Annual Status of Education Report
असर ASER 2021 RURAL
Facilitated by PRATHAM

Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2021

November 17, 2021

ASER 2021 - Rural

Annual Status of Education Report (Rural)

Date of publication: November 17, 2021

Cover photo: Rohit Chandravanshi
Back cover: Sunil Kumar Sinha
Inside back cover: Dakshata Agarwal
Other photos: All photos taken by volunteers and team members as they visited villages.

Available on the ASER Centre website (www.asercentre.org)

Published by:
ASER Centre
B-4/58, Safdarjung Enclave
New Delhi 110 029
Email: contact@asercentre.org

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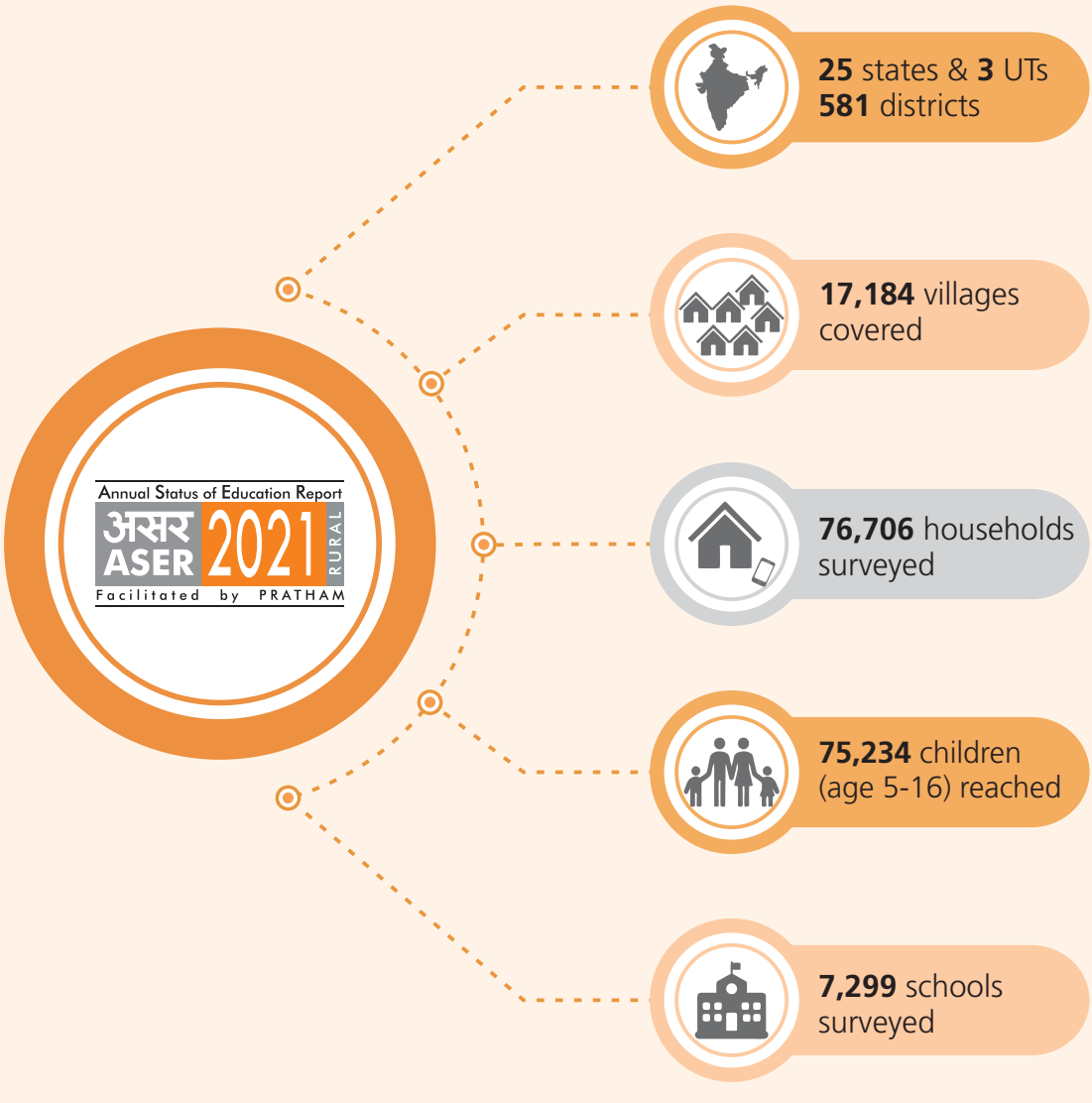
What is ASER?

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) is a citizen-led household survey that provides nationally representative estimates of children's schooling status and their foundational reading and arithmetic skills. In its standard format, the survey reaches children in the age group of 3-16 in almost all rural districts of India. It is carried out each year by volunteers from partner organisations like colleges, universities, non-profit organisations, and teacher training institutes, among others.

The COVID-19 crisis made it impossible to conduct a field-based survey on national scale in 2020 and 2021. However, the need to capture the effects of the pandemic and school closures on children's access to learning opportunities was crucial. ASER 2020 was therefore redesigned as a phone survey which gathered information on the impact of the pandemic on different aspects of children's education.

ASER 2021 retains the phone survey format. More than 3000 volunteers across the country spoke to parents and teachers, aiming to understand how children in the age group of 5-16 have studied at home since the onset of the pandemic and the challenges that schools and households now face as schools reopen.

Survey Coverage



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ASER 2021 Partners

Because ASER 2021 was a phone-based survey, partners were able to conduct it in geographies other than their own location based on volunteers' language proficiency.

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Sahyogini, Bokaro
Samarpan, Koderma
Sarvoday Chetna Kendra, Chatra
Srijan Foundation, Hazaribagh
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Dharti Gramotthan Evam Sahbhagi Gramin Vikas Samiti, Morena
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Sahyog Education and Welfare Association (SEWA), Jabalpur
Samarpan Foundation, Neemuch
Shiva Gramin Vikas Sansthan (SRDIM), Satna
The Bhopal School of Social Sciences, Bhopal
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Umang Samaj Sewi Sanstha, Gwalior
Yuva Udaan Educational and Social Welfare Society, Tipras

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Institute For Rural Development and Social Services, Jalgaon
Local Volunteers of Jalna
Mahatma Phule College of Social Work, Taloda
Nirmik Samajik Sansodhan Vikash Kendra, Latur
PAHAL Multipurpose Society, Padoli, Chandrapur
PARIS Bahuddeshiya Sanstha, Khadki
Prahar Samajik Kalyankari Sanstha, Goregaon
Saraswati Sevabhavi Sanstha, Bhatwadgaon
Savitri Jyotirao College of Social Work, Yavatmal
Sharadchandraji Pawar College of Agriculture, Kharawate-Dahiwali, Ratnagiri
Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune
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Nature's Club, Kendrapara

Social Integrity Programme for Health and Education, Basta, Balasore
Social Service of Ideal Youth Association (SSIYA), Subarnapaur

Puducherry

Coimbatore Multipurpose Social Service Society (CMSSS), Coimbatore
Society for Development of Economically Weaker Section (SODEWS), Vellore

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Doosra Dashak, Kishanganj, Baran
Doosra Dashak, Laxmangarh, Alwar
Ekal Jan Seva Sansthan, Ajmer
Hunar Ghar Upper Primary School, Bakhel, Udaipur
Mahila Ashram, Bhilwara
Saurav International English School, Patoli, Dausa
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Nehru Yuva Sangathan Fatehpur, Fatehpur
Samarth Foundation, Hamirpur

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Kajla Janakalyan Samiti, Purba Medinipur
Khardah Public Cultural and Welfare Association, Haora
NSS Unit, Gour Mahavidyalaya, Mangal Bari, Maldah
NSS Unit, Jadavpur University, South Twenty Four Parganas
NSS Unit, Jagannath Kishore College, Purulia
NSS Unit, Raiganj University, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur

Supporters

Anup Mukerji
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Emmerich Davies
Rohini Mukherjee

Special Thanks

Aekta Chanda, Senior Specialist- Education, Child Fund India, Jharkhand
Amit Kumar, Assistant Professor, Krishna Group of Colleges, Uttar Pradesh
Amritpal Singh Kalsi, Department of Career Guidance, Lovely Professional University, Punjab
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Our heartfelt thanks to Pratham teams for their support at different stages of the survey process.
And finally, thanks to all the families and teachers who interacted with us.

An Overview of ASER 2021

Background

Every year from 2005 to 2014 and then every alternate year till 2018, ASER has reported on children's schooling and learning status across rural India. Last year, COVID-19 interrupted this trajectory, along with so much else. But with schools being closed since March 2020, understanding the effect of the pandemic on schools, families and children was crucial. To address the need for large scale nationally representative data on the impact of the pandemic on children's education, in 2020, ASER developed an entirely new design, consisting of a phone-based survey that explored children's access to learning opportunities.

With the pandemic extending into yet another year, field-based survey operations were still not possible on a national scale. However, after eighteen months of closures, schools in India had either reopened or were on the verge of doing so. The need to examine what this meant for households and schools was apparent.

Last year saw a lot of concern about school closures leading to 'learning loss' and higher dropout rates. A lot of digital content was generated and transmitted to help children continue to learn while at home. ASER 2020 generated evidence on changes in enrollment patterns; the extent to which digital content was reaching children; and whether the pandemic had exacerbated equity gaps. The findings confirmed that equity gaps had in fact increased, and that it was the most marginalised who were being left behind.

This year schools reopening across some states necessitated an understanding of ground realities – whether the reopening had impacted enrollment patterns; what it meant for the family's involvement in children's learning; and the challenges that schools reopening during the pandemic posed for households and schools. In states where schools had not yet reopened, it became important to track the progress that schools had made in remote teaching-learning over the last year.

In order to take pandemic-related constraints into account, but at the same time address the need for large scale nationally representative data on these important questions, ASER 2021 was also conducted in the form of a phone survey.

What is ASER 2021?

The ASER 2021 survey was designed to be conducted at a time when schools had reopened in some states but not in others. One part of the survey thus focused on questions similar to ASER 2020, allowing comparison of last year's findings with data from this year for those children whose schools had not reopened. Topics explored included the provision of, and access to, remote education mechanisms and materials in rural parts of the country, and how children, families, and educators were engaging with these from their homes. A second part of the survey focused on children whose school had reopened, asking questions about children's attendance and COVID prevention measures being followed by schools, among others.

Sample: The standard operating procedure for ASER 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 2021 household survey was 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 2021 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. For more details on implementation, see the section on Process Documents.

To conduct the survey, phone calls were made to parents/caregivers of children aged 5-16 in 192,006 households as well as head teachers or teachers in 11,545 schools during September and October 2021. Of these, the survey was completed with 76,706 households and 7,299 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 I-VIII) that the teacher could provide the most information for and preferably the grade that was open for children to attend in person.

This report uses the ASER 2021 survey data to explore the following areas:

- **Children's enrollment:** Explores patterns of enrollment and dropout among 5-16-year-olds in rural India.
- **Paid tuition classes:** Explores the trends in children taking paid tuition classes to aid their studies.
- **Smartphones:** Reports on whether households have smartphones and if so, whether children have access to them.
- **Learning support at home:** Examines whether and how families support children at home as schools begin to reopen.
- **Access to and availability of learning materials:** Reports whether children received textbooks and additional learning materials or activities from schools, and the mediums through which they accessed the latter.
- Additional areas such as engagement with learning activities, and challenges of remote learning.
- **School survey:** Explores perceived changes in enrollment patterns and the reasons for the same; the teaching-learning activities and COVID prevention measures being followed in reopened schools; and progress in remote teaching-learning in schools that had not reopened.

Commentary

The COVID effect: Changing patterns in public and private inputs into schooling in rural India

Rukmini Banerji[1] & Wilima Wadhwa[2]

Schools shut down in India in March of 2020, and have begun to reopen only in the last few months. India is one of the countries that has had among the longest school closures in the world. According to the most recent data available from UNESCO, 18 months into the pandemic, the global average for school closures (full and partial) is just under 9 months (35 weeks), with schools being closed for over a year in countries like the US (62 weeks) and India (73 weeks) (data as of Sep 30, 2021).[3] There was no doubt that the pandemic was going to impact learning adversely – children's learning levels suffer even after regular, scheduled summer vacations. However, with the pandemic affecting livelihoods, especially of low-income, casual and migrant workers, there was an additional fear that family budgets getting squeezed would also lead to an increase in drop-outs, especially among older children and girls.

ASER 2020 was conducted in September 2020, six months into the pandemic, when schools were closed across the country. ASER 2021 was done a year later in September-October 2021 when schools were starting to reopen. According to ASER 2020, the proportion of children in the age group of 6-14 years not currently enrolled in school went up from 2.5% to 4.6% between 2018 and 2020. The largest drop in enrollment was for the youngest age group, with the proportion of 6-10-year-olds not currently enrolled rising from 1.8% in 2018 to 5.3% in 2020. In contrast, the proportion of currently not enrolled children in the age group of 11-14 increased only slightly, from 3.2% in 2018 to 3.9% in 2020. The increase for the younger age group could have been simply due to the fact that many young children (6-7-year-olds) were waiting to seek admission when schools reopened. At the time, six months into the pandemic, the situation was fairly fluid and it was difficult to assess whether the observed changes would hold.

A year later, the out of school numbers seem to have stabilised. According to ASER 2021 the proportion of children aged 6-14 who are currently not enrolled remained the same at 4.6%. However, things are still far from normal and we may continue to see churn in enrollment numbers for a few years to come.

On the other hand, we see a secular decline in the proportion of children not currently enrolled in the 15-16 age group – the age group considered most at risk for dropping out. In 2010, the proportion of 15-16-year-olds who were out of school was 16.1%. Driven by the government's push to universalise secondary education, this number has been steadily declining and stood at 12.1% in 2018. The decline continued in 2020 to 9.9% and to 6.6% in 2021.

Therefore, while the pandemic has resulted in some increase in the proportion of children who are not currently enrolled, this is mostly for the youngest age groups. It is possible that many of these children are still waiting to get admission and may get re-enrolled when the schools fully reopen and the situation gets a little more normalised. Also, younger children are easier to enroll and states can organise enrollment drives as they have in the past to get children back to school.

The major change in enrollment that is evident in ASER 2021 is a big jump in government school enrollment accompanied by a fall in private school enrollment. The increase in government school enrollment is across the board – all age-groups, grades and for both boys and girls.

A decline in private school enrollment was first seen in 2020, when it dropped from 32.5% in 2018 to 28.8% for 6-14-year-olds. But government school enrollment remained steady at about 65% – the drop in private school enrollment was accompanied by more children not being enrolled in school rather than a shift to government schools.

Between 2020 and 2021, in contrast, out of school numbers have held steady, private school enrollment has continued to drop and we see a big jump in government school enrollment across all age groups. The government-private split in enrollment in 2021 is close to the 2010 figures. Private school enrollment increased steadily from 2006 to 2014 and remained steady at about 30% till 2018. The decline observed in 2020 and 2021 has brought it back to the 2010 level of about 25%. Government school enrollment, in contrast, has been declining since 2006 till it stabilised at around 65% in 2018, jumping only in the last year to reach 70.3% in 2021.

ASER 2021 was conducted in September 2021, about 18 months into the pandemic, at a time when schools were starting to reopen. At the time the survey was done, about two thirds of enrolled children were in schools that had already reopened and about 96% of these were physically attending school. For these children, it is safe to assume that enrollment patterns are less fluid as compared to 2020. With out of school numbers stabilising or falling between 2020 and 2021, private school

[1] Chief Executive Officer, Pratham Education Foundation
[2] Director, ASER Centre.
[3] https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

enrollment continuing to decline, and a majority of children being back in school, government school enrollment has jumped significantly in 2021. Many affordable smaller private schools have shut down during the pandemic (UNICEF 2021)[4] – this could also be driving the shift to government schools. Finally, with many migrants moving back to their villages with their families, the demand for public education is likely to have gone up during this period.

Data from the ASER 2021 school survey seems to confirm this. Among the surveyed teachers and headmasters of government schools that had reopened, about 70% said that enrollment in their schools had increased. As the reasons for this increase, 40% said that that no studies were going on in private schools; 15% mentioned migration; 62% cited a shift from private schools because of financial distress; and about 50% ascribed it to the free facilities in government schools. Of course, it is entirely possible that this increase in government school enrollment may get reversed in the future as incomes recover and private schooling becomes profitable again.

While the aggregate enrollment picture is quite clear, there is a fair amount of variation at the state level. The national increase in government school enrollment is driven by large northern states like UP, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana and southern states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. All of these states had high private school enrollment (in excess of 40%) to start with. If the shift away from private schools is due to financial distress, then it is not surprising that it will be most evident in states where private school enrollment was high to begin with. In contrast, in many north-eastern states, government school enrollment has fallen during this period. For instance, in Nagaland and Manipur government school enrollment fell by more than 11 percentage points. Interestingly, the shift has not been to private schools but rather is reflected in much larger numbers of currently not enrolled children in these states. A decline in government school enrollment, though of a smaller magnitude, is also seen in Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand. Unlike the north-eastern states, here the decline is reflected in rising private school enrollments. Odisha and Chhattisgarh are low private school states but private school enrollment has been steadily rising since 2010.

The shift to government schools is not limited to particular grades or groups of children (Table 1). For instance, it has always been the case that more girls are enrolled in government schools as compared to boys. While this continues to be true in 2021, the proportion of boys enrolled in government schools has also increased from 63% in 2018 to 72% in 2021, narrowing the gender gap.

Table 1: % Children enrolled in government schools by sex & grade

Std	ASER 2018		ASER 2020		ASER 2021	
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Std I-II	57.9	65.1	61.1	66.7	72.0	74.1
Std III-V	62.7	71.2	65.6	73.3	70.9	77.1
Std VI-VIII	65.8	73.3	68.3	77.0	73.4	79.2
Std IX & above	64.6	68.9	69.7	72.7	71.2	74.3
All	62.8	70.0	66.4	73.0	71.9	76.5

There is a third piece to the enrollment picture – paid "tuition" classes. This is a gray area. Data on tuition classes is not easy to find. The ASER survey routinely collects data on tuition, and the trends over time show distinct patterns across India. In the northern and northwestern states like Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, private school incidence is relatively high and tuition-taking is low. In contrast, in the eastern states like West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha, private schooling is low. But even for young children, going to "tuition" is a major feature of the educational landscape. In 2018, well over 50% of children of school going age in Odisha, Bihar and West Bengal were taking some form of tuition classes. In 2021, this figure has crossed 60% in Odisha and well over 70% in Bihar and West Bengal. In fact, the incidence of tuition has increased across almost all states – perhaps a natural response to prolonged school closure. It is curious that while economic disruptions may have moved children out of private schools (in fact, in many cases the pandemic destroyed the economy of low cost private schools), parents were still able to access tuition classes where they had to pay fees. This may be due to the fact that tuition classes are a local phenomenon where payment may adjust flexibly and quickly based on demand and supply negotiated between the tutor and the family. It is clear that the large and growing "tuition" sector needs to be better understood in terms of its role in education provision and learning support in rural India. The decisions to open or shut government schools are taken by authorities at district or state level with school teachers having no say in

[4] https://www.unicef.org/globalinsight/reports/implications-covid-19-low-cost-private-schools

when or how school reopening can happen. But for the tuition sector, all decisions are local, flexible and can be immediate; these classes open or shut easily in responding instantly to local conditions with different waves of the pandemic.

This increased demand for public education in rural India, while it may be temporary, driven by financial distress and migration, does throw up several important questions.

First, we know that enrollment does not always translate to attendance. Even before the pandemic struck, we had wide variations in daily attendance across states. In states like UP and Bihar, on an average day, children's attendance was only 60% or sometimes even below. In reopened schools, staggered attendance patterns are being planned. Some schools are establishing new norms that only 50% children will come on any given day. Private schools are giving options of online or in-person instruction. This fluid situation is going to make it difficult to track attendance closely even after schools have reopened. Without regular attendance, effective instruction is difficult. School entitlements like mid-day meal, uniform and scholarships may have greater value in times of economic hardship and disruption. It is possible that while enrollment of older children, especially girls, has not dipped significantly, their daily attendance may be affected.

Second, are government schools and teachers equipped to deal with this influx of students, especially after a period of prolonged school closures with children coming back to school with large learning deficits? School teachers in reopened schools surveyed in ASER 2021 were asked about the activities they were doing in their classrooms and the challenges they faced in their teaching. Close to 75% said that they were following the curriculum of the current class, though 50% also said that they were revising material from last year's curriculum. A child who was in Std I in March 2020, would be in Std III when schools reopened in 2021. During this period when schools were closed, they have had limited access to learning materials other than textbooks – only about 27.9% children, in government school grades I-II, in 2020, said that they had received any additional learning material from their schools and in 2021 this figure was marginally higher at 31.5%. Can we expect such children to suddenly cope with Std III curriculum when they come back to school? Not surprisingly, a majority of the teachers facing challenges in teaching said that children were unable to catch up with the curriculum (65.4%).

Then there is the question of resourcing. Take the case of Uttar Pradesh, for example, where the increase in government school enrollment was the largest at 13.2 percentage points. According to ASER 2018, in over 60% Uttar Pradesh government primary school children were sitting in multi-grade classrooms. This could be due to a lack of space and/or teachers. In addition, only 12% children in Std III could read at Std II level and 11% could do a simple Std II level subtraction problem. When children come back to school after one and a half years of no formal instruction, these learning deficits are going to be much deeper and teachers will be dealing with more children than they were when schools shut down. How are we going to equip them to deal with a huge learning crisis accompanied by an influx of students? The usual brief of "follow the curriculum" will only exacerbate the problem and even more children will fall behind.

Whether at a micro level, school by school or at a macro level, state by state, for the remainder of the school year, it will be critical to track enrollment, attendance and learning. The fluidity of the current situation (when schools are open and when they are closed, when who is supposed to come to school and when they are not) will make this task very challenging. But it will only be by closely watching the situation day by day, with eyes close to the ground, that effective forward planning for the next school year can be done.

The foundational stage needs to be a priority on the ground, not just in policy

Suman Bhattacharjea[1]

In a world still reeling from the aftermath of COVID-19, we hear the 'build back better' slogan frequently. In the education sector, there has been extensive discussion in India and abroad about how best to address the likely impacts on children's enrollment in school as well as on the envisaged 'learning loss' due to school closures – which in the case of India lasted a year and a half, a very long time in the life of a child. But large scale, representative data measuring these impacts has been scarce.

