

ALL IN SCHOOL

# Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children



## A SITUATIONAL STUDY OF INDIA

August 2014

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United Nations Children's Fund  
India Country Office  
UNICEF House  
73, Lodi Estate  
New Delhi 110003  
Telephone: +91 11 24690401  
[www.unicef.in](http://www.unicef.in)

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## Preface

The second Millennium Development Goal calls for the achievement of universal primary education by 2015. UN website fact sheets in 2012 indicated that though many poor countries have shown significant increase in school participation, sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia were still home to the majority of out-of-school children. At the existing rate of progress, the goal is unlikely to be attained in many countries. In order to maintain a high priority within the Education for All (EFA) agenda and renew the efforts, UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) launched the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children in 2010 to accelerate efforts towards the goal of universal primary education by 2015. **The goal of the Initiative is to achieve a breakthrough in reducing the number of out-of-school children of primary and lower secondary school age.** This Initiative builds on UIS/UNICEF's 2005 joint report *Children Out of School: Measuring Exclusion from Primary Education*, which describes a methodology for estimating the number of primary school-age children who are out of school and presents national, regional and global estimates for this indicator.

The Global Initiative aims to improve the statistical information and analysis regarding out-of-school children, to identify the factors that contribute to their exclusion from schooling and to assess the effectiveness of existing policies. After consultation with national and international partners, twenty-six countries from seven UNICEF regions were selected to participate in the initiative. The present Report is an outcome of this initiative. India is in a unique position in respect to many other developing countries as the decision to universalise elementary education has been a part of the national policy since the late 1980s (National Policy on Education 1986). The international agenda following the 1990's Jomtien conference added to its focus at that time, and when the MDGs were endorsed 10 years later, much progress had already taken place. District Primary Education Programme had laid the foundation for scaling up elementary education and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme was in the pipeline. India's efforts were not limited to the primary age group but included the lower secondary age group as well – very much in tune with the present initiative. All these efforts were reinforced with the enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act in April 2010.

There has been rapid increase in enrolment at primary and lower secondary stages during the last few years, yet estimates based on different household surveys indicate that a considerable number of children still remain out of school. The present Report thus serves a very valuable purpose as it utilises the available data collected through administrative records and household surveys to profile the children out of school on the multiple and overlapping forms of exclusion. Given the large number of children of school-going age as well as the heterogeneity of the indigenous population, the barriers and bottlenecks in reaching under served populations are also manifold. The Report attempts to systematically analyse these barriers as well as the policies and programmes implemented to address the problem of exclusion from education.

An important part of this Report is its discussion of the status of administrative and household-based sources of data in relation to the estimation of the number of out-of-school children. It is hoped that this Report will provide useful inputs towards strengthening institutional capacities for implementing an appropriate statistical database, harmonisation of the definition of out-of-school children and identifying and mainstreaming all children into school in India.

This Report could have not been completed without the efforts of several institutions and colleagues. We sincerely thank the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India for agreeing to be part of this global initiative on out-of-school children and setting up the steering committee to guide this study. We take this opportunity to sincerely thank Ms. Maninder Kaur-Dwivedi from the Ministry of Human Resource Development for her continued support to this initiative and in providing valuable comments and suggestions towards finalizing this Report. We are extremely thankful to all the members

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**Shailendra Sigdel**  
Statistical Advisor,  
UNESCO Institute for  
Statistics (UIS),  
UNESCO, New Delhi



**Urmila Sarkar**  
Chief of Education,  
UNICEF-India Country Office  
New Delhi



**R. Govinda**  
Vice Chancellor,  
National University of Education  
Planning and Administration (NUEPA),  
New Delhi, India

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# Executive Summary

The Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children initiated by UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) aims to apply a more systematic approach to addressing the problem of exclusion in education, including the use of a more standardised methodology to analyse data and profiles of out-of-school children and those at risk of dropping out. This Report is part of the Global Initiative and focuses on out-of-school children in India. It draws on official administrative survey and large household surveys, as well as on focused research studies, both quantitative and qualitative. In India, education data from various sources are available and the Report examines them in the context of their relevance for the estimation of out-of-school children in the 5 to 13 age group. The relevant data sources are identified and are used to estimate the number of out-of-school children, and to analyse their profile. This Report also identifies the different barriers that have kept these children out of school, and examines the different policies that have been implemented to address these barriers. The concluding section of the Report draws together insights from the preceding sections, and proposes some data related recommendations.

## Data Sources and Profile

The Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) of the Global Initiative defines ‘Five Dimensions of Exclusion’ (5DE) which covers five target groups: Dimensions 1, 2 and 3 cover children who are not participating in formal schooling in three age groups – pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school age; Dimensions 4 and 5 cover children who are attending primary or lower secondary school, respectively but are at risk of dropping out. This India Report focuses on three of them, Dimensions 1, 2 and 3. Those in Dimension 1 are five year olds who receive neither pre-primary nor primary education. Dimensions 2 and 3 covers children in the 6 to 10 age group and the 11 to 13 age group respectively, who are not enrolled in formal schools in grade 1 and above (or non-formal schools with education levels equivalent to grade 1 and above). In this Report an alternative definition of the dimensions has also been used where children in these age groups who are attending pre-primary education in formal schools and children enrolled in non-formal centres set up by the government are considered to be in school and not in the dimensions of exclusion.

Availability of data on children in different dimensions of exclusion helps to understand and develop appropriate strategies to bring them all into school, and to monitor their progress. The examination of available data sources shows that data on out-of-school children are available from different sample based household surveys. But these yield different estimates of numbers out of school depending on the definition of school, definition of attendance and the population projections used for estimation. Surveys differ with respect to inclusion of children attending non-formal education centres and children attending pre-primary grades. A detailed look at how the estimates vary with each of these differences points towards the urgent need for adopting a uniform definition and methodology to estimate number of out-of-school children.

The methodology used in this study for estimation is similar to that proposed in the CMF and also used alternative methodologies. The number of out-of-school children is arrived at by using the proportion of out-of-school children from household surveys with the projected population for single age and then added. The methodology used in this study is based on the single age projected population published by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and United Nation Population Division (UNPD) population projection by using Sprague multiplier for single age population.<sup>1</sup>

Analysing the profile of children in Dimension 1 is difficult as both administrative data and data from household surveys, are focused on school participation in grade 1 and above. Government provision for the pre-primary stage is largely through a system of Anganwadis, which are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Enrolment data in these centres are available for children between 3 and 5 years, but it is not age disaggregated. The Ministry of Human Resource Development provides enrolment data for children in pre-primary grades but that too is not age disaggregated.

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<sup>1</sup> “Population Projections For India And States 2001-2026”, RGI India.

Estimates of Dimension 1 are available from household surveys. According to SRI-IMRB 2009 household survey data, 67 per cent of 5 year olds were enrolled in primary schools and less than 21 per cent were attending formal pre-primary schools. This means 12.4 per cent of 5 year olds were in Dimension 1. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) rural survey data shows a small proportion of 5 year olds were out of school. However both the surveys point to the fact that 5 year olds are largely enrolled in primary classes rather than in pre-primary education.

SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data have been used as the main data source for this Report as it is the latest available dataset on school participation based on sample household surveys and is especially designed for estimation of out-of-school children. Out of an estimated 190 million children in the 6-13 age group, 4.28 per cent of children were out of school which makes an estimated 8.15 million out-of-school children. The proportions of out-of-school children are 3.7 per cent in Dimension 2 and 5.2 per cent in Dimension 3. It is observed that the estimate of out-of-school children depends critically on the definition used for who is out of school and on the data collection and estimation process. A change in either of these leads to considerable differences in the estimation.

For analysing the profile of out-of-school children, both SRI-IMRB 2009 and the NSSO 2007-08 data have been used. The former has been disaggregated by location, sex and caste. It was also a useful source to examine the proportion of the out-of-school among children with special needs, and among the families below the poverty line (BPL). As the SRI-IMRB survey did not collect income or expenditure data, the profile analysis is supplemented by analysis of NSSO 2007-08 data which are disaggregated by economic categories based on monthly per capita consumption expenditure.

### Children in Dimensions 2 and 3, by Social Group, Gender and Location

(per cent)

|              | Dimension 2 (6 to 10 years) |     |        |     | Dimension 3 (11 to 13 years) |      |        |     |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----|--------|-----|------------------------------|------|--------|-----|
|              | SC                          | ST  | Muslim | All | SC                           | ST   | Muslim | All |
| Rural Male   | 4.9                         | 5.5 | 5.3    | 3.4 | 5.8                          | 8.5  | 9.4    | 4.8 |
| Rural Female | 6.2                         | 5.4 | 6.0    | 4.2 | 8.2                          | 11.4 | 9.4    | 6.4 |
| Urban Male   | 4.2                         | 2.3 | 5.6    | 2.8 | 6.1                          | 3.5  | 8.6    | 4.0 |
| Urban Female | 5.7                         | 2.1 | 5.2    | 2.9 | 4.4                          | 3.4  | 7.5    | 3.2 |
| All          | 5.4                         | 5.2 | 5.6    | 3.6 | 6.6                          | 9.3  | 9.1    | 5.2 |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

The proportions of children out of school vary according to their age and gender, social groups and residence. The estimate based on SRI-IMRB data suggests that the proportion of out of school boys is a little higher in the 11 to 13 age group (around 5 per cent) as against 3.4 per cent in the age group of 6 to 10 years (Table 2.10). The proportion of girls out of school is higher than that of boys for both age groups. Among children who are out of school, some are expected to never enter school unless specific interventions are undertaken, while some are expected to start schooling at a later age. Others have previously been enrolled but have dropped out. An analysis of these patterns of exclusion is important as different targeted interventions are needed to address the underlying causes keeping children out of school. The composition of out-of-school children in terms of their exposure to schooling in the 6 to 10 and 11 to 13 age groups are also very different. 81 per cent were never enrolled in Dimension 2 and 42 per cent in Dimension 3. Correspondingly, the proportion of dropouts among the out-of-school children in Dimension 2 is low (about 19 per cent), but is a more substantial proportion (58 per cent) in Dimension 3. An important reason for the high share of never enrolled children in the younger age group is that the age of entry to formal schools is not uniform and many households enrol their children late.

Children from Muslim, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities make up most of the out-of-school children in India, accounting for 67 per cent, although they only make up 40 per cent of the child population, indicating that they are the most excluded from education. It is seen that in all social categories, a higher proportion of girls are out of school than boys, and a higher proportion of children are out of school in rural compared to urban areas.

The profiles of out-of-school children has been further analysed with the help of NSSO 2007-08 data disaggregated by economic categories based on monthly per capita consumption expenditure. The analysis shows that children from households in the lower quintiles of per capita expenditure account for



a much larger proportion of out-of-school children among all these social groups. There is however one exception – in urban areas a higher proportion of boys in the older age group is out of school compared to girls. This could be the impact of the greater work availability for boys in urban areas. Children in certain groups are very vulnerable, as they are faced with overlapping disadvantages.

## Barriers and Bottlenecks

The barriers to school participation have been analysed along demand and supply side parameters in order to separate home and community factors from those related to the school. However, it should be noted that both supply- and demand-side barriers are closely linked. In addition, supply-side barriers often originate from or are aggravated by governance related problems and financial constraints – these issues are also discussed in the below chapters.

It is evident from the profile of out-of-school children that they are concentrated in population groups who are disadvantaged due to their location, to social factors related to caste/tribe/religion, socio-economic status and gender. These children face demand-side barriers that arise from factors related to the home and the community. A significant proportion of these out-of-school children belong to groups who face multiple disadvantages, and for them the demand-side barriers overlap and have a cumulative impact.

For example, a poor girl from a Muslim or tribal family in a rural area may face among the most challenging demand-side barriers that would combine being located in a rural area, limited access to resources, socio-cultural gender norms inimical to schooling of girls, and experience some level of alienation from the language and culture of the school system. Language is an issue particularly for tribal children living in remote areas since the teacher imparting the classroom instructions may be unfamiliar with the language spoken by these children at home. For a girl from a poor SC family, language may be less of a barrier, but social discrimination may be more acute. In the urban milieu, in addition to barriers arising from poverty and uncertain livelihood, children working and living in the streets and slum areas suffer access problems due to uncertainty of residence.

The challenge at present is not only to enrol all children in school, but to ensure that they attend school regularly and complete at least eight years of schooling. The supply-side barriers are important in keeping children in school. Barriers in terms of school infrastructure and quality are relevant across population groups. But for the socio-economically disadvantaged groups who still face many demand-side barriers, the supply barriers add to the obstacles to school participation. These disadvantaged children are usually concentrated in specific locations – backward districts and blocks, remote rural habitations, urban slums etc., where the supply barriers are more acute.

Many of the demand-side barriers have their roots in socio-cultural factors that are resistant to change. With the rural areas becoming better connected and with the government vigorously pushing the agenda of universalisation of elementary education, enrolment has increased considerably, especially at the primary level. For children in the 11 to 13 age group, especially in rural families, the traditional norms of early entry into the world of work (for boys to contribute to family livelihoods, for girls to take on household chores/agricultural work), hinder education. This is an important barrier in both the rural and urban areas, though the extent of work participation by these children is underestimated from available surveys owing to limitations arising from definition of “children’s work and the nature of their work”. In urban areas the barriers are less challenging but boys tend to be more out of school in some socio-economic groups, possibly arising from more employment opportunities for children in the urban milieu and enforcement inadequacies of child labour laws.



The demand-side barriers for girls in rural areas are relatively fewer at the primary stage of schooling, but play a major role in keeping adolescent girls out of school. Norms of child marriage is an additional barrier faced by girls. The supply-side problems arising from lack of upper primary schools in the immediate neighbourhood and inadequate number of female teachers add to these barriers.

Children from poor families, particularly first-generation learners, require pre-primary education to acquire some level of readiness for primary schooling. A little more than half the target age group access the preschool facilities provided through Anganwadis. Increasing access and quality of preschool education may well contribute to retaining more children in school, by giving them a more solid foundation in their early years of schooling.

Access to schooling is less of a barrier to school participation at present. Distance has ceased to be a major reason even for dropping out, although it is still fairly important for rural females, particularly among older age groups. Access continues to be a barrier for some other groups of children such as children of migrant families, children from tribal communities who live in isolated and hilly terrain, street children, children with disabilities and children in areas affected by civil strife. School infrastructure is one aspect of the government school system that has improved steadily over the past decades. But several studies have indicated the need for greater attention towards maintenance of these infrastructural facilities.

Over the years the government has mandated for free and compulsory education for all children in the country. However, problems related to teaching, maintenance of school facilities, and governance have impacted school quality. One of the important barriers continues to be the nature of classroom transactions. Teaching methods have been slow to change and schools can become an unattractive place for students. Most of the children from disadvantaged communities are first-generation school-goers, and they need extra attention as well as innovative methods of teaching to adapt schooling to their experience and context. This barrier is thus a complex combination of weaknesses in teacher recruitment policy, curricular needs of students from varying backgrounds, and governance issues, as well as factors such as lack of teacher motivation, non-teaching duties, and social distance between teacher and students. However, Activity Based Learning (ABL) which has been implemented in several states has emerged as the potential pedagogical model in reducing achievement gaps in gender and social groups along with provision of child centred and child friendly education.

The barriers faced by most vulnerable groups are immense. For children with special needs, major challenges remain by way of early identification of disability, sensitisation of teachers and students, provision of adequate resource support for inclusive education in schools, and, most important, incorporating the true spirit of inclusive education. Street children constitute another group who face major barriers in attending school. Uncertain livelihoods and living arrangements, pressures to earn at a young age, and violence within slums continue to impact school participation adversely in the case of slum children, especially boys. The ongoing civil strife in some parts of the country has resulted in disrupted schooling for many children. While the government is sensitive to this barrier to school participation, more effective action is needed.

Many of the barriers to school participation can be removed with better governance. Decentralised planning and management have made the planning process more inclusive but more needs to be done in this area. Decentralisation has led to multiplicity of players in the education sector as SSA officials, officials of the state education department, and local body members all have a role to play. At times lack of full clarity about their roles is one of the reasons that hinder the efficacy of many government programmes. School functioning is expected to improve with setting up of School Management Committees to monitor and support schooling, but their members need extensive capacity building to be effective.

While elementary education has received considerable financial resources with the advent of the SSA, the overall resource availability for the education sector is still far from adequate. Fiscal constraints on the central and state governments have compounded the problem. The mismatch between need and allocation and slow fund flow continue to be major obstacles in project implementation. Financial management also suffers from inadequate staffing and support is required to enhance capacities of the staff at state, district and sub-district levels.

## Policies and Strategies

The policy response of the Indian government in the area of elementary education has been to address the gamut of the barriers to schooling through the successive five year plans. While some interventions have worked better than others, it needs to be stated at the outset that just as the barriers to school participation are interlinked, so are the policy measures that address them. Improvement in indicators such as enrolment and gender parity is a result of a combination of several policies working in harmony.

Available evidence indicates that the supply-side barriers to schooling have been addressed to a great extent as the outreach of the elementary schooling system has expanded, mainly through SSA. Along with more schools being constructed, school infrastructure has improved with the provision of *pucca* buildings, drinking water, blackboards and toilets. However, universalising such provisions is still an unfinished agenda. Other strategies include recruiting more teachers including para-teachers to deal with teacher shortage and hiring female teachers to boost girls' enrolment. These policy measures have led to a significant improvement in school enrolment and attendance at the primary level. Some gaps remain in access for some especially vulnerable groups of children such as migrant children, street children, children living in slums and children in areas affected by civil strife.

Major changes have been brought in the approach towards out-of-school children. Earlier education centres like the EGS centres, AIE schools and bridge courses had been set up to enrol and educate these children in a non-formal way and mainstream them when they are ready for formal schooling. These centres had reasonable success in educating and mainstreaming them. After the enactment of the RTE Act, these centres have been discontinued. Out-of-school children are now identified by a school-mapping exercise in the community and the identified children are directly enrolled in formal government schools in age-appropriate grades. These children are provided Special Training which can last from 3 months to 2 years, depending on their need, so that they can attend regular classes at the earliest possible.

There are schemes targeted at out-of-school children from specific disadvantaged groups, and they have produced mixed results. In certain areas, the Indian government has introduced KGBVs which provide free residential facilities and schooling for out of school girls from marginalised communities who are 11 years or above. *Ashram* schools for tribal children and hostel facilities for different disadvantaged groups have also been set up for children in remote areas. Parents have indicated a demand for these schools. However, evaluations suggest that these have had varying degrees of success and their benefits are limited unless greater monitoring of quality can be ensured.

Difference in language and culture has been a major barrier in education of children belonging to ST groups. Several state governments have attempted to address this through the MLE strategy. These schools have been piloted in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Chhattisgarh, and scaling up is in progress. For Muslim children, several schemes have been developed by focusing on special schemes in areas with minority concentration: modernising madrasas, and expanding schooling infrastructure for this community. But given that most of the children from this community reportedly attend mainstream schools, the impact has been limited.

Inclusive education policies for special-needs children have been introduced, which have showed improvement in enrolments. But here, too, the focus has been on physical provision of inputs like ramps, and a lot needs to be done on improving the teaching, through provision of teacher training of longer duration for the teachers who are engaged in mainstreaming mildly disabled children and through provision of more teachers and other resources for inclusion of children with severe and profound disabilities. A greater degree of social sensitisation of parents and the community (and teachers and other government functionaries) is also very necessary.

Many of the demand-side barriers arise from sociocultural norms and are difficult to change. Efforts at community mobilisation have positively impacted these norms for certain population groups but not for all. Laws regarding age of marriage and child labour, if well formulated and strictly implemented, would go a long way to change the norms. However these laws are not under the jurisdiction of MHRD, and harmonisation between the different ministries involved remains an ongoing challenge.

Whatever the specialised nature of policy for a target group, the focus has been on expanding access and infrastructure, rather than on processes that improve the quality of teaching and of learning outcomes. The emphasis is now more on implementing programmes to improve school quality and on measuring and monitoring school quality indicators. There is a greater focus on improving teachers' capacities to lead the changes inside the classroom by revising norms of teacher recruitment, and revamping teacher education and in-service training curriculum. In 2009 the National Curriculum Framework of Teacher Education (NCFTE) was formulated based on the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. All teachers, existing and those aspiring, have to acquire professional teacher education. They are also required to clear a Teacher Eligibility Test (TET).

The classroom processes are changing too. Special programmes like ABL are implemented in several states to enable the children to learn through activities and at their own pace. The assessment system has been revamped and the recently introduced CCE, if properly used, should also bring about a qualitative change in the classroom process. The curriculum has been revised and new textbooks developed in most states. Steps are taken to make teachers aware that there should be no violence or discrimination against the students.

For better implementation of policies, decentralisation of education management has been initiated. While the outcome of this process has been largely positive, the impact of block and cluster level officials on teacher monitoring and support has been limited due to various reasons. Primary among them are the range of work responsibilities and also the overlap of the centrally sponsored SSA structure and the state education management structure. Since RTE the multiple models of community structures have been replaced by school management committees, with representation from parents, teachers and students. Efforts are on to build capacities of the SMC members through training. The district-based EMIS system – DISE has been strengthened, now known as UDISE, can be an important tool for planning and monitoring of educational programmes and indicators at all levels.

## Key Recommendations

The profiles and barriers identified in Dimensions 2 and 3, if matched against relevant programmes and schemes in place, point to some important issues which need additional attention. First, a significant proportion of the children in Dimension 2 are out of school because they are enrolled not at six years age



but at seven years or higher. So though these children are likely to be enrolled in school as they grow older, the likelihood of their completing eight years of education by the age of 14 is low. Second, different studies have shown that dropping out is usually a gradual process, often following a period of irregular attendance, and could be a result of declining motivation in the face of many barriers arising from illness, work pressure, low learning levels, or unattractive classroom processes. Children older than their peers in the same class are also more likely to dropout. At present while the policy towards mainstreaming children identified as out of school is quite clear, but identifying these children who are at risk of dropping out is not explicitly stated. Third, while the larger data sets point out that the children who have remained out of school are concentrated in specific population groups, information on children in these vulnerable population groups such as working children, street children, migrant children and children in areas of civil strife are not collected and analysed properly in the existing surveys and they are difficult to identify through the sample surveys.

These three issues point towards the need for robust data and indicators, as well as more focused analyses. Given the major role education statistics can play in planning, monitoring, policy formulation and advocacy, the multiple sources of data need to be interpreted and used carefully. Small differences in definitions of out-of-school children or calculations may lead to very different policy implications. So it is important to have standardised definitions and methodology to identify and estimate out-of-school children. The definition proposed in the SSA in the context of Special Training for out-of-school children, that is, a child 6-14 years of age is considered out of school “if he/she has never been enrolled in an elementary school or if after enrolment has been absent from school without prior intimation for reasons of absence for a period of 45 days or more” is a useful starting point. The following recommendations are made on the premise that this definition (or a similar one) will be accepted by all state governments in identifying out-of-school children.

- a) *Need for multiple indicators of schooling:* The number of out-of-school children shows a sharp decline, but this single statistic indicates that school participation rate in 6 to 13 age group has improved but does not indicate that many children continue to drop out before completing 8 years of schooling. Since multiple factors such as illness and low learning levels influence retention and age appropriate learning it is important to collect data on children in school related to their attendance and grade completion by age. More information on in-school children such as learning levels, mother tongue, special needs if any, attendance and age, which may influence a child’s likelihood of dropping out need to be collected. This will help in diagnosing the reasons why the child is at risk and planning on its basis to bring all children in school.
- b) *Need to harmonise definitions and methodologies:* No one data source can provide a comprehensive picture of the out-of-school children issue. In India there are several sources, which usually highlight different issues. A major difference between data from household surveys and administrative surveys is that while the household surveys focuses on children in a particular age group, the administrative survey focuses on children enrolled in particular grades. The indicators based on these alternative sources should be considered together for diagnostic purposes. It is important to ensure that the indicators built from different datasets are complementary and not contradictory. For the purpose the definitions of indicators from different sources and, where possible, the methodologies used, should be harmonised.
- c) *Need to monitor attendance:* The schooling status of a child may change over the year with changes in the child’s attendance. So an annual exercise of community mapping may not succeed in identifying all children who are out of school. It needs to be supplemented by monitoring of attendance by school teachers and SMC members, and follow up action. Such timely action may prevent some children from dropping out.
- d) *Provide support to stakeholders in use of education data:* Statistics on school access and infrastructure are useful tools at both macro and micro levels for planning, monitoring and implementation. At present Report Cards on the basis of DISE are also available at school levels. But its use is quite limited at decentralised levels as the SMC members, teachers and other stakeholders need training and support to understand the potential use of the Report Cards and to use it for their activities.
- e) *Need to extend scope of Household Surveys to include children up to 18 years of age and to collect data from vulnerable population groups:* During household surveys, education-related data on older

children (up to 18 years) need to be collected. Existing data sources show that 6 to 14 year olds are not all enrolled in age appropriate grades and many children dropout before completing eighth grade at 15 years of age or higher. Enrolment data of children upto 18 years will reflect the proportion who dropout before completing elementary education.

