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## **India & World Bank sign loan agreement to improve quality of learning for over 50 lakh students across Andhra Pradesh**

The Government of India, Government of Andhra Pradesh and the World Bank on 18th November 2021 signed the legal agreements for US\$250 million for a project which aims to improve quality of learning for over 50 lakh students in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Students from all grades and stages of school education will benefit from the project. The beneficiaries are about 40 lakh students (between the age of six and fourteen) in over 45,000 government schools, and over 10 lakh children (between the age of three and six) enrolled in Anganwadis (Integrated Child Development Centers), and about 1,90,000 teachers, and more than 50,000 Anganwadi workers.

The Supporting Andhra's Learning Transformation Project will encourage professional development of teachers; provide remedial learning courses for children impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and pay special attention to students from marginalized groups, including children with special needs, scheduled tribes, and girls.

The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, stated that “Providing universal access to quality education is central to India's economic and social development. The Project will support the state of Andhra Pradesh in fulfilling its vision of transforming government schools into vibrant institutions focused on foundational learning for young children, including addressing learning losses for children impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The agreement was signed by Shri Rajat Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Government of India; Mr Budithi Rajsekhar, Principal Secretary, Department School Education on behalf of the Government of Andhra Pradesh; and Mr Junaid Ahmad, Country Director, India on behalf of the World Bank.

The state has adopted a new competency-based teaching-learning approach. The project will improve teaching practices through classroom-based mentorships, need-based teacher training for teachers of all grades and subjects, Personalized Adaptive Learning (PAL) methods, and other forms of remedial education linked to standardized school-based assessments.

Developing the institutional capacity of schools for delivering these services will go a long way in building community confidence and improving the learning environment. The project will help with better maintenance of school facilities, support involvement of parents in

school management and monitoring, make data available, and enhance school safety.

The focus on foundational learning would be through short-term in-service training courses for Anganwadi workers and early grade (Grade 1 and 2) teachers and the supply of pedagogically appropriate Teaching Learning Material (TLM) across these centres and schools. Such attention to foundational learning will improve the readiness of schools in preparing children with the cognitive, socio-behavioural, and language skills needed for future labour markets. The project will introduce a one-year preschool-level course in 3,500 schools in the tribal blocks. It will help address the issue of low learning levels amongst the tribal community.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, home-based learning opportunities for students are of top priority for the state. Given the low availability of digital devices amongst students, the focus will be on developing physical learning kits and content for television and radio broadcasts. It will help in reducing the learning losses that children are likely to face due to school closures because of the ongoing pandemic, future natural disasters, or other disruptions related to climate change.

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Warm Regards,

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