Annual Status of Education Report
असर ASER 2020 RURAL WAVE 1
Facilitated by PRATHAM

# Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2020 Wave 1

February 1, 2021

# ASER 2020 Wave 1 - Rural

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Our heartfelt thanks to all our partner organisations and volunteers for conducting the ASER 2020 survey in their districts.

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Shri Sarvajanik B.S.W. and M.S.W. College, Mehsana

Kerala
Department of Social Work, St. Thomas' College (Autonomous), Thrissur

Tripura
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Organization for Rural Survival, Belonia, South Tripura
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# About Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020 Wave 1

## About ASER

Every year from 2005 to 2014, the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) report has provided district, state, and national estimates of the status of children's schooling and foundational learning across rural India. Children in the age group 3 to 16 were surveyed to find out their enrollment status in pre-school or school. Children in the age group 5 to 16 were assessed one-on-one to understand their basic reading and arithmetic abilities.

Starting its second decade of existence in 2016, ASER switched to an alternate-year cycle, where the 'basic' ASER described above is conducted every other year (2016, 2018); and in alternate years, ASER focuses on a different aspect of children's schooling and learning. In 2017, ASER 'Beyond Basics' focused on the abilities, activities, awareness, and aspirations of youth in the 14 to 18 age group across 28 districts in the country. In 2019, ASER 'Early Years' reported on young children's (age 4 to 8) pre-school and school enrollment status and their abilities on a range of important developmental indicators across 26 districts in the country.

The COVID-19 crisis interrupted this alternate-year calendar, making it impossible to conduct the nationwide 'basic' ASER that was due to be repeated in 2020. However, the urgent need to systematically examine the effects of the pandemic on schooling and learning opportunities of children across the country was apparent.

## Why ASER 2020 Wave 1?

Recent global estimates suggest that school closures, unequal access to technology-based educational inputs used for remote learning, and other related disruptions due to the pandemic are likely to result in 'learning loss' and higher dropout rates, aggravating existing equity gaps in education among other consequences. In India, numerous studies have been done on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country since the first lockdown was announced in March 2020, but very few cover children's education. Although a lot of digital content has been generated and transmitted to help children continue to learn while at home, there is limited evidence on the extent to which this content is in fact reaching children; whether they are engaging with it; and the impact it is having on their participation and learning.

In order to take the unprecedented pandemic-related constraints into account, but at the same time address the urgent need for large scale nationally representative data on children's education, the ASER 2020 survey was adapted to a phone survey format that could be conducted in multiple waves, in order to capture the effects of the pandemic on different aspects of children's education.

## What is ASER 2020 Wave 1?

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 survey was designed to be conducted at a time when schools have not yet reopened and governments and schools are reaching out to children through a variety of remote means with diverse educational content. It explores the provision of, and access to, remote education mechanisms and materials in rural parts of the country, and the ways in which children, families, and educators are engaging with these from their homes.

**Objectives:** The ASER 2020 Wave 1 survey focuses on the following key questions regarding provision of, access to, engagement with, and challenges concerning remote learning during school closures:

- What resources do families have to support children's learning at home?
- How are families and other community members helping children with learning activities?
- What learning materials and activities are children and families receiving from schools?
- How are families and children accessing learning materials and activities?
- Are children engaging with these learning materials and activities?

- What kind of contact do teachers and children/parents have with each other?
- What kinds of challenges are families and teachers facing with regard to remote learning?

**Sample:** The standard operating procedure for ASER survey includes recording a contact number from each household and school surveyed, where available. These phone numbers are used to monitor and cross-check the data collection effort in that survey year. The ASER 2020 household survey was therefore conducted with a random sample of households with mobile phones drawn from the ASER 2018 data set, selected to generate estimates that are representative at state and all-India levels. In addition, head teachers or teachers from all schools in the ASER 2018 sample were included in the ASER 2020 school survey. Extensive pilots and experiments were conducted to check the feasibility of the ASER 2018 data set as a sampling frame for ASER 2020. For more details on sampling, see the note on Sample design of rural ASER 2020 Wave 1. For more details on implementation, see section on ASER 2020 Wave 1 Process documents.

**Design:** To conduct the survey, phone calls were made to parents/caregivers of children aged 5-16 in 118,838 households as well as head teachers or teachers in 16,761 schools over a span of ten days in September 2020, the sixth month of continuous school closures across the country. Of these, the survey was completed with 52,227 households and 8,963 teachers (see section on Survey coverage for more details). Using standardised questionnaires, information was collected separately for each child in the 5-16 age group in each surveyed household. For schools, information was collected for the grade (between Std 1-8) that the teacher could provide the most information for.

**This report uses the ASER 2020 survey data to explore the following areas:**

- **Children's enrollment:** Explores patterns of enrollment and dropout among 6-16 year olds in rural India.
- **Children not currently enrolled:** Examines which children are currently not enrolled in school and the reasons behind this.
- **Household resources:** Explores whether households have key resources that can help support children's education. These include parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks.
- **Learning support at home:** Examines whether and how households support children during school closures. This includes support from family members as well as other support such as paid private tuition.
- **Access to and availability of learning materials:** Reports whether families received learning materials or activities from schools, and the mediums through which they accessed these.
- **Children's engagement with learning materials and activities:** Analyses the extent to which children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities received from any source; as well as the nature of contact between families and schools during the lockdown.
- **School survey:** Explores teachers' preparation for and implementation of remote teaching-learning activities with their students, and whether they received any help from the community to support children's learning during school closures.

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# Commentary

# The Q&A of school shutdown

**Madhav Chavan**[1]

The massive scale disruption due to the pandemic has raised many questions. Within the larger set of questions of the economy and health are many that are related to children and their education. The system reacted to the threat by shutting down schools and within days, solutions to lessen the blow of the crisis were evolving. In the beginning it was not clear how long the schools would be closed. When Indian schools had just shut down, schools in China and some European countries were already opening with caution. There was hope of early opening but the crisis dragged on. The Standard Operating Procedures written up in preparation of school opening have still not been used. Over a period of time people got fed up of staying at home and economic compulsions started forcing unlock processes to unravel. The medical fraternity gathered more information about treatment and the fear of COVID seemed to subside almost to the point of scary carelessness even in the middle of a raging pandemic. Anyone wandering around in the villages of India could see that life was coming back to the old normal. Even in the cities the talk of the 'new normal' seemed to become less and less common and limited to the upper classes.

Yet, schools did not open, even selectively, in rural areas. This could have been done by taking the parents into confidence and with proper precautions. I had felt from the early days of the school shut down that the responsibility to open and run schools should rest with the village panchayat based on certain safety criteria. This can be done even now but for some strange reason the decision to open schools is still centralized although in most states teachers are visiting schools regularly if not daily. In fact, if it was not for the teachers visiting schools, families would not have received the quota of mid-day meal grains, as well as school textbooks and other learning materials that ASER 2020 Wave 1 has recorded. This was an opportunity to try out new models of school that were more community based but the establishment lost a golden opportunity. ASER 2020 Wave 1 shows how a very large proportion of mothers, fathers and siblings have been helpful to school children during the shutdown. Increasing levels of education among parents is an important feature of the Indian society along with rapidly increasing penetration of the internet and smartphones. Unfortunately, our attention is focused on higher levels of education rather than on foundational stages and the lure of fancy technology is more attractive than the human interaction so critical for education.

The school shutdown has thrown up many questions that need to be answered with concrete data. First: will a large number of children drop out of schools or change from private schools to government schools due to changed economic circumstances? Second: how will the shutting down or the loss of a full year of schooling affect children's future? Third: based on the experience during the shutdown period, what role do we think ed-tech will play in the future of education and schooling?

The first question is difficult to answer definitively at this time although ASER 2020 Wave 1 hoped to find some clues when it was being planned in mid-2020 as the 'unlock' process had started. As it turns out, schools had not opened when the survey was carried out and the increase in out-of-school children is largely among 6- and 7-year-olds who are most likely awaiting admission. It is noteworthy that the proportion of out-of-school children or those who admit to being not enrolled in schools is the same for boys and girls. Will we see large proportions of older children, especially girls, dropping out of schools? There is a need to regularly monitor attendance levels to estimate the real proportion of children who can be termed 'dropout'. ASER has been reporting enrollment annually by asking children and parents if their child's name has been entered in the school register. Separately, school visits provide the number of children attending school on a given day by comparing the number of children in the class register. For some time to come, the government will need to commission agencies to regularly monitor attendance levels in schools to estimate the percentage of truants or dropouts from school because they may not necessarily withdraw their names from the school but may not attend regularly on account of work.

There was a fear that school closure will impact nutritional status of children who will be deprived of their mid-day meals. But the school systems are reported to have delivered grains and deposited daily cooking cost in the student's or parents' accounts. This must have helped families of millions of children in a big way during this crisis not only from a hunger point of view but also by giving a sense of security. Unfortunately, ASER 2020 Wave 1 was not able to capture details of this information.

There are newspaper reports, especially in Western media, of anecdotes of children being forced into labor. Again, ASER 2020 Wave 1 does not cover such details, but Pratham has a strong wing that deals with vulnerable children, which could

[1] President and member of the Board of Directors, Pratham Education Foundation

undertake a study to verify if numbers of child laborers and beggars in urban areas has risen. Many small businesses have closed down in cities and the families have been in extremely difficult circumstances. A separate urban study is needed urgently.

The second question about how school closure will affect children's future needs to be explored along two paths. There are problems related to examinations that need to be held for admission to higher levels of courses. School closure affects preparation for such examinations and delay-dislocation of examinations create further problems. This is really what people refer to when talking about affecting children's future. There is no doubt that the end-of-stage examination is an important part of a child's life and it can be very disturbing and frustrating to be unable to complete the course, not to speak of not being able to transition to the next stage. Of course, there is a need to reform examinations and the process of transition to higher level courses to abolish the dependence on once a year events. But, that will be a long term and complex undertaking that is also suggested by the new National Education Policy.

It appears that most education boards - central and state - have held the Std 10 and 12 examinations although the students are unable to attend the next level of classes in academic year 2020-21. ASER 2020 Wave 1 finds that about 18% of students at Std 9 or above attended online classes, which is almost the proportion of private school children who attended online classes in rural areas. The entire education system is focused on the board examinations and the entrance examination. That is where the stakes are high but for a relatively small proportion of students. The Gross Enrollment Ratio is said to be near 100% up to the age of 14. ASER data are consistent with these government figures. At the next stage of Std 9-10, the GER drops 20 percentage points to 80% and at the higher education stage it reduces dramatically by 55 percentage points to 25%. Not only are these numbers poor but even the product of this education, except in some elite institutions, is of poor quality by any standard. There is no way of knowing if this quality will deteriorate further, if this is even possible. It stands to reason that the students with means will have the opportunity to learn better than their poorer friends. But they always did. The divide is likely to deepen.

In contrast to the higher education sector, elementary education up to Std 8 is not considered high stakes. ASER 2020 Wave 1, which was telephonic, did not attempt to measure learning levels of children. But understanding learning loss of children over more than a year of school closure will be important. The phenomenon of learning loss is well known although it has not been studied in India. Any disruption of the regular, formal learning process is said to lead to learning loss that may result in loss of skills or knowledge. In India we have a bigger problem of extremely weak foundational skills such as reading. Whereas we may expect a good 80% children to be able to read a Std 2 level text in Std 3, only 20.9% Std 3 students in government schools and 40.6% in private schools can read such a text. Thereafter, annually about 10 to 15 percentage point more children acquire at least this level of reading skill and by Std 8 there are 69% government school children and 82.9% private school children who can at least read a Std 2 text. So, if formal schools are shut down for a whole year, how will the reading skills be impacted? Literature from the United States has begun to report research studies. The World Bank is predicting learning losses. There are reports of significant loss or lack of literacy and numeracy skills by some researchers in universities. There is an urgent need to conduct such studies in the developing world. In India, ASER has a very strong database to compare learning levels in 'normal' times. Low as they are, is there a further slide in the reading and numeracy levels?

ASER 2020 Wave 1 information shows that nearly 80% children going to private or government schools (Std 1-8) received textbooks and most children were helped by their parents to study at home. How frequently did they study? How seriously? Difficult to say, but about 60% of the children claim to have done some study activity with textbooks in the reference week (the week prior to the survey). This is an indication of the desire among Indian parents that their children should be educated. The near 100% enrollment of children up to age 14 has happened not because of any material incentive but because people do value education although they may not quite know what good education is. Therefore, it is more than likely that parents seriously pushed children to study at home in some manner. In addition, the data show that about 35% children (most probably a subset of those with textbooks) did some learning activity using other material such as worksheets, which could serve as a reminder and an encouragement to study. Is it possible that this informal learning activity at home countered the learning loss due to simple frequent engagement with learning materials? Simple assessments in villages may help us find answers.

The more important thing is that instead of waiting for June -July to open the schools, the teachers who are visiting their schools regularly can organize remedial learning activities with community participation right now. Pratham's experience and ASER findings point to the possibility of running such 'catchup' programs. As I have said earlier, if the decision to hold such classes in school classrooms of community spaces is left to village panchayat authorities via the district authorities, children

will be school-ready by June-July and no more time will be wasted. In any event, it should be possible to set aside time to catch up and overcome the COVID slide, if any. If there is no COVID slide, the time can be utilized to take forward what is envisaged for the foundational literacy and numeracy mission by the government.

The negative impact of not assessing learning loss and acting upon it can be disastrous. While schools can continue to promote children to higher classes, the learning standards will keep falling and will lead to shrinking livelihood opportunities. In any case, knowing that there is a loss and not acting on it will be nothing short of criminal.

The third question is regarding use of digital technology in education fondly referred to by its promoters as ed-tech. The Government of India has been encouraging use of digital technology for a variety of purposes. Teacher training, availability of teaching resources and access to learning materials for children have all been developed by many organizations. When the schools shut down, it was suddenly obvious to all that teaching-learning by remote methods was the only way to 'keep education going'. The first word that started going around was 'online classes' until it was realized that online learning needs much more than just smartphones. ASER 2020 Wave 1 shows that around 18% rural students, mostly above Std 8 and mostly from private schools, attended online classes. Pratham was one of the first organizations to start sending WhatsApp messages to rural children but many more organizations and governments followed quickly thereafter. ASER 2020 Wave 1 has found that during the reference week nearly one third of all enrolled children received learning materials. Of these 80% (that is 27% of all children) received learning materials on their family smartphone and 80% of them, or about 19% of all children received WhatsApp messages. These percentages vary from state to state. Obviously in states with greater percentage of households with smartphones, the percentage is higher. But, overall, the impact of digital means of reaching children is not impressive, whether in government schools or private, considering the ASER finding that 62% households have smartphones.

There are several issues with the use of these digital means to reach children. First is that while over 90% households have cell phones[2], 62% households have a smartphone which is mostly under the control of the father[3]. Therefore, its use for educational purpose is limited. Unless a family has multiple smart devices, the children cannot use one for education. In this survey, 10-11% households have reported purchasing a new phone - invariably a smartphone - during the pandemic.

Although many groups are promoting ed-tech applications for learning, there is no evidence that a smartphone with personalized learning software has a serious impact on learning. There are studies showing impact of digital programs on organized learning in schools or learning centers but the enthusiasm about ed-tech is mostly around smartphone mobile devices, without such evidence of impact. It is undeniable that digital technology can give a big boost to the teaching learning process including to build the capacities of teachers and the system as it exists today. But there are other issues to be considered at least in the Indian context.

First issue is with the process of learning. Given the low levels of foundational learning, do we expect that children, especially those from the socio-economically weakest families, with limited access to a smartphone, will learn by themselves with the device? Or, should we see this as a blended model that combines classroom learning and home learning and also individual learning with group learning? Again, there is no evidence of a model that has been tried in government schools or affordable schools for overall learning rather than just one subject learning.

The second issue is much bigger and something that the National Education Policy has focused on. All ed-tech software that is promoted is designed to teach the standard school subjects based on school textbooks. In doing this we curb the intrinsic power of the technology to allow non-linear exploration or building of knowledge. Learning cannot be limited to a rigid curriculum, although schooling is. It makes no sense to expect everyone to learn every subject in the same way. It makes no sense to place mathematics higher than creative writing or art or athletics. Technology can assist in making the process of learning truly child centric rather than teacher led. A recent article by Arvind Gupta talks about open learning processes. Pratham's own experiments in open learning are example of how digital means can be combined with group learning, volunteer/parental support and open curriculum lead to impact children's confidence and learning.

The pandemic is a disaster which showed us our weaknesses and tested our ability to innovate and overcome big challenges. It has given us opportunities to look within and think about what we need to change and how we can accomplish this change. ASER 2020 Wave 1 is one attempt to nudge the society and the government to think along those lines. It has also indicated to us what we need to do in Wave 2 and perhaps 3. ASER and Pratham work on the philosophy of analyzing to act and bring about change. That is what we intend to do.

[2] ASER 2018
[3] ASER 2020 Wave 1

# Learning in the time of COVID

**Rukmini Banerji**[1]

**Some starting thoughts**

By January 2021, schools across India will have been closed for nearly 300 days. Even when school systems declare themselves open, it will take time for attendance to stabilize. Teachers, especially those who come from a distance, have to return to their daily schedule. Parents have to feel comfortable sending children to school and children will need to get back into the routine of going to school. Yet, the longer schools remain closed, the more the concern among parents, practitioners and policymakers about impact and implications of what will be a year-long (maybe more) school closure.

As we look ahead and begin to plan, we need answers - data and analysis for many questions. At minimum, we need to know what has been going on with children's education in this COVID time, despite school closures. Next, to compare a typical year with a crisis year, we need to review evidence of long term trends over time prior to the pandemic. Thirdly, as we look towards a new era of education beyond the immediate crisis, what kinds of decisions and plans can be made based these types of data? In this note, I will try to take a crack at each of these questions.

**Designing data collection: What has been the status of children's education during the COVID crisis school closure period?**

Starting in 2005, for the past fifteen years, every year in the middle of January, India sees the release of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). For the first ten years, the ASER report tracked the status of schooling and provided estimates of basic reading and arithmetic skills each year. From 2014, the usual nationwide ASER report has been done every other year (we have reports from 2016 and 2018), with the gap year looking in depth at a specific age group. For example, ASER 2017 was on the age group 14 to 18, while ASER 2019 dealt with the age group 4 to 8. The year 2020 would have been the year for the usual report. But given the COVID crisis and the serious worry about school closure, it seemed right to change the focus and the timing of this year's ASER to explore what children were doing while schools remained closed.

Face-to-face surveys or field work are clearly not possible when physical movement is highly restricted, and there is fear about meeting unknown people. So, the usual ways of doing surveys are out of the question. In public discussions and private conversations, debates are raging about remote learning and digital opportunities in education. On the one hand, technology opens up immense possibilities for delivery of learning content and at the same time there are huge challenges in terms of inequitable access to new modes and mechanisms for accessing education. Yet at a time like this, it is even more important to find out, in rigorous and systematic ways, what children are doing and what has actually been possible in terms of extending educational opportunities to different kinds of populations.

In thinking about how the ASER effort could be adapted for use during the pandemic, there are several key features of the usual ASER architecture that are worth highlighting. ASER has always been a rural survey with information being collected from households. The sample of children reached is representative at district and state levels. In the COVID crisis, although the only way to reach families was via phone calls, it was nevertheless essential to maintain the representativeness of the sample. Luckily, phone numbers are collected from each surveyed household as part of the ASER survey process. This information is usually used for monitoring and cross-checking purposes. For ASER 2020 Wave 1, the ASER 2018 sample was used as the frame. The reliability of data depends entirely on the underlying sampling process. To rely on numbers, the sampling process must be scientific and rigorous. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID crisis, ASER even in this difficult year continues to be based on a meticulous sampling process.

Like in previous years, from April onwards, the ASER team piloted every aspect of the data collection process; from details of design to the nuts and bolts of delivery, each piece was tried out in diverse contexts and in many different languages. Since ASER 2020 Wave 1 data collection was the first nationwide phone survey for the ASER team, hours of practice went into that effort as well.

[1] Chief Executive Officer, Pratham Education Foundation

Timing wise, September seemed to be the right time to carry out the ASER 2020 survey. Many states have summer holidays in the April-May-June-July period. In addition, some of the time in July and August was used by state governments to formulate and finalize their strategies for the period of school closures. By September 2020, school systems across the country had settled into providing whatever support they could to their students. There was also a need for speed. If data could be made available quickly (within a month of data collection), then the evidence could be used by governments and others to carry out new interventions or do course corrections immediately, even while schools remained closed.

ASER 2020 Wave 1 was anchored around a set of interconnected questions. These included: what resources did families have to support home-based learning? Who in the family was able to help children? What inputs and learning opportunities did children receive? What were children able to do with respect to learning? Many of these questions were designed not only to explore how families dealt with the COVID crisis on the education front, but also to provide inputs into thinking about opportunities that could be leveraged beyond the crisis. Close to 120,000 households were sampled. Approximately 58% households were reached, of which 76% completed the survey. Thus, the ASER 2020 Wave 1 survey obtained information for about 60,000 children. Data collection was carried out in September and the report was released before the end of October 2020.

**Outlining findings: What has been the status of children's education during the period of school closure caused by the COVID crisis?**

Here are some of the highlights from this exercise. First, the availability of ASER 2018 data allowed comparisons to be made between then and now. For example, although the proportion of households who own televisions or motorized vehicles remained similar from 2018 to 2020, a sharp increase in smartphone ownership is visible across all states. Nationally, in 2018, 30% families whose children went to government schools owned smartphones. This number rose to 56% by 2018. For families who send their children to private schools, the figure in 2018 was 50% which increased to 74% in 2020. 11% families reported buying a new phone since the lockdown began, of which more than 80% reported that the new phone was a smartphone. The significant expansion in access to smartphones in rural families is a striking feature of the last two years.

Overall, households reported that about 75% children get some help at home in terms of learning support and that despite the crisis, close to 30% children continued to attend paid tuition classes. Obviously, in families where parents have more education they are able to help children more. However, even in families where both parents have less than 5 years of schooling, close to 55% children received help from parents. Significant help in low education families also comes from siblings (in households where both parents have not even studied up to Std V, 23% children get help from older brothers and sisters.)

In the reference week before the survey in September, about a third of all households reported receiving learning materials and activities from the child's school. 67% families whose children go to government schools and 87% of those whose children go to private schools reported receiving these materials via WhatsApp. Interestingly, 32% of government school children's families also added that materials came via visits (either to the school by parents or by school teachers to the child's home.)

As many as 80% of all children in the sample had textbooks of their current grade. This proportion was higher for government school children. State governments across the country have made extensive efforts to deliver textbooks to children and this statistic is testament to their endeavours. When asked about where children were learning at home during the reference week, 70% families replied that their children did some kind of learning activities in that week. The majority of these activities were with traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets, while far fewer children (usually below 20%) accessed learning programs on television or radio or online (via videos, recorded classes or live online sessions.)

ASER 2020 completed the first wave in September. It is likely that a follow up wave may be planned later in the current school year to track how children's learning journeys are progressing.

**Projecting possibilities: How can the current evidence and past trends be used to plan for the future?**

Five major takeaways from the current exercise of ASER 2020:

First, the situation is likely to remain fluid for some months to come. With the clear inequities in our society, it is essential to continue to track who is getting what kinds of opportunities and to assess what kind of learning loss is being experienced.

Second, ASER 2020 provides clear evidence of parental engagement and willingness to support children's learning. This family support has to be leveraged by the school system in a systematic way.

Third, traditional teaching-learning methods need to be combined effectively with newer ways of reaching and learning.

Fourth, in-depth assessments of 'what works and how' are needed to improve digital content and delivery for the future. Just because families have devices and connectivity does not automatically mean that children are learning effectively.

Finally, the digital divide is layered on to the existing divisions in our society. Mechanisms to reach and teach children who are on the dark side of the divide have to be worked out so that their educational disadvantage can be ameliorated over time.

Comparing typical year-on-year learning gains to possible learning loss in the crisis year and linking to what may be possible as 'catch up':

For over fifteen years, ASER surveys have repeatedly pointed to weak levels of basic learning for primary school children across India. The finding that even after five years of schooling, half of all Std V children still struggle to read basic text fluently or do simple arithmetic operations - has remained persistently unchanged over time. Even before COVID struck, low and unchanging learning levels were a key feature of the Indian school system.

Over the years, the ASER survey provides estimates for learning trajectories of different cohorts of children. For example, the tables below indicate that depending on the year and the cohort, 'learning gains' in usual years in Uttar Pradesh vary from 5-15 percentage points for Std III-V. Table 1 below tracks cohorts over time using reading data from ASER for children enrolled in government schools in Uttar Pradesh. Table 2 shows the percentage point gain year on year in the proportion of children reading at Std II level.

**Table 1: % Children in government schools in Uttar Pradesh reading at least at Std II level**

| Std | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | No ASER 2015 | 2016 | No ASER 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std II | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1.9 | | 3.2 | | 4.6 |
| Std III | 6.5 | 7.1 | 6.0 | | 7.2 | | 12.3 |
| Std IV | 14.2 | 17.1 | 15.2 | | 15.9 | | 23.8 |
| Std V | 25.6 | 24.5 | 26.8 | | 24.3 | | 36.2 |
| Std VI | 37.6 | 39.9 | 38.5 | | 34.7 | | 45.1 |
| Std VII | 48.9 | 50.1 | 52.1 | | 49.5 | | 55.3 |
| Std VIII | 57.3 | 57.6 | 59.3 | | 56.3 | | 62.0 |

**Table 2: Year-on-year percentage point increase in children's ability to read at least at Std II level**

| Std | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | No ASER 2015 | 2016 | No ASER 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std II | Start | Start | Start | Start | Start | | |
| Std III | Start | 4.9 | 3.7 | 7.0 | | 10.3 | |
| Std IV | Start | 10.6 | 8.1 | 9.1 | 7.0 | 14.5 | 10.3 |
| Std V | Start | 10.3 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.1 | 14.6 | 14.5 |
| Std VI | Start | 14.2 | 14.0 | 11.4 | 9.7 | 15.5 | 14.6 |
| Std VII | Start | 12.5 | 12.2 | 8.9 | 11.4 | 13.7 | 15.5 |
| Std VIII | Start | 8.7 | 9.2 | | 8.9 | | 13.7 |

Note: For years where there is no ASER data (2015 and 2017), an even percentage point increase has been projected based on data of year before and after.

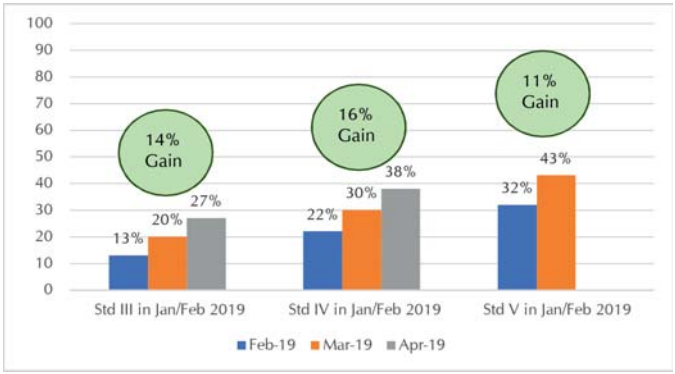
For example, the cohort that was in Std II in 2012 (light blue) gained almost 5 percentage points over one year as children moved to Std III. For the next three years, they gained roughly 8 to 10 percentage points each year. In higher grades (movement from Std VI to VII to VIII) the cohort gained between 13 to 14 percentage points a year.

**While data above show trends for 'learning gains' in a business-as-usual year, is there evidence and experience from Uttar Pradesh of learning gains if focussed efforts are made for 'catch-up'?**

For the past ten years and more, Pratham has developed the Teaching-at-the-Right Level (TaRL) approach that can help children who are in Std III or older learn to read fluently and do basic arithmetic in a matter of 30-50 days.[2] TaRL has clear goals, strong focus, simple techniques and materials and continuous on-site support that is provided to teachers via cluster and block resource persons from within the government system. The model has been evaluated rigorously and found to be effective.[3,4] Children are assessed using a simple tool, then grouped by level rather than grade for instruction. Using activities and materials appropriate for each group, children make quick progress.

In the 2018-19 academic year, Government of Uttar Pradesh in collaboration with Pratham rolled out the 'Graded Learning Program' (GLP) to improve the learning levels of Std I-V students. The 'GLP' was based on the TaRL approach. The program was implemented by about 220,000 teachers in 110,000 government schools, and approximately 9,000,000 children participated in the intervention. The effort achieved significant learning gain across all grades.

**Chart 1: % Children in government schools in Uttar Pradesh reading at least at Std II level**




Data from 110,747 schools; 5,030,301 students; 75 districts in UP

There was around a 15 percentage point increase in the proportion of children reading fluently and doing basic operations in Std III and IV who had 45-50 days of instructional time (2 hours a day dedicated to basic reading and arithmetic) and 10% in Std V who had about 30 days of classes. If a longer duration of instructional time had been available, a much greater learning improvement would have been seen.

The results from 2018-19 show that effective catch-up is possible. This was achieved due to specific time commitment and concerted effort on part of the teachers, cluster and block officers, district/ state education officials and leadership.

If a similar effort is done across the state for Std IV and V as soon as schools reopen, in 100 days it is possible that bigger learning gains in foundational skills are achieved than in a regular school year. If needed, an additional phase of 100 days can be planned either during the summer of 2021 or as soon as the 2021 school year begins.

**Concluding thoughts**

The availability of trends over time from data such as ASER can enable this type of projections to be made, so that planning is based on the available evidence. Both past data as well as current data (like that from ASER 2020) show us the urgent need for planning and implementing effective 'catch up' interventions across the country. This 'catch up' was needed before COVID but has become even more urgent now. As children return to school, enabling them to acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills must have high priority. ASER 2020 Wave 1 data indicates that there are other resources - human (family members, communities) and technology (hybrid mechanisms and mixed modes of delivery) that can strongly support school based efforts to fuel 'catch up'. The available evidence strongly presents the possibility of 'building back better'. Now concerted action must follow.

[2] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10833-016-9285-5?wt_mc=Internal.Event.1.SEM.ArticleAuthorAssignedToIssue
[3] https://www.nber.org/papers/w22931
[4] https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/4/2450/files/2018/04/EvidenceInPractice_CaseStudy_TaRL-1mshy9c.pdf

# Equity in the time of COVID

**Wilima Wadhwa**[1]

In India, school closures started as early as March 2020 and schools are yet to reopen in December 2020. ASER 2020 Wave 1 focuses on this period, in an attempt to gauge the impact of the pandemic on children's enrollment and learning. According to UNESCO, in the beginning of April, schools had closed across 194 countries, affecting 1.6 billion learners, constituting 91% of all enrolled students in the world. Not only is the pandemic expected to affect learning levels adversely, but with family budgets getting squeezed, it might also result in higher dropout rates. And, most importantly, across sectors, the adverse impact of the pandemic has been much greater on already vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. In education too, equity gaps may increase based on unequal access to different forms of technology-based educational inputs.

ASER 2020 Wave 1 was conducted in September 2020, and focused on children's access to learning material during the period when schools were still closed. During this period, state governments as well as private schools tried to provide learning materials in a variety of ways. However, while there is a fair amount of information about the type of content and material being shared, not much is known about whether children are receiving this material and how they are engaging with it. Moving forward it becomes critical to understand what worked and for whom. Is it the case that this shift to remote learning will widen the digital divide and accentuate equity issues in learning?

The ASER 2020 data confirms that the brunt of the impact of the pandemic on educational outcomes will be borne by children who are vulnerable to start with. It is well established that children from economically weaker backgrounds typically have lower learning outcomes. There are a variety of channels that this effect operates through. For instance, children from poorer households tend to have less educated parents who are unable to provide learning support comparable to children in richer households. Parents support their children's learning in a variety of ways. They help their children with their homework; they understand the importance of education and encourage their children to focus on school work; if they can financially afford it, they send their children to private schools and/or provide supplementary resources like private tutors to help academically; they, especially mothers, spend more time with the child, providing inputs into the overall development of the child. Remote learning opens up another channel that widens the learning disadvantage of relatively poorer children. These children may not have access to devices like computers, tablets, smartphones, that are needed for remote instruction and therefore may not be able to access learning material provided remotely by the state during the pandemic.

Using parental education as a proxy for affluence, ASER 2020 finds that children with low parental education are less likely to have a smartphone - 45% as compared to 79% of children with high parental education.[2] They are also more likely to send their children to government schools - 84% compared to 54% for children with more educated parents. Parents with low education are also less likely to help their children with school work - only 55% of children with low parental education received any learning support at home compared to almost 90% of children with high parental education.

What about other learning resources, like availability of textbooks and access to private tuition? Here the gap is much smaller. 28% children with low parental education took private tuition compared to 33% of children with high parental education. What this seems to imply is that even if budgets are tight, parents try to supplement their children's education as and when possible. This is further evidenced by almost 5% children with low parental education starting a new tuition during the lockdown as compared to 6% children with high parental education.

Similarly, there was not much difference in access to textbooks - 79% vs 83%. This is understandable, as most state governments made a big push to get textbooks to children during the lockdown. Government schools performed much better here as compared to private schools with 84% children in government schools reporting that they received the textbooks for their current grade as compared to 72% children in private schools.

To summarize, while children at the lower end of the SES spectrum may be disadvantaged in terms of the type of learning support they get in school and home or their access to digital devices, their parents tried to make up the disadvantage in other ways and the state also made sure that almost all children had access to textbooks. What about other learning materials shared

[1] Director, ASER Centre

[2] 'Low' parental education is defined as both parents having completed Std 5 or below and 'high' parental education is both parents having completed at least Std 9; medium parental education is a residual category containing all other combinations of mother's and father's schooling. 22.5% of children, in rural India, have parents with low education compared to 27.6% with high parental education. The remaining 50% are in the middle.

by states? Other than textbooks, states shared a variety of learning materials during the pandemic. These included traditional materials like worksheets as well as educational content broadcast on television and radio and online platforms like recorded and live video classes.[3]

Overall, only about 35% children reported receiving any learning material from their school in the week prior to the survey.[4] However, only 23% children with low parental education received any material as compared to 49% of children with high parental education. There could be a variety of reasons for this large gap in access. First, as noted earlier, a majority of children at the lower end of the income distribution are enrolled in government schools and these schools were slightly less successful at distributing learning materials as compared to private schools - 33% children in government schools reported receiving learning materials as compared to 40% in private schools.

Second, while schools used a variety of ways to share material and activities such as WhatsApp, other messenger apps, in person visits and phone calls, by and large they relied on one medium - 87% of children received learning material only via one medium. Among these children, the predominant source was WhatsApp (72%), though there was some compensation for lack of a smartphone with about 20% children getting the material through personal visits with either teachers visiting homes or parents visiting schools. As a result, among children without a smartphone, only 17% reported receiving any learning material in the reference week. Again, with a majority (55%) of children in relatively poorer households not having a smartphone, their access to whatever learning material was being distributed would be limited.

Therefore, during the period when schools were closed due to the pandemic, the predominant learning resource available to children with low parental education was their textbooks, with some limited support from parents and tutors. Is having a textbook, with no formal instruction and limited access to resources (human or digital) that can help explain the material in the textbook, sufficient for the child to learn new material or even retain the concepts learnt before schools closed? In theory, it is possible to learn new content or review concepts with well-designed textbooks. However, it is much harder, and certainly not ideal, especially for younger children.

A study by the World Bank[5] simulates the learning loss due to school closures. In their most pessimistic scenario - school closures of 7 months - which we have already crossed, globally children will lose almost a year of learning adjusted years of schooling, with long lasting effects on lifelong earnings. The study suggests that the effects on learning are likely to be exacerbated for children from weaker economic backgrounds who are unable to access remote learning resources and also do not have adequate learning support from home. This is confirmed by a recent study[6] on the effect of school closures on learning outcomes of primary school children in the Netherlands which estimates that the learning loss would be 55% larger for children from less educated households. Interestingly, they find no difference across sex, grade or subject. Evidence from a study[7] conducted after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan also points to the importance of parental education in mitigating the effects of school closures. The study finds that while children living close to the earthquake fault line scored significantly worse on academic tests, even three years after the quake, these effects were completely mitigated for children of better educated parents.

So, not only are school closures going to result in a significant learning loss; these losses are likely to be much greater for already disadvantaged children, resulting in an even greater learning gap between the rich and the poor. This increasing inequality is a result not just of unequal access to learning material but also the quality of material accessed by different groups. Among the learning materials/resources shared by the state, the closest thing to 'instruction' were online videos/ classes. With limited access to digital devices it is not surprising that less than 5% children with low parental education attended online classes as compared to 20% children with high parental education. In other words, apart from having a textbook, children whose parents had little or no education, who most likely had learning deficits to start with, were pretty much left to their own devices. In fact, 40% of these children did not engage in any kind of learning activity in the reference week, as compared to 20% of the children with more educated parents.

[3] See Annexure 2 for a list of materials shared by different states during September 2020.
[4] Learning material here does not include textbooks.
[5] Azevedo, J. P., Hasan, A., Goldemberg, D., Iqbal, S. A., and Geven, K. (2020). Simulating the potential impacts of covid-19 school closures on schooling and learning outcomes: A set of global estimates. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper.
[6] Engzell, P., Frey, A., & Verhagen, M. D. (2020). Learning Inequality During the Covid-19 Pandemic. https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/ve4z7
[7] Andrabi, T., Daniels, B., Das, J. 2020. Human Capital Accumulation and Disasters: Evidence from the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005. RISE Working Paper Series. 20/039. https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-WP_2020/039

It is clear that all children will need some remediation, as and when schools open. However, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, typically studying in government schools, will need more help. According to ASER 2018, the proportion of children in Std 5, with low parental education, who could read a Std 2 level text was 35% as compared to 70% of children with high parental education. So, not only did these children have limited access to learning materials during the school closures, they also started with a much larger learning deficit.

Similarly, younger children, who are just beginning to read and work with numbers, and children who were just acquiring minimum proficiency in reading and math, may slip more easily and require more attention when they return to school. According to the World Bank study, the proportion of children below minimum proficiency in early secondary, could rise by as much as 13 percentage points. If learning levels could drop by so much for older children, the situation could be much worse among younger children who are just learning to read and write.