ASER 2021 suggests that even as schools reopen, we have an uphill battle ahead of us.

On the positive side, ASER 2021 shows that families have not lost their faith in education. Despite COVID-19, school enrollments have not suffered much although enrollment patterns have shifted. Even today, only 4.6% children in the age group 6-14 years are not currently enrolled. And among enrolled children, across all school grades, almost 92% of children have textbooks for their current grade. This was always a noteworthy accomplishment in a country the size of ours; but for this to be the case after a year and a half of enormous disruptions is even more remarkable. It is worth recalling that even a year ago, ASER 2020 noted that most children had textbooks. At the time, this proportion was substantially higher for children in government schools than for their counterparts in private schools. As schools reopen in 2021, the proportion of children who have textbooks for their current grade is very high across both government and private schools.

So, most children are enrolled, and most enrolled children have textbooks at home. This is indeed good news. However, other trends suggested by the ASER 2021 data are more worrisome.

In 2020, when schools were closed, ASER found that barely one third of all enrolled children were receiving learning materials and activities from their schools (35.6%). A year later, among children whose schools had yet to reopen, this number had barely changed: just 39.8% had received any type of learning materials or activities from their school during the reference week; the proportion was lower in government schools (37.6%) than in private ones (46.9%). It seems that even eighteen months later, the education system has not been able to put in place effective mechanisms for reaching out systematically to children when schools are unable to hold in person classes, which means that the vast majority of children have spent a year and a half without much engagement with educational content. While there is considerable variation in states' ability to reach out to their students, very few states seem to have had major success in this respect. Among states where schools had not reopened at the time of the survey, across Std I-VIII, only 5 of the major states saw more than 50% of households reporting having received learning materials and activities for children (Table 1).

Table 1: Households with children in Std I-VIII reporting receipt of learning materials/activities when schools had not reopened (%). Government schools, selected states.

Assam	39.4
Gujarat	74.6
Himachal Pradesh	84.9
Jharkhand	20.8
Kerala	74.3
Maharashtra	50.1
Odisha	36.0
Tamil Nadu	55.4
West Bengal	29.8
All India	**38.2**

It is possible that because ASER 2021 was taking place in the run up to school reopening, schools were busy gearing up to get their students back in the classroom, and were therefore unable to simultaneously ensure continuity and regularity in remote contact with children. Among children whose schools had reopened, a higher proportion had indeed received materials and/or activities to do at home. But this difference is visible primarily because students who are back in school often reported being given homework by their teachers – a mechanism that does not rely on a technology interface and therefore removes a major barrier for the many students who have no access or limited access to smartphones.

As schools reopen, the situation with the youngest learners in early primary grades requires urgent thought and attention. Even without a measurement of learning outcomes, their situation should set off loud alarm bells.

First, the relatively high proportion of children currently not in school is driven mainly by this age group, as was the case

[1]Director of Research, ASER Centre

in 2020. Among 5-8-year-olds, the proportion of children not currently enrolled is 7.2%, much higher than the corresponding proportion among older children and almost the same as in 2020 (7.5%) (Table 2). This year too, the proportion of children not currently enrolled is highest among 5-year-olds, reaching more than 14% in both 2020 and 2021. These data point to a critical task ahead – that of ensuring that young children enrol in pre-school and school. It may be that many 5- and 6-year-olds are simply awaiting admission, as is the case every year. But this year is not a normal year, and getting these young children into school is urgent: they have already missed many months of engagement during the critical period of maximum brain development, and once this period is over, the opportunity to help them build firm foundations during the vital early years will be lost.

Table 2: Current enrollment status of children aged 5-8 (%)

Age	Pre-school			School			Not in pre-school or school	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt LKG/UKG	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 5	23.1	5.4	11.4	34.2	10.7	0.6	14.6	100
Age 6	4.9	3.3	6.2	59.6	18.4	0.6	7.1	100
Age 7	1.0	1.1	2.8	66.9	22.5	0.7	5.0	100
Age 8	0.4	0.3	0.8	68.8	25.0	0.5	4.4	100
Age 5-8	6.1	2.3	4.7	59.3	19.9	0.6	7.2	100

What about the young children currently enrolled in school? Unlike earlier editions, in both 2020 and 2021 ASER limited data collection to children aged 5 to 16; we therefore don't have information about 3- and 4-year-olds, who also fall within the purview of India's new National Education Policy. ASER 2021 data shows that among the 5- and 6-year-olds, there is a big increase in the proportion enrolled in government schools – a jump of about 12 percentage points over 2018 levels. In 2018, 22.4% of 5-year-olds were enrolled in government schools; that proportion is 34.2% today. Among 6-year-olds, 47.7% were enrolled in government schools in 2018, versus 59.6% today. These data suggest a major expansion in government school enrollments in the early grades - a trend suggested by the ASER 2021 school survey as well, where more than 70% of the relevant school respondents in schools that had reopened for students reported observing increases in Std I and II enrollments that went beyond the usual fluctuations in enrollment that are observed from year to year.

Table 3: Children in Std I and II who have never attended in-person classes since admission to Std I (%)

Std	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I	39.6	34.9	38.3
Std II	33.6	32.0	33.2
Std I & II	36.8	33.6	35.9

At the same time, about one in every three children in Std I and II has never attended in person school before – a slightly higher proportion among children enrolled in government schools and a slightly lower one among those in private schools (Table 3). Given the timeline of the pandemic, the incoming cohort of children in Std I is unlikely to have attended any pre-primary class before beginning primary school. Entry to the world of formal education can be a difficult process at the best of times, but the challenges these young children face as learners are therefore likely to be far more complex than would have been the case in pre-pandemic times.

ASER 2021 data suggests that schools need to pay close attention to these issues.

For one thing, while smartphone ownership has risen dramatically over the last few years, children's access is often quite limited, especially among the youngest learners who have the least access to technology. Almost a third of all children in Std I and II did not have a smartphone available at home. Not surprisingly, therefore, among children in these grades whose schools had yet to reopen, just about a third of surveyed households reported receiving materials and activities from school, and even fewer had had some form of contact with teachers to discuss children's learning (28.5%). The proportion of families who had some contact with teachers was heavily skewed towards better off families, as proxied by parental education levels.

At the same time, as the effects of the pandemic begin to dissipate and the economy opens up, the learning support provided by families has also decreased. ASER 2020 had reported enormous engagement from families – parents and older

siblings – in trying to ensure that children continued to learn, with three quarters of all children receiving support at home. Overall this proportion has dropped to two thirds of all children, mainly on account of less support from fathers. But it is worth noting that even in 2021, support from families has dropped primarily for children in higher grades. For children in Std I and II, across government and private schools almost three quarters of children continued to receive learning support from family members, usually parents.

The consequences of not designing mechanisms to address the situation of the youngest learners will be extremely grave, not only for individual children but for school systems as a whole. ASER has been reporting inadequate foundational skills among school-going children for more than 15 years now. Although ASER 2021 was unable to do a learning assessment of sampled children, a state-wide assessment was conducted earlier this year in Karnataka – the only state where it has been possible to conduct a field-based ASER, including a learning assessment, since the pandemic began. The fieldwork was done in March 2021, just ahead of the second wave of COVID-related shutdowns. The data on children's foundational reading and arithmetic abilities was alarming even then, and it would be another six months before schools finally began to reopen across the country.[2]

Covering almost 20,000 children age 5-16 across 24 of Karnataka's 30 districts, the learning data shows steep drops in children's foundational skills, particularly in lower primary grades when these foundations are often still shaky. In reading, for example, the proportion of children in Std II in government schools who were as yet unable to read even letters ('beginner' level) had increased by 13 percentage points over 2018 levels. The proportion of children in Std III who could read at least Std I level text had fallen sharply, from 41.8% to 24.2% over the same period (Table 4). In arithmetic, the proportion of children in Std II at beginner level had doubled since 2018 (Table 5).

Table 4: Trends over time: Reading ability in Std I, Std II and Std III. Karnataka, ASER 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020.

Year	% Children who are at beginner level (Govt schools)		% Children who can read at least Std I level text (Govt schools)
	Std I	Std II	Std III
2014	52.9	25.9	41.0
2016	51.6	24.2	37.9
2018	45.6	19.1	41.8
2020	60.9	32.6	24.2

Table 5. Trends over time: Arithmetic ability in Std I, Std II and Std III. Karnataka, ASER 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020

Year	% Children who are at beginner level (Govt schools)		% Children who can at least recognise double digit numbers 11-99 (Govt schools)
	Std I	Std II	Std III
2014	43.2	19.3	75.3
2016	41.2	15.9	74.7
2018	35.5	12.8	78.3
2020	48.1	25.0	60.7

There are ways in which schools can act to ensure that going forward these dreadful outcomes are mitigated for children across the country. The first is to speed up mechanisms for finding and enrolling children who are not currently enrolled, so that young children can avail of critical inputs during this vital phase in their development. Since almost all enrolled children have access to textbooks, once brought into the system they will have at least some amount of learning material at hand, although much more can surely be done. Equally importantly, families of the youngest children have demonstrated their willingness and ability to support their children's education, even once schools begin to open. It would be a terrible shame if this huge opportunity to bring parents on board as important actors in their children's education is wasted. Failing immediate measures to address the needs of our youngest learners, ASER data on learning outcomes may be even worse in future years than it has been over the last decade and a half.

[2] For details of the ASER 2020 Karnataka findings, see http://www.asercentre.org/p/392.html

About ASER 2021

Sample Design

Since 2005, ASER has been providing comparable estimates of learning and schooling at the elementary stage. ASER was done on an annual basis from 2005 to 2014 and on a biennial basis from 2016 onwards. Given this schedule, it was due to be conducted in 2020.

While the design, training, monitoring and data analysis of ASER is done by ASER and Pratham teams, the actual survey is done by volunteers in the field. The first lockdown due to the COVID pandemic commenced on March 22, 2020 and was extended multiple times in a variety of ways. As a result, it was not possible to conduct a field survey in 2020, and especially not with volunteers.

ASER 2020 was therefore conducted as a phone survey during September 2020, focusing on children's access to learning materials during the period when schools were still closed. After the far worse second wave of the pandemic in March-April 2021, it was decided that ASER 2021 would be conducted in September 2021, a year later, as schools in India were starting to reopen after 18 months of closures. The phone survey format was retained given that despite COVID infections declining across the country, it was still not safe to send volunteers into the field to interact with families and children.

Since ASER presents estimates representative at various geographic levels, 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.

Therefore, the ASER 2020 sample, that is representative at the state and national levels, was drawn using the ASER 2018 sample as a frame. The two-stage sample design of ASER is particularly suited for this purpose as the new sample would add another stage of sampling to the sample design. Further, with 90% mobile coverage the extent of the self-selection bias due to uncovered populations would be limited. 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 were not reachable. However, pan-India pilots suggested a fairly good reach (about 70%) and extensive experiments were also conducted to validate the frame.

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]

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 and a total of about 120,000 households across the country. However, as mentioned earlier, since the frame of mobile numbers was 2 years old, the ASER 2020 survey could connect with only about 60% of sampled households.[4]

Therefore, ASER 2021 doubled the sample size adding an additional 7 households per district to give a sample size of 420 households per district and a total of about 200,000 households across all rural districts of the country. 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 2021 is the rural household population of India.

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[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.

[4] See ASER 2020 Report for Sample Coverage details.

To summarise, ASER 2021 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, 14 households with mobile phones are sampled from the 20 selected households in each of the 30 sampled villages in each rural district. In each household selected in the third stage, parents are asked about all children in the age group of 5-16 years resident in the household.

ASER 2021 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 420 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.[5]

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 2021 adds another stage of sampling based on mobile phone coverage, the sample is no longer self-weighting; rather, weights differ across villages.[6] All estimates at the state and national levels are weighted, since states have a different number of districts and villages which vary by population.

Every year, ASER surveyors also visit the largest government primary or upper primary school in each sampled village, to record data on attendance as well as provision and usability of facilities. In each visited school, the phone number of the head teacher or a teacher is recorded for monitoring purposes. In ASER 2021, the entire ASER 2018 school sample was retained.

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

[6] 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 n_v is the number of villages sampled in the district in the first stage, $vpop_i$ is the household population of village i, $dpop$ is the number of households in the district, n_{hi} is the number of households sampled in the village in the second stage, n_{him} is the number of households who have a mobile phone in the second stage sample and n_{hi3} 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.

Timeline

June

- Existing international and national research on remote education and learning reviewed
- State-wise notifications and news regarding remote learning and school reopening tracked

July

- Multiple rounds of pilots conducted
- Questions and administration of household and school survey questionnaires refined

August

- First complete versions of the household and school survey questionnaires piloted by ASER state teams
- Questionnaires piloted by volunteers from local partners in 8 states to ensure feasibility as a citizen-led survey

September

- ASER central team, state teams and Master Trainers trained via Zoom on the ASER 2021 questionnaires and process in a national workshop
- Volunteers of local organisations trained in person or virtually by Master Trainers in simultaneous regional training workshops across the country

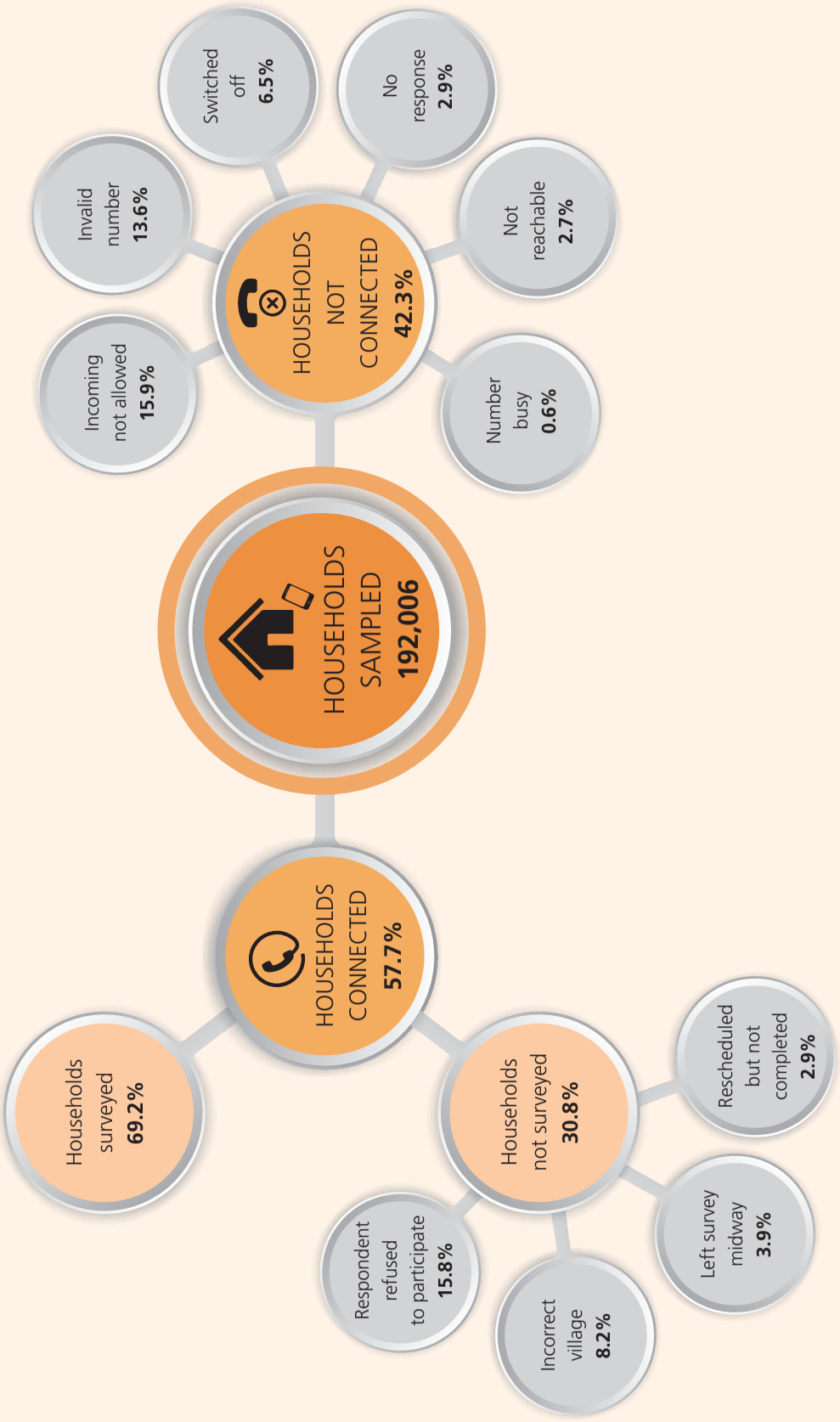
October

- Survey roll-out: Survey conducted in 581 districts across 25 states and 3 UTs
- Monitoring: Survey monitored by ASER teams and Master Trainers in real time through phone calls, checking of filled formats and tracking of survey progress dashboard
- Phone recheck: Some households and schools selected both randomly and purposively for phone recheck

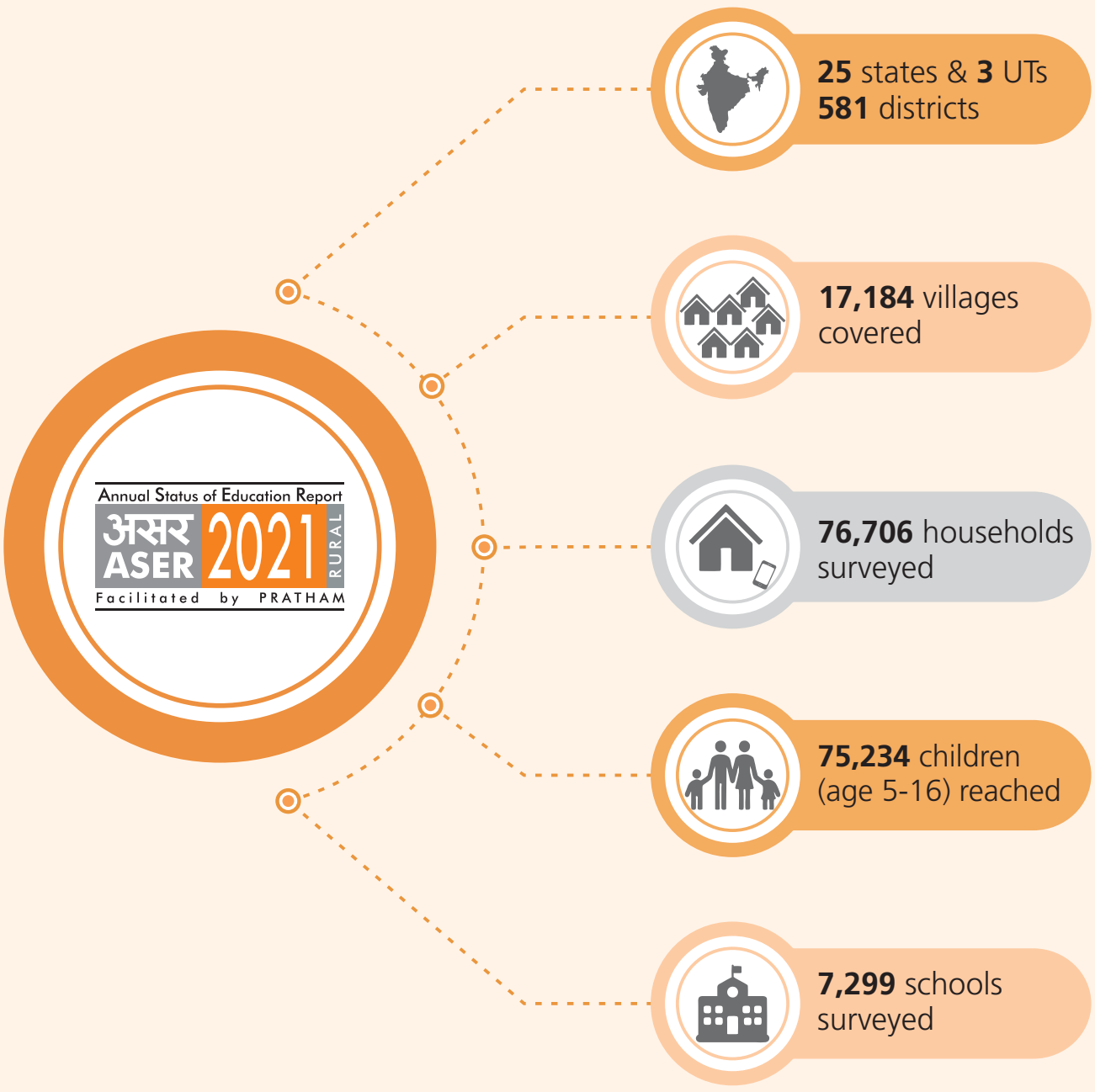
November

ASER 2021 report released

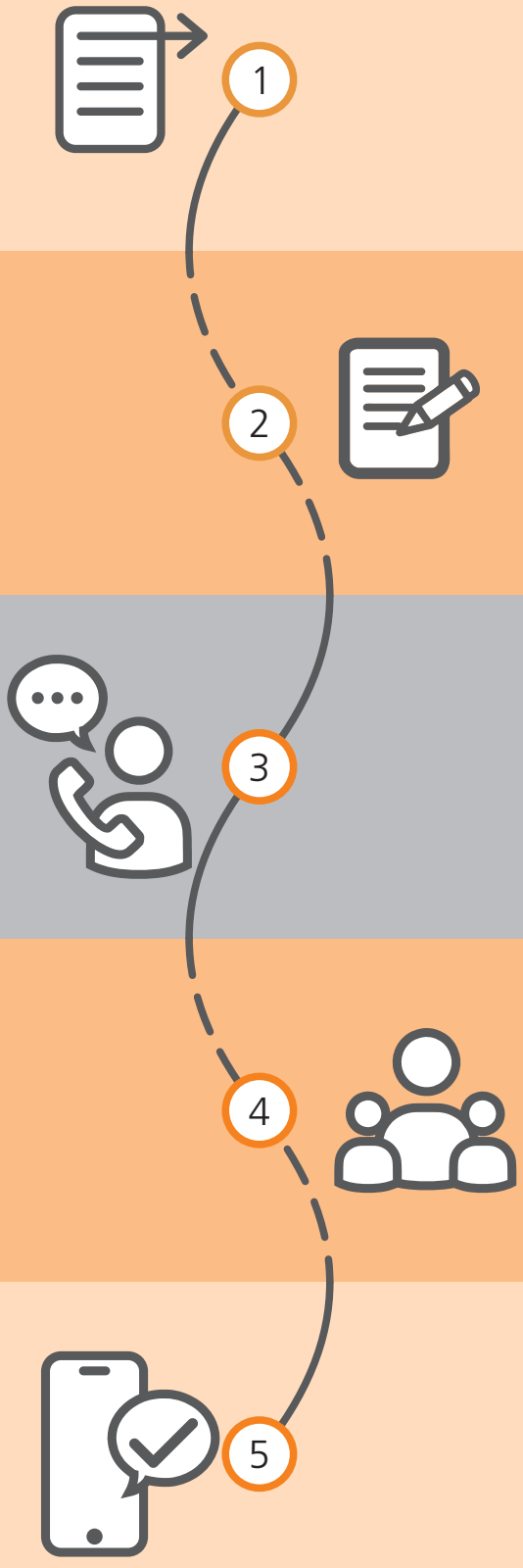
Survey Call Summary



Survey Coverage



Survey Process Summary



STARTING THE SURVEY

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

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 Sheets. She also makes additional attempts to numbers that do not connect in the first attempt, at different time intervals.