Identification of out-of-school children is not easy, particularly those in vulnerable groups. Clear definitions and instructions should be given in the questionnaire. Training should be given to identify children with special needs, and strategies should be developed to identify migrant children. Close monitoring of children from migrant families may be necessary. Similar strategies may be necessary to identify out of school working children, particularly those involved in seasonal work or part time work.

- f) *Need to extend scope of School Surveys to collect details of children enrolled in grades 1 to 12 and to include schools of all management types:* DISE data collected information on children in grades 1 to 8. Now under UDISE, data on grades 1 to 12 are collected. This is a useful step. For use in planning and monitoring, additional details of all enrolled children such as age, address, and grade enrolled in the previous year should be collected.

Enrolment data from all schools – government and private – should be collected. Care needs to be taken that no child is double counted through this process. The enrolment registers should be maintained correctly by developing and utilising standard record keeping register at all schools. The school teachers should be given clear instructions and capacity to identify a child who has not attended school continuously for 45 days and finding out whether the child has changed school or dropped out, and update the enrolment register accordingly.

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# Contents

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Preface .....   | iii        |
| Executive Summary .....   | v          |
| List of tables and figures .....  | xiv        |
| Acronyms .....  | xvi        |
| <b>1. Introduction .....</b>  | <b>1</b>   |
| 1.1 The Country Context.....  | 1          |
| 1.2 The Schooling System in India .....                                   | 4          |
| 1.3 The Report.....   | 7          |
| <b>2. Profiles of Out-of-school children.....</b>                         | <b>8</b>   |
| 2.1 Overview and Analysis of Data Sources.....                            | 8          |
| 2.2 Children in Dimension 1.....  | 18         |
| 2.3 Children in Dimensions 2 and 3.....                                   | 20         |
| 2.4 Internal Efficiency and the Process of Dropping Out.....              | 33         |
| 2.5 Vulnerable Population Groups.....                                     | 36         |
| 2.6 Analytical Summary .....  | 39         |
| <b>3. Barriers and Bottlenecks .....</b>                                  | <b>43</b>  |
| 3.1 Introduction .....  | 43         |
| 3.2 Demand-Side Barriers .....  | 44         |
| 3.3 Supply-Side Barriers.....   | 54         |
| 3.4 Barriers for Special Groups .....                                     | 63         |
| 3.5 Governance and Finance Related Barriers .....                         | 65         |
| 3.6 Analytical Summary .....  | 70         |
| <b>4. Policies and Strategies.....</b>                                    | <b>73</b>  |
| 4.1 Introduction .....  | 73         |
| 4.2 Strategies for Children in Dimension 1 .....                          | 76         |
| 4.3 Strategies to Support Children from Vulnerable Population Groups..... | 77         |
| 4.4 Strategies to Overcome Supply-Side Barriers .....                     | 89         |
| 4.5 Policies to Overcome Barriers in Governance and Financing .....       | 96         |
| 4.6 Analytical Summary .....  | 99         |
| <b>5. Conclusion and the Way Forward .....</b>                            | <b>101</b> |
| 5.1 Who are Out of School and Why? .....                                  | 101        |
| 5.2 Policies to Bring All Children to School.....                         | 107        |
| 5.3 Key Recommendations.....  | 109        |
| <b>Annexures.....</b>   | <b>119</b> |
| 1. Data Inventory .....   | 119        |
| 2. Tables .....   | 124        |
| 3. Bibliography.....  | 131        |

## List of tables and figures

|             |  |     |
|-------------|--|-----|
| Table 1.1   | Variations in human development indicators in Indian states.....   | 2   |
| Table 1.2   | Indian population by social and religious groups (2001).....   | 3   |
| Table 1.3   | Different types of schools in India in 2010-11.....  | 5   |
| Table 1.4   | Variations in management of formal schools in India .....  | 6   |
| Table 1.5   | Increase in enrolment in primary and upper primary stages between 2001-02 and 2010-11 ....                             | 6   |
| Table 2.1   | Enrolment indicators from administrative data sources.....   | 13  |
| Table 2.2   | Attendance rates from household surveys.....   | 15  |
| Table 2.3   | Enrolment in pre-primary schooling facilities: Administrative sources.....   | 19  |
| Table 2.4   | Percentage of children of pre-primary age (5 years) in pre-primary or primary grades .....                             | 19  |
| Table 2.5   | Proportion enrolled in pre-primary and primary schooling facilities: ASER 2012 .....                                   | 19  |
| Table 2.6   | Estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group .....   | 21  |
| Table 2.6a  | Alternate estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group, 2009 .....   | 22  |
| Table 2.7   | Percentage distribution of all children (6 to 13 years), by social group, 2009.....                                    | 22  |
| Table 2.8   | Percentage distribution of children (6-13 years) in different social groups among BPL and APL households, 2009.....    | 23  |
| Table 2.9a  | Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by gender.....                                      | 23  |
| Table 2.9b  | Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by social groups.....                               | 24  |
| Table 2.9c  | Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by economic categories ...                          | 24  |
| Table 2.10  | Proportion of out-of-school children in different age groups.....  | 25  |
| Table 2.11  | Adjusted net attendance rate by sex and level of education .....   | 25  |
| Table 2.12  | Percentage of children in 6-10 and 11-13 age groups who are out of school, by social group, gender and location .....  | 28  |
| Table 2.13  | Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by expenditure quintiles ...                        | 29  |
| Table 2.14  | State level variations in proportions of children out of school .....  | 31  |
| Table 2.15  | Locating high proportions of out-of-school children in selected states (by social group, location and gender) .....    | 33  |
| Table 2.16  | Distribution of out-of-school children: Never enrolled and dropouts.....   | 34  |
| Table 2.17  | Dropout rates between 2008-09 and 2009-10.....   | 35  |
| Table 2.18  | Variations in dropout rates: All students, SCs and STs .....   | 35  |
| Table 2.19  | Proportion of enrolled boys and girls (10-13 years) who completed grades 5 and 7 .....                                 | 36  |
| Table 2.20  | Proportion of children with special needs in the 6 to 13 age group.....  | 37  |
| Table 2.21a | Number and proportion of children out of school among children with special needs .....                                | 37  |
| Table 2.21b | Proportion of girls enrolled among children with special needs and all children, 2011-12 .....                         | 38  |
| Table 3.1   | Diversity in gender norms in India.....  | 45  |
| Table 3.2   | Average annual household expenditure per student by type of institution and level of education, NSSO (2007-08).....    | 50  |
| Table 3.3   | Average annual household expenditure per student by level of education in rural and urban areas – NSSO (2007-08) ..... | 50  |
| Table 3.4   | Engagement in work by children from BPL households .....   | 52  |
| Table 3.5   | Infrastructural facilities for elementary schools* in India, 2011-12 .....   | 57  |
| Table 3.6   | Per student expenditure on elementary education.....   | 69  |
| Table 4.1   | Policy milestones for elementary education.....  | 74  |
| Table 4.2   | Schemes targeting out of school girls .....  | 81  |
| Table 4.3   | Increase in the proportion of Muslim enrolment, 2011-12 .....  | 85  |
| Table 4.4   | Increase in the number of schools, 1985-86 to 2010-11 .....  | 89  |
| Table 4.5   | Proportion of female teachers in primary and upper primary schools.....  | 92  |
| Table 4.6   | State-Level variations in expenditure indicators, 2009-10.....   | 98  |
| Table 5.1   | Main findings from different sources of data .....   | 111 |
| Table 5.2   | Estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group from household surveys.....                                   | 113 |
| Table 5.3   | Formula to calculate proportion of out-of-school children from administrative data .....                               | 114 |
| Table 5.4   | Estimates of out-of-school children (6-13 age group) based on administrative data .....                                | 114 |



|             |   |     |
|-------------|---|-----|
| Figure 1.1  | India: Growth rate of GDP at factor cost at 2004-05 prices (per cent) .....                         | 1   |
| Figure 2.1  | Proportions of out-of-school children (6-13 years) by gender and age .....                          | 24  |
| Figure 2.2  | Proportion of children attending schools by age and class enrolled .....                            | 25  |
| Figure 2.3  | Proportions of out-of-school children (6-10 years) by gender and location.....                      | 26  |
| Figure 2.4  | Proportions of out-of-school children (6-10 years) by gender and social groups.....                 | 26  |
| Figure 2.5  | Proportions of out-of-school children (11-13 years) by gender and location .....                    | 27  |
| Figure 2.6  | Proportions of out-of-school children (11-13 years) by gender and social groups .....               | 27  |
| Figure 2.7a | Proportions of out-of-school children (6 - 10 years) by expenditure quintiles in rural areas .....  | 29  |
| Figure 2.7b | Proportions of out-of-school children (6 - 10 years) by expenditure quintiles in urban areas .....  | 30  |
| Figure 2.8a | Proportions of out-of-school children (11 - 13 years) by expenditure quintiles in rural areas ..... | 30  |
| Figure 2.8b | Proportions of out-of-school children (11 - 13 years) by expenditure quintiles in urban areas ..... | 31  |
| Figure 2.9a | Proportions of out-of-school children across India (6 to 10 years).....                             | 32  |
| Figure 2.9b | Proportions of out-of-school children across India (11 to 13 years) .....                           | 32  |
| Figure 2.10 | Proportions of children who have dropped out at the end of different grades.....                    | 34  |
| Figure 2.11 | Cumulative dropout rates during primary and upper primary stages .....                              | 35  |
| Figure 2.12 | Adjusted net attendance rate in different states (11 to 13 years).....                              | 36  |
| Figure 2.13 | Total enrolment of CWSN in different grades in 2011-12 .....  | 38  |
| Figure 3.1  | Public expenditure on education by education and other departments (states + centre) .....          | 68  |
| Figure 3.2  | Per student expenditure on elementary education as percentage of per capita GDP .....               | 69  |
| Figure 5.1  | Varying degrees of disadvantage: Children in dimension 2 .....                                      | 103 |
| Figure 5.2  | Varying degrees of disadvantage: Children in dimension 3 .....                                      | 105 |
| Figure 5.3  | School participation of children: Schematic presentation.....                                       | 110 |
| Chart 3.1   | Decentralised structure of education administration .....   | 67  |

#### Annexure Tables

|          |   |     |
|----------|---|-----|
| Table 1a | Percentage of children of 5 years of age in pre-primary or primary education, by sex and other characteristics, 2009..... | 124 |
| Table 1b | Percentage of children of age 5 years in pre-primary or primary education, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08.....   | 125 |
| Table 2a | Percentage of 6 to 10 year old children out of school, by age, sex and other characteristics, 2009 .....                  | 126 |
| Table 2b | Percentage of 6 to 10 year old children out of school, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08 .....                      | 126 |
| Table 3a | Percentage of 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by age, sex and other characteristics, 2009 .....                 | 127 |
| Table 3b | Percentage of 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08 .....                     | 127 |
| Table 4  | Percentage of 6 to 10 year old and 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by state, 2009.....                          | 128 |
| Table 5a | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Bihar, 2009 .....                  | 129 |
| Table 5b | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Uttar Pradesh, 2009 .....          | 129 |
| Table 5c | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Rajasthan, 2009 .....              | 129 |
| Table 5d | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Odisha, 2009 .....                 | 129 |
| Table 5e | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in West Bengal, 2009 .....            | 130 |
| Table 5f | Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Gujarat, 2009.....                 | 130 |

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# Acronyms

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| AAR    | Age-Specific Attendance Rate                                   |
| ABL    | Activity Based Learning  |
| AIE    | Alternative and Innovative Education                           |
| AIES   | All India Education Survey                                     |
| AIMMP  | Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme             |
| AIPEBM | Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities |
| ANAR   | Adjusted Net Attendance Rate                                   |
| ANER   | Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate                                    |
| AP     | Andhra Pradesh   |
| APL    | Above Poverty Level  |
| ASER   | Annual Status of Education Report                              |
| ASHA   | Accredited Social Health Activist                              |
| AWC    | Anganwadi Centre   |
| AWPB   | Annual Work Plan and Budget                                    |
| AWW    | Anganwadi Worker   |
| BaLA   | Building as Learning Aid                                       |
| BEO    | Block Education Officer  |
| BIMARU | Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh            |
| BPL    | Below Poverty Line   |
| BRC    | Block Resource Centre  |
| BRCC   | Block Resource Centre Coordinator                              |
| CABE   | Central Advisory Board of Education                            |
| CAG    | Comptroller and Auditor General of India                       |
| CAL    | Computer Aided Learning  |
| CCE    | Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation                        |
| CEDAW  | Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women   |
| CLIP   | Children Language Improvement Programme                        |
| CMF    | Conceptual and Methodological Framework                        |
| CMR    | Child Mortality Rate   |
| CORD   | Collaborative and Research Dissemination                       |
| CRC    | Cluster Resource Centre  |
| CRCC   | Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator                            |
| CRPF   | Central Reserve Police Force                                   |
| CSR    | Corporate Social Responsibility                                |
| CSS    | Centrally Sponsored Scheme                                     |
| CTS    | Child Tracking Survey  |
| CWSN   | Children With Special Needs                                    |
| DEO    | District Education Office                                      |
| DIET   | District Institute of Education and Training                   |
| DISE   | District Information System for Education                      |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| DPC     | District Project Coordinator                           |
| DPEP    | District Primary Education Programme                   |
| EBBs    | Educationally Backward Blocks                          |
| ECCE    | Early Childhood Care and Education                     |
| ECD     | Early Childhood Development                            |
| ECE     | Early Childhood Education                              |
| EDCIL   | Educational Consultants India Ltd.                     |
| EFA     | Education for All                                      |
| EGS     | Education Guarantee Scheme                             |
| GDP     | Gross Domestic Product                                 |
| GER     | Gross Enrolment Ratio                                  |
| GoI     | Government of India                                    |
| GPI     | Gender Parity Index                                    |
| HDI     | Human Development Index                                |
| ICDS    | Integrated Child Development Services                  |
| IDMI    | Infrastructure Development for Minority Institutions   |
| IHDS    | India Human Development Survey                         |
| IIPS    | International Institute for Population Sciences        |
| ILO     | International Labour Organization                      |
| IMF-WEO | International Monetary Fund-World Economic Outlook     |
| IMR     | Infant Mortality Rate                                  |
| IPEC    | International Programme of Elimination of Child Labour |
| ISCED   | International Standard Classification of Education     |
| JRM     | Joint Review Mission                                   |
| KGBV    | Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya                       |
| LEHAR   | Learning Enhancement Activities in Rajasthan           |
| LEP     | Learning Enhancement Programme                         |
| MCD     | Municipal Corporation of Delhi                         |
| MCS     | Model Cluster School                                   |
| MDGs    | Millennium Development Goals                           |
| MDM     | Mid Day Meal   |
| MEO     | Mandal Education Officer                               |
| MHRD    | Ministry of Human Resource Development                 |
| MLE     | Multi-Lingual Education                                |
| MME     | Modernisation of Madrasa Education                     |
| MMR     | Maternal Mortality Rate                                |
| MoI     | Medium of Instruction                                  |
| MP      | Madhya Pradesh   |
| MPCE    | Monthly Per Capita Expenditure                         |
| MS      | Mahila Samakhya  |
| MTA     | Mother Teacher Associations                            |
| MWCD    | Ministry of Women and Child Development                |
| NCAER   | National Council of Applied Economic Research          |
| NCDHR   | National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights                |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| NCERT   | National Council of Education Research and Training                            |
| NCF     | National Curriculum Framework  |
| NCFTE   | National Curriculum Framework of Teacher Education                             |
| NCLP    | National Child Labour Project  |
| NCPCR   | National Commission for Protection of Child Rights                             |
| NCTE    | National Council for Teacher Education   |
| NER     | Net Enrolment Ratio  |
| NFE     | Non-formal Education   |
| NFHS    | National Family Health Survey  |
| NGO     | Non-Government Organisation  |
| NHE     | Nutrition and Health Education   |
| NIPCCD  | National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development                 |
| NMCME   | National Monitoring Committee on Minorities Education                          |
| NPE     | National Policy on Education   |
| NPEGEL  | National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level                  |
| NP-NSPE | National Programme of Nutrition Support to Primary Education                   |
| NRBC    | Non-Residential Bridge Course  |
| NSSO    | National Sample Survey Organisation  |
| NUEPA   | National University of Educational Planning and Administration                 |
| OB      | Operation Blackboard   |
| OBC     | Other Backward Caste   |
| OOSC    | Out-of-School children   |
| PAB     | Project Approval Board   |
| PAISA   | Planning, Allocation, and Expenditure, Institutions: Studies in Accountability |
| POA     | Plan of Action   |
| PPP     | Purchasing Power Parity  |
| PRI     | Panchayati Raj Institution   |
| PSE     | Preschool Education  |
| PTA     | Parent Teacher Association   |
| PTR     | Pupil-Teacher Ratio  |
| PWD     | Person With Disabilities   |
| QMT     | Quality Monitoring Tools   |
| RBC     | Residential Bridge Course  |
| RTE     | Right to Education   |
| SAIES   | Seventh All India Education Survey   |
| SC      | Scheduled Caste  |
| SCERT   | State Council of Education Research and Training                               |
| SCPCR   | State Commission for Protection of Child Rights                                |
| SCR     | Student-Classroom Ratio  |
| SDP     | School Development Plan  |
| SEMIS   | Secondary Education Management Information System                              |
| SES     | Selected Education Statistics  |
| SIS     | State Implementation Societies   |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| SMC      | School Management Committee   |
| SMDC     | School Management Development Committee                                       |
| SNA      | System of National Accounting   |
| SPQEM    | Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas                            |
| SRI-IMRB | Social and Rural Research Institute – International Marketing Research Bureau |
| SSA      | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan   |
| SSE      | Statistics of School Education  |
| SSHE     | Sanitation and Hygiene Education Programme                                    |
| ST       | Scheduled Tribe   |
| STC      | Special Training Centres  |
| TET      | Teacher Eligibility Test  |
| TLM      | Teaching Learning Material  |
| UDISE    | Unified District Information System for Education                             |
| UEE      | Universal Elementary Education  |
| UIS      | UNESCO Institute for Statistics   |
| UNDP     | United Nations Development Programme  |
| UNESCO   | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization              |
| UNICEF   | United Nation’s Children Fund   |
| UNPD     | United Nations Population Division  |
| UP       | Uttar Pradesh   |
| US       | United States   |
| UT       | Union Territory   |
| VEC      | Village Education Committees  |
| VER      | Village Education Register  |
| WSDP     | Whole School Development Plan   |



# 1. Introduction

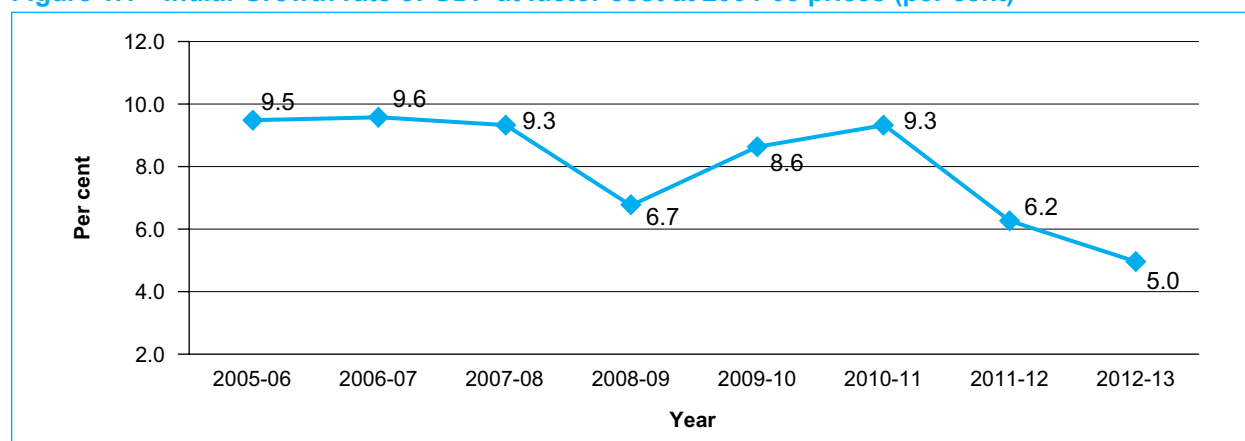
India is part of a Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children undertaken by UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The aim of the initiative is to “improve statistical information and analysis on out-of-school children (OOSC) and to scrutinise factors of exclusion from schooling, and existing policies related to enhanced participation (addressing the data, analysis and policy gaps)”.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that the identified policy gaps can pave the way for educational reforms so that all out-of-school children can eventually participate in the schooling process. The Report presents below some facts about India which will provide insights into the situation in this large and diverse country and help to throw light on the processes that lead to children remaining out of school.

## 1.1 The Country Context

A nation of more than 1.2 billion people in 2011,<sup>3</sup> India has grown steadily at a high rate during the first decade of the twenty-first century, and it is only after 2010, that the growth rate has slowed down (Fig. 1.1). The high growth rates were achieved amidst a sluggish global economy. The six-year (2006-11) average real GDP growth rate at constant prices was 8.28 per cent for India vis-à-vis 2.36 per cent for the world.<sup>4</sup> With skilled human capital and a rich mineral base, India is a key driver of global growth at present. Supporting 17.5 per cent of the world population, the country covers a meager 2.4 per cent of the world’s surface area.<sup>5</sup> The Indian population is also considered its asset: the country’s diminishing dependency ratio and increasingly youthful workforce gives it an advantage over the aging population profile of the developed countries.

The structure of the Indian economy has been changing. Economic reforms were introduced in the nineties. The service sector is spearheading the growth in the Indian economy and contributes around 55 per cent of GDP. Although agriculture contributes only 14.6 per cent of GDP (2009-10, at 2004-05 prices), it employs nearly 60 per cent of the Indian workforce.<sup>6</sup> There are a large number of marginal farmers and landless labourers. The sector has been facing stagnation with decline in per capita availability of food-grain.<sup>7</sup> Recent food price inflation has also contributed to the woes of the bottom-most expenditure quintile of the rural population – food items comprise nearly 70 per cent of their household expenses.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 1.1 India: Growth rate of GDP at factor cost at 2004-05 prices (per cent)**



Source: [http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/0205/databook\\_comp0205.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/0205/databook_comp0205.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children: Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF), March 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Government of India (2011b).

<sup>4</sup> IMF-WEO (International Monetary Fund – World Economic Outlook) database as of 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2013, [http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/0205/databook\\_comp0205.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/0205/databook_comp0205.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Source: Government of India (2011b).

<sup>6</sup> Source: Government of India (2011a).

<sup>7</sup> Government of India (2011a).

<sup>8</sup> Based on unit level data of NSS 2004-05 round of monthly consumption expenditure with uniform recall period (Government of India (2011a)).

India is a contrast between growth and development on the one hand and poverty and inequality on the other. Although poverty has declined over the last two decades, 21.9 per cent of the population is still estimated to be below the national poverty line, according to the 2011-12 estimates by the Planning Commission using the Tendulkar Committee methodology. Data on consumption expenditure indicates not only an inequality between rural and urban areas with higher poverty ratios in rural areas, but also greater inequality in urban areas vis-à-vis rural habitations. The Gini Coefficient for urban India for total consumption expenditure (2004-05) was 0.37 against 0.30 for rural India.<sup>9</sup> More recent statistics indicate that the rate of increase in the monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) of rural areas is higher than that of urban areas, indicating a gradual bridging of the rural-urban divide.<sup>10</sup>

India had a per capita GDP of 3203 international dollars in 2012 against 42,486 dollars for the US (PPP, 2005).<sup>11</sup> In 2012, India ranked 136<sup>th</sup> among 187 countries in terms of the Human Development Index and was in the medium human development category.<sup>12</sup> The HDI, which stood at 0.547 in 2011, has increased by 1.51 per cent between 1980 and 2011.<sup>13</sup> The life expectancy at birth (average for 2002-6) is 63.5 years (62.6 years for males and 64.2 years for females).<sup>14</sup> Although in 2011, the mean years of schooling was only 4.4 years for people aged 25 years and older, the expected years of schooling for a child admitted to primary level was 10.3 years, indicating that schooling for the younger age groups has improved compared to that of the older generations. The literacy rate of the seven plus population has risen from 65.4 per cent in 2001 to 74.0 per cent in 2011. However, there continues to be considerable divergence between the literacy rate for males (82.1 per cent) and females (65.5 per cent), reflecting gender inequality in access to education.<sup>15</sup> Over time, the male-female gap in literacy has narrowed, from a difference of 21.6 per cent in 2001 to 16.6 per cent in 2011.

