2.1 Introduction

Quality is a systemic trait rather than only a feature of instruction or attainment. As an overarching attribute, quality expresses the system’s capacity to reform itself for enhancing its ability to remedy its own weaknesses and to develop new capabilities. Quality is not merely a measure of efficiency; it also has a value dimension. The attempt to improve quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice. In the context of education two principles characterize most attempts to define quality: first learners’ cognitive development as the major explicit objective and second education’s role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development.

**Holistic Development of Learner:** These two principles of quality in education clearly direct us towards reducing gap between the intended, transacted and achieved curriculum. Inverse relationship exists between this gap and the quality. Wider the gap, wider the possibility of poor quality and minimum the gap greater the possibility for quality.

Further, our efforts for reducing the gap requires to provide adequate inputs with regard to quality which include, quality curriculum, effective teachers, realistic assessment in terms of learning progress, adequate career guidance and counseling provisions for adolescents and also to gear up processes with inbuilt monitoring and research components viz.; curriculum reform, reform in teacher education and examination with changed mindset ensuring participation of stakeholders from all the corners.

**Addressing Equity:** Quality must also be judged in the mirror of equity. An education system characterised by gender inequality or discrimination against particular groups on ethnic or cultural grounds is not of high quality.

**Gender Inequality:** ‘The Position Paper of the National Focus Group on Gender Issues in Education,(NCERT,2006)’ points out that the overall enrolment of girls has increased, the dropout rate of girls from marginalised and rural sections, specially from the upper primary level upwards is extremely high. A sizeable proportion of out of school dropouts, chiefly migrant, poor and working children, are girls – school discontinuation rates of rural girls are twice as high as that of boys. Thus, the likelihood of an urban girl continuing in school is low, and of a rural girl reaching Class XII very
unlikely. In real terms, what matters is not just access or enrolment but retention. While high costs of education is a social reason for poorer children not enrolling or dropping out of school, studies show that school factors are also responsible. The major reasons why children, both boys and girls, in both rural and urban area drop out are lack of interest in studies, hostile environment, poor teaching, non-comprehension, difficulties of coping, etc.

One study cited that 26 percent of children are of the view that school and teaching curricula related factors such as unfriendly atmosphere in schools, doubts about the usefulness of schooling and inability to cope with studies as reasons for their dropping out. Among girls in rural areas, these factors accounted for over 75 percent of the dropouts. Therefore, despite all the efforts of the education system to include girls, the system is “pushing out” those who are within, making it clear that issues of curriculum and pedagogy require critical attention in addition to enrolment.

Gender has to be recognised as a critical marker of transformation, and must become an important organising principle of the national and state curricular framework as well as every aspect of the actual curricula. Secondary stage curriculum should enable boys to question their own socialization into masculinity, and start the process of change in their personal relation and domestic life. They must be made to understand that in the ultimate analysis gender inequality doesn’t benefit anyone- it only leads to mistrust, insecurity and disharmony.

**Deprivation of the Marginalised Groups:** While an unprecedented rise in enrolment is evident of strong demand for education among the SC and ST, accessing basic school is as yet a massive problem. Though school participation rates have increased but attendance rates are quite unsatisfactory at the elementary level which is still worse at the secondary stage. Drop out; failure and low scholastic achievement affect SC and ST to a far greater degree than non SC, and ST school children.

Many of our schools now have large numbers of first generation learners. They would be completely dependent on the school for inculcating reading and writing skills and nurturing a taste for reading, and for familiarising them with the language and culture of the school, especially when the home language is different from the language of school. Many such children are also vulnerable to conditions prevailing at home, which might make them prone to lack of punctuality, irregularity and inattentiveness in the classroom.
The cumulative impact of enrolment of the diverse group of children in schools leads to low rates of school completion. Gender disparities are conspicuous on all educational indicators revealing the under-education of girls. Gender and class along with tribe and caste constitute fundamental categories of exclusion. Furthermore, significant inter-state, inter-regional and rural-urban disparities exist in many states and regions. Intra-caste and intra-tribe variations are also sharp and indicate that the relatively more marginalised of SC and ST groups experience gross educational deprivation. Scheduled tribes appear to lag behind the scheduled castes in most states barring largely the North – Eastern regions, due to specific socio-historical factors.

