

National Highlights 2009

Fewer girls 11-14 out of school

- The overall percentage of children (6-14) who are out of school has dropped from 4.3% in 2008 to 4% in 2009.
- Out of school girls in the age group 11 to 14 has dropped from 7.2% in 2008 to 6.8% in 2009. In terms of a decline in percentage points, this decrease is clearly visible in Chhattisgarh (3.8), Bihar (2.8), Rajasthan (2.6), Orissa (2.1), Jammu and Kashmir (1.9). Other than Meghalaya all other states in the North East also show a drop.
- Andhra Pradesh records an increase in the percentage of 11-14 year old girls out of school from 6.6% in 2008 to 10.8% in 2009. So does Punjab from 4.9% in 2008 to 6.3% in 2009.

Private school enrolment hasn't changed much

- Overall, for 6-14 year olds, between 2008 and 2009 there has been a slight decline in the percentage of children enrolled in private school (0.8 percentage points). However, six states show a decline in private school enrolment of more than 5 percentage points. Of these, Punjab which has one of the highest private school enrollments in the country shows the greatest drop (11.3 percentage points).

Half of India's five year olds are enrolled in primary school

- In 2009 as in 2008, well over 50% of 5 year olds are enrolled in school.
- Although for the country as a whole, the status of 3 and 4 year olds going to preschool (anganwadi or balwadi) has not changed much since 2008, among the major states Bihar, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat record a more than five percentage point increase in the proportion of children going to anganwadi.

Learning levels improving in Std 1

- The foundation of children's learning is built in early grades. Overall, the percentage of children in Std 1 who can recognize letters or more has increased from 65.1% in 2008 to 68.8% in 2009. Similarly there is an increase in number recognition, with percentage of children recognizing numbers or more increasing from 65.3% in 2008 to 69.3 in 2009.
- For Std 1 children in government schools in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Orissa there is an increase of 10 percentage points or more as compared to last year in their ability to at least recognize letter and numbers up to 9. In Tamil Nadu and Goa, there is an improvement in both reading and maths of

more than 5 percentage points. Similar increases are visible in Uttarakhand and Maharashtra in maths and in Karnataka in letter recognition.

No major improvements in learning levels for children in Std 5 except in Tamil Nadu for reading and in a few states in maths.

- The all India figure for percentage of all rural children in Std 5 reading text at Std 2 level shows a decline from 56.2% in 2008 to 52.8% in 2009. This means that well over 40% of all rural children in Std 5 in India are at least three grade levels behind.
- In reading, for government school children in Std 5 in Tamil Nadu there is an 8 percentage point increase over 2008 levels. Karnataka and Punjab also show improvements over last year. Hardly any change in other states in reading as compared to 2008.
- In maths, for children in Std 5, for the country as a whole, the ability to do division problems has hardly increased. However 7 states show increases of 5 to 8 percentage points. These states are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Wide variation in the ability to read and comprehend English across India.

- The all India numbers indicate that a quarter of all rural children in Std 5 children can read simple sentences. Of those who can read sentences, over 80% can understand the meaning of the sentence.
- By Std 8, 60.2% of all children can read simple sentences. In all the north-eastern states (except Tripura), Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala more than 80% of children in Std 8 can not only read simple sentences fluently but also understand the meaning.

Increase in tuition classes for all children across all grades

- Nationally, between 2007 and 2009, the percentage of children taking paid tuition increased for every class, in both government and private schools. Only Kerala and Karnataka show a small but consistent decline in the incidence of tuition across government school children in most classes.
- Among government school children, the percentage going to tuition class increases steadily as children move into higher classes: from 17.1% in Std 1 to 30.8% in Std 8. Among children attending private schools, almost a quarter (23.3%) take private tuition from Std 1 onwards. The percentage peaks at 29.8% in Std 4.
- Children in West Bengal are by far the most intensive users of paid private tuition in the country; more than half of all Std 1 and almost 90% of all Std 8 government school children take some kind of paid tuition. The incidence of tuition in Bihar and

Orissa is also high, with very large numbers of government school children taking tuition, ranging from about a third in Std 1 to well over half in Std 8.

Children's attendance needs improvement in some states ¹

- Comparisons across the three years (2005, 2007 and 2009) indicate that children's attendance in school, as observed on a random day in the school year, varies considerably across states. There are states like Bihar where less than 60% of enrolled children are attending on the day of the visit to southern states where average attendance is well above 90%. In addition, states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh need to pay more attention to raising attendance in schools. In most states, on the day of the visit, close to 90% of appointed teachers were present in the school.

Multigrade grouping is widespread

- In 2007 and 2009, surveyors were asked to observe if Std 2 and Std 4 were grouped and sitting together with any other grade. In both years, the incidence of multi-grade groupings was high. At the all-India level close to 50% children in class 2 and 4 were sitting with other classes.

Increase in useable toilets and improvements in availability of drinking water

- All India figures indicate that overall, the percentage of schools with no water or toilet provision is declining over time. Water is available in 75% of government primary schools and 81% of upper primary schools. Useable toilets can be found in over 50% of government schools. Four out of ten government primary schools do not have separate toilets for girls. This number is lower for upper primary schools at 26%. About 12 -15% girls' toilets are locked and only about 30 - 40% are useable.

Not all schools received the annual school grants for the last school year

- There is considerable variation across states for grants received in the last school year. In Nagaland close to 90% of schools visited had received all their annual grants, where as the percentage of visited schools receiving their grants in the 2008-2009 school year was 60% or below in Jharkhand, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh.

¹ Every alternate year, in each sampled village in each district, ASER surveyors visit a government primary or upper primary school. This visit is usually on either a Saturday or a Monday. (The rest of the survey is done on a Sunday at home). The school information is recorded either based on observations (such as attendance or useability of the facilities) or with information provided by the school (such as grants information).