SDG 4.1.1(a) requires minimum proficiency in reading and math for Std 2/3. UIS defines minimum proficiency in reading as being able to read at Std 2 level. According to ASER 2018, nationally the proportion of children in Std 3 of government schools, who were below minimum proficiency was a whopping 79%. However, there are large variations across states. For instance, in the better performing states like Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala and Punjab, as many as 36-47% children in Std 3 of government schools had acquired minimum proficiency in reading. On the other end of the spectrum are states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where only around 10-12% children in Std 3 of government schools had acquired minimum proficiency in reading. Interestingly, the states where learning outcomes are low are also the states where the distribution of learning material lagged behind. For instance, while 87% children in Himachal Pradesh said that they received learning material in the reference week, just under 8% had received any material in Bihar. Barring some smaller and north-eastern states, there seems to be a positive correlation between learning outcomes and access to materials during school closures.[8]

What this means is that the adverse impact of school closures on learning outcomes will not only affect economically weaker children disproportionately, but will also result in greater educational inequality across states. States and children who had lower learning levels to start with, will experience greater learning losses due to limited access to learning resources during this period. This in turn will lead to a widening gap between children from poorer backgrounds as compared to more well-off children; and between better performing states and states that are lagging behind. This in some sense is the worst-case scenario, since greater effort will be required in low-performing states.

However, if states use this opportunity as a call to action, there are many other stakeholders who will step up to the task of helping children learn. One key finding of ASER 2020 Wave 1 was around the big role played by families and communities. Parents are more educated than ever before - more than 75% children had at least one parent with more than primary school education. The role of parents and how they can help their children can and should be integrated into planning for learning improvement of children. Similarly, elder siblings also play an important role in children's education and can be roped in to help. As ASER 2020 Wave 1 shows 75% children receive some kind of help from a family member in studying at home. For younger children, this is typically the mother and for older children fathers and elder siblings step in. And, finally the community can also play a larger role. During the school closures, almost 70% of school respondents (head teachers and teachers) reported getting help from a variety of community members to reach out and support children. This narrowing of distance between school, home and community is something that needs to continue once schools re-open so that all resources can be leveraged to help children regain lost ground.

[8] Tanay Sukumar finds a similar correlation for learning outcomes in Std 8.
https://www.livemint.com/education/news/lost-school-time-might-lower-lifetime-earnings-for-lockdown-hit-children-11605076717454.html

# Supporting young children in the time of COVID

**Suman Bhattacharjea**[1]

The long-awaited National Education Policy (NEP) was finally released six months ago, in July 2020. On the subject of school education, it clearly outlines the importance of beginning at the beginning, with young children and foundational learning. These policy objectives are not new. The focus on the pre-primary stage began to gain momentum with the release of the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Education in 2013. Likewise, the importance of ensuring foundational skills was recognised by national initiatives such as the Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat programme as early as 2014. While data from the last couple of large-scale ASER surveys (2016 and 2018) show a welcome uptick in children's foundational reading and arithmetic in early primary grades, especially among government school students, achieving the NEP's stated goal of ensuring that every child acquires foundational skills by 2025 will undoubtedly be further complicated by the consequences of COVID-19.

With schools closed since the period of national lockdown beginning in March last year, it is too soon to tell what the impact of the pandemic will be on school and pre-school enrollments. ASER 2020 data suggests that the largest impact may well be on the youngest children, at least in the short term. In stark contrast to the other age groups surveyed for ASER 2020, the proportion of young children not currently enrolled increased sharply in comparison with similar households surveyed two years ago in ASER 2018 (Table 1). Overall, among young children in the 5-8 age band, the proportion of children not enrolled anywhere increased by 4 percentage points over 2018 levels. Standing at 7.5% in 2020, this is more than double the figure of 3.6% obtained in 2018.

However, even within the age band of 5-8 years, the increase in the proportion of children not currently enrolled is highest among the 5-year-olds and diminishes steadily with age. Among 5-year-olds this proportion is 6.8 percentage points higher in 2020 than in 2018, but only 2.4 percentage points more among the 8-year-olds. This suggests that the children not currently enrolled anywhere are mainly those who had not yet obtained admission when the school shutdowns happened in March, rather than children who had been enrolled and then dropped out of school once the pandemic hit.

**Table 1: Enrollment status of young children (age 5-8). Current status (2020) and percentage point change over 2018 levels.**

| Age | Not enrolled | Enrolled in: | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Anganwadi | Pre-primary* | Primary** | |
| 5 | 14.9 | 24.1 | 26.2 | 34.9 | 100 |
| | *+6.8* | *–4.0* | *–4.2* | *+1.4* | *0.0* |
| 6 | 7.9 | 5.6 | 15.2 | 71.3 | 100 |
| | *+4.5* | *–2.0* | *–3.1* | *+0.5* | *0.0* |
| 7 | 5.7 | 0.9 | 6.6 | 86.8 | 100 |
| | *+3.9* | *–0.9* | *–1.5* | *–1.5* | *0.0* |
| 8 | 3.9 | 0.4 | 2.0 | 93.8 | 100 |
| | *+2.4* | *–0.3* | *–1.8* | *–0.3* | *0.0* |
| 5-8 | 7.5 | 6.4 | 11.2 | 74.9 | 100 |
| | *+4.0* | *–2.6* | *–3.3* | *+1.9* | *0.0* |
| 6-10 | 5.3 | | | | |
| | *+3.5* | | | | |
| 11-14 | 3.9 | | | | |
| | *+0.7* | | | | |

For each age or age group in the table, numbers in the first row show ASER 2020 Wave 1 figures. Numbers in the row immediately below, in italics, show the percentage point change over ASER 2018 levels for comparable households.
* Refers to children enrolled in any pre-primary class, regardless of level (LKG, UKG, Nursery etc) or management type (government or private).
** Includes children enrolled in any primary school grade (Std I or higher, government or private school).

[1] Director of Research, ASER Centre

At the all-India level, these data show that the increase in young children not currently enrolled comes mainly from children who in a normal year would have been enrolled in some form of pre-school provision (Anganwadi or pre-primary class) rather than in primary school. For the country as a whole, school enrollments (Std I and above) have changed only marginally over 2018 levels for this age group. However, as Purnima Ramanujan and I wrote in the ASER 2018 report, states vary enormously with respect to what young children do, and national figures mask these enormous differences. For example, Table 2 below presents data for selected states regarding what 5-year-olds were doing in ASER 2020, as compared with 5-year-olds in comparable households in 2018. These data underline once again that for young children in particular, plans for the future will need to be tailored to individual state contexts. With the exception of Assam, data for every state shows an increase in the proportion of 5-year-olds not enrolled anywhere between 2018 and 2020. However, states like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat that had very few 5-year-olds not enrolled anywhere in 2018, show enormous increases in this proportion in 2020; whereas in other states the increase over 2018 levels is far smaller.

**Table 2: Enrollment status of 5-year-olds in selected states, 2018 and 2020**

| State | ASER 2018 | | | | ASER 2020 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | OOS* | Pre-primary** | School | Total | OOS* | Pre-primary** | School | Total |
| Madhya Pradesh | 0.4 | 76.3 | 23.3 | 100 | 12.2 | 55.8 | 32.1 | 100 |
| Rajasthan | 0.6 | 90.5 | 8.9 | 100 | 14.0 | 68.6 | 17.4 | 100 |
| Chhattisgarh | 0.7 | 86.8 | 12.5 | 100 | 5.1 | 73.6 | 21.3 | 100 |
| Maharashtra | 0.9 | 65.1 | 34.0 | 100 | 11.5 | 68.3 | 20.3 | 100 |
| Gujarat | 1.3 | 51.5 | 47.2 | 100 | 24.0 | 29.9 | 46.2 | 100 |
| Bihar | 1.5 | 87.2 | 11.3 | 100 | 6.4 | 88.4 | 5.2 | 100 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 2.0 | 73.9 | 24.2 | 100 | 25.7 | 64.0 | 10.4 | 100 |
| Telangana | 2.7 | 69.0 | 28.3 | 100 | 16.5 | 40.4 | 43.0 | 100 |
| Assam | 4.3 | 67.2 | 28.5 | 100 | 3.9 | 56.5 | 39.6 | 100 |
| Kerala | 5.0 | 71.3 | 23.7 | 100 | 8.8 | 54.1 | 37.1 | 100 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 6.7 | 48.2 | 45.1 | 100 | 13.0 | 36.1 | 50.9 | 100 |
| Karnataka | 8.9 | 29.3 | 61.8 | 100 | 19.0 | 25.0 | 56.0 | 100 |
| Odisha | 11.5 | 54.1 | 34.5 | 100 | 15.5 | 55.2 | 29.3 | 100 |
| Tamil Nadu | 18.0 | 44.3 | 37.8 | 100 | 24.6 | 35.0 | 40.4 | 100 |
| **Total** | **8.1** | **58.5** | **33.5** | **100** | **14.9** | **50.3** | **34.9** | **100** |

* Not enrolled in any institution at the time of the survey
** Enrolled in any pre-primary class (eg: Nursery/LKG/UKG) in any institution (Anganwadi/school)

Getting children enrolled in pre-schools or schools is something that as a country we have many years of experience with and know how to do successfully. More worrisome is the fact that when they do finally enter a classroom after this long gap, children whose foundational skills were shaky prior to the lockdown may have forgotten much of what they had learned - a phenomenon known as 'learning loss'. Although much of the literature on learning loss comes from the Global North, two recent analyses based in South Asia are relevant here. A recent analysis of the consequences for children that are clearly visible even 4 years after the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan show what could easily happen if action is not taken immediately.[2] Rukmini Banerji (2020) has examined 'learning loss' over summer vacations in our most populous state, Uttar Pradesh; and offers a path forward in terms of helping children to catch up quickly (see her piece in this report for a summary).[3]

[2] Andrabi, T., Daniels, B., Das, J. 2020. Human Capital Accumulation and Disasters: Evidence from the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005. RISE Working Paper Series. 20/039. https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-WP_2020/039
[3] Banerji, Rukmini. 2020. Learning "Loss" and Learning "Gain" in Primary School Years: What Do We Know from India That Can Help Us Think Forward in the COVID-19 Crisis? RISE Insight Note.
https://riseprogramme.org/sites/default/files/publications/20200723_RISE%20Insight%202020_19_Banerji_UP.pdf

The good news that ASER 2020 offers is that particularly in the case of young children, households increasingly have the resources with which to support their children's education. ASER 2020 data shows that parents in rural India are far more educated than before. For example, among children in the 5-8 age group, more than a third had both parents who had completed Std IX or higher. Even among children enrolled in government institutions (Anganwadi Centres or primary schools), who are often from socioeconomically disadvantaged households relative to those who attend private schools, more than three quarters had at least one parent who had studied beyond Std V (Table 2). Across the entire ASER 2020 sample, the data also reveals a huge jump in mobile phone ownership since 2018: 62% of households had at least one smartphone, up from 37% in ASER 2018. This means that many more families have the ability to access learning resources, whether shared by schools or from other sources.

**Table 3: Children age 5-8 by enrollment status and parents' education level**

| Enrollment status | Parents' education level* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High | Total |
| Not currently enrolled | 22.2 | 46.0 | 31.8 | 100 |
| Government Anganwadi, pre-primary or primary grade | 24.2 | 51.1 | 24.7 | 100 |
| Private pre-primary or primary grade | 8.7 | 41.1 | 50.2 | 100 |
| Total | 18.7 | 47.3 | 34.0 | 100 |

* 'Low' parental education includes families where both parents have completed Std V or less (including those with no schooling). At the other end of the spectrum, the 'high' parental education category comprises families where both parents have completed at least Std IX. All other parents are in the 'medium' category where there are many possible combinations.

Involving parents and families in supporting young children's transition from home to preschool, and from pre-primary to primary school, has long been considered good practice in terms of ensuring a continuum of early learning environments and experiences for the child. One positive outcome of the school closures due to COVID-19 is that involving parents became a necessity. But ASER 2020 also shows that families did not wait for institutions to reach out. Regardless of whether schools got in touch with them, families invested time and effort to support their children's education. Overall, an enormous 80% of these young children received help at home, including more than two thirds of those who are not even enrolled currently (Table 3). Among children who received help, they were most often supported by their mothers (41%) or fathers (35%). Not surprisingly, the availability of learning support at home was higher for these young children than for older age groups, especially the help provided by mothers.

**Table 4: Children age 5-8 by enrollment status and provision of learning support at home**

| Enrollment status | Does child receive learning support at home? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Don't know | Total |
| Not currently enrolled | 67.4 | 31.9 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Anganwadi | 77.6 | 22.4 | 0.1 | 100 |
| LKG/UKG | 85.6 | 14.3 | 0.1 | 100 |
| School | 80.7 | 19.0 | 0.3 | 100 |
| Total | 80.1 | 19.6 | 0.3 | 100 |

Going forward, this is something that the education system must build upon. Despite the unfortunate and abrupt school closures that were a consequence of the pandemic, there is clear evidence that parents can and want to support their children's learning, regardless of where the child is enrolled, how much they themselves have studied, or whether the school reached out to them. This is a huge advantage that must not be squandered: on the contrary, it must be leveraged to make sure that children are able to overcome the consequences of the pandemic relatively quickly. Rather than returning to the belief that teaching-learning can take place only in classrooms, the experience of these last nine months can be built upon to create systematic mechanisms to help parents and educators communicate and collaborate, in order to build a solid early years foundation for all children.

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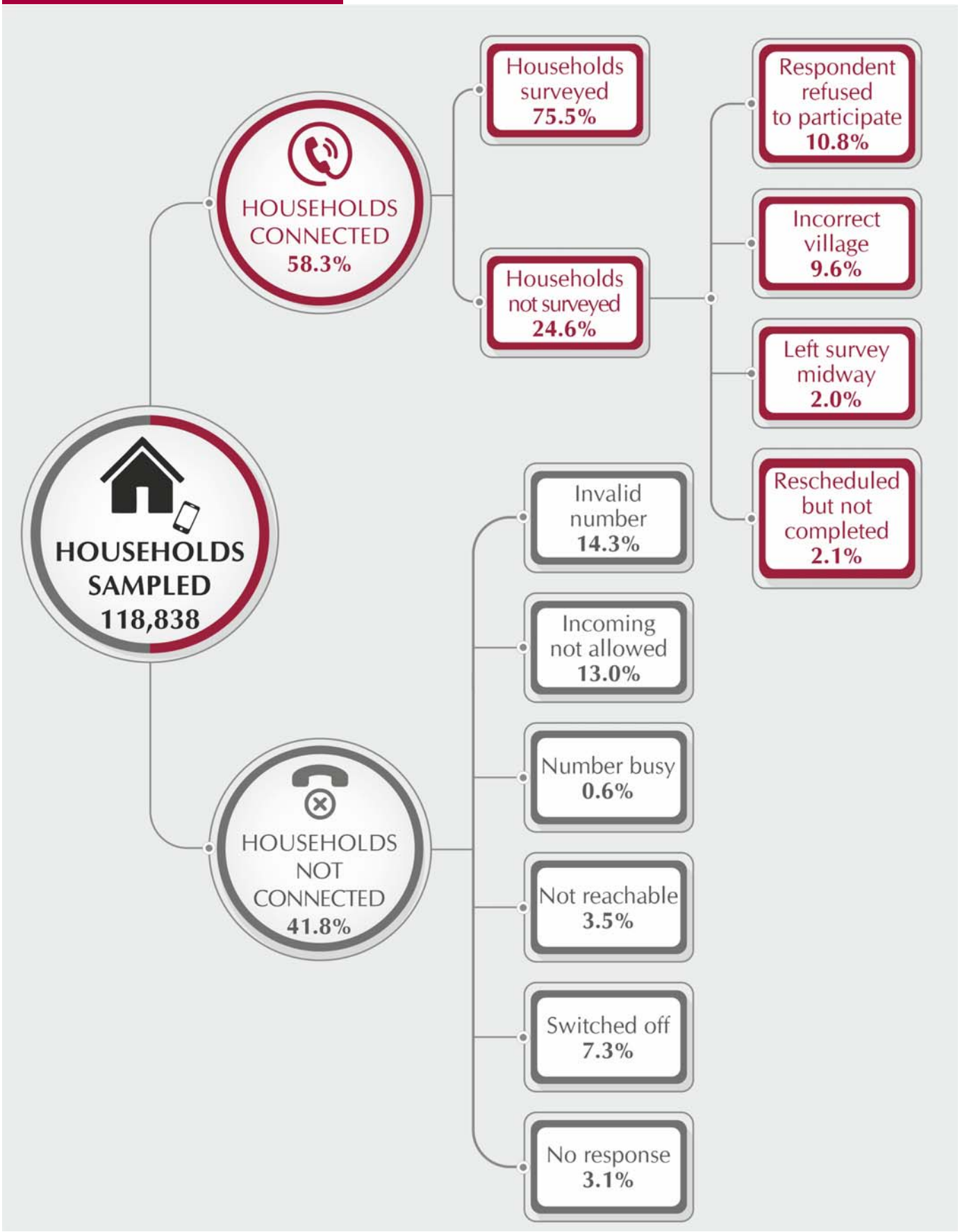
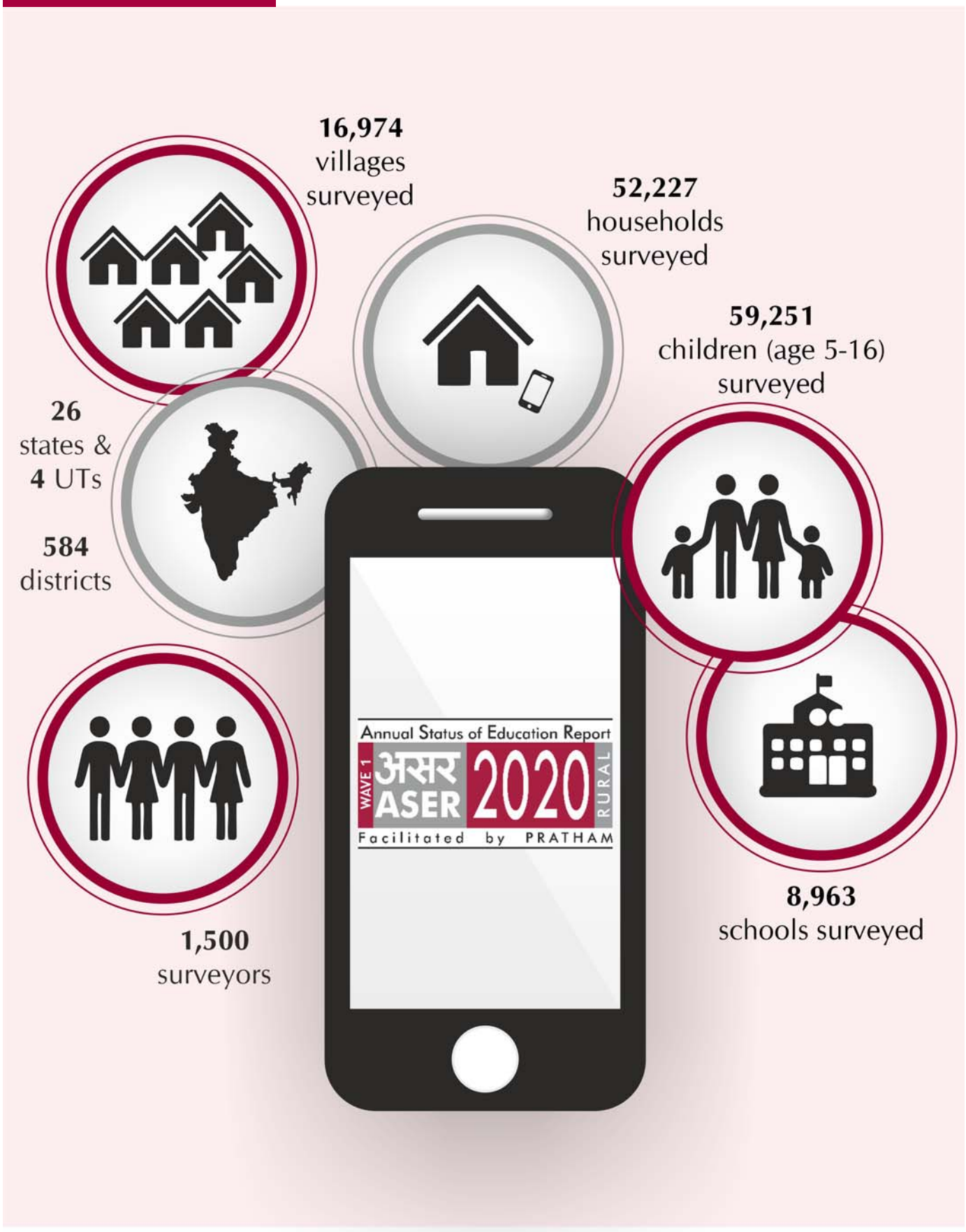
# About ASER

## Survey call summary



## Survey coverage



## Survey process summary

### 1. STARTING THE SURVEY

Surveyor keeps her mobile phone charged, and all printed formats (Call Log Sheet and Household & School Survey Sheets) handy; and then starts the calling process based on the list of sampled phone numbers provided.

### 2. MAINTAINING CALL RECORDS

While making the calls, surveyor records the Call Connection and Survey Completion status for each household and school in the Call Log Sheet. She also makes additional attempts to numbers that do not connect in the first attempt, at different time intervals.

### 3. TALKING TO THE RESPONDENTS

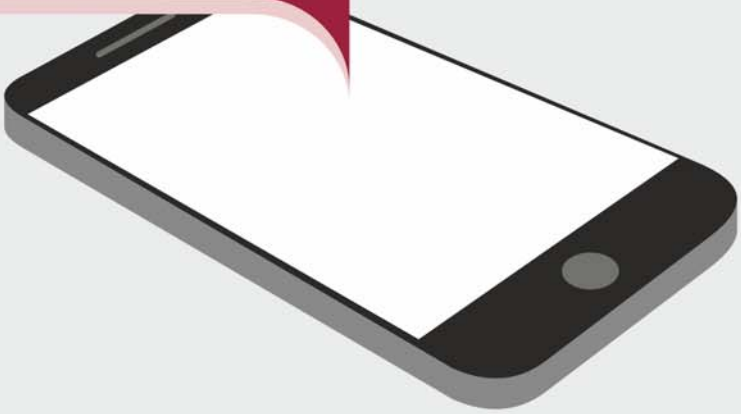
Surveyor introduces herself and the survey on the call. She explains the objectives of the survey clearly to the respondent using a standardised introductory script.

### 4. ADMINISTERING THE HOUSEHOLD AND SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRES

Surveyor takes information about remote teaching & learning activities from school headmasters or teachers for grades 1-8, & from households for children age 5-16 years. She fills the data in the respective formats.

### 5. DATA ENTRY AND RECHECK

The surveyor enters the data from the call log and survey sheets into the mobile app for the survey. She then sends formats for recheck. The Pratham/ASER state and central teams perform various quality checks.



# Sample design of rural ASER 2020 Wave 1

Since 2005, ASER has been providing comparable estimates of learning and schooling at the elementary stage. The 'basic' ASER, measuring foundational reading and arithmetic abilities of children in the school-going age group, was done annually from 2005 to 2014 and on a biennial basis from 2016 onwards. Therefore, it was scheduled to be conducted in 2020. While the design, training, monitoring and data analysis of ASER is done by ASER Centre and Pratham teams, the actual survey is done by volunteers in the field. The first lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic commenced on March 22, 2020 and was extended multiple times in a variety of ways. Given how fast the pandemic was spreading, it was soon clear that it would not be possible to conduct a field survey in 2020, especially not with volunteers.

However, given that schools closed as early as March 2020 and are yet to open, it was also clear that it was extremely important to conduct ASER this year to be able to gauge the impact of the pandemic on children's enrollment and learning. Further, the impact of the pandemic on different aspects of education would be felt at different times. Therefore, ASER 2020 was designed to be conducted in multiple waves to measure different aspects of the COVID-19 impact. The first wave, conducted during September 2020, focused on children's access to and use of learning materials during the period when schools were closed.

The challenge of conducting a field survey during a pandemic was met by conducting a phone-based survey. However, if estimates representative at various geographic levels were to be obtained, a sampling frame of phone numbers was required at the all-India level. Unfortunately, no such frame exists in the public domain. A possible solution to the lack of a frame was suggested by the ASER methodology. As part of the ASER survey, phone numbers of sampled households are recorded for monitoring and recheck purposes. Since ASER is representative at the district level, its sample size is fairly large - about 350,000 households across 17,500 villages and almost 600 districts. The need for such a large sample is necessitated by representation at the district level - to get representative estimates at the state and national levels such large sample sizes are not necessary. For instance, NSS surveys that are representative at the state and national levels have a sample size about a third as large as ASER.

Therefore, the ASER 2018 sample was used as a frame to draw the ASER 2020 sample that would be representative at the state and national levels. Drawing the new sample would require adding a third stage to ASER's existing two-stage sample design, to exclude households without mobile phones. With 90% mobile coverage in rural India, the extent of the self-selection bias due to uncovered populations would be small. A larger problem was that the ASER 2018 sample was two years old. With people moving, changing their mobile numbers, etc., it was possible that a large percentage of households would not be reachable. However, pan-India pilots suggested a fairly good reach (of about 70%); extensive experiments were also conducted to validate the frame.

In normal years, including 2018, ASER has a two-stage sample design. In the first stage, for each rural district, 30 villages are randomly selected from the Census 2011 village directory. Villages are selected using the probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling method. This method allows villages with larger populations to have a higher chance of being selected in the sample. It is most useful when the first stage sampling units vary considerably in size, because it ensures that households in larger villages have the same probability of getting into the sample as those in smaller villages, and vice versa.[1,2] In the second stage, 20 households are randomly selected in each of the 30 selected villages in the first stage – giving a total sample of 600 households per district. This sampling strategy generates a representative picture of each district. All rural districts are surveyed. The estimates obtained are then aggregated to the state and all-India levels.[3]

[1] Probability proportional to size (PPS) is a sampling technique in which the probability of selecting a sampling unit (village, in our case) is proportional to the size of its population. The method works as follows: First, the cumulative population by village calculated. Second, the total household population of the district is divided by the number of sampling units (villages) to get the sampling interval (SI). Third, a random number between 1 and the SI is chosen. This is referred to as the random start (RS). The RS denotes the site of the first village to be selected from the cumulative population. Fourth, the following series of numbers is formed: RS; RS + SI; RS + 2SI; RS + 3SI; .... The villages selected are those for which the cumulative population contains the numbers in the series.

[2] Most large household surveys in India, like the National Sample Survey and the National Family Health Survey also use this two-stage design and use PPS to select villages in the first stage.

[3] See ASER 2018 Report for a detailed discussion of the sample design.

ASER 2020 sampled 7 households with a mobile phone from each of the sampled ASER 2018 villages, giving a sample size of 210 households in each rural district. While this may not be sufficient to generate precise district level estimates, it is large enough to get good state level and national estimates. Like the standard ASER, the coverage of ASER 2020 is the rural household population of India.

To summarize, ASER 2020 has a three-stage clustered design. In the first stage, 30 households are sampled from the Census 2011 village directory using PPS. In the second stage, 20 households are randomly selected from each of the sampled villages. And, in the third stage, 7 households with mobile phones are randomly sampled from the 20 selected households in each of the 30 sampled villages in each rural district. All children in the age group of 5-16 years are surveyed in the households selected in the third stage.

In normal years, including 2018, ASER surveyors also visit a government primary or upper primary school in each sampled village, to record data on attendance and provision and usability of facilities. In each visited school, the phone number of the headteacher or a teacher is recorded for monitoring purposes. In ASER 2020, the entire ASER 2018 school sample was retained to explore whether schools shared learning materials during the period of school closures, how they shared these materials, and what contact they had with parents and the village community.

ASER 2020 provides estimates at the state and national levels. In order to aggregate estimates up from the district level households have to be assigned weights –– also called inflation factors. The inflation factor corresponding to a particular household denotes the number of households that the sampled household represents in the population. Given that 210 households are sampled in each district regardless of the size of the district, a household in a larger district will represent many more households and, therefore, have a larger weight associated with it than one in a sparsely populated district.[4]

In ASER's two-stage design, the sample is self-weighting at the district level - weights are the same for all households within a district. However, since ASER 2020 adds another stage of sampling based on mobile phone coverage, the sample is no longer self-weighting; rather, weights will differ across villages.[5] All estimates at the state and national levels are weighted, since states have a different number of districts and villages which vary by population.

[4] The inflation factor or weight associated with a household is simply the inverse of the probability of it being selected into the sample.

[5] The probability that household j gets selected in village i ($p_{ij}$) is the product of the probability that village i gets selected in the first stage ($p_i$) and the probability that household j gets selected in the second stage ($p_{j(i)}$) and the probability that household j has a mobile phone ($p_{j(i)m}$) and the probability that household j gets selected in the third stage ($p_{j(i)mi}$). This is given by:

$$p_{ij} = p_i \; p_{j(i)} \; p_{j(i)m} \; p_{j(i)mi} = \frac{nv}{dpop} \, vpop_i \, \frac{n_{hi}}{vpop_i} \, \frac{n_{him}}{n_{hi}} \, \frac{n_{hi3}}{n_{him}}$$

where nv is the number of villages sampled in the district in the first stage, vpopi is the household population of village i, dpop is the number of households in the district, nhi is the number of households sampled in the village in the second stage, nhim is the number of households who have a mobile phone in the second stage sample and nhi3 is the number of households with mobile phones sampled in the third stage. The weight associated with each sampled household within a village is the inverse of the probability of selection. Note that the sum of the weights of the households will give the district population of households and the sum of the weights for all children in the sample will approximate to the population of children in the 5-16 year age group in the district.

| State | Census 2011 Actual Districts | ASER 2020 Wave 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Surveyed Districts | Surveyed Villages | Sampled Households | Households connected | Surveyed Households | Surveyed children | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Children age 5-16 | Std 1-2 | Std 3-5 | Std 6-8 | Std 9-12 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 13 | 13 | 388 | 2715 | 1829 | 1442 | 1041 | 155 | 266 | 298 | 227 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 16 | 8 | 202 | 1409 | 637 | 428 | 480 | 93 | 132 | 131 | 79 |
| Assam | 27 | 26 | 727 | 5079 | 2619 | 2099 | 2162 | 425 | 552 | 584 | 79 |
| Bihar | 38 | 38 | 1136 | 7947 | 4071 | 2913 | 4862 | 877 | 1202 | 1125 | 1001 |
| Chhattisgarh | 18 | 16 | 459 | 3206 | 1570 | 1068 | 1261 | 207 | 310 | 324 | 312 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 1 | 1 | 28 | 208 | 126 | 84 | 65 | 9 | 13 | 22 | 17 |
| Daman and Diu | 2 | 2 | 17 | 227 | 147 | 125 | 93 | 27 | 32 | 24 | 9 |
| Goa | 2 | 2 | 45 | 314 | 198 | 92 | 54 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 14 |
| Gujarat | 26 | 26 | 759 | 5303 | 3303 | 2605 | 1892 | 364 | 611 | 457 | 339 |
| Haryana | 21 | 21 | 627 | 4398 | 3064 | 2184 | 2442 | 400 | 638 | 680 | 496 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 12 | 12 | 357 | 2511 | 1669 | 1470 | 1697 | 263 | 460 | 442 | 456 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | 22 | 14 | 405 | 2819 | 1678 | 1174 | 1650 | 286 | 422 | 441 | 316 |
| Jharkhand | 24 | 24 | 662 | 4619 | 1962 | 1358 | 2078 | 379 | 526 | 555 | 388 |
| Karnataka | 30 | 30 | 900 | 6155 | 3922 | 3128 | 4008 | 567 | 1007 | 1167 | 808 |
| Kerala | 14 | 12 | 351 | 2505 | 1931 | 1264 | 742 | 113 | 188 | 197 | 176 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 50 | 50 | 1471 | 10289 | 5503 | 4218 | 4985 | 770 | 1301 | 1306 | 1134 |
| Maharashtra | 33 | 33 | 981 | 6863 | 4209 | 3409 | 3891 | 626 | 1068 | 1174 | 741 |
| Manipur | 9 | 9 | 239 | 1717 | 884 | 678 | 1048 | 169 | 274 | 278 | 166 |
| Meghalaya | 7 | 7 | 173 | 1200 | 497 | 336 | 584 | 116 | 169 | 131 | 58 |
| Nagaland | 11 | 11 | 312 | 2238 | 1163 | 883 | 1169 | 181 | 306 | 323 | 146 |
| Odisha | 30 | 30 | 817 | 5701 | 2966 | 2378 | 2661 | 410 | 687 | 740 | 552 |
| Puducherry | 2 | 2 | 55 | 409 | 269 | 171 | 90 | 8 | 18 | 15 | 20 |
| Punjab | 20 | 20 | 595 | 4142 | 2821 | 2434 | 2010 | 315 | 475 | 536 | 516 |
| Rajasthan | 33 | 33 | 984 | 6888 | 4466 | 3340 | 4292 | 697 | 1041 | 1131 | 954 |
| Tamil Nadu | 31 | 31 | 923 | 6472 | 4058 | 2928 | 2134 | 242 | 494 | 565 | 529 |
| Telangana | 9 | 9 | 268 | 1876 | 1383 | 1151 | 1050 | 161 | 286 | 250 | 193 |
| Tripura | 4 | 4 | 118 | 826 | 392 | 295 | 196 | 29 | 49 | 55 | 45 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 71 | 70 | 2096 | 14662 | 8299 | 5912 | 7882 | 1376 | 2009 | 1848 | 1307 |
| Uttarakhand | 13 | 13 | 374 | 2614 | 1501 | 1042 | 1163 | 165 | 281 | 337 | 261 |
| West Bengal | 18 | 17 | 505 | 3526 | 2088 | 1618 | 1569 | 273 | 412 | 400 | 302 |
| **All India** | **607** | **584** | **16974** | **118838** | **69225** | **52227** | **59251** | **9710** | **15239** | **15550** | **11940** |

*State/UT estimates for Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Goa and Tripura have not been presented in this report due to insufficient sample size.
**Andhra Pradesh was bifurcated into Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in 2014. As a result, the sample frames of Census 2011 do not have the new state divisions. Of the 22 districts in undivided Andhra Pradesh, 9 rural districts are located in Telangana and the remaining 13 districts are located in Andhra Pradesh. ASER estimates for the two states are based on this separation of districts.
***Estimates for the UTs of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir have been presented in a combined form for comparability with ASER estimates of previous years.
****ASER 2020 Wave 1 was not conducted in Sikkim and Mizoram.

Annual Status of Education Report
असर ASER 2020 RURAL
Facilitated by PRATHAM

# ASER 2020 Wave 1 (Rural) findings – India

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 584 OUT OF 619 DISTRICTS

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation has caused shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 65.8 | 28.8 | 0.8 | 4.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 65.5 | 28.6 | 0.7 | 5.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 64.3 | 30.5 | 0.8 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 60.9 | 33.6 | 0.8 | 4.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 68.1 | 27.0 | 0.8 | 4.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 68.0 | 27.4 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 64.5 | 30.9 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 71.9 | 23.5 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 62.1 | 27.3 | 0.6 | 9.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 60.8 | 29.7 | 0.8 | 8.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 63.6 | 24.8 | 0.5 | 11.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, these data show that overall, more than 60% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 30% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Table 2).

**There has been a clear shift from private to government schools between 2018 and 2020, in all grades and among both boys and girls (Table 2). Reasons may include financial distress in households and/or permanent school shutdowns among the private schools.**

### Table 2: % Children enrolled in school. By grade, sex and school type. 2018 and 2020*

| Std | ASER 2018 | | | | | | ASER 2020 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Boys | | | Girls | | | Boys | | | Girls | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Total | Govt | Pvt | Total | Govt | Pvt | Total | Govt | Pvt | Total |
| Std I-II | 57.9 | 42.1 | 100 | 65.1 | 34.9 | 100 | 61.1 | 38.9 | 100 | 66.7 | 33.4 | 100 |
| Std III-V | 62.7 | 37.3 | 100 | 71.2 | 28.8 | 100 | 65.6 | 34.4 | 100 | 73.3 | 26.7 | 100 |
| Std VI-VIII | 65.8 | 34.3 | 100 | 73.3 | 26.7 | 100 | 68.3 | 31.7 | 100 | 77.0 | 23.0 | 100 |
| Std IX & above | 64.6 | 35.4 | 100 | 68.9 | 31.2 | 100 | 69.7 | 30.4 | 100 | 72.7 | 27.3 | 100 |
| All | 62.8 | 37.2 | 100 | 70.0 | 30.0 | 100 | 66.4 | 33.6 | 100 | 73.0 | 27.0 | 100 |

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# Children not enrolled in school

One widely anticipated consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic was that many more children would drop out of school. Although the true picture will only be known once schools reopen, ASER 2020 asked whether children were currently enrolled for the school year 2020-21.

## Are fewer children enrolled in 2020 than before?

**Table 3: % Children not enrolled in school. By age group and sex. 2018 and 2020***

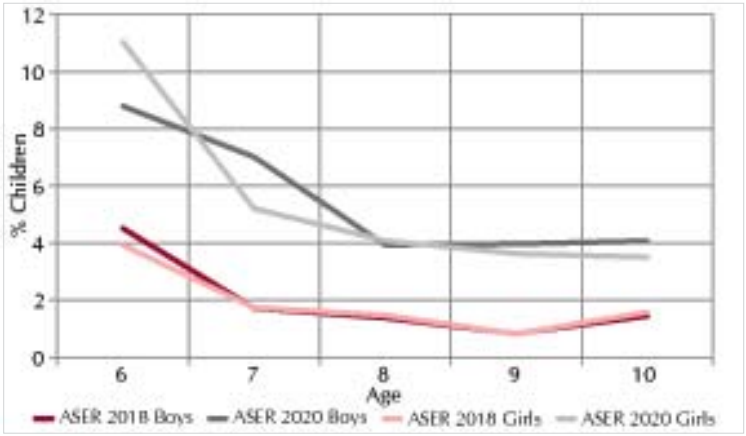
| Age group | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Boys | Girls | All | Boys | Girls | All |
| Age 6-10 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.3 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.9 |
| Age 15-16 | 11.4 | 12.6 | 12.0 | 8.8 | 11.1 | 9.9 |
| All | 3.7 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 5.3 | 5.7 | 5.5 |

Table 3 compares the proportion of children not enrolled in school in 2018 and 2020, separately for different age groups. These data show that while there have indeed been changes in children's enrollment status, these vary across age groups.