The uneven development in the country is reflected in wide variations in indicators across the states. The sex ratio is 1084 females per 1000 males in the southern state of Kerala, but only a dismal 877 in the northern state of Haryana. For selected human development indicators, the values for the lowest and the highest performing states, and the national average, are presented in Table 1.1. Life expectancy at birth (2002-06) shows great divergence between Assam (58.9) and Kerala (74). Literacy rates (2011) vary from

**Table 1.1 Variations in human development indicators in Indian states**

| Indicator   | Male | Female | Total |
|---|------|--------|-------|
| <b>Life Expectancy at Birth (2002-6)(years)</b>                               |      |        |       |
| Assam   | 58.6 | 59.3   | 58.9  |
| Kerala  | 71.4 | 76.3   | 74.0  |
| <i>India</i>  | 62.6 | 64.2   | 63.5  |
| <b>Infant Mortality Rate (2010) (no. per 1000 births)</b>                     |      |        |       |
| Kerala  | 13   | 14     | 13    |
| Madhya Pradesh  | 62   | 63     | 62    |
| <i>India</i>  | 46   | 49     | 47    |
| <b>Literacy Rate (2011) (%)</b>   |      |        |       |
| Bihar   | 73.4 | 53.3   | 63.8  |
| Kerala  | 96.0 | 92.0   | 93.9  |
| <i>India</i>  | 82.1 | 65.5   | 74.0  |
| <b>Proportion of households with access to safe drinking water (2001) (%)</b> |      |        |       |
| Himachal Pradesh  |      |        | 88.6  |
| Kerala  |      |        | 23.4  |
| <i>India</i>  |      |        | 77.9  |

Source: Government of India (2011a), Government of India (2011b).

<sup>9</sup> Source: Government of India (2011a).

<sup>10</sup> Government of India (2012a)

<sup>11</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/20206.html>. The per capita GDP is expressed in international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. The international dollar is a hypothetical unit of currency that has the same PPP that the US has in a given benchmark year.

<sup>12</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013>

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Government of India (2011a).

<sup>15</sup> Government of India (2011b).



63.8 per cent in Bihar to 93.9 per cent in Kerala. Health indicators, too, show wide variation – the infant mortality rate (IMR), in 2008, ranges from 70 in Madhya Pradesh to 12 in Kerala, against an all-India average figure of 53. An otherwise stellar performer, the state of Kerala, performs poorly when the report looked at access to safe drinking water (2001) with only 23.4 per cent households having access, whereas in Himachal Pradesh the corresponding figure is 88.6 per cent and even the national average is 77.9 per cent.

India is as diverse as it is vast. The geographical spectrum covers the mighty Himalayan mountains in the north, dense forests in the north-east, the Sunderbans – the largest delta in the world – in the east, long coastal belts in the south, deserts in the west, and a number of mighty rivers criss-crossing the entire country. The population density varies enormously between the country's 35 states and union territories. Against a population density of 382 per sq km for India as a whole in 2011, it is only 201 per sq km in the desert-state of Rajasthan, but as high as 1102 in the eastern state of Bihar. The country has 122 languages<sup>16</sup> and 234 mother tongues.<sup>17</sup>

Table 1.2 shows the break-up of the Indian population by social groups. Four-fifths of the population (80.5 per cent) are Hindu and 13.4 per cent are Muslims.<sup>18</sup> The Hindu community is divided into social classes termed as castes; the system is based on a hierarchical social order, endogamy and hereditary occupations. Certain groups have been historically disadvantaged as a result – the Scheduled Castes<sup>19</sup> (SCs), in particular, a category which includes groups who have historically been kept outside the caste system, and considered polluting and hence “untouchable”.

Comprising many sub-castes, people from SC communities are scattered all over India. As per the 2001 census, SCs accounted for 166.63 million (16.2 per cent) of the country's total population. SCs have traditionally done menial jobs and have mostly nil or very small landholdings. The Indian government has promulgated laws to prohibit discrimination against SCs and has a policy of reservation of a specified quota for SCs in areas of public-sector employment and public provision of education.<sup>20</sup> SCs have benefited from these government schemes as well as *Dalit*<sup>21</sup> social movements. However, there is great variation in the extent to which different SC groups have been able to access such benefits. Disadvantage and discrimination continues to be part of their life experience.

Scheduled Tribes (STs), also called *adivasis* or the original inhabitants of the country, are indigenous people who have traditionally lived in remote habitations in forested and hilly terrains. As per the 2001 census, STs accounted for 84.32 million (8.2 per cent) of the country's total population. Tribal groups are

**Table 1.2 Indian population by social and religious groups (2001)**<sup>22</sup>

|                            | Population (millions) | Percentage to total population |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Total population of India  | 1028.74               | –                              |
| Hindus                     | 827.58                | 80.5                           |
| Muslims                    | 138.88                | 13.4                           |
| Other religious minorities | 54.78                 | 6.1                            |
| Scheduled Castes           | 166.64                | 16.2                           |
| Scheduled Tribes           | 84.33                 | 8.2                            |

Source: Government of India (2001)

<sup>16</sup> The two main language families in India are Indo-Aryan and Dravidian.

<sup>17</sup> The 2001 census lists languages and mother tongues with speakers' strength of 10,000 and above. More than one mother-tongue can be listed under one language, e.g., under Bengali language, the 2001 census lists four mother tongues – Bengali, Chakma, Haijong, and Rajbongsi.

<sup>18</sup> There are also Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi populations – each only a very small proportion of the population.

<sup>19</sup> Scheduled Castes is a modern governmental category that includes only those outcaste and untouchable groups who profess to be of Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist religion (based on the current version of the President's Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order as quoted in Viswanath (2012)).

<sup>20</sup> World Bank (2011).

<sup>21</sup> The term *dalit*, which is often used interchangeably with Scheduled Castes, is a wider category which refers to all individuals/groups traditionally regarded as outcaste and untouchable, including those who may be of Muslim or Christian religion.

<sup>22</sup> Population composition from the 2011 census are available for social groups but not for religious groups. So information for 2001 is provided.

concentrated in certain states, in particular, those in the north east,<sup>23</sup> and in Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. They have been historically disadvantaged due to their geographical isolation, with poor access to infrastructure and facilities. They have been further impoverished by modern development processes: through loss of access to forest resources on which they have traditionally depended for their livelihoods, and through displacement due to development projects. Although the Indian government has adopted pro-active measures to integrate the tribal population into the rest of the economy, while respecting their culture, an approach that combines 'integration with isolation', the measures have not yet yielded sufficient results and tribal children now comprise a large section of those who are out of school.

The Muslims are a religious minority in India. They numbered 193.66 million (13.4 per cent) in the 2001 census. The 2006 Sachar Committee report revealed how the Indian growth story has bypassed much of the Muslim community. The India Human Development Report 2011 by the Planning Commission reveals that in 2007-8 nearly 24 per cent of Muslims in urban areas and 13 per cent of Muslims in rural areas were poor. The incidence of urban poverty among Muslims was the highest among all social and religious groups. Moreover the rate of decline in poverty since 1993-94 has been the slowest for Muslims.<sup>24</sup> Features of the Hindu caste system are found among Indian Muslims as well. Those who owe their lineage to Arab Muslims, or are converts from upper caste Hindu groups are more advantaged. But those who have converted from the lower castes among Hindus have also been historically discriminated against.<sup>25</sup>

All these groups (SCs, STs and Muslims) have been excluded from mainstream development to a great extent. This assumes particular importance in the context of universalisation of education and there is an urgent need to focus on the school participation of children from such vulnerable groups. Gender issues are also crucially important, as the Report finds that cutting across social communities, women face gender bias in terms of access to education, health, employment and personal security. This is particularly so for women from poorer households and vulnerable social groups.

## 1.2 The Schooling System in India

School education in India had earlier been exclusively the responsibility of the state governments. The states had inherited their own school structure from the pre-independence era (before 1947) and had built on it. In 1976 education became the joint responsibility of the central and the state governments by a constitutional amendment.<sup>26</sup> This enabled the Central government to play a more active role in school education, and it became an important player in planning and financing school education. Since then there have been attempts to have a common school structure in all states. The structure adopted at the national level envisages a general education for all children during the first ten years of schooling. At the higher secondary level (grades 11 and 12), courses are diversified into different streams of study, such as Science, Humanities, Commerce, etc. There is a public examination at the end of grade 12, which enables a student to qualify for entry to higher education.

The stages of school education in India are as follows: Primary (grades 1 to 5; 5 years duration); Upper Primary (grades 6 to 8; 3 years duration); Secondary (grades 9 and 10; 2 years duration) and Higher Secondary (grades 11 and 12; 2 years duration). The education cycle from grade 1 till grade 8 is referred to as the elementary education cycle. According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) which is designed to serve as a statistical framework for assembling, compiling and presenting comparable indicators and statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally, primary corresponds to ISCED 1, upper primary to ISCED 2 and secondary and higher secondary stages to ISCED 3. While all states have a public competitive examination after grade 10 (secondary) and grade 12 (higher secondary), there are differences in terms of how primary and upper primary stages are defined. While many follow the central norm of 5+3 years for the primary and upper primary stages, a few

<sup>23</sup> The North East states in India are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

<sup>24</sup> [www.infochangeindia.org](http://www.infochangeindia.org)

<sup>25</sup> The Indian government also has another category "Other Backward Classes (OBC)" – individuals from groups included in the list of OBCs are entitled to reservations in certain areas. Nearly all the historically disadvantaged Muslim groups have been included in the list of OBCs, and are entitled to reservations for OBCs.

<sup>26</sup> Forty-second Amendment to the Constitution of India.



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states continue to use 4+3,<sup>27</sup> or 4+4<sup>28</sup> years. The length of pre-primary education which corresponds to ISCED 0, varies from 1 to 3 years. Government provision is for 3 years, as part of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Government schools in some states have one year of pre-primary education attached to the schools.

The schools in different states are also different.<sup>29</sup> In rare cases do government schools have all grades from 1 to 10 or 1 to 12. Some states have a fragmented system at primary and upper primary stage (e.g., primary schools with grades 1-5 and upper primary schools with grades 6-8) while others have separate primary schools (grades 1-5) and upper primary schools with both primary and upper primary grades (grades 1-8). Similarly, some secondary schools may have only grades 9-10, or they may include upper primary grades (grades 6-10). In some states there are higher secondary schools which go up to grade 12. These include schools which include only the secondary and higher secondary stages (grades 9-12) and schools which also include the upper primary stage (grades 6-12). In other states, grades 11 and 12 are taught in a college.<sup>30</sup> Table 1.3 shows the different types of schools in India.

There are variations in school management as well. The four main types of school management are (a) government, (b) local body, (c) private aided and (d) private unaided. Unaided schools may be recognised or unrecognised.

**Table 1.3 Different types of schools in India in 2010-11**

| Type of schools          | Grades in each type                 | Number of schools |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Primary schools          | 1-4, 1-5                            | 748,547           |
| Upper primary schools    | 1-7, 1-8, 6-7, 6-8, 5-8             | 447,600           |
| Secondary schools        | 1-10, 5-10, 6-10, 8-10, 9-10        | 128,370           |
| Higher secondary schools | 1-12, 5-12, 6-12, 8-12, 9-12, 11-12 | 71,814            |

Source: SES (2010-11)

<sup>27</sup> For example, Assam, Kerala, and Odisha.

<sup>28</sup> West Bengal.

<sup>29</sup> The details are available at <http://www.educationforallindia.com/page101.htm>.

<sup>30</sup> Maharashtra, for example.

**Table 1.4 Variations in management of formal schools in India**

| School type             | Management  |
|-------------------------|---|
| Government schools      | All schools run by the central or state governments or public sector undertakings or autonomous organisations completely financed by the government. <sup>31</sup>  |
| Local body schools      | All schools run by local government bodies, such as Municipal Committees, Zila Parishads (district level), Panchayat Samitis (sub district level).  |
| Private aided schools   | All schools run by an individual or a private organisation and which receive a grant from the government/local body.  |
| Private unaided schools | All schools managed by an individual or a private organisation which do not receive a grant from the government/local body. Unaided schools may be recognised or unrecognised.  |
| Recognised schools      | All schools in which the course of study is prescribed or recognised by the government and which satisfy the authorities (Directorate of Education, Municipal Corporation, Board, etc.) with regard to meeting certain norms. Some schools for religious minorities provide formal education. <sup>32</sup> |

Source: Glossary of 7<sup>th</sup> All India Education Survey, Government of India (various years, c).

Other than the formal government and local body schools there were non-formal education centres like Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centres and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres till the enactment of RTE in 2009. Children from small and remote habitations who faced difficulties in accessing schooling facilities within walking distance (i.e. 1 to 3 km) had earlier been provided with small schools known as EGS Centres or alternative schools, which were up to grade 3 at most. These were to function as transitory facilities, until they were upgraded to become formal government primary schools. The AIE scheme was aimed at providing education for very specific, difficult-to-reach groups of out-of-school children. It included residential and non-residential bridge courses, back to school camps, seasonal hostels, drop-in centres and other alternative education centres.<sup>33</sup>

Table 1.5 shows that enrolment in formal schools has been increasing rapidly even when population in this age group has shown a decreasing trend. It also points out to the higher rate of growth in enrolment of the educationally disadvantaged groups – the girls, SCs and STs. These are the groups in which enrolment was at a lower level, and this growth appears to reflect a catching up process.

**Table 1.5 Increase in enrolment in primary and upper primary stages between 2001-02 and 2010-11**

|                      | Enrolment, 2001-02<br>(millions) | Enrolment, 2010-11<br>(millions) | Increase in proportion<br>enrolled (%) |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Grades 1 to 5</b> |                                  |                                  |  |
| Boys                 | 63.6                             | 70.5                             | 11                                     |
| Girls                | 50.3                             | 64.9                             | 29                                     |
| All                  | 113.9                            | 135.3                            | 19                                     |
| SC                   | 21.5                             | 27.1                             | 26                                     |
| ST                   | 11.7                             | 14.9                             | 27                                     |
| <b>Grades 6 to 8</b> |                                  |                                  |  |
| Boys                 | 26.1                             | 32.8                             | 26                                     |
| Girls                | 18.7                             | 29.3                             | 56                                     |
| All                  | 44.8                             | 62.1                             | 39                                     |
| SC                   | 7.5                              | 11.3                             | 51                                     |
| ST                   | 3.4                              | 5.4                              | 61                                     |

Source: SES 2010-11, SES – All India time series 2005-06.

<sup>31</sup> Government schools include those managed by the Tribal/Social Welfare Department of the state/central government.

<sup>32</sup> Madrasas are recognised by Wakf Board/Madrasa Board.

<sup>33</sup> While the EGS centres are included in ICSED 1, the AIEs are not included.



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### 1.3 The Report

The chapters for the Report are organised as follows: The Chapter 2 examines data collection and management issues involved in efforts to estimate out-of-school children, and then go on to outline the profiles of out-of-school children. In Chapter 3, the Report investigates the barriers faced by these children, which prevent them from participating in school. In Chapter 4, the policies initiated to tackle these barriers are discussed. The concluding Chapter 5 draws together the insights from the preceding chapters and proposes some data related recommendations.

## 2. Profiles of Out-of-School Children

The Indian National Policy on Education (formulated in 1986 and revised in 1992) had resolved to ensure that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality would be provided to all children up to 14 years of age, before the beginning of the twenty-first century. The flagship national programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA – Education for All), which was launched in 2001-02, revised the goals – provision of useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6 to 14 age group was to be ensured by 2010. These national education goals are in agreement with the second Millennium Development Goal which aims to ensure that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, are able to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015. In 2009, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act was passed. The Act goes one step further and puts the compulsion on the government to ensure the right for every child in the age group 6 to 14 years to receive at least eight years of child-friendly education in a neighbourhood school.

Yet available evidence indicates that while the proportion of children out of school in this age group is declining, a significant number have never been enrolled or have dropped out. In this section the Report has used various sources of data for estimating out-of-school children, analyse these, and on that basis, analyse the profile of children who are out of school.

### 2.1 Overview and Analysis of Data Sources

There are two primary sources for education data – administrative data sources and household surveys. The Report discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each to clearly identify the data sources to be used to estimate out-of-school children (details of data sources are given in the Data Inventory in Annexure 1). It is necessary to clarify at the outset that the relevant age group is mentioned in different sources as 6–14 years and 6–13 years. They refer to the same age group. When the RTE Act mentions children between 6 and 14 years, it refers to children who have completed 6 years, and are below 14 years of age (that is the children have completed 13 years). The Report has referred to this age group as 6–13 years. Similarly government documents refer to pre-primary age group as those between 3 and 6 years, while in this Report it is as 3 to 5 years.



### 2.1.1 Administrative data sources

For administrative data sources, the school is the unit of data collection. Such data is used as a monitoring and planning tool – primarily with a view to improving access and school quality. Data collected includes enrolment in different grades in formal schools, availability of teachers, infrastructure and facilities in schools and financial allocations for education at state level. While all cover data from recognised schools, coverage of unrecognised schools, non-formal education centres and pre-primary education are limited (See Annexure 1 for details).



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There are three national level administrative data sources for elementary education in India.

- Statistics of School Education (SSE), earlier Selected Educational Statistics (SES):**  
State-specific information for all states and Union Territories (UTs) is collected by the state education departments for all recognised schools in the entire schooling system in the state, from the pre-primary level to the higher secondary level.<sup>34</sup> It is annually published by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Information is also provided on teacher training programmes. The SES is published two to three years after the collection of data, and does not include age wise data on all states.<sup>35</sup>
- All India Education Survey (AIES):**  
All India Education Surveys are conducted to provide inputs for educational planning. Eight such surveys have been done – the first was launched in 1957 and the eighth in 2009. AIES provides village and habitation level information on accessibility, availability and the quality of various types of recognised schools. While the data is detailed and it is possible to generate district level estimates, there is a long time lag between data collection and publication.
- District Information System for Education (DISE):**  
Decentralisation of education management brought in the need for more disaggregated data. Under the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), an appraisal of available education statistics at the primary level indicated weaknesses of the existing system, which led to the establishment of a regular data collection system to support both grassroots-level planning, as well as macro-planning. Since 2001-02, data has been collected from all government and recognised private schools, and is compiled and disseminated annually. Report cards are available at school, district and state levels. Their coverage has improved over time. Some states now cover unrecognised schools<sup>36</sup> and online data is available within a year of data collection.
- Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE):**  
Since 2009-10, the Secondary Education Management Information System (SEMIS) had been developed under Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA)<sup>37</sup> and data on secondary/higher secondary schools (Class 9 to 12) had been collected in a format very similar to DISE. A more recent initiative is the setting up of UDISE (Unified District Information System for Education) in 2012 which has created a unified database of students from Class 1 to 12 in each district and will replace DISE and SEMIS.

<sup>34</sup> Earlier data on the entire education system till Ph.D level was presented in these publications. Now data on higher education is being published separately and only school data is brought out in SSE.

<sup>35</sup> Government of India (various years, b).

<sup>36</sup> Data from unrecognised schools was collected in Punjab and Haryana in 2005-6; since then it is also being done in several other states.

<sup>37</sup> The scheme was launched in March, 2009 with the objective to enhance access to secondary education and to improve its quality.

### 2.1.2 Household survey data

Various household surveys are conducted in India on a national scale by government and non-government organisations. While some of them are focused on children's school participation, other surveys are multi-focused and include information on children's education. Some of the important surveys which are conducted at regular intervals are discussed here.

1. *Population Census:*

The decadal population census is the most comprehensive data source for school participation of children. Based on a complete enumeration of all households, the number and proportion of out-of-school children can be estimated and disaggregated by their socio-religious background and work status. The data can be used to generate reliable estimates at administrative block and village levels. However, the data is collected only every ten years, and usually there is a significant time lag before detailed tables and data is available.<sup>38</sup>

2. *National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) Surveys:*<sup>39</sup>

The NSSO under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, conducts multi-subject sample surveys all over the country. The surveys started in 1950 primarily to provide data for planning and policy formulation. Since then there have been successive annual rounds. The surveys are based on rigorous sampling methods and estimation procedures. Each round of survey has a different subject of enquiry and usually focuses on education once every 10 years. The last survey on education in India (64<sup>th</sup> round) was in 2007-08. The data can be used to calculate, at national and state levels, the proportion of children who have never been enrolled and those who have dropped out of school. Additionally in the thick-sample employment survey rounds, which are done every 5 years, comparable data on education and attendance are also collected. NSSO 66<sup>th</sup> round (2009-10) is the last such round.



<sup>38</sup> Latest educational data is available for the year 2001.

<sup>39</sup> Data is available on CD-ROMs from the Deputy Director General, Computer Centre, MOSPI, East Block No. 10, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110066 on payment.



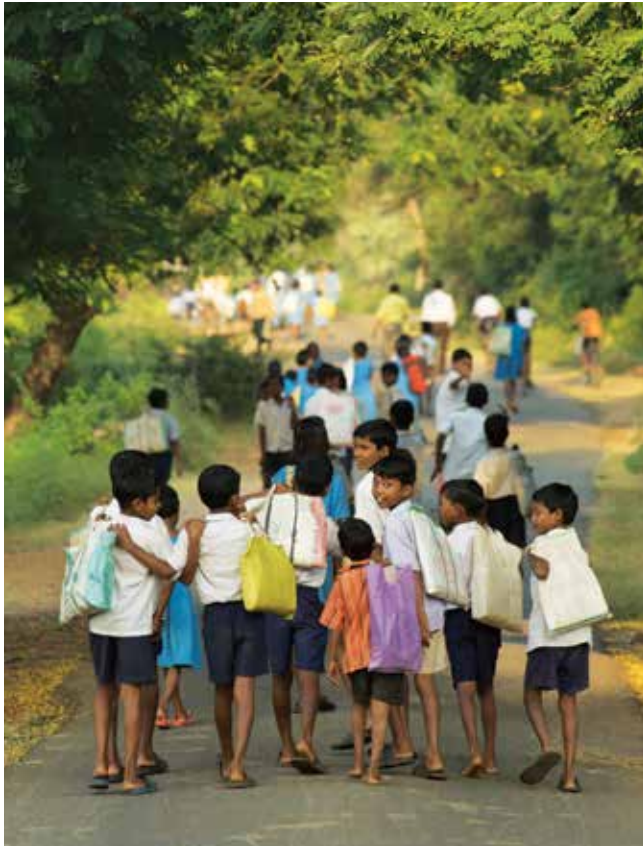
3. *National Family Health Survey (NFHS):*<sup>40</sup>  
NFHS is a large-scale, multi-round survey of a representative sample of households throughout India and is conducted by the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) designated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with support from a number of field organisations. There have been three rounds of surveys since 1992-93, conducted with a gap of 6 to 7 years. The latest one – NFHS-3 – was conducted in 2005-06. These surveys stand out for their organised and rapid data processing and the short time lag between the survey and its publications. Unit level data can be used to estimate attendance rates, and the number of children who have never been enrolled and those who have dropped out, at national and state levels.
4. *Surveys of Out-of-School Children (SRI-IMRB):*  
Two large sample (random) surveys were conducted in 2005 and 2009 to estimate out-of-school children between 5 and 13 years of age. These surveys were commissioned by Educational Consultants India Limited (EdCIL) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, and conducted by Social and Rural Research Institute, a specialist unit of IMRB International (SRI-IMRB). These surveys were focused on identifying out-of-school children, so a rigorous definition of out-of-school children was used. Any child who, even when enrolled, had not attended school any time in the two months preceding the survey, was counted as out of school. This is the only survey which estimates the number and the profile of out-of-school children including analysis on school participation of slum children, children in below-poverty-level (BPL) families, and children with Special Needs.
5. *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) household surveys and Child Tracking Surveys (CTS):*  
Most states conduct household surveys every year, as part of SSA, in order to identify children who are still out of school, and to enrol them. These data are collected by teachers by visiting all households in the catchment area of the school. Their estimates of out-of-school children are usually lower than the estimates generated by the sample surveys. The survey definitions and methodology are determined at the state level. In recent years several states have attempted to introduce a computerised database on the schooling status of all children between 0 and 14 years. An initial household survey is conducted to collect data on the children, and this database is updated on the basis of repeat surveys. Odisha initiated the process in 2005. A database consisting of age, education status and other relevant details of all children up to 14 years of age was loaded on the state government's Database Server and District Servers. This database was updated annually which made it possible to track the schooling status of all children in this age group on the internet.<sup>41</sup> Other states like Rajasthan and Uttarakhand started similar exercises more recently.
6. *India Human Development Survey (IHDS):*  
National Council of Applied Economic Research and University of Maryland conducted the IHDS in 2005, where data was collected from a nationally representative sample of households in rural India. Detailed information on school participation, grades completed, and costs of education were collected for all children between 6 and 14 years (both years included). This survey was a repeat of a survey conducted 11 years earlier in 1994. With this dataset, unit level data can be used to estimate proportion of never enrolled and dropout children at state and national levels.
7. *Annual Status of Educational Report (ASER):*  
Facilitated by the ASER Centre and the NGO Pratham, ASER is based on an annual survey of children aged between 5-16 years in all households in randomly selected villages. It is focused on the assessment of reading and arithmetic levels of these children, and possible determinants. It also collects information on children's school participation and is used to measure school attendance rates. The speed and regularity with which the survey reports are brought out makes them a very useful tool. The survey is undertaken annually in rural India (since 2005) by over 25,000 volunteers from NGOs and local citizens' groups (such as women's groups and youth groups), as well as individuals from local colleges (students and faculty).