TALKING TO RESPONDENTS

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

ADMINISTERING THE HOUSEHOLD AND SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRES

Surveyor administers either the household questionnaire to parents/caregivers of children aged 5-16 in sampled households, or the school questionnaire to the head teacher/teacher of sampled schools. She records their answers in the appropriate format.

DATA ENTRY AND RECHECK

Surveyor enters the data from the Call Log Sheet and the Household or School Survey Sheets into the mobile app for the survey. She then sends the formats for recheck. Thereafter, the ASER state and central teams perform various quality checks.

Sample Description

State	Census 2011 Districts	ASER 2021									
		Surveyed Districts	Surveyed Villages	Sampled Households	Households Connected	Surveyed Households	Children age 5-16	Std I-II	Std III-V	Std VI-VIII	Std IX-XII
Andhra Pradesh	13	13	390	4442	3039	2367	1507	223	375	421	304
Arunachal Pradesh	16	8	229	2256	958	496	524	91	150	126	88
Assam	27	26	749	8511	4249	3047	2660	476	714	753	473
Bihar	38	38	1139	13113	6629	3590	4832	869	1164	1161	961
Chhattisgarh	18	16	473	4972	2433	1561	1630	292	432	424	374
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1	28	309	207	91	62	11	14	13	14
Daman & Diu	2	2	17	278	179	135	109	16	41	32	17
Gujarat	26	26	775	8217	5718	4310	2610	533	901	639	385
Haryana	21	21	628	7222	5039	3099	2839	431	742	766	680
Himachal Pradesh	12	12	358	4587	2810	2145	2106	281	548	588	597
Jammu & Kashmir	22	13	348	3913	2348	1640	2201	350	557	563	445
Jharkhand	24	24	716	7189	3101	1881	2535	461	631	648	497
Karnataka	30	30	890	10456	6658	4841	5078	804	1224	1634	1130
Kerala	14	12	351	3904	2913	1889	892	105	218	255	221
Madhya Pradesh	50	50	1499	15769	8320	5742	6657	1022	1703	1773	1605
Maharashtra	33	33	990	11281	6349	4242	4023	674	1050	1208	869
Manipur	9	9	257	2996	1519	1191	1762	250	388	413	291
Meghalaya	7	7	204	1787	759	547	837	148	246	207	87
Nagaland	11	11	319	3693	2102	1733	1641	263	382	385	203
Odisha	30	30	878	9086	4333	3166	3123	478	810	871	718
Puducherry	2	2	55	626	440	336	187	19	46	63	51
Punjab	20	20	596	7370	4995	3878	2493	415	584	644	618
Rajasthan	33	33	989	11018	6793	4961	5380	858	1425	1448	1264
Tamil Nadu	31	31	923	10757	7193	5122	3923	491	950	1187	1158
Telangana	9	9	270	3254	2198	1631	1115	191	274	281	195
Tripura	4	4	120	1369	694	539	359	77	85	97	66
Uttarakhand	13	13	383	4064	2185	1239	1030	126	270	267	258
Uttar Pradesh	71	70	2100	23742	13139	8808	10969	2051	2911	2635	1892
West Bengal	18	17	510	5825	3524	2479	2150	453	579	562	332
All India	**605**	**581**	**17184**	**192006**	**110824**	**76706**	**75234**	**12459**	**19414**	**20064**	**15793**

*State/UT estimates for Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry 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 & Kashmir have been presented in a combined form for comparability with ASER estimates of previous years.
****ASER 2021 was not conducted in Goa, Sikkim and Mizoram.

Household Survey
Major Findings

India RURAL

Analysis based on data from households. 581 out of 619 districts
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

Clear shift in enrollment from private to government schools

Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

Age group and sex	ASER 2018					ASER 2020					ASER 2021				
	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not enrolled	Total	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not enrolled	Total	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not enrolled	Total
Age 6-14: All	64.3	32.5	0.7	2.5	100	65.8	28.8	0.8	4.6	100	70.3	24.4	0.7	4.6	100
Age 7-16: All	63.1	32.3	0.7	3.9	100	65.5	28.6	0.7	5.2	100	69.9	24.7	0.7	4.7	100
Age 7-10: All	64.4	33.5	0.7	1.4	100	64.3	30.5	0.8	4.4	100	70.3	24.8	0.6	4.4	100
Age 7-10: Boys	60.6	37.4	0.7	1.4	100	60.9	33.6	0.8	4.7	100	67.9	26.9	0.5	4.7	100
Age 7-10: Girls	68.4	29.5	0.7	1.4	100	68.1	27.0	0.8	4.1	100	72.8	22.3	0.7	4.1	100
Age 11-14: All	64.1	32.0	0.8	3.2	100	68.0	27.4	0.7	3.9	100	70.5	24.5	0.8	4.1	100
Age 11-14: Boys	60.5	35.9	0.7	2.9	100	64.5	30.9	0.7	3.9	100	67.5	27.3	0.9	4.3	100
Age 11-14: Girls	67.6	28.0	0.8	3.6	100	71.9	23.5	0.7	3.9	100	73.9	21.5	0.7	3.9	100
Age 15-16: All	57.4	29.9	0.6	12.1	100	62.1	27.3	0.6	9.9	100	67.4	25.2	0.9	6.6	100
Age 15-16: Boys	55.9	32.2	0.5	11.5	100	60.8	29.7	0.8	8.8	100	66.7	26.3	0.9	6.1	100
Age 15-16: Girls	58.9	27.8	0.7	12.6	100	63.6	24.8	0.5	11.1	100	68.1	24.0	0.8	7.1	100

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

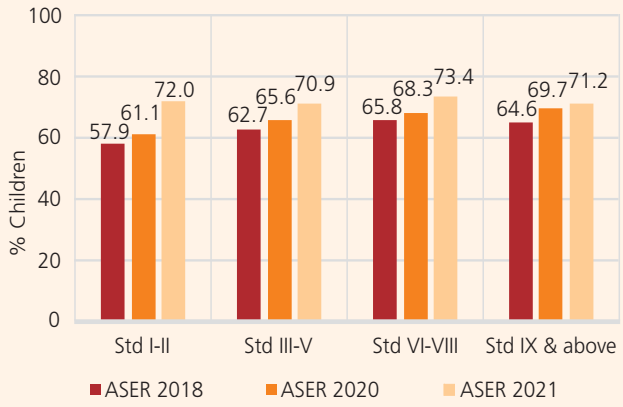
Table 1 summarises enrollment data for different groups of children for 2021, 2020 and 2018. For children in the age group 6-14, enrollment in private schools has decreased from 32.5% in 2018 to 24.4% in 2021. A corresponding increase is visible in both government school enrollments as well as in the proportion of children not currently enrolled. Among older children in the age group 15-16, an increase in government school enrollment of 10 percentage points over 2018 levels is driven by significant declines in the proportion of out of school children in this age group, as well as by decreasing private school enrollments.

Among enrolled children, grade-wise patterns show similar trends. There has been a clear shift from private to government schools between 2018 and 2021, in all grades and among both boys and girls. The increase is most striking among children enrolled in the lowest grades (Table 2, Chart 1). For example, among boys enrolled in Std I-II, enrollment in government schools increased by more than 10 percentage points from 2020 to 2021. Overall, less than 30% of all enrolled children are enrolled in private schools, and boys are more likely to be enrolled in private schools than girls.

Table 2: % Girls enrolled in Govt school. By grade. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

Std	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Std I-II	65.1	66.7	74.1
Std III-V	71.2	73.3	77.1
Std VI-VIII	73.3	77.0	79.2
Std IX & above	68.9	72.7	74.3
All	70.0	73.0	76.5

Chart 1: % Boys enrolled in Govt school. By grade. 2018, 2020 and 2021*



*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

State-wise trends

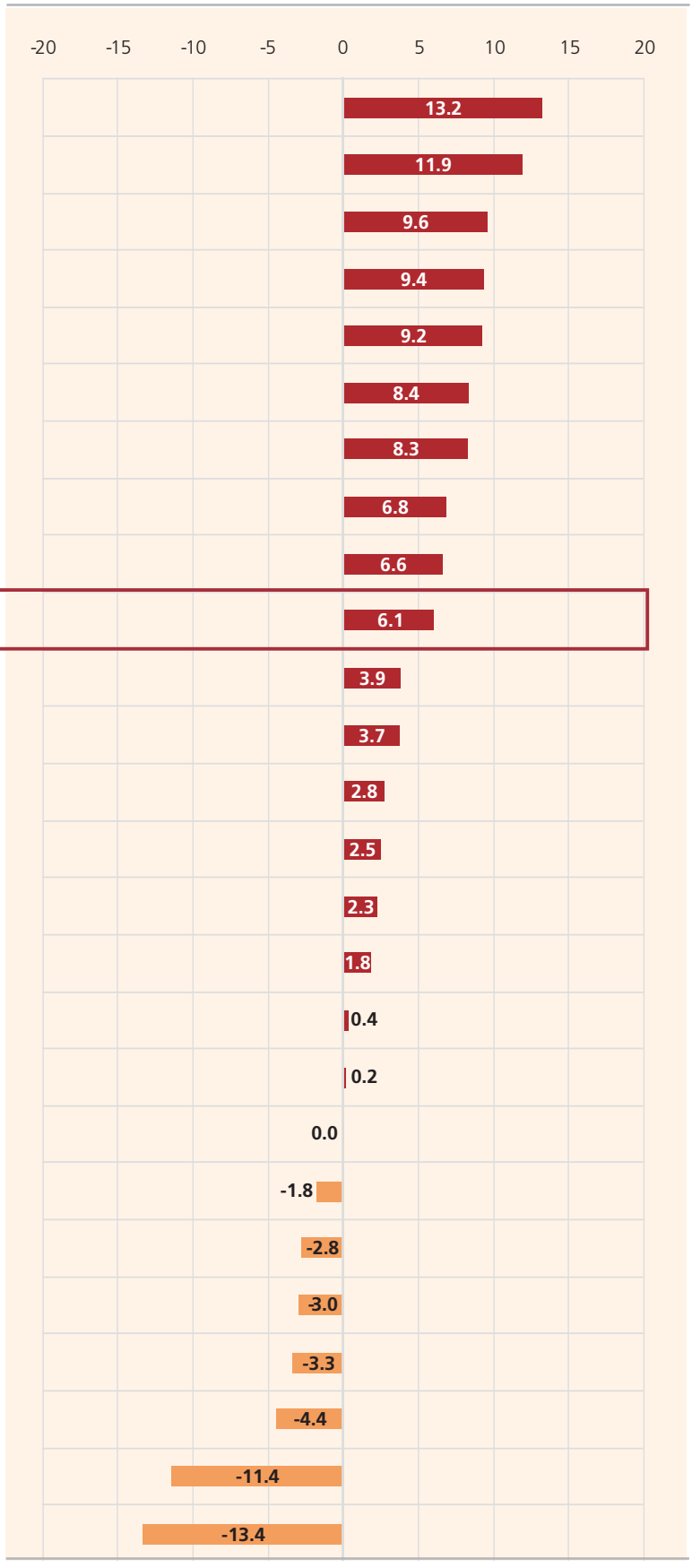
Table 3: % Children aged 6-14 enrolled in Govt school. By state and sex. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

State	ASER 2018			ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Andhra Pradesh	59.0	65.1	62.2	64.4	69.5	66.9	63.7	77.2	70.6
Arunachal Pradesh	53.8	59.0	56.5	49.5	45.2	47.5	53.2	62.7	58.3
Assam	65.4	72.2	68.8	61.1	69.1	64.9	61.1	67.8	64.4
Bihar	73.4	82.0	77.7	73.2	80.9	76.9	78.2	82.9	80.5
Chhattisgarh	73.4	77.8	75.7	64.1	69.9	67.0	70.2	75.5	72.9
Gujarat	83.2	86.9	85.0	83.8	85.7	84.7	86.1	83.9	85.2
Haryana	36.5	47.9	41.8	43.9	50.5	46.9	43.6	53.9	48.3
Himachal Pradesh	55.5	61.8	58.6	49.4	59.6	54.1	55.6	66.7	60.9
Jammu & Kashmir	53.7	61.0	57.3	48.2	57.3	52.3	53.3	58.0	55.5
Jharkhand	72.8	79.5	76.1	69.7	74.7	72.1	75.6	81.8	78.6
Karnataka	65.0	73.7	69.4	66.4	71.1	68.6	76.8	78.6	77.7
Kerala	45.4	50.2	47.9	54.6	67.1	60.9	58.0	61.6	59.8
Madhya Pradesh	63.7	71.2	67.3	60.7	69.9	65.3	63.9	72.0	67.7
Maharashtra	57.8	63.3	60.5	66.5	69.2	67.8	67.1	72.8	69.7
Manipur	25.3	28.3	26.8	11.3	12.1	11.7	12.1	14.8	13.4
Meghalaya	33.4	34.5	34.0	40.8	35.6	37.9	33.3	34.5	33.9
Nagaland	44.8	47.6	46.2	30.3	30.6	30.4	33.6	36.3	34.8
Odisha	85.0	88.4	86.7	78.5	84.5	81.5	82.6	84.9	83.7
Punjab	43.0	49.3	46.0	43.7	49.6	46.4	49.1	57.0	52.8
Rajasthan	54.4	64.4	59.1	52.3	62.2	56.7	64.0	73.6	68.4
Tamil Nadu	63.3	70.0	66.7	58.7	71.1	64.6	73.7	78.8	76.3
Telangana	52.6	60.2	56.4	51.4	58.7	54.8	57.6	62.9	60.0
Uttarakhand	50.9	57.2	53.9	43.4	59.0	50.3	47.3	54.4	50.5
Uttar Pradesh	39.8	46.7	43.1	47.8	51.9	49.7	54.8	58.1	56.3
West Bengal	87.0	88.9	88.0	86.0	90.6	88.3	91.7	92.0	91.8
All India	**60.7**	**68.0**	**64.3**	**62.6**	**69.4**	**65.8**	**67.9**	**73.0**	**70.3**

*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Chart 2: Percentage point change in the proportion of children aged 6-14 enrolled in Govt school between 2018 and 2021*. By state.

State	ASER 2018	ASER 2021
Uttar Pradesh	43.1	56.3
Kerala	47.9	59.8
Tamil Nadu	66.7	76.3
Rajasthan	59.1	68.4
Maharashtra	60.5	69.7
Andhra Pradesh	62.2	70.6
Karnataka	69.4	77.7
Punjab	46.0	52.8
Haryana	41.8	48.3
All India	**64.3**	**70.3**
West Bengal	88.0	91.8
Telangana	56.4	60.0
Bihar	77.7	80.5
Jharkhand	76.1	78.6
Himachal Pradesh	58.6	60.9
Arunachal Pradesh	56.5	58.3
Madhya Pradesh	67.3	67.7
Gujarat	85.0	85.2
Meghalaya	34.0	33.9
Jammu & Kashmir	57.3	55.5
Chhattisgarh	75.7	72.9
Odisha	86.7	83.7
Uttarakhand	53.9	50.5
Assam	68.8	64.4
Nagaland	46.2	34.8
Manipur	26.8	13.4



*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Steady increase in children taking tuition

Table 4: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By grade. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

Std	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Std I-II	24.2	33.2	37.0
Std III-V	27.7	32.9	39.4
Std VI-VIII	28.6	30.7	38.9
Std IX & above	35.5	33.6	41.1
All	28.6	32.5	39.2

Table 5: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By school type. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

School type	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Govt	29.6	33.0	39.5
Pvt	26.7	31.2	38.2
Govt & Pvt	28.6	32.5	39.2

Chart 3: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By sex. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

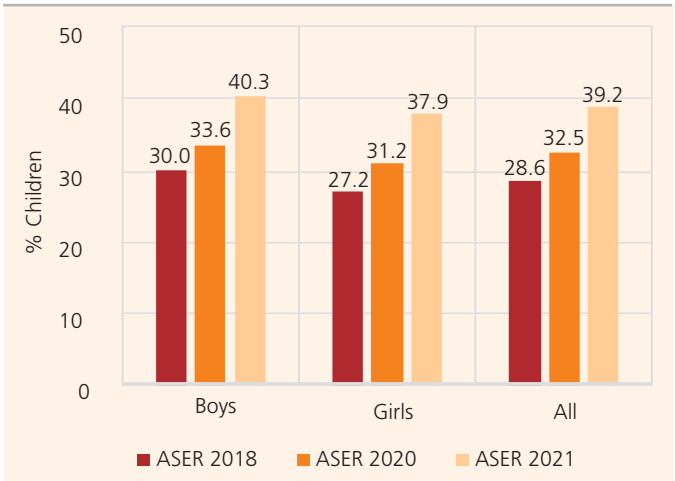
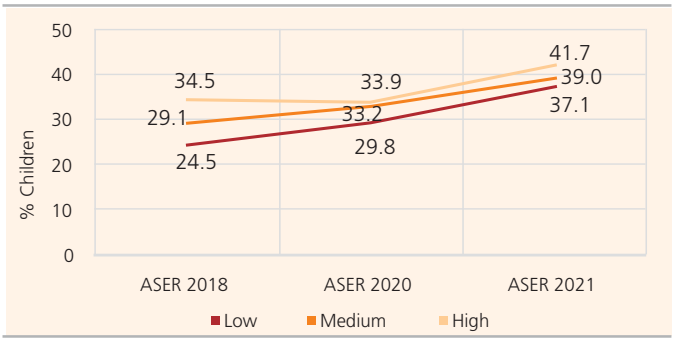


Chart 4: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By parents' education. 2018, 2020 and 2021*



We categorise 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 6: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By grade and school reopening status. 2021

Std	School not reopened	School reopened
Std I-II	37.7	36.6
Std III-V	41.6	38.0
Std VI-VIII	41.6	37.6
Std IX & above	45.7	40.1
All	41.2	38.2

The proportion of children taking tuition has increased from 2018 to 2021, regardless of grade, school type, or sex (Tables 4 and 5, Chart 3). Currently, almost 40% children take paid private tuition classes.

The largest increases in the proportion of children taking tuition are seen among children from the most disadvantaged households. Taking parental education as a proxy for economic status, between 2018 and 2021, the proportion of children with parents in the 'low' education category who are taking tuition increased by 12.6 percentage points, as opposed to a 7.2 percentage point increase among children with parents in the 'high' education category (Chart 4).

Some differences are visible in the proportion of children taking tuition by school reopening status, with tuition classes more common among children whose schools were still closed at the time of the survey. This difference in tuition-taking is larger in higher classes than in lower ones. Among children in Std IX or higher, for example, the difference in tuition taking between children whose schools have not reopened versus those whose schools have reopened is more than five percentage points (Table 6).

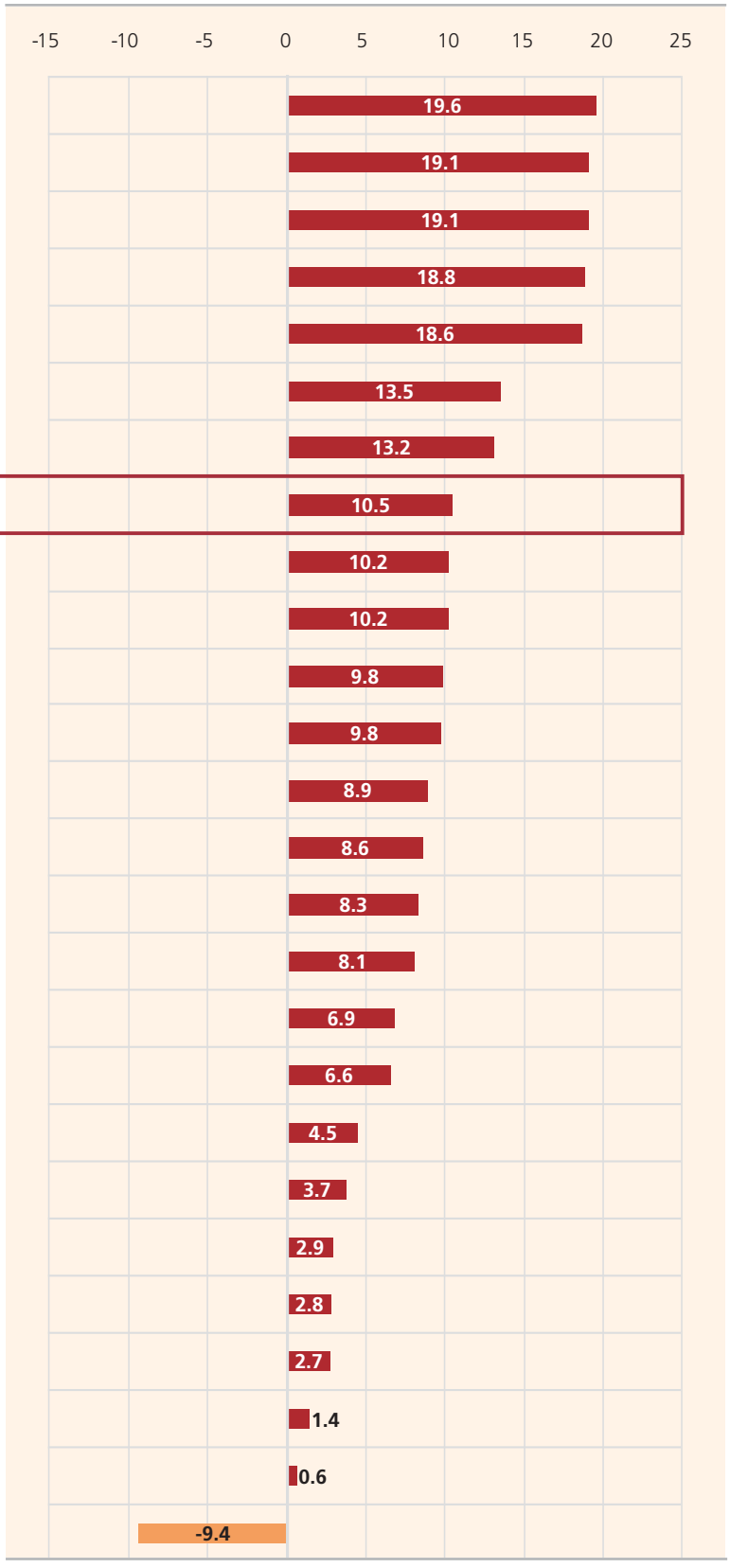
*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 and ASER 2021 estimates.

