

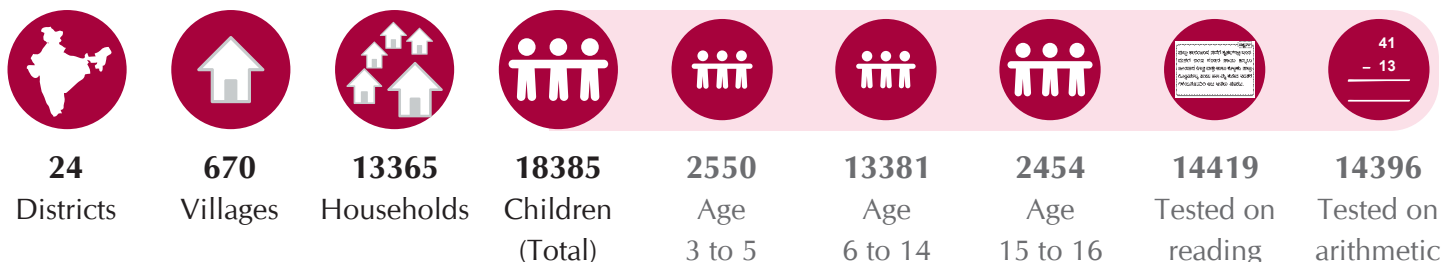
## About ASER

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in school closures across the world, causing massive disruption to children's learning. More than one academic year has passed, and the pause in face-to-face learning has led to a growing concern over 'learning loss' in children. Global estimates suggest that children's foundational skills will suffer due to prolonged school closures and inequitable access to different forms of technology-based educational platforms. This lack of foundational skills, the building blocks for further learning, will impact children's ability to engage with school curricula in higher grades.

Evidence on the status of children's schooling and foundational learning can help us to understand how best to support them going forward, especially during these uncertain times. However, in 2020, the pandemic put a halt to all field based activities and no assessment of children's learning levels could take place. In March 2021, ASER found a small window to return to villages and communities to meet children and gauge how their learning had been impacted.

ASER visited households in rural districts of Karnataka, collected information on children's enrollment patterns and assessed their basic reading and arithmetic skills. This ASER exercise was able to reach children within the period that can be considered the 2020-21 "school year". To better understand the implications of these findings, we present comparisons with estimates from earlier years.

## Coverage



**Table 1: % Children enrolled in different types of schools by age group and sex 2018**

Age group	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not in School	Total
Age 6 -14: All	69.9	29.1	0.3	0.7	100
Age 7-16: All	69.7	28.4	0.2	1.7	100
Age 7-10: All	67.7	31.8	0.3	0.2	100
Age 7-10: Boys	63.2	36.5	0.2	0.2	100
Age 7-10: Girls	72.1	27.2	0.5	0.3	100
Age 11-14: All	72.8	25.8	0.2	1.3	100
Age 11-14: Boys	68.2	30.3	0.1	1.4	100
Age 11-14: Girls	77.1	21.5	0.3	1.2	100
Age 15-16: All	66.5	26.0	0.1	7.4	100
Age 15-16: Boys	65.9	27.0	0.1	7.0	100
Age 15-16: Girls	66.9	25.1	0.1	7.8	100

**Table 2: % Children enrolled in different types of schools by age group and sex 2020**

Age group	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not in School	Total
Age 6 -14: All	72.6	26.6	0.5	0.3	100
Age 7-16: All	72.3	26.7	0.5	0.5	100
Age 7-10: All	70.2	29.0	0.6	0.2	100
Age 7-10: Boys	67.6	31.7	0.5	0.2	100
Age 7-10: Girls	72.9	26.4	0.6	0.2	100
Age 11-14: All	74.4	24.9	0.4	0.3	100
Age 11-14: Boys	71.6	27.6	0.5	0.4	100
Age 11-14: Girls	76.9	22.6	0.3	0.2	100
Age 15-16: All	71.5	26.1	0.7	1.7	100
Age 15-16: Boys	70.3	27.8	0.5	1.4	100
Age 15-16: Girls	72.7	24.5	0.9	1.9	100

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa and EGS.

'Not in school' includes children who never enrolled or have dropped out.

## Reading

ASER learning assessments are conducted in the household. Children in the age group 5-16 are assessed. The type of school in which children are enrolled (government or private) is also recorded. The assessment was conducted in Kannada.