<sup>40</sup> Data available at website <http://www.measuredhs.com/>

<sup>41</sup> Child tracking system in Odisha has been revised in 2011, to collect additional information on quality of schools and special training centres and is renamed as Child Monitoring Survey.

### 2.1.3 Comparison of administrative data sources

Administrative data sources estimate the number of enrolled children in school. The number of out-of-school children can be estimated for any age group if the number of children enrolled in that age group is subtracted from the estimated child population in the age group. However administrative data is usually used to measure school participation, and not to estimate the number of children out of school at the national level. The most commonly used participation indicator is the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). GER of an age group is the number of children enrolled in a specified stage of schooling as a proportion of estimated child population in the age group which is appropriate to that stage of schooling. GER does not require information on age of children enrolled and so can be easy to compute.



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The other common participation indicator is the Net Enrolment Rate (NER). NER of an age group is the number of children in the age group attending their age appropriate level of schooling as a proportion of the estimated child population in the age group. It can be calculated if distribution of enrolment by age is available. DISE is the only source which collects data on student's age and so can generate the NER.<sup>42</sup>

The Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF) of the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children has suggested an Adjusted NER (ANER) which is the number of children in the age group attending their age appropriate level of schooling or one level above as a proportion of the estimated child population in the age group. DISE data set collects information on children enrolled in grades 1 to 8. So even though it is possible to calculate ANER for the primary stage, it is not possible for the upper primary stage as age and enrolment data for secondary grades are not available.<sup>43</sup>

GER has been calculated from the three administrative data sources as well as the data presented in UIS for international comparisons. NER could be estimated only from the DISE

data<sup>44</sup> and ANER from UIS data and can be calculated at primary level and coming year, by utilising UDISE data it can be calculated at lower secondary level also. These figures are presented in Table 2.1. GER calculated from the initial year's data of UDISE is also presented in the table. Two interesting results are noticed: First, compared to the Eighth All India Education Survey (EAIES) in 2009-10, the GERs from other sources are higher. Second, all sources indicate a very high GER at primary level – more than 100 – but a lower rate at upper primary level. The high GERs reflect the fact that enrolment is mostly crowded in the primary grades. Underage enrolment in Class 1 (below 6 years) is also a feature in several states<sup>45</sup> where the age of admission in Class 1 is 5 years.

Administrative data sources supply regular data of the formal schooling system at a disaggregated level. But they have only limited coverage of unrecognised and private schools. Among these various sources, DISE data has become a very useful planning tool for elementary education at state and district levels on account of its improved coverage and regularity. However, estimates generated for the country as a whole have major problems because of the existing state-level variations. First, as discussed in the previous chapter, school structures are not uniform across different states. Elementary schools in several states

<sup>42</sup> Age data is not fully reported by all states. State Report Cards 2011.

<sup>43</sup> There is no information on the number of 11 to 13 year old children who study above grade 8. With regularisation of UDISE data system this will be available in future.

<sup>44</sup> In the data limitations section in "Elementary Education in India: where do we stand. State Report Cards" it is stated that age grade matrix was not available from all districts.

<sup>45</sup> Discussed in the section on Dimension 1.

**Table 2.1 Enrolment indicators from administrative data sources**

(per cent)

| Source              | Primary stage (grades 1-5) | Upper primary stage (grades 6-8) |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| EAIES GER (2009-10) | 108.9                      | 77.0                             |
| SES GER (2010-11)   | 116.0                      | 85.5                             |
| DISE GER (2010-11)  | 118.6                      | 81.2*                            |
| UDISE GER (2011-12) | 118.2                      | 91.1                             |
| UIS GER (2010)**    | 113                        | 83                               |
| DISE NER (2010-11)  | 99.9                       | 61.8*                            |
| UIS ANER (2008)**   | 92.6                       | NA                               |
| UIS ANER (2012)     | 98.9                       |                                  |

NER is calculated on the assumption that the 6-10 age group corresponds to the primary stage, and the 11-13 age group to the upper primary stage.

\* Possible underestimates as the State Report Cards have reported a limitation in the data – Class 8 enrolment data has not been reported in some schools/districts.

\*\* Global Education Digest 2011: Comparing Education Statistics across the World, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have grades 1 to 7 (instead of grades 1 to 8). As a result, in some states/districts Class 8 enrolment data is not included in the reporting on the upper primary level.<sup>46</sup> Secondly, since the enactment of RTE, the official age of admission in Class 1 is 6 years. But state norms are not uniform and the age of admission remains 5 years in several states.<sup>47</sup> DISE data calculates overage and underage enrolment according to the age norms in a particular state, and so it is difficult to interpret these statistics at the national level. Thirdly, there is also the problem of double enrolment, particularly in states with large numbers of private schools – recognised and unrecognised. Some children may be enrolled in government and private schools at the same time, and attend private schools more regularly while receiving incentives like free textbooks, scholarships and mid day meal from government schools. There are also cases when a child is transferred from one school to another without informing the school authorities, and the child's name remains in the enrolment register of both the schools.

The variations in estimates from different sources arise from the underlying differences in definitions and methods of data collection. These differences are explored further.

- *Definition of school:* Administrative data collect enrolment data from grades 1 to 8 from all formal recognised schools – both government and private. A number of private unaided schools are unrecognised and so are difficult to capture in the administrative database. Both the All India Education Surveys and DISE have attempted to collect data on these schools. While DISE has improved its coverage of these schools over time, it remains incomplete. However, under the RTE Act, all private schools are required to satisfy certain norms and be recognised. Hence they will get included in the database.

These data sources also include data on enrolment in pre-primary grades of these schools. Enrolments of the large number of privately managed and unrecognised schools providing pre-primary education are only partially covered as many states do not collect the required data.<sup>48</sup> Enrolment data from Anganwadis which are the pre-primary education facilities run under the government's Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme is collected separately by the concerned Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). SSE 2007-08 is the latest source which provides us with enrolment data from pre-primary enrolment as well as from Anganwadis as it had adopted International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, 1997) norms.<sup>49</sup> The Reports of later years do not have corresponding information.

<sup>46</sup> Data Limitations section in Elementary Education in India: where do we stand. State Report Cards (2011-12).

<sup>47</sup> No recent information on age of entry is available, but Sood (2008) states that it was 5 years for 23 states and 6 years in 12 states in the previous decade.

<sup>48</sup> SES 2009-10.

<sup>49</sup> The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is designed to serve as a statistical framework for assembling, compiling and presenting comparable indicators and statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally. In this document ISCED 1 is enrolment in grades 1 to 5 and ISCED 2 is enrolment in grades 6 to 8.

- **Definition of attendance:** Enrolment in grades 1 to 8 on 30<sup>th</sup> September is used as a reference date for data collection. As enrolment data on a particular reference date (e.g., 30<sup>th</sup> September) is used, the data is a measure of school participation on that date and not attendance. Apart from this, pre-primary enrolment is not included in most of the administrative data collection systems mentioned above.
- **Data collection process:** For SES, State education departments collect data from pre-primary grades to Class 12 in all recognised schools, and colleges and send it to MHRD. DISE data is collected by school teachers of government schools and sent to the block education office of SSA, and then to district education office. It is difficult to ensure coverage of all private schools. For AIES, State and District survey units are set up to collect and monitor the data. In the eighth round the data was collected by Head Teachers of schools and sent to the block education office of SSA and then to district and state survey units.
- **Population projections:** Single age wise projected population is available for the years 2006 and 2011 for the ages 5-18 years from “Population Projections For India And States 2001-2026” published by Registrar General of India. The numbers in the 6 to 10 age group and the 11 to 13 age group are calculated from this, and GER (from AIES, SES and DISE data) and NER (from DISE data) are calculated using these figures. UNESCO Institute for Statistics and UNICEF (as part of the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children) had, for estimation of child population in the 6 to 10 and 11 to 13 age groups, taken the figures from UNPD population projections (revised in 2012) for 2005 and 2010. The UIS data source calculates ANER for the age group corresponding to the primary stage of schooling.

#### 2.1.4 Comparison of household survey sources

The proportion of out-of-school children can be directly estimated from household surveys. The surveys collect data on children who attend school rather than those who are enrolled and, hence, are better able to identify the nominally enrolled children that is those who are enrolled but not attending (as done by

NSSO 64<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> rounds, SRI-IMRB both rounds and SSA Child Tracking surveys). They also collect data on children who are never enrolled, and who have dropped out from school – enrolled at some time ago and not continuing education. So it is possible to directly estimate the proportion of children who are out of school. Age data are always collected, which allows calculations of attendance rates of children in different age groups; but this could also lead to errors in cases where the respondents are not aware of the children’s correct age and misreport it.<sup>50</sup>

Table 2.2 shows the attendance rates estimated from different household surveys. These are also termed as Age-specific Attendance Rates (AAR). They do not take into consideration the class in which the child is enrolled, and so are not comparable to GER and NER. Table 2.2 shows wide variations in attendance rates. The proportions of children attending school are higher in the more recent data sets (NSSO 2009-10, SRI-IMRB 2009 and ASER 2009). Also the estimates show a higher attendance rates for the younger age group but a decline in the next age group.



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<sup>50</sup> Births of all children are not registered, and even when they are, the respondent may not remember the child’s date of birth.

**Table 2.2 Attendance rates from household surveys**

(per cent)

| Source               | 6 – 10 years      | 11 – 13 years     |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| IHDS (2004-05)       | 85.0 <sup>1</sup> |                   |
| NFHS (2005-06)       | 82.9              | 75.3 <sup>2</sup> |
| NSSO (2007-08)       | 88.0              | 86.0              |
| NSSO (2009-10)       | 92.1              | 92.0              |
| SRI-IMRB (2009)      | 96.3              | 94.8              |
| ASER Rural (2009-10) | 97.7 <sup>3</sup> | 94.6 <sup>2</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> For 6 to 14 year olds.    <sup>2</sup> For 11 to 14 year olds.    <sup>3</sup> For 7 to 10 year olds.

As discussed in the earlier section, the variations in estimates may arise from differences in their definition of “schools”, and definition of “not attending”. Additionally, as these data are collected through sample surveys, they may differ due to the difference in sampling strategy and scope of the survey. Finally, the estimation is based on projected population for the relevant year, and they may differ when the population projections are different. These differences are further explored.

- **Definition of School:** In all these data sets a child attending Class 1 or above in formal government schools, private schools, recognised Madaras and EGS centres is considered as in school. However their approaches are different regarding non-formal educational facilities and education facilities providing pre-primary education. NSSO does not consider any other education facilities as “schools”. The SRI-IMRB out of school survey on the other hand clearly includes Centres conducting bridge courses (residential and non-residential), unrecognised Madaras providing general education in addition to religious education, Sanskrit pathshalas (recognised by the state Sanskrit board and teaching EVS and mathematics in addition to language) in their definition of “school”. ASER survey uses a somewhat similar definition and NFHS has no clearly stated definition. IHDS survey includes open school in their definition.
- **Definition of attending:** Definition of “attending” also varies. SRI-IMRB Report has a clear definition. A child is categorised as ‘out of school’ if the child is either not enrolled in pre-primary grades or above or is enrolled but has been absent for more than two months continuously or has discontinued studies from the schools defined. NSSO considers children never enrolled in Class 1 or above and dropout children as out of school but no reference period is given to determine dropouts. If child has not been attending because of illness, vacation or interval after exams when results are to be announced, then the child is to be considered to be “attending”. ASER, NFHS and IHDS surveys use enrolment as a proxy for attendance.
- **Sampling strategy and scope of survey:** The sample design for data collection also varies. NSSO uses a stratified multi-stage design. The sample designs sometimes differ between different rounds depending on the scope of survey. The 66<sup>th</sup> round in 2009-10 was focused on employment and unemployment, and consumer expenditure. Education data for all household members, from pre-primary to higher education, were also collected. When compared to 64<sup>th</sup> round focused on education, it had an additional substratum while selecting villages in the rural areas – depending on incidence of child workers. Data was collected between July 2009 and June 2010.

The sample design of SRI-IMRB survey was stratified and multi stage and used the sampling frame of NSSO 2007-08 survey. Education data was collected for 5 to 13 year olds, and details were collected upto Class 8. Data was collected between February and May 2009. NFHS (2005-06) and IHDS (2004-05) also used a stratified multi-stage sample – the stratifying variables depended on the objectives of the data collection.

- **Population projection and estimation procedure:** Unlike administrative sources, the attendance rates in household surveys are calculated on the basis of sample weights and sample population. However when survey data is used to estimate the number of out-of-school children, projected population in the survey year gains importance.<sup>51</sup> The 2001 population census has been used for sampling in all these surveys. The SRI-IMRB out of school survey has estimated the number of out-of-school children, based on population projections published by the Registrar General of India.

<sup>51</sup> Discussed in details in Chapter 5.

The estimates generated from any of these data sets need to be interpreted with care. These are based on household surveys and do not include homeless populations: street children, children in institutions, children staying in workplaces (shops, etc.) or children displaced in civil strife. With the sustained efforts to bring all children into school, out-of-school children are more likely to be clustered in certain pockets and not randomly distributed. Estimates based on surveys of randomly-selected sample households are likely to be underestimates on this count.

There may be other reasons for these estimates to be incorrect. First, migrant families are not systematically included. Varying patterns of migration lasting from a few months to a year make it difficult to capture migrant children; not all would be available at the same time. In urban areas, where in-migration rates are particularly high, there is an additional problem that seasonal migrants tend to stay in slums and unauthorised colonies that may be excluded from the sampling frame. Second, school participation of children varies over the year – the school calendar, agricultural calendar and climatic conditions are some important factors which cause variations in enrolment and attendance rates. The school calendar is made in the state capital. Major festivals and the climatic conditions in the state capital are more likely to impact the school calendar than local festivals in tribal areas or climatic conditions in areas far from the state capital. The local context may thus contribute additional reasons for children to be absent from school at certain times of the year. The surveys do not take these factors into account. Third, the academic year is not the same across states. For example, in some districts in Jammu & Kashmir, the new academic session begins in November, and schools close soon after from mid-November to early February. In other north Indian states like Uttar Pradesh, new sessions start in April or May. Fourth, the reference date for calculating age varies: NFHS surveys use 1 April, SRI-IMRB uses 1 January, and other surveys like the NSSO note age on the date of survey.

### 2.1.5 Methodology used for estimation of out-of-school children and analysis of profiles

In this section the Report identifies the data sources and the methodology used to estimate the number and proportions of children out of school, and to analyse their profile. The previous section discussed the definitions used by different data sources. It is difficult to say unequivocally that the definition used by one particular source is superior to another but it points out to the need for a clearly specified harmonised definition to be used. This would make it easy to compare and monitor progress using data from different sources.

#### **Sources used**

Out of the different data sets available for the past five years, the Report has used household survey data, rather than administrative sources, to estimate the number of out-of-school children and to generate profile of out-of-school children. The primary reasons for this choice are that household surveys have data on both in-school and out-of-school children and on the age of the child, while the administrative sources give information on in-school children only, and at school level. It is possible to use administrative sources for the estimation if data on an age grade matrix is available for all enrolled children in the 6 to 13 age group. Only DISE data attempts to provide this information,<sup>52</sup> but till Class 8 only. No information on children in the age group studying in higher grades is available.<sup>53</sup>

Household survey data are also more useful to analyse the profiles of out-of-school children as they provide details of the socio economic and religious background of the children. Administrative surveys in India collect information on children “in school”, making it difficult to disaggregate data on out-of-school children by child characteristics.

In this Report the SRI-IMRB 2009 unit data has been used to estimate the number of out-of-school children, as the survey was especially designed for the purpose. For the profile analysis both SRI-IMRB 2009 and the NSSO 2007-8 data have been used. The data has been disaggregated by location, gender and caste. It is also a useful source to examine the proportion out-of school among children with special needs, and among the families below the poverty line (BPL). This is supplemented by analysis of NSSO 2007-08 data as the SRI-IMRB survey did not collect income or expenditure data.

The two data sets are not directly comparable as they differ in the timing of the survey and the definitions used, though they use the same sampling frame. The details are given in the Data Inventory in Annexure 1.

<sup>52</sup> In addition, DISE reports of various years have noted that age data is not complete.

<sup>53</sup> Since data is collected regularly through DISE (now UDISE), it has the potential to be a very useful source for estimation if effort is made to collect complete data on the age of children enrolled in school.

Administrative data, if collected annually, is useful to measure flow rates of discontinuance – like dropout rates, transition rates and survival rates. For these purposes, the DISE data is also used where possible – as it appears to have the best coverage of schools and data collection is regular. The data for 2009-10 and the preceding year have been used (see Section 2.4) to calculate the rates.

### **Dimensions of exclusion**

#### *Definitions developed in the Global Initiative:*

Dimensions of exclusion from school participation is a model adopted in the present global initiative and elaborated in its Conceptual and Methodological Framework (CMF), where 5 target groups of children spanning three levels of education – pre-primary, primary and lower secondary – are identified for data and policy analysis. Each group represents a distinct Dimension of Exclusion. Children who are of appropriate age for pre-primary, primary and lower secondary grades, and are out of school are in Dimensions 1, 2 and 3, respectively. Children in Dimension 1 are those who are in the pre-primary age group, but do not attend pre-primary or primary school, while children in Dimensions 2 and 3 are those children in the age groups corresponding to the primary and lower secondary stages, respectively, who are not attending primary or secondary school (ISCED 1, 2 and 3). Children in Dimensions 4 and 5 are in primary and lower secondary school, respectively, but are at risk of dropping out.



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Two groups of children are included, according to the CMF, in Dimensions 2 and 3 even if they are attending facilities which provide learning related activities. Those who attend pre-primary education facilities are one such group as “educational properties of pre-primary education and the pedagogical qualifications of teaching staff in such programmes may not meet the criteria that are applied to primary education”.<sup>54</sup> Children who attend non-formal education centres which are not officially recognised and are not equivalent to primary or secondary grades in formal education system belong to the other group. The framework of this global initiative acknowledges that children in these groups are different from those who do not attend any educational facilities, and suggests additional analysis of these children in countries where the numbers are significant.

#### *Definitions used in this Report:*

The official norms of education departments regarding the age of admission to Class 1 are not clearly stated.<sup>55</sup> But 6 years is the age of admission in Class 1 according to RTE. So 6 to 10 years is the age group corresponding to the primary stage and 11 to 13 years is the age group corresponding to the lower secondary stage (also known as the upper primary stage). The school participation rates of 5 year old children are analysed to identify those in Dimension 1; children in the age groups of 6 to 10 years and 11 to 13 years are to be analysed to identify those in Dimensions 2 and 3, respectively.

In this report, children in Dimension 1 have the same definition as that given in the CMF for this global initiative – that is the 5 year olds who are not attending pre-primary or primary schools. Dimensions 2 and 3 are defined differently. Children in Dimension 2 and Dimension 3 are children in the 6 to 10 age group and

<sup>54</sup> UNICEF and UNESCO Institute for Statistics – Conceptual and Methodological Framework.

<sup>55</sup> Some details are available in an MHRD publication in 2003 where age of admission in grade 1 is given as 5 years for twenty-three states and 6 years for twelve states. <http://dise.in/Downloads/Use%20of%20Dise%20Data/Neelam%20Sood.pdf>

the 11 to 13 age group who are not attending pre-primary, primary or secondary school (ISCED levels 0, 1, 2 and 3), whether formal or non-formal.<sup>56</sup> That is, in contrast to CMF definition, children in pre-primary schooling or in non-formal schools are considered to be in school and not included in Dimension 2 or Dimension 3.

### **Categories of disaggregation for profile**

The categories used for analysis of profiles of out-of-school children were suggested in the CMF developed as part of the Global Initiative of Out-of-School children. Accordingly the data on out-of-school children have been disaggregated by location (urban and rural areas, as well as different states), by gender, and also by social, religious and economic categories (see Annexure 2: Tables 4 and 5). The main disadvantaged social groups include the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the Scheduled Tribes (ST).<sup>57</sup> The economic categories used are based on monthly per capita consumption expenditure. The sample households have been divided into 5 quintiles, calculated separately for rural and urban areas as they have different expenditure cut-offs for each quintile.

### **Calculation for estimation**

The data sets used are collected on the basis of a survey of a stratified random sample of households. Proportions out of school in different strata for the two relevant age groups (details given in Section 2.3.1) are calculated from the data set. These proportions have been used with projected populations to arrive at national estimates. In the next two sections, we estimate the number and proportion of out-of-school children and examine their profile in relation to Dimensions 1, 2 and 3.<sup>58</sup>

## **2.2 Children in Dimension 1**



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It is difficult to analyse the profiles of children in Dimension 1 (that is out-of-school children who are 5 years old) as there are multiple types of provision of pre-primary education which vary in duration from 1 to 3 years, and no data source collects information from all these facilities. Preschool education is largely provided by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), for 3 to 5 year olds, in Anganwadis and Balwadis, as part of the ECCE programme. Formal schools also provide pre-primary education. This varies from 1 to 3 years in duration. These schools are largely under private management and may be recognised or unrecognised. A few states like Assam and Delhi have one

year of pre-primary schooling in the government primary schools. Age-disaggregated enrolment data are an imperative for estimation of Dimension 1. But administrative sources like MWCD provide information on total enrolments in Anganwadi centres, while SES from MHRD provides information on enrolment in pre-primary grades in recognised schools. While the two sets of data give an estimate of enrolment in

<sup>56</sup> UIS and UNICEF, for the purpose of this Global Initiative of Out-of-School Children, have considered children enrolled in non-formal programmes which aim at providing the equivalency to formal primary education as well as mainstreaming them into the formal system as “in school”. The present analysis is based on a similar definition where children in non-formal programmes in India which provide this equivalency is considered as in school – this includes schools under the Education Guarantee Scheme as well as education centres for out-of-school children, whose purpose is to mainstream them into the regular school system. These centres are up to 2 years in duration, and include short term bridge courses as well as regular classes with flexible timing.

<sup>57</sup> Data is also given for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Others (includes the upper castes).

<sup>58</sup> The Indian Taskforce on the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children has decided not to focus on Dimensions 4 and 5 in the present exercise.



**Table 2.3 Enrolment in pre-primary schooling facilities: Administrative sources** (in millions)

| Source                                      | ICDS/Anganwadi | Pre-primary class (formal) | Total attendance  |
|---|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| SAIES (2002-3) <sup>60</sup><br>(3-5 years) | 25.40          | 8.17                       | 33.57             |
| WCD (2009-10)<br>(3-5 years)                | 33.57          | NA                         | 33.57             |
| SSE (2011-12)                               | 35.82          | 6.30                       | 42.13<br>GER 57%* |

\* Census population for 2011 was used to calculate GER

pre-primary education, no information on age is available. So it is not possible to estimate the number and proportion of 5 year olds who are enrolled (or not enrolled) in these institutions.

Table 2.3 gives some of this data on enrolment of 3 to 5 year olds in pre-primary grades. According to estimates by the Ministry of Woman and Child Development, more than 35 million children in the 3 to 5 age group are enrolled in Anganwadi and Balwadis. For the year 2011-12, the attendance rate of 3 to 5 year olds in pre-primary education has been arrived at by aggregating enrolment data provided by MWCD and pre-primary enrolment data provided by Statistics of School Education (SSE),<sup>60</sup> and using Census 2011 data for the population of 3 to 5 year olds. An estimate of GER for the pre-primary stage is available only from these sources of data.