State-wise trends

Table 7: % Enrolled children taking tuition. By state. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

State	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Arunachal Pradesh	26.6	35.9	46.3
Uttar Pradesh	19.6	32.9	38.7
Nagaland	27.9	23.1	47.0
Gujarat	16.9	23.0	35.7
Jammu & Kashmir	10.3	25.2	28.9
Jharkhand	44.1	52.0	57.6
Madhya Pradesh	14.7	25.3	27.8
All India	**28.6**	**32.5**	**39.2**
Uttarakhand	21.8	29.6	32.1
Rajasthan	5.1	11.9	15.3
Haryana	18.0	37.3	27.8
Karnataka	10.7	8.4	20.5
Chhattisgarh	3.6	5.5	12.5
Odisha	57.5	52.4	66.2
Andhra Pradesh	14.7	4.1	22.9
Bihar	65.4	64.3	73.5
Himachal Pradesh	7.9	10.4	14.7
Maharashtra	14.2	9.3	20.7
Assam	24.7	27.8	29.1
Telangana	5.9	5.3	9.6
Manipur	46.2	32.1	49.1
Punjab	29.7	29.4	32.5
Tamil Nadu	13.9	8.4	16.6
Meghalaya	20.3	11.0	21.7
West Bengal	75.8	73.5	76.5
Kerala	28.2	11.1	18.8

Chart 5: Percentage point change in enrolled children taking tuition between 2018 and 2021*. By state.



*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Smartphone ownership has increased, but children's access remains an issue

Table 8: % Enrolled children who have a smartphone available at home. By school type. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

School type	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Govt	29.6	56.4	63.7
Pvt	49.9	74.2	79.0
Govt & Pvt	36.5	61.8	67.6

Table 9: % Enrolled children with at least one smartphone available at home. By parents' education. 2020 and 2021

Parents' education	ASER 2020		ASER 2021	
	At least one smartphone available at home	Bought a new smartphone for children's education since March 2020	At least one smartphone available at home	Bought a new smartphone for children's education since March 2020
Low	45.1	5.2	52.0	26.8
Medium	60.2	8.8	66.1	27.3
High	78.7	13.0	81.8	29.3
All	61.9	9.1	67.7	27.9

We categorise 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 with access to smartphones. By grade. 2021

Std	% Children					
	At least one smartphone available at home	Of children who have a smartphone available at home, % children able to access it for their studies:				Bought a new phone for children's education since the lockdown began
		Yes, at all times	Yes, sometimes	Not accessible	Total	
Std I-II	64.9	19.9	40.8	39.3	100	19.3
Std III-V	66.6	23.7	47.2	29.0	100	24.6
Std VI-VIII	66.6	27.6	50.2	22.2	100	30.0
Std IX & above	72.6	35.4	47.5	17.0	100	36.4
All	67.6	27.0	47.0	26.1	100	28.0

The availability of smartphones in children's homes has almost doubled from 2018 to 2021, regardless of school type. For example, in 2018, 29.6% of children in government schools had at least one smartphone at home. This proportion increased to 56.4% in 2020 and grew further to 63.7% in 2021 (Table 8).

However, household economic status (proxied here by parents' education level) affects smartphone availability. As parents' education level increases, the likelihood that the household has a smartphone also increases: in 2021, over 80% of children with parents who had studied at least till Std IX had a smartphone available at home, as compared to just over 50% children whose parents had studied till Std V or less (Table 9). Notably, though, even among children with parents in the 'low' education category, over a quarter of households had bought a new smartphone for their children's studies since the lockdown began in March 2020.

Expanding smartphone availability in the household does not automatically translate into children's access to a smartphone. Across all grades, although over two thirds of all enrolled children have a smartphone at home, just over a quarter of these have full access to it for their studies (27%), while close to half have partial access (47%) and the remaining quarter have no access at all (26.1%). There is also a clear pattern by grade, with more children in higher classes having access to a smartphone as compared to children in lower grades. For example, 39.3% children in Std I-II have no access to a smartphone despite having one at home, as opposed to 17% children in Std IX or higher (Table 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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

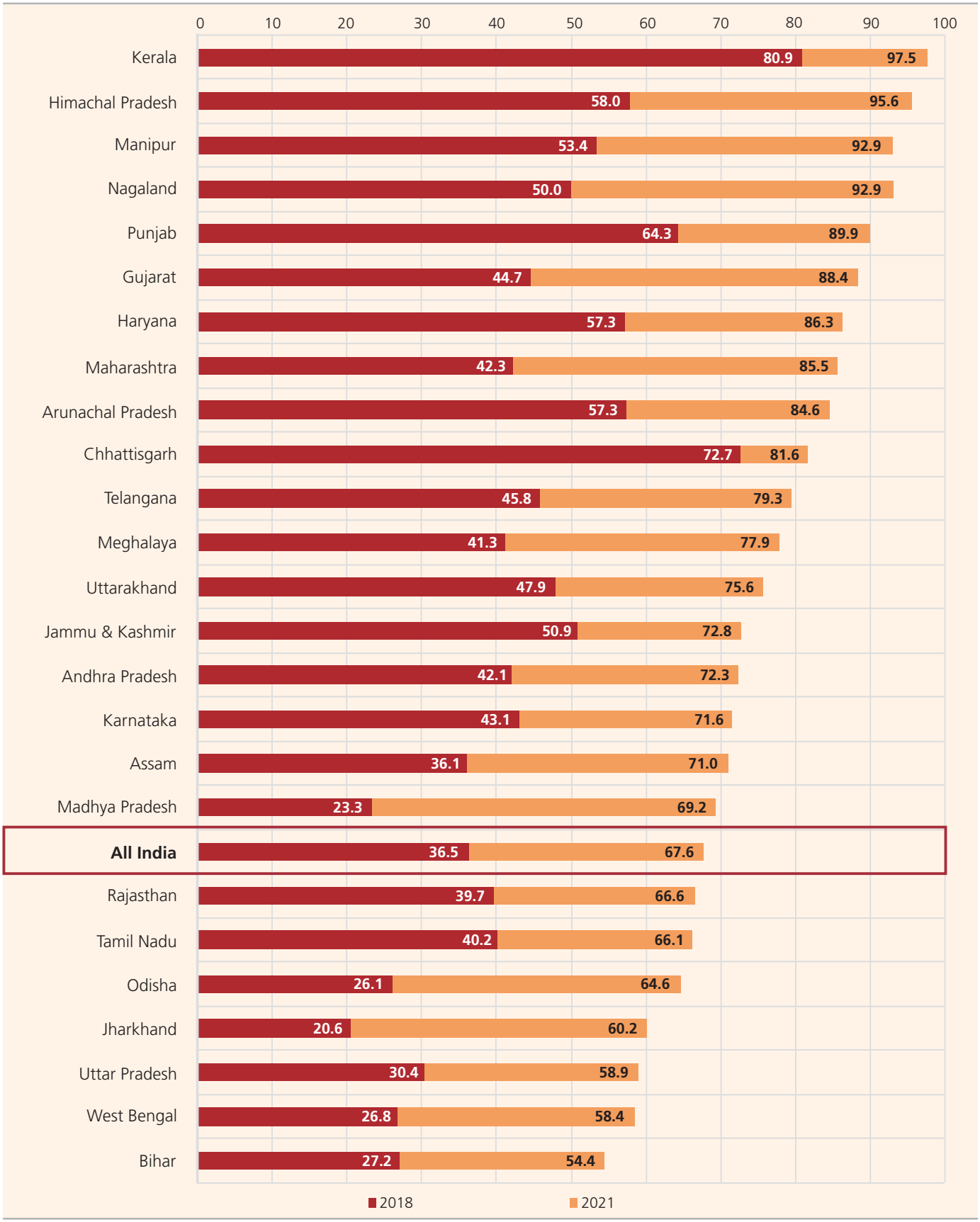
State-wise trends

Table 11: % Enrolled children with a smartphone available at home. By state. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

State	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Andhra Pradesh	42.1	61.5	72.3
Arunachal Pradesh	57.3	81.1	84.6
Assam	36.1	60.7	71.0
Bihar	27.2	51.7	54.4
Chhattisgarh	72.7	75.7	81.6
Gujarat	44.7	84.0	88.4
Haryana	57.3	82.3	86.3
Himachal Pradesh	58.0	90.0	95.6
Jammu & Kashmir	50.9	77.1	72.8
Jharkhand	20.6	50.2	60.2
Karnataka	43.1	68.6	71.6
Kerala	80.9	94.3	97.5
Madhya Pradesh	23.3	62.7	69.2
Maharashtra	42.3	76.3	85.5
Manipur	53.4	84.3	92.9
Meghalaya	41.3	72.0	77.9
Nagaland	50.0	81.8	92.9
Odisha	26.1	49.3	64.6
Punjab	64.3	88.5	89.9
Rajasthan	39.7	62.9	66.6
Tamil Nadu	40.2	64.1	66.1
Telangana	45.8	74.0	79.3
Uttarakhand	47.9	74.7	75.6
Uttar Pradesh	30.4	53.7	58.9
West Bengal	26.8	47.4	58.4
All India	**36.5**	**61.8**	**67.6**

*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Chart 6: % Enrolled children who have a smartphone available at home. By state. 2018 and 2021*

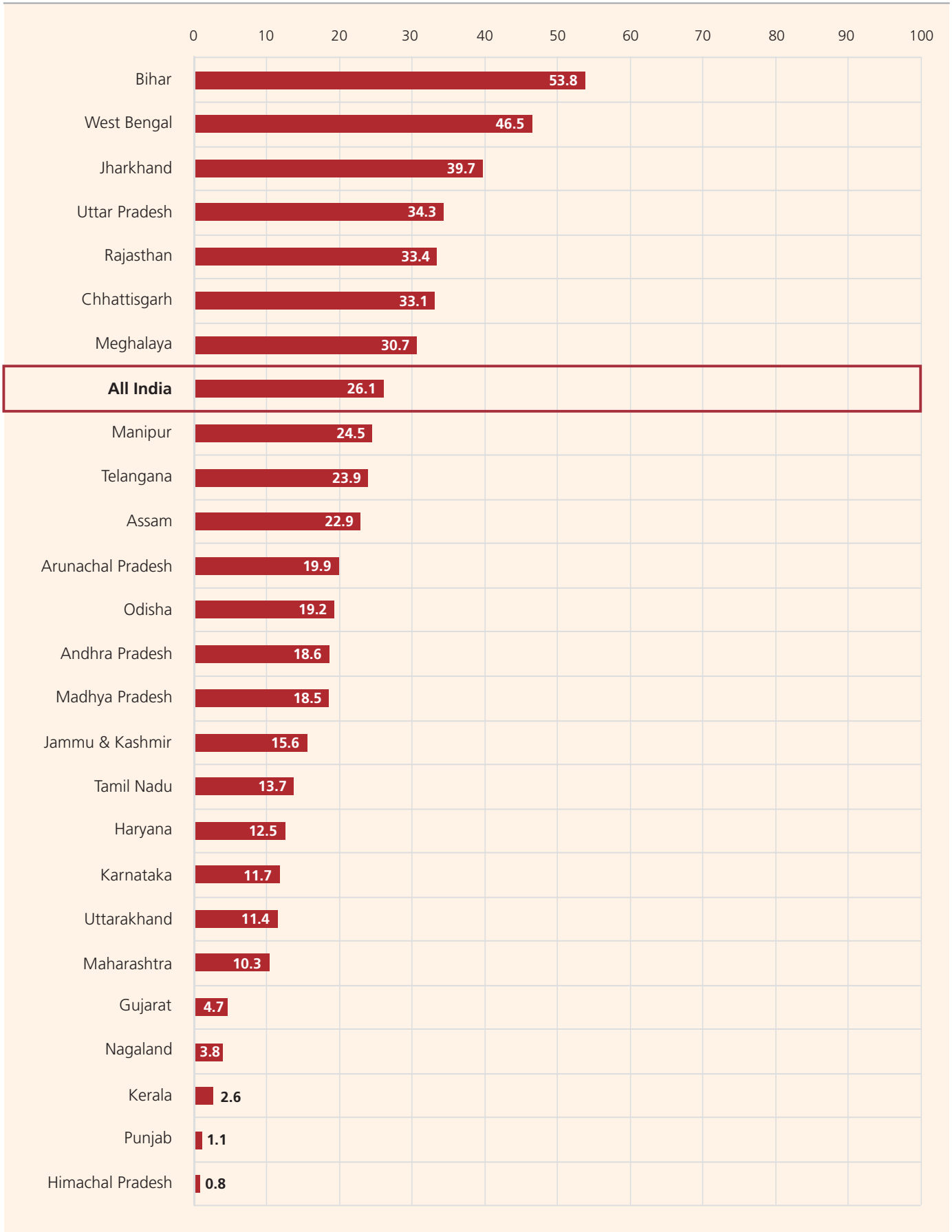


*All estimates from ASER 2018 reported here were generated after excluding households without a mobile phone, in order to make these comparable with the ASER 2020 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Table 12: % Enrolled children with access to smartphones. By state. 2021

State	% Children with at least one smartphone available at home	Of children with a smartphone available at home, % children able to access it for their studies:			
		Yes, at all times	Yes, sometimes	Not accessible	Total
Andhra Pradesh	72.3	35.8	45.7	18.6	100
Arunachal Pradesh	84.6	29.4	50.7	19.9	100
Assam	71.0	25.7	51.4	22.9	100
Bihar	54.4	11.8	34.4	53.8	100
Chhattisgarh	81.6	25.3	41.6	33.1	100
Gujarat	88.4	37.9	57.5	4.7	100
Haryana	86.3	38.4	49.2	12.5	100
Himachal Pradesh	95.6	25.1	74.2	0.8	100
Jammu & Kashmir	72.8	40.1	44.4	15.6	100
Jharkhand	60.2	20.7	39.6	39.7	100
Karnataka	71.6	35.6	52.7	11.7	100
Kerala	97.5	76.2	21.2	2.6	100
Madhya Pradesh	69.2	31.8	49.7	18.5	100
Maharashtra	85.5	27.0	62.7	10.3	100
Manipur	92.9	35.6	39.9	24.5	100
Meghalaya	77.9	35.2	34.2	30.7	100
Nagaland	92.9	55.2	41.0	3.8	100
Odisha	64.6	46.5	34.3	19.2	100
Punjab	89.9	43.2	55.7	1.1	100
Rajasthan	66.6	21.1	45.5	33.4	100
Tamil Nadu	66.1	26.8	59.5	13.7	100
Telangana	79.3	42.2	33.9	23.9	100
Uttarakhand	75.6	31.0	57.6	11.4	100
Uttar Pradesh	58.9	18.7	47.0	34.3	100
West Bengal	58.4	12.8	40.7	46.5	100
All India	**67.6**	**27.0**	**47.0**	**26.1**	**100**

Chart 7: Of enrolled children who have a smartphone available at home, % children who are unable to access it for their studies. By state. 2021



Decrease in learning support at home as schools reopen

Table 13: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and school type. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	78.6	86.7	81.5	71.9	80.8	74.3
Std III-V	75.3	81.7	77.3	68.9	76.9	71.0
Std VI-VIII	70.8	79.1	73.1	63.3	69.7	64.9
Std IX & above	66.9	71.7	68.3	55.3	60.7	56.7
All	72.6	80.0	74.9	64.8	71.9	66.6

Chart 8: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By school reopening status and school type. 2021

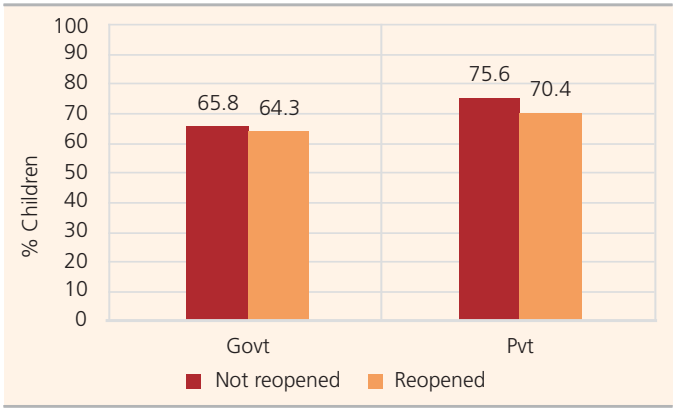


Chart 9: % Enrolled children who receive help while studying at home. By grade and family member. 2020

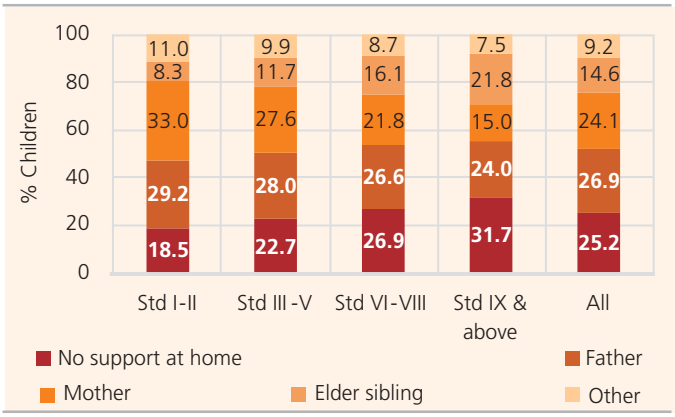


Chart 10: % Enrolled children who receive help while studying at home. By grade and family member. 2021

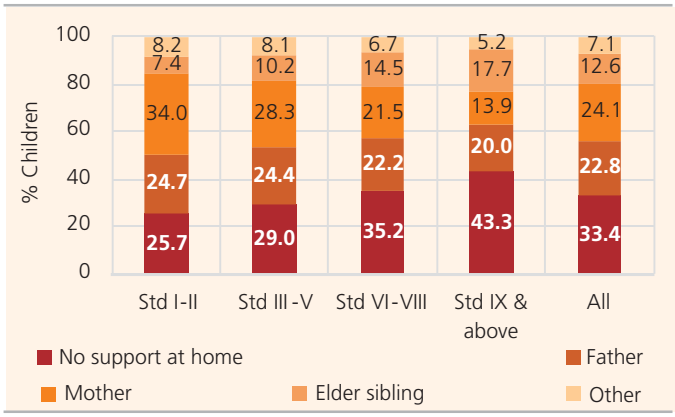


Table 14: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By grade and parents' education. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Std I-II	57.9	82.7	93.6	50.9	75.1	86.2
Std III-V	56.4	79.0	91.6	48.9	72.3	84.0
Std VI-VIII	52.8	75.8	89.1	45.8	66.7	78.3
Std IX & above	53.5	69.4	81.4	43.1	57.8	68.0
All	54.8	76.5	89.4	46.8	67.8	79.9

We categorise 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.

We use the term 'learning support at home' to refer to the effort that families put into helping children with learning activities when they are studying at home, whether or not they are also going to school.

The proportion of enrolled children who receive learning support at home has decreased by almost 8 percentage points for both government and private school going children since 2020, with the sharpest drop visible among children in higher grades (Table 13). Decreasing family involvement is driven by school reopening, with children who had returned to school receiving less help at home than those whose schools remained closed (Chart 8). The reduction in help with studies is driven largely by less support from fathers (Charts 9 and 10).

Help at home is also related to parents' education level. While close to 80% children with parents in the 'high' education category received help at home, this proportion is under 50% for children whose parents have studied up to Std V or less (Table 14).

State-wise trends

Table 15: % Enrolled children who receive help from family members while studying at home. By state and school type. 2021

State	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Andhra Pradesh	57.3	76.1	62.0
Arunachal Pradesh	69.9	75.2	71.7
Assam	70.5	79.9	73.7
Bihar	62.0	76.1	63.8
Chhattisgarh	80.7	90.8	83.1
Gujarat	73.8	75.0	74.0
Haryana	62.4	71.4	66.8
Himachal Pradesh	81.8	90.4	84.8
Jammu & Kashmir	54.6	70.5	60.7
Jharkhand	57.5	72.5	60.3
Karnataka	68.2	75.9	69.8
Kerala	79.7	84.4	81.4
Madhya Pradesh	63.9	71.9	66.1
Maharashtra	71.5	68.4	70.4
Manipur	76.0	79.6	79.0
Meghalaya	69.2	77.3	74.5
Nagaland	73.1	77.2	75.4
Odisha	66.7	77.2	68.2
Punjab	62.9	71.1	66.5
Rajasthan	51.1	56.1	52.4
Tamil Nadu	53.2	68.8	56.6
Telangana	59.4	63.8	60.7
Uttarakhand	67.3	71.9	69.3
Uttar Pradesh	67.9	70.1	68.7
West Bengal	68.5	84.2	69.4
All India	**64.8**	**71.9**	**66.6**

Slight increase in learning materials available for children

Table 16: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By grade and school type. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	79.8	69.7	76.2	88.1	88.1	88.1
Std III-V	85.5	72.0	81.4	92.7	90.5	92.1
Std VI-VIII	86.3	73.7	82.8	94.1	90.9	93.3
Std IX & above	82.7	73.5	80.0	93.2	92.9	93.1
All	84.1	72.2	80.5	92.3	90.7	91.9

Schools yet to reopen

Table 17: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	27.9	35.8	30.8	31.5	39.4	33.5
Std III-V	33.7	40.4	35.8	39.2	46.9	41.0
Std VI-VIII	35.4	42.7	37.4	41.1	50.7	43.0
Std IX & above	34.8	43.4	37.3	36.4	53.9	40.6
All	33.5	40.6	35.6	37.6	46.9	39.8

Schools reopened

Table 18: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week. By grade and school type. 2021

Std	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	40.9	47.9	42.9
Std III-V	44.1	48.3	45.2
Std VI-VIII	45.7	50.7	47.0
Std IX & above	47.9	53.0	49.3
All	45.0	50.2	46.4

Almost all enrolled children have textbooks for their current grade (91.9%). This proportion has increased over the last year, for children enrolled in both government and private schools (Table 16).

