

For immediate release

POLICY TRACKERS ON THE EDUCATION EMERGENCY

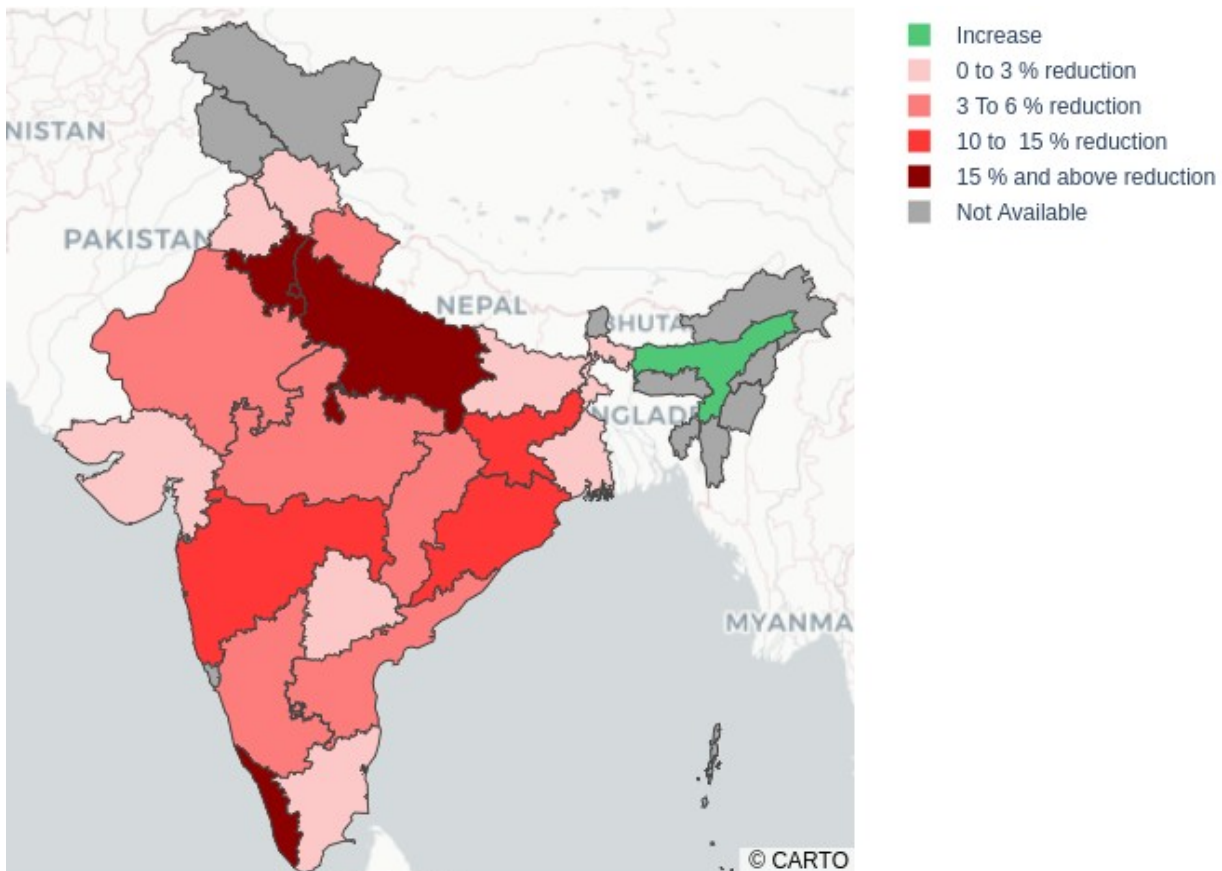
January 28, 2022

Policy Tracker : State Education Finance

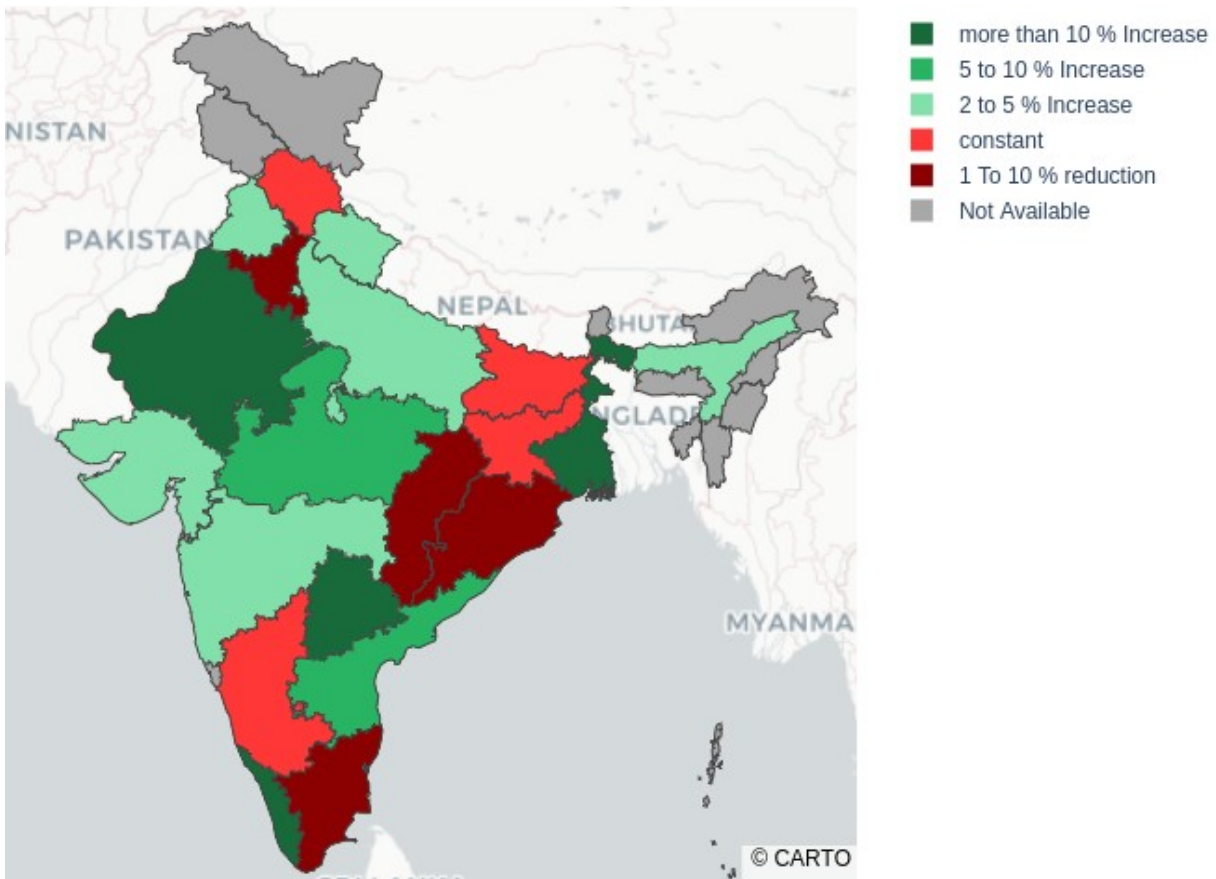
An education emergency of unprecedented proportions has severely impacted hundreds of millions of children in India. Prolonged school closures have caused learning deprivation, student dropout, increased child labour, malnutrition, and early marriages that are compromising the future of our country. It is time to open schools and massively increase funding of public education with a clear focus on the disadvantaged and marginalized. Under-funding in the education sector has been a serious concern for decades. The need of the hour is not only increased public spending on education but also appropriate allocations for addressing the issues of resuming learning, reorganising the curriculum, combating malnutrition, and supporting the socio-emotional development of children.

The National Education Emergency Coalition (NCEE) has launched Policy Trackers on the Education Emergency. The '[Policy Tracker : State Education Finance](#)' consists of three maps that provide information on education budgets and education financing by state Ministries of Education for 2020-21 and 2021-22.