Among household surveys, NSSO and SRI-IMRB provide details for school attendance for 5 year old children, but do not give information on their enrolment in Anganwadi centres or Balwadi centres. ASER surveys are the only household surveys which provide details on enrolment in preschool facilities, but these are for rural areas.

Table 2.4 gives data on attendance of 5 year olds in formal pre-primary or primary grades. In the year 2009, 12.0 per cent of males and 12.9 per cent of females are seen to be not studying in any formal school. A small proportion (over 20 per cent) was enrolled in pre-primary grades while the majority were enrolled in primary grades (around two thirds).

ASER data (Table 2.5) confirms the trend. In rural areas nearly 57 per cent of 5 year olds were in primary schools, 21 per cent in Anganwadi and Balwadis, and a little more than 12 per cent in formal pre-primary grades.

**Table 2.4 Percentage of children of pre-primary age (5 years) in pre-primary or primary grades** (per cent)

| All states | Attending formal school |                | Not attending any formal school |
|------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
|            | Pre-primary grades      | Primary grades |                                 |
| Male       | 21.3                    | 66.7           | 12.0                            |
| Female     | 19.9                    | 67.2           | 12.9                            |
| All        | 20.7                    | 66.9           | 12.4                            |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

**Table 2.5 Proportion enrolled in pre-primary and primary schooling facilities: ASER 2012** (per cent)

| Source  | Enrolled in    |                    |                | Not enrolled |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|
|         | ICDS/Anganwadi | Pre-primary grades | Primary grades |              |
| 3 years | 56.8           | 7.7                | NA             | 35.4         |
| 4 years | 55.5           | 21.2               | NA             | 23.3         |
| 5 years | 21.0           | 12.2               | 56.8           | 10.1         |

Source: ASER 2012

Note: For ages 3 and 4 only preschool status was noted.

<sup>59</sup> The tables from SAIES (2009-10) do not include any information on pre-primary enrolment.

<sup>60</sup> SES does not publish all educational data in one volume, since 2007-8. Instead all school level statistics including data on teacher training are published in Statistics of School Education (SSE).

There could be two possible reasons for this high enrolment in primary schools. First, there is no uniform standard age for admission to primary schools. So children may be sent for admission when they are 5 or 6 or even older<sup>61</sup> depending on the local norms. Second, parents may wish to send their 4 or 5 year old for pre-primary education, but if such facilities are unavailable or unaffordable, they may admit the child in Class 1. Some parents may also find it more convenient to send their younger child along with the older sibling to primary school, rather than to a separate preschool. It is only in areas where private schools have flourished (for example, in urban areas and in states with a higher presence of private schools), that we find that a higher proportion of households are found to send their children to the pre-primary sections of private schools.

This can also be seen from the disaggregated data in Table 1 of Annexure 2. Attendance in pre-primary formal schools is higher in urban areas and among the socially and economically advantaged groups (i.e. not among the SC, ST, Muslims, and the lower expenditure quintiles). Gender differences are pronounced in urban areas, but not in rural areas.

Both SRI-IMRB data and ASER data indicate that the proportion of children in Dimension 1 is quite low. However, the data also reveal that a large number of parents have enrolled their children in Class 1 at 5 years of age rather than send to pre-primary facilities, suggesting possibly a gap in the nature of supply and demand for pre-primary education.

### 2.3 Children in Dimensions 2 and 3

Children in Dimensions 2 and 3 are defined in this Report as children between 6 and 10 years, and between 11 and 13 years, respectively, who are not attending formal or non-formal schools at pre-primary level or above (that is ISCED levels 0, 1, 2 and 3).

#### 2.3.1 Estimated out-of-school children

The estimates of out-of-school children from different household data sources vary widely. According to SSA estimates (reported by MHRD), which are based on household surveys conducted in all states, the number of out-of-school children has declined from 7 million in 2005-06 to 3 million in 2012.<sup>62</sup> But



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<sup>61</sup> Late enrolment is more common in areas where the terrain is difficult as in hill areas or in forested areas.

<sup>62</sup> JRM 10<sup>th</sup> (2009).

these surveys differ from other national level household surveys as they are conducted separately and independently by different states, with the objective of identifying out-of-school children at village level and bringing them back to school. The numbers of out-of-school children based on these surveys could be underestimates.<sup>63</sup> The different child censuses (sometimes termed as child tracking survey – CTS) conducted by several state governments (such as Odisha in 2005 and Rajasthan in 2011) also point to the likelihood of underestimation – in 2011-12 in Rajasthan 1.2 million children were reported to be out of school from the CTS exercise, while only 3.7 million were reported to be out of school in India in the same year, according to the SSA household survey.<sup>64</sup> Independent household surveys (SRI-IMRB) have been commissioned by MHRD to provide alternate estimates of out-of-school children. The 2005 survey estimated 13.5 million children out of school that year, nearly double the 7 million estimated by the SSA household survey for the same year. In Chapter 5 we discuss the estimation issues in greater detail.

In the present Report, the estimate of the number of Out-of-School Children is based on the SRI-IMRB (2009) Report. This is the second survey commissioned by Government of India to estimate the number and proportion of children out of school. The calculation is based on the assumption that the age of entry in Class 1 is 6 years and the duration of the primary (ISCED level 1) and upper primary stages (ISCED level 2) are 5 years and 3 years, respectively. In the Report, estimation was not done for each single age and then combined, as suggested in CMF. Instead it was done for rural and urban areas, separately, for each of the states following the guidelines provided by the Research, Evaluation & Studies Unit, Technical Support Group, EdCIL. These estimates were then combined to provide overall estimates.

Table 2.6 summarises the findings. The Report estimated that there were 190 million children in the age group 6-13 years. Out of these, 4.28 per cent of children were out of school which makes an estimated 8.15 million out-of-school children. Of them 7 million are from rural areas and the rest from urban areas.

As already stated, the definitions of Dimension 2 and Dimension 3 used for analysing SRI-IMRB data are different from that in CMF. The estimation process used for Table 2.6 differs from that used in the Global Initiative and also in the data used for population projection.

CMF proposed that the child population in the 6 to 10 and 11 to 13 age groups be estimated from UNPD population projections (revised in 2012) for 2005 and 2010 for international comparison purpose. Single age population estimates for 2005 and 2010 can be arrived at using the Sprague multiplier. Annual compound growth rates of population between 2005 and 2010 can be used to project individual age-wise populations for the year of data collection.<sup>65</sup> For estimating the number of out-of-school children, the proportion of out-of-school children for single age population is computed from the survey data. The number of out-of-school children for each single age is calculated by using the proportion with the projected population. These numbers are added to estimate the number of out-of-school children.

The SRI-IMRB estimate is, however, based on the single age wise projected population for the ages 5-18 years published by Registrar General of India.<sup>66</sup> The estimates are made for the two age groups in rural and urban areas separately for each state, and then added to get the estimated number of out-of-school children.

Table 2.6a presents the results of a statistical exercise where different definitions and population projections are used to generate alternate estimates of out-of-school children from the SRI-IMRB data set.

**Table 2.6 Estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group**

| Location    | Number of children | Proportion out of school (%) | Number out of school |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Rural areas | 155,143,385        | 4.53                         | 7,024,118            |
| Urban areas | 35,439,196         | 3.18                         | 1,126,500            |
| All         | 190,582,581        | 4.28                         | 8,150,618            |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009

<sup>63</sup> The 10<sup>th</sup> JRM Aide Memoire states that “the total estimated number of out-of-school children needs to be considered with caveats”.

<sup>64</sup> JRM 15<sup>th</sup> (2012).

<sup>65</sup> For IMRB survey population for 2009 has been taken, while the NSSO survey was conducted between July 2009 and June 2010, the population projections have been made for 4.5 years from 2005.

<sup>66</sup> “Population Projections For India And States 2001-2026”, RGI India.

**Table 2.6a Alternate estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group, 2009**

| Out-of-school children according to | Population projection RGI |                     | Population projection UNPD |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|                                     | Proportion (%)            | Number (in million) | Proportion (%)             | Number (in million) |
| <b>6 to 10 years</b>                |                           |                     |                            |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 3.69                      | 4.3                 | 3.69                       | 4.5                 |
| Definition 2                        | 6.41                      | 7.5                 | 6.41                       | 7.8                 |
| <b>11 to 13 years</b>               |                           |                     |                            |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 5.23                      | 3.8                 | 5.23                       | 3.7                 |
| Definition 2                        | 5.73                      | 4.2                 | 5.73                       | 4.1                 |
| <b>6 to 13 years</b>                |                           |                     |                            |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 4.28                      | 8.1                 | 4.28                       | 8.2                 |
| Definition 2                        | 6.15                      | 11.7                | 6.15                       | 11.9                |

Source: Calculated from SRI-IMRB 2009 data, population projections from RGI, 2009 and UNPD 2009 (2012 revision).  
 Definition 1: OOSC are children who have never been enrolled in pre-primary schooling or above, and those who have dropped out from pre-primary schooling or above, covering both formal and non-formal education facilities.  
 Definition 2: OOSC are children who have never been enrolled in Class 1 and above, and those who have dropped out from Class 1 and above, in formal education facilities.

Four estimates are calculated, using two definitions of out of school (given by CMF, and by the Out of School Report, 2009) and two estimates of child population based on different population projections. Using the 2009 Report's own definition of out-of-school children the estimate is 8.1 million when the RGI population projections are used and 8.2 million if UNPD population projections are used. When children in the 3-5 age group, who are attending pre-primary facilities or non-formal education facilities are also defined to be out of school, the number increases to 11.7 million if the RGI population projection is used, and 11.9 million if the UNPD population projection is used.

The differences in the estimated number of out-of-school children, illustrate how estimates vary with changes in definition and methodology and bring to attention the urgent need for a uniform definition and methodology for estimation and population projection to be used. These issues are discussed in greater details in Chapter 5.

### 2.3.2 Profiles of children in Dimensions 2 and 3

The profile of out-of-school children is analysed from unit level data of the SRI-IMRB 2009 survey. We have disaggregated the data on out-of-school children by residence (urban and rural areas), by gender, and also by social and religious categories. The Indian economy is predominantly rural – more than four-fifths of the children in the 6 to 13 age group live in rural areas. To better understand the dimensions of exclusion, we first look at the profile of all children in the 6 to 13 age group, irrespective of their schooling status (see Tables 2.7 and 2.8). This will serve as a contrast when the profile of out-of-school children is described.

Table 2.7 gives the data for all children in the 6 to 13 age group disaggregated by social groups. It shows that while a high proportion of children belong to the OBC communities, children from SC groups are also a sizeable group in both rural and urban areas. Children from ST groups are a comparatively higher

**Table 2.7 Percentage distribution of all children (6 to 13 years), by social group, 2009** (per cent)

|         | Rural | Urban | All   |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| SC      | 20.1  | 16.1  | 19.5  |
| ST      | 12.7  | 4.5   | 11.3  |
| OBC*    | 33.1  | 25.6  | 31.8  |
| Others* | 22.1  | 35.4  | 24.3  |
| Muslim  | 12.0  | 18.4  | 13.1  |
| All     | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

\*Excludes Muslims. Data on Muslims is given separately in Row 5.  
 Source: Unit level data, SRI-IMRB 2009

**Table 2.8 Percentage distribution of children (6-13 years) in different social groups among BPL and APL households, 2009** (per cent)

|         | Rural |       |       | Urban |       |       |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|         | BPL   | APL   | All   | BPL   | APL   | All   |
| SC      | 26.1  | 16.2  | 20.1  | 21.7  | 14.7  | 16.1  |
| ST      | 17.0  | 9.9   | 12.7  | 7.9   | 3.6   | 4.5   |
| OBC*    | 30.2  | 35.0  | 33.1  | 27.5  | 25.1  | 25.6  |
| Others* | 16.1  | 26.0  | 21.1  | 20.9  | 39.1  | 35.4  |
| Muslim  | 10.6  | 12.9  | 12.0  | 22.1  | 17.5  | 18.4  |
| All     | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

\*Excludes Muslims. Data on Muslims is given separately in Row 5.  
Source: Unit level data, SRI-IMRB 2009

proportion in rural areas. Muslim children constitute 13 per cent of the population but account for more than 18 per cent in urban areas.<sup>67</sup>

As seen from Table 2.8, socially disadvantaged communities are likely to be economically disadvantaged. When the social backgrounds of children from BPL (Below Poverty Line) and APL (Above Poverty Line) households are compared, we see that children from the SC, ST and Muslim communities are more likely to belong to BPL households. Children from OBC communities in urban areas also show some disadvantage, but not in rural areas. Children from the category "Others", which includes primarily upper caste Hindus, are more likely to belong to APL households.

For detailed profiles, the out-of-school children are analysed in two ways. First, the distribution of out-of-school children among the different social and economic categories are analysed to identify the main categories in which these children are concentrated. Second, the proportion of out-of-school children in each of these categories is calculated to identify the categories where children are more likely to be out of school. The second method allows identification of numerically small but vulnerable groups.

### 2.3.3 Composition of out-of-school children

In the following set of tables we have compared the distribution of child population and out-of-school children among different categories. Table 2.9a shows that there are more boys (54 per cent) than girls (46 per cent) in the child population whereas the proportions are reversed among out-of-school children, where around half are girls.

Similarly children from the disadvantaged social and religious groups have a higher likelihood of being out of school. Table 2.9b shows that ST, SC and Muslims are all over-represented among the out-of-school children. The proportion of OBCs among the out-of-school children is high, but lower than the proportion in India's child population. The children in the category "Others" are the most advantaged – they are nearly one-fifth of the total child population but constitute around 10 per cent among out-of-school children. Table 2.9c shows the extent to which children from BPL households are over-represented among the pot of out-of-school children. More than half the out-of-school children are from APL households, which perhaps indicates that economic disadvantage is not the sole explanation for children

**Table 2.9a Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by gender** (per cent)

|       | 6-10 years   |                        | 11-13 years  |                        |
|-------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
|       | All children | Out-of-school children | All children | Out-of-school children |
| Boys  | 54.6         | 50.3                   | 55.1         | 49.5                   |
| Girls | 45.4         | 49.7                   | 44.9         | 50.5                   |
| All   | 100.0        | 100.0                  | 100.0        | 100.0                  |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

<sup>67</sup> In India, NSS data on "Others" includes data on the more advantaged Muslim groups. Nearly all disadvantaged Muslim groups have been classified as OBCs, and NSS data on OBCs includes these disadvantaged groups. But for Tables 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10b, the data on Muslims has been excluded from these two categories (Others and OBCs) and presented separately.

**Table 2.9b Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by social groups**

(per cent)

|         | 6-10 years   |                        | 11-13 years  |                        |
|---------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
|         | All children | Out-of-school children | All children | Out-of-school children |
| ST      | 11.6         | 16.8                   | 10.9         | 19.5                   |
| SC      | 19.4         | 29.0                   | 19.6         | 24.9                   |
| OBC*    | 32.0         | 24.3                   | 31.6         | 23.6                   |
| Others* | 23.8         | 9.3                    | 25.4         | 10.2                   |
| Muslims | 13.3         | 20.6                   | 12.6         | 21.9                   |
| All     | 100.0        | 100.0                  | 100.0        | 100.0                  |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

\*Excludes Muslims. Data on Muslims is given separately.

**Table 2.9c Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by economic categories**

(per cent)

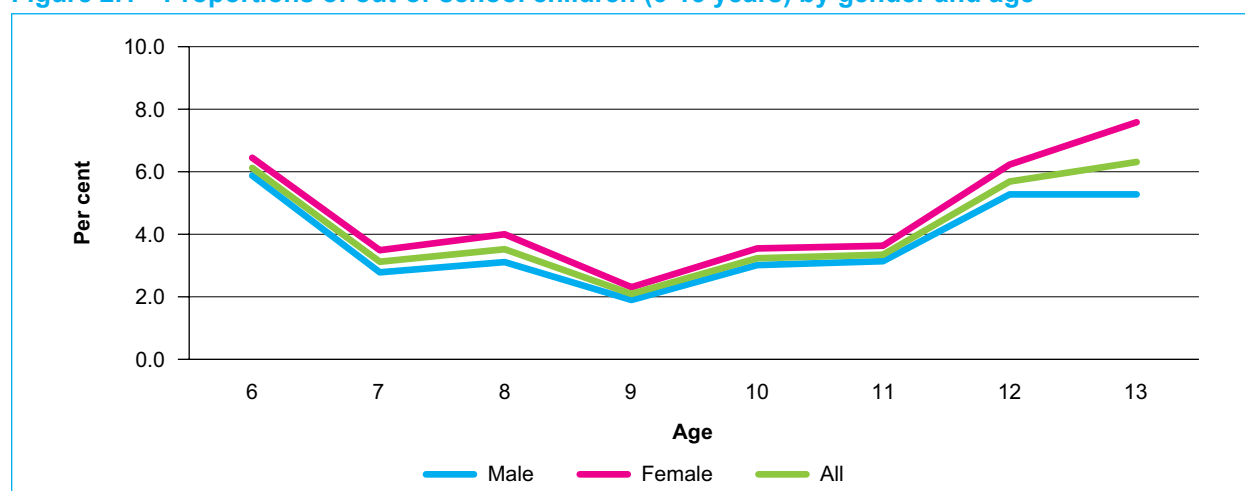
| Households classified as | 6-10 years   |                        | 11-13 years  |                        |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
|                          | All children | Out-of-school children | All children | Out-of-school children |
| BPL                      | 36.2         | 43.5                   | 36.4         | 47.9                   |
| APL                      | 63.8         | 56.5                   | 63.6         | 52.1                   |
| All                      | 100.0        | 100.0                  | 100.0        | 100.0                  |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

remaining out of school. But it also could be a comment on the accuracy of the BPL identification process as we later see from NSSO data (Table 2.13) that poverty is strongly associated with out of school status. Analysis at state level shows that a high proportion of children out of school from APL families are from a few states – UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Delhi.

### 2.3.4 Proportion of out-of-school children: National level

An overall picture of 6-13 year old children, age-wise, who are out of school, shows that 6 per cent of children are not enrolled in pre-primary and above in formal schools at 6 years (Fig. 2.1). However, many children enter school late which is reflected in the decline in out of school proportions till the age of 9. The proportion of out-of-school children remains below 4 per cent till the age of 11, and from 12 onwards the proportion increases. It is remarkable that the gap in school participation rates between male and female children is quite small till the age of 11, and increases after that in favour of males. Table 2.10 summarises these differences for the two age groups. It reflects the low proportion out of school in the 6 to 10 age group and the low gender differences. In the 11 to 13 age group the out of school proportions are higher and so are the gender differences.

**Figure 2.1 Proportions of out-of-school children (6-13 years) by gender and age**

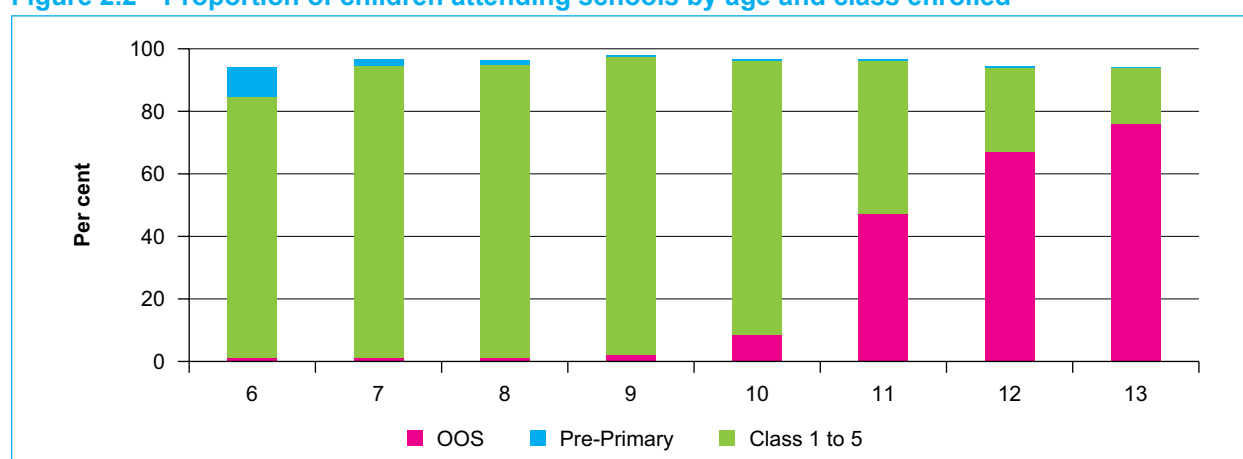
Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

**Table 2.10 Proportion of out-of-school children in different age groups** (per cent)

| Age group (years) | Proportion out of school |       |      |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------|------|
|                   | Boys                     | Girls | All  |
| 6 -10             | 3.40                     | 4.04  | 3.69 |
| 11-13             | 4.77                     | 5.79  | 5.23 |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 Report

Figure 2.2 gives a more detailed breakdown. Each stacked column gives the proportion of children of a specified age in the 6-13 age group who are out of school, and enrolled in pre-primary, primary, and higher grades. It re-emphasises the fact that the children's progress through school is not smooth. As mentioned earlier, several states have 5 years as age of entry for class1, and so a few 10 year olds are found enrolled in the upper primary stage. However, children who are overage for their class are a more common phenomenon. This includes a significant proportion of 6 year olds (9 per cent) who are in pre-primary grades, and around 40 per cent of 11 year olds, 17 per cent of 12 year olds, and 17 per cent of 13 year olds who are in primary grades. Table 2.18 (Section 2.4) on dropout rates confirms that many children spend more than a year in a particular class.

**Figure 2.2 Proportion of children attending schools by age and class enrolled**

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

Table 2.11 presents the proportion of children in the 6-10 and 11-13 age groups who are studying in grades appropriate for their ages or higher. This is measured by the Adjusted Net Attendance Rates (ANAR). The ANARs at primary stage (that is, the proportion of children aged 6 to 10 years studying in grade 1 or higher) are 94 per cent for both males and females. This is quite a high rate but lower than the attendance rate of this age group (96.3 per cent). It indicates that 2.3 per cent of children in this age group are not included in calculations of ANAR as they are in school but studying in pre-primary grades. In the next age group the attendance rate is as high as 95 per cent, but ANAR (proportion of children aged 11 to 13 years studying in grade 6 or higher) is much lower, less than two-thirds (64 per cent). In both the age groups there is hardly any gender gap. So while the proportions of OOSC have declined sharply, a large proportion of those in school are overage for their class. This is a matter of concern in the context of meeting the RTE and the EFA goals, as these (overage) children will be unable to complete 8 years of education by the age of 13 years.

**Table 2.11 Adjusted net attendance rate by sex and level of education** (per cent)

| Level of education   | Adjusted net attendance rates |        |       |                     |
|--|-------------------------------|--------|-------|---------------------|
|  | Male                          | Female | Total | Gender parity index |
| Proportions of children in the 6-10 age group attending primary grades or above        | 93.9                          | 93.6   | 93.8  | 1.00                |
| Proportions of children in the 11-13 age group attending upper primary grades or above | 63.9                          | 63.5   | 63.8  | 0.99                |
| Total*   | 84.0                          | 83.9   | 84.0  | 1.00                |

Source: Calculated from SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

Note: \*Total ANAR is the average of the ANAR for both age groups weighted by the relevant populations.

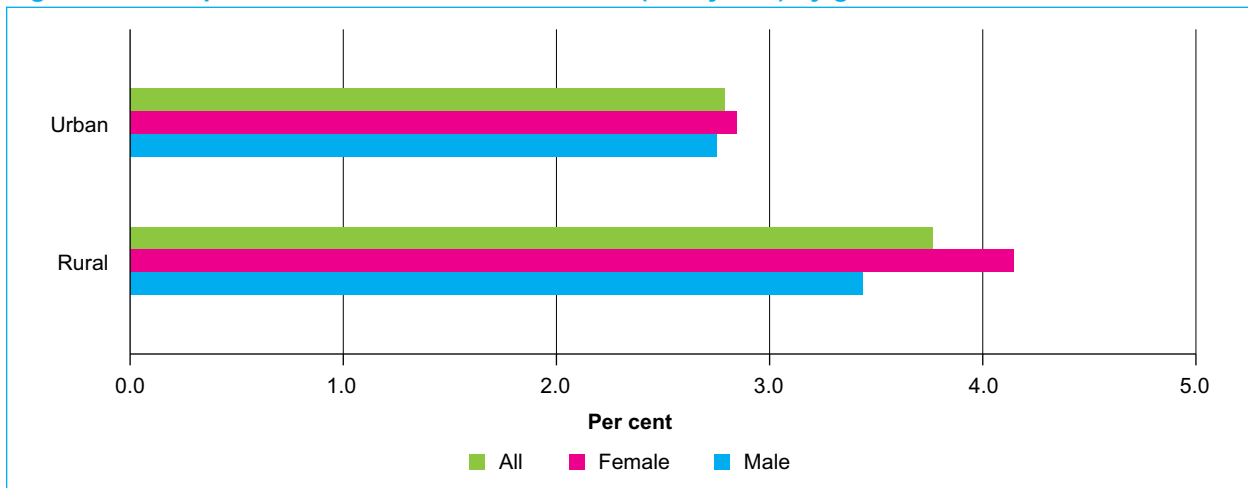
A detailed picture of proportions of children out of school by area, gender, expenditure quintiles and social groups is given in Table 6 in Annexure 2. In the next two sections we focus on the two age groups separately.