School curriculum and pedagogy must provide opportunities for every child’s learning and her free, creative and multidimensional development. The culture and experiences that the SC or ST Child brings to the school must be integral to an egalitarian teaching learning process in fulfilment of the goal of a meaningful education for all children.

**Rural –Urban Divide: **Rural –Urban divide in education is clearly visible in India. Many factors are responsible for this. These range from geographical to social-economic and cultural diversity. Illiteracy in rural parents is also an important reason. Lack of adequate physical facilities and information network often help in widening rural-urban gap. At secondary level it is observed that while urban middle-class students are stressed from the need to perform extremely well, rural children are not sure about whether their preparation is adequate even to succeed. It is well documented that much of the higher failure and dropout rates in rural schools can be attributed to poor performance in three subjects- Mathematics, Science and English. This forces one to critically review the whole system of evaluation and examination.

In this context, multiplicity of subsystems and types of schools tend to have a detrimental effect on the overall quality of the education system because the attention of the more articulate sections of society gets passed on a small fraction of the student population. It is desirable to evolve a common school system to ensure comparable quality in different regions of the country. When children of different backgrounds study together, it improves the overall quality of learning and enriches the school ethos. Social justice has many obvious implications. One obvious implication is that special efforts will be required to ensure that education promotes an inclusive identity. Children belonging to religious and linguistic minorities need special provision and care in accordance with the perspective reflected in the Constitution. Flexibility, continuity and plurality must be at the core of curricular vision.
2.2 Other Concerns

Adolescent Age: Secondary education covers the age group of 15 and 16, and followed by the higher secondary grades for the age group 17-18. These are the years of adolescence. These are the years of adolescence, and late adolescence. These are the years of transition; indeed, most crucial years of life. There are steady and fast changes in the body structure transforming to adult form and image of life. At this age, the bodily changes take final shape and stabilise. Adolescence is the stage of:

a. Intense physical change and formation of identity
b. Emergence of abstract reasoning and logical thinking
c. Intense vibrancy and energy
d. Emotional transformation and maturity that swings between joy and trauma
e. Stage of transition to work

Curriculum for the Adolescents

By the time children reach the secondary stage of education, they have acquired a sufficient knowledge base, experience, language abilities and maturity to engage with different forms of knowledge: concepts, structure of body of knowledge, investigation methods and validation procedures. Therefore, the subjects could be more closely linked with the basic forms and the disciplines as they are recognized in higher education and the curriculum at this stage should be, as far as framed on the basis of these abilities and interests. Moreover, the learners at this stage must be motivated for engagement with both understanding and generating knowledge beyond here and now and also opportunity for developing a critical understanding of the self in relation to society.

Such engagements and their access to laboratories and libraries will help them discovering their own interests and aptitudes and begin to form ideas on what courses of study and related work they might like to pursue later.

For a large number of children, this is also a terminal stage, when they leave school and begin acquiring productive work skills. Those for whom this stage becomes terminal on account of socio-economic circumstances need opportunities for learning creative and productive work skills while the system as a whole moves towards universalizing secondary education. The curriculum should provide them work related education not necessarily be narrowly vocational but with a definite work component. This will help in
developing their practical aptitude in the preparation for definite vocational work later. For example, a young student who shows signs of mechanical aptitude and is interested in mechanical things, may take a course with technical bias-not to become an engineer but to get a general introduction to that field of engineering which he/she may like to choose as his/her vocation after further training.

Therefore the secondary stage learners need a curriculum mix of knowledge and work components, which will provide him/her:

- Deep engagement with both understanding and generating knowledge
- Opportunities for learning creative and productive skills
- Adequate exposure of other areas such as arts and crafts.
- Career guidance and Counseling

**Career Guidance and Counseling:** Adolescence is a period in an individual’s life that is marked by personal, social and emotional crises created due to the demands of adjustment required in family, peer group and school situations. Counselors (may also be a teacher counselor), especially trained in theory and practice of counseling, can guide the students and help them develop the right attitudes and competencies to cope with educational, personal, social and career related problems and issues. The provision of these services in school particularly at this stage would help students cope with increasing academic and social pressures. A multi-pronged strategy is needed to make available guidance services a school stage across the country. A school must also have the provision of teacher counselor (teacher formally trained in counseling techniques) to provide continuous guidance if required for certain number of students.

