Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

- Based primarily on material available on government website http://ssa.nic.in

- Inputs also drawn from:
  - SSA,DPEP Project Appraisal Documents of WB. (available on WB-Website)
  - "Para Teachers in India: A Review", NIEPA, IIEP - a study financed by WB (available at http://www.azimpremjifoundation.org/)
  - State government SSA sites. (In particular, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh).

- Two important aspects of SSA that should be focused on:
  - Widescale acceptance of para-teachers
  - Formalisation of Non Formal Education (via EGS and AIE) – Not the focus of this talk.
Introduction: What is Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan? (From ssa.gov.in)

- A programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education.
- A response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.
- An opportunity for promoting social justice through basic education.
- An effort at effectively involving the local bodies in management of elementary schools.
- An expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.
- A partnership between the Central, State and the local government.
**Introduction: A brief history**

- Parateachers introduced in Rajasthan in 1980s as ’Shiksha Karmis’ under a program assisted by Swedish International Development Authority(SIDA).

- WB adopted the concept of in early 90s, beginning with Uttar Pradesh, under the series of programs called DPEP.

- The DPEPs were bought under single program entity called Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001-2002. In fact it merged:
  - Operation Blackboard, Teacher Education, Non Formal Education (Education Guarantee Schools, Alternative Schooling facilities, Balika Shikshan Shivir, ’Back to School’ camps, etc), Mahila Samakhya, National Programme for Nutritional Support for Primary Education, State Specific Education Projects in Bihar, Rajasthan, UP and AP and DPEP in 248 districts of 18 States, Lok Jumbish Project.
SSA: Broad Strategies Central to SSA Program

- A pre-project Phase
- Community ownership, and accountability to community
- Institutional reforms capacity building.
- Thrust on quality
- Improving mainstream educational administration
- Habitation as a unit of planning
- Priority to education of girls, SC/STs, disabled.
- District elementary education plans
- Role of teachers
SSA: Important Financial Norms

- Sustainable financing with increasing share of states.
- State governments to maintain 1999-2000 level of investment. SSA funds to be over and above this.
- All existing legal agreements continue to apply.
- Existing schemes (except National Bal Bhawan and NCTE, Mid Day Meal) will converge after the IX Plan.
- District Education Plans should reflect resources from all sources and schemes.
- All school funds to be transferred to local bodies.
- Other incentive schemes will continue to be funded by the State not by SSA.
SSA: Norms

- Teacher
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- Teacher
- School / Alternative schooling facility
SSA: Norms

- Teacher
- School / Alternative schooling facility
- Upper Primary schools/ Sector
SSA: Norms

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- School / Alternative schooling facility
- Upper Primary schools/ Sector
- Classrooms
SSA: Norms

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- Upgradation of EGS to regular school or setting up of a new Primary school as per State norm
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- Upgradation of EGS to regular school or setting up of a new Primary school as per State norm
- TLE for upper-primary
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Schools grant
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Schools grant
- Teacher grant
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Schools grant
- Teacher grant
- Teacher training
SSA: Norms cont’d.

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- State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT)
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Training of community leaders
SSA: Norms cont’d.

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- Provision for disabled children
SSA: Norms cont’d.

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- Research, Evaluation, supervision and monitoring
SSA: Norms cont’d.

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- Management Cost
SSA: Norms cont’d.

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- Teacher grant
- Teacher training
- State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT)
- Training of community leaders
- Provision for disabled children
- Research, Evaluation, supervision and monitoring
- Management Cost
- Interventions for girls’ education, ECCE, SC/ST community, and computer education.
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Block Resource Centres/ Cluster Resource Centres
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Block Resource Centres/ Cluster Resource Centres
- Interventions for out of school children
SSA: Norms cont’d.

- Block Resource Centres/ Cluster Resource Centres
- Interventions for out of school children
- Preparatory activities for microplanning, household surveys, studies, community mobilisation, school-based activities, office equipment, training and orientation at all levels, etc.
SSA: Other important aspects

- Envisions Community Based Monitoring with Full Transparency - The Educational Management Information System (EMIS).
- Regular monitoring proposed.
- Special attention for girls, SC/STs and Out of School Children (EGS).
- Also support to pre school children (ECCE).
- Support for civil construction.
- Support also provided to government aided schools.
1999-2000 level of investment: Maintained

Formation of annual plans: Not at the grass root levels as stipulated by norms.

Teachers training in practice to about 50% levels only.

Data is in sharp contrast to official dropout figures (based on about ten schools). 22% as opposed to district official figures of 2%.

Pass percentages of EGS is better for the two years 2001-2002, 2002-2003

Large teacher shortage (in spite of a large number of para-teacher appointments).
Aside: The debate on Parateachers.

Who are they anyway?