**Table 3: % Children by grade and reading level  
All schools 2018**

Std	Not even letter	Letter	Word	Std I level text	Std II level text	Total
I	40.3	39.9	15.4	2.5	1.9	100
II	17.2	31.7	30.6	13.0	7.6	100
III	9.2	19.8	30.3	21.5	19.2	100
IV	5.1	13.5	23.4	24.8	33.2	100
V	4.5	8.7	16.9	23.8	46.0	100
VI	4.2	6.7	12.8	20.5	55.8	100
VII	2.5	6.3	12.2	18.0	61.2	100
VIII	2.0	4.9	6.9	15.9	70.3	100

**Table 4: % Children by grade and reading level  
All schools 2020**

Std	Not even letter	Letter	Word	Std I level text	Std II level text	Total
I	56.8	29.4	10.5	1.6	1.7	100
II	31.8	37.3	21.5	6.2	3.3	100
III	16.5	29.5	30.5	13.7	9.8	100
IV	12.0	19.2	30.5	20.0	18.3	100
V	6.5	12.5	23.6	23.9	33.6	100
VI	3.9	7.9	14.6	23.8	49.8	100
VII	3.3	6.3	12.8	21.2	56.5	100
VIII	2.4	5.8	8.2	17.5	66.2	100

The reading tool is a progressive tool. Each row shows the variation in children's reading levels within a given grade. For example, in Table 3, among children in Std III, 9.2% cannot read letters, 19.8% can read letters but not words or higher, 30.3% can read words but not Std I level text or higher, 21.5% can read Std I level text but not Std II level text, and 19.2% can read Std II level text. For each grade, the total of these exclusive categories is 100%.

**Table 5: Trends over time  
Reading in Std III by school  
type 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020**

Year	% Children in Std III who can read Std II level text		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*
2014	16.4	23.3	18.3
2016	19.0	22.1	19.8
2018	19.4	19.0	19.2
2020	9.8	9.9	9.8

\*This is the weighted average for children in government and private schools only.

The highest level in the ASER reading assessment is a Std II level text. Table 5 shows the proportion of children in Std III who can read Std II level text. This figure is a proxy for "grade level" reading for Std III. Data for children enrolled in government schools and private schools is shown separately.

**Table 6: Trends over time  
Reading in Std V and Std VIII by school  
type 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020**

Year	% Children in Std V who can read Std II level text			% Children in Std VIII who can read Std II level text		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*
2014	45.7	53.5	47.2	70.1	72.2	70.6
2016	41.9	42.8	42.1	69.7	71.2	70.0
2018	47.6	41.8	46.0	70.1	71.5	70.3
2020	32.8	35.5	33.6	66.8	65.1	66.4

\* This is the weighted average for children in government and private schools only.



### Reading Tool (Kannada)

Std II level text	Std I level text
<p><b>ಕಥೆ</b></p> <p>ಆಮೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮೊಲ ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರು. ಒಂದು ದಿನ ಆಮೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮೊಲ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆ ಬರ್ಪಾಟು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡವು. ಯಾರು ಮೊದಲು ಪಕ್ಕದ ಊರನ್ನು ತಲುಪುವರೋ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಬಹುಮಾನ ಎಂದು ಘೋಷಿಸಿದವು. ಮೊಲ ಓಡುತ್ತಾ ಮುಂದೆ ಸಾಗಿತು. ಅರ್ಧ ಸಾಗಿದ ಮೇಲೆ ಮೊಲ ವಿಶ್ರಾಂತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಬಯಸಿತು. ಅಲ್ಲೇ ಮರದ ಕೆಳಗೆ ನಿಡ್ಡೆ ಮಾಡಿತು. ಅಷ್ಟರಲ್ಲೇ ಆಮೆ ಬೇಗನೇ ಸಾಗಿ ಊರನ್ನು ತಲುಪಿತು. ಸ್ಪರ್ಧೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಮೆ ಜಯಿಸಿದಾಗ ಮೊಲ ಸಪ್ತೆ ಮೋರೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಕುಳಿತುಕೊಂಡಿತು.</p>	<p><b>ಸತ್ಯಾಂಕ</b></p> <p>ಕೆಮಲೆಗೆ ಗುಲಾಜಿ ಹೂವು ಅಂದರೆ ಬಹಳ ಇಷ್ಟ. ಇದು ನೋಡಲು ಬಹಳ ಅಂದ. ಕೆಮಲೆಯ ಮನೆಯ ಅಂಗಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಣ್ಣ ಬಣ್ಣದ ಗುಲಾಜಿ ಹೂವುಗಳ ಅಂದವಾದ ತೋಟವಿದೆ.</p>
<p><b>Letters</b></p> <p>ಎ ಬು ಐ ಫ ಪ ದ ಠ ಬ ಓ ಡ</p>	<p><b>Words</b></p> <p>ಕೊಡ ಮಳೆ ಭರ ನಾರು ಮಳೆ ಭಯ ದಾರಿ ಜಾಣ ಭಡಿ ದೇವ ದೂರು</p>

## Arithmetic

ASER learning assessments are conducted in the household. Children in the age group 5-16 are assessed. The type of school in which children are enrolled (government or private) is also recorded.