- Among boys in the 6-10 age group, for example, there has been a sharp increase in the proportion of children not currently enrolled, from 1.8% in 2018 to 5.3% in 2020; with a similar increase among girls in this age group.
- However, this proportion has increased much less among children in the 11-14 age group, among both boys and girls.
- The proportion of children not currently enrolled has actually decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

## Why the spike in children who are not enrolled in school, especially among young children?

**Chart 1: % Children not enrolled in school. By age and sex. 2018 and 2020***




With schools closed, in a sense all children are currently out of school, and the 'true' proportion of out of school children is difficult to measure. However, the age-wise breakdown of children in the 6-10 age group who are not currently enrolled shows that while the increase in this proportion over 2018 is visible at each of these ages, the biggest spike is visible for the youngest children – those who are 6 years old, especially among girls (Chart 1).

To understand these patterns better, parents of children who are not currently enrolled were asked which year the child had dropped out and why this was the case. Their responses show that across the entire 6-16 age group surveyed, more than half of the children not currently enrolled had 'dropped out' in 2020. However, the vast majority of these children are not 'dropouts' in the usual sense of the term: they are awaiting admission to school. This is particularly true for children in the 6-10 age group, and explains the spike visible among the 6 year olds in particular.

**Because schools are closed, many young children have not yet secured admission to Std 1. The increase in not enrolled children in the 6-10 age group is therefore likely to be more a reflection of children waiting to enroll in school rather than of children who have indeed dropped out.**

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school to send their child to but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

## How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 4: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 35.0 | 22.7 | 31.3 | 18.9 | 9.5 | 16.1 |
| Std I-V | 17.7 | 11.1 | 15.7 | 15.6 | 7.3 | 13.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 19.2 | 17.9 | 18.8 | 20.9 | 15.4 | 19.2 |
| Std IX-X | 18.8 | 23.6 | 20.3 | 26.3 | 29.9 | 27.4 |
| Std XI & above | 9.4 | 24.7 | 14.0 | 18.2 | 37.9 | 24.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

**Table 5: Distribution of enrolled children. By parents' education and household resources. 2020**

| Parents' education | % Children | Of these children, | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | % Whose households have smartphones | % Enrolled in Govt school |
| Low | 22.5 | 45.1 | 84.0 |
| Medium | 49.9 | 60.2 | 71.6 |
| High | 27.6 | 78.7 | 53.9 |
| All | 100 | 61.9 | 69.5 |

We categorize parents' education as follows: 'low' parental education includes families where both parents have completed Std V or less (including those with no schooling). At the other end of the spectrum, the 'high' parental education category comprises families where both parents have completed at least Std IX. All other parents are in the 'medium' category where there are many possible combinations.

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves.

In ASER 2020, for example, Table 4 shows that under a third of children's mothers (31.3%) and even fewer children's fathers (16.6%) have no schooling.

**More than half of all children's mothers (53.1%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (70.8%) have completed more than 5 years of school.**

ASER does not collect information on household income, but parents' education levels can be used as a proxy for the household's socio-economic status. On average, more educated parents have households with higher incomes. Table 5 shows, for example, that as parents' education level increases, the likelihood that the household has a smartphone also increases; and the probability that the sampled child is studying in a government school decreases:

- Almost a quarter of all children have parents in the 'low' education category (22.5%). The vast majority of these children study in government schools (84%) and less than half of their families have a smartphone (45.1%).
- Similar proportions of children have parents in the 'high' education category (27.6%). But a far lower proportion are in government schools (53.9%), while most have families with a smartphone (78.7%).

## Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 79.8 | 69.7 | 76.2 |
| Std III-V | 85.5 | 72.0 | 81.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 86.3 | 73.7 | 82.8 |
| Std IX & above | 82.7 | 73.5 | 80.0 |
| All | 84.1 | 72.2 | 80.5 |

Table 6 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

## Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 7: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 29.6 | 49.9 | 36.5 | 56.4 | 74.2 | 61.8 |
| TV | 54.8 | 72.5 | 60.7 | 56.0 | 71.9 | 60.8 |
| Motorized vehicle | 39.1 | 62.5 | 46.9 | 43.5 | 64.7 | 49.9 |

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 7).

**Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously – from 36.5% to 61.8%.**

The percentage point increase in smartphone ownership was similar in households of children enrolled in government and private schools. Among children enrolled in both government and private schools, about 1 in every 10 households bought a new phone to support their children's education after schools closed in March 2020 (Table 8). Most often parents purchased a smartphone. But even among children who did not have a smartphone at home, about 1 in every 10 was able to access a smartphone elsewhere, for example from a neighbour.

**Table 8: % Enrolled children with access to smartphones. By school type. 2020**

| School type | % Children | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of smartphones in the household | | | | | Bought a new phone for children's education since the lockdown began | If bought a new phone, then type of phone purchased | | If no smartphone in the household, then % children who have access to any other smartphone |
| | No smartphone | 1 | 2 | 3 or more | Total | | Regular phone | Smartphone | |
| Govt | 43.6 | 43.6 | 9.7 | 3.1 | 100 | 10.2 | 20.1 | 80.6 | 12.6 |
| Pvt | 25.8 | 50.3 | 16.7 | 7.2 | 100 | 13.2 | 15.7 | 83.8 | 13.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 38.2 | 45.6 | 11.8 | 4.3 | 100 | 11.1 | 18.5 | 81.7 | 12.7 |

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# Learning support for children at home

The previous section summarized what households *have*, in terms of the availability of some key resources that they can use to support children's learning. This section examines some dimensions of what households *do*, in order to provide learning support to children during the period of school closures. This includes support from family members as well as other support such as paid private tuition.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 9: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

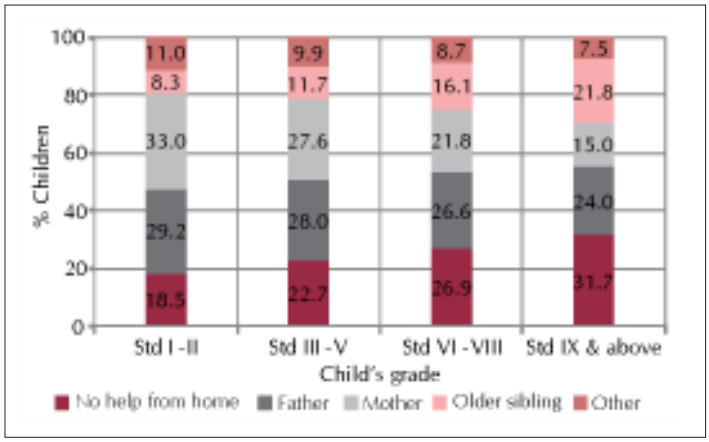
| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 78.6 | 86.7 | 81.5 |
| Std III-V | 75.3 | 81.7 | 77.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 70.8 | 79.1 | 73.1 |
| Std IX & above | 66.9 | 71.7 | 68.3 |
| All | 72.6 | 80.0 | 74.9 |

Table 9 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 81.5% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 68.3% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 75.3% government school children receive help as compared to 81.7% of children enrolled in private schools.

## Which family members help children to study at home?

**Chart 2: % Enrolled children who receive help at home. By grade and family member. 2020**




'Other' includes uncle, aunt, cousin or any other family member.

The surveyed household was asked about who helps children most often with studying at home. Options included mother, father, older siblings and others.

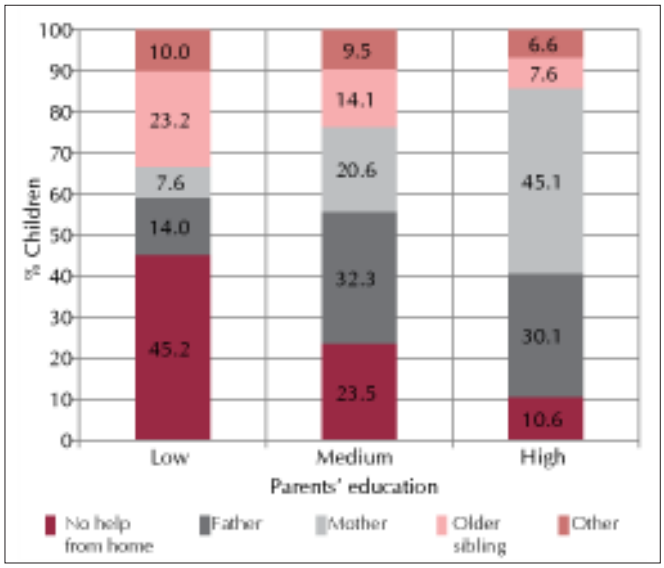
Data indicate that as children move into higher grades, fewer get help from family members, especially mothers. For example, 33% of Std I-II children receive help from their mothers but only 15% of Std IX & above children are helped by their mothers.

However, help from older siblings increases as children move to higher grades.

## Does parents' education level influence whether children get learning support at home?

Clearly, the more educated the parents, the more help their children receive. Among families where both parents have completed Std IX or more (the 'high' category), for example, close to 45% children receive help from their mothers (Chart 3). These trends do not vary much across government and private school children (Table 10).

### Chart 3: % Enrolled children who receive help at home. By parents' education and family member. 2020




'Other' includes uncle, aunt, cousin or any other family member.

We categorize parents' education as follows: 'low' parental education includes families where both parents have completed Std V or less (including those with no schooling). At the other end of the spectrum, the 'high' parental education category comprises families where both parents have completed at least Std IX. All other parents are in the 'medium' category where there are many possible combinations.

### Table 10: % Enrolled children who receive family support for learning. By parents' education and type of school. 2020.

| Parents' education | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low | 55.0 | 54.0 | 54.8 |
| Medium | 75.5 | 78.9 | 76.5 |
| High | 89.4 | 89.4 | 89.4 |
| All | 72.9 | 80.3 | 75.2 |

**Although school closures had relatively little impact on children's tuition, these data reveal significant family support for children's education even among children whose parents have only studied up to Std V or less (the 'low' category of education).**

For example, among children whose parents have completed Std V or less,

- A little more than half of these children get help at home, whether they study in government or private school (Table 10).
- 14% receive help from their fathers and almost 8% from their mothers (Chart 3).
- Further, if parents have low levels of education, older siblings and others play a more significant role (Chart 3).

## Are children taking tuition classes while schools are closed?

### Table 11: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By school type and tuition category. 2020

| School type | % Children currently taking tuition | | % Children currently not taking tuition | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Started before the lockdown | Started after the lockdown | Not taking tuition even before the lockdown | Discontinued tuition after the lockdown | |
| Govt | 26.9 | 4.8 | 57.1 | 11.2 | 100 |
| Pvt | 21.8 | 8.1 | 58.7 | 11.4 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 25.4 | 5.8 | 57.6 | 11.3 | 100 |

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020 when schools across the country were closed. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week?*

**Overall, approximately one third of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials or activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 12).**

A slightly larger proportion of students in higher classes received materials as compared to lower classes. For example, close to 38% of high school students received materials as compared to 30.8% of children in Std I-II.

A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

**Table 12: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 27.9 | 35.8 | 30.8 |
| Std III-V | 33.7 | 40.4 | 35.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 35.4 | 42.7 | 37.4 |
| Std IX & above | 34.8 | 43.4 | 37.3 |
| All | 33.5 | 40.6 | 35.6 |

## Through what medium did children receive learning materials or activities?

**Table 13: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 67.3 | 12.3 | 31.8 | 5.6 |
| Pvt | 87.2 | 9.9 | 11.5 | 5.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 74.2 | 11.5 | 24.8 | 5.7 |

Answer options were read out; respondents could select more than one option.

As noted above, only a third of all children received materials or activities during the reference week.

But those who did receive material, received it in a variety of ways.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was by far the most common medium used for sharing learning materials and activities, followed by phone calls and visits.

A higher proportion of students enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp than their counterparts in government schools. Accessing materials/opportunities via phone calls or visits was more common among children enrolled in government schools.

*This section captures activities shared with children that required use of textbooks. Availability of textbooks in the household was discussed in the previous section.

**Table 14: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/ activities in the reference week, % children who got these through one or more mediums. By school type and number of mediums. 2020**

| School type | Number of mediums | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| Govt | 85.8 | 11.5 | 2.6 | 0.1 | 100 |
| Pvt | 88.3 | 9.2 | 2.3 | 0.2 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 86.7 | 10.7 | 2.5 | 0.2 | 100 |

**Table 15: % Enrolled children who received materials from only one medium. By smartphone availability and medium. 2020**

| Smartphone availability | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 83.9 | 2.8 | 11.8 | 1.5 | 100 |
| No | 23.4 | 11.8 | 57.1 | 7.8 | 100 |
| All | 72.2 | 4.6 | 20.5 | 2.7 | 100 |

Answer options were read out; respondents could select more than one option.

Despite the variety of ways in which children could have accessed learning materials and activities, during the reference week most children – more than 86% – received these materials in just one way (Table 14).

If a smartphone was available in the family, it is very likely that the child's access to available material was via WhatsApp (Table 15). Interestingly, even among children whose families had no smartphones, almost a fourth (23.4%) were able to access WhatsApp using someone else's smartphone. However, in families that had no smartphones, more than half of all children availed of materials through physical visits (either going to the school or the teacher coming to the home).

## If households did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, what did they say was the reason?

**Table 16: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 68.5 | 10.7 | 25.8 | 5.1 | 4.3 |
| Pvt | 66.9 | 11.6 | 20.4 | 5.2 | 6.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 68.1 | 11.0 | 24.3 | 5.1 | 4.8 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Families cited different reasons for why their children did not receive learning materials or activities during the reference week. Across children enrolled in both government and private schools, most parents said that the school had not sent materials (68.1%). Overall, almost a quarter of sampled children's parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (24.3%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (25.8%) than those enrolled in private school (20.4%).

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio; and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 17: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By grade and type of material. 2020**

| Std | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Std I-II | 55.6 | 33.5 | 15.7 | 2.3 | 16.6 | 7.3 |
| Std III-V | 60.2 | 35.5 | 19.7 | 2.7 | 19.7 | 8.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 60.7 | 36.0 | 20.8 | 2.9 | 21.9 | 11.5 |
| Std IX & above | 61.2 | 35.5 | 21.5 | 2.6 | 27.5 | 16.3 |
| All | 59.7 | 35.3 | 19.6 | 2.7 | 21.5 | 11.0 |

**Table 18: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 59.5 | 34.1 | 20.2 | 2.8 | 18.3 | 8.1 |
| Pvt | 60.1 | 38.0 | 18.4 | 2.3 | 28.7 | 17.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.7 | 35.3 | 19.6 | 2.7 | 21.5 | 11.0 |

**Even though only a third of all children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week.**

These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others. Students in higher grades were more likely to be connected to online classes or video recordings as compared to their younger counterparts (Table 17).

While the proportion of children doing different types of activities is quite similar for government and private schools, there is one significant difference. Children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons. For example,

- While close to 60% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks durnig the reference week, 28.7% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 18.3% of government school children.
- Further, 17.7% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 8.1% of government school children (Table 18).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 19: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 30.5 | 26.2 | 24.2 | 19.1 | 100 |
| Pvt | 28.1 | 21.0 | 24.2 | 26.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 29.8 | 24.6 | 24.2 | 21.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 30.5% students in government schools and 28.1% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to a fifth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school students (26.7%) as compared to government school students (19.1%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. Teachers and parents/families need to discuss how the child is doing both academically and in terms of well-being. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020.

The data indicates that overall, about a third of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 20).

**More educated parents had greater contact with school teachers, as well as a lower proportion of children who did not do any activity in the reference week (Table 21). This suggests that children whose parents could offer support at home were also those who got more support from school.**

**Table 20: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administrative purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/ child called or visited each otherat least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 32.3 | 29.2 | 19.3 | 40.4 |
| Pvt | 37.4 | 36.1 | 21.7 | 31.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 33.9 | 31.3 | 20.0 | 37.7 |

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

**Table 21: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By parents' education and type of contact. 2020**

| Parents' education | % Children who did no activity | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/ child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Low | 40.8 | 25.2 | 23.0 | 15.0 |
| Medium | 30.1 | 32.8 | 30.4 | 20.3 |
| High | 19.6 | 43.3 | 40.0 | 24.5 |
| All | 29.6 | 34.0 | 31.4 | 19.9 |

We categorize parents' education as follows: 'low' parental education includes families where both parents have completed Std V or less (including those with no schooling). At the other end of the spectrum, the 'high' parental education category comprises families where both parents have completed at least Std IX. All other parents are in the 'medium' category where there are many possible combinations.

# School survey

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey attempted to reach the head teacher or another teacher of a government school with primary classes in each village where sampled households were located. These schools were surveyed two years ago as part of ASER 2018. This year, teachers were asked about their ability to maintain contact and conduct distance learning activities with their students during school closures. Teachers were asked questions about the school in general, as well as about the grade that they could offer the most information for. For many questions, responses were requested for the reference period of the week prior to the survey.

## What kinds of schools and teachers did ASER 2020 reach?

**Table 22: Number of schools reached by grades offered. 2020**

| | Number of schools |
|---|---|
| Primary (Std I-IV/V) | 4881 |
| Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII) | 3411 |
| Other | 671 |
| Total | 8963 |

**Table 23: % School respondents by designation. 2020**

| Designation | % School respondents |
|---|---|
| Head teacher | 55.9 |
| Teacher | 44.1 |
| Total | 100 |

ASER 2020 reached teachers or head teachers in a total of 8,963 government schools across the country. More than half of these were primary schools, while most of the remainder were upper primary schools (Table 22). In more than half of these schools, the respondent was the head teacher (Table 23).

When asked to select one specific grade that they were able to provide the most information about, more than half of these respondents selected Std III, IV, or V; and over a quarter selected Std VI, VII, or VIII (Table 24).

**Table 24: % School respondents by the grade they opted to provide information about. 2020**

| Std | % School respondents |
|---|---|
| Std I-II | 18.9 |
| Std III-V | 54.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 26.4 |
| Could not give information | 0.5 |
| Total | 100 |

## How prepared are teachers for remote teaching-learning?

**Table 25: % School respondents who have children's phone numbers available. By grade and proportion of children. 2020**

| Std | All children | > = Half | < Half | None/ Don't know | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 35.8 | 37.8 | 17.2 | 9.1 | 100 |
| Std III-V | 41.3 | 36.2 | 16.8 | 5.6 | 100 |
| Std VI-VIII | 43.1 | 40.5 | 13.6 | 2.7 | 100 |
| All | 40.8 | 37.7 | 16.1 | 5.5 | 100 |

**Overall, school respondents seemed to be well placed to conduct remote teaching-learning activities.**

**Table 26: % School respondents who received training to conduct remote teaching-learning activities. By grade and type of training received. 2020**

| Std | % School respondents who received training | Of those who received training, type of training received | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Brief instructions (in person or online) | Series of in person/ online training sessions | Enrolled in/ completed online course | Other kinds of training received |
| Std I-II | 49.8 | 62.3 | 38.7 | 6.3 | 3.9 |
| Std III-V | 50.6 | 68.4 | 32.4 | 7.3 | 4.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 48.7 | 74.4 | 27.0 | 8.7 | 4.8 |
| All | 50.0 | 68.8 | 32.2 | 7.5 | 4.4 |

Respondents could specify more than one type of training.

Most teachers reported having phone numbers for at least half of their students (Table 25). However, the necessary training was perhaps inadequate, with half the respondents having received any training. Of those who did, the majority reported only receiving brief instructions, either online or in person, on what they should do and how they should do it (Table 26).

# Learning materials and engagement

## How often did teachers share learning materials or activities with their students, and how did they share it?

### Table 27: % School respondents who shared learning materials/activities with students. By grade and frequency of sharing. 2020

| Std | In the reference week | At least once since lockdown | Not even once | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 65.8 | 23.5 | 10.7 | 100 |
| Std III-V | 67.1 | 22.4 | 10.5 | 100 |
| Std VI-VIII | 66.8 | 18.9 | 14.3 | 100 |
| All | 66.8 | 21.7 | 11.5 | 100 |

School respondents were asked whether they had shared any learning materials or activities with their students during the reference week; and if they had not, then whether they had done so at least once since the school closures in March 2020. The responses received were similar across all grades: two thirds of all respondents reported having shared materials in the preceding week; and most of the remaining reported having done so at least once since March 2020 (Table 27). Only one respondent in every ten reported not having shared any materials with their students. Similarly, the vast majority of teachers reported having distributed textbooks to all children in the selected grade (Table 28).

### Table 28: % School respondents who reported having distributed textbooks to children. By grade and reach of textbook distribution. 2020

| Std | All parents/ children | Some parents/ children | Not distributed/ Don't know | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 87.1 | 6.2 | 6.8 | 100 |
| Std III-V | 88.3 | 6.1 | 5.7 | 100 |
| Std VI-VIII | 83.5 | 7.3 | 9.2 | 100 |
| All | 86.8 | 6.4 | 6.8 | 100 |

### Table 29: Of school respondents who shared learning materials/activities with students during the reference week, % respondents using different mediums. By grade and medium. 2020

| Std | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 80.8 | 25.5 | 64.8 | 7.6 |
| Std III-V | 79.8 | 26.9 | 59.8 | 10.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 84.4 | 34.0 | 56.5 | 19.4 |
| All | 81.2 | 28.5 | 59.9 | 12.3 |

'Other' includes Telegram, SMS or other mediums.
Answer options were read out; respondents could select more than one option.

Regardless of grade, WhatsApp was by far the most common method used by school respondents who reported having sent materials or activities to their students during the reference week (81.2%) (Table 29). A majority also reported distributing materials through personal contact with parents or children (59.9%). Contact between teachers and parents (or children) during the reference week was usually initiated by the teacher (Table 30).

### Table 30: % School respondents in contact with parents/children. By grade and type of contact. 2020

| Std | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administrative purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/ child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Std I-II | 46.6 | 23.0 | 22.8 | 54.9 |
| Std III-V | 46.9 | 25.7 | 23.7 | 55.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 47.2 | 29.9 | 16.7 | 56.3 |
| All | 46.9 | 26.3 | 21.7 | 55.5 |

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# Community involvement

## Do teachers get help from others in the community to support children's learning?

**Table 31: % School respondents who reported taking help from community members. By state and stakeholder whose help was taken. 2020**

| State | % School respondents who take help from village/ community members | Of those who reported taking help, % school respondents who took help from: | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Village head or ward member | NGO or local volunteers | Older children | Parents or caregivers | Anganwadi workers | SMC members | Others |
| Andhra Pradesh | 33.3 | | | | | | | |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 0.0 | | | Data Insufficient | | | | |
| Assam | 62.3 | | | | | | | |
| Bihar | 88.3 | 39.6 | 3.8 | 30.2 | 52.8 | 5.7 | 39.6 | 11.3 |
| Chhattisgarh | 70.2 | 20.7 | 1.2 | 54.0 | 47.1 | 6.9 | 50.6 | 8.1 |
| Gujarat | 69.7 | 23.6 | 0.9 | 20.4 | 48.0 | 11.1 | 48.4 | 0.0 |
| Haryana | 60.9 | 13.1 | 4.6 | 51.5 | 62.1 | 5.6 | 36.4 | 3.0 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 73.4 | 8.0 | 0.9 | 38.1 | 52.2 | 5.3 | 33.6 | 0.0 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | 59.3 | 56.3 | 2.5 | 8.8 | 50.0 | 6.3 | 3.8 | 13.8 |
| Jharkhand | 83.7 | 37.0 | 3.0 | 25.0 | 53.0 | 8.0 | 43.5 | 4.0 |
| Karnataka | 62.5 | 38.3 | 13.3 | 42.1 | 31.3 | 10.0 | 40.0 | 1.7 |
| Kerala | 42.3 | 61.5 | 69.2 | 9.6 | 32.7 | 9.6 | 34.6 | 19.2 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 77.4 | 9.9 | 5.2 | 51.8 | 79.7 | 13.7 | 21.6 | 2.7 |
| Maharashtra | 76.0 | 20.6 | 22.6 | 46.3 | 55.4 | 5.7 | 44.1 | 3.7 |
| Manipur | 14.3 | | | | | | | |
| Meghalaya | 50.0 | | | Data Insufficient | | | | |
| Nagaland | 55.0 | | | | | | | |
| Odisha | 59.3 | 16.9 | 3.2 | 6.5 | 46.8 | 4.0 | 53.2 | 2.4 |
| Punjab | 85.1 | 19.1 | 5.4 | 32.7 | 19.7 | 26.0 | 41.6 | 32.7 |
| Rajasthan | 65.2 | 35.8 | 2.8 | 51.4 | 35.3 | 29.8 | 15.6 | 6.9 |
| Tamil Nadu | 46.5 | 45.0 | 5.0 | 55.0 | 43.3 | 0.0 | 15.0 | 0.0 |
| Telangana | 72.7 | 34.7 | 5.6 | 72.2 | 66.7 | 2.8 | 20.8 | 2.8 |
| Tripura | 96.6 | 29.8 | 0.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 100 | 0.0 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 60.7 | 28.9 | 2.5 | 16.1 | 43.4 | 22.1 | 58.0 | 8.0 |
| Uttarakhand | 78.9 | 26.7 | 17.4 | 41.9 | 54.7 | 12.8 | 44.2 | 3.5 |
| West Bengal | 80.9 | | | | | | | |
| **All India** | **68.8** | **24.6** | **7.6** | **36.7** | **49.4** | **12.9** | **38.1** | **7.1** |

Answer options were read out; respondents could select more than one option.

Across the country, school respondents reported getting help from a wide variety of community actors in order to reach and support children. Overall, 7 out of every 10 respondents reported receiving help from somebody in the community (Table 31). Of these, half reported support being provided by parents; while many also reported being helped by SMC members, older children, or village heads/ ward members.

Clear differences in these patterns are visible across states. For example, large proportions of school respondents in Kerala report receiving help from NGOs or local volunteers; while many teachers in Punjab and Rajasthan report receiving help from Anganwadi workers.

Annual Status of Education Report
WAVE 1 असर ASER 2020 RURAL
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# ASER 2020 Wave 1 (Rural) findings – State estimates

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 13 OUT OF 13 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 66.9 | 26.6 | 0.1 | 6.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 68.2 | 25.3 | 0.1 | 6.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 62.8 | 31.6 | 0.2 | 5.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 61.2 | 34.5 | 0.0 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 64.8 | 28.1 | 0.3 | 6.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 71.7 | 21.2 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 68.6 | 24.4 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 74.6 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

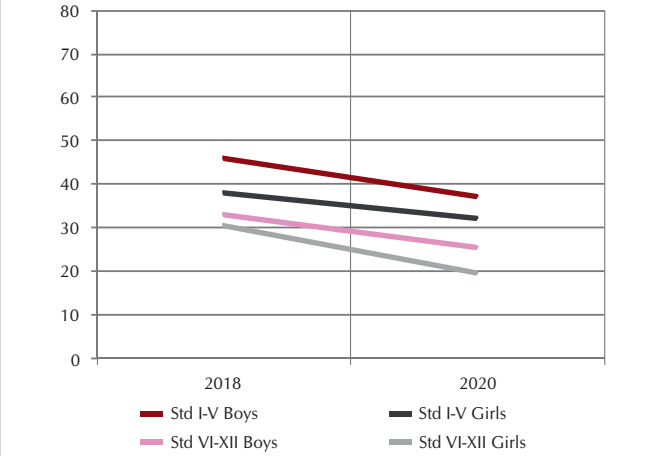


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, nearly 67% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 27% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020. This decrease is highest for girls enrolled in Std VI-XII.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.4 | 6.6 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.3 | 6.3 |
| Age 15-16 | 7.9 | 9.4 |
| All | 2.2 | 6.9 |

A higher proportion of children across age groups are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age group 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

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Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 31.6 | 16.9 | 27.5 | 26.0 | 7.1 | 20.8 |
| Std I-V | 22.0 | 9.7 | 18.6 | 19.6 | 17.3 | 18.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 18.0 | 14.4 | 17.0 | 19.3 | 15.0 | 18.1 |
| Std IX-X | 18.6 | 36.4 | 23.6 | 19.2 | 28.6 | 21.8 |
| Std XI & above | 9.7 | 22.7 | 13.3 | 16.0 | 32.0 | 20.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (53.9%) and a slightly higher proportion of children's fathers (60.2%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 32.5 | 23.2 | 29.2 |
| Std VI-XII | 42.5 | 26.6 | 39.0 |
| All | 38.5 | 24.7 | 34.6 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 35.2 | 53.7 | 42.1 | 57.0 | 72.9 | 61.5 |
| TV | 89.4 | 95.9 | 91.8 | 92.9 | 92.9 | 92.9 |
| Motorized vehicle | 45.7 | 70.0 | 54.7 | 49.1 | 69.6 | 54.9 |

Table 4 indicates that overall, close to 40% of all children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles remained similar for the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased significantly - from 42.1% to 61.5%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 63.6 | 84.3 | 70.8 |
| Std VI-XII | 57.8 | 59.8 | 58.2 |
| All | 60.2 | 73.6 | 63.9 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 63.9% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 70.8% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 58.2% children in Std VI-XII.
- For primary grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. 63.6% children in Std I-V in government school children receive help as compared to 84.3% of children enrolled in private schools in the same grades.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 19.0 | 25.2 | 21.2 |
| Std VI-XII | 27.2 | 30.1 | 27.9 |
| All | 23.9 | 27.4 | 24.9 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 55.3 | 45.5 | 30.2 | 1.3 |
| Pvt | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 63.3 | 36.1 | 23.9 | 2.9 |

Overall, a quarter of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities with children. Personal visits and calls were the other common mediums among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 85.4 | 10.5 | 14.2 | 3.7 | 2.9 |
| Pvt | 73.9 | 15.9 | 21.0 | 10.1 | 2.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 82.3 | 11.9 | 16.0 | 5.4 | 2.6 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (82.3%). Overall, 16% of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason with more parents of children enrolled in private school highlighting this reason (21%) than those enrolled in government school (14.2%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

### Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 24.4 | 19.7 | 33.2 | 0.9 | 11.4 | 3.2 |
| Pvt | 26.1 | 20.4 | 24.1 | 0.7 | 23.3 | 13.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 24.9 | 19.9 | 30.7 | 0.9 | 14.8 | 6.2 |

Even though only a quarter of all children received materials from their schools during the reference week, half of the households reported that children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

The proportion of children doing different types of activities using traditional materials is quite similar for private and government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 24.4% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 26.1% private school children.
- 23.3% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 11.4% of government school children.
- 13.8% of private school children reported using live online as opposed to 3.2% of government school children (Table 10).

### How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 50.9 | 23.1 | 13.7 | 12.3 | 100 |
| Pvt | 49.0 | 21.1 | 14.7 | 15.3 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 50.4 | 22.5 | 14.0 | 13.1 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 50.9% children in government schools and 49% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

13% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (15.3%) as compared to government school children (12.3%).

### How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administrative purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 26.7 | 25.6 | 8.9 | 36.2 |
| Pvt | 28.3 | 24.7 | 10.6 | 28.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 27.2 | 25.3 | 9.4 | 34.2 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 27.2% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is slightly higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# Arunachal Pradesh RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 8 OUT OF 16 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

### Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 47.4 | 48.1 | 0.0 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 51.6 | 44.7 | 0.0 | 3.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 40.0 | 53.3 | 0.0 | 6.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | Insufficient Data | | | | |
| Age 7-10: Girls | | | | | |
| Age 11-16: All | 59.7 | 38.7 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 54.9 | 42.5 | 0.0 | 2.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 65.7 | 34.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***

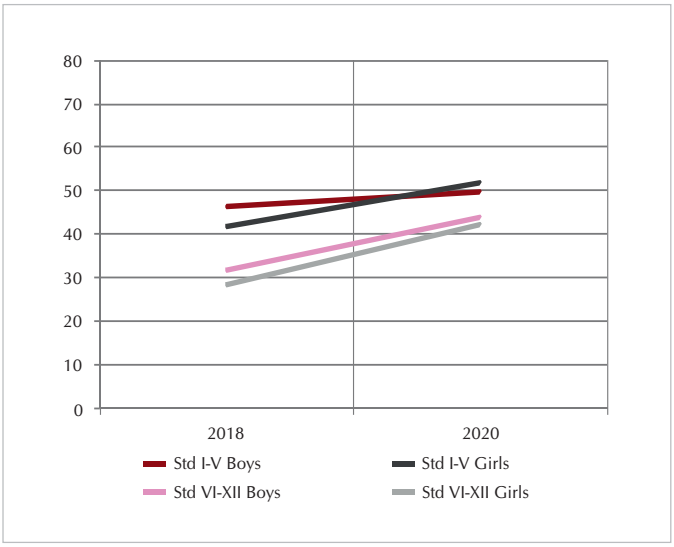


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, 47.4% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 48.1% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades. This increase is higher for girls than boys.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 2.7 | 7.5 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.8 | 0.8 |
| Age 15-16 | 9.3 | 3.5 |
| All | 3.3 | 4.3 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. Further, there has been a decrease in the proportion of children not enrolled in schools for the age group of 15-16 years.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# Arunachal Pradesh RURAL

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 37.9 | 21.3 | 30.0 | 24.8 | 20.9 | 22.9 |
| Std I-V | 8.5 | 13.6 | 10.9 | 8.4 | 7.2 | 7.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 18.0 | 23.5 | 20.6 | 14.4 | 11.3 | 12.9 |
| Std IX-X | 26.3 | 25.2 | 25.8 | 22.6 | 21.9 | 22.3 |
| Std XI & above | 9.3 | 16.5 | 12.7 | 29.8 | 38.8 | 34.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (59.1%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (69.3%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 66.2 | 73.1 | 69.7 |
| Std VI-XII | 83.1 | | 85.7 |
| All | 75.1 | 80.3 | 77.6 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 51.1 | 67.1 | 57.3 | 75.2 | 87.8 | 81.1 |
| TV | 69.4 | 83.6 | 74.8 | 62.9 | 67.3 | 65.0 |
| Motorized vehicle | 39.5 | 61.8 | 48.1 | 43.8 | 53.6 | 48.4 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. The percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a higher proportion of children in 2020 come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with TV decreased, the proportion of children with households owning a smartphone increased significantly - from 57.3% to 81.1%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 62.6 | 84.3 | 73.6 |
| Std VI-XII | 71.6 | | 74.2 |
| All | 67.4 | 81.4 | 73.9 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, about 74% of all children receive help from family members.
- For government schools, more older children receive help from families than younger children. Among children enrolled in government schools, 62.6% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 71.6% children in Std VI and above.
- Private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std I-V, 62.6% government school children receive help as compared to 84.3% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 19.3 | 57.6 | 38.6 |
| Std VI-XII | 57.6 | | 62.1 |
| All | 39.4 | 62.4 | 50.1 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | | | | |
| Pvt | 96.4 | 0.0 | 2.9 | 0.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 93.7 | 0.3 | 5.0 | 2.6 |

Overall, half of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children. Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the main medium used for sharing learning materials/activities (93.7%).