**Inclusive Education:** Inclusive education refers to all learners, young people- with or without disabilities being able to learn together in ordinary school and community educational settings with appropriate network of support services. In addition to the provision of aids and appliances, a flexible, broad and balanced curriculum that can meet the need of all children is the call of the day

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** The significance of ICT as a site for curriculum planning has been widely recognised, but detailed guidelines and strategies for its optimum utilization in education are under process. If ICT is to become a means of enhancing curricular reform, it must treat the majority of teachers and children not merely consumers but also as active producers. Integration of ICT in school curriculum would take away the sense of burden and boredom that our present-day education induces. In
science and mathematics and in teaching children with disabilities, the potential of ICT is widely appreciated.

2.3 Challenges of Providing Quality Secondary Education

The Knowledge Challenge: The question, ‘What should be taught to the young?’ derives from a deeper question, namely, what aims worth pursuing in education? The answer is a vision of the capabilities and values that every individual must have and a socio-political and cultural vision for society. The essential purposes that needs to be pursued by the school education relates to social life, lifelong learning and the world of work.

In is widely recognised that mathematics and science should have a claim as quality indicators because they provide essential knowledge tools and foundations for lifelong learning skills. However, there is also a need to re-emphasise that social studies, foreign languages, ICT and arts and crafts, work related generic competencies (such as critical thinking, transfer of learning, creativity, communication skills, etc.) also depict their essential position in the curricular areas as well as in the world of work. All of these areas of knowledge and skills present major challenges for the teaching profession and to the content of teaching in initial and in-service training.

Change requires rethinking, reappraisal; re-evaluation of accepted practices, challenging what has always been done and accepted. Change often requires both restructuring and recapturing of organizations. It imposes new demands on hierarchies, status and relationships.

The Curriculum Challenge: The Knowledge challenge as discussed above lead us towards the curriculum challenge in school education. All indicated areas of knowledge emphasise that the curriculum needs to provide experiences that build the knowledge base through a progressive introduction to the capabilities of thinking rationally, to understand the world through various disciplines, foster aesthetic appreciation and sensitivity towards others, to work and to participate in economic processes.

Curriculum experiences need to be designed from the point of view of the need of the learner and from the larger perspective of the challenges facing humanity and the nation today. The secondary schools in India have following diverse categories of adolescents:

a. Those who have successfully completed eight year of schooling (may need less teacher’s time and enriched curriculum)

b. Those who have completed eight year of schooling but still posses gaps in terms of fundamental concepts, skills and behavioural attributes
(may need more time and a curriculum which not only work as a remedy to their learning gaps and but also help in learning higher concepts)

c. Those who have left the mainstream for one or more years after completing eight year of schooling and now entering in the secondary education (may need bridge courses to bridge the learning gaps).

Even under these categories there exist two broad sub-categories such as boy and girl and rural and urban and further these broad categories also include other categories such as first generation learners, learners belonging to migratory population, learners belonging to Scheduled Caste(SC)/Scheduled Tribe (ST) categories, differently abled learners, etc. So there may be a differently abled girl belonging to Scheduled Caste residing in remote rural area, entering in secondary education with many gaps in her learning after two years. This girl has multiple disadvantages. What kind of curriculum and pedagogy we provide her to overcome her learning gaps and remain in the system? This is a curriculum challenge, which needs to be addressed.

**The Resource Challenge:** Presently the serious resource challenge lies in the intelligent and cost-effective use of resources. Experiences of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA) and other programmes have shown that although there are substantial expansion of facilities but at many places these facilities are under utilised e.g. Computers; laboratory equipments in many cases are not used properly at secondary stage. The reason relates to the knowledge and curriculum challenge. Unless we bring comprehensive and serious reform in curriculum incorporating the concerns related to pedagogy of science, mathematics, language, ICT, health, arts, etc. generating the need for the use and sharing of resources, the resource challenge will continue to be a constrain for improving quality.

**The Challenge of Decentralisation:** In order to realise the constitutional mandate of decentralized democracy and development almost all the state governments enacted their state Panchayati Raj. Moreover, in every educational scheme and programme of Govt. of India has decentralized planning component. However, there are huge ambiguities and overlaps in the functions and tasks to be discharged at different levels. These ambiguities often result in conflicts between the three tiers, especially with respect to: Who plans? Who decides? Who selects? Who accords approval? Who implements? Who releases funds? Who monitors? Indeed there is no role clarity between the functions at the different levels.
The Challenge of Data and Comparability: Benchmarking is a way of thinking about national performance, about local and regional effectiveness and performance at the level of individual schools. Benchmarks can be used diagnostically and formatively to inform policy and practice but are sometimes also viewed as threat.