"They are hired at a substantially lower salary at around one-fifth the normal teachers salary, with Class 12 qualifications(reduced to Class 10 for females). "

Replacing regular government. teachers in regular government. schools where the reason usually cited is "lack of resources".

In the new EGS type of setups, they are the rule rather than exception
Whom do they teach?

- The documents are not very explicit about this. It may look like, reading some of them, that they are restricted to Primary classes.

- SSA site for UP State is more clearer: "Shiksha Mitra entrusted to teach class - I II. They are trained specifically for this."

- It is not clear if this is followed in other schools. In MP, "Shiksha Karmi" handle at least three grades, primary, upper primary, and secondary.

- In fact there are EGS for the upper primary sections. It is unlikely that the teacher in an EGS will be a regular teacher. Worse, it is possible that EGS has even lower grade of teachers - referred to as ’Education Volunteers’ in some documents.
Parateachers: How many of them?

- There is no authentic data as to number of parateachers.
- Estimates put number of parateachers to about 5 lakhs in year 2004. (Number of Primary and Upper Primary teachers was 19 lakhs and 13 lakhs respectively in 2000).
- In states like Madhya Pradesh official renaming of all teacher cadres as "teachers" permits them to bring statistics down to a level of 1.53% and 2.30% in rural and urban Primary schools respectively, and 0% in upper primary schools!
Parateachers: Why?

- "Currently, teachers salaries consume 97.6 percent of combined plan and non-plan expenditure on elementary education. Therefore, to employ additional teachers required to fill vacancies at government pay scales and service conditions will not help reduce unit costs in education."

- "The implication [of calculations] is that by the time the full responsibility the DPEP and Lok Jumbish projects fall on the government, universalization would require an increased allocation for primary education from 2.1 percent to between 2.4 and 2.6 percent of state GDP depending on the rate of economic growth and from 9 to 11 percent of total government expenditure. If the parateacher scheme is not implemented, if their payments increase to those of regular teachers, the requirement will be around 3.3 percent of state GDP."

- "The benefits regarding parateachers include more accountability less absenteeism, and incentive perform in Order to have their contract renewed, more engagement of the parateachers with parents and school committees, etc. The project has developed it parateacher training and teacher development program based on the successful SKP model which has been documented to produce greater achievement at the lower levels of primary education, and similar results to government schools in Class4."
Parateachers: What has it do with SSA?

- Legal agreements with the funding agencies contain clauses on Parateachers.

- State SSA sites also clearly mention induction of parateachers.

- However, parateachers is an independent phenomenon. They are replacing regular teachers well within the regular Primary Schools.
Parateachers: What does SSA say on teachers?

- The States will be free to follow their own norms as long as these consistent with the norms established by NCTE. There will be no compromise on standards even though payments of less than the State pay scale as an interim measure may be adopted in states with large-scale vacancies. The presence of the non-governmental sector has to be taken note of before working out vacancies.

- Ensure that there are no single teacher school. Overall, the effort will be to provide at least 1:40 teacher pupil ratio. Qualifications of Upper primary teachers will be as per state specific norms and the number of Upper Primary schools will be broadly as per the national policy norm. The practice of at least 50% women teachers will be strictly followed.

- The support for newly appointed teachers salaries under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will be for a ten-year period. Assistance will not be available for filling up existing vacancies that have arisen on account of attrition.

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will encourage decentralised management of teacher cadres. The Gujarat model of recruiting fully trained teachers on fixed pay as an interim strategy could be adopted in states with large-scale teacher vacancies. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan would like to improve the accountability of the teacher vis-à-vis local community without diluting the standards for selection of teachers, as laid down from time to time by the National Council of Teacher Education.
Parateachers: Issues

- **Underqualified**
  - The rampant unemployment in some places improves conditions.
  - However they are still underqualified when compared to the standard expectations.
  - Stipulated minimum qualification in Rajasthan is merely class 8th (class 5th in case of females!). At most places stipulated minimum requirements is either class 10th or 12th.

- **Underpaid**
  - Honorarium goes as low as Rs. 800, even much lower, average will be around Rs. 2000.
  - Five parateachers are employed in cost of one regular teacher.

- **Contract work**
  - All parateachers are appointed on a "one year contract", in fact effective for only ten months.
  - VEC can reappoint the Shiksha Mitra in next session keeping in view their work conduct.
  - Contract work also goes a long way in adding to insecurity (no pensions for example.)
Parateachers: Legal Situation

- Parateachers legitimised at a time when actually professional norms of teachers were being strengthened.

- Norms laid down by the NCTE seems to be at least 12 years of education education followed by 2 years of professional training in pedagogy.

- In draft approach paper for the Tenth Five-Year Plan approved by the Union Cabinet: "Steps would have to be ... remove legal impediments in the recruitment of para-teachers".

- Under terms of SSA, teacher appointments were to be continued from regular state budgets. This has not been generally followed.
Thank You