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 35.3 | 12.1 | 13.7 | 17.5 | 31.1 |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 36.1 | 12.8 | 14.0 | 16.0 | 29.6 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (36.1%). Further, 14% of parents mentioned not having a smartphone and 16% mentioned facing connectivity issues as other reasons.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 50.0 | 19.8 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 26.0 | 15.5 |
| Pvt | 66.4 | 46.8 | 9.4 | 2.9 | 39.0 | 22.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 57.7 | 32.4 | 12.6 | 1.4 | 32.1 | 18.6 |

Even though only half of all children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to those in government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 66.4% of children enrolled in private schools reported using textbooks in the reference week compared to 50% children enrolled in government schools.
- 39% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 26% of government school children.
- 22.3% of private school children reported using live online classes as opposed to 15.5% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 39.6 | 21.3 | 19.4 | 19.7 | 100 |
| Pvt | 20.4 | 20.2 | 26.9 | 32.6 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 30.6 | 20.8 | 22.9 | 25.7 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 39.6% children in government schools and 20.4% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a quarter of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (32.6%) as compared to government school children (19.7%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 27.7 | 24.8 | 26.4 | 44.4 |
| Pvt | 35.1 | 26.7 | 31.0 | 23.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 31.2 | 25.7 | 28.4 | 34.6 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, around a third of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private (35.1%) than in government schools (27.7%) (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 26 OUT OF 27 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 65.0 | 33.4 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 65.8 | 31.4 | 0.6 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 61.7 | 37.2 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 58.7 | 40.3 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 64.9 | 33.9 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 68.4 | 29.3 | 0.7 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 62.8 | 34.3 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 74.4 | 24.1 | 0.2 | 1.3 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 69.5 | 22.2 | 0.9 | 7.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 68.5 | 22.3 | 0.0 | 9.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 70.6 | 22.0 | 1.9 | 5.5 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

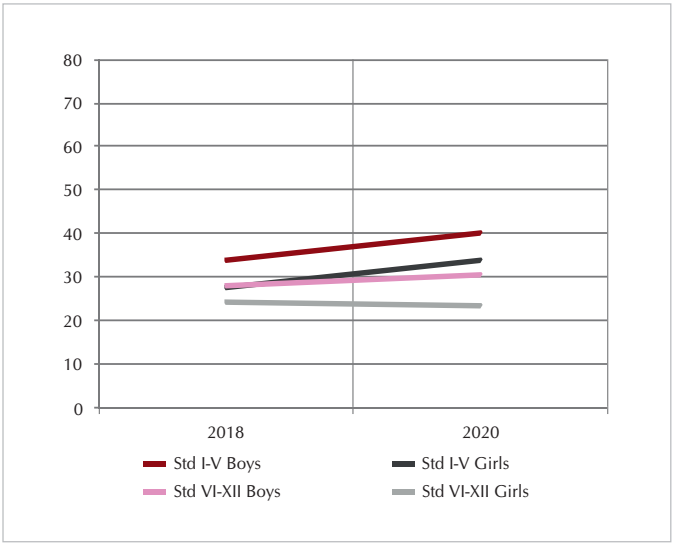


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, 65% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 33.4% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 for both boys and girls. This increase is higher for children enrolled in primary grades.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.8 | 0.9 |
| Age 11-14 | 3.0 | 1.6 |
| Age 15-16 | 11.7 | 7.4 |
| All | 3.5 | 2.2 |

There is not much change in the enrollment for children in the age group 6-10 in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 11-14 and 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 21.7 | 9.5 | 17.8 | 18.4 | 7.9 | 15.1 |
| Std I-V | 19.0 | 10.8 | 16.4 | 16.0 | 7.2 | 13.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 21.6 | 15.0 | 19.5 | 20.9 | 17.0 | 19.7 |
| Std IX-X | 31.7 | 41.2 | 34.7 | 31.9 | 33.1 | 32.3 |
| Std XI & above | 6.0 | 23.6 | 11.6 | 12.7 | 34.8 | 19.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (65.8%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (71.8%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 97.1 | 100.0 | 98.2 |
| Std III-V | 97.7 | 99.4 | 98.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 98.5 | 97.4 | 98.2 |
| Std IX & above | 99.5 | 98.4 | 99.2 |
| All | 98.2 | 98.9 | 98.4 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 29.8 | 51.4 | 36.1 | 52.4 | 78.3 | 60.7 |
| TV | 37.6 | 61.9 | 44.6 | 41.8 | 55.6 | 46.2 |
| Motorized vehicle | 20.6 | 47.5 | 28.3 | 26.7 | 50.3 | 34.2 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, a similar percentage of children in government schools have textbooks for their current grade as compared to children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like motorized vehicles increased slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 36.1% to 60.7%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 81.1 | 95.4 | 86.6 |
| Std III-V | 76.8 | 90.8 | 81.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 76.8 | 85.9 | 79.2 |
| Std IX & above | 67.2 | 75.5 | 69.5 |
| All | 75.8 | 88.3 | 79.8 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, about 80% of all children receive help from family members.
- More younger children receive help from families than older children. 86.6% children enrolled in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 69.5% children in Std IX and above.
- For all grade levels, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std I-II, 81.1% government school children receive help as compared to 95.4% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 8.6 | 41.5 | 21.3 |
| Std III-V | 11.5 | 47.4 | 24.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 17.5 | 41.2 | 23.8 |
| Std IX & above | 24.6 | 50.1 | 31.7 |
| All | 15.5 | 44.7 | 24.9 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 74.6 | 22.7 | 14.7 | 7.3 |
| Pvt | 86.4 | 14.6 | 11.8 | 12.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 81.4 | 18.0 | 13.0 | 10.1 |

Overall, a fourth of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A much higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via calls and visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 79.1 | 10.8 | 22.5 | 3.7 | 1.2 |
| Pvt | 82.5 | 9.1 | 13.9 | 7.6 | 1.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 79.9 | 10.4 | 20.5 | 4.6 | 1.1 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (79.9%). Overall, almost one-fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (20.5%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (22.5%) than those enrolled in private school (13.9%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 48.3 | 15.7 | 5.7 | 2.6 | 9.5 | 3.5 |
| Pvt | 62.7 | 27.5 | 7.8 | 2.5 | 20.4 | 12.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 52.9 | 19.5 | 6.4 | 2.6 | 13.0 | 6.2 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of private school children doing different types of activities is higher as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 48.3% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 62.7% private school children.
- 20.4% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 9.5% of government school children.
- 12% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 3.5% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 43.9 | 35.2 | 15.1 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Pvt | 29.1 | 33.1 | 19.9 | 18.0 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 39.2 | 34.5 | 16.7 | 9.7 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 43.9% children in government schools and 29.1% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a tenth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (18%) as compared to government school children (5.8%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administrative purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 15.1 | 11.9 | 22.7 | 40.3 |
| Pvt | 35.1 | 28.6 | 29.7 | 31.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 21.5 | 17.3 | 24.5 | 37.4 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, around a fifth of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private schools (35.1%) than in government schools (15.1%) (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 38 OUT OF 38 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 76.9 | 18.0 | 1.2 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 78.5 | 16.9 | 1.1 | 3.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 75.7 | 18.8 | 1.6 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 71.5 | 22.4 | 1.6 | 4.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 80.2 | 14.9 | 1.7 | 3.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 79.7 | 17.5 | 0.7 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 75.8 | 21.8 | 0.6 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 84.1 | 12.5 | 0.9 | 2.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 82.1 | 10.9 | 1.0 | 6.0 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 82.5 | 10.9 | 1.5 | 5.1 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 81.9 | 10.9 | 0.3 | 7.0 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 75% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 20% are enrolled in private schools.

This is a slight change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). The proportion of boys and girls enrolled in private schools slightly decreased for Std I-V and increased for Std VI-XII.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 3.6 | 5.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 3.6 | 2.2 |
| Age 15-16 | 10.1 | 6.0 |
| All | 4.5 | 4.2 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 11-14 and 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 47.2 | 29.1 | 44.1 | 23.3 | 10.6 | 21.1 |
| Std I-V | 13.6 | 13.6 | 13.6 | 11.1 | 7.5 | 10.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 16.0 | 12.9 | 15.5 | 16.7 | 13.2 | 16.1 |
| Std IX-X | 15.3 | 22.2 | 16.5 | 29.6 | 28.1 | 29.3 |
| Std XI & above | 8.0 | 22.3 | 10.4 | 19.4 | 40.8 | 23.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, close to half of all children's mothers (42.4%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (68.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 66.0 | 79.2 | 69.0 |
| Std III-V | 73.4 | 82.0 | 75.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 74.6 | 89.6 | 76.7 |
| Std IX & above | 81.1 | 88.2 | 81.9 |
| All | 74.2 | 83.8 | 75.8 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 23.0 | 47.1 | 27.2 | 49.4 | 62.4 | 51.7 |
| TV | 26.9 | 56.1 | 31.9 | 30.2 | 56.4 | 34.7 |
| Motorized vehicle | 22.8 | 52.8 | 28.0 | 27.4 | 57.4 | 32.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 27.2% to 51.7%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 78.3 | 87.4 | 80.4 |
| Std III-V | 74.5 | 83.0 | 76.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 73.1 | 83.9 | 74.6 |
| Std IX & above | 68.6 | 85.3 | 70.5 |
| All | 73.4 | 84.8 | 75.3 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 80.4% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 70.5% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 74.5% government school children receive help as compared to 83% children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 4.1 | 18.8 | 7.5 |
| Std III-V | 4.5 | 22.9 | 8.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 4.3 | 23.7 | 7.0 |
| Std IX & above | 5.4 | 27.9 | 8.0 |
| All | 4.6 | 22.7 | 7.7 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 57.3 | 17.7 | 33.5 | 7.6 |
| Pvt | 88.9 | 16.7 | 3.3 | 2.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 73.3 | 17.2 | 18.3 | 5.2 |

Overall, close to 8% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). However, the difference by school type is notable. A much higher proportion of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children across all grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 82.1 | 11.5 | 19.9 | 1.4 | 2.2 |
| Pvt | 75.7 | 13.8 | 16.3 | 2.1 | 2.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 81.1 | 11.8 | 19.3 | 1.5 | 2.2 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (81.1%). Overall, almost one-fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (19.3%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (19.9%) than those enrolled in private school (16.3%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 57.1 | 35.2 | 8.9 | 1.3 | 6.9 | 2.9 |
| Pvt | 71.9 | 54.1 | 13.2 | 0.6 | 24.2 | 13.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.6 | 38.4 | 9.6 | 1.2 | 9.9 | 4.7 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of private school children doing different types of activities is higher as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 57.1% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 71.9% private school children.
- 24.2% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 6.9% of government school children.
- 13.5% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 2.9% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 33.5 | 31.4 | 27.5 | 7.6 | 100 |
| Pvt | 18.1 | 24.2 | 34.0 | 23.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 30.9 | 30.2 | 28.6 | 10.3 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 33.5% children in government schools and 18.1% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a tenth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (23.7%) as compared to government school children (7.6%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 8.7 | 13.4 | 6.9 | 18.0 |
| Pvt | 26.1 | 31.0 | 9.6 | 14.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 11.7 | 16.4 | 7.2 | 17.4 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, close to 12% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is very high among families of children in private (26.1%) than in government schools (8.7%) (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 16 OUT OF 18 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 67.0 | 30.1 | 0.1 | 2.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 68.9 | 27.1 | 0.1 | 4.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 63.0 | 35.1 | 0.2 | 1.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 61.7 | 35.7 | 0.3 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 64.4 | 34.5 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 73.5 | 24.1 | 0.0 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 68.5 | 28.1 | 0.0 | 3.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 78.1 | 20.4 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 70.3 | 18.3 | 0.0 | 11.4 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 58.4 | 27.7 | 0.0 | 13.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 82.3 | 8.8 | 0.0 | 8.9 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade. 2018 and 2020*

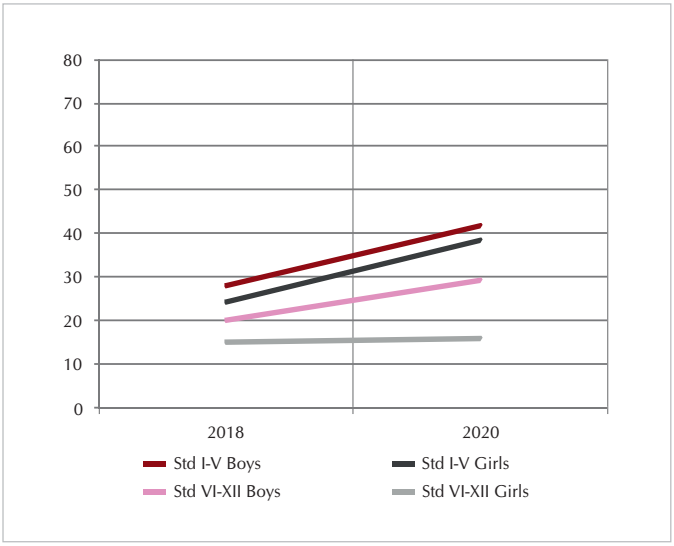


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 70% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 30% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for both boys and girls. This increase is higher for children enrolled in primary grades.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.5 | 3.1 |
| Age 11-14 | 4.5 | 2.4 |
| Age 15-16 | 20.3 | 11.4 |
| All | 6.2 | 4.5 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 11-14 and 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 34.5 | 8.0 | 26.5 | 14.1 | 2.7 | 10.7 |
| Std I-V | 23.3 | 7.8 | 18.6 | 23.2 | 4.9 | 17.7 |
| Std VI-VIII | 24.3 | 23.5 | 24.0 | 26.6 | 14.2 | 22.9 |
| Std IX-X | 10.9 | 24.3 | 14.9 | 20.2 | 22.9 | 21.0 |
| Std XI & above | 7.1 | 36.5 | 16.0 | 15.8 | 55.4 | 27.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (54.9%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (71.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 89.9 | 62.9 | 79.2 |
| Std VI-XII | 85.9 | 67.9 | 82.0 |
| All | 87.4 | 64.9 | 80.7 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 69.6 | 83.9 | 72.7 | 70.0 | 89.1 | 75.7 |
| TV | 69.9 | 86.6 | 73.5 | 72.5 | 83.1 | 75.8 |
| Motorized vehicle | 45.1 | 73.6 | 51.2 | 64.0 | 85.8 | 70.7 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a similar proportion of children come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). The proportion of children from households with assets like TV also changed only slightly over the last two years.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 86.1 | 93.1 | 88.9 |
| Std VI-XII | 80.2 | 95.6 | 83.6 |
| All | 82.5 | 94.1 | 86.0 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 86% of all children receive help from family members.
- For government schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Among children enrolled in government schools, 86.1% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 80.2% children in Std VI and above.
- For both grade levels, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std I-V, 86.1% government school children receive help as compared to 93.1% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 37.2 | 36.0 | 36.7 |
| Std VI-XII | 39.1 | 45.7 | 40.6 |
| All | 38.4 | 39.9 | 38.8 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 69.3 | 12.2 | 26.3 | 7.7 |
| Pvt | 82.4 | 13.5 | 16.4 | 1.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 73.4 | 12.6 | 23.2 | 5.7 |

Overall, 38.8% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). While there is not much difference for Std I-V, a higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children enrolled in Std VI and above.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 46.3 | 9.8 | 22.3 | 4.9 | 22.1 |
| Pvt | 53.2 | 6.8 | 17.0 | 6.1 | 21.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 48.5 | 8.9 | 20.6 | 5.3 | 21.9 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (48.5%). Overall, one fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (20.6%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (22.3%) than those enrolled in private school (17%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 73.9 | 28.9 | 8.9 | 0.3 | 23.8 | 24.8 |
| Pvt | 58.6 | 35.8 | 10.7 | 0.5 | 29.7 | 28.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 69.3 | 31.0 | 9.4 | 0.4 | 25.6 | 25.9 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of private school children doing most types of activities is slightly higher as compared to government schools. But children in government schools were more likely to do textbook-based activities.

For example,

- Close to 74% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 58.6% private school children.
- 29.7% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 23.8% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 18.9 | 35.8 | 22.5 | 22.8 | 100 |
| Pvt | 25.3 | 25.9 | 21.3 | 27.4 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 20.8 | 32.8 | 22.2 | 24.2 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 18.9% children in government schools and 25.3% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a quarter of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (27.4%) as compared to government school children (22.8%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 37.1 | 30.8 | 37.0 | 55.0 |
| Pvt | 38.8 | 44.8 | 30.6 | 36.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 37.6 | 35.0 | 35.2 | 49.7 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, more than a third of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is quite similar for families of children in private and government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 26 OUT OF 26 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 84.7 | 13.8 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 81.9 | 15.5 | 0.0 | 2.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 86.3 | 13.3 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 86.0 | 13.2 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 86.6 | 13.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 83.3 | 14.7 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 81.5 | 17.2 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 85.4 | 11.8 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 64.3 | 24.5 | 0.0 | 11.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 63.1 | 31.9 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 65.4 | 17.3 | 0.0 | 17.3 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

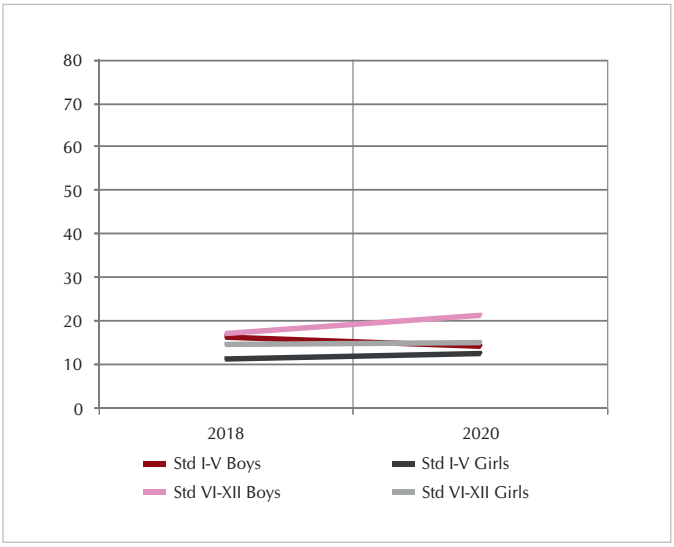


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 85% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 13.8% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment for boys enrolled in Std VI-XII and slight decrease for those enrolled in Std I-V between 2018 and 2020.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.7 | 1.2 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.8 | 2.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 18.9 | 11.2 |
| All | 4.5 | 2.9 |

A slightly higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 20.2 | 13.8 | 19.2 | 6.7 | 2.4 | 6.0 |
| Std I-V | 23.6 | 12.7 | 21.9 | 15.5 | 5.6 | 13.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 22.0 | 18.2 | 21.4 | 20.3 | 17.2 | 19.9 |
| Std IX-X | 21.2 | 27.7 | 22.2 | 29.0 | 31.6 | 29.4 |
| Std XI & above | 13.0 | 27.7 | 15.3 | 28.5 | 43.2 | 30.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (58.9%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (80.1%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 93.8 | 93.7 | 93.8 |
| Std VI-XII | 97.1 | 94.2 | 96.6 |
| All | 95.2 | 94.0 | 95.0 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 40.6 | 68.1 | 44.7 | 82.9 | 89.3 | 84.0 |
| TV | 78.4 | 90.9 | 80.3 | 82.6 | 84.7 | 82.9 |
| Motorized vehicle | 55.5 | 78.1 | 58.8 | 63.8 | 73.6 | 65.3 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is slightly higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 44.7% to 84%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 87.4 | 85.3 | 87.1 |
| Std VI-XII | 81.6 | 77.2 | 80.8 |
| All | 84.9 | 81.0 | 84.3 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to 85% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 87.1% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 80.8% children in Std VI-XII.
- For each grade level, government school children get more help than private school children. For example, for children in Std VI-XII, 81.6% government school children receive help as compared to 77.2% of children enrolled in private schools.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 79.7 | 84.0 | 80.3 |
| Std VI-XII | 84.7 | 81.5 | 84.1 |
| All | 81.9 | 82.6 | 82.0 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 61.6 | 14.4 | 50.0 | 2.5 |
| Pvt | 86.2 | 23.7 | 29.4 | 4.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 65.4 | 15.9 | 46.8 | 2.8 |

Overall, 82% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in Std I-V.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

## Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 34.9 | 29.7 | 27.1 | 7.6 | 8.8 |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 37.6 | 27.3 | 25.3 | 7.9 | 9.8 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (37.6%). Overall, a quarter of parents mentioned not having a smartphone (25.3%) or internet (27.3%) as other reasons.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 81.4 | 36.2 | 59.6 | 3.0 | 50.6 | 28.5 |
| Pvt | 82.6 | 39.7 | 47.2 | 2.2 | 67.4 | 41.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 81.6 | 36.8 | 57.7 | 2.9 | 53.2 | 30.5 |

A similar percentage of children who received materials from their schools during the reference week did some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, a very high proportion of children reported doing activities using textbooks followed by video lessons and TV broadcasts. The proportion of children doing some types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- While close to 82% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks during the reference week, 67.4% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 50.6% of government school children.
- Further, 41.5% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 28.5% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 8.1 | 14.8 | 24.4 | 52.7 | 100 |
| Pvt | 6.5 | 8.9 | 24.8 | 59.8 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 7.8 | 13.9 | 24.4 | 53.8 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 8.1% children in government schools and 6.5% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

More than half of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (59.8%) as compared to government school children (52.7%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 74.3 | 53.4 | 25.7 | 49.9 |
| Pvt | 68.2 | 63.9 | 39.6 | 30.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 73.4 | 55.0 | 28.0 | 47.1 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 73% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 21 OUT OF 21 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 46.9 | 48.9 | 0.5 | 3.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 49.1 | 46.1 | 0.4 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 44.6 | 52.2 | 0.6 | 2.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 39.5 | 56.6 | 1.0 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 50.4 | 47.2 | 0.3 | 2.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 50.9 | 44.2 | 0.4 | 4.5 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 48.0 | 47.5 | 0.7 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 54.4 | 40.5 | 0.0 | 5.1 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 54.7 | 36.9 | 0.0 | 8.4 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 54.7 | 37.5 | 0.0 | 7.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 55.1 | 35.7 | 0.0 | 9.2 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

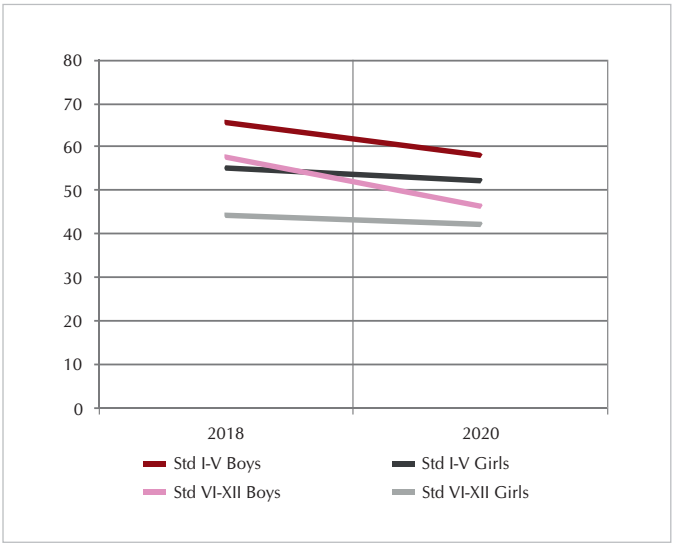


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 46% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 49% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020. This decrease is much higher for boys as compared to girls across grades.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.3 | 2.9 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.0 | 4.5 |
| Age 15-16 | 6.4 | 8.4 |
| All | 2.3 | 4.4 |

A higher proportion of children across all age groups are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age group 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 34.2 | 12.5 | 23.4 | 15.7 | 6.1 | 11.0 |
| Std I-V | 21.9 | 7.9 | 14.9 | 15.7 | 3.1 | 9.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 22.2 | 20.7 | 21.4 | 24.4 | 11.0 | 17.8 |
| Std IX-X | 12.4 | 24.8 | 18.5 | 19.1 | 26.7 | 22.8 |
| Std XI & above | 9.3 | 34.2 | 21.7 | 25.2 | 53.1 | 38.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (61.6%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (79.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 77.8 | 82.9 | 81.0 |
| Std III-V | 88.9 | 89.2 | 89.0 |
| Std VI-VIII | 89.9 | 92.2 | 91.0 |
| Std IX & above | 82.3 | 93.9 | 86.9 |
| All | 85.9 | 89.6 | 87.7 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 39.7 | 71.0 | 57.3 | 77.2 | 87.4 | 82.3 |
| TV | 75.3 | 91.7 | 84.5 | 69.7 | 85.6 | 77.5 |
| Motorized vehicle | 50.2 | 80.2 | 67.0 | 54.4 | 75.0 | 64.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like motorized vehicles decreased slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased significantly - from 57.3% to 82.3%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 83.0 | 85.0 | 84.2 |
| Std III-V | 77.1 | 79.3 | 78.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 70.3 | 82.5 | 76.2 |
| Std IX & above | 64.7 | 69.0 | 66.4 |
| All | 72.2 | 79.6 | 75.8 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 84.2% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 66.4% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 77.1% government school children receive help as compared to 79.3% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 57.8 | 67.5 | 63.9 |
| Std III-V | 67.7 | 74.1 | 70.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 68.9 | 71.9 | 70.3 |
| Std IX & above | 70.7 | 75.5 | 72.6 |
| All | 67.7 | 72.2 | 69.9 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 92.2 | 3.3 | 4.5 | 2.8 |
| Pvt | 96.3 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 2.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 94.3 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 2.7 |

Overall, close to 70% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 40.1 | 10.0 | 46.8 | 2.6 | 8.6 |
| Pvt | 45.7 | 13.6 | 31.9 | 1.9 | 8.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 42.4 | 11.5 | 40.6 | 2.3 | 8.7 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (42.4%). Overall, almost two fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (40.6%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (46.8%) than those enrolled in private school (31.9%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 60.4 | 38.5 | 17.6 | 2.5 | 32.6 | 17.0 |
| Pvt | 67.3 | 47.7 | 15.0 | 1.1 | 34.8 | 28.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 63.8 | 43.0 | 16.3 | 1.8 | 33.7 | 22.7 |

Not only did a significant proportion of children receive materials from their schools during the reference week, but households also reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to those in government schools. Children enrolled in government schools were almost as likely to be using recorded video lessons as those in private schools.

For example,

- 60.4% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 67.3% private school children.
- 34.8% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 32.6% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 29.8 | 18.8 | 19.7 | 31.7 | 100 |
| Pvt | 19.7 | 19.1 | 26.1 | 35.1 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 24.8 | 19.0 | 22.8 | 33.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 29.8% children in government schools and 19.7% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a third of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (35.1%) as compared to government school children (31.7%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 54.9 | 45.5 | 31.9 | 41.0 |
| Pvt | 54.8 | 50.0 | 31.4 | 35.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 54.9 | 47.7 | 31.6 | 38.1 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, more than half of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is the same among families of children in private and government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# Himachal Pradesh RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 12 OUT OF 12 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

### Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 54.1 | 44.3 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 57.8 | 40.1 | 0.5 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 49.2 | 49.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 42.4 | 57.4 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 56.8 | 40.7 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 59.3 | 39.0 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 56.1 | 42.1 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 63.0 | 35.3 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 70.9 | 24.8 | 0.0 | 4.3 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 67.3 | 27.0 | 0.0 | 5.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 74.0 | 22.9 | 0.0 | 3.2 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***

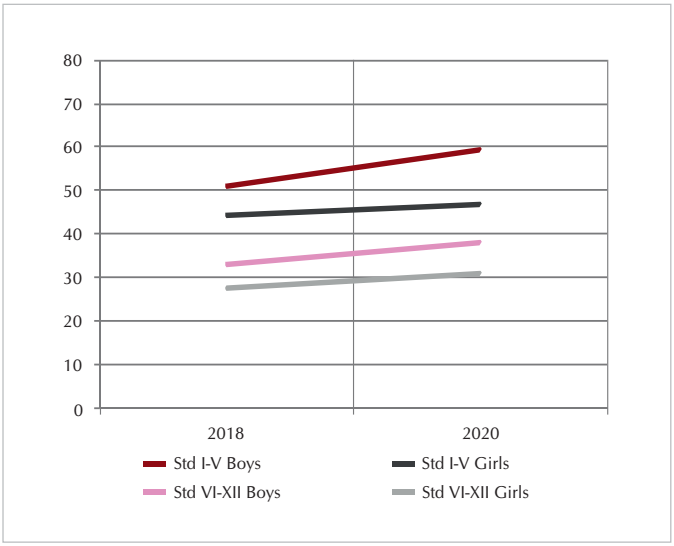


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than half of all children are enrolled in government schools (54.1%) and close to half of all children are enrolled in private schools (44.3%).

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020. This increase is higher for boys as compared to girls across grades.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.3 | 0.9 |
| Age 11-14 | 0.6 | 1.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 2.2 | 4.3 |
| All | 0.7 | 1.6 |

A slightly higher proportion of children in all age groups are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). This proportion is seen to increase with age. Given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 8.4 | 1.4 | 5.4 | 4.2 | 0.6 | 2.7 |
| Std I-V | 12.9 | 2.7 | 8.6 | 11.0 | 1.3 | 6.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 23.0 | 4.3 | 15.0 | 19.2 | 5.9 | 13.5 |
| Std IX-X | 28.3 | 25.5 | 27.1 | 32.4 | 28.1 | 30.6 |
| Std XI & above | 27.4 | 66.2 | 43.9 | 33.2 | 64.2 | 46.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, 86% of all children's mothers and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (90.6%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 91.9 | 96.8 | 95.1 |
| Std III-V | 99.6 | 97.3 | 98.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 95.7 | 96.6 | 96.1 |
| Std IX & above | 95.8 | 93.1 | 95.1 |
| All | 96.4 | 96.2 | 96.3 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 47.4 | 75.1 | 58.0 | 86.6 | 94.8 | 90.0 |
| TV | 89.5 | 97.7 | 92.6 | 81.0 | 92.8 | 86.0 |
| Motorized vehicle | 26.0 | 60.7 | 39.2 | 30.2 | 64.5 | 44.7 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, almost all children have textbooks for their current grade. The percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is similar to that among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). While the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles also shows some change over the last two years, in comparison the proportion owning a smartphone has increased enormously - from 58% to 90%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 96.7 | 93.0 | 94.3 |
| Std III-V | 91.8 | 92.0 | 91.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 78.4 | 93.0 | 84.3 |
| Std IX & above | 65.0 | 88.2 | 71.5 |
| All | 78.4 | 91.8 | 84.1 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 84.1% of all children receive help from family members.
- For government school, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Among children in government schools, 96.7% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 65% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level except Std I-II, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std VI-VIII, 78.4% government school children receive help as compared to 93% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 91.9 | 91.1 | 91.4 |
| Std III-V | 91.8 | 92.4 | 92.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 90.0 | 86.8 | 88.7 |
| Std IX & above | 76.1 | 86.8 | 79.1 |
| All | 85.4 | 89.5 | 87.2 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 93.2 | 8.0 | 2.6 | 5.8 |
| Pvt | 98.9 | 9.2 | 0.9 | 3.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 95.7 | 8.5 | 1.9 | 4.6 |

Overall, close to 87.2% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A similar percentage of private school children and government school children in the same grades received learning materials/activities.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was slightly more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 14.2 | 2.1 | 36.9 | 0.6 | 51.2 |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 15.3 | 4.2 | 26.1 | 2.2 | 55.7 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, a major reason cited by parents was non-availability of smartphones. Overall, about a quarter of all parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (26.1%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

### Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 77.3 | 48.9 | 6.7 | 1.5 | 62.5 | 13.6 |
| Pvt | 80.6 | 56.6 | 3.9 | 1.0 | 71.4 | 39.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 78.7 | 52.1 | 5.5 | 1.3 | 66.3 | 24.5 |

A similar percentage of children who received materials from their schools during the reference week did some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, a very high proportion of children reported doing activities using online resources such as videos/ recorded classes. This is the second most used resource after traditional material like textbooks. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were also more likely to be connected to live online classes. For example,

- While close to 80% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks, 66.3% reported using recorded video lessons during the reference week.
- 39.2% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 13.6% of government school children (Table 10).

### How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 12.3 | 17.3 | 28.3 | 42.2 | 100 |
| Pvt | 10.7 | 12.2 | 19.4 | 57.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 11.6 | 15.1 | 24.5 | 48.8 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 12.3% children in government schools and 10.7% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About half of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (57.7%) as compared to government school children (42.2%).

### How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 70.2 | 62.8 | 64.0 | 79.2 |
| Pvt | 73.0 | 70.0 | 72.8 | 65.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 71.4 | 65.9 | 67.2 | 74.1 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, close to three quarters of all children's teachers contacted parents/ families during the reference week. This proportion is slightly higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# Jammu and Kashmir RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 14 OUT OF 22 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

### Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 52.3 | 45.0 | 0.3 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 56.4 | 40.9 | 0.3 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 46.3 | 51.2 | 0.3 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 42.7 | 54.1 | 0.5 | 2.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 50.4 | 47.9 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 59.1 | 38.6 | 0.3 | 2.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 53.2 | 45.6 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 65.8 | 30.6 | 0.1 | 3.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 71.3 | 24.7 | 0.2 | 3.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 74.0 | 24.1 | 0.4 | 1.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 68.4 | 25.5 | 0.0 | 6.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***

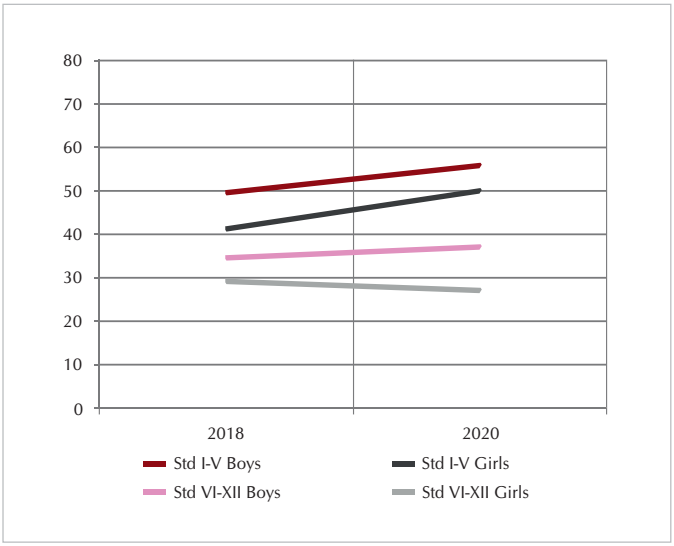


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, around 52% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 45% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for boys and for girls enrolled in primary grades.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.9 | 2.8 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.6 | 2.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 9.8 | 3.7 |
| All | 2.7 | 2.6 |

A slightly higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. Further, the proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 62.0 | 40.1 | 52.7 | 27.9 | 10.6 | 20.5 |
| Std I-V | 6.4 | 8.0 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 2.9 | 5.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 14.5 | 9.7 | 12.5 | 18.8 | 15.4 | 17.3 |
| Std IX-X | 11.2 | 19.3 | 14.6 | 28.6 | 34.2 | 31.0 |
| Std XI & above | 6.0 | 22.9 | 13.2 | 17.6 | 36.9 | 25.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

In ASER 2020, 52.7% of all children's mothers and 20.5% of all children's fathers had no formal schooling. Only 40.3% of all children's mothers have completed more than 5 years of school compared to around 74.2% of all children's fathers (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 98.6 | 98.7 | 98.7 |
| Std III-V | 91.5 | 95.9 | 93.7 |
| Std VI-VIII | 97.8 | 98.7 | 98.1 |
| Std IX & above | 96.1 | 95.5 | 96.0 |
| All | 95.7 | 97.3 | 96.4 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 41.1 | 65.9 | 50.9 | 69.7 | 86.9 | 77.1 |
| TV | 43.0 | 68.1 | 52.8 | 42.1 | 56.9 | 48.4 |
| Motorized vehicle | 14.1 | 34.2 | 22.0 | 17.9 | 36.9 | 26.0 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For most grades, a similar percentage of children in government schools have textbooks for their current grade as compared to children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a higher proportion of children in 2020 come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). The proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years. However, the proportion of children with households owning a smartphone has increased enormously - from 50.9% to 77.1%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 59.0 | 74.5 | 68.3 |
| Std III-V | 61.5 | 65.8 | 63.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 62.1 | 59.8 | 61.3 |
| Std IX & above | 55.8 | 68.1 | 59.2 |
| All | 59.9 | 67.0 | 63.0 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 63% of all children receive help from family members.
- More younger children receive help from families than older children. 68.3% children enrolled in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 59.2% children in Std IX and above.
- For most grade levels, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std I-II, 59% government school children receive help as compared to 74.5% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 33.3 | 35.7 | 34.7 |
| Std III-V | 33.3 | 43.3 | 38.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 38.5 | 48.9 | 42.2 |
| Std IX & above | 36.7 | 50.3 | 40.4 |
| All | 35.9 | 43.5 | 39.1 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 51.6 | 9.1 | 51.0 | 7.5 |
| Pvt | 64.5 | 6.7 | 36.5 | 4.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 57.7 | 8.0 | 44.2 | 6.0 |

Overall, 39.1% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 62.7 | 9.9 | 31.6 | 15.9 | 1.0 |
| Pvt | 74.6 | 11.5 | 10.2 | 17.4 | 0.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 67.3 | 10.5 | 23.4 | 16.5 | 0.9 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (67.3%). Overall, more than one-fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason, with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (31.6%) than those enrolled in private school (10.2%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 47.1 | 23.5 | 7.6 | 4.6 | 16.6 | 14.7 |
| Pvt | 55.2 | 23.4 | 7.3 | 4.0 | 18.8 | 17.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 50.6 | 23.5 | 7.5 | 4.3 | 17.6 | 15.7 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is quite similar for private and government schools.