Households of enrolled children were asked whether they had received learning materials or activities from the school for children to do at home during the week prior to the survey (the reference week). These could take the form of traditional materials like worksheets in print or virtual form; online or recorded classes; and videos or other activities sent via phone or received in person. For children whose schools had reopened, these materials could also include homework given by the school.[1]

Overall, among enrolled children whose schools had not reopened, 39.8% children received some kind of learning materials or activities (other than textbooks) from their teachers during the reference week. This is a slight increase over 2020, when 35.6% children received learning materials during the corresponding reference week. In both years, a higher percentage of private school children received learning materials/activities as compared to government school children in the same grades (Table 17).

More children whose schools had reopened received learning materials in the reference week as compared to their counterparts whose schools had not reopened, mainly because of the inclusion of homework. Here also, a higher proportion of children in private schools received these materials as compared to those in government schools (Table 18).

[1]The survey was conducted in September 2021, when schools had reopened in some states but not in others. See Annexure 1 for details.

State-wise trends

Table 19: % Enrolled children who have textbooks for their current grade. By state and school type. 2020 and 2021

State	ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Andhra Pradesh	38.5	24.7	34.6	97.5	92.7	96.3
Arunachal Pradesh	75.1	80.3	77.6	93.0	97.7	94.6
Assam	98.2	98.9	98.4	96.0	98.3	96.8
Bihar	74.2	83.8	75.8	88.7	94.6	89.4
Chhattisgarh	87.4	64.9	80.7	97.0	93.4	96.1
Gujarat	95.2	94.0	95.0	93.0	98.0	93.6
Haryana	85.9	89.6	87.7	92.3	97.4	94.8
Himachal Pradesh	96.4	96.2	96.3	97.5	96.9	97.3
Jammu & Kashmir	95.7	97.3	96.4	94.0	97.0	95.1
Jharkhand	78.9	71.6	77.1	90.9	85.2	89.8
Karnataka	93.9	76.0	89.1	83.3	82.7	83.2
Kerala	92.9	90.0	91.9	98.6	94.3	97.1
Madhya Pradesh	89.3	57.2	79.6	92.7	83.9	90.2
Maharashtra	86.0	71.4	80.8	91.0	87.5	89.8
Manipur	99.6	97.2	97.5	93.5	94.5	94.3
Meghalaya	97.5	97.9	97.8	96.9	99.5	98.6
Nagaland	98.0	99.8	99.2	96.5	98.0	97.3
Odisha	88.7	88.0	88.6	95.2	96.3	95.3
Punjab	96.1	95.9	96.0	97.5	99.3	98.3
Rajasthan	70.6	43.0	60.4	91.9	82.6	89.4
Tamil Nadu	93.7	68.1	86.4	95.8	87.7	94.1
Telangana	89.3	37.1	68.1	95.6	87.6	93.2
Uttarakhand	75.6	85.9	80.3	86.0	88.6	87.1
Uttar Pradesh	83.5	74.9	79.6	90.8	92.1	91.3
West Bengal	99.6	100.0	99.7	97.6	97.8	97.7
All India	**84.1**	**72.2**	**80.5**	**92.3**	**90.7**	**91.9**

Household Survey Additional Tables

Enrollment

Table 1: % Children enrolled in school. By age group, sex and school type. 2021

Reference table taken from Major Findings	Age group and sex	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not enrolled	Total
	Age 6-14: All	70.3	24.4	0.7	4.6	100
	Age 7-16: All	69.9	24.7	0.7	4.7	100
	Age 7-10: All	70.3	24.8	0.6	4.4	100
	Age 7-10: Boys	67.9	26.9	0.5	4.7	100
	Age 7-10: Girls	72.8	22.3	0.7	4.1	100
	Age 11-14: All	70.5	24.5	0.8	4.1	100
	Age 11-14: Boys	67.5	27.3	0.9	4.3	100
	Age 11-14: Girls	73.9	21.5	0.7	3.9	100
	Age 15-16: All	67.4	25.2	0.9	6.6	100
	Age 15-16: Boys	66.7	26.3	0.9	6.1	100
	Age 15-16: Girls	68.1	24.0	0.8	7.1	100

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

Table 20: % Children whose schools have reopened. By grade and school type. 2021

Std	% Children whose schools have reopened to attend physically			Of children whose schools have reopned,% children attending school		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	59.1	63.0	60.2	95.1	93.9	94.8
Std III-V	61.2	65.0	62.2	96.2	94.1	95.6
Std VI-VIII	66.2	72.6	67.7	95.2	95.9	95.4
Std IX & above	81.4	84.4	82.2	96.0	97.2	96.3
All	66.8	71.2	67.9	95.7	95.4	95.6

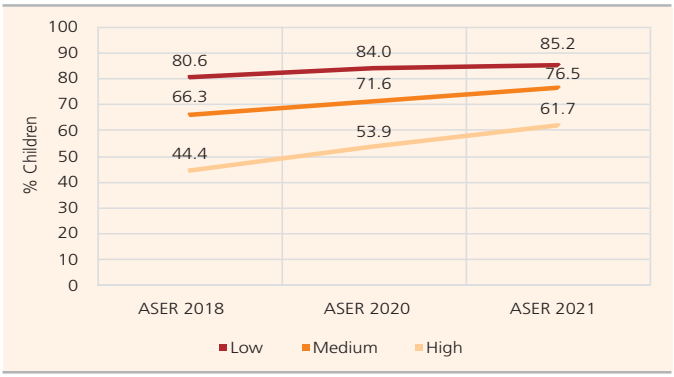
Table 21: % Children not currently enrolled in school. By age group and sex. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

Age group	ASER 2018			ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Age 6-14	2.3	2.6	2.5	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.4	4.6
Age 6-10	1.8	1.8	1.8	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.2	4.9	5.0
Age 11-14	2.9	3.6	3.2	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.3	3.9	4.1
Age 15-16	11.4	12.6	12.0	8.8	11.1	9.9	6.1	7.1	6.6
All	3.7	4.2	4.0	5.3	5.7	5.5	5.0	4.9	4.9

Table 22: Distribution of enrolled children by parents' education. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

Parents' education	% Children		
	ASER 2018	ASER 2020	ASER 2021
Low	30.8	22.5	22.1
Medium	48.8	49.9	47.5
High	20.4	27.6	30.4
Total	100	100	100

Chart 11: % Children enrolled in Govt schools. By parents' education. 2018, 2020 and 2021*



We categorise 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.

*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

State-wise trends

Table 23: % Children aged 6-14 not currently enrolled in school. By state and sex. 2018, 2020 and 2021*

State	ASER 2018			ASER 2020			ASER 2021		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Andhra Pradesh	1.0	1.4	1.2	6.6	6.3	6.4	8.2	5.8	7.0
Arunachal Pradesh	2.1	2.6	2.3	6.1	2.5	4.5	7.1	4.7	5.8
Assam	2.4	1.3	1.9	1.2	1.3	1.2	2.0	1.5	1.7
Bihar	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.5	4.3	3.9	7.4	5.9	6.7
Chhattisgarh	3.2	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.8	1.3	0.6	0.9
Gujarat	1.5	2.0	1.7	1.4	1.7	1.5	2.5	4.2	3.3
Haryana	1.5	1.8	1.6	3.5	3.8	3.6	2.3	2.9	2.5
Himachal Pradesh	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.2	0.6
Jammu & Kashmir	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.9	3.0	2.4	6.6	5.4	6.0
Jharkhand	2.3	1.8	2.1	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.1	2.3	2.7
Karnataka	0.7	0.7	0.7	6.4	5.9	6.2	1.6	1.7	1.6
Kerala	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	4.1	2.9
Madhya Pradesh	3.0	4.4	3.7	4.1	3.4	3.7	3.9	3.1	3.5
Maharashtra	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.4	1.3	1.4	0.6	1.9	1.2
Manipur	1.4	0.9	1.1	5.1	3.2	4.1	16.8	14.1	15.5
Meghalaya	6.2	2.6	4.4	9.9	13.0	11.6	2.9	2.1	2.5
Nagaland	2.1	1.6	1.8	4.4	7.3	5.9	18.4	21.2	19.6
Odisha	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.3	1.9	1.5	1.9	1.7
Punjab	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	4.6	2.6	3.7
Rajasthan	2.3	4.8	3.4	6.3	7.1	6.6	4.6	4.3	4.5
Tamil Nadu	0.4	0.1	0.3	7.9	4.4	6.2	1.5	1.1	1.3
Telangana	0.6	0.6	0.6	4.8	3.9	4.4	12.9	10.5	11.8
Uttarakhand	1.4	1.5	1.4	5.0	2.4	3.8	4.5	4.5	4.5
Uttar Pradesh	3.9	5.0	4.4	9.6	10.9	10.1	8.5	9.2	8.8
West Bengal	2.3	1.0	1.6	1.1	0.0	0.6	1.4	0.5	1.0
All India	**2.3**	**2.6**	**2.5**	**4.6**	**4.6**	**4.6**	**4.8**	**4.4**	**4.6**

*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 and ASER 2021 estimates.

Table 24: Distribution of enrolled children by parents' education. By state. 2021

State	Low	Medium	High	Total
Andhra Pradesh	32.3	40.1	27.7	100
Arunachal Pradesh	25.4	39.1	35.5	100
Assam	16.9	38.6	44.5	100
Bihar	29.8	42.6	27.7	100
Chhattisgarh	17.4	55.0	27.6	100
Gujarat	13.4	43.3	43.3	100
Haryana	15.5	44.3	40.3	100
Himachal Pradesh	4.0	30.4	65.6	100
Jammu & Kashmir	23.4	48.0	28.5	100
Jharkhand	27.3	49.5	23.2	100
Karnataka	26.1	43.8	30.1	100
Kerala	1.2	18.4	80.4	100
Madhya Pradesh	24.6	56.7	18.7	100
Maharashtra	7.0	42.9	50.1	100
Manipur	10.4	40.4	49.1	100
Meghalaya	29.3	44.3	26.3	100
Nagaland	14.5	55.1	30.4	100
Odisha	14.5	43.4	42.2	100
Punjab	14.1	43.9	42.1	100
Rajasthan	32.6	55.1	12.3	100
Tamil Nadu	15.3	47.2	37.5	100
Telangana	30.4	39.0	30.7	100
Uttarakhand	14.1	44.6	41.4	100
Uttar Pradesh	24.4	51.7	23.9	100
West Bengal	20.1	54.4	25.5	100
All India	**22.1**	**47.5**	**30.4**	**100**

We categorise 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 25: % Children enrolled in Govt school. By parents' education. 2021

State	Low	Medium	High
Andhra Pradesh	91.0	76.5	55.9
Arunachal Pradesh	83.0	60.6	58.9
Assam	82.5	73.3	53.9
Bihar	95.2	88.4	76.8
Chhattisgarh	95.8	79.5	56.5
Gujarat	96.1	92.0	79.8
Haryana	83.2	60.7	27.7
Himachal Pradesh	90.2	84.6	53.7
Jammu & Kashmir	75.8	65.0	44.2
Jharkhand	89.2	82.3	69.1
Karnataka	89.1	82.8	63.3
Kerala		88.4	55.1
Madhya Pradesh	83.3	73.0	52.0
Maharashtra	75.7	69.5	63.1
Manipur	37.1	21.2	12.4
Meghalaya	41.0	37.6	21.4
Nagaland	60.2	52.0	23.7
Odisha	96.1	91.3	77.0
Punjab	80.4	67.2	36.6
Rajasthan	86.2	70.9	47.8
Tamil Nadu	89.2	86.1	64.0
Telangana	79.5	71.8	55.6
Uttarakhand	56.1	64.0	48.5
Uttar Pradesh	70.7	61.5	48.1
West Bengal	95.0	95.9	89.8
All India	**85.2**	**76.5**	**61.7**

We categorise 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.

Access to additional learning materials and activities

Table 26: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week. By grade, school reopening status and school type. 2021

Std	School not reopened			School reopened		
	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	31.5	39.4	33.5	40.9	47.9	42.9
Std III-V	39.2	46.9	41.0	44.1	48.3	45.2
Std VI-VIII	41.1	50.7	43.0	45.7	50.7	47.0
Std IX & above	36.4	53.9	40.6	47.9	53.0	49.3
All	37.6	46.9	39.8	45.0	50.2	46.4

Table 27: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week, % children who received these through different mediums. By school type, school reopening status and medium. 2021

School type	School not reopened				School reopened				
	WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Other	WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Homework	Other
Govt	55.0	12.8	28.0	4.5	35.9	6.5	12.8	53.6	4.0
Pvt	84.9	10.8	8.4	3.1	42.5	6.8	7.8	55.0	3.4
Govt & Pvt	63.2	12.3	22.6	4.1	37.8	6.6	11.3	54.0	3.8

Table 28: % Enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week. By grade, school reopening status and parents' education. 2021

Std	School not reopened			School reopened		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Std I-II	20.5	29.5	42.9	37.5	40.6	48.6
Std III-V	27.6	37.3	50.5	38.8	46.7	49.3
Std VI-VIII	28.2	40.1	53.1	41.0	47.0	53.7
Std IX & above	30.2	36.0	52.9	43.6	51.3	52.6
All	26.7	36.2	49.5	40.6	47.1	51.1

We categorise 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 29: Of enrolled children who received learning materials/activities to do at home in the reference week, % children who received these through different mediums. By parents' education, school reopening status and medium. 2021

Parents' education	School not reopened				School reopened				
	WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Other	WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Homework	Other
Low	43.3	11.3	33.8	5.8	30.2	6.2	13.5	57.8	3.0
Medium	55.2	12.7	27.0	3.5	36.2	6.1	10.5	55.9	3.6
High	74.7	10.1	16.2	4.2	45.9	8.2	10.8	47.7	4.4

We categorise 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.

Engagement with learning activities at home

Table 30 a and b: % Enrolled children who did learning activities at home during the reference week. By grade, school reopening status and type of material. 2020 and 2021

a. School not reopened												
Std	ASER 2020						ASER 2021					
	Traditional		Broadcast		Online		Traditional		Broadcast		Online	
	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes
Std I-II	55.6	33.5	15.7	2.3	16.6	7.3	51.2	31.7	14.1	2.9	14.9	14.0
Std III-V	60.2	35.5	19.7	2.7	19.7	8.9	58.7	39.3	19.9	3.7	19.8	21.8
Std VI-VIII	60.7	36.0	20.8	2.9	21.9	11.5	60.5	40.5	19.8	2.9	23.4	24.0
Std IX & above	61.2	35.5	21.5	2.6	27.5	16.3	55.5	41.1	17.9	3.1	29.6	36.6
All	59.7	35.3	19.6	2.7	21.5	11.0	57.1	38.1	18.2	3.2	20.9	22.4

b. School reopened (ASER 2021)						
Std	Traditional		Broadcast		Online	
	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes
Std I-II	59.1	44.9	17.0	5.1	12.4	9.7
Std III-V	61.2	48.1	20.3	5.8	15.8	13.6
Std VI-VIII	62.6	49.1	20.7	5.9	18.5	16.7
Std IX & above	65.5	51.8	22.1	5.0	22.4	20.4
All	62.4	48.9	20.3	5.5	17.8	15.7

Table 31 a and b: % Enrolled children who did learning activities at home during the reference week. By parents' education, school reopening status and type of material. 2020 and 2021

a. School not reopened												
Parents' education	ASER 2020						ASER 2021					
	Traditional		Broadcast		Online		Traditional		Broadcast		Online	
	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes
Low	50.2	28.4	13.5	1.9	11.1	4.7	46.9	30.2	10.7	3.5	10.2	9.3
Medium	59.2	33.8	19.0	2.8	19.8	8.9	56.0	34.9	16.4	2.6	17.1	16.8
High	69.2	44.0	25.7	2.9	33.3	20.0	62.4	44.9	23.7	3.8	30.4	35.0

b. School reopened (ASER 2021)						
Parents' education	Traditional		Broadcast		Online	
	Text-book	Work-sheet	TV	Radio	Videos/ recorded classes	Live online classes
Low	56.2	43.5	16.3	6.1	13.5	11.7
Medium	63.8	49.8	19.3	4.5	16.6	14.1
High	66.9	52.5	26.1	6.3	24.2	22.1

We categorise 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 32: % Enrolled children who did learning activities at home during the reference week. By state, school type and type of material. 2021

State	Govt			Pvt			Govt & Pvt		
	Traditional	Broadcast	Online	Traditional	Broadcast	Online	Traditional	Broadcast	Online
Andhra Pradesh	63.9	33.6	29.3	73.6	32.7	25.8	66.3	33.4	28.4
Arunachal Pradesh	81.1	16.1	22.6	83.7	10.2	35.2	81.9	14.1	26.8
Assam	62.6	7.2	17.6	69.9	10.6	37.7	65.1	8.3	24.4
Bihar	44.5	15.0	8.9	60.0	24.4	18.7	46.4	16.1	10.1
Chhattisgarh	66.3	15.6	16.4	74.2	12.4	36.0	68.2	14.8	21.1
Gujarat	75.7	53.0	59.8	81.0	58.2	70.1	76.4	53.7	61.1
Haryana	60.0	14.3	36.9	59.5	12.3	30.0	59.7	13.3	33.5
Himachal Pradesh	87.3	9.9	74.6	88.7	11.5	88.8	87.8	10.5	79.6
Jammu & Kashmir	55.2	10.8	23.8	55.1	16.8	37.3	55.1	13.1	28.9
Jharkhand	42.6	4.8	12.6	51.3	7.7	26.8	44.2	5.3	15.3
Karnataka	60.1	44.9	32.3	68.9	40.0	40.9	61.9	43.9	34.1
Kerala	89.7	53.6	88.0	88.3	32.2	96.4	89.2	46.0	91.0
Madhya Pradesh	70.8	18.4	22.7	63.0	17.8	23.3	68.6	18.3	22.9
Maharashtra	59.2	28.2	42.7	66.5	23.7	51.2	61.6	26.7	45.5
Manipur	71.8	22.7	16.7	79.1	24.5	47.0	77.8	24.1	41.5
Meghalaya	77.3	9.5	10.2	77.5	10.2	25.4	77.5	9.9	20.0
Nagaland	71.8	9.4	50.5	78.9	17.5	51.2	75.8	14.0	50.9
Odisha	66.0	18.5	28.2	77.9	21.6	46.5	67.7	19.0	30.7
Punjab	78.9	14.9	30.6	84.2	14.2	32.1	81.3	14.6	31.3
Rajasthan	62.8	7.8	16.3	56.1	10.0	18.1	61.0	8.4	16.8
Tamil Nadu	71.3	51.2	23.3	72.9	39.1	42.1	71.6	48.6	27.4
Telangana	68.9	25.0	27.6	67.7	22.2	35.6	68.5	24.2	30.1
Uttarakhand	74.2	21.9	26.7	81.0	15.3	44.2	77.2	19.0	34.3
Uttar Pradesh	71.0	15.5	11.1	74.0	19.3	18.3	72.2	17.0	13.9
West Bengal	69.7	9.7	12.7	72.6	9.6	23.0	69.9	9.7	13.3
All India	**63.1**	**20.8**	**21.8**	**69.4**	**20.8**	**31.0**	**64.7**	**20.8**	**24.2**

Challenges of remote learning

Table 33: % Enrolled children who did online activities at home in the reference week and found it easier than 2020. By grade. 2021

Std	% Children who did online activities at home	Of these, % who found it easier to do activities than 2020
Std I-II	16.7	49.3
Std III-V	22.6	49.3
Std VI-VIII	25.7	50.2
Std IX & above	30.5	53.1
All	24.2	50.7

Table 34: % Enrolled children who are facing challenges in studying at home. By grade and school type. 2021

Std	Govt	Pvt	Govt & Pvt
Std I-II	27.5	28.5	27.7
Std III-V	31.6	29.9	31.2
Std VI-VIII	30.9	27.7	30.2
Std IX & above	28.7	26.8	28.2
All	30.0	28.3	29.5

Table 35: If facing challenges, then type of challenges faced (%). By school type. 2021

School type	No smartphone	Phone not available for child to use	No one to help child at home	Network/ connectivity issues	Electricity issues	Child not able to learn remotely	Child not interested	Child is too young so needs help	Other
Govt	34.7	20.4	9.4	27.1	12.8	20.3	8.3	10.0	1.9
Pvt	20.5	14.9	7.4	37.9	14.3	26.9	9.9	10.9	2.1
Govt & Pvt	31.1	19.0	8.9	29.8	13.2	22.0	8.7	10.2	1.9

Table 36: % Enrolled children who did online activities at home in the reference week and found it easier than 2020. By parents' education. 2021

Parents' education	% Children who did online activities at home	Of these, % who found it easier to do activities than 2020
Low	15.9	45.1
Medium	21.1	50.3
High	34.9	52.4

Table 37: % Enrolled children who are facing challenges in studying at home. By grade and parents' education. 2021

Std	Low	Medium	High
Std I-II	25.9	27.6	29.0
Std III-V	27.8	31.3	33.7
Std VI-VIII	26.3	30.7	33.0
Std IX & above	26.1	27.7	31.3
All	26.6	29.6	32.0

We categorise 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 38: If facing challenges, then type of challenges faced (%). By parents' education. 2021

Parents' education	No smartphone	Phone not available for child to use	No one to help child at home	Network/ connectivity issues	Electricity issues	Child not able to learn remotely	Child not interested	Child is too young so needs help	Other
Low	42.8	22.6	11.1	21.9	9.3	18.1	6.6	7.9	0.8
Medium	35.0	19.4	9.9	26.5	12.4	20.3	8.3	9.9	2.4
High	18.3	15.4	5.9	39.5	16.0	27.8	10.6	12.2	2.1

We categorise 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 Reopening Status during Household and School Surveys

As the COVID-19 pandemic reached India in March 2020, schools across the country shut down and moved to remote modes of teaching-learning. It is only after July 2021, when the COVID caseload started declining in India, that schools started reopening for children to attend in person. ASER 2021 was conducted in September and October 2021, at a time when some states had reopened their schools for all grades, some were in the process of reopening them in a phased manner (starting mostly with the higher grades), and some had not reopened schools at all.