**2.3.4.1 Children in Dimension 2**

Less than 4 per cent of children in the 6 to 10 age group are found to be out of school. As Figure 2.3 indicates, the incidence of out-of-school children in India is higher in rural areas than urban areas. The gender differences are also higher in rural areas, as 4.2 per cent of females are out of school compared to 3.4 per cent among males. In urban areas not only are the proportions out of school lower, no gender differences are noticed. The proportions out of school are around 2.8 per cent for both boys and girls.

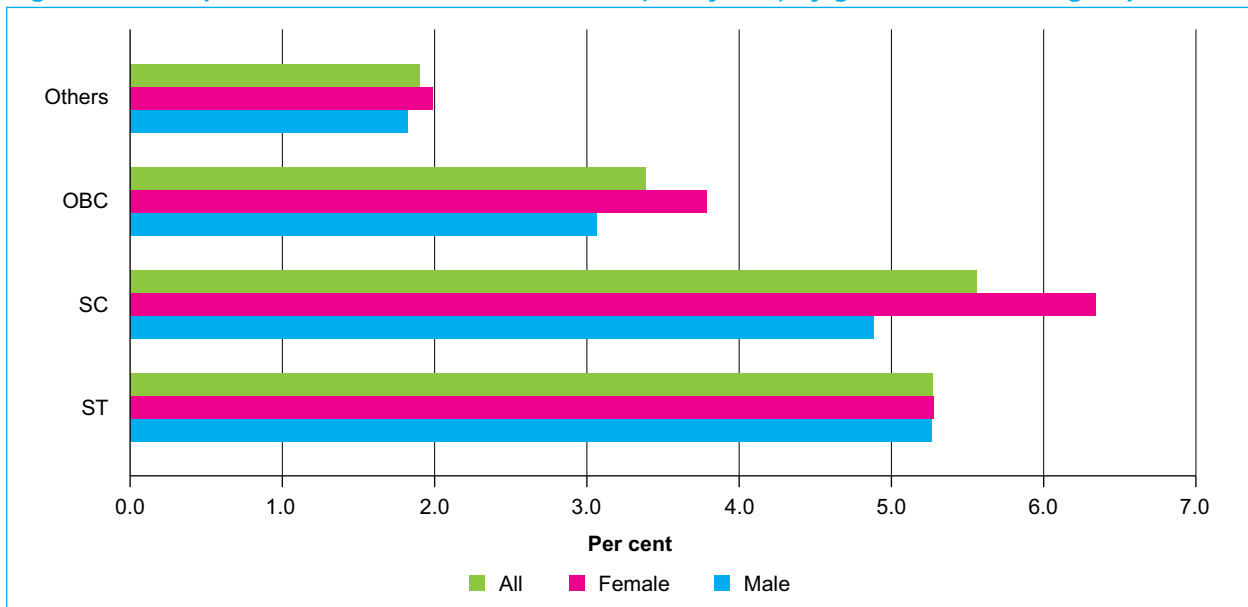
While the proportions of children out of school are low for all social groups, they are comparatively higher in the socially disadvantaged groups. Among children from the SC groups, the proportion out of school is 5.6 per cent. The proportion for children from ST groups is similar (5.3 per cent). The gender differences are however more marked among the SCs, with 6.1 per cent of females out of school compared to 4.8 per cent of males, whereas they are negligible among STs (Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.3 Proportions of out-of-school children (6-10 years) by gender and location**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

**Figure 2.4 Proportions of out-of-school children (6-10 years) by gender and social groups**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

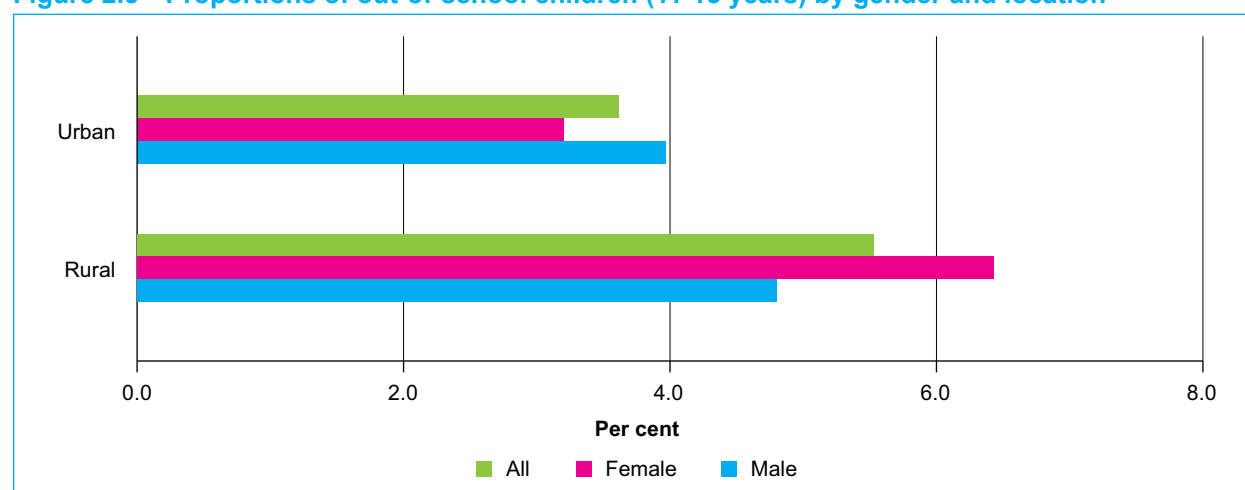


The Muslims had the highest proportion out of school – 5.7 per cent (Table 2a in Annexure 2). Gender differences exist, but are quite low. It is interesting to note that in urban areas more Muslim boys are out of school compared to girls.

### 2.3.4.2 Children in Dimension 3

The next age group, 11 to 13 years, is more difficult to analyse. As we have noted earlier, the progress of children through school is not smooth. As a result, while a significant proportion of children in the 11 to 13 age group do attend grades 6 to 8, there are children who are enrolled in grades above Class 8, and in grades below Class 6. Adjusted Net Attendance Rates in Table 2.11 shows that less than two-thirds of 11 to 13 year olds are enrolled in age appropriate grades or above. Table 3a in Annexure 2 presents the proportions out of school in the 11-13 age group in different categories.

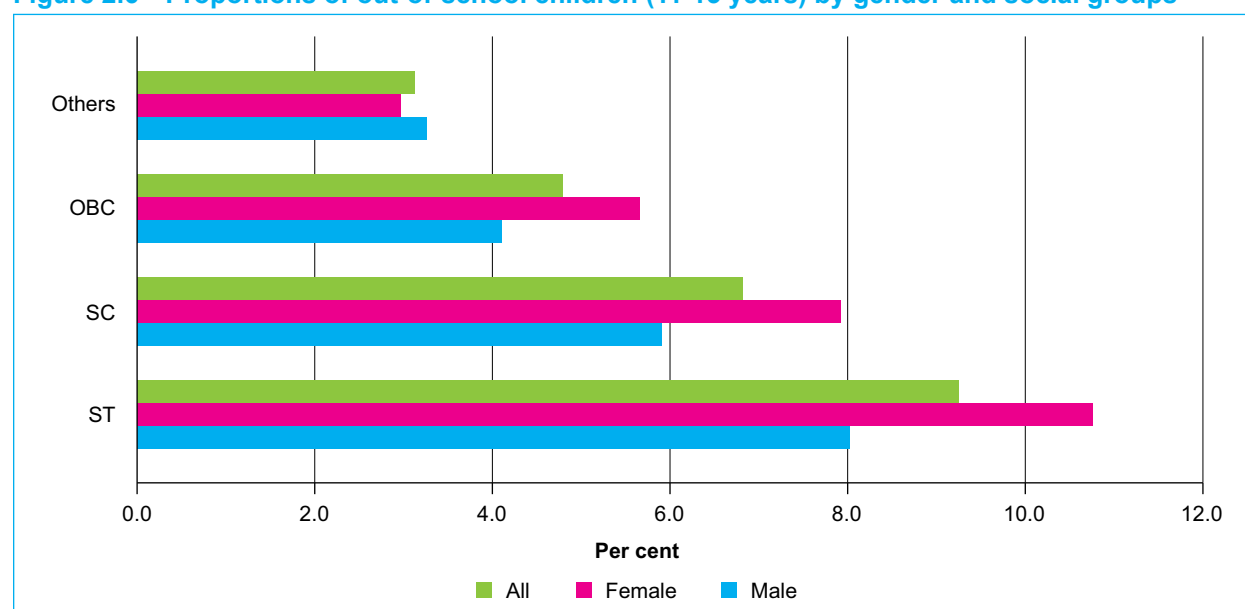
**Figure 2.5 Proportions of out-of-school children (11-13 years) by gender and location**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

The proportion of out-of-school children in the 11 to 13 age group at 5.2 per cent is only 1.5 per cent points higher than that in the 6-10 age group. However, this figure hides wide variations among different socio-economic groups. First, the urban and rural situations are different – while 3.6 per cent of children in urban areas are out of school, the figure is 5.5 per cent in rural areas. Second, while the gender differences in rural areas are significant for this age group – 4.8 per cent of males are out of school as opposed to 6.4 per cent of females, urban areas show a reverse pattern. While 4 per cent of boys are out of school, the proportion among girls is slightly lower at 3.2 per cent (Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.6 Proportions of out-of-school children (11-13 years) by gender and social groups**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

**Table 2.12 Percentage of children in 6-10 and 11-13 age groups who are out of school, by social group, gender and location** (per cent)

|              | SC      |          | ST      |          | Muslim  |          | OBC*    |          | Others* |          |
|--------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|              | 6 to 10 | 11 to 13 | 6 to 10 | 11 to 13 | 6 to 10 | 11 to 13 | 6 to 10 | 11 to 13 | 6 to 10 | 11 to 13 |
| Rural Male   | 4.9     | 5.8      | 5.5     | 8.5      | 5.3     | 9.4      | 2.5     | 3.3      | 1.3     | 2.2      |
| Rural Female | 6.2     | 8.2      | 5.4     | 11.4     | 6.0     | 9.4      | 3.4     | 5.4      | 1.6     | 2.2      |
| Urban Male   | 4.2     | 6.1      | 2.3     | 3.5      | 5.6     | 8.6      | 2.0     | 2.5      | 1.3     | 1.8      |
| Urban Female | 5.7     | 4.4      | 2.1     | 3.4      | 5.2     | 7.5      | 1.3     | 1.8      | 1.5     | 1.4      |
| All          | 5.4     | 6.6      | 5.2     | 9.3      | 5.6     | 9.1      | 2.7     | 3.9      | 1.4     | 2.1      |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

Note: \*Excludes children of Muslim background.

Figure 2.6 gives relevant figures for the 11-13 age group. It shows that among children from the socially disadvantaged SC groups, there is a higher proportion out of school, compared to the OBCs and Others. And the proportion out of school is still higher among the socially disadvantaged STs. Gender differences are strong among the children from both groups.

When disaggregating by religious background, we see that the proportion of children out of school is highest among Muslim children (Table 2a, Annexure 2).

Table 2.12 presents an overview of the variations in proportions of children out of school by age group, gender, location, caste and religion. It shows an interesting pattern in terms of gender. Girls in rural areas have the greater disadvantage in both age groups in most socio-religious categories. In urban areas, and particularly in the 11 to 13 age group, males are more likely to be out of school among all social groups. The proportion of Muslim children in Dimension 3 is high in all the categories.

It is important to keep in mind the size and variations in India. The proportions out of school in Table 2.12 are at the national level. At state levels the picture may be very different. In states where proportions out of school are very low – around 1 per cent, the proportions are low for all social groups, whether privileged or disadvantaged. But states where proportions out of school are high – the north Indian states for example – the variations in proportions out of school are high too. A very high proportion of children from disadvantaged groups are out of school, while most of those from socially and economically advantaged backgrounds are in school.

#### 2.3.4.3 Dimensions 2 and 3 by Expenditure Quintiles

The SRI-IMRB survey did not collect income or consumption data of households. So to analyse the economic profile of Dimensions 2 and 3, we have used NSSO data collected in 2007-08. The economic categories used are based on monthly per capita consumption expenditure. The sample households have been divided into 5 quintiles, calculated separately for rural and urban areas as they have different expenditure cut-off points for each quintile. So the quintiles in rural and urban areas are not directly comparable.

In this 2007-08 NSSO survey, no definition of out-of-school children was used. But the educational details on the population between 5 and 29 years were collected – it included information on enrolment status, type of school, and class enrolled. So the proportion of children out of school has been estimated using the definition of out-of-school children as given in the SRI-IMRB survey – children in the age group 6 to 10 years and 11 to 13 years who are not attending any formal or non-formal schools in pre-primary grades or higher.

Compared to gender and social categories, the economic categories show the starkest difference. The following table (Table 2.13) gives the breakdown of all children and those out of school by expenditure quintiles. It is seen that for both the age groups around 70 per cent of the out-of-school children in rural areas and 90 per cent of the out-of-school children in urban areas are in the lowest two expenditure quintiles. As Table 2.8 shows, the poorer households are more likely to be from the disadvantaged social groups as well – the composition of out-of-school children reflects a combination of social and economic disadvantage.

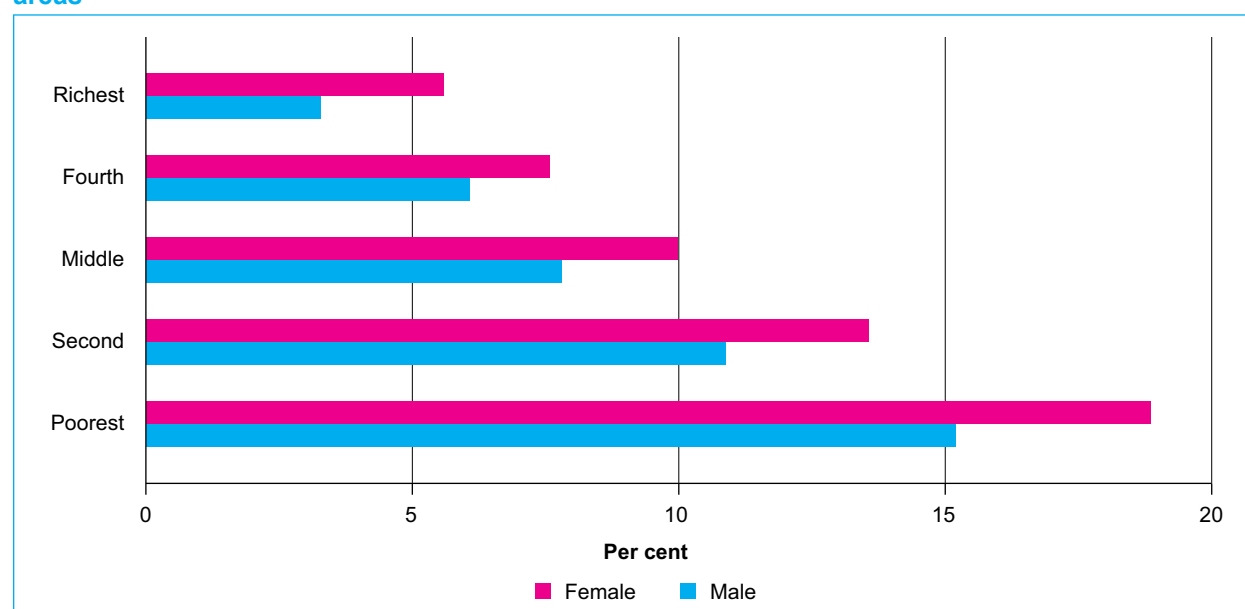
**Table 2.13 Percentage distribution of all children and out-of-school children by expenditure quintiles** (per cent)

|                        | 6-10 years   |                        | 11-13 years  |                        |
|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
|                        | All children | Out-of-school children | All children | Out-of-school children |
| <b>Rural quintiles</b> |              |                        |              |                        |
| Lowest                 | 30.4         | 45.3                   | 27.1         | 41.4                   |
| Second                 | 24.8         | 26.4                   | 23.2         | 25.2                   |
| Middle                 | 20.1         | 15.5                   | 20.2         | 18.7                   |
| Fourth                 | 16.0         | 9.4                    | 17.7         | 11.1                   |
| Highest                | 8.7          | 3.3                    | 11.7         | 3.7                    |
| All                    | 100.0        | 100.0                  | 100.0        | 100.0                  |
| <b>Urban quintiles</b> |              |                        |              |                        |
| Lowest                 | 36.1         | 72.7                   | 34.6         | 69.6                   |
| Second                 | 28.2         | 19.0                   | 27.0         | 20.1                   |
| Middle                 | 13.7         | 5.4                    | 13.9         | 4.8                    |
| Fourth                 | 14.5         | 2.1                    | 16.1         | 5.1                    |
| Highest                | 7.4          | 0.8                    | 8.4          | 0.4                    |
| All                    | 100.0        | 100.0                  | 100.0        | 100.0                  |

Source: NSSO 2007-8 unit level data

Figure 2.7a indicates very high proportions of children out of school in the two lowest quintiles in rural areas. The proportion of girls out of school is seen to be higher than among boys in all the expenditure quintiles in these areas. In urban areas the proportion of children out of school is very high in the lowest quintile (16.8 per cent). The relatively lower proportions of children out of school in the other quintiles, possibly reflects urban areas having better schooling facilities, better economic conditions, and schooling more widely accepted as a social norm.<sup>68</sup> Unlike rural areas, gender gaps in urban areas are minimal in all the expenditure quintiles – even the lowest.

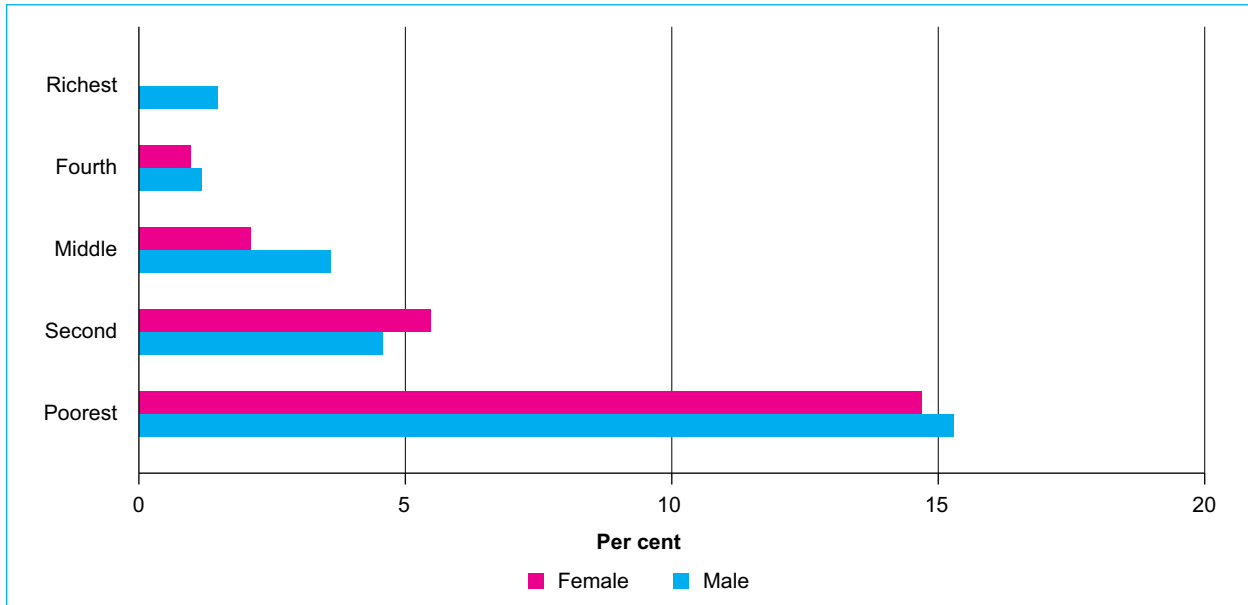
**Figure 2.7a Proportions of out-of-school children (6 - 10 years) by expenditure quintiles in rural areas**



Source: NSSO 2007-8 unit level data

<sup>68</sup> The calculations of NSSO expenditure quintiles show that the upper boundary for the lowest quintile in urban areas is similar to that for the third lowest quintile in rural areas.

**Figure 2.7b Proportions of out-of-school children (6 - 10 years) by expenditure quintiles in urban areas**

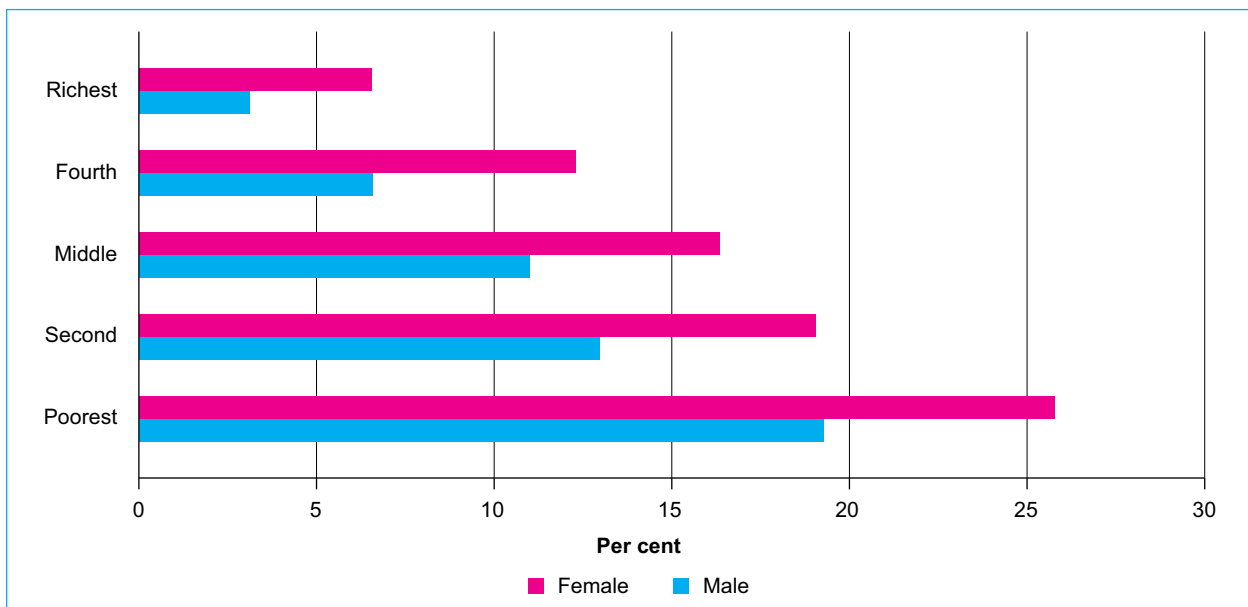


Source: NSSO Unit level Data 2007-08

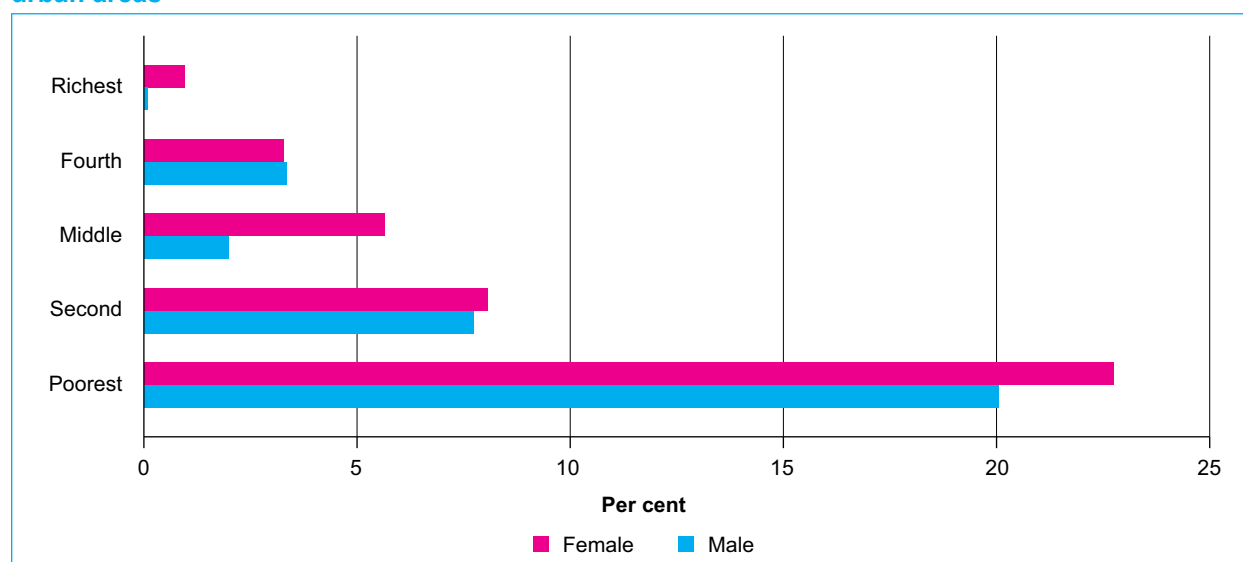
Figures 2.7a and 2.7b present the proportions of children out of school in the 6 to 10 age group in different expenditure quintiles in rural and urban areas, respectively.