For example,

- 47.1% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 55.2% private school children.
- 18.8% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 16.6% of government school children.
- 17.1% of private school children reported using live online as opposed to 14.7% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 45.9 | 23.0 | 15.6 | 15.6 | 100 |
| Pvt | 33.9 | 32.7 | 16.0 | 17.4 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 40.8 | 27.1 | 15.7 | 16.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 45.9% children in government schools and 33.9% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About 16% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (17.4%) as compared to government school children (15.6%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 30.4 | 31.6 | 11.7 | 35.5 |
| Pvt | 30.6 | 36.5 | 15.3 | 31.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 30.5 | 33.7 | 13.1 | 33.7 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, around a third of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is same among families of children in private and government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 24 OUT OF 24 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 72.1 | 22.5 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 70.7 | 23.6 | 2.4 | 3.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 70.2 | 26.0 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 70.4 | 25.2 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 70.0 | 27.0 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 72.4 | 20.8 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 68.5 | 26.5 | 1.3 | 3.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 76.4 | 14.9 | 5.3 | 3.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 67.2 | 25.5 | 1.0 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 64.2 | 29.9 | 1.1 | 4.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 69.7 | 21.9 | 0.9 | 7.6 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

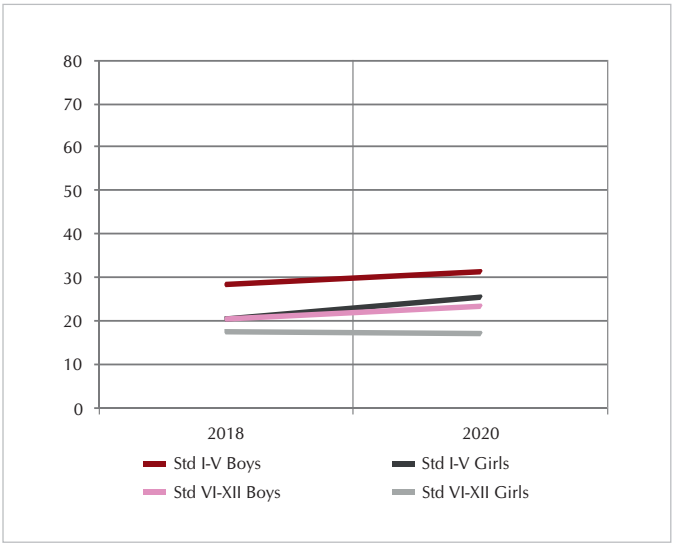


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 70% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 23% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a slight increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 for boys across grades and girls in primary grades.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.4 | 2.2 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.9 | 3.6 |
| Age 15-16 | 10.2 | 6.3 |
| All | 3.2 | 3.4 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. Further, the proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 46.0 | 30.2 | 42.1 | 24.6 | 11.4 | 21.3 |
| Std I-V | 18.3 | 8.7 | 16.0 | 14.6 | 4.8 | 12.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 14.6 | 13.6 | 14.4 | 17.6 | 21.8 | 18.6 |
| Std IX-X | 14.3 | 29.8 | 18.1 | 29.3 | 34.0 | 30.5 |
| Std XI & above | 6.9 | 17.7 | 9.5 | 14.0 | 28.0 | 17.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, close to half of all children's mothers (42%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (66.6%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 72.8 | 69.9 | 71.9 |
| Std III-V | 81.1 | 74.5 | 79.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 85.5 | 70.8 | 82.9 |
| Std IX & above | 70.9 | 70.1 | 70.7 |
| All | 78.9 | 71.6 | 77.1 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 16.5 | 35.0 | 20.6 | 47.9 | 57.1 | 50.2 |
| TV | 29.4 | 48.8 | 33.6 | 25.7 | 49.8 | 31.6 |
| Motorized vehicle | 26.2 | 50.8 | 31.6 | 32.8 | 52.9 | 37.7 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 20.6% to 50.2%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 75.6 | 87.5 | 79.5 |
| Std III-V | 63.3 | 81.3 | 68.0 |
| Std VI-VIII | 68.7 | 77.8 | 70.4 |
| Std IX & above | 66.6 | 58.5 | 64.9 |
| All | 68.1 | 78.4 | 70.6 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 70.6% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 79.5% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 64.9% children in Std IX and above.
- In each grade level up to Std VIII, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 63.3% government school children receive help as compared to 81.3% of children enrolled in private schools.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 25.2 | 20.2 | 23.6 |
| Std III-V | 29.2 | 21.3 | 27.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 31.5 | 37.7 | 32.6 |
| Std IX & above | 26.5 | 21.3 | 25.3 |
| All | 28.6 | 24.6 | 27.6 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 78.4 | 4.0 | 17.6 | 4.1 |
| Pvt | 93.6 | 3.1 | 3.7 | 0.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 81.7 | 3.8 | 14.6 | 3.4 |

Overall, 27.6% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in most grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

## Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 38.8 | 10.9 | 54.2 | 5.6 | 8.2 |
| Pvt | 58.8 | 8.8 | 45.2 | 3.3 | 5.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 43.8 | 10.3 | 52.0 | 5.0 | 7.5 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that they did not have a smartphone (52%). Overall, close to 44% parents mentioned schools not sending material as a reason, with more parents of children enrolled in private school highlighting this reason (58.8%) than those enrolled in government school (38.8%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 53.3 | 23.1 | 8.2 | 0.5 | 18.0 | 4.4 |
| Pvt | 56.5 | 29.9 | 13.8 | 0.6 | 27.6 | 19.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 54.1 | 24.7 | 9.6 | 0.5 | 20.3 | 8.0 |

Even though only a small proportion of children had access to smartphones or received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- While similar proportions of children in both types of schools reported using textbooks during the reference week, 19.4% of private school children reported using live online classes as opposed to 4.4% of government school children.
- Further, 27.6% children in private schools accessed videos/ recorded classes during the reference week as compared to 18% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 40.0 | 29.3 | 19.5 | 11.3 | 100 |
| Pvt | 33.6 | 23.0 | 19.1 | 24.2 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 38.4 | 27.8 | 19.4 | 14.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 40% children in government schools and 33.6% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to 15% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (24.2%) as compared to government school children (11.3%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 28.6 | 22.9 | 10.4 | 35.4 |
| Pvt | 25.3 | 27.8 | 12.0 | 18.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 27.8 | 24.1 | 10.8 | 31.5 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, more than a quarter of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 30 OUT OF 30 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 68.6 | 25.0 | 0.2 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 68.1 | 25.3 | 0.2 | 6.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 67.0 | 26.8 | 0.1 | 6.1 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 66.7 | 27.0 | 0.0 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 67.2 | 26.7 | 0.2 | 6.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 69.5 | 24.1 | 0.4 | 6.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 65.7 | 27.7 | 0.4 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 73.8 | 20.1 | 0.3 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 66.9 | 25.2 | 0.1 | 7.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 65.7 | 24.7 | 0.0 | 9.6 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 68.0 | 25.7 | 0.2 | 6.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

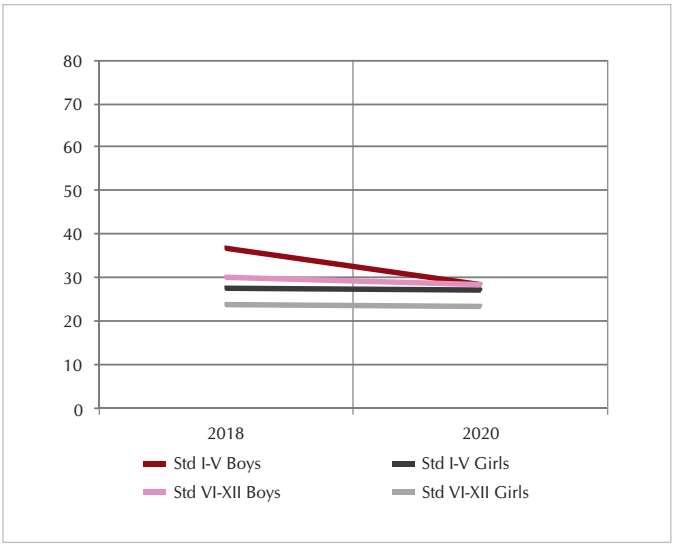


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 70% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 25% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 for boys. This decrease is higher for boys enrolled in primary grades.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.2 | 6.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.2 | 6.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 7.1 | 7.7 |
| All | 1.6 | 6.5 |

A higher proportion of children across age groups are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 31.2 | 13.9 | 26.5 | 23.4 | 13.6 | 20.8 |
| Std I-V | 15.7 | 7.3 | 13.4 | 15.9 | 6.4 | 13.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 19.9 | 16.1 | 18.9 | 20.5 | 16.6 | 19.4 |
| Std IX-X | 23.0 | 37.0 | 26.8 | 26.9 | 31.6 | 28.2 |
| Std XI & above | 10.2 | 25.6 | 14.4 | 13.3 | 31.7 | 18.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (60.1%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (65.9%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 89.8 | 68.1 | 84.1 |
| Std III-V | 96.5 | 81.8 | 92.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 96.9 | 76.4 | 91.7 |
| Std IX & above | 88.9 | 72.8 | 84.7 |
| All | 93.9 | 76.0 | 89.1 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 36.7 | 58.3 | 43.1 | 63.5 | 82.6 | 68.6 |
| TV | 83.5 | 92.4 | 86.1 | 80.6 | 89.0 | 82.8 |
| Motorized vehicle | 55.3 | 73.4 | 60.7 | 62.9 | 76.3 | 66.5 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 43.1% to 68.6%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 76.8 | 86.7 | 79.4 |
| Std III-V | 71.3 | 83.9 | 75.0 |
| Std VI-VIII | 71.8 | 78.8 | 73.6 |
| Std IX & above | 65.5 | 72.5 | 67.4 |
| All | 71.0 | 80.2 | 73.5 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 79.4% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 67.4% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 71.3% government school children receive help as compared to 83.9% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 61.2 | 58.6 | 60.5 |
| Std III-V | 76.8 | 70.5 | 75.0 |
| Std VI-VIII | 77.2 | 66.5 | 74.5 |
| Std IX & above | 71.8 | 68.9 | 71.0 |
| All | 73.4 | 67.1 | 71.7 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 40.3 | 12.9 | 70.0 | 9.1 |
| Pvt | 76.2 | 16.1 | 36.5 | 8.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 49.3 | 13.7 | 61.6 | 8.9 |

Overall, more than 70% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in the same grades.

WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities with private school children (76.2%) while personal visits was the most common medium among government school children (70%).

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 69.8 | 13.2 | 13.4 | 19.0 | 1.6 |
| Pvt | 67.8 | 16.3 | 9.9 | 14.5 | 2.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 69.1 | 14.3 | 12.2 | 17.5 | 1.9 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (69.1%). Overall, more than a tenth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (12.2%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (13.4%) than those enrolled in private school (9.9%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 70.7 | 50.0 | 28.1 | 2.7 | 25.5 | 10.6 |
| Pvt | 64.8 | 45.2 | 23.1 | 3.0 | 39.7 | 24.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 69.2 | 48.7 | 26.7 | 2.8 | 29.3 | 14.3 |

A similar percentage of children who received materials from their schools during the reference week did some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of government school children doing activities using traditional material is slightly higher as compared to private schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons. For example,

- 70.7% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 64.8% private school children.
- 39.7% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 25.5% of government school children.
- 24.4% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 10.6% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 18.8 | 20.1 | 34.5 | 26.7 | 100 |
| Pvt | 18.4 | 19.5 | 30.3 | 31.9 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 18.6 | 20.0 | 33.4 | 28.1 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 18.8% children in government schools and 18.4% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

More than a quarter of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (31.9%) as compared to government school children (26.7%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 61.0 | 55.6 | 23.8 | 56.6 |
| Pvt | 55.6 | 54.3 | 25.1 | 45.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.6 | 55.2 | 24.1 | 53.6 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, about 60% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 12 OUT OF 14 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 60.9 | 36.7 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 63.0 | 31.1 | 2.5 | 3.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 53.5 | 44.4 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 49.6 | 48.8 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 57.8 | 39.6 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 69.5 | 21.9 | 2.8 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 65.9 | 23.0 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 72.5 | 21.0 | 0.4 | 6.0 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

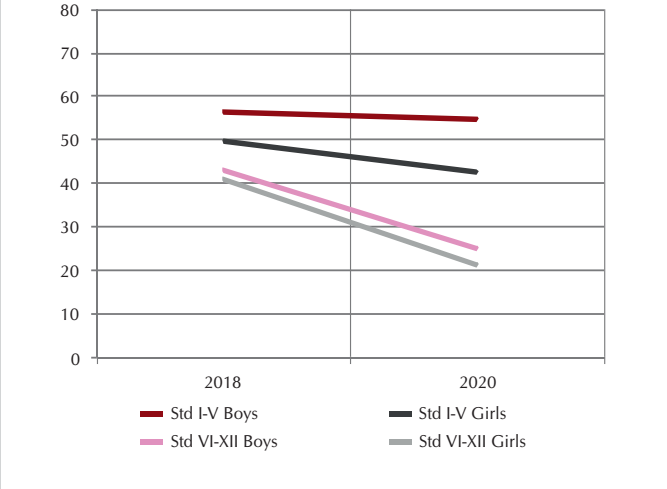


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 60% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 37% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020. This decrease is higher for children enrolled in Std VI-XII as compared to primary grades and slightly more for girls as compared to boys.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Age 11-14 | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 0.8 | 17.8 |
| All | 0.2 | 3.2 |

A higher proportion of older children (age group 15-16) are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). All children in the 6-14 age group are currently enrolled in school.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| Std I-V | 3.3 | 0.8 | 2.4 | 5.3 | 1.2 | 3.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 7.7 | 3.3 | 6.2 | 12.3 | 14.5 | 13.0 |
| Std IX-X | 39.7 | 22.5 | 33.7 | 53.8 | 40.8 | 49.2 |
| Std XI & above | 49.3 | 73.5 | 57.7 | 27.9 | 43.6 | 33.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, a very high proportion of children's mothers (97.6%) and fathers (95.6%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 99.3 | 87.7 | 93.6 |
| Std VI-XII | 89.1 | | 90.3 |
| All | 92.9 | 90.0 | 91.9 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 76.4 | 86.0 | 80.9 | 93.3 | 96.1 | 94.3 |
| TV | 86.2 | 92.7 | 89.3 | 84.5 | 90.4 | 86.6 |
| Motorized vehicle | 61.7 | 75.1 | 68.0 | 63.4 | 82.6 | 70.3 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. Overall, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased significantly - from 80.9% to 94.3%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 93.9 | 91.7 | 92.8 |
| Std VI-XII | 80.5 | | 75.9 |
| All | 85.6 | 80.9 | 83.9 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to 84% of all children receive help from family members.
- More younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 92.8% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 75.9% children in Std VI-XII.
- Government school children get more help than private school children. For all enrolled children, 85.6% government school children receive help as compared to 80.9% of children enrolled in private schools.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 88.6 | 84.3 | 86.5 |
| Std VI-XII | 78.2 | | 79.7 |
| All | 82.1 | 84.4 | 82.9 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 97.4 | 20.1 | 0.4 | 3.1 |
| Pvt | 93.7 | 14.9 | 0.0 | 10.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 96.1 | 18.2 | 0.3 | 5.7 |

Overall, about 83% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A similar proportion of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in government schools received materials through WhatsApp as well as via phone calls.

## Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | | | | | |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 37.6 | 3.2 | 13.3 | 1.3 | 49.4 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, a common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (37.6%). Overall, almost one tenth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (13.3%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 84.8 | 70.5 | 71.5 | 1.6 | 41.6 | 30.3 |
| Pvt | 89.5 | 76.3 | 29.5 | 1.9 | 44.5 | 53.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 86.5 | 72.6 | 56.5 | 1.7 | 42.7 | 38.5 |

Not only did a significant proportion of children receive materials from their schools during the reference week, but households also reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing most types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to those in government schools. Children enrolled in government schools were just as likely to be using recorded video lessons as those in private schools, but more private school children were connected to live online classes. For example,

- 84.8% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 89.5% private school children.
- A much higher proportion of government school children used TV broadcast (71.5%) compared to private school children (29.5%).
- 53.4% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 30.3% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 6.5 | 6.6 | 15.1 | 71.9 | 100 |
| Pvt | 2.8 | 10.1 | 18.4 | 68.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 5.2 | 7.8 | 16.3 | 70.8 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 6.5% children in government schools and 2.8% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to three quarters of all children did three activities or more.

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 68.8 | 51.8 | 76.7 | 61.0 |
| Pvt | 71.0 | 61.6 | 76.0 | 56.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 69.6 | 55.3 | 76.4 | 59.2 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, about 70% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is slightly higher among families of children in private schools than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 50 OUT OF 50 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 65.2 | 30.2 | 0.9 | 3.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 66.2 | 28.1 | 0.8 | 4.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 61.4 | 34.7 | 1.1 | 2.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 54.7 | 41.3 | 1.3 | 2.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 67.9 | 28.3 | 0.8 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 69.1 | 26.1 | 0.7 | 4.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 65.5 | 28.4 | 1.0 | 5.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 73.2 | 23.5 | 0.5 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 69.4 | 19.6 | 0.4 | 10.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 68.6 | 21.7 | 0.8 | 9.0 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 70.6 | 17.2 | 0.0 | 12.2 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

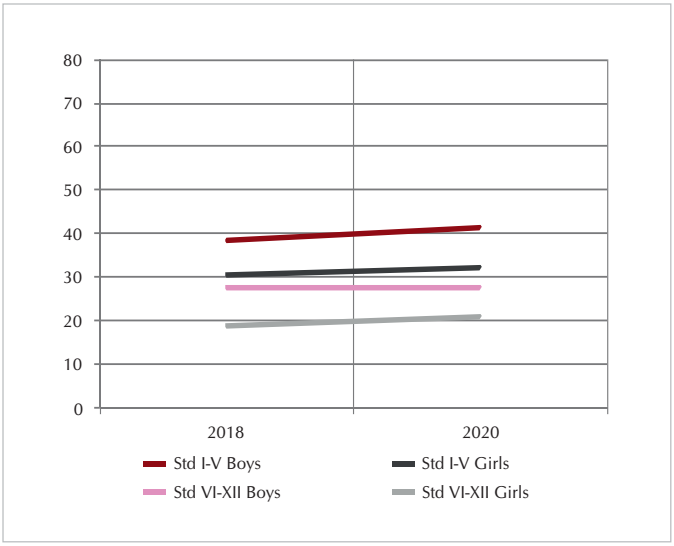


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 65% of all children are enrolled in government schools and over 30% are enrolled in private schools.

This does not show much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). The proportion of boys enrolled in Std I-V and girls enrolled in Std VI-XII in private schools increased slightly.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.9 | 3.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 5.8 | 4.1 |
| Age 15-16 | 21.6 | 10.6 |
| All | 6.8 | 5.0 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 11-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# Madhya Pradesh RURAL

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 40.4 | 25.5 | 35.9 | 17.9 | 8.4 | 15.0 |
| Std I-V | 26.6 | 15.5 | 23.3 | 18.2 | 10.1 | 15.7 |
| Std VI-VIII | 18.7 | 27.1 | 21.2 | 28.5 | 21.4 | 26.3 |
| Std IX-X | 10.4 | 18.5 | 12.9 | 20.5 | 28.7 | 23.0 |
| Std XI & above | 3.9 | 13.4 | 6.7 | 14.9 | 31.5 | 20.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, close to half of all children's mothers (40.8%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (69.3%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 84.6 | 53.6 | 72.6 |
| Std III-V | 89.2 | 52.0 | 75.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 93.2 | 60.8 | 84.0 |
| Std IX & above | 87.9 | 66.5 | 83.6 |
| All | 89.3 | 57.2 | 79.6 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 17.1 | 38.3 | 23.3 | 58.2 | 73.2 | 62.7 |
| TV | 50.2 | 73.6 | 57.0 | 57.6 | 74.8 | 62.7 |
| Motorized vehicle | 38.3 | 65.9 | 46.3 | 45.1 | 61.9 | 50.1 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is much higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles shows some change over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 23.3% to 62.7%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 84.3 | 91.6 | 87.1 |
| Std III-V | 82.0 | 85.1 | 83.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 80.4 | 81.0 | 80.6 |
| Std IX & above | 75.3 | 72.9 | 74.8 |
| All | 79.9 | 83.4 | 81.0 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, more than three quarters of all children receive help from family members (81%).
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 87.1% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 74.8% children in Std IX and above.
- For most grade levels, private school children get slightly more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 82% government school children receive help as compared to 85.1% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 44.1 | 34.3 | 40.3 |
| Std III-V | 46.6 | 35.1 | 42.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 55.3 | 39.1 | 50.8 |
| Std IX & above | 51.2 | 49.7 | 50.9 |
| All | 50.1 | 38.5 | 46.6 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 72.9 | 5.6 | 30.8 | 4.3 |
| Pvt | 88.0 | 3.4 | 13.6 | 3.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 76.7 | 5.1 | 26.5 | 4.0 |

Overall, close to half of all enrolled children (46.6%) received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 61.4 | 7.3 | 47.1 | 1.6 | 2.7 |
| Pvt | 75.0 | 7.3 | 24.8 | 2.3 | 3.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 66.2 | 7.3 | 39.3 | 1.9 | 3.1 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (66.2%). Overall, almost 40% of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason, with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (47.1%) than those enrolled in private school (24.8%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

### Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 70.6 | 50.3 | 25.0 | 12.4 | 30.9 | 6.8 |
| Pvt | 57.0 | 34.7 | 21.7 | 4.0 | 27.4 | 8.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 66.5 | 45.6 | 24.0 | 9.9 | 29.8 | 7.3 |

Even though only half of all children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of government school children doing different types of activities is higher as compared to private schools. Children enrolled in government schools were just as likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons as those in private schools.

For example,

- 70.6% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 57% private school children.
- 27.4% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 30.9% of government school children.
- 8.4% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 6.8% of government school children (Table 10).

### How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 18.7 | 20.2 | 26.8 | 34.4 | 100 |
| Pvt | 30.1 | 22.1 | 24.9 | 22.9 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 22.1 | 20.8 | 26.2 | 30.9 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 18.7% children in government schools and 30.1% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a third of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of government school children (34.4%) as compared to private school children (22.9%).

### How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 50.8 | 44.2 | 32.3 | 50.9 |
| Pvt | 37.5 | 32.3 | 33.6 | 36.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 46.8 | 40.6 | 32.8 | 46.6 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, close to a half of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 33 OUT OF 33 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 67.9 | 30.0 | 0.8 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 61.7 | 35.5 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 73.8 | 24.3 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 71.4 | 26.6 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 75.9 | 22.2 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 62.4 | 36.1 | 0.9 | 0.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 62.2 | 36.4 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 62.7 | 35.9 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 36.8 | 55.5 | 1.8 | 5.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 40.0 | 52.5 | 2.3 | 5.1 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 33.1 | 58.9 | 1.2 | 6.8 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

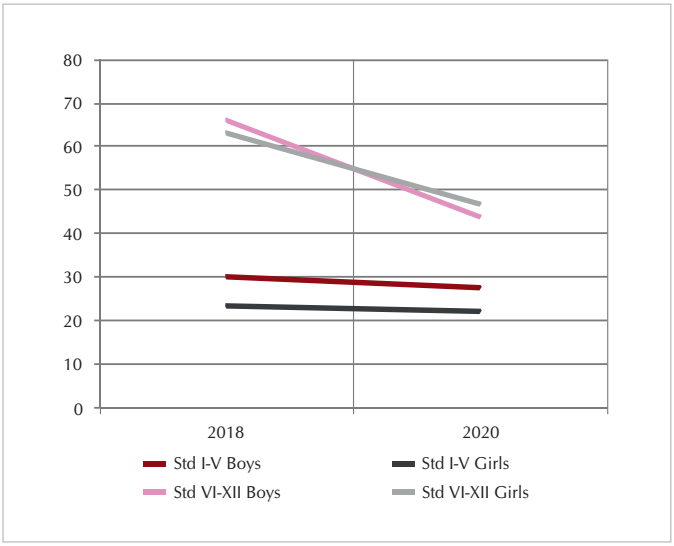


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 70% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 30% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for both boys and girls.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.4 | 2.2 |
| Age 11-14 | 0.9 | 0.6 |
| Age 15-16 | 3.6 | 5.9 |
| All | 1.1 | 2.1 |

A higher proportion of children are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 11.3 | 8.3 | 10.2 | 5.9 | 4.5 | 5.4 |
| Std I-V | 12.8 | 10.3 | 11.9 | 10.2 | 7.2 | 9.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 21.0 | 21.3 | 21.1 | 17.2 | 12.7 | 15.6 |
| Std IX-X | 36.0 | 35.8 | 35.9 | 34.1 | 33.7 | 34.0 |
| Std XI & above | 18.9 | 24.3 | 20.8 | 32.6 | 42.0 | 35.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than three quarters of all children's mothers (77.8%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (85.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 84.9 | 60.3 | 79.0 |
| Std III-V | 92.7 | 75.0 | 88.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 88.6 | 82.0 | 86.2 |
| Std IX & above | 63.7 | 62.9 | 63.2 |
| All | 86.0 | 71.4 | 80.8 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 36.7 | 49.3 | 42.3 | 74.9 | 78.8 | 76.3 |
| TV | 78.8 | 85.6 | 81.8 | 76.3 | 81.4 | 78.1 |
| Motorized vehicle | 50.2 | 60.8 | 54.9 | 55.9 | 63.5 | 58.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 42.3% to 76.3%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 92.3 | 88.5 | 91.4 |
| Std III-V | 88.3 | 89.7 | 88.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 84.4 | 82.5 | 83.7 |
| Std IX & above | 79.4 | 72.3 | 75.2 |
| All | 86.7 | 81.2 | 84.7 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to 85% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 91.4% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 75.2% children in Std IX and above.
- For most grade levels, government school children get more help than private school children. For example, for children in Std VI-VIII, 84.4% government school children receive help as compared to 82.5% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 60.9 | 67.3 | 62.4 |
| Std III-V | 65.6 | 67.4 | 66.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 63.3 | 65.1 | 64.0 |
| Std IX & above | 62.8 | 60.6 | 61.5 |
| All | 63.6 | 64.3 | 63.8 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 89.1 | 10.5 | 14.0 | 6.6 |
| Pvt | 95.5 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 9.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 91.4 | 9.1 | 11.3 | 7.7 |

Overall, 63.8% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via calls and visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 56.9 | 8.3 | 33.8 | 4.1 | 6.9 |
| Pvt | 60.2 | 9.7 | 30.7 | 2.7 | 6.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 58.0 | 8.8 | 32.7 | 3.6 | 6.6 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (58%). Overall, almost one-third of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (32.7%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (33.8%) than those enrolled in private school (30.7%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 71.9 | 33.4 | 38.6 | 3.6 | 34.0 | 16.6 |
| Pvt | 66.4 | 30.2 | 31.5 | 3.2 | 40.8 | 23.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 69.9 | 32.3 | 36.1 | 3.5 | 36.4 | 19.0 |

Even though 63.8% of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in government schools as compared to those in private schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 71.9% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 66.4% private school children.
- 40.8% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 34% of government school children.
- 23.4% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 16.6% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 16.8 | 24.5 | 24.2 | 34.5 | 100 |
| Pvt | 18.9 | 23.5 | 21.9 | 35.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 17.5 | 24.2 | 23.4 | 34.9 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 16.8% children in government schools and 18.9% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a third of all children did three activities or more. In this category, the proportion of private school children (35.7%) is similar to that of government school children (34.5%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 57.0 | 50.5 | 38.1 | 65.9 |
| Pvt | 49.6 | 47.9 | 37.2 | 56.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 54.4 | 49.6 | 37.7 | 62.7 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, more than half of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 9 OUT OF 9 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 11.7 | 83.4 | 0.8 | 4.1 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 12.6 | 82.7 | 0.8 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 10.7 | 84.8 | 1.2 | 3.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 9.4 | 84.6 | 2.1 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 11.9 | 85.0 | 0.3 | 2.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 13.8 | 81.4 | 0.6 | 4.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 16.0 | 78.0 | 0.5 | 5.5 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 11.6 | 84.6 | 0.6 | 3.2 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

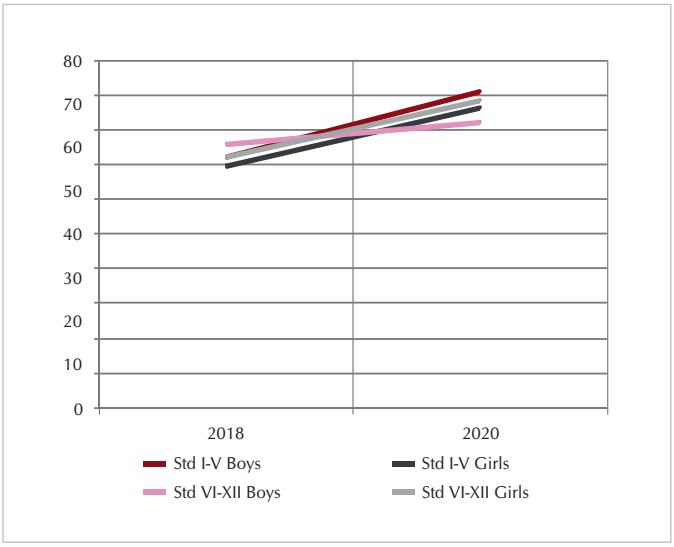


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, 11.7% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 83.4% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for both boys and girls.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.8 | 3.6 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.4 | 4.5 |
| Age 15-16 | 5.3 | 3.7 |
| All | 1.6 | 4.0 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 14.3 | 17.0 | 16.7 | 11.0 | 9.9 | 10.1 |
| Std I-V | 17.4 | 7.0 | 8.3 | 4.9 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 10.2 | 16.0 | 15.3 | 11.2 | 11.9 | 11.8 |
| Std IX-X | 36.1 | 34.6 | 34.8 | 30.7 | 32.8 | 32.5 |
| Std XI & above | 22.0 | 25.4 | 25.0 | 42.2 | 41.3 | 41.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, a high proportion of children's mothers (75.1%) and children's fathers (85.8%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | | 96.7 | 96.8 |
| Std III-V | | 98.3 | 98.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | | 96.2 | 96.7 |
| Std IX & above | | 97.7 | 98.1 |
| All | 99.6 | 97.2 | 97.5 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 40.1 | 58.5 | 53.4 | 80.3 | 84.9 | 84.3 |
| TV | 51.2 | 76.6 | 69.5 | 52.2 | 62.8 | 61.4 |
| Motorized vehicle | 19.4 | 40.5 | 34.6 | 35.3 | 46.7 | 45.3 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. The proportion of children who have textbooks is similar for children in government and private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). The proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years. However, the proportion of children with households owning a smartphone has increased enormously - from 53.4% to 84.3%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | | 87.4 | 87.9 |
| Std III-V | | 90.5 | 89.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | | 79.5 | 80.0 |
| Std IX & above | | 83.2 | 83.3 |
| All | 84.3 | 85.2 | 85.0 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 85% of all children receive help from family members. The proportion of children who receive help is similar for children in government and private schools.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | | 27.8 | 26.7 |
| Std III-V | | 28.2 | 25.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | | 36.8 | 34.1 |
| Std IX & above | | 36.3 | 34.6 |
| All | 15.1 | 32.3 | 30.0 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 56.3 | 32.8 | 3.2 | 22.3 |
| Pvt | 76.6 | 10.4 | 17.6 | 13.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 75.3 | 11.9 | 16.6 | 13.9 |

Overall, 30% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A much higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via calls was more common among government school children.

## Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | | | | | |
| Pvt | 84.1 | 5.1 | 7.7 | 3.5 | 7.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 84.8 | 5.0 | 7.9 | 4.2 | 7.6 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (84.8%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 70.4 | 50.4 | 10.0 | 11.8 | 9.9 | 6.5 |
| Pvt | 71.5 | 48.9 | 10.8 | 8.7 | 14.4 | 5.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 71.3 | 49.1 | 10.7 | 9.1 | 13.8 | 5.2 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. While the proportion of children doing different types of activities is quite similar for private and government schools, children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be using online resources such as recorded video lessons.

For example,

- While close to 71% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks during the reference week, 14.4% children in private schools used videos/recorded lessons during the reference week as compared to 9.9% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 23.5 | 23.7 | 31.8 | 21.0 | 100 |
| Pvt | 24.3 | 20.1 | 33.5 | 22.0 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 24.2 | 20.6 | 33.3 | 21.9 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 23.5% children in government schools and 24.3% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to a fifth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is not much difference in the proportion of private school children (22%) as compared to government school children (21%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 13.2 | 20.6 | 16.5 | 24.5 |
| Pvt | 14.2 | 15.0 | 32.4 | 33.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 14.1 | 15.7 | 30.4 | 31.9 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, around 14% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is slightly higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 7 OUT OF 7 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 37.9 | 50.5 | 0.0 | 11.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 39.0 | 50.2 | 0.0 | 10.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 33.5 | 60.4 | 0.0 | 6.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 45.4 | 51.8 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 23.5 | 67.7 | 0.0 | 8.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 42.3 | 43.9 | 0.0 | 13.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 40.3 | 46.7 | 0.0 | 13.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 43.7 | 42.0 | 0.0 | 14.3 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

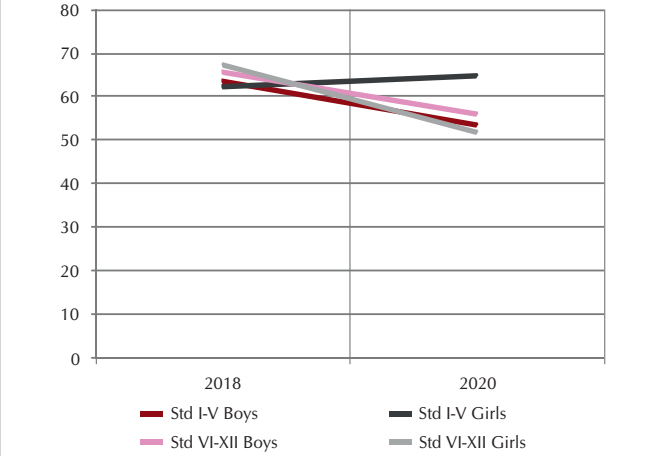


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, 37.9% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 50.5% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for boys enrolled in Std I-XII and for girls enrolled in Std VI-XII.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 5.2 | 7.8 |
| Age 11-14 | 3.7 | 15.3 |
| Age 15-16 | 10.1 | 10.3 |
| All | 5.5 | 11.4 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). Given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. Further, there has been an enormous increase in the proportion of children (age group of 11-14 years) not enrolled in schools - from 3.7% in 2018 to 15.3% in 2020.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 34.4 | 21.8 | 27.0 | 45.1 | 31.5 | 37.5 |
| Std I-V | 37.8 | 24.9 | 30.3 | 19.7 | 19.5 | 19.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 13.7 | 25.0 | 20.3 | 8.7 | 11.6 | 10.3 |
| Std IX-X | 8.0 | 17.9 | 13.8 | 16.6 | 23.2 | 20.3 |
| Std XI & above | 6.1 | 10.5 | 8.7 | 9.9 | 14.2 | 12.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

In ASER 2020, over 27% of all children's mothers and 37.5% of all children's fathers had no formal schooling. Less than half of all children's mothers (42.8%) and fathers (42.9%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 96.9 | 98.7 | 97.9 |
| Std VI-XII | | 96.7 | 97.5 |
| All | 97.5 | 97.9 | 97.8 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 34.7 | 45.0 | 41.3 | 74.5 | 70.2 | 72.0 |
| TV | 52.6 | 62.7 | 59.1 | 43.9 | 55.2 | 50.4 |
| Motorized vehicle | 25.8 | 29.1 | 27.9 | 12.9 | 23.2 | 18.8 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, a similar percentage of children in government schools have textbooks for their current grade as compared to children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles decreased over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 41.3% to 72%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 57.8 | 56.4 | 56.9 |
| Std VI-XII | | 60.6 | 60.6 |
| All | 59.1 | 58.0 | 58.4 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 58.4% of all children receive help from family members. The proportion of children who get help is similar for government and private school children.
- More older children receive help from families than younger children. Among enrolled children, 56.9% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 60.6% children in Std VI and above.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 22.0 | 29.7 | 26.6 |
| Std VI-XII | | 35.8 | 30.8 |
| All | 23.4 | 32.0 | 28.3 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 61.0 | 19.2 | 26.2 | 0.0 |
| Pvt | 58.8 | 8.7 | 53.5 | 1.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.5 | 12.4 | 43.9 | 1.1 |

Overall, 28.3% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A slightly higher proportion of children enrolled in government schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among private school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 93.1 | 1.5 | 6.9 | 0.0 | 6.6 |
| Pvt | 92.9 | 1.5 | 9.7 | 0.2 | 2.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 93.0 | 1.5 | 8.5 | 0.1 | 4.3 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (93%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 38.7 | 22.7 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 10.7 | 9.8 |
| Pvt | 34.2 | 25.6 | 2.5 | 0.7 | 6.5 | 3.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 36.1 | 24.3 | 2.5 | 0.4 | 8.3 | 6.0 |

Even though a small proportion of children (28.3%) received materials from their schools during the reference week, about two-fifth of households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others. For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in government schools as compared to those in private schools. Children enrolled in government schools were more connected to online videos/recorded lessons and live classes.

For example,

- 38.7% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 34.2% private school children.
- 6.5% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 10.7% of government school children.
- 3.2% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 9.8% of govern-ment school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 59.3 | 17.0 | 12.8 | 11.0 | 100 |
| Pvt | 60.2 | 17.4 | 15.6 | 6.8 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.8 | 17.2 | 14.4 | 8.6 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 59.3% children in government schools and 60.2% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

8.6% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of government school children (11%) as compared to private school children (6.8%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 24.9 | 12.1 | 21.9 | 24.3 |
| Pvt | 23.1 | 26.3 | 19.5 | 26.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 23.9 | 20.2 | 20.6 | 25.5 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, close to a quarter of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. There is not much difference in this proportion among families of children in government and private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 11 OUT OF 11 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 30.5 | 63.0 | 0.7 | 5.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 31.3 | 62.7 | 0.6 | 5.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 24.6 | 70.1 | 1.1 | 4.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 23.6 | 73.5 | 0.0 | 2.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 25.7 | 66.4 | 2.3 | 5.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 35.6 | 57.8 | 0.3 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 35.8 | 57.4 | 0.5 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 35.2 | 58.4 | 0.0 | 6.3 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

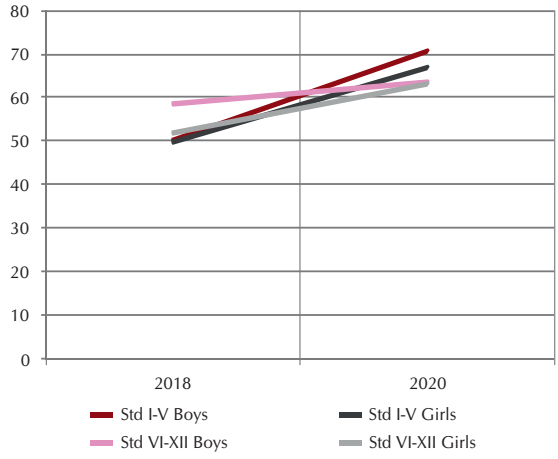


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 31% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 63% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for both boys and girls. This increase is higher for boys and girls enrolled in Std I-V.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.6 | 4.6 |
| Age 11-14 | 2.0 | 7.1 |
| Age 15-16 | 8.4 | 3.9 |
| All | 2.7 | 5.6 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). The main cause for this could be the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 30.1 | 15.9 | 20.7 | 29.0 | 11.0 | 17.1 |
| Std I-V | 15.8 | 11.1 | 12.7 | 10.8 | 10.4 | 10.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 24.8 | 34.8 | 31.4 | 21.2 | 21.4 | 21.3 |
| Std IX-X | 21.2 | 26.0 | 24.4 | 29.2 | 38.2 | 35.1 |
| Std XI & above | 8.1 | 12.3 | 10.8 | 9.9 | 19.0 | 15.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, two thirds of all children's mothers (66.6%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (72.3%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 99.2 | 100.0 | 99.7 |
| Std VI-XII | 97.0 | 99.6 | 98.7 |
| All | 98.0 | 99.8 | 99.2 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 36.3 | 62.7 | 50.0 | 70.1 | 87.8 | 81.8 |
| TV | 49.5 | 75.8 | 63.1 | 45.4 | 67.5 | 60.1 |
| Motorized vehicle | 22.7 | 41.6 | 32.6 | 12.8 | 31.6 | 25.2 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, almost all children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is slightly higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV decreased over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 50% to 81.8%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

## Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 70.6 | 81.9 | 78.4 |
| Std VI-XII | 68.1 | 77.5 | 74.1 |
| All | 69.3 | 79.8 | 76.3 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, more than three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 78.4% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 74.1% children in Std VI-XII.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std I-V, 70.6% government school children receive help as compared to 81.9% of children enrolled in private schools.

## Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 51.0 | 76.3 | 68.4 |
| Std VI-XII | 60.5 | 82.3 | 74.3 |
| All | 56.0 | 79.1 | 71.3 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 74.2 | 5.4 | 26.8 | 0.7 |
| Pvt | 88.8 | 7.3 | 16.4 | 2.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 84.9 | 6.8 | 19.2 | 1.6 |

Overall, about 71% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

## Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 71.4 | 3.0 | 20.6 | 11.0 | 0.9 |
| Pvt | 52.1 | 2.6 | 28.8 | 21.7 | 9.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 61.0 | 2.8 | 25.0 | 16.7 | 5.4 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (61%). Overall, one fourth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (25%), with more parents of children enrolled in private school highlighting this reason (28.8%) than those enrolled in government school (20.6%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 52.6 | 36.7 | 9.0 | 9.2 | 16.9 | 9.4 |
| Pvt | 80.1 | 45.1 | 5.4 | 4.9 | 21.9 | 21.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 70.8 | 42.3 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 20.2 | 17.4 |

Not only did a significant proportion of children receive materials from their schools during the reference week, but households also reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing most types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to those in government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 52.6% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 80.1% private school children.
- 21.9% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 16.9% of government school children.
- Further, 21.5% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 9.4% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 40.1 | 19.7 | 18.9 | 21.3 | 100 |
| Pvt | 13.8 | 32.0 | 27.6 | 26.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 22.7 | 27.8 | 24.6 | 24.9 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 40.1% children in government schools and 13.8% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a fourth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is slightly higher proportion of private school children (26.7%) as compared to government school children (21.3%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 33.0 | 38.3 | 20.7 | 45.6 |
| Pvt | 65.4 | 67.0 | 37.1 | 72.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 54.4 | 57.3 | 28.8 | 63.4 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, more than half of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 30 OUT OF 30 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 81.5 | 16.5 | 0.1 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 79.2 | 14.9 | 0.1 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 78.1 | 21.2 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 74.7 | 24.6 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 81.6 | 17.7 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 85.8 | 12.5 | 0.2 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 82.7 | 16.4 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 89.1 | 8.6 | 0.4 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 65.0 | 7.4 | 0.0 | 27.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 67.9 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 22.1 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 61.6 | 4.4 | 0.0 | 34.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

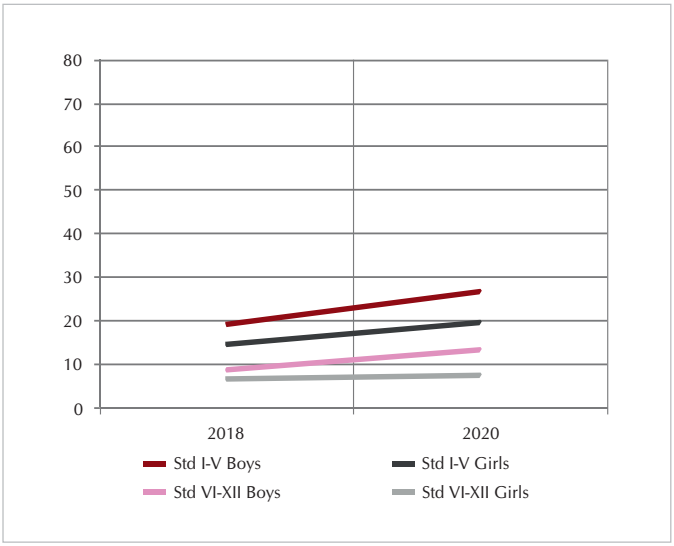


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 80% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 17% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020. This increase is high among boys enrolled in Std I-V.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.6 | 2.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Age 15-16 | 10.6 | 27.4 |
| All | 2.3 | 6.1 |

A higher proportion of children are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). Given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age group 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 17.5 | 2.5 | 15.1 | 10.6 | 3.0 | 9.3 |
| Std I-V | 20.5 | 7.1 | 18.3 | 19.9 | 3.8 | 17.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 21.6 | 13.5 | 20.3 | 17.7 | 11.8 | 16.7 |
| Std IX-X | 31.7 | 51.9 | 34.9 | 34.1 | 44.9 | 35.9 |
| Std XI & above | 8.8 | 25.1 | 11.4 | 17.8 | 36.6 | 20.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, two thirds of all children's mothers (66.6%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (73.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 84.7 | 90.4 | 86.3 |
| Std III-V | 92.8 | 88.0 | 91.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 91.3 | | 90.9 |
| Std IX & above | 83.3 | | 83.2 |
| All | 88.7 | 88.0 | 88.6 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 23.9 | 41.8 | 26.1 | 44.2 | 75.1 | 49.3 |
| TV | 59.1 | 83.2 | 62.0 | 65.4 | 79.4 | 67.7 |
| Motorized vehicle | 38.5 | 70.5 | 42.4 | 42.5 | 71.5 | 47.3 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. This proportion is very similar across children enrolled in government and private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 26.1% to 49.3%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 77.5 | 90.7 | 81.2 |
| Std III-V | 71.5 | 86.6 | 74.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 66.4 | | 68.4 |
| Std IX & above | 67.2 | | 67.7 |
| All | 69.7 | 85.3 | 72.3 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 81.2% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 67.7% children in Std IX and above.
- Private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 71.5% government school children receive help as compared to 86.6% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 10.3 | 52.0 | 22.1 |
| Std III-V | 18.8 | 53.2 | 25.7 |
| Std VI-VIII | 21.2 | | 25.5 |
| Std IX & above | 19.7 | | 20.6 |
| All | 18.5 | 50.6 | 23.8 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 69.7 | 8.8 | 22.6 | 2.3 |
| Pvt | 88.5 | 7.4 | 6.0 | 0.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 76.3 | 8.3 | 16.8 | 1.8 |

Overall, close to 24% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A much higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 65.8 | 5.9 | 24.7 | 20.5 | 2.6 |
| Pvt | 59.4 | 8.4 | 24.1 | 21.3 | 7.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 65.1 | 6.2 | 24.7 | 20.5 | 3.0 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (65.1%). Overall, almost one fourth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (24.7%). The percentage of parents who cited this reason was equal for children enrolled in government and private school.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 59.2 | 32.2 | 10.1 | 1.2 | 10.6 | 5.2 |
| Pvt | 76.9 | 47.2 | 12.8 | 0.8 | 30.3 | 15.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 62.1 | 34.7 | 10.6 | 1.2 | 13.9 | 7.0 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing most types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Further, children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 59.2% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 76.9% private school children.
- 30.3% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 10.6% of government school children.
- 15.9% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 5.2% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 32.1 | 33.1 | 25.4 | 9.4 | 100 |
| Pvt | 17.6 | 19.2 | 35.7 | 27.5 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 29.7 | 30.8 | 27.1 | 12.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 32.1% children in government schools and 17.6% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a tenth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is much higher proportion of private school children (27.5%) as compared to government school children (9.4%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 17.4 | 19.3 | 21.4 | 35.9 |
| Pvt | 31.8 | 31.9 | 27.8 | 40.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 19.8 | 21.4 | 22.2 | 36.6 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, about a fifth of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private schools than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 20 OUT OF 20 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 46.4 | 52.1 | 0.1 | 1.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 49.5 | 48.6 | 0.1 | 1.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 42.6 | 55.9 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 38.6 | 59.9 | 0.0 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 47.5 | 50.9 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 50.3 | 48.3 | 0.1 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 48.0 | 50.3 | 0.0 | 1.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 53.1 | 45.7 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 61.2 | 35.1 | 0.3 | 3.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 59.0 | 36.9 | 0.5 | 3.6 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 64.0 | 32.8 | 0.0 | 3.3 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

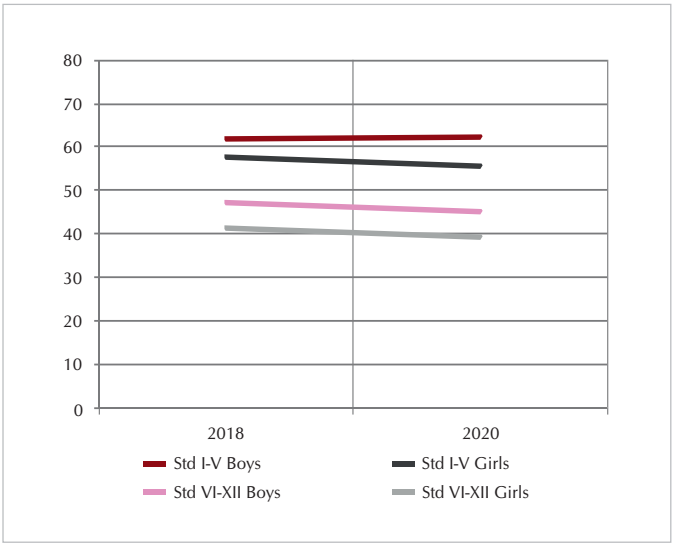


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 46% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 52.1% are enrolled in private schools.

There is not much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1).

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.4 | 1.6 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.5 | 1.4 |
| Age 15-16 | 6.0 | 3.5 |
| All | 1.8 | 1.8 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-10 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for these young children, the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 11-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 31.1 | 8.8 | 20.0 | 26.1 | 7.7 | 16.9 |
| Std I-V | 19.3 | 7.7 | 13.5 | 13.2 | 6.2 | 9.7 |
| Std VI-VIII | 23.9 | 19.3 | 21.6 | 20.2 | 11.6 | 15.9 |
| Std IX-X | 16.8 | 25.9 | 21.3 | 26.0 | 33.1 | 29.5 |
| Std XI & above | 8.9 | 38.4 | 23.6 | 14.5 | 41.4 | 27.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, two thirds of all children's mothers (66.5%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (73.3%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 92.8 | 95.9 | 94.7 |
| Std III-V | 96.0 | 97.0 | 96.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 98.1 | 96.1 | 97.2 |
| Std IX & above | 95.7 | 93.9 | 95.0 |
| All | 96.1 | 95.9 | 96.0 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 47.3 | 79.8 | 64.3 | 83.3 | 93.7 | 88.5 |
| TV | 92.7 | 98.4 | 95.7 | 84.6 | 93.5 | 89.0 |
| Motorized vehicle | 64.9 | 89.8 | 77.9 | 68.7 | 86.7 | 77.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For Std I-V, the percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is slightly higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV decreased over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 64.3% to 88.5%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 70.8 | 88.8 | 82.0 |
| Std III-V | 76.8 | 80.7 | 79.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 67.9 | 80.9 | 74.1 |
| Std IX & above | 61.0 | 67.4 | 63.3 |
| All | 67.8 | 79.9 | 73.8 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 82% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 63.3% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 76.8% government school children receive help as compared to 80.7% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 85.8 | 86.6 | 86.3 |
| Std III-V | 88.8 | 87.0 | 87.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 88.8 | 89.8 | 89.3 |
| Std IX & above | 84.9 | 89.0 | 86.4 |
| All | 87.1 | 88.1 | 87.6 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 93.7 | 10.7 | 10.9 | 5.0 |
| Pvt | 95.1 | 10.1 | 4.8 | 5.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 94.4 | 10.4 | 7.9 | 5.1 |

Overall, 87.6% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). Almost the same percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A slightly higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 32.9 | 7.6 | 43.8 | 2.7 | 12.9 |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 45.2 | 5.4 | 31.7 | 3.9 | 17.9 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (45.2%). Overall, almost a third of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (31.7%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 86.3 | 63.2 | 32.6 | 2.1 | 48.2 | 24.1 |
| Pvt | 88.7 | 67.9 | 10.5 | 1.5 | 60.7 | 52.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 87.5 | 65.6 | 21.6 | 1.8 | 54.4 | 38.4 |

Not only did a significant proportion of children receive materials from their schools during the reference week, but households also reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

The proportion of children doing most types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 86.3% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 88.7% private school children.
- 60.7% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 48.2% of government school children.
- 52.9% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 24.1% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 5.4 | 16.3 | 27.7 | 50.6 | 100 |
| Pvt | 5.1 | 10.2 | 19.9 | 64.9 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 5.3 | 13.2 | 23.8 | 57.7 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, only 5.4% children in government schools and 5.1% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to 60% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (64.9%) as compared to government school children (50.6%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 74.9 | 60.0 | 61.9 | 74.7 |
| Pvt | 67.1 | 60.0 | 61.4 | 65.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 71.0 | 60.0 | 61.6 | 70.2 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 71% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 33 OUT OF 33 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 56.7 | 36.6 | 0.1 | 6.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 58.2 | 34.6 | 0.1 | 7.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 54.9 | 38.0 | 0.1 | 7.1 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 51.9 | 41.1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 58.7 | 34.1 | 0.1 | 7.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 59.2 | 35.0 | 0.1 | 5.7 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 53.9 | 41.3 | 0.1 | 4.8 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 65.9 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 6.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 62.5 | 26.7 | 0.0 | 10.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 57.7 | 32.8 | 0.0 | 9.4 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 68.5 | 19.0 | 0.0 | 12.5 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

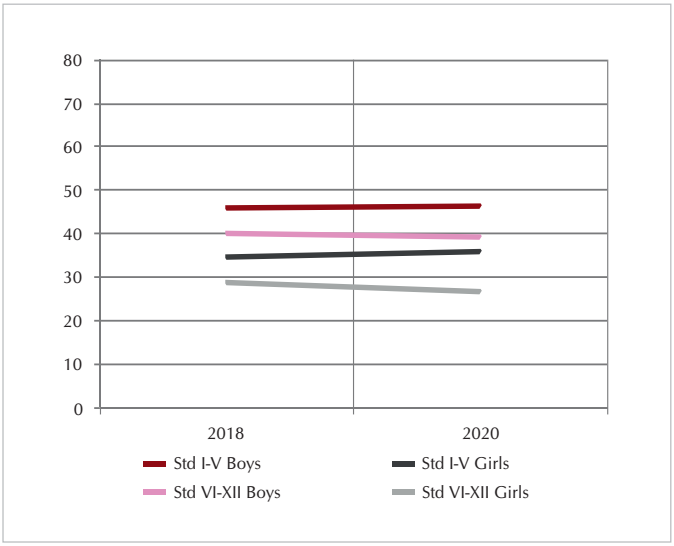


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 56% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 37% are enrolled in private schools.

There is not much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). The proportion of boys enrolled in Std VI-XII in private schools decreased slightly between 2018 and 2020.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 2.2 | 7.5 |
| Age 11-14 | 5.0 | 5.7 |
| Age 15-16 | 15.1 | 10.7 |
| All | 5.2 | 7.4 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 64.9 | 44.1 | 57.1 | 24.3 | 11.7 | 19.6 |
| Std I-V | 16.1 | 18.3 | 17.0 | 18.5 | 10.3 | 15.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 11.7 | 17.0 | 13.7 | 24.9 | 22.8 | 24.1 |
| Std IX-X | 4.7 | 9.6 | 6.5 | 18.9 | 25.4 | 21.3 |
| Std XI & above | 2.6 | 11.0 | 5.8 | 13.3 | 29.8 | 19.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, 26% of all children's mothers and a far higher proportion of children's fathers (64.9%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 52.3 | 39.8 | 46.8 |
| Std III-V | 68.2 | 41.0 | 57.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 76.0 | 42.5 | 64.1 |
| Std IX & above | 77.5 | 50.1 | 69.1 |
| All | 70.6 | 43.0 | 60.4 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 31.2 | 53.7 | 39.7 | 55.4 | 75.5 | 62.9 |
| TV | 45.0 | 69.7 | 54.3 | 47.2 | 66.9 | 54.5 |
| Motorized vehicle | 48.9 | 68.9 | 56.4 | 51.9 | 72.8 | 59.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, most children have textbooks for their current grade, especially in higher classes. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 39.7% to 62.9%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 59.2 | 74.8 | 66.0 |
| Std III-V | 62.7 | 68.0 | 64.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 57.1 | 67.3 | 60.7 |
| Std IX & above | 57.4 | 62.6 | 59.0 |
| All | 59.0 | 68.1 | 62.4 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 62.4% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 66% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 59% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 62.7% government school children receive help as compared to 68% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 16.2 | 13.9 | 15.2 |
| Std III-V | 20.4 | 19.0 | 19.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 23.2 | 19.7 | 22.0 |
| Std IX & above | 27.5 | 26.7 | 27.3 |
| All | 22.5 | 19.7 | 21.5 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 75.9 | 4.2 | 20.1 | 5.4 |
| Pvt | 87.4 | 2.1 | 10.8 | 6.5 |
| Govt & Pvt | 79.8 | 3.5 | 16.9 | 5.8 |

Overall, 21.5% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A slightly higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 64.6 | 9.7 | 26.6 | 5.7 | 6.4 |
| Pvt | 73.5 | 10.2 | 11.3 | 5.8 | 6.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 68.0 | 9.9 | 20.8 | 5.7 | 6.4 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (68%). Overall, one fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (20.8%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (26.6%) than those enrolled in private school (11.3%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 45.9 | 22.1 | 8.5 | 1.6 | 11.7 | 4.2 |
| Pvt | 43.8 | 26.4 | 7.2 | 1.4 | 14.8 | 7.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 45.1 | 23.7 | 8.0 | 1.5 | 12.9 | 5.2 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is similar for those in private schools as compared to government schools. However, children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- About 45% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks during the reference week, but 14.8% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 11.7% of government school children.
- Further, 7% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 4.2% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 49.6 | 20.9 | 20.4 | 9.1 | 100 |
| Pvt | 48.7 | 19.7 | 19.9 | 11.7 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 49.2 | 20.5 | 20.2 | 10.1 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 49.6% children in government schools and 48.7% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a tenth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (11.7%) as compared to government school children (9.1%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 30.0 | 26.3 | 23.4 | 38.5 |
| Pvt | 22.5 | 26.6 | 25.8 | 25.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 27.2 | 26.4 | 24.3 | 33.9 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 27.2% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 31 OUT OF 31 DISTRICTS

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 64.6 | 27.5 | 1.6 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 67.9 | 25.2 | 1.8 | 5.0 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 60.4 | 29.0 | 1.9 | 8.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 56.4 | 30.5 | 2.3 | 10.8 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 65.0 | 27.2 | 1.5 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 72.2 | 23.1 | 1.7 | 3.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 66.1 | 29.3 | 2.1 | 2.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 78.5 | 16.8 | 1.3 | 3.4 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 73.9 | 22.2 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 72.8 | 24.5 | 0.5 | 2.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 74.8 | 20.1 | 3.0 | 2.1 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, close to 65% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 28% are enrolled in private schools.

This does not show much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). The proportion of boys enrolled in Std I-V and girls enrolled in Std VI-XII in private schools decreased slightly.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.1 | 9.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 0.5 | 3.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| All | 0.5 | 5.6 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 14.3 | 1.6 | 10.5 | 15.4 | 7.1 | 12.9 |
| Std I-V | 17.1 | 5.8 | 13.8 | 18.4 | 5.3 | 14.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 25.2 | 18.9 | 23.3 | 21.5 | 12.6 | 18.8 |
| Std IX-X | 29.6 | 25.0 | 28.2 | 31.7 | 29.8 | 31.2 |
| Std XI & above | 13.9 | 48.6 | 24.2 | 13.0 | 45.2 | 22.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, close to three quarters of all children's fathers (72.7%) and an even higher proportion of children's mothers (75.7%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 87.5 | 58.6 | 73.1 |
| Std III-V | 95.3 | 60.8 | 85.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 94.9 | 75.6 | 90.1 |
| Std IX & above | 92.9 | 77.3 | 89.3 |
| All | 93.7 | 68.1 | 86.4 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 33.9 | 53.5 | 40.2 | 56.9 | 81.1 | 64.1 |
| TV | 94.4 | 97.3 | 95.3 | 92.4 | 93.1 | 92.6 |
| Motorized vehicle | 67.5 | 81.9 | 72.1 | 69.1 | 81.2 | 72.5 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is much higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 40.2% to 64.1%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 81.8 | 84.0 | 82.9 |
| Std III-V | 69.2 | 87.5 | 74.4 |
| Std VI-VIII | 56.6 | 74.0 | 61.0 |
| Std IX & above | 55.9 | 60.1 | 56.9 |
| All | 62.2 | 76.9 | 66.4 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 66.4% of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 82.9% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 56.9% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 69.2% government school children receive help as compared to 87.5% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 35.8 | 55.2 | 45.7 |
| Std III-V | 35.0 | 49.3 | 39.1 |
| Std VI-VIII | 34.0 | 45.2 | 36.8 |
| Std IX & above | 47.8 | 52.7 | 48.9 |
| All | 38.5 | 50.3 | 41.9 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 73.2 | 13.0 | 14.1 | 3.6 |
| Pvt | 93.9 | 4.2 | 1.5 | 2.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 80.3 | 10.0 | 9.7 | 3.0 |

Overall, 41.9% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via calls and visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 59.4 | 8.6 | 31.3 | 3.0 | 3.4 |
| Pvt | 61.4 | 14.0 | 19.1 | 3.3 | 12.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 59.9 | 9.9 | 28.2 | 3.1 | 5.8 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (59.9%). Overall, close to a third of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (28.2%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (31.3%) than those enrolled in private school (19.1%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 55.8 | 24.1 | 47.3 | 2.8 | 14.6 | 5.3 |
| Pvt | 54.5 | 22.7 | 29.8 | 2.1 | 29.0 | 21.1 |
| Govt & Pvt | 55.4 | 23.7 | 42.3 | 2.6 | 18.7 | 9.8 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

The proportion of children doing some types of activities is higher for those in government schools as compared to private schools. Children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- About 55% of all children in both types of schools reported using textbooks during the reference week, 29% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 14.6% of government school children.
- Further, 21.2% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 5.3% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 26.5 | 29.5 | 23.1 | 20.9 | 100 |
| Pvt | 30.0 | 22.2 | 23.0 | 24.8 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 27.5 | 27.4 | 23.1 | 22.0 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 26.5% children in government schools and 30% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

More than a fifth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (24.8%) as compared to government school children (20.9%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 39.2 | 28.7 | 16.2 | 45.5 |
| Pvt | 45.6 | 36.6 | 12.3 | 16.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 41.0 | 31.0 | 15.2 | 37.3 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, about 41% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 9 OUT OF 9 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 54.8 | 40.1 | 0.8 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 56.6 | 37.4 | 0.8 | 5.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 48.1 | 48.2 | 0.5 | 3.3 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 45.8 | 49.8 | 0.2 | 4.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 50.5 | 46.4 | 0.7 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: All | 62.2 | 30.3 | 1.1 | 6.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Boys | 58.2 | 34.8 | 0.7 | 6.4 | 100 |
| Age 11-16: Girls | 67.0 | 25.0 | 1.6 | 6.5 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

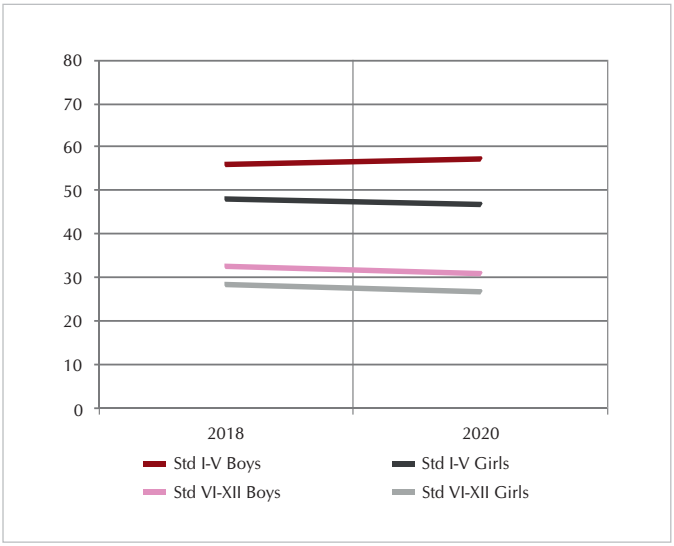


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, nearly 55% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 40% are enrolled in private schools.

This does not show much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1).

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.3 | 5.4 |
| Age 11-14 | 0.9 | 3.2 |
| Age 15-16 | 4.7 | 15.0 |
| All | 1.3 | 6.0 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-16 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). This increase is the highest for children in 15-16 age group. Given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 45.5 | 22.0 | 35.9 | 32.6 | 10.3 | 23.4 |
| Std I-V | 15.6 | 6.7 | 11.9 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 8.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 15.1 | 14.0 | 14.7 | 18.2 | 10.7 | 15.1 |
| Std IX-X | 15.5 | 30.0 | 21.4 | 25.8 | 32.8 | 28.7 |
| Std XI & above | 8.4 | 27.4 | 16.1 | 14.6 | 37.3 | 24.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, 52.2% of all children's mothers and a much higher proportion of children's fathers (67.8%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 88.1 | 30.8 | 58.1 |
| Std VI-XII | 90.2 | 48.6 | 78.2 |
| All | 89.3 | 37.1 | 68.1 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 37.6 | 57.2 | 45.8 | 68.1 | 82.5 | 74.0 |
| TV | 87.1 | 94.8 | 90.3 | 88.0 | 94.0 | 90.5 |
| Motorized vehicle | 48.4 | 71.5 | 58.0 | 57.2 | 75.3 | 64.6 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, roughly two-thirds of children in government and private schools have textbooks for their current grade. But far higher proportions of children in government schools have textbooks than those in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV has remained similar for the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 45.8% to 74%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 70.3 | 82.0 | 76.4 |
| Std VI-XII | 62.6 | 74.1 | 65.9 |
| All | 65.7 | 79.2 | 71.2 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 71.2% of all children receive help from family members.
- In government and private schools, more younger children receive help from families than.
- older children. Overall, 76.4% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 65.9% children in Std VI-XII.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 63.2 | 31.8 | 46.7 |
| Std VI-XII | 70.2 | 46.8 | 63.5 |
| All | 67.4 | 37.0 | 55.0 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 42.7 | 32.7 | 38.7 | 5.7 |
| Pvt | 59.4 | 33.6 | 17.9 | 5.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 47.3 | 33.0 | 33.0 | 5.8 |

Overall, 55% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A much higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 58.0 | 7.8 | 29.9 | 1.3 | 13.3 |
| Pvt | 67.7 | 6.1 | 10.5 | 5.2 | 19.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 63.9 | 6.8 | 18.2 | 3.6 | 17.0 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (63.9%). Overall, almost a fifth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (18.2%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (29.9%) than those enrolled in private school (10.5%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 66.7 | 52.1 | 75.1 | 0.7 | 32.0 | 16.9 |
| Pvt | 41.3 | 35.3 | 47.7 | 0.2 | 32.7 | 28.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 56.4 | 45.3 | 64.1 | 0.5 | 32.3 | 21.6 |

Even though only about half of all children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing some types of activities is higher for those in government schools as compared to private schools. Children enrolled in government schools were just as likely to be using recorded video lessons as those in private schools, but more private school children were connected to live online classes.

For example,

- 66.7% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 41.3% private school children.
- 32.7% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 32% of government school children.
- 28.6% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 16.9% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 7.0 | 18.0 | 25.7 | 49.3 | 100 |
| Pvt | 19.8 | 26.9 | 25.4 | 27.9 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 12.2 | 21.6 | 25.6 | 40.7 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 7% children in government schools and 19.8% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

40% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of government school children (49.3%) as compared to private school children (27.9%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 67.5 | 52.4 | 13.8 | 45.2 |
| Pvt | 43.1 | 33.0 | 3.1 | 28.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 57.6 | 44.6 | 7.8 | 38.3 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 57.6% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is much higher among families of children in government than in private schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# Uttar Pradesh RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 70 OUT OF 71 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

### Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 49.6 | 39.4 | 0.7 | 10.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 47.2 | 41.8 | 0.6 | 10.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 51.2 | 37.8 | 0.8 | 10.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 48.3 | 41.0 | 0.6 | 10.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 54.9 | 33.8 | 1.0 | 10.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 47.5 | 43.0 | 0.5 | 9.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 45.7 | 45.4 | 0.7 | 8.3 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 49.8 | 40.1 | 0.3 | 9.8 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 38.1 | 48.0 | 0.3 | 13.6 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 37.7 | 51.3 | 0.5 | 10.5 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 38.6 | 44.1 | 0.1 | 17.3 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***

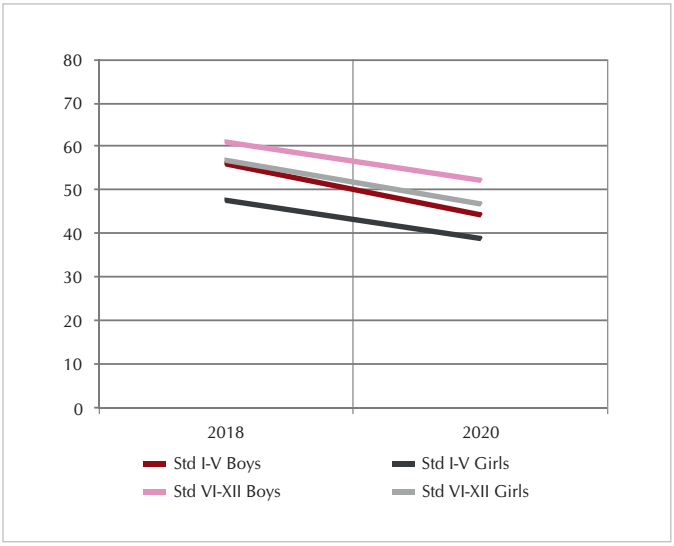


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 49% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 39% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been a decrease in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 across grades for both boys and girls. This decrease is higher for boys in Std I-V and girls in Std VI-XII.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 3.4 | 11.1 |
| Age 11-14 | 5.6 | 9.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 17.9 | 13.6 |
| All | 6.5 | 10.8 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission. The proportion of children currently not enrolled in school has decreased over 2018 levels among the 15-16 year old age group.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 53.2 | 35.0 | 44.9 | 24.9 | 13.0 | 19.5 |
| Std I-V | 15.2 | 11.8 | 13.7 | 14.0 | 7.0 | 10.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 15.8 | 18.2 | 16.9 | 22.4 | 14.1 | 18.6 |
| Std IX-X | 9.0 | 11.9 | 10.3 | 20.8 | 28.1 | 24.1 |
| Std XI & above | 6.9 | 23.0 | 14.2 | 18.0 | 37.9 | 27.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than two fifths of all children's mothers (41.4%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (69.8%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 85.8 | 75.0 | 80.9 |
| Std III-V | 84.8 | 74.9 | 80.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 84.0 | 72.0 | 78.9 |
| Std IX & above | 76.3 | 77.7 | 77.1 |
| All | 83.5 | 74.9 | 79.6 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 19.8 | 38.9 | 30.4 | 44.9 | 64.2 | 53.7 |
| TV | 33.8 | 54.5 | 45.2 | 39.3 | 59.6 | 48.5 |
| Motorized vehicle | 30.5 | 53.9 | 43.4 | 41.6 | 59.7 | 49.8 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade except for children enrolled in Std IX and above, the percentage of children in government schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in private schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles changed only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 30.4% to 53.7%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 75.3 | 84.6 | 79.5 |
| Std III-V | 73.5 | 81.0 | 76.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 68.4 | 78.3 | 72.7 |
| Std IX & above | 69.3 | 75.3 | 72.8 |
| All | 71.8 | 79.6 | 75.3 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarters of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 79.5% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 72.8% children in Std IX and above.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std III-V, 73.5% government school children receive help as compared to 81% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 18.6 | 23.3 | 20.7 |
| Std III-V | 19.6 | 21.9 | 20.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 20.4 | 24.3 | 22.1 |
| Std IX & above | 17.9 | 22.3 | 20.5 |
| All | 19.4 | 23.0 | 21.0 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 61.0 | 14.0 | 28.4 | 10.3 |
| Pvt | 83.6 | 6.4 | 10.8 | 4.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 72.3 | 10.2 | 19.6 | 7.6 |

Overall, 21% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 57.3 | 14.8 | 32.1 | 3.0 | 4.2 |
| Pvt | 60.7 | 13.8 | 23.8 | 5.1 | 4.9 |
| Govt & Pvt | 58.8 | 14.4 | 28.4 | 3.9 | 4.5 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (58.8%). Overall, more than one-fourth of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason (28.4%), with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (32.1%) than those enrolled in private school (23.8%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 49.3 | 28.9 | 10.8 | 4.1 | 12.2 | 4.7 |
| Pvt | 55.8 | 38.0 | 16.4 | 3.6 | 21.6 | 11.4 |
| Govt & Pvt | 52.3 | 33.1 | 13.4 | 3.8 | 16.5 | 7.8 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. Further, the proportion of private school children doing most types of activities is higher as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 49.3% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 55.8% private school children.
- 21.6% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 12.2% of government school children.
- 11.4% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 4.7% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 43.4 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 12.3 | 100 |
| Pvt | 35.2 | 17.9 | 24.4 | 22.5 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 39.7 | 21.1 | 22.3 | 16.9 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 43.4% children in government schools and 35.2% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to 17% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (22.5%) as compared to government school children (12.3%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 24.1 | 23.6 | 11.0 | 30.0 |
| Pvt | 28.8 | 28.2 | 13.1 | 18.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 26.3 | 25.7 | 11.9 | 24.6 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, about a fourth of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 13 OUT OF 13 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

## Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

### Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 50.3 | 43.8 | 2.0 | 3.9 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 51.4 | 42.1 | 1.9 | 4.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 44.0 | 50.9 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 37.6 | 55.1 | 2.6 | 4.7 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 52.0 | 45.6 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 54.9 | 38.9 | 1.6 | 4.6 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 47.7 | 46.9 | 1.0 | 4.5 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 64.2 | 29.1 | 2.4 | 4.4 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 56.4 | 34.0 | 1.4 | 8.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 49.7 | 43.3 | 1.3 | 5.7 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 63.9 | 23.7 | 1.5 | 11.0 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

### Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020*

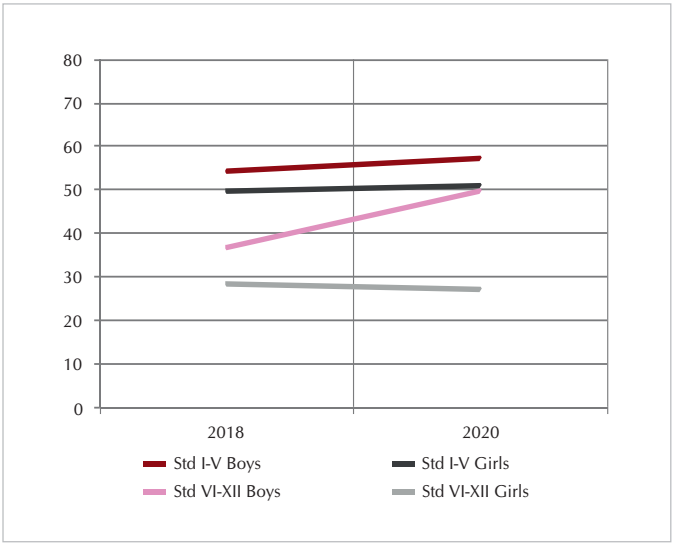


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, more than 50% of all children are enrolled in government schools and close to 44% are enrolled in private schools.

This marks a change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There has been an increase in private school enrollment between 2018 and 2020 for boys. This increase is much higher for boys in Std VI-XII. There is not much change in girl's enrollment.

### Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020*

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 0.9 | 3.1 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.9 | 4.6 |
| Age 15-16 | 6.9 | 8.2 |
| All | 2.4 | 4.7 |

A higher proportion of children in the age group 6-14 are not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). But given the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, at least for young children (age 6-10), the main cause of not being enrolled in school may be that families are waiting for schools to open to seek admission.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 26.4 | 20.0 | 23.5 | 9.5 | 9.6 | 9.5 |
| Std I-V | 20.0 | 13.8 | 17.1 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 7.9 |
| Std VI-VIII | 25.2 | 14.3 | 20.2 | 21.4 | 11.4 | 16.8 |
| Std IX-X | 14.0 | 16.6 | 15.2 | 35.9 | 25.5 | 31.1 |
| Std XI & above | 14.5 | 35.3 | 24.0 | 25.4 | 45.5 | 34.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, more than half of all children's mothers (59.4%) and an even higher proportion of children's fathers (82.6%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 71.7 | 82.5 | 77.6 |
| Std VI-XII | 77.8 | 89.4 | 82.3 |
| All | 75.6 | 85.9 | 80.3 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 36.7 | 63.4 | 47.9 | 65.4 | 85.6 | 74.7 |
| TV | 73.5 | 89.7 | 80.3 | 77.3 | 86.0 | 81.3 |
| Motorized vehicle | 21.4 | 61.6 | 38.4 | 25.8 | 56.6 | 39.9 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, a very high proportion of children have textbooks for their current grade. For every grade, the percentage of children in private schools who have textbooks is higher than among children in government schools.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles increased only slightly over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 47.9% to 74.7%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 78.6 | 80.6 | 79.7 |
| Std VI-XII | 61.7 | 78.4 | 68.3 |
| All | 67.7 | 79.5 | 73.1 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, close to three quarter of all children receive help from family members.
- For both types of schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 79.7% children in Std I-V receive help from family members as compared to 68.3% children in Std VI-XII.
- For each grade level, private school children get more help than government school children. For example, for children in Std VI-XII, 61.7% government school children receive help as compared to 78.4% of children enrolled in private schools.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-V | 74.8 | 75.5 | 75.1 |
| Std VI-XII | 78.3 | 70.3 | 75.1 |
| All | 77.0 | 72.9 | 75.1 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 88.3 | 5.9 | 7.0 | 3.5 |
| Pvt | 97.9 | 9.5 | 4.3 | 1.8 |
| Govt & Pvt | 92.6 | 7.5 | 5.8 | 2.8 |

Overall, 75.1% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). A higher percentage of government school children received learning materials/activities as compared to private school children in the Std VI-XII.

Regardless of school type, WhatsApp was the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. A higher proportion of children enrolled in private schools received materials through WhatsApp, and accessing materials via visits was more common among government school children.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 46.3 | 20.8 | 48.1 | 2.1 | 0.6 |
| Pvt | 59.4 | 22.5 | 27.7 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Govt & Pvt | 53.0 | 21.7 | 37.7 | 1.1 | 0.7 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was that the school had not sent materials (53%). Overall, 37.7% of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as a reason, with more parents of children enrolled in government school highlighting this reason (48.1%) than those enrolled in private school (27.7%).

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 58.9 | 35.9 | 21.1 | 0.4 | 24.8 | 10.9 |
| Pvt | 70.5 | 45.3 | 9.5 | 0.5 | 38.0 | 20.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 64.2 | 40.2 | 15.8 | 0.5 | 30.9 | 15.3 |

Not only did a significant proportion of children receive materials from their schools during the reference week, but households also reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material like textbooks is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons.

For example,

- 58.9% of government school children reported using text-books during the reference week as compared to 70.5% private school children.
- 38% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 24.8% of government school children.
- Further, 20.3% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 10.9% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 29.1 | 25.9 | 20.6 | 24.4 | 100 |
| Pvt | 24.0 | 19.8 | 21.0 | 35.2 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 26.8 | 23.1 | 20.8 | 29.4 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 29.1% children in government schools and 24% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

Close to 30% of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (35.2%) as compared to government school children (24.4%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 55.4 | 48.9 | 46.9 | 65.0 |
| Pvt | 60.6 | 50.4 | 39.5 | 49.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 57.8 | 49.6 | 43.7 | 59.2 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, close to 60% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

# West Bengal RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 17 OUT OF 18 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Children's school enrollment

The ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey was conducted during late September 2020. This section explores patterns of enrollment among 6-16 year olds in rural India.

### Have enrollment patterns changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Beyond the health consequences of COVID-19, the pandemic has caused school closures as well as economic hardships due to migration and loss of livelihoods, among other reasons. ASER 2020 explored whether this unprecedented situation is associated with shifts in children's enrollment patterns in rural India.

**Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2020**

| Age group and sex | Govt | Pvt | Other | Not enrolled | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 6-14: All | 88.3 | 10.1 | 1.0 | 0.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-16: All | 89.0 | 8.4 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: All | 83.9 | 15.0 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Boys | 80.7 | 17.9 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 100 |
| Age 7-10: Girls | 87.1 | 12.2 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: All | 93.8 | 4.4 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Boys | 92.6 | 4.4 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Age 11-14: Girls | 95.0 | 4.4 | 0.6 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: All | 88.7 | 3.7 | 1.3 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Boys | 86.7 | 3.3 | 1.1 | 8.9 | 100 |
| Age 15-16: Girls | 90.8 | 4.1 | 1.6 | 3.6 | 100 |

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or are not currently enrolled.

**Chart 1: % Children enrolled in private schools. By grade and sex. 2018 and 2020***

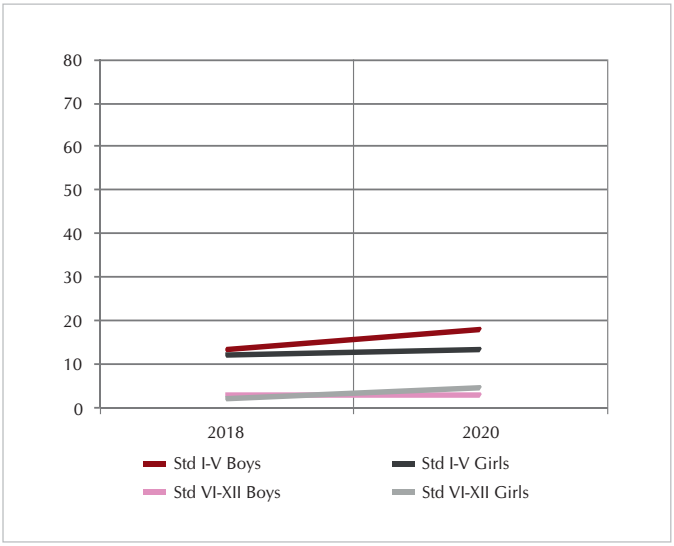


Table 1 summarizes enrollment data for different age groups in the ASER 2020 sample. For children in the 6-14 age group, this data shows that overall, nearly 90% of all children are enrolled in government schools and 10% are enrolled in private schools.

This does not show much change from two years ago, when the last comparable ASER survey was conducted (Chart 1). There is an increase in proportion of boys enrolled in Std I-V in private schools.

**Table 2: % Children currently not enrolled in school. By age. 2018 and 2020***

| Age | 2018 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Age 6-10 | 1.3 | 0.2 |
| Age 11-14 | 1.9 | 1.0 |
| Age 15-16 | 11.0 | 6.2 |
| All | 3.3 | 1.5 |

For all age groups, the proportion of children not enrolled in school has decreased in 2020 as compared to 2018 (Table 2). This decrease is more for older children (age 15-16) as compared to younger children (age 6-10)

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

# West Bengal RURAL

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Household resources

A family's resources influence the type and amount of support they can provide for children's learning, not only in terms of choosing a school for their child, but in many other ways as well. ASER 2020 asked questions about selected household resources, such as parents' own education levels; access to technology such as TV and smartphones; and availability of textbooks for the current grade. Other than the availability of textbooks, ASER 2020 Wave 1 did not explore if the household had other learning materials like other books, instructional games, etc.

### How much schooling do parents of children in the ASER 2020 sample have?

**Table 3: Distribution of enrolled children. By school type, mother's and father's education level. 2020**

| Parents' education level | Mother | | | Father | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % Children in | | | % Children in | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| No schooling | 15.1 | 8.2 | 14.5 | 15.1 | 11.9 | 14.8 |
| Std I-V | 22.5 | 8.0 | 21.1 | 24.2 | 3.8 | 22.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 28.8 | 22.3 | 28.2 | 26.1 | 25.3 | 26.0 |
| Std IX-X | 23.6 | 40.5 | 25.2 | 20.3 | 28.9 | 21.1 |
| Std XI & above | 10.0 | 21.0 | 11.1 | 14.4 | 30.1 | 15.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Increasingly, parents of children currently in school have been to school themselves. In ASER 2020, 63% of all children's fathers and a slightly higher proportion of children's mothers (64.5%) have completed more than 5 years of school (Table 3).

### Do children have textbooks at home?

**Table 4: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 99.3 | | 99.5 |
| Std III-V | 99.8 | | 99.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 99.8 | | 99.8 |
| Std IX & above | 99.4 | | 99.4 |
| All | 99.6 | 100.0 | 99.7 |

### Do children have a smartphone at home?

**Table 5: % Enrolled children with selected assets available at home. By school type and asset type. 2018 and 2020***

| Household resource | % Children | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ASER 2018 | | | ASER 2020 | | |
| | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
| Smartphone | 25.4 | 43.2 | 26.8 | 44.7 | 72.3 | 47.4 |
| TV | 55.9 | 74.0 | 57.3 | 48.9 | 65.7 | 50.5 |
| Motorized vehicle | 37.9 | 60.3 | 39.7 | 26.5 | 50.2 | 28.8 |

Table 4 indicates that in all grades, almost all children have textbooks for their current grade.

The comparison between ASER 2018 and 2020 shows that a much higher proportion of children now come from households with a smartphone as compared to two years ago (Table 5). Although the proportion of children from households with assets like TV and motorized vehicles decreased over the last two years, the proportion owning a smartphone increased enormously - from 26.8% to 47.4%.

*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 estimates.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

## Access to and availability of learning materials and activities

This section examines learning support available to children, as well as access to and availability of learning materials/activities during the period of school closures. The ASER 2020 survey asked households whether schools had sent learning materials or activities for children during the week prior to the survey (the reference week), which was carried out in September 2020. Learning materials included traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person.

### Do families help children while studying at home?

**Table 6: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 76.6 | | 81.0 |
| Std III-V | 78.1 | | 77.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 66.7 | | 67.2 |
| Std IX & above | 60.4 | | 59.9 |
| All | 70.4 | 81.6 | 71.5 |

Table 6 shows the proportion of children who receive help at home for learning activities.

- Taking all children across different grades together, 71.5% of all children receive help from family members.
- Overall, private school children get more help than government school children.
- In government schools, more younger children receive help from families than older children. Overall, 76.6% children in Std I-II receive help from family members as compared to 60.4% children in Std IX and above.

### Did children receive any learning materials or activities during the reference week and if they did, through what medium?*

**Table 7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020**

| Std | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 13.8 | | 17.8 |
| Std III-V | 19.9 | | 22.2 |
| Std VI-VIII | 18.6 | | 20.7 |
| Std IX & above | 19.8 | | 20.4 |
| All | 18.5 | 39.0 | 20.5 |

**Table 8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type and medium. 2020**

| School type | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 24.1 | 4.6 | 68.6 | 3.8 |
| Pvt | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 30.8 | 7.6 | 59.0 | 5.1 |

Overall, 20.5% of all enrolled children received some kind of learning materials/activities from their teachers during the reference week (Table 7). However, the difference by school type is notable. A much higher proportion of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children.

Regardless of school type, personal visits were the most common medium used for sharing learning materials/activities. Further, close to a third of all children received materials via WhatsApp.

### Why didn't households access learning material and activities during the reference week?

**Table 9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activities during the reference week reasons given by parents. By school type and reason. 2020**

| School type | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 83.4 | 9.8 | 10.8 | 5.8 | 2.9 |
| Pvt | | | | | |
| Govt & Pvt | 83.5 | 9.9 | 10.3 | 5.4 | 2.8 |

Respondents could specify more than one reason.

Among enrolled children in government schools who did not access learning materials or activities during the reference week, the most common reason cited by parents was the school was not sending material (83.4%). Around 10% of parents mentioned not having a smartphone as another reason.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

# Children's engagement with learning materials and activities

While the previous section looked at whether households received learning materials and activities from schools in the week prior to the survey in September 2020, this section analyses whether children actually engaged with different kinds of materials and activities during that week. Households were asked about a variety of materials and activities received from any source, including traditional materials like textbooks and worksheets (in print or virtual format), lessons that were broadcast on television or radio, and online activities such as pre-recorded videos or live classes.

## Did children do learning activities during the reference week?

**Table 10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By school type and type of material. 2020**

| School type | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Govt | 63.1 | 34.8 | 10.5 | 0.9 | 7.8 | 3.9 |
| Pvt | 76.4 | 40.4 | 5.9 | 0.0 | 21.6 | 11.3 |
| Govt & Pvt | 64.4 | 35.4 | 10.0 | 0.9 | 9.1 | 4.6 |

Even though only a small proportion of children received materials from their schools during the reference week, households reported that most children did do some learning activity during that week. These activities were shared by diverse sources such as schools, families, and private tutors, among others.

For both types of schools, the proportion of children doing activities using traditional material is higher as compared to online resources. The proportion of children doing different types of activities is higher for those in private schools as compared to government schools. Children enrolled in private schools were much more likely to be connected to online classes and recorded video lessons. For example,

- 63.1% of government school children reported using textbooks during the reference week as compared to 76.4% private school children.
- 21.6% of private school children reported using recorded video lessons as opposed to 7.8% of government school children.
- 11.3% children in private schools accessed live online classes during the reference week as compared to 3.9% of government school children (Table 10).

## How much did children do during the reference week?

**Table 11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| School type | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 29.0 | 33.7 | 28.1 | 9.2 | 100 |
| Pvt | 21.9 | 31.4 | 27.8 | 18.9 | 100 |
| Govt & Pvt | 28.3 | 33.5 | 28.1 | 10.1 | 100 |

Based on responses from households, 29% children in government schools and 21.9% children in private schools did not do any of these activities during the reference week.

About a tenth of all children did three activities or more. In this category, there is higher proportion of private school children (18.9%) as compared to government school children (9.2%).

## How much contact was there between school and home during the reference week? And since schools closed?

**Table 12: % Enrolled children in contact with schools. By school type and type of contact. 2020**

| School type | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administra-tive purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/child called or visited each other at least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Govt | 10.3 | 10.6 | 32.5 | 43.3 |
| Pvt | 30.8 | 30.6 | 38.8 | 44.2 |
| Govt & Pvt | 12.3 | 12.6 | 33.0 | 43.4 |

Even when schools are closed, contact between the home and school is important. ASER 2020 explored this issue in two ways: whether parents and teachers had been in touch (phone or visit) during the reference week; and if not, whether there had been contact since the lockdown began in March 2020. The data indicates that overall, 12.3% of all children's teachers contacted parents/families during the reference week. This proportion is higher among families of children in private than in government schools (Table 12).

'Contact for administrative purposes' includes contact by phone calls, personal visits or SMS/WhatsApp.

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Facilitated by PRATHAM

# ASER 2020 Wave 1 process documents

# Training

The ASER survey is conducted in almost every rural district in India, usually with the help of local organizations and institutions like universities, colleges, and non-governmental organizations. However, this year was different. The survey was conducted in most states by Pratham and ASER teams themselves. In the few states, where there is no Pratham presence, it was conducted with the help of local partner organizations or independent local volunteers.

In all, 1,382 internal staff and 132 external volunteers conducted the ASER 2020 Wave 1 phone survey, reaching 584 districts in 26 states and 4 union territories, 52,227 households and 8,963 schools in more than 16,974 villages across India. As in every ASER, for the surveyors to be able to conduct the survey properly, they needed to be trained rigorously.

In the light of COVID-19, ASER 2020 survey training was conducted virtually for the first time, with surveyors participating in training from their homes in different locations across the country. Various new methods were employed to make the training as comprehensive and effective as a regular in-person training. The ASER training process was designed to give surveyors the skills needed to conduct a phone survey including managing calling lists and tracking repeat attempts to phone numbers that did not connect in the first instance, introducing themselves and the survey to the respondent, explaining the objectives and importance of the data being collected in this survey, asking survey questions clearly and precisely, recording information over a phone call, and entering this information accurately in the survey application.

ASER survey trainings followed a two-tier model that consisted of:

**National training:**
ASER central team trained all ASER state teams and selected Pratham team members who would conduct survey process trainings at the state level

↓

**State level training:**
Surveyors from Pratham teams and external partner organizations and local volunteers were trained state-wise

Standardization in training and survey is extremely important in order to ensure that the data collected is reliable and valid across districts and states. For this purpose, the guidelines and instructions for the training delivered were clear and consistent across tiers, so that each participant was able to conduct the survey accurately following the same protocols.

## Tier I: National training:

The ASER 2020 survey began with a 6-day national training from 2 to 7 September. Conducted over Zoom, an online meeting platform, the training comprised 140 participants drawn from the ASER central team, ASER state teams from across the country, selected Pratham team members, and external guests. The main objective was to thoroughly train state teams on all survey formats and processes, so that they could deliver the training at the state level. Participants attended 5 days of virtual classroom sessions (about 4 hours per day) and a half day was dedicated to making pilot phone calls. 1-2 days of mock training sessions were held additionally to prepare trainers in their delivery of content.

Key aspects of the national training included:

- **Virtual classroom sessions:** These were designed to provide a theoretical understanding of the survey process, quality control processes, sampling for the survey, etc. Presentations, role plays, and energizers were used to make the virtual classroom sessions effective and engaging. To ensure that there was a more participative learning environment, role-play sessions were held in breakout rooms with 7-8 participants in each room so that every participant got a chance to practice the administration of the survey questionnaire.
- **Pilot calls:** Each participant was assigned a few household numbers to practice calling actual respondents. These pilot calls were extremely useful for the participants to get hands-on experience of doing the phone survey.

- **Quiz:** A quiz was administered in order to ensure that every participant understood the survey content and the quality control processes thoroughly. Additional sessions were organised to clarify doubts. The quiz was conducted in an online format, enabling prompt sharing of results and clarification of doubts.
- **Mock training**: Mock training sessions gauged participants' ability to train on the survey process and assisted them in improving the quality of training. Participants were allotted topics to train on and were assessed by experienced Pratham/ASER master trainers. Personalized feedback was given to each participant.
- **State planning:** Survey roll-out plans for each state were finalised, including the shortlisting of surveyors, district allocation to managers, plans for state level trainings, timelines for execution of the survey, and detailed budgeting, among others.

## Tier II: State level training:

State level trainings spanned 3-4 days. 128 Pratham/ASER members trained 1,386 surveyors on how to conduct the phone survey. Like national training, key elements of the state level trainings included virtual classroom sessions, pilot calls and a quiz. Surveyors who scored low on the quiz or did not show a good performance during the role play sessions were replaced, re-trained or provided additional support during the survey. It was mandatory for all participants to be present on all days of the training.

## Monitoring of trainings:

Specific steps were taken to ensure that the key aspects of training were implemented across all state level training sessions:

- State level training sessions were attended and monitored by the head of the Pratham programs in the state as well as members of the ASER central team.
- Records were maintained for each surveyor. These records contained attendance for each day of training, quiz marks, and role play performance. The data in this sheet was used to select surveyors for monitoring and recheck.

# Survey Process

## Getting ready for the survey

The surveyor should keep all essential items (phone, earphones, drinking water, formats, stationery, phone charger) ready before making the calls. She must practice and revise the introduction to be given to the respondent before making the calls. It is important that she check all numbers to be called for the day in the call log sheets, keep all survey formats ready, and as far as possible, sit in a quiet place with good network connectivity before starting calls.

## 1. Household survey

This section describes the household survey process.

### • What to do when calling a household

**Purpose**: Surveyor introduces herself to the respondent, explains the rationale behind the household survey and how the data will be used.

**Introducing oneself on the call:** Conducting a survey over the phone where neither party can see the other is difficult, and everyone is apprehensive of cold calls - the purpose behind them, how the surveyor got the number, what will be done with the personal information, why one should cooperate, etc. It is important to explain these things on each call in a standardized manner:

- Who the surveyor/organization is
- How we got the respondent's number
- Why we are calling
- How we will use the information collected
- How we will keep their identity confidential.

The answers to these questions form a part of the introduction script. Surveyor uses the introduction script to introduce herself, the organization and the survey; and to confirm that the correct person has been called by confirming the village, block and district where they live.

**Confirming the location:** The call log sheets list the sampled households with their village, block, and district locations, which were recorded during ASER 2018. The first step after the surveyor explains where she is calling from once the call connects is to confirm whether the recorded location is correct. For this, she asks the respondent: "Are you staying in ____ village of_____ block in ____ district?". If the respondent identifies the location as correct, then the conversation is continued.

**Introduction script, rationale and usage:** Once the location is confirmed as correct, the surveyor clarifies how she got the respondent's number referring to two other surveyors who must have visited the household two years ago to conduct the ASER 2018 survey. While explaining the rationale for calling/purpose of the survey, she emphasizes the following points:

- Children's learning has been affected since schools closed due to the pandemic
- It is important to find out how children are learning at home, what support they are receiving from schools/families, and what challenges they face
- The survey is being conducted in 1,00,000 households. The data will be collated and presented, and the respondent's and child's name will be kept confidential
- The data will be useful for various stakeholders trying to support children's learning during the pandemic.

## Introduction script

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### Script to introduce yourself during the household phone survey

Good morning/afternoon/evening! I am calling from an NGO called Pratham which works in children's education. Are you staying in ____ village of_____ block in ____ district?

**<If Yes, then ask>**

Some of my colleagues came to your house two years ago, in 2018, to conduct a survey on children's education (ASER survey). As you know, ever since the lockdown began in March this year and schools were shut, children's learning has been affected.

We are conducting this phone survey to understand how 5-16-year-old children are studying/learning at home during the lockdown, what support are they receiving from their schools/teachers/parents, what challenges are they facing, etc.

We are conducting this survey all over India in about 1 lac households. We will collate and present data in a report so that the findings can be discussed with all stakeholders and informed policy decisions can be taken.

Please be assured your name or your child's name(s) will not be published anywhere in the report. This information will be completely confidential. I can share the address and phone number of the office with you if you require any further clarifications.

This survey will take about 15-20 minutes. Can we talk now?

<**If Yes**, start the conversation and ask questions in the same order as listed in the 'Household Survey Sheet'.>
<**If No**, ask for a new time to call the respondent back.>

**<If No, then>**
<Thank the respondent and end the call.>

## • How to fill the household call log sheet

**Purpose:** To note the call connection status and the survey completion status for each sampled household.

**Household call log sheet:** The household call log sheet contains the record of calls to be made to all the households assigned to a surveyor. The call log sheet gives the following information for each household: whether the call made was answered, the number of attempts made till the call was answered, and whether the survey was completed. Each row of the household call log sheet contains information for one household. The phone number provided for each household is used to contact the household for the survey. The general information section is pre-filled by the ASER state team and given to each surveyor before the start of the survey. The surveyor checks the household call log sheet at the start of each survey day to identify all the households to be called that day.

**Attempts and time slots:** The surveyor makes a maximum of three additional attempts to each number that does not connect in the first attempt. This is done to maximize reach in the survey. The attempts are spread across the day. Time slots can be before and after 1 pm. Each new attempt is made in a new time slot. For example, if the first attempt to a school is at 10 am and the call does not connect, the second attempt is made after 1 pm. This increases the chances of the call being answered. The date and time for each new attempt is recorded in the section 'call connection status'.

**Call connection status:** Call connection status gives information about whether the surveyor could reach a particular household and the reason if she could not. For every call attempt to a household, the call connection status is recorded as per the codes given for each possible situation, along with the date and time when the household was called.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Call connection status</th></tr>
<tr><th>Code</th><th>Possibility</th><th>Action to be taken</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Call connected – someone answers the call</td><td>Surveyor continues with the survey</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Invalid number – number does not exist/is temporarily out of order</td><td rowspan="2">Surveyor ends the survey. Does not make any more attempts at this number.</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Incoming not allowed – incoming calls have been suspended on a number temporarily or permanently</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Number busy – includes call waiting</td><td rowspan="4">Surveyor makes another attempt in the next assigned time slot</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Number not reachable – phone is out of network coverage area</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Switched off</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>No response – phone ringing but not answered</td></tr>
</table>

**Survey completion status:** Survey completion status gives information about whether the surveyor could complete the survey of a household after the call connected and the reasons if not. For every call answered, the survey completion status is recorded as per the codes given for each possible situation.

| Survey completion status | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Possibility** | **Action to be taken** |
| 1 | *Survey completed* - the whole questionnaire was administered and answered by the respondent | Not applicable |
| 2 | *Refused to participate* - respondent does not want to be part of the survey | Surveyor ends the survey |
| 3 | *Incorrect village/district* - respondent has never lived in such a village/has relocated to a new place | |
| 4 | *Left survey midway* - respondent answers a few questions but does not want to answer the rest, and ends the call | |
| 5 | *Call dropped* – call cuts mid-survey due to network/other issues | Surveyor calls again immediately; if no connection is made, then she will make a new attempt in the next assigned time slot |
| 6 | *Asked to reschedule* – respondent is busy and asks to call back at another time | Surveyor calls back at their preferred time and date |

- *Case: Incorrect village/district:* In case the respondent does not know this location and says she has never lived in such a place, then such a household is recorded as 'incorrect village/district' with code 3 in survey completion status in the household call log sheet. In such a scenario, the surveyor thanks the respondent for their time and ends the survey.
- *Case: Refusal to participate:* Even after explaining rationale and usage, some respondents may not want to participate in the survey. In this case the surveyor:
  - Does not give up immediately
  - Acknowledges participants' concerns and emphasizes complete confidentiality
  - Reiterates the importance of this data in spreading awareness about the condition of children's learning in the pandemic.

If the respondent still does not want to participate, then the surveyor records such a household as 'refused to participate' with code 2 in survey completion status in the household call log sheet, thanks the respondent and ends the call. No further attempts to this number are made.

- *Case: Rescheduling the call:* In some cases, the respondent may be busy when called and may request a call back at some other time. In such situations, the surveyor explains that the survey will take only 10-15 minutes and requests them to spare the time if possible. If the respondent still asks to call some other time, then the surveyor makes a note of this in survey completion status and also records the next preferred date and time at which the respondent is to be called back under the next attempt in the call connection status of the household call log sheet.

- *Other cases:*
  - No child age 5-16 years in the household: The surveyor asks and records only Q1 and Q2 from the household survey sheet (Section A), marks 'survey completed' in survey completion status in the household call log sheet and ends the call.
  - A child answers the call: The surveyor asks the child to let her speak to an adult in the household. If an adult is not available, she asks the child for a time when they will be home. The surveyor records this situation as 'Asked to reschedule' under survey completion status and notes the time and date when the adult will be home for the next attempt in call connection status. The surveyor then calls back in the new time slot noted by her and attempts to do the survey with the adult for that household.

# ASER 2020: Household Call Log Sheet

This sheet is a record of all the households you have called, including those where the call did not connect.

| Caller Name: | Anita Pal | Caller ID: | WB004 | State: | West Bengal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| HH No. | HH ID | District | Block | Village | Phone no. | Name of respondent | Call connection status (write appropriate code)<br>1- Call connected<br>2- Invalid number<br>3- Incoming not allowed<br>4- Number busy<br>5- Number not reachable<br>6- Switched off<br>7- No response | | | | | | | | | | | | If call connected, survey completion status (write appropriate code)<br>1- Survey completed<br>2- Refused to participate<br>3- Incorrect village/district<br>4- Left survey midway<br>5- Call dropped<br>6- Asked to reschedule<br>(Write time for the next call) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | Attempt 1 | | | Attempt 2 | | | Attempt 3 | | | Attempt 4 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Attempt 1 | Attempt 2 | Attempt 3 | Attempt 4 |
| 1 | 678450 | Hooghly | Arambag | Ranipur | 7579xxxxxx | Rakhi Sen | 10/09 | 11:30 | 4 | 10/09 | 03:40 | 1 | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| 2 | 678451 | Hooghly | Arambag | Jethua | 6592xxxxxx | Biplab Ghosh | 10/09 | 11:32 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 3 | 678452 | Hooghly | Arambag | Tala | 8370xxxxxx | Rama Sanyal | 10/09 | 12:40 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 678453 | Hooghly | Arambag | Sonamukhi | 7402xxxxxx | Probir Ray | 10/09 | 12:41 | 6 | 10/09 | 04:33 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 678454 | Hooghly | Goghat | Rokhimganj | 6665xxxxxx | Shantilata | 10/09 | 12:45 | 1 | 10/09 | 06:30 | 1 | | | | | | | 6 | 1 | | |
| 6 | 678455 | Hooghly | Goghat | Pansher | 7986xxxxxx | Nabarun | 11/09 | 11:15 | 7 | 11/09 | 04:00 | 7 | 12/09 | 03:15 | 7 | 13/09 | 05:00 | 7 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## • How to record information in the household survey sheet

**Purpose:** To collect information about children's access to and engagement with learning materials and activities from home; availability of infrastructure such as TV, radio, smartphones, mobile phones, etc. to facilitate this access; support from parents and/or teachers to facilitate learning; and challenges faced by parents/children in this process.

Surveyors keep the following in mind while conducting the survey:

- Read all questions as they are written in the household survey sheet
- Include only those children in the age group of 5-16 who eat from the same kitchen as the respondent
- If no adult is at home, a child aged 14 or above can be the respondent
- Ask the respondent whether the children being surveyed are nearby. If they are, ask to have the child sit with the respondent while they answer the questions. In case the respondent is unsure of any answer, they can quickly ask the child. This is only to make sure that the information provided is correct as far as possible
- Use the full phrase "since the lockdown began in March 2020" for each question where it is mentioned as such
- Note the time period carefully as "since the lockdown began" or "in the last week" while asking different questions
- For questions not applicable to a child, leave the answer option blank
- See the instructions to read out or not read out the answer options carefully in each question.

**Sample information:** In the first section in the household survey sheet, the surveyor enters the following sample details carefully from the household call log sheet: the state, district, block and village the household is in, contact information for the household, as well as the respondent's name.

Before starting the survey, the surveyor confirms that the respondent can provide information for children's learning; if not, she requests him/her to give the phone to someone who can.

**Section A: Household information:** This section captures general information about the sampled household with reference to the number of members in the household, number of children in the age group of 5-16 (if any), and whether any of those children migrated back to this sampled household because of the lockdown.

**Section B: Child's information:** This section contains name, age, sex, and enrollment for every child in the household who eats from the respondent's kitchen and is in the 5-16 age group.

**Section C: Information for enrolled children:** This section collects information about those children who are currently enrolled in an educational institution in more detail. It comprises questions on the child's current grade, type of school she is enrolled in, whether she was promoted in this year, and if the child has changed the type of institution she used to attend this year and the reason for the same.

**Section D: Not enrolled children:** This section collects information about those children who are currently not enrolled in any type of school as they either never enrolled or have dropped out.

**Section E: Dropout children:** This section collects information pertaining to those children who have dropped out of school in more detail. It comprises questions on the year the child dropped out, and if the child dropped out this year, then the reason for the same. Children awaiting admission to a new grade/school are counted as 'drop out' for this survey. The reason for dropping out in this case is recorded as 'awaiting admission'.

**Section F: Tuition**: This section collects information on paid academic tuition (no classes on dance, music, sports, etc.) being taken by children aged 5-16, regardless of their enrollment status. Tuition includes both online and in-person tuition. If a child has temporarily stopped going to tuition or has irregular attendance because of being in a containment zone, etc. but has paid the fees, then it is included as taking tuition. The section also captures changes in children's tuition since the lockdown began in March 2020.

**Section G: Parents' information:** This section records name, age and education level of the parent(s) living with the child.

- If one or both parents have died or do not live with the child regularly, or if the child lives at some relative's house/ boarding school away from parents, then parents' information is not recorded.

- If the child lives with their step-parents, their information is included in this section.
- Highest education level for a parent that is the grade/degree which they have successfully completed is recorded. For example, if a parent dropped out in the 2nd year of their bachelor's degree, their highest education level is 1st year of graduation.

**Section H: Respondent's information:** This section notes down the relationship between the respondent and the children in the household they are giving information for.

**Section I: Support at home:** This section looks at whether children receive any support in learning from different members of the household and who helps most often.

**Section J: Smartphone availability:** Questions in this section explore the availability of a working smartphone in the household, and whether children in households that do not have a smartphone have access to one through any other means.

**Section K: School textbooks:** This section looks at whether the children have school textbooks of the grade they are currently enrolled in to study with at home.

**Section L: Receipt of learning materials/activities from school:** This section captures if the parent/child received any learning materials/activity for the child in the last week from the school teacher and the medium(s) through which the parent/child received it. If the parent/child has not received anything in the last week, then the reasons for the same are recorded.

**Section M: Contact between HM/teacher and parents/children:** This section captures contact between parent/child and school teacher in the last week to discuss learning materials/activities or the child's wellbeing. Separate questions check whether the initiative to call or visit was taken by the teacher, parent/child or both. If this contact did not happen in the last week, it explores if it happened at all since the lockdown started. This section also captures contact between parent/child and school teacher since the lockdown began to discuss administrative information such as mid-day meal, school reopening, etc.

**Section N: Engagement with learning materials/activities:** This section captures children's engagement in the last week. It explores whether children did any activity involving the use of school textbooks, worksheets, online learning applications/ websites, TV, radio, etc. These questions are asked for all children aged 5-16 in the household, regardless of their enrollment status. For every activity that the child did, information on who shared the activity with the child is included.

**Section O: Challenges faced while studying at home:** This section captures challenges being faced by parent/child while studying at home.

**Section P: Mid-day meal - Distribution of ration/fund:** This section captures if children enrolled in an Anganwadi or government pre-school, or in a government school (Std 1-8) received any funds or ration under the mid-day meal scheme.

**Section Q: Household indicators:** This section captures other information about household members and household assets:

- If any member has completed Std 12
- TV and radio (in working condition) owned by the household. Radio in smartphones is included
- Motorized 2- or 4-wheeler such as bike, scooter, car, jeep (3-wheeler is not included). Vehicles should be owned by the household and can be used for commercial or personal purposes.

# ASER 2020: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SHEET

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **State: West Bengal** | **District: Hooghly** | **Block: Serampore** | **Village: Nabagram** |
| **HH ID: 6734xxxx** | **HH phone no.: 8793xxxxxx** | **Alternative HH phone no.: 7022xxxxxx** | **Respondent's Name: Naren Khan** |
| **Caller ID: WB004** | **Caller's name: Anita Pal** | **Caller's phone number: 8854xxxxxx** | **Date: 10/09/2020** / **Start time: 02:34** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Household information** | 1. I am surveying people who eat from the same kitchen in a household. Can you tell me the number of people in your household who eat from the same kitchen as you? <write number> | **5** | **If no in Q2**, then thank the respondent and end the call. **If yes in Q2**, then ask: Will you be able to give me information about how children in the household are studying these days? If not, may I speak to someone who will be able to give me this information (Hint: Ask for a parent). |
| | 2. Do you have children in the age group 5-16 in your household? <write code: 1- Yes, 2- No> | **1** | |
| | 3. No. of children in the age group 5-16 in the household <write number> | **2** | |
| | 4. Of these, are there any children who have migrated back from other places after the lockdown began in March 2020? <write code: 1- Yes, 2- No> | **2** | |
| | **4a. If yes, then ask:** How many children migrated back? <write number> | | |

| Section | Question | Coding | | Child 1 | Child 2 | Child 3 | Child 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B. Child's information** | 5. Name | *Write name* | | **Tina Khatun** | **Smita Khatun** | | |
| | 6. Age | *Write age <number>* | | **7** | **12** | | |
| | 7. Sex | 1- Male | 2- Female | **2** | **2** | | |
| | 8. Is the child currently enrolled in Anganwadi/pre-school or school? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | | **1** | **2** | | |
| **C. For children currently enrolled in Anganwadi/preschool or school** | 9. Has the child been promoted to a new Std this year? *(If not sure, probe and urge the respondent to ask the child/another household member)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | **1** | **99** | | |
| | 10. Which Std is the child currently enrolled in? *(While noting the Std confirm if this is the new Std to which child has been promoted)* | *Write grade:*<br>AW- Anganwadi<br>PP- Pre-primary/LKG/UKG,<br>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 | | **1** | **6** | | |
| | 11. Which type of school is the child currently enrolled in? | 1- Govt<br>2- Pvt | 3- Madrassa<br>4- Other | **1** | **1** | | |
| | 12. Has the child changed her Anganwadi/pre-school or school after the lockdown began in March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | **2** | **1** | | |
| | **12a. If yes, then ask:** Which type of school was the child previously enrolled in? *(Before the lockdown began in March 2020)* | 1- Anganwadi/Govt pre-primary<br>2- Pvt LKG/UKG<br>3- Govt school | 4- Pvt school<br>5- Madrassa<br>6- Other | | **4** | | |
| | 12b. Why did the child change her Anganwadi/pre-school or school?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write one code that applies.* | 1- Could not afford fees<br>2- School closed down permanently<br>3- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | **1** | | |
| **D. For not enrolled children** | ***If currently not enrolled in Anganwadi/pre-school or school, then ask all questions except K, L, M, (Q23-28) and P (Q36)*** | | | | | | |
| | 13. Did the child drop out or was never enrolled in Anganwadi/pre-school or school? | 1- Drop out<br>2- Never enrolled | | | | | |
| **E. For drop out children** | **14. If the child dropped out, then ask:** Which Std did the child drop out in? | *Write Std* | | | | | |
| | 14a. Which year did the child drop out in? *(Include those awaiting admission in new grade as drop out)* | *Write year* | | | | | |
| | **14b. *If the child dropped out in 2020, then ask:*** Why did the child drop out this year? | 1- Awaiting admission to new grade or school | 2- Other <write><br>99 - Don't know | | | | |
| **F. Paid tuition classes (in-person/online)** | 15. Does the child currently take paid tuition? *(Include online tuition)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | **2** | **1** | | |
| | **15a. If yes, then ask:** Has the child started taking any new paid tuition after the lockdown began in March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | **1** | | |
| | 16. Did the child take any paid tuition before the lockdown began in March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | **2** | **2** | | |
| **G. Parent's information** | 17a. Father's name | *Write name* | | **Mintu Khan** | **Mintu Khan** | | |
| | 17b. Father's age | *Write age* | | **37** | **37** | | |
| | 17c. Father's highest qualification | *Write qualification* | NA- Never enrolled | **NA** | **NA** | | |
| | 17d. Mother's name | *Write name* | | **Sima Khatun** | **Sima Khatun** | | |
| | 17e. Mother's age | *Write age* | | **35** | **35** | | |
| | 17f. Mother's highest qualification | *Write qualification* | NA- Never enrolled | **BA 1st Year** | **BA 1st Year** | | |

| | | | | Child's Name | Tina Khatun | Smita Khatun | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H. Respondent's info | 18. How are you related to <child name>?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write one code that applies.* | 1- Father<br>2- Mother<br>3- Elder brother/sister | 4- Uncle<br>5- Aunt<br>6- Cousin<br>7- Other <write> | | 4 | 4 | | |
| I. Support for the child at home | 19. Does anyone help the child in studying at home? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 1 | | |
| | **19a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who helps the child MOST often?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write one code that applies.* | 1- Father<br>2- Mother<br>3- Elder brother/sister | 4- Uncle<br>5- Aunt<br>6- Cousin<br>7- Other <write> | | 2 | 2 | | |
| J. Smartphones in the household | 20. Is there a working smartphone in the household?<br>*(Apply kitchen rule)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| | **20a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How many working smartphones are there in the household? | 1- One smartphone<br>2- Two smartphones | 3- Three or more smartphones<br>99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| | 21. Did you/child's parent buy a phone for children's education after the lockdown began in March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 2 | | |
| | **21a. If yes (bought a phone), then ask:**<br>Did you buy a regular phone or a smartphone?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Regular phone<br>2- Smartphone | 99- Don't know | | 2 | | | |
| | **22. If no or don't know in Q 20, then ask:**<br>Does the child have access to a smartphone, whether owned by somebody else in the household or owned by neighbours or friends?<br>*(Household here means outside respondent's kitchen)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>99- Don't know | | | | | | |
| K. School textbooks (for enrolled children only) | 23. Does the child have the textbooks for the Std she is currently enrolled in? | 1- Yes, all subjects<br>2- Yes, some subjects | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | | 1 | 2 | | |
| | **23a. If yes (for all or some subjects), then ask:**<br>Are these textbooks new? | 1- All new<br>2- All old | 3- Some new, some old<br>99- Don't know | | 2 | 2 | | |
| | 23b. Where did the child get the textbooks from?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school<br>2- Bought from the market<br>3- Received from elder brother/sister | 4- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | 3 | 3 | | |
| L. Receiving learning material/activities from school (for enrolled children only) | 24. In the last week did the parent/child receive any learning material/activities from the school teacher? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | **24a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How has the parent/child received the learning material/activities from the school teacher?<br>*READ OUT the options. Write all the codes that apply.* | 1- WhatsApp<br>2- Telegram<br>3- SMS<br>4- Phone call | 5- Home visit<br>6- School visit<br>7- Other <write> | | | 1, 5 | | |
| | **24b. If no (not received), then ask:**<br>Why did the parent/child not receive any learning material/activities from the school teacher?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.* | 1- School/teacher not sending anything<br>2- No internet<br>3- No smartphone | 4- Connectivity issues<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| M. Contact between school teacher and parents/children (for enrolled children only) | 25. In the last week did the school teacher call or visit parent/child to discuss about learning material/activities or the child's progress/well being? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | 26. In the last week did the parent/child call or visit the school teacher to discuss about learning material/activities or child's progress/well being? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 2 | | |
| | **27. If no or don't know in Q25 and Q26, then ask:**<br>Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have the parents/children and the school teacher spoken (on call or visit) to each other even once to discuss learning material/activities or children's progress/well being? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | | | |
| | 28. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have the parents/children and the school teacher spoken (on call or visit or SMS/WhatsApp) to each other even once to discuss any administrative information regarding mid-day meal, school reopening, etc.? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 1 | | |
| N. Children's engagement with learning material/activities | 29. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity using **school textbooks**? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 2 | | |
| | **29a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who shared this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school teacher<br>2- Given by parent/elder sibling in the household on their own<br>3- Received from any other source such as NGO, etc.<br>4- Received from tuition<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | | | | |

| | | | | Child's Name | Tina Khatun | Smita Khatun | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N. Children's engagement with learning material/activities | 30. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity using **worksheets?** | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 1 | | |
| | **30a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who shared this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school teacher<br>2- Given by parent/elder sibling in the household on their own<br>3- Received from any other source such as NGO, etc.<br>4- Received from tuition<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| | 31. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity using online videos, recorded classes or games found on educational mobile learning apps/websites? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | **31a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who shared this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school teacher<br>2- Given by parent/elder sibling in the household on their own<br>3- Received from any other source such as NGO, etc.<br>4- Received from tuition<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | | 1 | | |
| | 32. In the last week, did the child attend any live online classes such as on Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx etc.? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 2 | | |
| | **32a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who conducted this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Conducted by school teacher<br>2- Conducted by any other source such as NGO, etc. | 3- Conducted by tuition teacher<br>4- Other <write><br>99 - Don't know | | | | | |
| | 33. In the last week, did the child watch any educational programs on TV? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 2 | | |
| | **33a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who shared this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school teacher<br>2- Given by parent/elder sibling in the household on their own<br>3- Received from any other source such as NGO, etc.<br>4- Received from tuition<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | 2 | | | |
| | 34. In the last week, did the child listen to any educational programs on the radio? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 2 | | |
| | **34a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Who shared this activity?<br>*READ OUT the options and write all the codes that apply.* | 1- Received from school teacher<br>2- Given by parent/elder sibling in the household on their own<br>3- Received from any other source such as NGO, etc.<br>4- Received from tuition<br>5- Other <write><br>99- Don't know | | | | | | |
| O. Challenges faced by parent/child during remote learning | 35. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, has the parent/child faced any challenges while studying at home? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | 1 | | |
| | **35a. If yes, then ask:**<br>What kinds of challenges did the parent/child face while studying at home?<br>*DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.* | 1- No smartphone<br>2- Recharge/internet plan issues<br>3- Connectivity issues/no internet<br>4- Electricity issues<br>5- Limited access to smartphone<br>6- Lack of support from school teacher<br>7- Lack of supervision at home<br>8- Unable to operate technology<br>9- Child is not interested<br>10- Other <write> | | | 2, 3, 6, 9 | 2, 3, 6 | | |
| P. Mid-day meal (AW/Govt school (1-8)) | 36. Have you received ration or funds for mid-day meal from the Anganwadi/school in August 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | 1 | | |
| | **36a. If no or don't know, then ask:**<br>Have you received ration or fund for mid-day meal from the Anganwadi/school even once since the lockdown began in March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| Q. Household indicators | 37. Has anyone else completed class 12th in the household?<br>*(Except mother and father of the children)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 2 | | | |
| | 38. Is there a working television in the household? | 1- Yes 2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| | 39. Is there a working radio in the household? | 1- Yes 2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| | 40. Is there a motorized 2-wheeler or 4-wheeler in the household? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | 1 | | | |
| **End time: 03:13** | | | | | | | | |

## 2. School survey

A teacher (as far as possible, the head teacher) from one government school with primary sections was called in each village where sampled households were located. This section describes the school survey process.