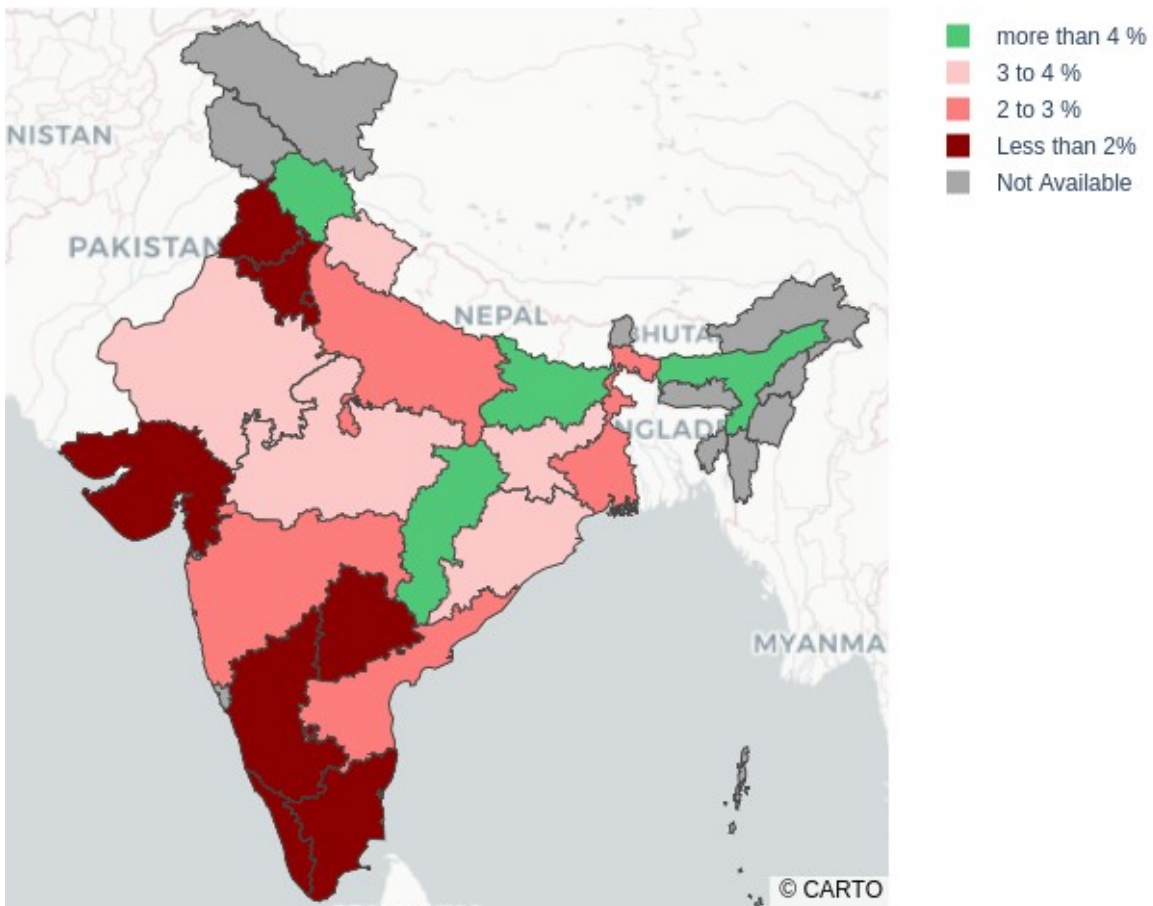
Map 1 : In 2020-21 most states drastically reduced their education budget allocations vis-à-vis their original budget estimates



Map 2 : In 2021-22, a majority of states decreased or kept constant their education budget allocations compared to 2020-21