Figures 2.8a and 2.8b show the proportions out of school in the 11 to 13 age group by expenditure quintiles in rural and urban areas, respectively. The proportions are much higher than in the 6 to 10 age group. And unlike the younger age group, the proportions of out of school girls in rural areas are high in all but the highest quintile. The gender differences are also very sharp. In urban areas, like in the younger age group, the proportion of children out of school is very high in the lowest quintile. In fact the proportion is as high as that in the lowest quintile in rural areas. The proportions of children out of school in the other quintiles in urban areas are lower.

**Figure 2.8a Proportions of out-of-school children (11 - 13 years) by expenditure quintiles in rural areas**



Source: NSSO unit level data 2007-08

**Figure 2.8b Proportions of out-of-school children (11 - 13 years) by expenditure quintiles in urban areas**

Source: NSSO unit level data 2007-08

### 2.3.5 State level variations

So far the data discussed pertained to India as a whole. But out-of-school children as a phenomenon is more area specific, and within specific areas, certain social and economic groups are seen to be more disadvantaged. Profiles at national level disguise state-level variations. The state-wise incidence of children in Dimensions 2 and 3 is presented in Table 2.14, and in Figures 2.9a and 2.9b. The average proportion in 2009 is 3.7 per cent in Dimension 2 and 5.2 per cent in Dimension 3. The figure of 5 per cent for the proportion of out-of-school children has been taken as a benchmark to identify states with high proportions of out-of-school children. The table and the figure show that the proportion of children in Dimension 2 is high in very few states – it is high for both boys and girls in Arunachal Pradesh, and in the large north Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Girls in Rajasthan are the most disadvantaged with the highest proportion in Dimension 2.<sup>69</sup>

The proportions of children in Dimension 3 are high in more states. Apart from these 4 states of Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, U.P. and Rajasthan, proportions in Dimension 3 are also high among boys and girls in the eastern states of West Bengal and Odisha, boys in Delhi, and girls in Mizoram and Uttarakhand. In contrast the figures for Dimensions 2 and 3 are lower in the southern and western states. Though the states with a high proportion of children out of school are few, they are among the more populous states in India.

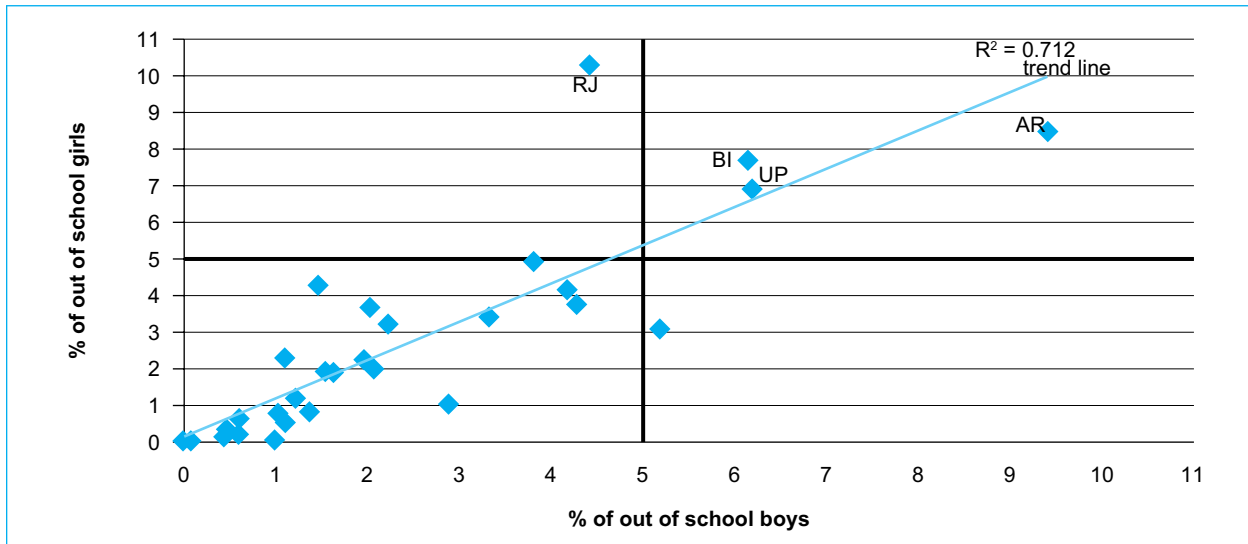
**Table 2.14 State level variations in proportions of children out of school**

| Age group                    | States with out-of-school rates greater than 5%  |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
|                              | Boys   | Girls  |
| Dimension 2<br>6 to 10 years | Arunachal Pradesh (9.4%)<br>Uttar Pradesh (6.2%)<br>Bihar (6.1%)<br>Mizoram (5.2%)   | Rajasthan (10.3%)<br>Arunachal Pradesh (8.5%)<br>Bihar (7.7%)<br>Uttar Pradesh (6.9%)  |
| Dimension 3<br>11-13 years   | Odisha (10.7%)<br>Uttar Pradesh (7.5%)<br>Arunachal Pradesh (7.1%)<br>Rajasthan (7.3%)<br>West Bengal (7.0%)<br>Delhi (6.8%)<br>Bihar (6.2%) | Rajasthan (16.4%)<br>Arunachal Pradesh (8.4%)<br>Odisha (10.1%)<br>Bihar (10.7%)<br>Uttar Pradesh (8.6%)<br>Mizoram (6.6%)<br>West Bengal (6.5%)<br>Uttarakhand (5.2%) |

Source: Calculated from SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data.

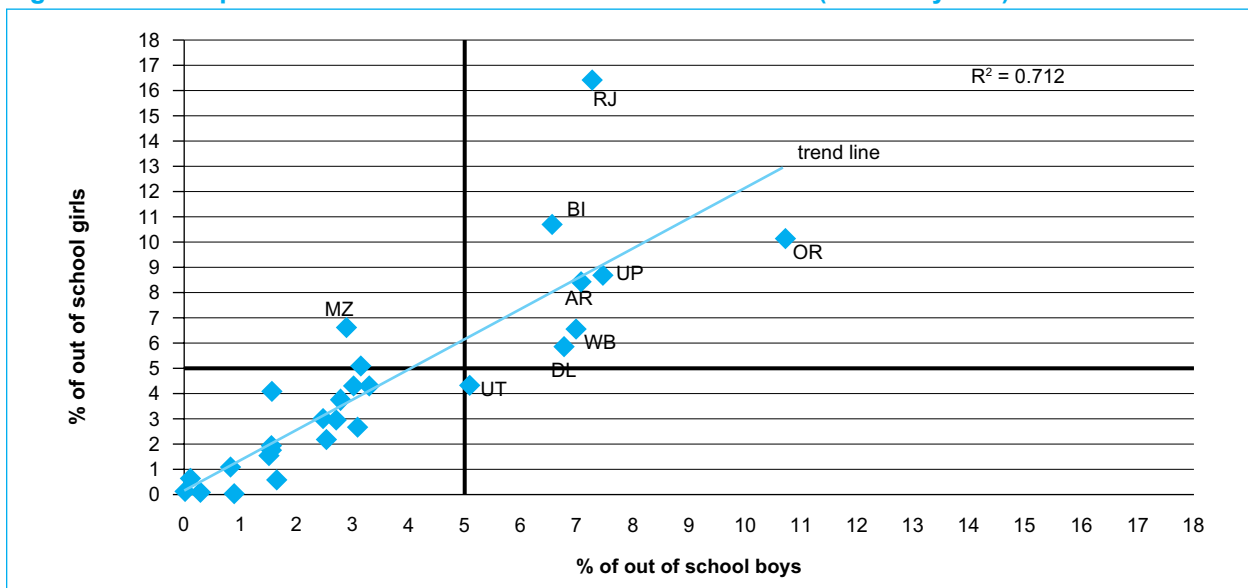
<sup>69</sup> The figures for individual states are taken from Table 4, Annexure 2.

**Figure 2.9a Proportions of out-of-school children across India (6 to 10 years)**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009. AR=Arunachal Pradesh, BI=Bihar, RJ=Rajasthan and UP=Uttar Pradesh.

**Figure 2.9b Proportions of out-of-school children across India (11 to 13 years)**



Source: SRI-IMRB 2009. AR = Arunachal Pradesh, BI = Bihar, DL = Delhi, MZ = Mizoram, RJ = Rajasthan, OR = Odisha, UP = Uttar Pradesh, UT = Uttarakhand and WB = West Bengal.

The Report has looked at the profile of out-of-school children in two sets of states in greater detail. The state level discussions are not comprehensive, but indicative of the nature of variations. As Table 2.14 indicates, the states in the first set, that is, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, have very high proportions of out-of-school children in both the age groups, and examining the profile of the out-of-school children in these states will be significant.<sup>70</sup> The Report has also looked at a second set of states which have relatively lower proportions of out-of-school children in the 6 to 10 age group but have higher proportions out of school in the 11 to 13 year age group – Odisha and West Bengal. Disaggregated data of Gujarat – a state with lower numbers and proportions of out-of-school children in both age groups – is also presented as a contrast.

Tables 5a - 5f in Annexure 2 give a detailed profile of out-of-school children and Table 2.16 gives a summary of their profiles. The summary table shows that proportions of children out of school are high among all categories and age groups in Bihar and UP, but are more specific in other states.

<sup>70</sup> Arunachal Pradesh had a small sample – so we have not disaggregated it.

**Table 2.15 Locating high proportions of out-of-school children in selected states (by social group, location and gender)**

| State       | Age group (years) | Social group   | Location     | Gender      |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Bihar       | 6 – 13            | SC             | Rural        | Boys, Girls |
|             |                   | Muslim         | Rural, Urban | Boys, Girls |
|             | 6 – 10            | SC             | Urban        | Girls       |
| UP          | 6 – 13            | SC, Muslim     | Rural, Urban | Boys, Girls |
| Rajasthan   | 6 – 13            | SC, ST, Muslim | Rural        | Girls       |
|             | 6 – 13            | ST             | Rural        | Boys        |
|             | 11 – 13           | SC             | Rural, Urban | Boys        |
| Odisha      | 6 – 13            | ST             | Rural        | Boys, Girls |
|             | 11 – 13           | SC             | Rural, Urban | Boys, Girls |
| West Bengal | 6 – 10            | SC, ST         | Rural        | Boys        |
|             |                   | SC, Muslim     | Urban        | Boys, Girls |
|             | 11 – 13           | SC, Muslim     | Rural, Urban | Boys, Girls |
| Gujarat     | 11 – 13           | ST             | Rural        | Boys, Girls |
|             |                   | SC, Muslim     | Urban        | Boys        |

Source: Calculated from Tables 5a to 5f in Annexure 2.

In absolute numbers, Bihar accounts for a smaller number of out-of-school children compared to the much larger state of Uttar Pradesh, but as seen from Table 5a (Annexure 2), the proportion out of school is very high among all social groups, particularly in rural areas. Among Muslims, out of school proportions are high in urban and rural areas, and for both genders, with the disadvantage more pronounced for urban areas, while among SC children disadvantage is higher in rural areas.

Uttar Pradesh accounts for more than a third of out-of-school children in India. The out of school proportion in urban areas is one of the highest among the states (Table 5b in Annexure 2). In rural areas children from Muslim households and girls, in particular, appear to be at the greatest disadvantage.

Rajasthan also accounts for a substantial number of out-of-school children. However as seen from Table 5c in Annexure 2, the most vulnerable are the girls in rural areas in all social groups in both age groups. In contrast the proportion out of school among males is high primarily among STs in rural areas. In urban areas, it is higher proportions of older SC children who are out of school (Table 2.15).

The second set of states show a different pattern, where significant proportions of boys from certain socio-economic groups are also out of school. In Odisha the share of children out of school is high primarily among 11 to 13 year olds in rural areas (Table 5d in Annexure 2). In West Bengal the out of school proportions in the 11 to 13 age group are high among all the disadvantaged groups. In both the age groups, a high proportion of boys from SC and Muslim households in both rural and urban areas are out of school – among the Muslims the proportions of boys out of school are higher than among the girls (Table 5e in Annexure 2). In Gujarat the out of school proportion is relatively higher in 11 to 13 year olds for ST boys and girls in rural areas, and among SC and Muslim boys in urban areas (Table 5f in Annexure 2).

The proportions out of school have been rapidly decreasing in all these states when compared with the out of school survey of SRI-IMRB in 2005. The first three states (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan) have been educationally disadvantaged from pre-independence years and so the proportions of children out of school are still relatively high in both the age groups and among several categories. In the other three states (Odisha, West Bengal and Gujarat) the proportions of children out of school are lower and primarily in the 11-13 age group. In a few groups a high proportion of out of school boys are also found.

## 2.4 Internal Efficiency and the Process of Dropping Out

Earlier sections have indicated a rapid decline in the proportion of out-of-school children since the nineties. Table 2.16 gives details of the proportions of out-of-school children who never been enrolled and those who have dropped out of school. While the proportions out of school in the two age groups are not

**Table 2.16 Distribution of out-of-school children: Never enrolled and dropouts** (per cent)

|                              |        | Never enrolled in school | Dropped out of school | Out of school |
|------------------------------|--------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Dimension 2<br>(6-10 years)  | Male   | 80.6                     | 19.4                  | 100.0         |
|                              | Female | 81.3                     | 18.7                  | 100.0         |
|                              | Total  | 80.9                     | 19.1                  | 100.0         |
| Dimension 3<br>(11-13 years) | Male   | 38.3                     | 61.7                  | 100.0         |
|                              | Female | 45.9                     | 54.1                  | 100.0         |
|                              | Total  | 42.1                     | 57.9                  | 100.0         |

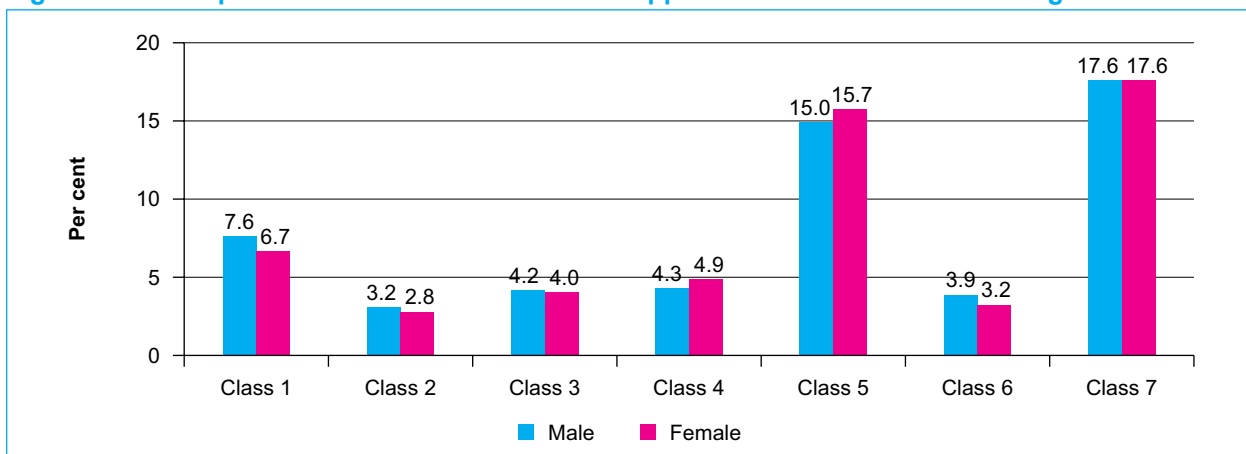
Source: Calculated from SRI-IMRB unit level data (2009)

very different (Table 2.10), the degree of exposure to school is very different. Around 81 per cent of the out-of-school children in the younger age group have never been enrolled and only 19 per cent have been to school and dropped out. In the older age group, in contrast, more than half the out-of-school children are dropouts, and the remaining are the ones who have never been enrolled, still a sizeable proportion (42 per cent). Within this age group the proportion never enrolled is higher among females.

As mentioned earlier, in India, all children do not join formal schools at the same age. SRI-IMRB data indicates that the age at which children are admitted usually varies from 5 to 9 years. So some of the children in the 6-10 age group who are out of school maybe enrolled in school at a later date. In particular those who are enrolled in pre-primary education facilities are very likely to attend primary school in the near future. Figure 2.1 (see Section 2.3.4) shows a similar trend where the proportion of children out of school decreases till the age of 9. Thus, in the younger age group the more important problem is of late enrolment of a significant number of children. Among the older children, dropping out and never being enrolled in school are both important problems.

When does “dropping out” become a major problem? Administrative data sources show a dynamic picture of the process of dropping out. Ideally dropout rates should be calculated following a cohort of children over the primary and upper primary stage. But in the absence of time series data, a reconstructed cohort method is used based on enrolment and repetition data of two successive years collected by DISE. Since DISE do not collect enrolment data of Class 9, it has not been possible to calculate the dropout rate at the end of Class 8 using this method. Dropout rates, repetition rates and promotion rates at the end of grades 1 to 7 are given in Table 2.17. It is seen that dropout rates are relatively high at 7.2 per cent after Class 1 and then quite low in the rest of the primary stage. The dropout rates after Class 5 (15.3 per cent) and after class 7 (17.6 per cent) are quite high. The dropout rates of boys and girls are given in Figure 2.10, and it is interesting to note that there is hardly any gender difference.

The cumulative dropout rate (Figure 2.11) during the primary stage (after grades 1, 2, 3 and 4) is 18.5 per cent.<sup>71</sup> It is much higher (34.2 per cent) during the upper primary stage (after grades 5, 6 and 7). So the

**Figure 2.10 Proportions of children who have dropped out at the end of different grades**

Source: DISE Data 2008-09 and 2009-10

<sup>71</sup> The cumulative dropout rate at primary (upper primary) stage is the percentage of children entering grade 1 (grade 6) who drop out before they complete grade 5 (grade 8).

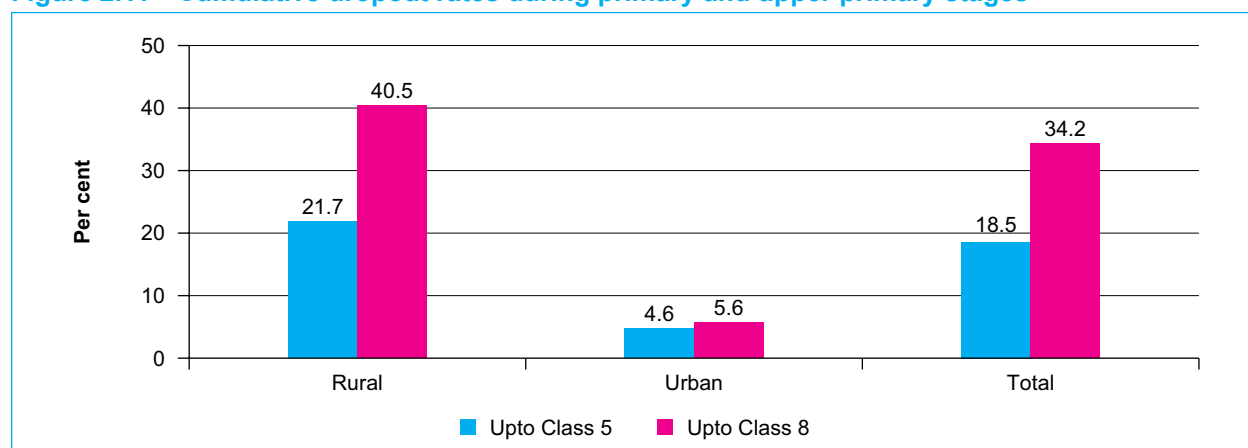


**Table 2.17 Dropout rates between 2008-09 and 2009-10**

(per cent)

|         | Promotion rate | Repetition rate | Dropout rate | Survival rate from Class 1 |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Class 1 | 84.0           | 8.9             | 7.1          | 100.0                      |
| Class 2 | 91.8           | 5.3             | 2.9          | 92.2                       |
| Class 3 | 91.1           | 4.9             | 4.1          | 89.3                       |
| Class 4 | 91.3           | 4.2             | 4.5          | 85.5                       |
| Class 5 | 79.1           | 5.7             | 15.3         | 81.5                       |
| Class 6 | 90.7           | 5.8             | 3.5          | 68.3                       |
| Class 7 | 77.5           | 4.9             | 17.6         | 65.8                       |

Source: DISE school level data, 2008-09 and 2009-10

**Figure 2.11 Cumulative dropout rates during primary and upper primary stages**

Note: Cumulative dropout rate at primary (upper primary) stage is the percentage of children who enter grade 1 and dropout before they complete grade 5 (grade 8).

Source: DISE school level data, 2008-09 and 2009-10

survival rate is 81 per cent in the primary stage, but falls sharply after grade 6, and still further after grade 7 to just 66 per cent. The difference between rural and urban areas is very sharp – dropping out is more prevalent in rural areas (Figure 2.11). Table 2.17 points out that the transition rate between grades 5 and 6 is quite low. Urban schools score here as transition rates are higher than in rural schools (Figure 2.11).

The Statistics of School Education publication calculates dropout rates by comparing grade 5 enrolment of current year with grade 1 enrolment 4 years back, and grade 8 enrolment of the current year with grade 1 enrolment 7 years back. Repetition data is not collected and therefore is not taken into account, indicating a bias of overestimation. Table 2.18 gives the dropout rates for different social groups. It indicates that while dropout rates have declined sharply in the last decade, it is a more common phenomenon among children from ST groups at primary level, and for children from both SC and ST groups at upper primary level.