The challenge of comparability is to create an open and positive climate for dialogue. Comparison, which is perceived as unfair, becomes detrimental to the positive and constructive use of benchmark data. The obvious place to start with standards attained by children at school- their outcomes on leaving school, their acquisition of basic skills at key stages of development.

Data on pupil attainment at given ages is, however, of limited use to policy making without knowledge of the conditions in which attainment is raised and of limited value without an understanding of factors which contribute to good teaching and effective learning. This raises the question of availability of comparative data.

While selecting indicators and benchmarks it is important to see which are most effective and stimulating and open policy dialogue, one which looks forward to policy implications of data and available for further enquiry in the future needs to be selected for work.

2.4 Strategies

Our goal of quality secondary education requires following strategies to be adopted at the national, state, district and school level:

Curriculum Reforms

a. Evolving a mechanism at state level to bring curriculum reform in tune with the emerging curricular vision as suggested in NCF-2005 in terms of flexibility, contextuality and plurality.

b. Evolving a mechanism to provide all the adolescents an opportunity for meaningful learning and successful completion of secondary education by creating enabling school environment and inclusive curriculum.


Assessment and Examination Reform: Evolving a scheme of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) leading to examination reforms at secondary level along with a mechanism for its implementation in letter and spirit.
Reform in Teacher Education at Secondary Stage

a. Teacher Recruitment Policy: This requires evolving state specific recruitment, deployment and transfer policy for recruitment of quality teachers under the broad guidelines provided by the national agencies.

b. Pre-service Teacher Education: This requires overhauling of pre-service teacher education programme at secondary level adding the component of pre-service teacher education at higher secondary level which is an untouched area and need attention with regard to the future vision of RMSA to provide senior secondary education to all.

c. In-service Teacher Professional Development: This requires designing the modalities for continuous in-service teacher education in view of the emerging curricular vision of flexibility, contextuality and plurality for school education. The modalities must focus on the significant changes in each subject area as informed by the recent curriculum reform. The modalities must also take care of the emerging national, social and systemic concerns such as gender inequality, sensitivity toward marginalized groups, inclusive education, examination reform, vocational education, art and aesthetics, peace, work and health. In order to achieve the above required reforms, there is a need to evolve a mechanism of continuous in-service teacher education for all the teachers at secondary level involving various management structures with the help of modalities designed incorporating emerging curricular vision and continuous in-service training for all the Heads/Principals on effective academic leadership and administration.

Guidance and Counseling: There is a need to evolve a mechanism of providing students intervention/awareness to deal with the problems of adolescents’ health (with special focus on the health of girls) and adjustment and also to guide them for their future career as per their interests and engagement in various subject areas.

Environment Building: There is a need to evolve a mechanism for building the environment and generate public opinion in favour of universalisation of secondary education to implement RMSA. It is only through environment building that community can be mobilized. This is particularly necessary to ensure participation of girls, scheduled castes, schedule tribes, other backward classes, cultural and linguistic minorities and the disabled. Without involving all and each of them, USE will remain another elusive dream.

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**Open Schooling:** There is a need to evolve a mechanism of providing secondary education of comparable quality to even those adolescents who are out of school and are not able to join formal schooling due to social and economic factors.

**Monitoring:** There is a need to strengthen the mechanism of monitoring interventions provided at various levels on various aspects of the secondary education and also introducing a feedback loop to support the functionaries at all the levels if required.

**Research:** Promoting a culture of research/inquiry in view of providing inputs to policies and scheme related to secondary stage and also the aspect of programme evaluation should be strengthened.

**Innovation:** Efforts should be made for promoting innovations, both at micro and macro levels in the areas of curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education and assessment and evaluation.

**Community Participation and Public Private Partnership:** The school needs to explore opportunities for active engagement by parents and communities in the process of learning as well as ensuring equity in the school. This can be done in many ways. For instance, parents and community members could come into the school as resource persons and share their knowledge and experiences in relation to a particular topic. Schools should allow community to transfer oral history (e.g. folklores, migration, environmental degradation, traders, etc.) and traditional knowledge (sowing and harvesting, traditional crafts etc.) to learners; influence the content of subjects by providing local, practical and appropriate examples; support learners in their exploration and creation of knowledge and practise of democracy; monitor the realisation of children’s rights as well as violations of these rights; and participate in setting criteria for vocational training.