This situation presented a unique challenge of tracking the reopening status of schools in each state in real time, while the school survey was ongoing. While the decision to reopen schools was further decentralised within some states, in general the decision making regarding school reopening could be tracked through official state notifications, which in turn influenced the questions school head teachers and teachers were asked during the survey.

The challenges faced by recently reopened schools were vastly different from those confronting schools that were still operating remotely. Hence, ASER 2021 designed two separate school questionnaires. One focused on schools that had reopened, gathering information on schools' preparedness to implement COVID prevention measures, the teaching-learning activities being done in classrooms, and the challenges faced in teaching children. The other questionnaire focused on schools that had not yet reopened and examined the progress made in remote teaching since 2020.

The 'school reopened' questionnaire was administered in states where either all or some grades up to Std VIII had reopened. In states where schools had not yet reopened up to Std VIII, the 'school not reopened' questionnaire was administered. Annexure 2 provides details on school reopening status in individual states during the school survey.

The household survey was conducted on a different and slightly longer timeline than the school survey, during which many states saw schools reopening. The household sample thus consists of a mix of children whose schools had reopened and those whose schools had not. The data presented in this report reflects this variation between these two distinct categories of children. For details on school reopening status in individual states during the household survey, see Annexure 1.

School Survey Major Findings

Sample description

The ASER 2021 school sample comprised the head teacher or another teacher of a government school with primary classes in each sampled village, and respondents from more than 7,000 government schools across 25 states were surveyed during September and October 2021. Each respondent was asked to select one grade about which they could provide information. In a few states, schools had not reopened during the course of the survey; but in the majority, schools had reopened either all grades or some grades for children to attend in person (see Annexure 2 for details). We refer to these schools as fully reopened and partially reopened schools respectively.

Table 39: Number of schools reached by grades offered and school reopening status. 2021

Grades offered	Schools fully reopened	Schools partially reopened	Schools not reopened	Total
Primary (Std I-IV/V)	2466	41	1616	4123
Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII)	1286	854	734	2874
Other	206	19	77	302
Total	3958	914	2427	7299

Table 40: % School respondents by designation and school reopening status. 2021

Designation	% Schools fully reopened	% Schools partially reopened	% Schools not reopened
Head teacher	44.9	55.1	52.3
Teacher	55.1	44.9	47.8
Total	100	100	100

Table 41: % School respondents by the grade they opted to provide information about. By grade and school reopening status. 2021

Std	% Schools fully reopened	% Schools partially reopened	% Schools not reopened
Std I-II	20.0	2.8	21.7
Std III-V	57.9	12.7	56.6
Std VI-VIII	21.9	83.8	21.2
Could not give information	0.2	0.7	0.5
Total	100	100	100

Table 42: School reopening status reported by school respondents (%). By grades offered and reopening status.

Grades offered	% Schools fully reopened	% Schools partially reopened	% Schools not reopened	Total
Primary (Std I-IV/V)	98.4	1.6	0.0	100
Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII)	60.1	39.9	0.0	100
All	80.7	19.3	0.0	100

Enrollment

Table 43: School respondents reporting major changes in enrollment in recent years (%). By grade and school reopening status. 2021

Std	Enrollment in reopened schools (%)				Enrollment in schools not reopened (%)			
	Increased	Decreased	No change	Total	Increased	Decreased	No change	Total
Std I-II	72.2	7.2	20.6	100	51.9	11.4	36.7	100
Std III-V	70.0	6.7	23.3	100	53.4	11.1	35.4	100
Std VI-VIII	65.6	6.5	27.9	100	59.2	9.1	31.7	100
All	68.9	6.7	24.4	100	54.3	10.8	34.9	100

Table 44: Perceived reasons for major changes in enrollment in recent years, where these were reported (%). By grade and school reopening status. 2021

Std	School reopened						School not reopened					
	Migration	Marriage/ employ-ment	Classes not being held in Pvt school	COVID caused financial distress	Free facilities in Govt schools	Other	Migration	Marriage/ employ-ment	Classes not being held in Pvt school	COVID caused financial distress	Free facilities in Govt schools	Other
Std I-II	13.1	3.5	34.8	58.2	49.5	18.0	13.2	3.9	35.4	48.4	45.1	14.1
Std III-V	13.3	5.3	39.8	62.5	50.9	14.3	11.6	3.2	27.2	49.6	45.2	15.8
Std VI-VIII	20.5	6.5	44.5	64.5	46.0	12.5	14.8	2.8	30.7	51.1	46.9	12.5
All	15.5	5.3	40.4	62.4	49.1	14.4	12.7	3.2	29.7	49.7	45.6	14.7

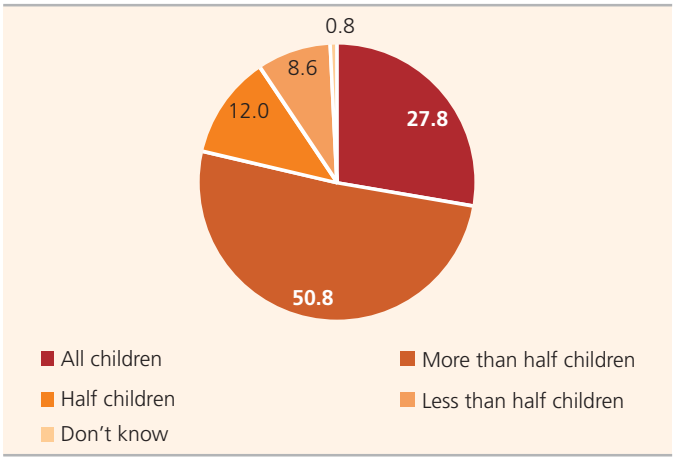
Table 43 and 44 report whether school staff perceived unusual changes in enrollment patterns in recent years and the possible reasons for these. In all schools, the majority of respondents reported perceiving recent increases in enrollments, but the proportion of respondents reporting this outcome was significantly higher when schools had reopened (close to 70%) as compared to when they had not (54.3%).

Among both reopened and not reopened schools, COVID caused financial distress, free facilities provided by government schools and classes not being held in private schools were cited as the major reasons for this increase. More respondents in reopened schools reported these as reasons as compared to respondents in not reopened schools.

Schools reopened

Attendance

Chart 12: School respondents' estimate of children's attendance on last working day prior to survey (%). 2021



COVID prevention measures

Table 45: Measures for COVID prevention reported by respondents (%). By grades offered. 2021

Grades offered	% School respondents who reported:		
	Receiving notification for implementing measures	Inspection for COVID prevention measures	Taking at least one dose of COVID vaccine
Primary (Std I-IV/V)	92.6	61.9	98.2
Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII)	94.6	69.5	99.3
Total	93.5	65.4	98.7

Table 46: COVID prevention facilities reported by respondents to be available in school (%). By grades offered. 2021

Grades offered	Water	Soap	Sanitiser	Temperature gun	Extra masks	Quarantine room	COVID prevention guidelines displayed in schools	No facility
Primary (Std I-IV/V)	93.5	93.8	95.3	28.4	73.0	2.9	74.4	0.4
Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII)	91.9	89.2	95.0	35.0	72.4	6.0	79.1	0.7
Total	92.8	91.7	95.1	31.4	72.7	4.3	76.5	0.5

Table 47: Training received by school respondents for implementation of COVID prevention measures (%). 2021

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 an online course	Other kinds of training
Std I-II	70.2	80.9	23.3	7.0	2.4
Std III-V	71.8	79.3	27.2	10.5	2.2
Std VI-VIII	76.3	85.5	27.2	8.3	1.0
All	73.1	81.7	26.6	9.1	1.8

Norms for children's attendance varied across schools and states, but only 27.8% of respondents reported that all children who were supposed to attend school on the working day prior to the survey actually did so (Chart 12).

ASER 2021 also asked about COVID prevention measures in reopened schools. Almost all respondents reported having taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine (Table 45). Even though temperature guns and quarantine rooms were rare in schools, common provisions for COVID prevention were widely available, including water (92.8%), soap (91.7%), and sanitiser (95.1%). 73.1% respondents also reported receiving training/orientation for implementing COVID prevention measures in school (Table 47).

Teaching-learning activities in class

Table 48: Classroom activities reported by school respondents during the reference week (%). By grade. 2021

Std	Regular curriculum	Extra-curricular activities	Revision of last year's curriculum	Other
Std I-II	65.9	45.7	51.9	12.6
Std III-V	68.7	42.1	55.3	12.8
Std VI-VIII	84.4	40.0	43.5	6.9
All	73.5	42.0	50.8	10.8

Table 49: Materials used in class by school respondents during the reference week (%). By grade. 2021

Std	Text-books	Work-sheets	Online recorded videos	Charts and models	Other
Std I-II	66.8	46.6	27.3	53.7	12.4
Std III-V	75.4	54.0	26.6	48.9	11.5
Std VI-VIII	86.1	52.1	20.2	30.5	8.1
All	77.5	52.1	24.6	43.5	10.5

Table 50: Challenges faced by school respondents in teaching currently (%). By grade. 2021

Std	% School respondents facing challenges in teaching	If facing challenges, then type of challenges faced:						
		Teaching same content multiple times	Low attendance	Children unable to catch up with curriculum	Technical/ connectivity issues	Implementing COVID guidelines in class	Lack of support from parents	Other
Std I-II	68.7	45.0	26.9	58.4	12.3	21.0	22.2	17.6
Std III-V	72.4	46.1	25.1	70.1	17.6	23.4	22.8	14.5
Std VI-VIII	67.8	46.5	36.6	61.8	33.8	22.4	26.8	12.2
All	70.2	46.0	29.1	65.4	22.0	22.7	24.0	14.3

Most teachers reported that children studied the regular curriculum in class during the reference week (73.5%), but patterns varied by grade. More respondents who provided information about Std VI-VIII reported teaching the regular curriculum in the classroom (84.4%), as compared to 65.9% for Std I-II. Teachers reported that children in lower grades did more extra-curricular activities as compared to children in higher grades (Table 48).

Across all grades, textbooks were reported as the most common material being used by respondents to teach in class (77.5%), with some variation by grade. More respondents reported using interactive materials like charts and models for children in lower grades as compared to their counterparts in higher grades (Table 49).

Close to three quarters of all respondents reported facing challenges in teaching their grade currently (Table 50). The most commonly reported challenge was that children were unable to catch up with their grade-level curriculum (65.4%).

Mid-day meal

Table 51: Status of mid-day meal provision reported by school respondents (%). By grade. 2021

Std	Children eating mid-day meal in school				Ration/fund given to students at least once in 3 months				
	All children	Some children	Not eating	Total	All children	Some children	Submitted list to Govt	Not distributed	Total
Std I-II	49.0	2.3	48.7	100	79.6	6.1	3.4	10.9	100
Std III-V	52.5	1.8	45.6	100	80.0	6.2	3.4	10.4	100
Std VI-VIII	13.5	2.2	84.4	100	77.0	12.1	3.5	7.4	100
All	38.8	2.0	59.2	100	78.9	8.2	3.4	9.5	100

Schools yet to reopen

Sharing materials/activities and contact

Table 52: Status of textbook distribution reported by school respondents (%). By grade. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020				ASER 2021			
	All children	Some children	Not distributed	Total	All children	Some children	Not distributed	Total
Std I-II	87.1	6.2	6.8	100	90.7	5.5	3.8	100
Std III-V	88.3	6.1	5.7	100	90.3	6.0	3.7	100
Std VI-VIII	83.5	7.3	9.2	100	89.1	7.4	3.5	100
All	86.8	6.4	6.8	100	90.1	6.2	3.7	100

Table 53: Status of sharing of additional learning materials/activities with children reported by school respondents (%). By grade and medium. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020					ASER 2021				
	% School respondents	If shared materials/activities, then medium:				% School respondents	If shared materials/activities, then medium:			
		WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Other		WhatsApp	Phone call	Personal visit	Other
Std I-II	65.4	80.8	25.5	64.8	7.6	67.5	68.7	24.2	62.5	4.5
Std III-V	66.8	79.8	26.9	59.8	10.6	74.1	72.3	24.4	64.9	6.8
Std VI-VIII	66.3	84.4	34.0	56.5	19.4	81.2	82.1	27.8	54.3	6.5
All	66.4	81.2	28.5	59.9	12.3	74.2	73.9	25.1	62.0	6.3

Table 54: School respondents' reported contact with parents and children during the reference week to discuss learning materials/activities, child's progress or wellbeing (%). By grade. 2020 and 2021

Std	ASER 2020		ASER 2021	
	Teacher visited or called parent/child	Parent/child visited or called teacher	Teacher visited or called parent/child	Parent/child visited or called teacher
Std I-II	46.6	23.0	52.1	35.3
Std III-V	46.9	25.7	52.6	35.0
Std VI-VIII	47.2	29.9	51.9	37.4
All	46.9	26.3	52.3	35.6

In schools that had not reopened, respondents were asked whether they had distributed textbooks to children and whether they had provided any additional learning materials or activities during the reference week.

The majority of school respondents reported that textbooks had been given to all enrolled children across all grades (90.1%) (Table 52). Three quarters also reported sharing additional learning materials/activities with children, an increase of close to 8 percentage points over 2020; this was more often reported by respondents providing information for higher grades than by those giving information for lower grades. WhatsApp continues to be the most common medium for sharing learning materials and activities (73.9%), followed by personal visits (62%) (Table 53). More than half the respondents reported visiting or calling parents/children during the reference week to discuss learning materials or children's progress, a slight increase over 2020 levels (Table 54).

Process Documents

Training

The ASER survey is conducted in almost every rural district in India, usually with the help of local organisations and institutions like universities and colleges, non-governmental organisations, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), etc. This year too, the survey was conducted by external organisations and independent local volunteers with the support of Pratham and ASER state teams, reaching 581 districts in 25 states and 3 Union Territories, 76,706 households and 7,299 schools in 17,184 villages across India. As in every ASER, surveyors are trained rigorously in order to conduct the survey properly.

As was the case with ASER 2020, COVID-19 restrictions required the ASER 2021 survey training to be conducted virtually with most organisations, with surveyors participating from their homes in different locations across the country. In some districts where the COVID-19 situation was under control and offices or universities had reopened, training workshops were conducted in person. For the virtual training, methods that were tried and tested during ASER 2020 were refined further in order to make the training as comprehensive and effective as the in person equivalent.

The ASER training process this year 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 mobile application.

The training workshops followed a two-tier model that consisted of:

National training:
ASER central team trained the ASER state team members and Master Trainers who were responsible for training at the regional level

↓

Regional level training:
Surveyors from external partner organisations, from Pratham and in some cases local volunteers were trained region-wise

Tier I: National training

The ASER 2021 survey began with a 5-day national training workshop from 4 to 8 September. Conducted over Zoom, an online meeting platform, training participants comprised over 120 participants drawn from the ASER central team, the ASER state teams from across the country, selected Pratham team members and external Master Trainers. The main objective was to thoroughly train the participants on all survey formats and processes, so that they could deliver the training at the regional level. Participants attended 5 days of virtual classroom sessions (about 5 hours per day) and half a day was dedicated to making pilot phone calls. Mock training sessions were held additionally amongst all state teams to prepare trainers on their delivery of content.

Key aspects of the national training included:

- **Training on operating Zoom:** All participants were first taken through a Zoom explainer in which the basics of operating the Zoom platform and its various features were detailed. This helped prepare them to deliver and manage the regional virtual training sessions.
- **Virtual classroom sessions:** These were designed to provide a theoretical understanding of the survey process, quality control processes, sampling for the survey, etc. Presentations and energisers were used to make these sessions effective and engaging. To ensure that there was a participative learning environment, role play and doubt clearing sessions were held so that every participant got a chance to immerse in the process.

- **Pilot calls:** Each participant was assigned a few household numbers to practice calling actual respondents. These pilot calls were extremely useful for participants to get hands-on experience of doing the phone survey. Additional sessions were organised to clarify doubts and to check how the formats were filled.
- **Quizzes:** Quizzes were 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 the experienced ASER state team members. Personalised 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 Master Trainers, plans for regional level trainings, timelines for execution of the survey, and detailed budgeting, among others.

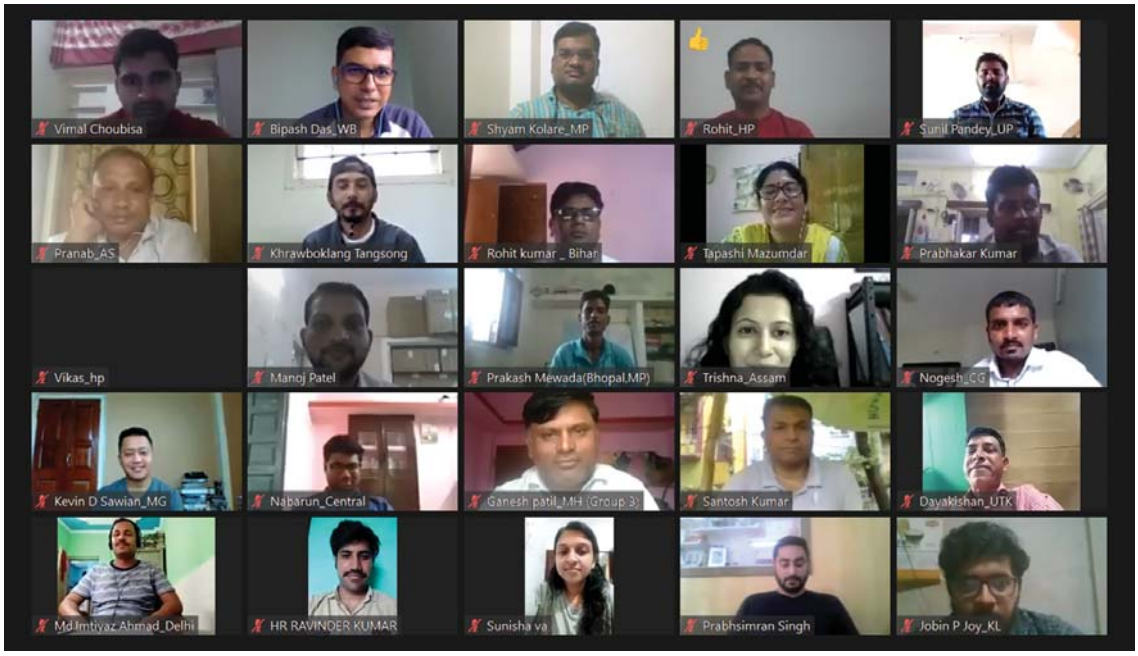
Tier II: Regional level training

Regional level training workshops were conducted by states in different phases. Each workshop spanned 3-4 days. ASER state team members and Master Trainers trained 3,361 surveyors on how to conduct the phone survey in 103 virtual and 41 in person training workshops. Like the national training workshop, key elements of the regional level training sessions included virtual classroom sessions, pilot calls and a quiz to assess the understanding of survey processes. Surveyors who scored low on the quiz or 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 workshop.

Monitoring of training

Specific steps were taken to ensure that the key aspects of training were implemented across all regional level training sessions:

- Regional level training sessions were attended and monitored by the ASER central and state teams.
- Records were maintained for each surveyor. These records contained the automated attendance generated by Zoom for each day of the training and quiz marks. These data were used to take decisions about which surveyors' work to monitor 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 the survey 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.

• How to begin a call to a household

Objective: 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 personal information, why one should cooperate, etc. It is important to explain these things on each call in a standardised manner:

- Who the surveyor/organisation 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 organisation 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 call connects is to confirm whether the recorded location is correct. The surveyor 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 three years ago to conduct the ASER 2018 survey. While explaining the rationale for calling/purpose of the survey, she emphasises 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 in the last year and a half and what support they are receiving from schools/families
- As schools reopen, it is also important to understand the challenges that school reopening poses for households and schools
- The survey is being conducted in 200,000 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

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 three years ago, in 2018, to conduct a survey on children's education (ASER survey). As you know, ever since the lock down began in March last 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 have studied at home in the last year and a half, what support they have received from schools, teachers and parents so far, and the challenges that they will face as schools reopen.

The survey is being carried out all over India in about 2 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. In addition, the name of your village will also not be published. This information will be completely confidential. We will present findings only for the state as a whole. I can share the address and phone number of our 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**

Objective: 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 maximise 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, along with the date and time when the household was called.

Call connection status		
Code	**Possibility**	**Action to be taken**
1	*Call connected* – someone answers the call	Surveyor continues with the survey
2	*Invalid number* – number does not exist/is temporarily out of order	Surveyor ends the survey. Does not make any more attempts at this number
3	*Incoming not allowed* – incoming calls have been suspended on a number temporarily or permanently	
4	*Number busy* – includes call waiting	Surveyor makes another attempt in the next assigned time slot
5	*Number not reachable* – phone is out of network coverage area	
6	*Switched off*	
7	*No response* – phone ringing but not answered	

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.

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: 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 emphasises 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' (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: Incorrect village/district:* If 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' (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: 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 and attempts to do the survey with the adult for that household.

ASER 2021: Household Call Log Sheet

This sheet is a record of all the households you have to call. Households where the call did not connect will also be recorded.

Caller name:	Sachika Ghosh	Caller ID:	WB03	State:	West Bengal

HH No.	HH ID	District	Block	Village	Phone no.	Name of respondent	Call connection status (write appropriate code) 1- Call connected 2- Invalid number 3- Incoming not allowed 4- Number busy 5- Number not reachable 6- Switched off 7- No response												If call connected, survey completion status (write appropriate code) 1- Survey completed 2- Refused to participate 3- Incorrect school/village/district 4- Left survey midway 5- Call dropped 6- 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	78450	Hooghly	Arambag	Ranipur	7579XXXXXX	Ankit Dutta	11/09	10:45	6	11/09	3:15	1								2		
2	78451	Hooghly	Arambag	Jethua	8337XXXXXX	Aneysha Roy	11/09	11:00	1										1			
3	78452	Hooghly	Arambag	Tala	9748XXXXXX		11/09	11:50	2													
4	78453	Hooghly	Goghat	Rokhimganj	9654XXXXXX	Binoy Ghosh	11/09	12:05	4	11/09	3:25	1								3		
5	78454	Hooghly	Goghat	Pansher	7044XXXXXX		11/09	12:10	7	11/09	3:30	7	12/09	10:20	7	12/09	5:30	7				
6																						
7																						
8																						
9																						
10																						
11																						
12																						
13																						
14																						
15																						

- **How to record information in the household survey sheet**

Objective: To collect information about children's enrollment and tuition taking; school reopening status and attendance; access to and engagement with learning materials and activities from home; availability of infrastructure such as TV, radio, smartphones, 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 out 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 to make sure that the information provided is correct as far as possible
- Note the time period carefully as "current academic year" or "in the last week" while asking different questions
- For questions not applicable to a child, leave the answer option blank
- Follow the instructions to read out or not read out the answer options and recording of responses 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 about children's education; if not, she requests 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 and number of children in the age group of 5-16 (if any).

