

Introduction

ASER 2014 marks the tenth year of the Annual Status of Education Report. Each year since 2005, ASER has reached almost all rural districts in the country with three basic questions: Are children enrolled in school? Can they read? Can they do basic arithmetic?

ASER is the only source that makes current data on schooling and learning available for all states in India. Using a household survey methodology,¹ ASER collects data for a representative sample of children from every state and almost every rural district in India. On average ASER reaches over 560 districts each year, surveying an average of 650,000 children in more than 16,000 villages in the country. This is about twice the size of the rural sample of the NSS surveys, which provide estimates for poverty, employment, and other socioeconomic indicators in India.

Each year data collection for ASER is done in the months of September, October and November. The report is released in January of the following year. This enables data about learning to be made available during the same school year in which the data was collected. In each year's report, basic tables on enrollment, reading, arithmetic and school facilities are published for each state and for India as a whole. This information is available well in time to be used for planning for the next school year.

To mark the 10th year of the ASER exercise, this supplemental report presents trends over time in enrollment, reading, arithmetic and English for children in rural India. The assessment tools for each of these three domains are comparable over time. Reading and arithmetic assessments have been done every year since the inception of the ASER survey. English assessment has been done in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2014. The data tables reported here cover the years 2006 to 2014. ASER 2005 data is not included in this report because the sampling in the first year was different from that in subsequent years.

This ASER supplemental report includes four types of data tables.² These are:

- **Enrollment trends over time:** Here the focus is mainly on trends in the proportion of children out of school (age group 6-14) by gender as well as the proportion

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHILE READING THIS REPORT

- The number of districts mentioned in the report is based on the 2001 census, which has been used as the sampling frame for ASER for the entire duration of the exercise.
- In the data tables, estimates have not been presented if the sample size was insufficient.
- In the schooling and learning tables, data is categorized by school type. Because ASER data is collected from households, children's schooling status is reported by children themselves or by other members of the household. For example, reading levels of children in private schools and government schools refers to learning levels of children who self-reported being enrolled in one of these types of schools.
- Every year, ASER samples 30 villages per district from the Census 2001 village directory, and surveys 20 households in each selected village. All children in the age group of 3-16 years are surveyed in the sampled households. Therefore, the number of villages and households visited by ASER surveyors has remained more or less unchanged since 2006. However, the number of children surveyed has fallen by about 25% between 2006 and 2014. This drop is in all probability due to the increase in the number of rural households since 2006. Census 2011 notes that there was a 24% increase in rural households since Census 2001. Yet, the rural population increased by only 12%, during the same period. This means that the average rural household size has gone down resulting in fewer children per household.

¹ Children could be enrolled in government schools, private schools or in other kinds of educational institutions. They could also be not enrolled in school. By going to the household, ASER collects information for all these kinds of children.

² In addition, for each state, there is also a table summarizing the sample for each year. This information includes the total number of districts surveyed each year, the total number of villages, households and also the number of children surveyed categorized by age.

going to private schools during the period 2006-2014.

- **Reading levels over time:** Two grades/classes have been selected for tracking trends over time.³ For Std. III children, we focus on the percentage of children who can read text at least at Std. I level and for Std. V children we look at the proportion of children who can read text at Std. II level. For both these grades, data is presented separately for children who are enrolled in government schools and in private schools.
- **Arithmetic levels over time:** For arithmetic the data tables included in this supplemental report present figures from 2007 onwards. This is because the tools used in 2005 and 2006 are somewhat different from those used from 2007 onwards. As with the reading data tables, two grades/classes have been selected for tracking trends over time. For Std. III children, we focus on the percentage of children who can do at least subtraction and for Std. V children we look at the proportion of children who can do division. For both these grades, data is presented separately for children who are enrolled in government schools and private schools.
- **English trends over time:** Basic English assessments have been done in 2007, 2009, 2012 and 2014. The data tables presented here focus on grades/classes V and VII. For Std. V, we report the percentage of children who can read at least words and also those who can read sentences. For Std. VII, we report the percentage of children who can read sentences. For both these grades, data is presented separately for children who are enrolled in government schools and private schools.

Data tables for each state present figures both at state and at All India level. The pages for each state also have samples of the assessment tools that have been used.

The ASER survey from each year has much more data than is reported in this supplemental report. For example, the data from school observations for each state is not included here. This is partly because the school tables in the main ASER report contain information over time. The ASER Centre website www.asercentre.org carries the full report for each year from 2005 to 2014. The assessment tools and administration instructions are also included in each year's report. Additional information is available on the website under the section "ASER survey".

To access raw data from ASER 2006-2014, please write to contact@asercentre.org.

³ Data for all grades is available in the ASER report for each year. In the ASER data set, children's learning levels can also be analysed by age.