### • What to do when calling a school

**Purpose:** Surveyor introduces herself to the respondent, explains the rationale behind the school survey and use of these data.

**Introducing yourself on the call:** *The process to be followed by the surveyor is the same as given in the household survey process.*

**Confirming the respondent and location:** The call log sheets list the sampled schools with their village, block, district locations, which were recorded during ASER 2018. Additionally, the name and designation of the respondent, and name of the school and school type are also provided. After a call connects, the surveyor explains where she is calling from and confirms whether the respondent and recorded location of the sampled school are correct. For this, she asks the respondent: "Are you ____ a teacher/HM in ____ school in ____village of_____ block in ____ district?" If the respondent identifies the location as correct, then the conversation is continued.

**Introduction script, rationale and usage:** The process to be followed by the surveyor is the same as given the household survey process.

### • How to fill the school call log sheet

**Purpose:** To note the call connection status of each attempt and the survey completion status of each school.

**School call log sheet:** The school call log sheet contains a record of calls to be made to all schools assigned to one surveyor. It gives information for each school: whether the call made was answered, number of attempts made till the call was answered, and if the survey was completed. One row of the school call log sheet contains information for one school. The phone number provided for each school is to be used to contact the school for the survey. The general information section is pre-filled by the ASER state team and given to each surveyor before the start of the survey. The surveyor checks the school call log sheet at the start of each survey day to identify all the schools to be called that day.

**Attempts and time slots:** *The process to be followed by the surveyor is the same as given in the household survey process.*

**Call connection status:** *The process to record call connection status to be followed by the surveyor is the same as given in the household survey process.*

**Survey completion status:** The process to record survey completion status followed by the surveyor is the same as given in the household survey process; only two new situations detailed in codes 5 and 6 are added in the school survey.

## Introduction script

Annual Status of Education Report
WAVE 1 असर ASER 2020 RURAL
Facilitated by PRATHAM

**Script to introduce yourself during the school phone survey**

Good morning/afternoon/evening! I am calling from an NGO named Pratham which works in children's education. Are you _____<name of respondent>, a <teacher/HM> in the government school in ____ village of_____ block in ____ district?

**<If Yes, then ask>**

Some of my colleagues came to your school two years ago, in 2018, to conduct a survey on children's education (ASER survey). As you know, ever since the lockdown began in March this year and schools were shut, children's learning has been affected.

We are conducting this phone survey to understand how schools are supporting 5-16-year-old children who are studying at home during the lockdown, what materials/activities are being sent, if teachers and parents are in contact with each other, what kinds of challenges teachers are facing etc.

We are conducting this survey all over India in about 16,000 schools. We will collate and present data in a report so that the findings can be discussed with all stakeholders and informed policy decisions can be taken.

Please be assured your name or your school's name will not be published anywhere in the report. This information will be completely confidential. I can share the address and phone number of the office with you if you require any further clarifications.

This survey will take about 10-15 minutes. Can we talk now?

<**If Yes,** then confirm the designation and type of school and ask questions in the same order as listed in the 'School Survey Sheet'.>
<**If No**, ask for a good time to call back.>

**<If No, then ask>**

Were you ever a <teacher/HM> in the government school in ____ village of_____ block in ____ district?

<**If Yes,** then ask if they have retired or have become an administrator or have been transferred/relocated to another school?>
<If yes, then refer to the procedure explained in the 'School Log Sheet'.>

**<If No, (the respondent does not recognize this school/village even after asking the above questions), then>**
<Thank the respondent and end the call.>

| Survey completion status | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Possibility** | **Action to be taken** |
| 1 | *Survey completed* – the whole questionnaire has been administered and answered by the respondent | Not Applicable |
| 2 | *Refused to participate* – respondent does not want to be part of the survey | Surveyor ends the survey |
| 3 | *Incorrect school/village/district* – respondent does not identify the mentioned school/village/district, i.e., wrong number | |
| 4 | *Left survey midway* – respondent answers a few questions but does not want to answer the rest and ends the call | |
| 5 | *Retired/on leave/administrator/relocated* – respondent has retired, is on leave, has been promoted to an administrative position, has changed schools or been transferred | Surveyor takes information of another teacher/HM in sample school and conducts the survey with new respondent |
| 6 | *Unable to give information (may have redirected)* – respondent cannot give any information about any grade between grade 1-8 of the sample school | |
| 7 | *Call dropped* – call cuts mid-survey due to network/other issues | Surveyor calls again immediately; if no connection is made, then she will make a new attempt in the next assigned time slot |
| 8 | *Asked to reschedule* – respondent is busy and asks to call back at another time | Surveyor calls back at their preferred time and date |

- *Case: Incorrect village/school/district, Refusal to participate, Rescheduling the call:* The process to be followed by the surveyor is the same as given in the household survey process.
- *Case: Retired/on leave/administrator/relocated:* If the respondent has retired/is on leave/has been promoted to any administrative position/has relocated to a new school, the surveyor asks the respondent for the name and number of any other HM/Teacher currently working in the school. If the respondent is able to provide the information, the surveyor completes the survey with this new respondent. If the respondent is not able to provide the alternate contact information, the surveyor ends the survey for this school.
- *Case: Unable to give information:* If the respondent says that they cannot give any information about any grade between Std 1-8 in the sampled school, then the surveyor asks the respondent for the name and number of any other HM/Teacher currently working in the school who will be able to answer our questions. If the new respondent is able to provide the information, the surveyor completes the survey with this new respondent. If the original respondent is not able to provide the alternate contact information, the surveyor ends the survey for this school.

# ASER 2020: School Call Log Sheet

This sheet is a record of all the schools you have called, including those where the call did not connect.

| Caller name: | Rahul | Caller ID: | PB205 | State: | Punjab |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Sch No. | School ID | District | Block | Village | Type of school (Std 1-4/5 or Std 1-6/7/8 or Others) | Phone no. | Name of respondent | Designation (HM/ Teacher) | Call connection status (write appropriate code)<br>1- Call connected<br>2- Invalid number<br>3- Incoming not allowed<br>4- Number busy<br>5- Number not reachable<br>6- Switched off<br>7- No response | | | | | | | | | | | | If call connected, survey completion status (write appropriate code)<br>1- Survey completed<br>2- Refused to participate<br>3- Incorrect school/village/district<br>4- Left survey midway<br>5- Retired/On leave/ Administrator/ Relocated<br>6- Unable to give info (may have redirected)<br>7- Call dropped<br>8- Asked to reschedule (Write time for next call) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | Attempt 1 | | | Attempt 2 | | | Attempt 3 | | | Attempt 4 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Date | Start time (HH:MM) | Call connection status | Attempt 1 | Attempt 2 | Attempt 3 | Attempt 4 |
| 1 | PB2600 | Ludhiana | Khanna | Libra | Std 1-4/5 | 98XXXXXXXX | Rita | HM | 02/09 | 09:30 | 4 | 02/09 | 1:00 | 7 | 03/09 | 11:00 | 1 | | | | | 3 | |
| 2 | PB2601 | Ludhiana | Khanna | Khanna | Std 1-4/5 | 88XXXXXXXX | Savita | Teacher | 02/09 | 09:45 | 6 | 02/09 | 1:20 | 1 | 02/09 | 6:00 | | | | | | 8 | | |
| 3 | PB3015 | Ludhiana | Sahnewal | Chunni | Std 1-4/6 | 97XXXXXXXX | Rahul | HM | 02/09 | 10:00 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | PB3024 | Ludhiana | Sahnewal | Wadali | Std 1-4/7 | 99XXXXXXXX | Pradeep | Teacher | 04/09 | 10:10 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 5 | PB2605 | Ludhiana | Khanna | Dahera | Std 1-6/7/8 | 81XXXXXXXX | Nazma | HM | 05/09 | 11:15 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 5 | | | |
| 6 | PB3032 | Ludhiana | Khanna | Pamaddi | Std 1-6/7/8 | 79XXXXXXXX | Meenal | HM | 06/09 | 02:00 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## • How to record information in the school survey sheet

**Purpose:** To collect information on the school's facilitation of children's learning during the COVID-19 lockdown; information on children's enrollment, mobile phones and smartphone access to children/families; teacher orientation/training on remote teaching-learning processes; sharing and discussing materials and activities created by teachers/school as well as central/state government; contact with parents/children; tracking children's progress; community involvement and support in sharing and discussing learning material with parents/children; challenges faced in conducting remote learning activities; distribution of mid-day meals; and preparation for reopening schools are themes explored in the survey.

Surveyors keep the following in mind while conducting the survey:

- Read all questions as they are written in the school survey format
- Include only sampled schools in the school survey
- The sample has a mixture of HMs and teachers as respondents. Hence, the school questionnaire is designed as such that the HM can answer for the teacher and vice versa, if they have the required information. So, the framing is "have you/teacher". Keep this in mind while asking questions and noting responses.
- In the school survey some questions are for the school overall, and some are for a specific grade chosen by the respondent him/herself. While taking answers from the respondent for a particular grade (as specified in the question), keep reminding them about giving information for the chosen grade only
- Use the full phrase "since the lockdown began in March 2020" for each question where it is mentioned
- Note the time period carefully as "since the lockdown began" or "in the last week" while asking different questions
- For questions that are not applicable, leave the answer option blank
- Review the instructions to read out or not read out the answer options carefully in every question.

**Sample information:** In the first section in the school survey sheet, the surveyor enters the sample details carefully from the school call log sheet: state, district, block, village, school ID, school type, respondent's name, number, and designation. The designation column 'teacher' includes para teachers.

**Section A: General information:** This section captures general information about the sample school and about the grades the respondent teaches and sends learning materials to. The teacher is asked to select one grade between Std 1-8 for which she can give the most information for to continue the survey. If she cannot give information or a grade or can give information only for Std 9 and above, the surveyor requests her to provide contact information of another HM/teacher who can give this information and ends the survey with this respondent.

**Section B: Enrollment and contact with children:** This section asks questions about the number of children enrolled in the selected grade, availability of their contact details and the mode of contact with children whose phone numbers are not available.

**Section C: Remote learning - Government and school:** This section explores if the government has directly shared any learning materials via TV, radio or online broadcast, or the school has received any instructions, notifications, guidelines, or orders from the government to share learning materials with children of the selected grade. It also captures HM/teacher's own initiative to share learning materials/activities with children.

**Section D: Training/orientation of HM/teachers:** This section captures if the respondent has received any training to share or discuss learning materials with parents/children of the selected grade.

**Section E: Learning materials/activities shared with parents/children:** This section captures whether the school distributed textbooks (or funds for textbooks) to children of the selected grade, and/or asked them to watch/listen to any TV or radio broadcast of educational programs. It also collects information on whether the respondent shared any materials with parents/children during the last week; the different mediums used to do so; and whether they participated in creating the learning materials.

**Section F: Children's engagement with learning materials/activities:** This section collects information on the kinds of learning materials/activities which the respondent shared with children, such as textbooks, worksheets, online videos, etc. It also explores which activity the teacher finds most useful.

**Section G: Community involvement:** This section explores if the school receives help from different community members to share or discuss learning materials/activities with children.

**Section H: Learning materials/activities shared even once:** This section applies to only those schools where learning materials were not shared in the week before the survey was conducted. It captures if learning materials were shared even once since the lockdown began in March 2020.

**Section I: Contact between respondent and parents/children:** *This section records information about contact between parents/children and teachers in the same manner as given in the household survey process.*

**Section J: Challenges:** This section collects information about the challenges being faced by the respondent in sharing and/or discussing the learning materials/activities with parents/children.

**Section K: Mid-day meal ration and funds:** This section focuses on the distribution of mid-day meal ration or funds by the school to children of the selected grade. Information for ration and fund is recorded separately.

**Section L: Preparations for reopening schools:** This section records information about the school's preparation for physically reopening the school for children. Reopening the school for any one or a subset of grades is included. Reopening the school only for teachers is not included.

| Annual Status of Education Report WAVE 1 असर ASER 2020 RURAL Facilitated by PRATHAM | **ASER 2020: SCHOOL SURVEY SHEET** | **State: Punjab** | **District: Ludhiana** | | **Block: Khanna** | **Village: Libra** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **School Name: Libra Government Primary School** | | | **Date: 02/09** | **Start Time: 11:00 AM** | |
| **School ID:** | **Type of School (tick)** | **Std 1 to 4/5** | **Std 1 to 6/7/8** | **Others** | **Designation (tick)** | **HM** | **Teacher** |
| **Caller ID:** | **PB15** | **Caller's name:** | | **Riya** | **Caller's phone number:** | **98XXXXXXXX** | |
| **Respondent's name:** | **Meena** | | **Respondent's phone number:** | | **89XXXXXXXX** | | |

| Section | Question | Coding | | Answer |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. General information | 1. Which grade(s) do you teach? | Write all grade(s): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, NA - Not teaching | | 2, 3, 4, 5 |
| | 2. Which grades do you send learning material/activities to? | Write all grade(s): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, NA - Not teaching | | 1, 2, 3 |
| | 3. Which grade can you give the MOST information for?<br>*(Request the respondent to select only one grade which they know most about)* | Write one grade between 1 to 8:<br>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, NA - Can't give information | | 2 |
| | ***If NA - Can't give information in Q3,** then request the respondent to share contact details of another teacher/HM of the sample school who can give the information. Thank this respondent and end the survey.*<br>***If the respondent can give information only for Std 9 or above,** then request the respondent to share contact details of another teacher/HM of the sample school who can give the information for Std 1-8. Thank this respondent and end the survey.* | | | |
| | 4. Can you tell me the no. of teachers in this school?<br>*(Do not include headmaster in this count)* | <Write> | 99- Don't know | 5 |
| | 5. How far do you live from the school? | 1- Less than 2 km<br>2- Between 2 and 5 km | 3- More than 5 km<br>4- Another village/city<br>99- Don't know | 4 |
| ***Section B to K will be asked for the grade selected by the respondent*** | | | | |
| B. Enrolment and contact of children enrolled in the selected grade | 6. Total number of children enrolled in this grade | <Write number> | | 20 |
| | 7. How many children's phone numbers are available with you/teacher for this grade? | 1- All<br>2- More than half<br>3- Half | 4- Less than half<br>5- None<br>99- Don't know | 2 |
| | 8. Are you/teacher able to contact children of this grade whose phone numbers are not available or those children who don't have a phone? | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>3- Did not try to contact | 4- All children have phone<br>99- Don't know | 2 |
| | **8a. If yes, then ask:** How do you/teacher contact those children of this grade whose phone numbers are not available or those who don't have a phone?<br>*DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Take neighbours' help<br>2- Do home visits<br>3- Taking help of Anganwadi workers<br>4- Meet in school<br>5- Other <write> | | |
| | 9. How many children of this grade have smartphones in their households? | 1- All<br>2- More than half<br>3- Half | 4- Less than half<br>5- None<br>99- Don't know | 3 |
| C. Remote learning at Govt and School level | 10. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, has the Central or State Govt. shared any learning material/activities for children of this grade via TV or Radio or YouTube? | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>99- Don't know | | 1 |
| | 11. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, has the school received any Govt. notification/guideline/instruction (oral or written) to share learning material/activities with parents of children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>99- Don't know | | 1 |
| | 12. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have you/teacher shared any learning material/activities with ANY children/parents on your own?<br>*(Children can be of any grade or school/community in this question)* | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>99- Don't know | | 1 |
| D. Training/Orientation of HM/teachers | 13. Have you/teacher been given any training/orientation to share and/or discuss the learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade and/or track children's progress?<br>*(Note: Include both in-person and online trainings/sessions or instructions given in meetings).* | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>99- Don't know | | 2 |
| | **13a. If yes, then ask:**<br>What kind of training/orientation have you/teacher received?<br>*DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Brief instructions in an in-person meeting or over phone/online<br>2- Series of in-person/online training sessions<br>3- Enrolled in/completed an online course<br>4- Other <write> | | |
| E. Sharing learning material/activities with parents/children | 14. Has the school distributed textbooks for this grade to the parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes, all parents/children<br>2- Yes, some parents/children | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | 3 |
| | 15. Has the school asked the children of this grade to watch any educational programs on TV? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 |
| | 16. Has the school asked the children of this grade to listen to any educational programs on the radio? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 |
| | 17. In the last week, have you/teacher shared any learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 |
| | ***If no or don't know in Q 17, then go to Q 23 in section H. Learning material/activities shared even once*** | | | |
| | **17a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How did you/teacher share this learning material/activities with parent/children of this grade?<br>*READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- WhatsApp<br>2- Telegram<br>3- SMS<br>4- Phone call | 5- Home visit<br>6- School visit<br>7- Other <write> | 1, 3, 4 |
| | 18. Were you/teacher involved in creating this learning material/activities for children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 2 |
| | **18a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Did you/teacher create the above learning material/activities for children of this grade along with the Govt. or on your own?<br>*DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Created along with the Govt (at any level: state/district/block/cluster)<br>2- On my own<br>3- Other <write> | | 2 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F. Children's engagement with learning material/activities | 19a. In the last week, did you/teacher share any learning material/activities involving the use of **school textbooks** with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 2 | |
| | 19b. In the last week, did you/teacher share any learning material/activities involving the use of **worksheets** with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 2 | |
| | 19c. In the last week, did you/teacher share any learning material/activities involving the **use of online videos, recorded classes, educational games, etc. found on educational mobile learning apps/websites** with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | 19d. In the last week, did you ask children of this grade to do any other educational activity? | 1- Yes <write><br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 2 | |
| | **20. If yes in more than one question from Q 19a to 19d, then ask:**<br>Out of all the learning material/activities you shared with parents/children of this grade last week, which one did you find the MOST useful?<br>*READ OUT the options mentioned above and write ONE code that applies.* | 1- School textbooks<br>2- Worksheets | 3- Content on educational mobile learning apps/websites<br>99- Don't know | | |
| | 21. Are you/teacher able to regularly track if children of this grade are using the learning material or doing the activities? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | **21a. If yes, then ask:**<br>In the last week, how many children of this grade were able to complete the activities sent by you/teacher? | 1- All<br>2- More than half<br>3- Half | 4- Less than half<br>5- None<br>99- Don't know | 3 | |
| G. Involvement of community | 22. Do you/teacher take help from any other member of the village or community to share or discuss learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | **22a. If yes, then ask:**<br>Which members of the village or community did you take help from?<br>*READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Village head/Ward member<br>2- NGO/local volunteers<br>3- Older children | 4- Select parents/caregivers<br>5- Anganwadi workers<br>6- SMC members<br>7- Other <write> | 3, 7 - Retired school teachers | |
| H. Learning material/activities shared even once | ***If no or don't know in section E in Q 17, then ask Q 23 below:*** | | | | |
| | 23. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have you/teacher shared any learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade even once? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | | |
| | **23a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How did you/teacher share this learning material/activities with parent/children of this grade?<br>*READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- WhatsApp<br>2- Telegram<br>3- SMS<br>4- Phone call | 5- Home visit<br>6- School visit<br>7- Other <write> | | |
| I. Contact between HM/teacher and parents/children | 24. In the last week, did you/teacher call or visit parents/children of this grade to discuss about learning material/activities or children's progress/well being? | 1- Yes, all parents/children<br>2- Yes, some parents/children | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | 2 | |
| | 25. In the last week, did the parents/children of this grade call or visit you/teacher to discuss about learning material/activities or children's progress/well being? | 1- Yes, all parents/children<br>2- Yes, some parents/children | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | 3 | |
| | **26. If no or don't know in Q 24 and 25, then ask:**<br>Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have the parents/children of this grade and you/school teacher spoken (over call or visit) to each other even once to discuss learning material/activities or children's progress/well being? | 1- Yes, all parents/children<br>2- Yes, some parents/children | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | | |
| | 27. Since the lockdown began in March 2020, have the parents/children of this grade and you/school teacher spoken (over call or SMS/WhatsApp) to each other even once to discuss any administrative information regarding mid-day meal, school reopening, etc.? | 1- Yes, all parents/children<br>2- Yes, some parents/children | 3- No<br>99- Don't know | 1 | |
| J. Challenges faced by HM/teacher during remote learning | 28. Are you/teacher facing any challenges in sharing and/or discussing learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | **28a. If yes, then ask:**<br>What kinds of challenges are you/teacher facing?<br>*Probe but DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Parent/child unable to operate phone<br>2- Phone is not available for child's use<br>3- Connectivity issues/No internet<br>4- Child is not interested<br>5- Lack of support/supervision at home<br>6- Other <write> | | 3, 5 | |
| | | | | **Ration** | **Fund** |
| K. Mid-day meal | 29. Has the ration and/or fund for mid-day meal been distributed to parents/children of this grade in the month of August 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>3- Have submitted list | 99- Don't know | 1 | 2 |
| | **29a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How many parents/children have received the ration and/or fund? | 1- All<br>2- More than half<br>3- Half | 4- Less than half<br>5- None<br>99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | **30. If no or don't know in Q 29, then ask:**<br>Has the ration and/or fund for mid-day meal been distributed to parents/children of this grade even once since March 2020? | 1- Yes<br>2- No<br>3- Have submitted list | 99- Don't know | | 2 |
| | **30a. If yes, then ask:**<br>How many parents/children have received the ration and/or fund? | 1- All<br>2- More than half<br>3- Half | 4- Less than half<br>5- None<br>99- Don't know | | |
| L. Reopening the school | 31. Has the school begun any preparations for physically reopening the school for children? | 1- Yes<br>2- No | 99- Don't know | 1 | |
| | **31a. If yes, then ask:**<br>What kind of preparations has the school begun?<br>*DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.* | 1- Sanitation/cleaning<br>2- Other <write> | 99- Don't know | 2 - Walls are being whitewashed | |
| **End time:** | | | | | |

# Quality control

Quality control processes form an integral part of the ASER architecture, and these processes are reviewed and improved each year in order to ensure the credibility of ASER data. For ASER 2020 Wave 1, these processes were laid out for every stage of the survey and were executed by the Pratham/ASER state and central team members.

The quality control processes can be broadly divided into pre-survey quality control processes, internal phone-based processes, and data entry processes.

## Pre-survey quality control and phone-based processes

These comprise 'pre-survey quality control', 'monitoring', and 'recheck' activities.

### Pre-survey quality control:

During the training, surveyors were evaluated on their attendance and performances in survey process quiz, role play and pilot calls.

### Monitoring:

During the survey, quality was controlled via oversight of phone-based activities in all districts while the survey was in progress. One manager managed 15 surveyors. The ASER 2020 monitoring process comprised two kinds of activities:

- **Call tracking sheet:** Pratham/ASER state teams made phone calls to all the surveyors as the survey rolled out in a district. Information regarding the progress of survey activities was collected during the calls and surveyors' doubts were clarified. This helped to provide immediate corrective action and to avoid repetition of mistakes in further calls. Along with this, data entry on a daily basis on the survey mobile application was ensured.
- **Tracking portal:** Pratham/ASER state teams cross-checked the survey progress in the call tracking sheet with that on the portal, and ensured that surveyors were making up to 3 additional attempts to households where the call did not connect in the first instance.

### Recheck:

Information collected during the survey was verified at various levels. The following recheck activities were conducted in ASER 2020:

- **Desk recheck:** Pratham/ASER state teams conducted desk recheck of the survey formats filled by the surveyors. Surveyors were divided into two groups and allotted alternate days to send two of their completed formats each day. Pratham/ASER state teams shared prompt feedback with the surveyors in case of errors or omissions.
- **Phone recheck:** Based on the survey formats from desk recheck, households which needed further verification were identified for phone recheck. Additionally, Pratham/ASER state teams randomly selected formats from 2 villages and 3 households and 1 school in each village for phone recheck.

Overall, 40% households and 49% schools surveyed in ASER 2020 were rechecked. At the end of all these layers of quality control checks, households and schools with poor survey quality were either resurveyed or dropped from the data set.

## Data entry processes

Data for the survey was recorded in printed survey formats. To compile and then process this data for analysis, it was entered into a mobile application by the surveyors on a daily basis. For each question in the survey, rules and validations were in place to ensure that the data entry was done efficiently.

Annual Status of Education Report
WAVE 1 असर ASER 2020 RURAL
Facilitated by PRATHAM

# Annexures

# Annexure 1: Key ASER 2020 Wave 1 findings by sex

This section presents key ASER 2020 Wave 1 findings by sex.

The data indicates that girls have slightly better access to textbooks and support at home to study. Girls enrolled in private schools had slightly better access to learning materials/activities. Overall, girls were slightly more likely to do learning activities and contact between teacher and parent/child was higher for girls. However, these differences are very small.

### Table A1.1: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By sex and school type. 2020

| Sex | Govt | Pvt | Govt & Pvt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 83.7 | 71.8 | 79.7 |
| Female | 84.5 | 72.8 | 81.4 |
| All | 84.1 | 72.2 | 80.5 |

### Table A1.2: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By school type and sex. 2020

| School type | Male | Female | All |
|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 72.0 | 73.1 | 72.6 |
| Pvt | 79.0 | 81.4 | 80.0 |
| Govt & Pvt | 74.4 | 75.3 | 74.8 |

### Table A1.3: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and sex. 2020

| Std | Male | Female | All |
|---|---|---|---|
| Std I-II | 81.7 | 81.4 | 81.5 |
| Std III-V | 76.8 | 77.8 | 77.3 |
| Std VI-VIII | 72.4 | 73.8 | 73.1 |
| Std IX & above | 67.2 | 69.4 | 68.3 |
| All | 74.4 | 75.3 | 74.8 |

### Table A1.4: % Enrolled children who receive help at home. By sex and family member. 2020

| Sex | No help from home | Father | Mother | Older sibling | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 25.6 | 26.9 | 23.7 | 14.4 | 9.4 | 100 |
| Female | 24.7 | 26.9 | 24.5 | 14.9 | 9.0 | 100 |
| All | 25.2 | 26.9 | 24.1 | 14.6 | 9.2 | 100 |

### Table A1.5: % Enrolled children who receive family support for learning. By parents' education and sex. 2020

| Parents' education | Male | Female | All |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low | 54.4 | 55.3 | 54.8 |
| Medium | 75.8 | 77.2 | 76.5 |
| High | 89.0 | 89.9 | 89.4 |
| All | 74.6 | 75.8 | 75.2 |

### Table A1.6: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By sex and tuition category. 2020

| Sex | % Children currently taking tuition | | % Children currently not taking tuition | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Started before the lockdown | Started after the lockdown | Not taking tuition even before the lockdown | Discontinued tuition after the lockdown | |
| Male | 26.0 | 6.4 | 56.2 | 11.4 | 100 |
| Female | 24.6 | 5.2 | 59.1 | 11.2 | 100 |
| All | 25.4 | 5.8 | 57.6 | 11.3 | 100 |

**Table A1.7: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities in the reference week. By school type and sex. 2020**

| School type | Male | Female | All |
|---|---|---|---|
| Govt | 33.3 | 33.6 | 33.4 |
| Pvt | 39.6 | 41.9 | 40.6 |
| Govt & Pvt | 35.5 | 35.8 | 35.6 |

**Table A1.8: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/acitvities in the reference week, % children who received these through different mediums. By sex and medium. 2020**

| Sex | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 74.5 | 11.2 | 24.8 | 5.6 |
| Female | 73.7 | 11.8 | 24.8 | 5.8 |
| All | 74.2 | 11.5 | 24.8 | 5.7 |

**Table A1.9: Of enrolled children who did not receive learning materials/activies during the reference week, reasons given by parents. By sex and reason. 2020**

| Sex | School not sending | No internet | No smartphone | Connectivity issues | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 68.4 | 11.5 | 23.9 | 5.0 | 4.7 |
| Female | 67.7 | 10.3 | 24.7 | 5.3 | 4.9 |
| All | 68.1 | 11.0 | 24.3 | 5.1 | 4.8 |

**Table A1.10: % Enrolled children who did learning activities during the reference week. By sex and type of material. 2020**

| Sex | Traditional | | Broadcast | | Online | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Text-book | Work-sheet | TV | Radio | Videos/ re-corded classes | Live online classes |
| Male | 58.8 | 35.4 | 19.2 | 2.7 | 21.8 | 11.5 |
| Female | 60.6 | 35.1 | 20.1 | 2.6 | 21.1 | 10.5 |
| All | 59.7 | 35.3 | 19.7 | 2.7 | 21.5 | 11.0 |

**Table A1.11: % Enrolled children by the number of learning activities done during the reference week. By school type and number of activities. 2020**

| Sex | No activity | 1 activity | 2 | 3 or more | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 30.3 | 24.0 | 24.2 | 21.5 | 100 |
| Female | 29.2 | 25.3 | 24.2 | 21.3 | 100 |
| All | 29.8 | 24.6 | 24.2 | 21.4 | 100 |

**Table A.12: %Enrolled children in contact with schools. By sex and type of contact. 2020**

| Sex | Contact to discuss learning materials/activities or child's progress/wellbeing | | | Contact for administrative purposes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child in the reference week | Parent/child visited or called teacher in the reference week | Of those who had no contact in the reference week, teacher or parent/ child called or visited each otherat least once since the lockdown | Teacher or parent/child contacted each other at least once since the lockdown |
| Male | 33.5 | 31.1 | 19.5 | 36.9 |
| Female | 34.2 | 31.4 | 20.5 | 38.6 |
| All | 33.8 | 31.3 | 20.0 | 37.7 |

# Annexure 2: Learning materials shared by state governments, publicly available in September 2020

This table shows the provision of different learning materials by state governments in September 2020, the month when the ASER 2020 phone survey was conducted. These include textbooks (print and online); worksheets (print and online); educational programs on TV and Radio; and online video lessons.

Cells highlighted in pink indicate that the material was available and those highlighted in grey indicate that it was not available. The numbers in each cell indicate the sources of this information, which are listed in the Source reference list (Pg 117).

For example, in Andhra Pradesh, textbooks, worksheets, TV programs and online video lessons were shared with/available for students in September 2020, while radio programs were not available. This information was verified by officials at State Council of Educational Research and Training, Andhra Pradesh (coded as 1 in the Source reference list).

Available Not available

| State | Textbooks (print and online) | Worksheet (print and online) | TV program | Radio program | Online video lessons |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Andhra Pradesh | 1, 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1,3 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Assam | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7, 8, 9 |
| Bihar | 10 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 14, 15, 16 |
| Chhattisgarh | 17, 20 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 19, 21, 22 |
| Gujarat | 23 | 24, 27 | 25 | 23 | 25, 26, 28, 29 |
| Haryana | 30, 34, 35 | 31, 32, 34 | 32 | 32 | 32, 33 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 36 | 37 | 36 | 36 | 38 |
| Jammu | 39 | 39 | 39 | 39 | 40, 41 |
| Kashmir | 42 | 42 | 42 | 42 | 41, 43 |
| Jharkhand | 44 | 44 | 45 | 45 | 46 |
| Kerala | 47 | 48, 51 | 49 | 49 | 50, 52, 53, 54 |
| Karnataka | 55 | 56 | 56 | 56 | 57, 58, 59 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 60, 63 | 61 | 13 | 61 | 62, 64, 65, 66 |
| Maharashtra | 67, 71 | 68 | 68, 69 | 68 | 70, 72, 73 |
| Manipur | 74 | 75 | 75 | 76 | 77, 78, 79 |
| Meghalaya | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 127 |
| Nagaland | 81 | 81 | 81 | 81 | 82, 83 |
| Odisha | 84 | 85 | 85 | 85 | 86, 87, 88, 89, 90 |
| Punjab | 91 | 92 | 93 | 93 | 94, 95, 96 |
| Rajasthan | 97, 101 | 98 | 98 | 99 | 100, 102 |
| Tamil Nadu | 102 | 103 | 103, 106 | 103 | 104, 105, 106 |
| Telangana | 107, 108 | 107 | 107 | 107 | 107,109,110 |
| Tripura | 111 | 112 | 112 | 112 | 112 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 113, 115 | 114, 115 | 115, 117 | 115 | 64, 116, 118, 119 |
| Uttarakhand | 120 | 120 | 120 | 120 | 121, 122 |
| West Bengal | 123 | 124 | 125 | 125 | 126 |

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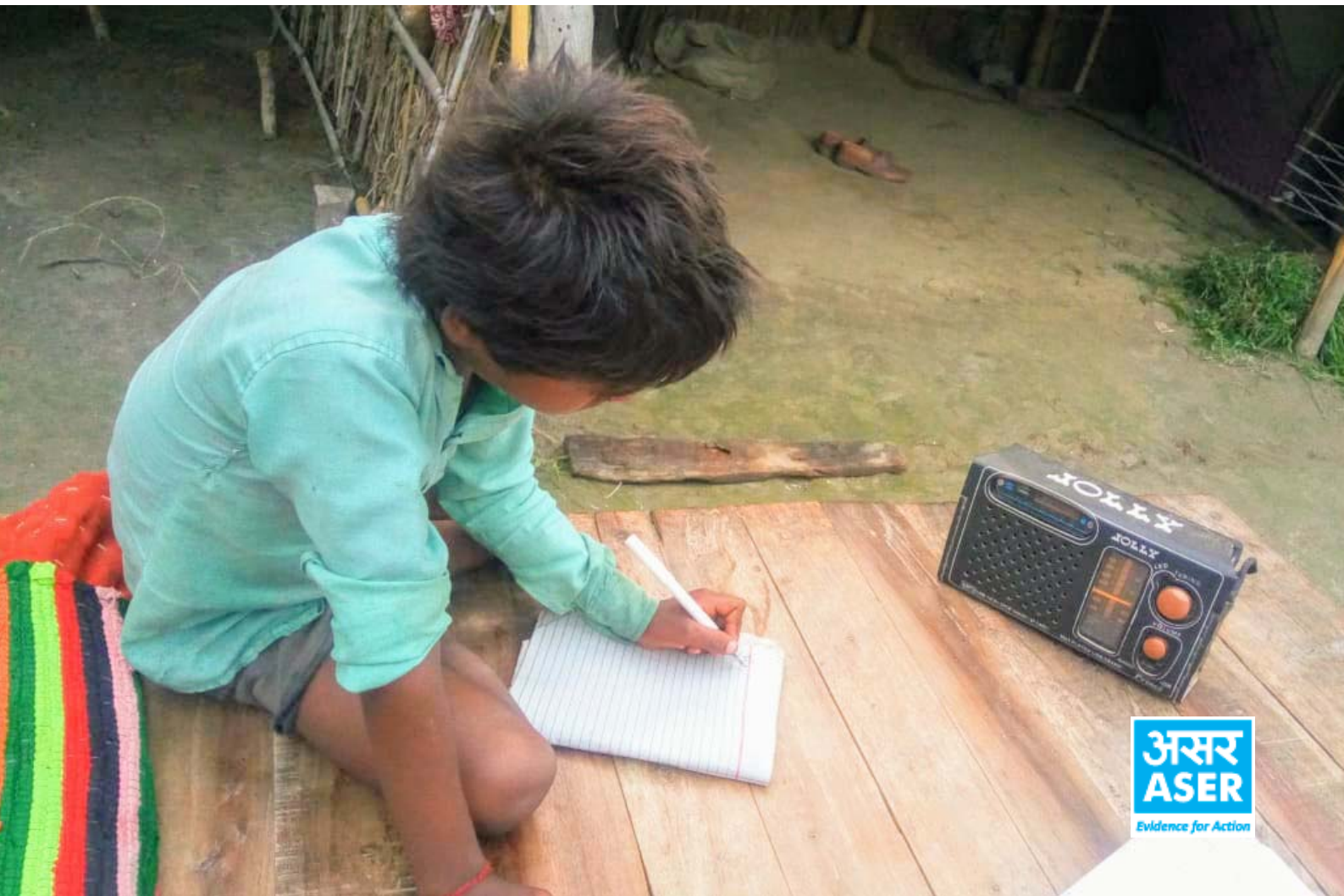
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