Parents and other members of the community may also be invited to attend a lecture by academic mentor or expert from the University on equity issues such as gender discrimination, and other discriminations to spread awareness and building environment for sending their children for secondary and further education. School can also take initiatives to organise ‘nukar natak’ and role plays with the help of students, teachers and community members for environment building. There can be an understanding that school space can be shared with the community for local events. Community involvement can also be sought for maintaining the school and its facilities.
The RMSA recognises public-private partnership as an important tool for improving the quality of certain aspects and facilities which contribute to the overall quality of education provided in schools. The framework mentions that wherever possible, philanthropic investment by private organizations should be utilized for improving school infrastructure and resources such as libraries, science labs, audio-visual and ICT facilities, art and craft workshops, sports facilities and equipment, drinking water and toilet facilities.

According to RMSA framework around 58.86% of high schools are run by private sector and out of these 31.08% of high schools are classified as private unaided schools. A partnership model for utilizing the services of these private schools for running second shift for the children of the under privileged section may be explored where grant-in aid towards teachers salary and other expenditure related to cleanliness and the learning resource material for these children can be provided by the government.

Public-Private Partnership may also be explored for ICT enabled secondary education and vocational training of secondary students. Similarly transport arrangement for students particularly for girls can be outsourced.

Certified vocational sites (both private and public) in each district may be identified for the acquisition of core work skills and experience where students can receive vocational training However, care must be taken that children are not exploited. Private sector may also be involved in designing curriculum and in designing a testing and certification system so that the demand for appropriate skill by the industry can be met.

The overall plan of action for quality improvement in secondary education may be suggested as follows:

2.5 Plan of Action

Various national and state level institutes such as National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), District Institutes of Educational Training (DIET), Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), College of Teacher Education (CTE), State Boards and University Departments etc., need to be strengthened and acquainted about their role for quality improvement in secondary education under RMSA in specific terms. They need to perform the functions as mentioned below:
National Level
1. National Resource Group (NRG) will be set up to provide policy guidance, direction and capacity building for quality improvement with regard to Curriculum Reforms, ICT enabled secondary education, appropriate pedagogic and evaluation practices, pre-vocational courses for skill development, in-service professional development of secondary school teachers, management of quality issues in various states/UTs, capacity building for research studies, including action researches. The members of NRG will be drawn from the national level institutions such as NCERT, NUEPA, Planning Commission, NCTE, IGNOU, NIOS, TSG (Ed. CIL ) etc1.
2. NCERT will develop indicators of quality on various aspects of school education for formal schooling. Similarly, NIOS will develop indicators for open schooling.
3. The NCERT and NUEPA will provide academic guidance and orientation to the state/UT functionaries and teacher educators/key resource persons enabling them to handle the quality issues relating to quality at secondary stage with regard to:
   a. Carry out curriculum and examination reforms at the secondary stage.
   b. Strengthen linkages between primary, upper primary, secondary and senior secondary level curriculum including syllabus designing and textbook preparation.
   c. Equip heads of schools in school management and leadership for effective school governance.
   d. Encourage greater linkage, communication and transparency between different structures including NGOs and levels of decision making.
   e. Create spaces where local –level representative institutions can work closely with teachers to enhance efficiency
   f. Take significant measures to facilitate secondary schooling in learner’s home language or regional language. A more adequate set of measures providing for multilingual facility on the part of the teacher is needed. Similarly, policy measures taken to widen the scope of madrasa education need to be strengthened.
4. NCERT to develop the Quality Monitoring Tools for monitoring quality at various stages of the implementation of the scheme.

1 For further details regarding the composition and functioning of NRG refer chapter 11.
5. NCERT and NUEPA to coordinate the mechanism of Monitoring and Evaluation in States/UT through National Resource Group (NRG), which will involve experts from the NCERT, NUEPA, NCTE, NIOS, MHRD, Ed. CIL, Central Universities, etc.

6. NCERT, NUEPA and NIOS to provide academic guidance for researches, survey and pilot studies to states/UTs with a view to improve quality of secondary education.

**State Level**

1. States/UTs need to prepare their perspective and annual plans for obtaining central assistance under RMSA involving District level education functionaries which will be appraised by MHRD with the support of TSG-EDCIL and members from the NCERT, NUEPA, Planning Commission, NIOS, etc.

2. The State Governments and Union Territory Administration will take the responsibility for setting up State Resource Group for reviewing and guiding quality components in their annual plans, facilitating the execution of annual plans with regard to quality components, conducting the orientation programmes for district level functionaries on quality issues for the execution of annual plans, ICT enabled secondary education, evolving effective and operational mechanism for effective programme evaluation through researches, use of tools and techniques and visits, coordination and feedback to MHRD/TSG2.

3. State level Institutions such as SCERT, State Boards, STTIs, IASEs, CTEs, SIEs, SIEMAT, etc. to make arrangements for the ITPD programmes and induction training.

4. State open school will facilitate states to provide secondary education to out-of –school children who are not able to continue with formal schooling due to socio-economic factors.

5. State Vocational Institutions/Polytechnics, etc. will provide guidance and identify vocational workshops for secondary children outside the school to give them hands-on exposures to various vocations relevant for them. The Public Private Partnership’s (PPP’s) model should be strengthened for a purpose of creating work benches for vocational

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2 For further details regarding the composition and functioning of SRG, refer chapter 11.
skill development. State will help schools to set SDMC or sub district level mechanism to implement RMSA at the school level.

**District level**

1. The State Governments and Union Territory Administration will take the responsibility for setting up District Resource Group (DRG) for planning and managing all quality components within the time frame and reflecting adequately in the district level plans, establishing ICT infrastructure for secondary schools, particularly the portals and the networks, providing internet connectivity of adequate bandwidth and ensure adequate comfort levels with the use of technology, facilitating research, evaluation and monitoring of quality aspects in secondary schools, encouraging innovations in school education and conduct of action research by secondary school teachers, Providing *on site guidance* to academic problems of secondary stage teachers.

2. DRG will also carry out the programmes for popularising science and mathematics, enhancing teacher’s communication skill and proficiency particularly in English language, environment building in the community, training and orientation of SDMC members, etc.

2.6 Strengthening of Resource Institutions and Enhancing Synergy

1. MHRD needs to take steps towards strengthening resource institutions responsible for implementing the RMSA by making provisions for necessary infrastructure, human resources, capacity building and professional development of the faculty, etc.

2. MHRD also needs to form a group at the ministry to manage the synergy among all these resource institutions for better and fast implementation of quality aspects of RMSA.

2.7 Budgetary Provision

1. The RMSA scheme under the head quality improvement in secondary and higher secondary education mentions that the budgetary requirement for the creation of new structure, strengthening of existing structure and revision of curriculum by the states/UTs under the broad framework of NCF-2005 should be met out of 2.2% of the plan allocations earmarked for management and monitoring. Further

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3 For further details regarding the composition and functioning of DRG, refer chapter 11.
for research and monitoring also, the requirement of funds to be met out of 2.2% earmarked for MMER cost.

2. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MMER) for access and equity aspects are a major intervention, which requires sufficient budgetary allocation. It is being felt that presently the budget earmarked for MMER is quite less, and sharing this allocation with curriculum reform and other quality interventions may not be fruitful for providing adequate quality interventions. Considering, the emerging perspectives of quality in curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education, assessment and evaluation, comprehensive dialogues, interaction, deliberations and discussions are required to be initiated at national, state and district level. This requires formal meetings and workshops at different levels and orientation of various stakeholders involved in this process. Moreover, providing teachers one or two time training in year will not be sufficient to motivate them for regular and lifelong learning. There are many occasions where teachers need immediate interventions and guidance for action research. This requires continuous mentoring and academic support.

3. There is an urgent need for separate budget allocation for quality initiatives essentially 5% of the plan allocations, which will influence optimization of infrastructure created under RMSA. It is further suggested that research in the area of quality is seen as an ongoing continuous academic activity rather than an activity to support monitoring and supervision system. Therefore, budget provision for research for quality is to be made within budget allocation for quality initiatives.

**Note:** Subsequent chapters in this document deal with some of aforesaid strategies as an area to provide clear vision and guidelines (also giving space for flexibility) for the programmes to be undertaken and the modalities (at the national /state/district level) for the same along with the financial implications in these areas for quality improvement.