**Table 7: % Children by grade and arithmetic level All schools 2018**

Std	Not even 1-9	Recognize numbers		Subtract	Divide	Total
		1-9	10-99			
I	29.7	38.2	30.3	1.5	0.4	100
II	10.9	24.5	54.7	9.3	0.6	100
III	4.9	13.9	54.9	23.3	3.0	100
IV	2.9	7.3	48.2	29.5	12.1	100
V	2.3	5.1	38.0	34.1	20.5	100
VI	2.4	3.3	34.7	30.0	29.6	100
VII	1.1	2.1	36.1	27.2	33.6	100
VIII	1.0	1.3	32.0	26.6	39.0	100

**Table 8: % Children by grade and arithmetic level All schools 2020**

Std	Not even 1-9	Recognize numbers		Subtract	Divide	Total
		1-9	10-99			
I	42.6	36.1	19.5	1.4	0.4	100
II	22.5	35.0	36.7	5.0	0.8	100
III	10.7	24.7	47.3	15.7	1.6	100
IV	7.1	15.0	49.6	24.8	3.6	100
V	4.6	10.3	41.0	32.1	12.1	100
VI	2.6	5.6	32.0	35.3	24.5	100
VII	1.7	4.4	26.9	36.8	30.2	100
VIII	1.1	4.0	24.5	31.8	38.7	100

The arithmetic tool is a progressive tool. Each row shows the variation in children's arithmetic levels within a given grade. For example, in Table 7, among children in Std III, 4.9% cannot yet recognize numbers 1-9, 13.9% can recognize numbers up to 9 but cannot recognize numbers up to 99 or higher, 54.9% can recognize numbers up to 99 but cannot do subtraction, 23.3% can do subtraction but cannot do division, and 3% can do division. For each grade, the total of these exclusive categories is 100%.

**Table 9: Trends over time Arithmetic in Std III by school type 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020**

Year	% Children in Std III who can do at least subtraction		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*
2014	21.9	38.2	26.3
2016	25.5	38.7	28.9
2018	23.5	32.8	26.3
2020	16.0	20.1	17.3

\*This is the weighted average for children in government and private schools only.

In most states, children are expected to do 2-digit by 2-digit subtraction with borrowing by Std II. Table 9 shows the proportion of children in Std III who can do subtraction. This figure is a proxy for "grade level" arithmetic for Std III. Data for children enrolled in government schools and private schools is shown separately.

**Table 10: Trends over time Arithmetic in Std V and VIII by school type 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020**

Year	% Children in Std V who can do at least subtraction			% Children in Std VIII who can do division		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt*
2014	49.4	70.2	53.7	34.9	43.3	37.0
2016	54.6	68.7	57.8	39.9	49.2	42.2
2018	52.5	60.8	54.6	36.1	47.4	39.0
2020	41.5	50.4	44.1	36.6	46.2	38.9

\* This is the weighted average for children in government and private schools only.



### Arithmetic Tool

ಅಂಕ ಗುರುತಿಸುವಿಕೆ 1 ರಿಂದ 9	ಎರಡು ಅಂಕಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಗುರುತಿಸುವಿಕೆ 10 ರಿಂದ 99	ಕಳೆಯುವುದು		ಭಾಗಾಕಾರ
1 4	51 83	46 - 29	63 - 39	7) 879
7 3	37 65	47 - 28	45 - 17	6) 824
6 9	55 26	92 - 76	84 - 57	8) 985
5 2	91 43	52 - 14	66 - 48	4) 517
36 27				

5 ಅಂಕಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 4 ಉತ್ತರಗಳು ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಬೇಕು. 5 ಎರಡು ಅಂಕ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 4 ಉತ್ತರಗಳು ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಬೇಕು. ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ 2 ಲೆಕ್ಕಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ, ಎರಡೂ ಉತ್ತರಗಳು ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಬೇಕು. ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ಒಂದು ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಮಾಡಿ, ಉತ್ತರ ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಬೇಕು.