

SEVEN NORTHEASTERN STATES LAG BEHIND IN TOILETS FOR SCHOOLGIRLS

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

Nationally, about 66.4% schools provide girls with toilets.

An average of 34.96% schools in the eight northeastern States had usable toilets for girls in 2018 compared to 36.66% in 2016, data analysed from the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018 report revealed.

With 75.7% schools – a marginal increase from 75% in 2016 – having usable toilets for girls, Sikkim performed better than the national average of 66.4% last year. But the State's show was overshadowed by the less-than-satisfactory performance by seven other States in the region.

Nagaland was the next best State with 47%, an increase from 40.9% in 2016, followed by Mizoram with the highest percentile increase from 25.3% to 34.9% in these two years.

The other five states performed poorly, the steepest drop for Assam being 38.3% from 54.2% in 2016. Manipur had 9.1% schools having fewer usable toilets for girls, followed by Meghalaya (8.6%), Arunachal Pradesh (7.6%) and Tripura (7.3%).

J&K suffers too

The national averages hide major variations across the states, with deficiencies particularly marked in Jammu and Kashmir apart from most of the north-eastern states, the ASER report, prepared by NGO Pratham, said. In Jammu and Kashmir, 48.2% schools had toilets for girls last year, up from 46.7% in 2014 (data for J&K for 2016 was not available). The State provided drinking water in 54.6% schools in 2018, better than the average 44.4% schools in the north-eastern states. The average for the Northeast last year was poorer than the 44.99% in 2016. Sikkim, Assam and Mizoram had an average 68.53% schools that had drinking water facilities in schools. The national average was 74.8%.

According to the report, 2018 completed eight years of compulsory schooling for the first cohort of students to benefit from Right to Education Act 2010.

National picture

“Nationally, substantial improvements are visible over this eight-year period in the availability of many school facilities mandated by RTE. The fraction of schools with usable girls' toilets doubled, reaching 66.4% in 2018. The percentage of schools with books, other than textbooks, available rose from 62.6% to 74.2% between 2016-18.

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