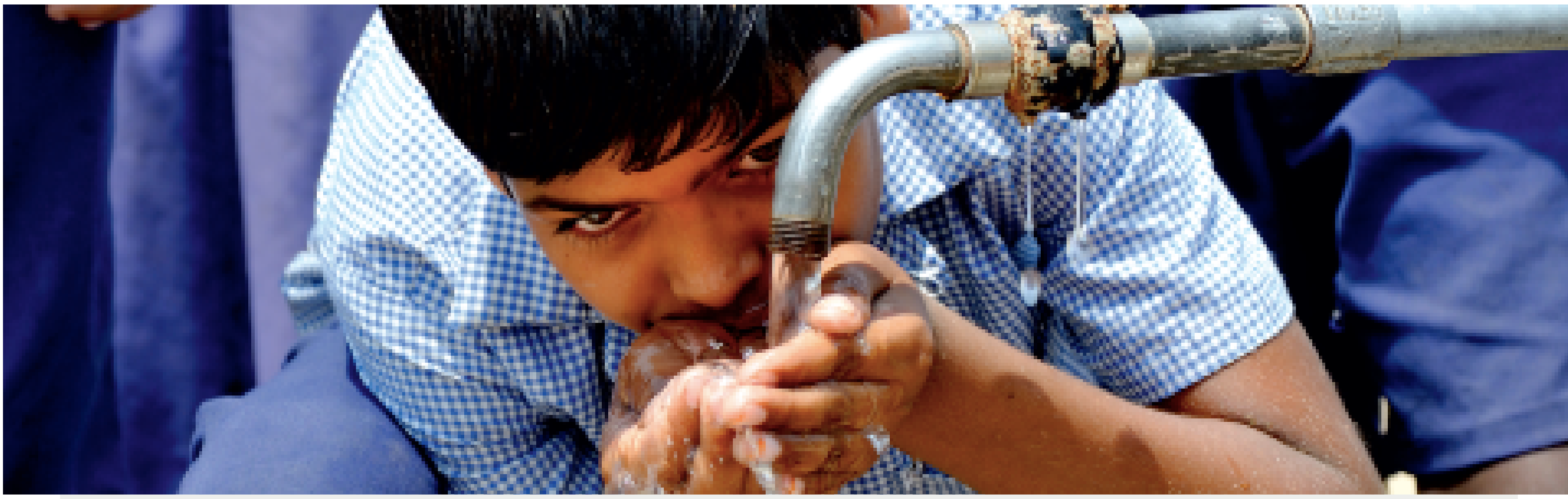
Government of Karnataka rolls out free water quality testing in government schools



The Government of Karnataka (GoK) has taken a huge leap towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 and Target 6.1 in school settings. "SDG 6 seeks to achieve access to safe drinking water for all". Towards this end, GoK has mandated water quality testing twice a year, free of cost, in all the government schools.

Baseline data collected under Strengthening Swachh Vidyalaya" Initiative (SSVI)* under Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya has revealed that, in 2019- 2020:

- about 30% schools carried out water testing once a year and,
- 18.3% schools test twice a year

Centre for Environment Education (CEE) has shared the above data with State Project Director (SPD) Samagra Sikshana, Karnataka (SSK), Government of Karnataka, to take suitable actions for ensuring water quality testing in all schools. Immediate action was taken by SSA by issuing a circular instructing all District Education Officers (DEOs) to get water quality tested, twice a year, in all government schools.

The State Project Director (SPD) SSK, wrote to the Commissioner, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department (RDWSD) to ensure . A circular was issued from the Commissioner RDWSD to all District government laboratories to provide mandatory water testing in government school, twice a year, free of cost.

At present, water testing is mandatory in all the Government Schools in Karnataka, twice a year and free of cost.

Further to this, CEE team advocated with the Districts to make use of this opportunity and complete water quality testing. Inturn district SSA officials initiated activities for the same.

Currently, all the districts are gearing up to ensure water quality testing in schools.

'SSVI is a joint initiative of UNICEF, Centre for Environment Education, Samagra Shikshana Karnataka and Department of Education, Government of Karnataka for strengthening WASH in schools.'

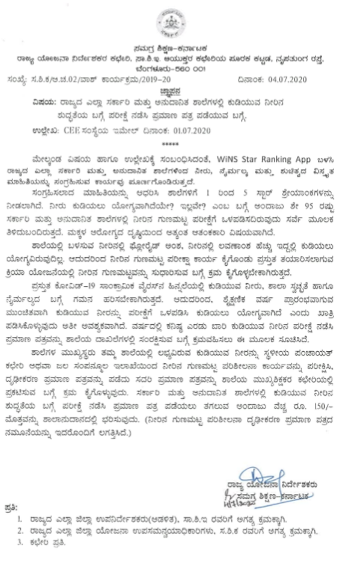


Fig-1:Circular issued by SSA mandating water testing in schools

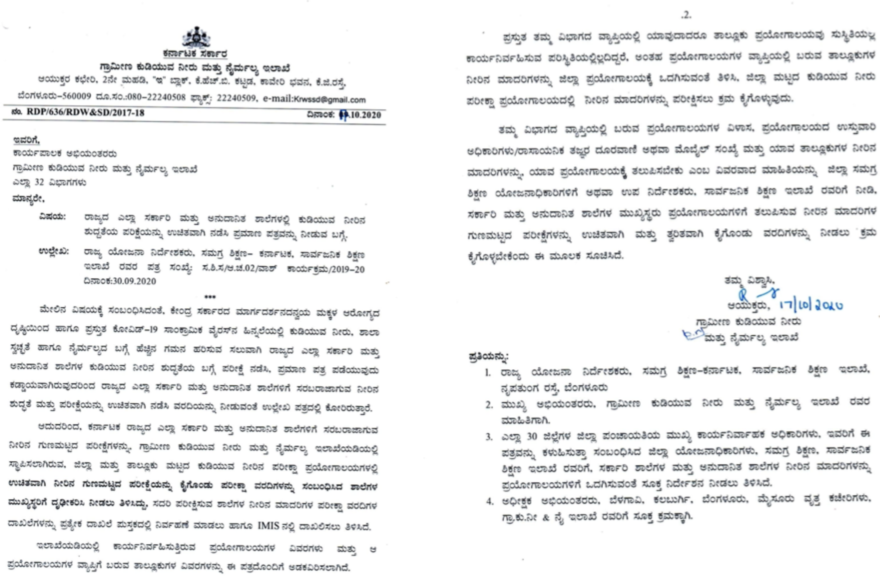


Fig-2 & 3: Circular issued by Commissioner RWSD mandating free water testing in schools