



PHD Research Bureau
PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry



ADB to Help Improve Quality and Inclusive School Education in India

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a US\$500 million loan to help the Government of India improve the quality of the country's school education and mitigate the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on students' learning.

The loan supports the Integrated Scheme for School Education (*Samagra Shiksha*) and the new Exemplar School Initiative of the Ministry of Education (MOE) to improve education quality by focusing on inclusive and equitable learning outcomes. About 1,800 government schools will be transformed into exemplar schools in the states of Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand. Exemplar schools will demonstrate quality learning environments and effective learning, which will become a model for replication in other government schools across India.

India's concerted efforts to improve access to education have resulted in boosting school enrollment over the past 2 decades. Primary enrollment reached near universal level by 2016, and girls' enrollment now exceeds boys' enrollment in most states of India. However, increased schooling has not yet translated into improved learning outcomes. Many primary students are not gaining proficiency in foundational literacy and numeracy. Learning deficiencies at lower grades can lead to weak employability later in life. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation with long school closures and limited remote learning, especially in rural areas.

In addition to supporting the Exemplar School Initiative, the loan will help scale up foundational learning for primary students and enhance the relevance of secondary education by introducing science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics (STEAM) and integrated vocational education. The learning interventions will be implemented across a larger set of cluster-level schools in the five states.

It will also provide continuous professional development for teachers and principals to build their pedagogic skills, subject knowledge, and digital skills. The program mainstreams digital technologies in teaching-learning practices and expands local digital contents based on lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will strengthen each state's education management information system to monitor school performance and promote evidence-based planning. ADB will help the MOE establish national guidelines and develop curricula frameworks for STEAM and integrated vocational education.

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Warm Regards,

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