Section B: Child's information: This section contains name, age, sex, and enrollment details 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 children enrolled currently: 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 and type of school she is enrolled in.

Section D: Information on school reopening for enrolled children: This section records information about the school reopening status for children; whether the parents were consulted for the date of reopening; whether they are sending their child to school and if not, the reasons for the same.

Section E: For children enrolled in Std I and II: This section collects information about Std I and II – whether the school teacher contacted the parents of the child to get her enrolled in Std I and whether the child has attended in person classes even once since admission to Std I.

Section F: For children currently not enrolled: This section collects information about children who are currently not enrolled in any type of school as they either never enrolled or have dropped out.

Section G: 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 in 2020 or 2021, 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 H: Paid tuition classes: This section collects information on paid academic tuition (excluding 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.

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 the most often.

Section J: Smartphone availability: Questions in this section explore the availability of a working smartphone in the household, whether children in the household have access to the available smartphone for their studies and if any new smartphone was bought since March 2020 for children's education.

Section K: School textbooks: This section looks at whether the children have school textbooks of the grade they are currently enrolled in.

Section L: Learning materials/activities: This section captures if the parent/child received any learning materials/activities for the child in the week prior to the survey (reference week) from the school teacher and the medium(s) through which the parent/child received it. Homework is included in the medium for receiving materials.

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 or progress, and was asked only for children whose schools had not reopened.

Section N: Children's engagement with learning materials/activities: This section captures children's engagement. It explores whether children did any activity involving the use of school textbooks or worksheets in the reference week, and whether they did any activity involving the use of TV or radio since the current academic year began. These questions are asked for all children aged 5-16 in the household, regardless of their enrollment status.

Section O: Online recorded content/games and live online classes: This section explores whether children did any educational activity at home using recorded games/apps/websites and/or attended online classes in the reference week, and if children find it easier to access online classes and recorded videos/games in comparison with last year.

Section P: Challenges in learning at home/online learning: This section captures the challenges being faced by the parent/child in studying at home or studying online.

Section Q: For children aged 12 or above: This section was asked specifically for children aged 12 and above. It explores whether the child has started helping out more with household chores and/or family business since the lockdown began; whether the child has learned to operate a computer or laptop since the lockdown started; and how the lockdown has impacted her emotionally.

Section R: Community Classes: This section records if the child attended any community classes in the last week.

Section S: Mid-day meal: This section captures if children enrolled in an Anganwadi or government pre-school, or in a government school (Std I-VIII) received any funds or ration under the mid-day meal scheme at least once in the three months before the survey. It also captures if the child has received mid-day meal if she is going to school.

Section T: Parents' information: This section records the name, age, education level and vaccination status 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 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 (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 U: 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 2021: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SHEET

State: Rajasthan	District: Alwar	Block: Rajgadh	Village: Akoda
HH ID: 12023	HH phone no.: XXXXXXXXXX	Alternative HH phone no.: XXXXXXXXXX	Respondent's Name: Saksham
Caller ID: RJ02	Caller's name: Disha	Caller's phone number: XXXXXXXXXX	Date: 5/10/21 / Start time: 1:06 PM

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>	6	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 living there? <write code: 1- Yes, 2- No>	1	
	3. No. of children in the age group 5-16 in the household <write number>	2	
	I will now ask you some questions one by one for each child. Should we start?		

Section	Question	Coding		Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4
B. Child's information	4. Name	Write name		Suraj	Lakshita		
	5. Age	Write age <number>		6	13		
	6. Sex	1- Male	2- Female	1	2		
	7. How are you related to <child name>? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write one code that applies.*	1- Father 2- Mother 3- Elder brother/sister	4- Uncle 5- Aunt 6- Cousin 7- Other <write>	2	2		
	8. Is the child currently enrolled in Anganwadi/pre-school or school?	1- Yes 2- No		1	1		
Ask sections C, D and E if the child is enrolled, otherwise skip to section F:							
C. For children enrolled currently	9. Which Std is the child currently enrolled in?	Write grade: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 AW- Anganwadi PP- Pre-primary/ LKG/UKG	13- 1st year 18- Diploma (D.Ed) 19- ITI 20- Polytechnic	1	7		
	10. Which type of school is the child currently enrolled in?	1- Govt 2- Pvt	3- Madrassa 4- Other	1	2		
D. School re-opening (for enrolled children only)	11. Has the school re-opened for the child to attend physically?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	1		
	If yes, then ask the rest of the questions in this section, otherwise skip to section E:						
	12. Did the school teacher ask you/child's parents about when they should re-open school?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know		2		
	13. Are you/child's parents sending the child to school?	1- Yes	2- No		1		
	13a. If not sending the child to school, then ask: What is the reason? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- COVID fear 2- Child currently involved in other/home work	3- Waiting for a few days to assess situation 4- Other <write> 99- Don't know				
E. For children enrolled in Std 1 and 2	**Ask this section ONLY FOR CHILDREN IN STD 1 and 2 (If the child is in Std 2, then ask about their experience when in Std 1)**						
	14. Did any school teacher contact you/child's parents to get the child enrolled in Std 1?	1- Yes 2- No	3- Directly admitted from pre-primary to Std 1 99- Don't know	1			
	15. Has the child attended classes in school physically even once since admission to Std 1?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2			

Page 2 HH ID: 12023	Caller ID: RJ02		Child name:	Suraj	Lakshita		
F. For not enrolled children	16. Did the child drop out or was never enrolled in Anganwadi/pre-school or school?	1- Drop out 2- Never enrolled					
G. For drop out children	**17. If the child dropped out, then ask:** Which Std did the child drop out in?	*Write Std*					
	18. Which year did the child drop out in? *(Include those awaiting admission in new grade as drop out)*	*Write year*					
	18a. If the child dropped out in 2020, then ask: Why did the child drop out in 2020?	1- Awaiting admission to new grade or school	2- Could not afford fees 3- Other <write> 99 - Don't know				
	18b. If the child dropped out in 2021, then ask: Why did the child drop out in 2021?	1- Awaiting admission to new grade or school	2- Could not afford fees 3- Other <write> 99 - Don't know				
H. Paid tuition classes	19. Does the child currently take paid tuition? *(Include online tuition)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	1		
I. Support at home	20. Does anyone help the child in studying at home?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1	1		
	20a. If yes, then ask: Who helps the child MOST often? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write one code that applies.*	1- Father 2- Mother 3- Elder brother /sister	4- Uncle 5- Aunt 6- Cousin 7- Other <write>	2	2		
J. Smartphones in the household	21. Is there a working smartphone in the household? *(Apply kitchen rule)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1			
	21a. If yes, then ask: How many working smartphones are there in the household?	1- One smartphone 2- Two smartphones	3- Three or more smartphones 99- Don't know	2			
	21b. Is this smartphone available for the child to use for studies?	1- Yes, all the time 2- Yes, sometimes	3- No 99- Don't know	2	1		
	21c. Did you/child's parent buy a smartphone for children's education after the lockdown began in March 2020?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1	1		
K. School textbooks (for enrolled children only)	22. Does the child have the textbooks for the grade she is currently enrolled in?	1- Yes, all subjects 2- Yes, some subjects	3- No 99- Don't know	1	1		
L. Learning material/activities (for enrolled children only)	23. In the last week, did the parent/child receive any learning material/activities from the school teacher?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1	2		
	23a. If yes, then ask: How has the parent/child received the learning material/activities from the school teacher? *READ OUT the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- WhatsApp 2- Telegram 3- SMS 4- Phone call 5- Home visit	6- School visit when schools not re-opened 7- Home work when schools have reopened 8- Other <write>	1, 4			
M. Contact as school not reopened (for enrolled children only)	**Ask this section only if the child's school has NOT RE-OPENED**						
	24. In the last week, did the parents/child and school teacher call or visit each other to discuss about learning material/activities or the child's progress/well being?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1			

Page 3 HH ID: 12023 Caller ID: RJ02			Child name:	Suraj	Lakshita		
N. Children's engagement with learning material/ activities at home	25. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity using school textbooks at home?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1	1		
	26. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity using worksheets at home?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	1		
	27. In the last week, did the child watch any educational programs on TV at home?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	1		
	28. In the last week, did the child listen to any educational programs on the radio at home?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	2		
Now let's talk about your child's experience with online activities at home - one type is that which is done using pre-recorded classes, videos, etc. and the second type is the live online classes in which the teacher teaches students live on video call.							
O. Online recorded content/games and live online classes	29. In the last week, did the child do any educational activity at home using online videos, recorded classes or games found on educational mobile learning apps/websites?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	2		
	30. In the last week, did the child attend any live online classes using apps like Zoom, Google Meet or Webex?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1	2		
	If yes in Q29 or Q30 (child did some activity using online recorded material or child attended some live online class in the last week), then ask:						
	31. Is it easier for the child to do activities using online recorded videos/games or to learn through live online classes now, as compared to last year?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2			
P. Challenges in learning at home/online learning	32. Is the child currently facing any challenges in studying at home/online?	1- Yes 2- No	3- School has reopened for children to attend physically 99- Don't know	1	3		
	32a. If yes, then ask: What kind of challenges is the child facing? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- No smartphone 2- Phone not available for child to use 3- No one to help child at home 4- Network/connectivity issues 5- Electricity issues 6- Child not able to learn remotely/not able to understand the learning material 7- Child not interested in studies 8- Child is too young so needs more help 9- Other <write> 99 - Don't know		6, 8			
Q. For children aged 12 or above	**Ask this section ONLY FOR CHILDRED AGED 12 AND ABOVE**						
	33. Since the lockdown began, has the child started helping out more with household chores like cooking, cleaning, getting groceries from the market, etc.?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know		1		
	34. Since the lockdown began, has the child started helping out more with family work like farming/business?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know		2		
	35. Since the lockdown began, has the child learnt how to operate a computer/laptop?	1- Yes 2- No	3- Already knew how to operate 99- Don't know		1		
	36. How is the child feeling after the lockdowns due to COVID? *READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- No impact 2- Child is happy 3- Child is anxious/restless 4- Child is sad /angry	5- Child misses school/friends 6- Other <write> 99- Don't know		1		
R. Community Classes	37. Did the child attend any community classes in the last week?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2	2		

Page 4 HH ID: 12023	Caller ID: RJ02		Child name:	Suraj	Lakshita		
S. Mid-day meal (AW/ Govt school Std 1-8)	**Ask this section ONLY FOR CHILDREN IN ANGANWADIS OR GOVT SCHOOL STD 1-8**						
	38. Have you received ration or funds for mid-day meal from the Anganwadi/school in the last 3 months?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1			
	39. If sending the child to school, then ask: Is the child eating mid-day meal at school?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know				
T. Parents' information	40a. Father's name	*Write name*		Prashant	Prashant		
	40b. Father's age	*Write age*		38	38		
	40c. Father's highest class completed	*Write qualification*	*NA- Never enrolled*	12	12		
	40d. Has he been vaccinated against COVID-19?	1- Yes, one dose 2- Yes, both doses	3- No 99- Don't know	2	2		
	41a. Mother's name	*Write name*		Sachika	Sachika		
	41b. Mother's age	*Write age*		32	32		
	41c. Mother's highest class completed	*Write qualification*	*NA- Never enrolled*	10	10		
	41d. Has she been vaccinated against COVID-19?	1- Yes, one dose 2- Yes, both doses	3- No 99- Don't know	1	1		
U. Household indicators	42. Has anyone else completed class 12th in the household? *(Except mother and father of the children)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2			
	43. Is there a working television in the household?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1			
	44. Is there a working radio in the household?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2			
	45. Is there a motorized 2-wheeler or 4-wheeler in the household?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1			
End time: 1:20 PM							

2. School survey

A teacher (where possible, the HM) from one government school with primary sections was called in each village where sampled households were located. Since the survey was conducted at a time when schools in some states had reopened but some had not, the school survey consists of two questionnaires – one for schools not reopened and one for reopened schools.

• What to do when calling a school

Objective: 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 in the household survey process.

Confirming the respondent and location: The school call log sheet lists 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 in the household survey process.

• How to fill the school call log sheet

Objective: To note the call connection status and the survey completion status of each sampled school.

School call log sheet: The school call log sheet contains a record of the 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 in the household survey process.

Call connection status: The process to record call connection status is the same as in the household survey process.

Survey completion status: The process to record survey completion status followed by the surveyor is the same as in the household survey process; only two new situations detailed in codes 5 and 6 (given ahead) are added.

Introduction script

Annual Status of Education Report
असर ASER 2021 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 say>

Some of my colleagues came to your school three years ago, in 2018, to conduct a survey on children's education (ASER survey). As you know, ever since the lockdown began last year and schools were shut, children's learning has been affected.

With schools now reopened or on the verge of reopening, we are conducting this phone survey to understand how schools are supporting 5-16-year-old children in either returning to school or in studying at home where schools have not reopened, and the challenges involved.

We are conducting this survey all over India in about 14,000 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. In addition, the name of your village will also not be published. This information will be completely confidential. We will present findings only for the state as a whole. I can share the address and phone number of our office with you if you require any further clarifications.

This survey will take about 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 I-VII of the sampled 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 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 sampled 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 I-VIII 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, then the surveyor ends the survey for this school.

ASER 2021: School Call Log Sheet

Annual Status of Education Report ASER 2021 RURAL Facilitated by PRATHAM

This sheet is a record of all the schools you have to call. Schools where the call did not connect will also be recorded.

Caller name: Avantika Thareja | Caller ID: PB10 | 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) 1- Call connected 2- Invalid number 3- Incoming not allowed 4- Number busy 5- Number not reachable 6- Switched off 7- No response												If call connected, survey completion status (write appropriate code) 1- Survey completed 2- Refused to participate 3- Incorrect school/village/district 4- Left survey midway 5- Retired/On leave/ Administrator/Relocated 6- Unable to give info (may have redirected) 7- Call dropped 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	11026	Ludhiana	Khanna	Libra	Std 1-4/5	9896XXXXXX	Rita Kaur	Teacher	01/10	9:30	1										1			
2	11027	Ludhiana	Khanna	Khanna	Std 1-4/5	9526XXXXXX	Anhad Bhatia	HM	01/10	10:20	6	01/10	2:45	1								6		
3	11028	Ludhiana	Sahnewal	Chunni	Std 1-4/5	8334XXXXXX	Setu Loomba	Teacher	01/10	10:30	3													
4	11029	Ludhiana	Sahnewal	Wadali	Std 1-6/7/8	9624XXXXXX	Ambalika Khanna	HM	01/10	10:35	2													
5	11030	Ludhiana	Khanna	Dahera	Std 1-4/5	8992XXXXXX	Akash Singh	Teacher	01/10	10:45	7	01/10	3:00	7	02/10	12:30	1	03/10	9:30	1			8	1
6	11031	Ludhiana	Khanna	Pamaddi	Std 1-6/7/8	8777XXXXXX	Yash Trivedi	Teacher	01/10	11:30	1										3			
7																								
8																								
9																								
10																								
11																								
12																								

Surveyors keep the following in mind while conducting the survey:

- Read out all questions as they are written in the school survey sheet
- 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". This should be kept 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. 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
- Note the time period carefully as "current academic year" or "in the last week" while asking different questions
- For questions that are not applicable, leave the answer option blank
- Follow the instructions to read out or not read out the answer options, and coding of responses in every question.

- **How to record information in 'school not reopened' survey sheet**

Objective: To collect information on the school's facilitation of children's learning during the COVID-19 lockdown; information on children's enrollment and contact details; teacher orientation/training on remote teaching processes; sharing and discussing materials and activities; contact with parents/children to track children's progress; arrangement of community classes; community involvement and support; challenges faced in conducting remote learning activities; and distribution of mid-day meal ration/funds.

Sample information: In the first section of the school survey sheet, 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.

Section A: General information: This section captures information about the reopening status of the school and about the grades the respondent teaches. The teacher is asked to select one grade between Std I-VIII for which she can give the most information. If she cannot give information for a grade or can give information only for Std IX 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 attendance: This section asks questions about the appointment of an HM and number of teachers appointed in the school. It also enquires about any significant changes in the enrollment patterns of children in the school in comparison to the last few years and the possible underlying causes for the same.

Section C: COVID related preparations, funds/resources in school: This section explores whether the government has shared any notification/order regarding COVID prevention measures to be followed once schools reopen and whether facilities such as soap, sanitiser and water are available to implement these measures. The respondent is also asked if the school has received any new funds/material or used existing funds/materials to implement these measures.

Section D: Community classes: This section enquires about the facilitation of community classes by teachers and local community volunteers to share and discuss learning materials and activities for the children of the sampled school. The respondent is also asked about the grades for whom community classes are being held, and their starting date and frequency.

Section E to M are asked for the grade selected by the respondent.

Section E: Enrollment and contact of children in the selected grade: This section records 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. It also captures information specific to Std I and II children - if the respondent contacted parents for children's enrollment in Std I and whether children have attended in person classes even once since admission to Std I.

Section F: Sharing learning materials/activities: This section captures whether the school distributed textbooks to children of the selected grade; if the teacher shared any learning materials/activities with parents and/or children in the reference week; and the mode of sharing these learning materials. It also records if the respondent asked children to do any

activity using textbooks/worksheets in the reference week and/or watch/listen to any TV or radio broadcast of educational programs since the current academic year started.

Section G: Online recorded classes: This section explores if the school asked children to do any activity involving use of online videos, recorded classes and/or games found on any mobile apps/educational website and if it has become easier to share online/recorded content as compared to 2020.

Section H: Live online classes: This section enquires whether any live/online classes were held using Google Meet, Zoom or WebEx in the reference week, and if so, the attendance and frequency of such classes. It also asks whether the respondent finds it easier to conduct live online classes now as compared to 2020.

Section I: Involvement of community: This section explores if the school takes help from different community members to share or discuss learning materials/activities with children.

Section J: Contact between teacher in parents/children: This section records information about in person or phone-based contact between the teacher and the parents/children of the selected grade in the reference week.

Section K: Challenges faced by teacher in remote teaching-learning: This section enquires about the challenges being faced by the respondent in teaching children of the selected grade remotely.

Section L: Training/orientation of teachers: This section records any training/orientation given to the respondent on any aspect of remote teaching, and the type of training received.

Section M: Mid-day meal: This section records whether the mid-day meal ration or funds were distributed by the school to children of the selected grade even once in the three months before the survey.

ASER 2021: School Survey Sheet (Schools not reopened for Std 1-8)		State: Rajasthan	District: Alwar		Block: Rajgadh	Village: Akoda	
		School Name: GPS Akoda			Date: 5/10/21	Start time: 3:03	
School ID: 20034	**Type of School (tick)**	Std 1 to 4/5 ✓	Std 1 to 6/7/8	Others	**Designation (tick)**	HM	Teacher ✓
Caller ID: RJ21		Caller's name: Seema			Caller's phone number: 99221xxxxx		
Respondent's name: Mohit		Respondent's phone number: 83293xxxxx					

Section	Question	Coding		Answer
A. General information	1. Has the school reopened (even if partially) for children to attend physically?	1- Yes, for all grades 2- Yes, for some grades	3- No	3
	If not reopened for children to attend physically (option 3 of Q1), then ask:			
	2. 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*		1,2
	3. Which grade can you give the MOST information for? *(Request the respondent to select only one grade which they know most about)*	*Write one grade between 1 to 8:* *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,* *NA - Can't give information*		2
	***If NA - Can't give information for 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.* ***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.*			
SCHOOL LEVEL QUESTIONS				
B. Enrolment and attendance	4. Can you tell me if there is an HM appointed for this school? *(Do not include acting HM)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	5. Can you tell me the no. of teachers appointed in this school? *(Do not include HM in this count; include para-teachers and shiksha mitra)*	*Write number*	99- Don't know	3
	6. Currently, how often are you supposed to attend school in person in a week?	1- All days in the week 2- Some days in the week	3- Not supposed to attend school	1
	7. Has there been any **big change** in the number of children enrolled in this school as compared to the last few years?	1- Increased 2- Decreased	3- No change 99- Don't know	1
	7a. If enrolment has increased or decreased, then ask: What is the reason for this change according to you? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Migration 2- Dropped out for other reasons like employment, marriage, etc. 3- No studies happening in pvt school 4- Shifted from pvt to govt due to COVID caused financial distress 5- Free govt facilities/govt schools taking initiative 6- Other <write> 99- Don't know		4, 5
C. COVID related preparations, funds/resources in school	8. Has the school received any Govt. notification/order detailing COVID prevention measures to be implemented after re-opening school in the current academic year?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	9. Which of the facilities does the school have to implement COVID prevention measures? *READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Water 2- Soap 3- Sanitiser 4- Temperature gun	5- Extra masks 6- Quarantine room NA - No facility available	1, 2, 3, 5
	10. Is the school using any funds/materials to implement COVID prevention measures?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	10a. If yes, then ask: What are the sources of these funds/materials? *READ OUT all the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- New fund/material by Govt 2- Existing fund	3- Other <write> 99- Don't know	2

