of NGO Advisor (a Geneva-based independent media organization)
- **Champion Level-Platinum Certification** by Guide Star India for NGO Transparency by GuideStar India

### **References**

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# ***Building relationships Creating value***

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