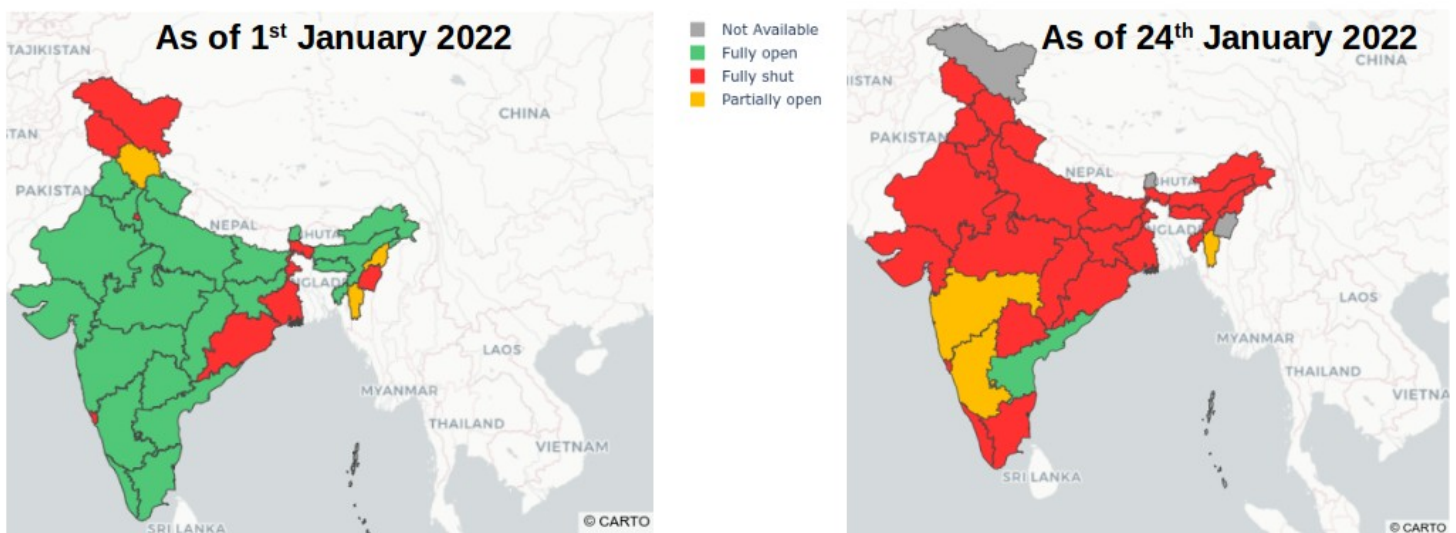
Map 3 : Most states allocated less than 4 percent of their income to education (2020-21)



Dr Jyotsna Jha, Director, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies (CBPS), said, "Although most states have maintained the per child expenditure in nominal terms, it has largely remained static, which in real terms means a reduction in most cases. Education, which occupies two-third to three-fourth of child budgets, has been devastated by the almost continuous school closure for nearly two years, and needs huge budgetary increases."

Policy Tracker : School Opening Status

Across the world, schools have been mostly kept open, in some countries even throughout the pandemic. Yet, we see that the maxim of **'schools must be the last to close and the first to open'** is not being applied in states across the country. Decisions on opening and phasing must be made by the district and taluka administration, and under guidelines issued by the state and central governments, for greater flexibility. The maps below obtained from the **'Policy Tracker : School Opening Status'** show the alarming difference between the number of states that had lower primary schools open as of 1st January 2022 and the current situation (as of 24th January 2022).



Dr. Niranjanaradhya V.P., eminent educationist and chief advocate of state funded public education said, "The Policy Tracker reveals the dismal state of affairs; governments have kept schools closed when there has been no scientific reasons to do so, unlike most other countries. The harm from school closure will affect our children for generations. Even when the third wave has been established to cause a mild illness, and all economic activities have been permitted, including theatres, malls, and swimming pools, schools have been closed. This is unconscionable. School closures not only affect the learning but also nutrition, health and well-being of children. It will have disastrous consequences on our economy."

We demand that both state and central governments increase education budgets and allocate additional funds for education in this Budget. Adequate steps must be taken to address the education emergency that we are facing.

- **National Coalition on the Education Emergency** (a group of individuals, organizations and networks across the country which have come together to 'resume and renew' school education. The NCEE working groups produce research studies, curricular resources, guidelines for school opening to support governments, teachers, parents and communities to address the Education Emergency).
info@educationemergency.net | www.educationemergency.net