Page 2 School ID: 20034		Caller ID: RJ21		
D. Community classes	11. Has the school received any notification/order to conduct community classes for children of this school in the current academic year?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	12. Are any community classes currently being conducted for children of this school?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	If yes, then ask the questions below otherwise skip this section:			
	12a. For which grades are community classes being conducted?	*Write all grade(s):* *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12*		3, 4, 5
	12b. Since when are these community classes being conducted in this current academic year?	*Write month*	1- Varies by grade 99- Don't know	June
	12c. How often are these community classes conducted in a week?	1- All days in the week 2- Some days in the week	3- Varies by grade 99- Don't know	2
	12d. Who conducts these community classes? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Teachers of those grades 2- Any school teacher	3- Local community volunteers 4- Parents of children 5- Other <write> 99- Don't know	1
GRADE LEVEL QUESTIONS (grade for which teacher can give most information)				
Section E to M will be asked for the grade selected by the respondent				
E. Enrolment and contact of children in the selected grade	13. Total number of children enrolled in this grade	*Write number*		14
	Ask Q14 ONLY if the teacher is giving information for STD 1 OR 2, otherwise skip to Q15:			
	14a. Did you/teacher contact the parents of the children in this grade to get them enrolled in Std 1?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	14b. Have the children in this grade attended classes in school even once physically?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2
	15. How many children's phone numbers are available with you/teacher for this grade?	1- All 2- More than half 3- Half	4- Less than half 5- None 99- Don't know	2
	16. 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 all children 2- Yes some children 3- No	4- Did not try to contact 5- All children have phone 99- Don't know	1
	16a. 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? *DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Take neighbours'/neighbourhood children's help 2- Do home visits 3- Taking help of Anganwadi workers 4- Meet in school 5- Other <write>		1, 2
F. Sharing learning materials/activities	17. Has the school distributed textbooks to the parents/children of this grade for the current academic year?	1- Yes for all children 2- Yes for some children	3- No 99- Don't know	1
	18. In the last week, have you/teacher shared any learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	18a. If yes, then ask: How did you/teacher share this learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade? *READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- WhatsApp 2- Telegram 3- SMS 4- Phone call	5- Home visit 6- School visit 7- Other <write>	1, 5
	19. In the last week, did you/teacher ask children of this grade to do activities using textbooks?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	20. In the last week, did you/teacher ask children of this grade to do activities using worksheets?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	21. Have you/teacher asked the children of this grade to watch any educational programs on TV since the current academic year started?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	22. Have you/teacher asked the children of this grade to listen to any educational programs on the radio since the current academic year started?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2

Page 3 School ID: 20034		Caller ID: RJ21		
G. Online recorded content/games	23. In the last week, did you/teacher ask children of this grade to do any activity involving the use of online videos, recorded classes, games, etc. found on educational mobile apps/websites?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2
	23a. If yes, then ask: Is it easier for you/teacher to share online recorded content/games with children of this grade now, as compared to 2020?	1- Yes 2- No 3- No change 4- Varies for different children	5- Did not send online content in 2020 99- Don't know	
H. Live online classes	24. In the last week, did you/teacher conduct any live online classes using apps like Zoom, Google Meet or Webex for children of this grade?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	If yes, then ask the questions below otherwise skip this section:			
	24a. How often did you/teacher conduct this online class in the last week?	1- All days in the week 2- Some days in the week	99- Don't know	2
	24b. How many children in this grade were able to attend the last live online class?	1- All 2- More than half 3- Half	4- Less than half 5- None 99- Don't know	4
	24c. Is it easier for you/teacher to teach children of this grade through these live online classes now, as compared to 2020?	1- Yes 2- No 3- No change 4- Varies for different children	5- Did not conduct live online class in 2020 99- Don't know	1
I. Involvement of community	25. 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 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	25a. If yes, then ask: Which members of the village or community did you take help from? *READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Village head/Ward member 2- NGO/local volunteers 3- Older children	4- Select parents/caregivers 5- Anganwadi workers 6- SMC members 7- Other <write>	2, 4
J. Contact between teacher and parents/children	26. 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 children 2- Yes, some children	3- No 99- Don't know	2
	27. 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 children 2- Yes, some children	3- No 99- Don't know	3
K. Challenges faced by teacher during remote learning	28. Are you/teacher facing any challenges in teaching this grade currently?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	28a. If yes, then ask: What kind of challenges are you/teacher facing? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Teaching same content multiple times 2- Unable to catch up with curriculum/have forgotten previous material 3- Technical or connectivity issues 4- Lack of support from parents 5- All students don't have mobile phones 6- Electricity issues 7- Children not interested 8- Other <write> 99- Don't know		2, 6
L. Training/orientation of teachers	29. Have you/teacher been given any training/orientation on any aspect of remote teaching since lockdown began in March 2020? *(Include both in-person and online trainings/sessions or instructions given in meetings)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	29a. If yes, then ask: What kind of training/orientation have you/teacher received? *DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Brief instructions in an in-person meeting or over phone/online 2- Series of in-person/online training sessions 3- Enrolled in/completed an online course 4- Other <write>		2
M. Mid-day meal	30. Has the ration and/or fund for mid-day meal been distributed to parents/children of this grade in the last three months?	1- Yes, to all children 2- Yes, to some children	3- No 4- Have submitted list 99- Don't know	1
End time: 3:20 PM				

- **How to record information in the 'school reopened' survey sheet**

Objective: To collect information on the school's facilitation of children's learning upon reopening after the lockdown; information on children's enrollment and changes in enrollment patterns as compared to the last few years; the implementation of COVID prevention measures by the school and funds received for this purpose; community involvement and support in sharing and discussing learning material with parents/children; involvement of parents/caregivers/SMC members in the decision to reopen the school for in person learning; teaching-learning activities in class; and challenges faced as classes resume.

Sample information: In the first section in the school survey sheet, the surveyor enters the sample details from the school call log sheet: state, district, block, village, school ID, school type, respondent's name, number, and designation.

Section A: General Information: This section captures general information about the school reopening status and about the grades the respondent teaches. If only Std IX or higher have reopened, the 'school not-reopened' questionnaire is administered for Std I-VIII. If any grade out of Std I-VIII has resumed in person classes, the teacher is asked to select any one reopened grade for which she can give the most information. If she cannot give information for a grade or can give information only for Std IX 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 Attendance: This section asks questions about the appointment and weekly in-person attendance of the headmaster and teachers in the school. It also enquires about any significant changes in the enrollment patterns of children in the school in comparison to the last few years and possible underlying causes for the same.

Section C: COVID related preparations, funds/resources in school: This section explores whether the government has shared any notification/order regarding COVID prevention measures to be followed once schools reopen and whether facilities such as soap, sanitiser and water are available to implement these measures. The respondent is also asked if the school has received any new funds/material or used existing funds/materials to implement these measures.

Section D: Community classes: This section enquires about the facilitation of community classes by teachers and local community volunteers to share and discuss learning materials and activities for the children of the sampled school. The respondent is also asked about the grades for whom these community classes are being held, and the starting date and frequency of the same.

Section E to L are asked for the grade selected by the respondent.

Section E: Decision to reopen: This section captures if the decision to reopen the school was discussed with parents/caregivers of the children or in any meeting with the School Management Committee.

Section F: Student enrollment and attendance: This section records the number of children enrolled in the selected grade, their expected attendance for in person classes in any given week and their actual attendance on the last working day prior to the survey.

Section G: Teaching-learning activities in class: This section captures the learning activities that children did in class in the reference week and the materials used by the respondent in the classroom to facilitate these activities.

Section H: Online/remote learning: This section explores if learning materials/activities are still being shared with children of the selected grade remotely and the mode of sharing the same; whether children have been asked to do any activities using textbooks, worksheets and/or online videos/recorded classes/educational games on apps and websites in the reference week; and whether children were asked to watch or listen to any educational broadcast on the TV or radio since the current academic year started.

Section I: Challenges faced by the teacher: This section enquires about the challenges being faced by the respondent in teaching children of the selected grade in in person classes.

Section J: Children's assessment: This section enquires if the children of the selected grade have been assessed on their understanding of previous grades' learning materials.

Section K: COVID related information for the selected grade: This section records information about whether the respondent received any training/orientation on implementing COVID prevention measures in the classroom; if she has discussed the same with the parents/children of the selected grade; and the steps she has undertaken to implement these measures.

Section L: Mid-day meal: This section records whether mid-day meal is being served to children of the selected grade in the school and whether the ration and/or funds under the mid-day meal scheme have been distributed to children in the last three months before the survey.

ASER 2021: School Survey Sheet (Schools re-opened for any grade in Std 1-8)		State: Chhattisgarh	District: Bilaspur		Block: Masturi		Village: Seepat
		School Name: GPS Seepat			Date: 08/09		Start time: 11:00 AM
School ID: 11122	**Type of School (tick)**	Std 1 to 4/5	Std 1 to 6/7/8 ✓	Others	**Designation (tick)**	HM ✓	Teacher
Caller ID: PB32		Caller's name: Sanjay			Caller's phone number: 877XXXXXXX		
Respondent's name: Vikram		Respondent's phone number: 974XXXXXXX					

Section	Question	Coding		Answer
A. General information	1. Has the school formally reopened (even if partially) for children to attend physically?	1- Yes, for all grades 2- Yes, for some grades 3- No		2
	2. If yes for some grades, then which grades have reopened for children in your school?	*Write all grades between 1 to 12:* *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12*		6, 7, 8
	3. 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*		6
	4. Of the grades that have re-opened for children, which grade can you give me the most information for? (Request the respondent to select only one grade which they know most about and which has re-opened)	*Write one grade between 1 to 8:* *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,* *NA - Can't give information*		6
	***If only Std 9 or above has reopened,** then ask questions from the 'Schools not reopened' questionnaire for Std 1-8.* ***If the teacher can't give information for any grades that have reopened out of Std 1-8,** then request the respondent to share contact details of another teacher/HM of the sampled school who can give this information. Thank this respondent and end the survey.*			
SCHOOL LEVEL QUESTIONS				
B. Enrolment and attendance	5. Can you tell me if there is an HM appointed for this school? *(Do not include acting HM)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	6. Can you tell me the no. of teachers appointed in this school? *(Do not include HM in this count; include para-teachers and shiksha mitra)*	*Write number*	99- Don't know	5
	7. Currently, how often are you supposed to attend school in person in a week?	1- All days in the week 2- Some days in the week		1
	8. Has there been any big change in the number of children enrolled in this school as compared to the last few years?	1- Increased 2- Decreased	3- No change 99- Don't know	1
	8a. If enrolment has increased or decreased, then ask: What is the reason for this change according to you? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Migration 2- Dropped out for other reasons like employment, marriage 3- No studies happening in private school 4- Shifted from pvt to govt due to COVID caused financial distress 5- Free govt facilities/govt schools taking initiative 6- Other <write> 99- Don't know		3, 4
C. COVID related preparations, funds/resources in school	9. Has the school received any Govt. notification/order detailing COVID prevention measures to be implemented after re-opening school in the current academic year?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	10. Which of the facilities does the school have to implement COVID prevention measures? *READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Water 2- Soap 3- Sanitiser 4- Temperature gun	5- Extra masks 6- Quarantine room NA - No facility available	1, 2, 3, 5
	11. How often is the school premises sanitised/disinfected?	1- Once before reopening 2- Daily 3- Few times a week	4- Once a week 5- Monthly 6- Other <write> 7- Not sanitised 99- Don't know	5
	12. Have COVID prevention guidelines been displayed in the school? *(e.g. poster, notice etc.)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2
	13. Has any inspection of implementation of COVID prevention measures been conducted since the school re-opened?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	2
	14. Have you been vaccinated against COVID-19?	1- Yes, one dose 2- Yes, both doses	99- No	1
	15. Has the block/district/state made it compulsory for all teachers to get vaccinated?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	16. Is the school using any funds/materials to implement COVID prevention measures?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	16a. If yes, then ask: What are the sources of these funds/materials? *READ OUT all the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- New fund/material by Govt 2- Existing fund	3- Other <write> 99- Don't know	1

Page 2 School ID: 11122		**Caller ID:** PB32		
D. Community classes	17. Has the school received any notification/order to conduct community classes for children of this school in the current academic year?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	18. Are any community classes currently being conducted for children of this school?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	If yes, then ask the questions below otherwise skip this section:			
	18a. For which grades are community classes being conducted?	*Write all grade(s):* *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12*		1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	18b. Since when are these community classes being conducted in this current academic year?	*Write month*	1- Varies by grade 99- Don't know	July
	18c. How often are these community classes conducted in a week?	1- All days in the week 2- Some days in the week	3- Varies by grade 99- Don't know	2
	18d. Who conducts these community classes? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Teachers of those grades 2- Any school teacher 3- Local community volunteers	4- Parents of children 5- Other <write> 99- Don't know	1
GRADE LEVEL QUESTIONS (grade for which teacher can give most information)				
Section E to L will be asked for the grade selected by the respondent				
E. Decision to re-open	19. Did you ask the parents/caregivers of children of this grade about when to re-open school?	1- Yes, some parents 2- Yes, all parents	3- No 99- Don't know	1
	20. Was the decision to re-open school for children of this grade discussed in any SMC meeting?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
F. Student enrolment and attendance	21. Total number of children enrolled in this grade	*Write number*		12
	22. How often are children of this grade supposed to attend school physically in a week?	1- All children on all days 2- Some children on some days	3- Some children on all days 99- Don't know	1
	23. Out of those children who were supposed to attend school yesterday (last working day), how many children actually attended school?	1- All 2- More than half	3- Half 4- Less than half 99- Don't know	2
	24. Ask this question if respondent is giving information about Std 1 or 2 ONLY: Did you/teacher contact the parents to get their children enrolled in Std 1?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	
G. Teaching-learning activities in class	25. What did the children do in class in the last week? *READ OUT all the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Regular curriculum/syllabus 2- Activities apart from curriculum 3- Revision of lessons from previous academic year 4- Other <Write> 99- Don't know		1, 3
	26. What materials did you/teacher use to teach in class in the last week? *DO NOT READ out the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Textbooks 2- Worksheets 3- Online recorded videos	4- Charts and models 5- Other <write> 99- Don't know	1, 2
H. Online/remote learning	27. Are you/teacher still sending learning materials/activities to children ofthis grade remotely?	1- Yes, to all children 2- Yes, to some children	3- No 99- Don't know	3
	If yes to all or some children, then ask the rest of the questions below, otherwise skip this section:			
	28. In the last week, have you/teacher shared any learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade?	1- Yes, to all children 2- Yes, to some children	3- No 99- Don't know	
	28a. If yes, then ask: How did you/teacher share this learning material/activities with parents/children of this grade? *READ OUT all the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- WhatsApp 2- Telegram 3- SMS 4- Phone call	5- Home visit 6- School visit 7- Other <write>	
	29. In the last week, did you/teacher ask children of this grade to do activities remotely using the following:			
	29a. Textbook	1- Yes, some parents 2- Yes, all parents	3- No 99- Don't know	
	29b. Worksheet	1- Yes, some parents 2- Yes, all parents	3- No 99- Don't know	
	29c. Online videos, recorded classes or educational games on apps/websites	1- Yes, some parents 2- Yes, all parents	3- No 99- Don't know	
	30. Have you/teacher asked the children of this grade to watch any educational programs on TV since the current academic year started?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	
	31. Have you/teacher asked the children of this grade to listen to any educational programs on the radio since the current academic year started?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	

Page 3 School ID: 11122		**Caller ID:** PB32		
I. Online recorded content/games	32. Are you/teacher facing any challenges in teaching this grade currently?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	32a. If yes, then ask: What kind of challenges are you/teacher facing? *DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Teaching same content multiple times 2- Children's attendance is low 3- Unable to catch up with grade level curriculum/have forgotten previous material 4- Technical or connectivity issues 5- Implementing COVID guidelines in class 6- Lack of support from parents 7- Other <write> 99- Don't know		3, 5, 6
J. Children's assessment	33. After school re-opened, have you/teacher assessed children of this grade to find out if they had learnt the material of the previous grade?	1- Yes, all children 2- Yes, some children	3- No 99- Don't know	1
K. COVID related information for the selected grade	34. Have you/teacher been given any training/orientation since the lockdown started in March 2020 to implement COVID prevention measures with children of this grade after school re-opens? *(Include both in-person and online trainings/sessions or instructions given in meetings)*	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	34a. If yes, then ask: What kind of training/orientation have you/teacher received? *DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all codes that apply.*	1- Brief instructions in an in-person meeting or over phone/online 2- Series of in-person/online training sessions 3- Enrolled in/completed an online course 4- Other <write>		3
	35. Have you/teacher discussed COVID prevention measures to be followed after re-opening of school with parents/children of this grade?	1- Yes 2- No	99- Don't know	1
	36. What measures are you following to prevent the spread of COVID in the classroom? *DO NOT READ OUT the options. Write all the codes that apply.*	1- Making children wear masks 2- Following social distancing 3- Checking children's temperature 4- Making children wash/sanitize their hands 5- Sitting in a open/ventilated space 6- Other <write> 99- Don't know		1, 2, 4
L. Mid-day meal	37. Are children of this grade eating mid-day meal in school?	1- Yes, all children 2- Yes, some children	3- No 99- Don't know	3
	38. Has the ration and/or fund for mid-day meal been distributed to parents/children of this grade in the last three months?	1- Yes, all children 2- Yes, some children 3- No	4- Have submitted list 99- Don't know	1
End time: 11:20 AM				

Quality Control

Quality control processes form an integral part of the ASER architecture, and are reviewed and improved each year in order to ensure the credibility of ASER data. Since ASER 2021, like ASER 2020, was conducted as a phone survey, several new methods of ensuring data quality had to be designed. These processes were laid out for every stage of the survey and were executed by the Master Trainers and the ASER state and central team members.

ASER 2021 quality control processes can be broadly divided into pre-survey, during survey and post-survey quality control.

Pre-survey

- Selecting surveyors: When short-listing surveyors for the virtual training, factors important for phone surveys such as good network connectivity, availability of smartphones, basic qualifications, etc. were considered.
- Attendance during training: Surveyors were evaluated on their attendance in all sessions of all days of the training using the Zoom platform feature that records minute-wise attendance.
- Quiz and pilot performance: Surveyors' understanding of the survey process was evaluated from their quiz marks and the formats that they filled during the practice phone calls, which were further used to guide recheck plans.

During survey

During the survey, quality was controlled via oversight of phone-based activities in all districts while the survey was in progress. Each Master Trainer managed approximately 20 surveyors. The ASER 2021 monitoring process comprised three different activities:

- Phone monitoring using Call Tracking Sheet: Master Trainers made phone calls to all surveyors as the survey rolled out in a district. Information regarding the progress of survey activities was collected and surveyors' doubts were clarified. This helped to ensure immediate corrective action if needed, and to avoid repetition of mistakes in subsequent calls.
- Checking of survey formats: Master Trainers and ASER state team members checked the survey formats filled by the surveyors on a daily basis. Surveyors were divided into two groups and allotted alternate days to send scanned photo of their survey formats for the day. Master Trainers and ASER state team members shared prompt feedback with the surveyors in case of errors or omissions.
- Survey tracking dashboard: Data for the survey was recorded in printed survey formats. To compile and monitor this data in real time, emphasis was placed on daily entry of the filled survey formats into a mobile application. The data entered was immediately reflected in the survey tracking dashboard, allowing Master Trainers and ASER state teams to cross-check the survey progress recorded in the Call Tracking Sheet with the dashboard. An analysis of the two was used to make decisions regarding phone recheck.

Post-survey

Information collected during the survey was verified at various levels. The following recheck activities were conducted in ASER 2021:

- Phone recheck of surveyed households: Post survey, based on the analysis of the survey formats during monitoring, surveyed households and schools which needed further verification were identified for phone recheck. In addition, for each surveyor, Master Trainers and ASER state team members randomly selected 2 households from 2 separate villages and 1 school for phone recheck. Overall, 58.3% households and 35.6% schools surveyed in ASER 2021 were rechecked.
- Phone recheck of numbers not connected: Calls were made by Master Trainers and ASER state teams to verify all the numbers that surveyors marked as not connected. This ensured that no potential household or school was missed from the survey.

Annexures

Annexure 1: School reopening status during household survey

State	Std I	Std II	Std III	Std IV	Std V	Std VI	Std VII	Std VIII	Std IX	Std X	Std XI	Std XII	Survey start date	Survey end date	Links to official reopening notifications
Andhra Pradesh													21 Sept	10 Oct	I-XII
Arunachal Pradesh													25 Sept	20 Oct	I-XII
Assam													22 Sept	09 Oct	IX, X, XII
Bihar													17 Sept	12 Oct	I-XII
Chhattisgarh													15 Sept	27 Sept	I-XII
Gujarat													16 Sept	30 Sept	VI-XII
Haryana													16 Sept	10 Oct	I-XII
Himachal Pradesh													12 Sept	08 Oct	IX-XII
Jammu & Kashmir													07 Oct	20 Oct	X, XII
Jharkhand													16 Sept	08 Oct	VI-XII
Karnataka													27 Sept	27 Oct	I-XII
Kerala													13 Sept	04 Oct	
Madhya Pradesh													17 Sept	20 Oct	I-XII
Maharashtra													18 Sept	24 Oct	V-XII
Manipur													17 Sept	29 Sept	
Meghalaya													22 Sept	27 Sept	I-XII
Nagaland													20 Sept	10 Oct	V-XII
Odisha													20 Sept	18 Oct	IX, X, XII
Punjab													16 Sept	01 Oct	I-XII
Rajasthan													17 Sept	07 Oct	I-XII
Tamil Nadu													20 Sept	19 Oct	IX-XII
Telangana													21 Sept	08 Oct	I-XII
Uttar Pradesh													17 Sept	10 Oct	I-XII
Uttarakhand													16 Sept	24 Oct	I-XII
West Bengal													17 Sept	29 Sept	

Reopened before survey Reopened during survey Not reopened

Annexure 2: School reopening status during school survey (Std I to VIII)

State	Std I	Std II	Std III	Std IV	Std V	Std VI	Std VII	Std VIII	Survey start date	Survey end date	Links to official reopening notifications
Andhra Pradesh									27 Sept	6 Oct	I-VIII
Arunachal Pradesh									18 Sept	27 Sept	I-VIII
Assam									12 Sept	5 Oct	
Bihar									21 Sept	11 Oct	I-VIII
Chhattisgarh									18 Sept	15 Oct	I-VIII
Gujarat									16 Sept	30 Sept	
Haryana									24 Sept	12 Oct	I-VIII
Himachal Pradesh									20 Sept	21 Oct	
Jammu & Kashmir									6 Oct	24 Oct	
Jharkhand									4 Oct	12 Oct	VI-VIII
Karnataka									24 Sept	30 Sept	I-VIII
Kerala									18 Sept	29 Sept	
Madhya Pradesh									7 Oct	30 Oct	I-VIII
Maharashtra									17 Sept	30 Sept	
Manipur									20 Sept	28 Sept	
Meghalaya									22 Sept	3 Oct	I-VIII
Nagaland									16 Sept	30 Sept	V-VIII
Odisha									30 Sept	24 Oct	
Punjab									20 Sept	6 Oct	I-VIII
Rajasthan									6 Oct	20 Oct	I-VIII
Tamil Nadu									20 Sept	19 Oct	
Telangana									27 Sept	6 Oct	I-VIII
Uttar Pradesh									16 Sept	17 Oct	I-VIII
Uttarakhand									17 Sept	25 Sept	I-VIII
West Bengal									22 Sept	30 Sept	

Reopened before survey Reopened during survey Not reopened

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