The outcome of high repetition and dropout rates is seen in the low ANAR and the low educational attainment of children. Table 2.19 gives the proportions of enrolled children who have completed grade 5 and grade 7 by age. If all children start schooling by the age of 6 and do not repeat any grades they complete the primary stage by the age of 11 and the upper primary stage by the age of 14. However the situation is very different where the proportion of enrolled children who have completed primary

**Table 2.18 Variations in dropout rates: All students, SCs and STs**

(per cent)

|              | Dropout rate – Grades 1 to 5 |         | Dropout rates – Grades 1 to 8 |         |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|
|              | 2000-01                      | 2009-10 | 2000-01                       | 2009-10 |
| All students | 40.7                         | 28.9    | 53.7                          | 42.4    |
| SC students  | 45.2                         | 29.3    | 60.7                          | 51.3    |
| ST students  | 52.3                         | 34.5    | 68.7                          | 57.8    |

Source: SES, relevant years

**Table 2.19 Proportion of enrolled boys and girls (10-13 years) who completed grades 5 and 7**

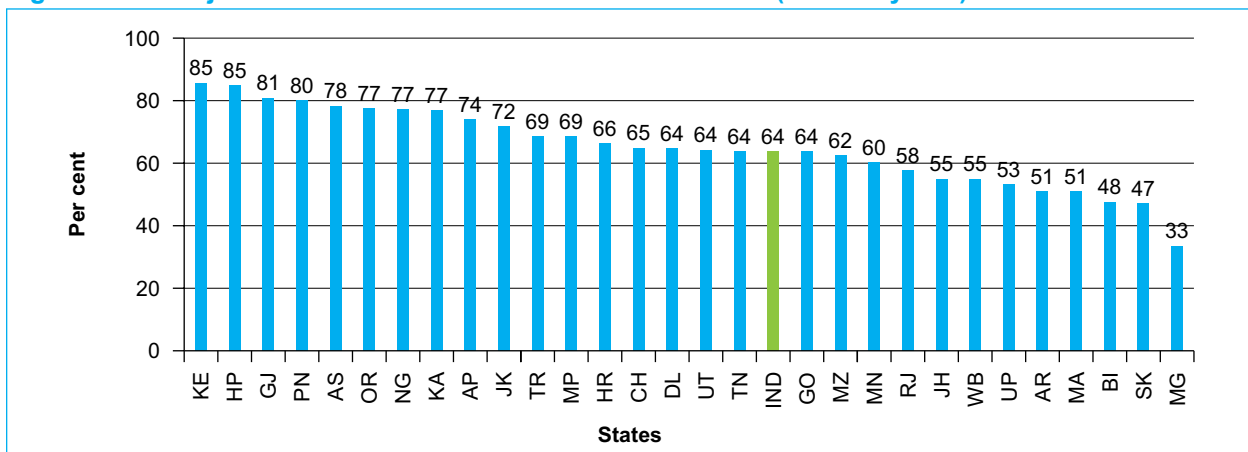
(per cent)

| Age (years) | Proportion of children who completed |        |         |        |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|
|             | Grade 5                              |        | Grade 7 |        |
|             | Male                                 | Female | Male    | Female |
| 10          | 7.4                                  | 8.7    | –       | –      |
| 11          | 46.9                                 | 46.9   | –       | –      |
| 12          | 66.4                                 | 67.3   | 6.5     | 6.0    |
| 13          | 76.9                                 | 75.0   | 39.5    | 38.9   |

Source: IMRB unit level data 2009

schooling is less than 50 per cent at the age of 11, with the proportion increasing as children aged 12 and 13 years are included. The proportion who has completed the upper primary stage by the age of 14 years is less than 40 per cent.

Figure 2.12 shows that in India ANAR for 11 to 13 year old is quite low – around 64 per cent (see bar which has been highlighted).<sup>72</sup> This is the situation for most states and for some of the educationally disadvantaged states the proportion is around 50 per cent or lower. Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Punjab are the only states which stand out with ANAR over 80 per cent. However state level data show no inverse relationship between the proportion of children out of school and ANAR. Several of the states with low ANAR, also have a low proportion of children out of school. So even though a low proportion of children are out of school in these states, the probability that most children will complete eight years of education (as ensured by Right to Education in the country), by 14 years of age is low.

**Figure 2.12 Adjusted net attendance rate in different states (11 to 13 years)**

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009 unit level data

To achieve EFA targets, decreasing the number of out-of-school children is a necessary condition. However it is not sufficient to ensure that all children complete the eight grades by the age of 14. As the number of out-of-school children declines it becomes important to estimate and track ANAR and grade completion rates. These indicators along with estimates of out-of-school children will be better able to capture progress towards EFA goals.

## 2.5 Vulnerable Population Groups

The analysis of profiles is based on household data disaggregated by general categories. Further disaggregation of these data sets could not be made in the absence of more specific details. So it was not possible to identify specific groups of children for whom school participation is extremely difficult. These groups can be identified only through focused micro-studies and information from such studies is limited.

<sup>72</sup> It is disturbing to note that while 2009 SRI IMRB data show a great decline in the proportions of children out of school as compared to NSSO 2007-08 data, the ANAR for the 11 to 13 year olds from the two sources are very similar.

### 2.5.1 Children with disabilities

One such vulnerable group is children with disabilities, also called children with special needs (CWSN).<sup>73</sup> Estimates of the extent of disability among children vary. Census 2001 gave an estimate of 3.43 million in the 5-14 age group. The SRI-IMRB (2009) survey collected detailed information on type of disability for all children with special needs in the 6-13 age group, both in school and out of school. Its estimate of the number of CWSN, at around 2.9 million children, is much lower than the Census figure. According to the SRI-IMRB survey, the CWSN constitute 1.52 per cent of the child population in this age group (Table 2.20).

Estimates of the proportions out of school among the children with special needs also vary. However, all sources agree that a high proportion of CWSN are out of school. A study by the World Bank,<sup>74</sup> which uses 2002 NSS data for CWSN in the 5-18 age group, shows that the attendance at school of CWSN does not go beyond 70 per cent for boys and 66 per cent for girls. Gender differentials for CWSN do not emerge till the age of 12 years. As expected, school attendance is higher among urban CWSN compared to those in rural areas.

The SRI-IMRB (2009) survey gives a similar figure – it reports that 34 per cent of the physically or mentally challenged children in the 6 to 13 age group were out of school. As a result while only 1.5 per cent of children in the 6-13 age group were identified as disabled,<sup>75</sup> they constituted more than 12 per cent of all out-of-school children (Table 2.19). The 1.9 million CWSN who were in school constituted only 1 per cent of all children enrolled in school.

The survey also finds that the proportions out of school were relatively lower for those with hearing disability, orthopaedic/locomotive disability and visual disability – varying between 20 per cent and 30 per cent. The situation was much worse for those with speech disability, mental disability and multiple disabilities. This is a useful pointer for identifying policies which have achieved some degree of inclusiveness for certain types of disabilities (Table 2.21a).

**Table 2.20 Proportion of children with special needs in the 6 to 13 age group**

|                                      | No. of children in 6 to 13 age group (in million) | No. of CWSN in 6 to 13 age group (in million) | Proportion of CWSN (%) |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------|
| In school and out-of-school children | 190.58  | 2.90  | 1.52                   |
| Children in school                   | 182.43  | 1.91  | 1.00                   |
| Out-of-school children               | 8.15  | 0.99  | 12.13                  |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009

**Table 2.21a Number and proportion of children out of school among children with special needs**

| Number of CWSN in 6-13 age group             | Mental Disability | Visual Disability | Hearing Disability | Speech Disability | Orthopaedic Disability | Multiple Disabilities | All Disabilities |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Out of school                                | 249,803           | 116,909           | 45,663             | 139,692           | 271,736                | 164,556               | 988,359          |
| Total  | 520,051           | 393,655           | 223,511            | 377,927           | 1,101,004              | 280,948               | 2,897,096        |
| Proportion (%) of CWSN who are out of school | 48.03             | 29.70             | 20.43              | 36.96             | 24.68                  | 58.57                 | 34.12            |

Source: SRI-IMRB 2009

<sup>73</sup> In this study, the terms children with disability (CWD) and children with special needs (CWSN) are used interchangeably although special needs generally refers to a category requiring more assistance in the classroom, e.g., for dyslexia.

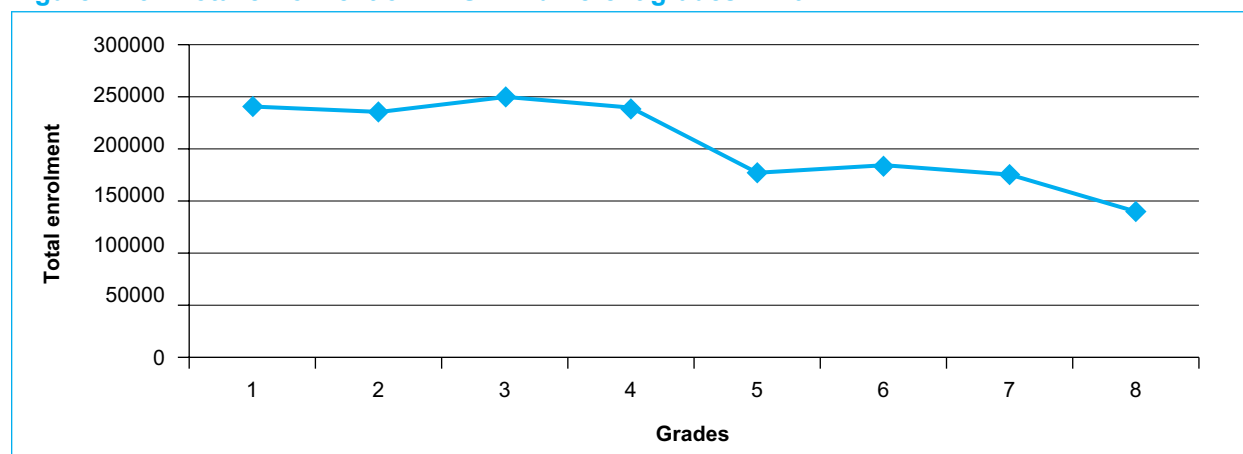
<sup>74</sup> World Bank (2007).

<sup>75</sup> A person with a disability was defined by SRI-IMRB as “a person with restrictions or lack of abilities to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being [...]. It excluded illness/injury of recent origin (morbidity) resulting in temporary loss of ability to see, hear, speak or move”.

**Table 2.21b Proportion of girls enrolled among children with special needs and all children, 2011-12**

| Grades        | Enrolment of CWSN (in millions) |       |                       | % of girls' enrolment among all children |
|---------------|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|--|
|               | Total                           | Girls | % of girls' enrolment |  |
| Primary       | 1.2                             | 0.5   | 42.0                  | 48.4                                     |
| Upper-Primary | 0.4                             | 0.2   | 44.1                  | 48.6                                     |
| Total         | 1.6                             | 0.7   | 42.6                  | 48.4                                     |

Source: Calculated from DISE 2011-12

**Figure 2.13 Total enrolment of CWSN in different grades in 2011-12**

Source: DISE 2011-12

Among the administrative data sources, DISE provides detailed information on CWSNs in school. Table 2.21b shows that nearly 1.6 million CWSN were enrolled in school in 2011-12. A gender bias in their schooling is noted – while girls contribute 48 per cent of total enrolment, they are less than 43 per cent among the enrolled children with special needs.

Figure 2.13 gives the enrolment of CWSN by grade. A downward trend is observed after grade 3, and numbers decline particularly rapidly in upper primary grades.

DISE data have presented grade-wise percentage distribution of enrolled CWSN by type of disabilities. 2011-12 data shows that for certain types of disabilities there is a decline in enrolment shares as one moves from grade 1 to higher grades, while for other types of disabilities the trend is reversed.<sup>76</sup>

In grade 1 the disabilities which are more prevalent are in speech, movement, and mental ability. As one moves from grade 1 to higher grades, the share of children with disabilities in sight, hearing and movement in the total enrolment of children with disabilities increases. The share of children with difficulties in speech, mental disability (involving retardation, learning difficulties, cerebral palsy, autism) and multiple disabilities, declines in higher grades – pointing towards the difficulties in providing inclusive education to these children. By grade 8, the majority of the CWSN are those who suffer from physical disabilities, low vision, and hearing disability. This trend is very similar to that seen from SRI-IMRB 2009 data.

## 2.5.2 Child labour

Regular school attendance is a major problem for children who have to work for long hours. There are no data sources which collect comprehensive data on children's work participation. Surveys such as the Census, NSSO employment rounds, and NFHS do collect information on children who work for income generation. But the definition of 'child work' varies across surveys. The estimates generated from different sources are not comparable as the definitions of "work" are also different. The age used in defining a 'child worker' according to Indian laws has been changing but is still different from the standards set by the ILO.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>76</sup> DISE Flash Statistics 2011-12.

<sup>77</sup> For further discussion on this issue, please refer to Chapter 4.

According to the 2001 census, around 12.7 million children of the 5-14 age group were 'economically active'.<sup>78</sup> The different official estimates indicate a decline in incidence of child labour since 2001.<sup>79</sup> However, there is likely to be considerable under-estimation since these estimates do not account for children who are out of school but are not apparently economically active. They are usually called 'nowhere children' – that is, neither in school nor at work. It is very likely that these children are economically active, but their nature of work, often carried out inside their homes, may not be accounted for in the national statistics.

Not all working children are out of school, especially those who work daily for a few hours, or those who are engaged in seasonal work. But they find it difficult to attend school regularly, and to complete elementary education. These child workers, both visible and not so visible, constitute a very important group, for whom school participation is a huge challenge, even though following RTE the state is mandated to provide them with elementary education in such a way as to cover any costs which prevent them from accessing this education.

### 2.5.3 Disadvantaged Groups in Urban Areas

While the proportion of out-of-school children is in general lower in urban areas, these children are concentrated in the lowest expenditure quintile (Figures 2.7b and 2.8b). This quintile includes especially vulnerable groups like working children, children in red light areas (those who belong to families of commercial sex workers), migrant children, and those in families with major illnesses. As the proportion of out-of-school children has declined, more boys in the 11 to 13 age group in urban areas are found to be out of school as compared to girls (Figure 2.5). IMRB 2009 data also shows that among urban children the proportion out of school is higher among the slum population. School participation among street children is very low and in household surveys, homeless populations including street children are not included. Collecting reliable data from these especially vulnerable groups is difficult, although recently estimation has been carried out in Delhi and Mumbai. They are usually clustered in specific geographical areas, and need focused study to identify and estimate their numbers. Their problems are discussed in detail in the next chapter on Barriers for Out-of-school children.

### 2.5.4 Other Disadvantaged Groups

There are several disadvantaged groups where case studies suggest a high proportion of out-of-school children. But collecting reliable data on school participation from these groups is very difficult. School participation rates in areas affected by civil strife are expected to be very low. Many states in India are affected by civil strife. As a rule, reliable estimates regarding the number of children out of school in these areas are not available, as data collection is difficult. The enrolment data from DISE, however, indicate high enrolment in most of the conflict ridden districts.

Another group where high proportions of children are likely to be out of school are migrants. When parents migrate for several months at a time for work, their children who accompany them may or may not be working with them, but are likely to find it difficult to attend school regularly. However, here too there are no data sources from which reliable estimates can be generated for out-of-school children.

## 2.6 Analytical Summary

The analytical framework used for investigating the issues related to out-of-school children has been based on the concept of 'Dimensions of exclusion from school participation'. Part of the present global initiative, this model involves 5 target groups of children spanning three levels of education – pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary. Each group of children represent a dimension of exclusion. Children in Dimension 1 are those who are in the pre-primary age group, but do not attend pre-primary or primary school, while children in Dimensions 2 and 3 are those children in the age groups corresponding to

<sup>78</sup> NCPCR website. This study notes that work has been defined in the Census 2001 as 'participation in any economically productive activity with or without compensation, wages or profit'. All persons engaged in 'work' as defined in the Census are considered workers. Main workers are defined as those who have worked for the major part of the reference period that is 6 months or more. And marginal workers are those who have not worked for the major part of the reference period. All those workers who are not cultivators or agricultural labourers or engaged in household industry are categorised as 'Other Workers'.

<sup>79</sup> NSSO 61<sup>st</sup> Round data for 2004-05 gives a figure of 8.9 million, and 66<sup>th</sup> round data for 2009-10 gives a much lower figure of 4.9 million.

the primary and lower secondary stages, respectively, who are not attending primary or secondary grades (ISCED 1, 2 and 3). Children in Dimensions 4 and 5 are in primary and lower secondary school, respectively, but are at risk of dropping out. For the present exercise, the analysis has been restricted to Dimensions 1, 2, and 3.

Data on children in different dimensions of exclusion is necessary to develop appropriate strategies to bring them all into school, and to monitor their progress. Discussions on available data sources show that data on out-of-school children are available from several household surveys. But these yield different estimates of OOSC depending on the definition of school, definition of attendance and the population projections used for estimation. Surveys differ with respect to inclusion of children attending non-formal education centres and children attending pre-primary grades. A detailed look at how the estimates vary with each of these differences points towards the urgent need for adopting a uniform definition and methodology.

The analysis of profiles of out-of-school children is based on two of the available data sources. In India, the most reliable administrative data source for elementary education is the DISE data set, which is collected by the education department from all recognised schools and some unrecognised private schools. It is provided at state, district, and school levels. Aggregation of administrative data from state to national level is problematic as the school structure and norms regarding what constitutes the appropriate grade for a specific age are not uniform in all the states. There has been a move towards greater uniformity of state norms in recent years, but as education is a concurrent subject, differences still exist. The introduction of UDISE as a district level administrative data source for school education (grades 1 to 12) is expected to address many of these issues.

Analysing the profile of children in Dimension 1 is difficult as both administrative data and data from household surveys are focused on school participation in grade 1 and above. Government provision for the pre-primary stage is largely through a system of Anganwadi and Balwadis, which are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Woman and Child Development and not the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Enrolment data in these centres are available for children between 3 and 5 years, but it is not age disaggregated. MHRD provides enrolment data for children in pre-primary grades but that too is not age disaggregated. So estimates are not available from administrative data. Household surveys indicate 5 year olds are largely in primary grades, and a smaller proportion in pre-primary grades. It is not clear what proportions are enrolled in Anganwadi and Balwadis. So the available data indicates that while the numbers and proportions of children in Dimension 1 are not very high, access to pre-primary grades in schools is quite low. It also points to the need for collecting enrolment data by single year of age.

In the present chapter, two data sets were used for the purpose of estimation and for disaggregating profiles of out-of-school children in the 6 to 13 age group, i.e. children in Dimensions 2 and 3. SRI-IMRB 2009 data have been used for the estimation – being the latest data available based on national-level household surveys. It is seen that the estimate of out-of-school children depends critically on the definition used for who is out of school and on the estimation process. A change in either of these leads to considerable differences in the estimate.



SRI-IMRB 2009 data is also used for obtaining a disaggregated profile by state, location, caste and religion. This profiling is supplemented by analysis of NSSO data 2007-08 by expenditure groups. The Indian system of disaggregating data by social and religious groups has been useful in analysing profiles of out-of-school children. The profiles of OOSC have been examined in two ways. First, the



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distribution of out-of-school children in different categories is looked at to examine who these children are and where they are concentrated. Second, different socio-economic and locational categories are analysed to find the proportion of out-of-school children in each category. The profiles show that more than two-thirds of the out-of-school children belong to SC, ST and Muslim households. The analysis also shows that the proportions of OOSC among Muslims are higher than those among SCs and STs, which again are higher than among the “Others” (which includes the more advantaged caste groups).

The other dimensions of disadvantage – gender, location (rural/urban) and economic groups (measured by monthly per capita expenditure) cut across the social groups. So it is seen that in households in the lower expenditure quintiles a much larger proportion are out of school among all social groups (both advantaged and disadvantaged). Similarly, in all social groups a higher proportion of children are out of school in rural compared to urban areas. In rural areas, and in 6 to 10 age group in urban areas, a higher proportion of girls are likely to be out of school than boys. However for 11 to 13 age group in urban areas a higher proportion of boys is out of school compared to girls for most categories. This could be the impact of the greater work opportunities available for these boys in urban areas.

The different categories of disadvantage overlap for some children – the cumulative effects of caste/religion, class and gender make them vulnerable to be left out of the schooling process. For example, while only 5.2 per cent of children in the 11 to 13 age group are out of school, among females in this age group, from SC, ST and Muslim households in rural areas, the proportions out of school are higher, varying from 8 per cent to 11.4 per cent.

The proportions of children out of school vary according to their age and gender. The estimate based on SRI-IMRB data suggests that the proportion out of school for boys is a little higher in the older age group (around 5 per cent) as against 3.4 per cent in the younger age group. The proportion of girls out of school is higher than that of boys for both age groups. The composition of out-of-school children in terms of their exposure to schooling in the two age groups is also very different. Proportions never enrolled varied from 81 per cent in the younger age group to 42 per cent in the older age group. Correspondingly, the proportion of dropouts among the out-of-school children in the younger group is low (about 19 per cent), but is a more substantial proportion (58 per cent) in the older age group.

Why is the proportion of never enrolled children so high among the 6 to 10 year olds? One of the reasons is that the age of admission to formal schools has been a fluid category – while the age of admission in grade 1 is 6 years according to RTE, it is informally accepted by the education department as 5 years

in several states. Additionally, while a large number of households take admission (to Grade 1) for their children at 5 years of age or even earlier, others admit them at 7 and 8 years of age. So a significant proportion of the “never enrolled” among the 6 to 10 year olds, in reality, constitute those who are likely to be late entrants to school.

This analysis is mostly at the national level. India is a large populous country and states differ widely in their social and economic characteristics. Very preliminary analysis at state level confirms a high level of interstate variations. In Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, the proportions of children out of school are high in both age groups. But while the proportions out of school are high for both boys and girls in rural and urban areas in Bihar, in UP, the proportions out of school are higher in urban than in rural areas. Rajasthan, in contrast, shows very high gender differences in rural areas – out of school proportions among girls are double that among boys. In states like West Bengal and Odisha, the proportions out of school are much lower in the 6 to 10 age group, but still quite high among both boys and girls in the 11 to 13 age group. In the states which are educationally advantaged, the so called “last mile” children in specific social categories are seen to be out of school, and as seen from Gujarat data, boys from disadvantaged groups remain more likely to be out of school.

The analysis is limited by unavailability of data on school participation of vulnerable groups of children in difficult circumstances. These children are likely to suffer from caste and class disadvantages, in addition to those caused by other problems unique to their situation. Anecdotal evidence suggests high proportions out of school among CWSN, child workers, street children, children living in slums, in migrant families and among children in areas under civil strife. Lack of reliable data and correct estimates tend to underplay the urgency of dealing with these problems.

Figure 2.1 shows that after the age of 9, as children grow older, the proportion out of school increases. More than 5 per cent of the 11 to 13 year olds are out of school and nearly 60 per cent of them are reported to have dropped out. Of those in school, more than 30 per cent are not studying in age appropriate grades, but in primary grades. The result is seen in low educational attainment (Table 2.19) – barely 75 per cent of children who are 13 years old have completed 5 years of schooling.

Administrative survey data emphasises that many children dropout before completing grade 8. And a significant proportion has to repeat grades – only 66 per cent of children in grade 1 were found to survive till grade 8 without repetition (Table 2.17). The two sets of data sources draw attention to the need of multiple indicators like ANAR, completion rates and dropout rates to monitor progress – in addition to the proportions out of school,

This exercise also points to the need for regularly collected data – both through household surveys and school surveys. The administrative data sources are not able to collect information from all schools – state-wise differences in schooling structures adding to the problem. Information on the age of students is not always collected, which limits the scope of analysis. Household surveys on the other hand are usually multi-focused, and the definition of out-of-school children is not clearly spelt out. These surveys collect data on the age of children as reported by parents, which may differ from their actual age or from that recorded in the school register.

A major lacuna in the estimation process has been the absence of a common definition of out-of-school children. Administrative data defines in-school children as children whose names are included in the enrolment register in grade 1 and above. Their attendance is not explicitly included in the definition. There was a provision in many states to strike off names of children who have been absent continuously for a specific period, but names were usually not struck off mid-session. The multi-focused household surveys frame questions in generalised terms and have no explicit criterion about regular attendance. The SRI-IMRB out of school survey sponsored by MHRD, and the child tracking surveys in different states, are the only sources that include regular attendance as a criterion of being in school, but the reference period varied. There are also differences in definitions of what constitutes a school, and the inclusion of pre-primary grades. Since estimation of number of out-of-school children and their profile is essential for implementing the RTE Act, harmonisation of definitions and data sets is now a priority. A major step in this direction has been taken earlier this year in the context of identifying out-of-school children for special training – a child absent from school continuously for 45 days is to be considered out of school.



## 3. Barriers and Bottlenecks

### 3.1 Introduction

School participation at the elementary stage stands at a high level at present. The number of students enrolled in grades 1-8 increased from 131.4 million in 1990-91 to 197.37 million in 2010-11.<sup>80</sup> Specifically, in the period between 2005 and 2009, school participation increased from 93.9 per cent to 96.3 per cent in the 6 to 10 age group and from 91.4 per cent to 94.8 per cent in the 11 to 13 age group.<sup>81</sup> Given the large size of the population in India, despite high enrolment, even small percentages of never-enrolleds, along with dropouts, translate into an estimated 8.15 million children out of school in the 6-13 age group in the year 2009.<sup>82</sup> While the enrolment is near universal in the younger age group, with only 3.7 per cent being out of school, the share of those out of school is slightly higher at 5.2 per cent for the older age group. But despite high school participation for both age groups, the Adjusted Net Attendance Rates (ANAR) and grade completion rates at upper primary levels are low, as it has been seen in Chapter 2 (Tables 2.11 and 2.19). It is an indication that enrolment in schools, while a very necessary first step towards universalising elementary education, may not ensure smooth completion of eight years of schooling for all. In this context, the barriers for schooling which lead children to drop out before completing eight years of schooling become extremely important.

Research studies have reiterated the desire of parents for good schooling for their children.<sup>83</sup> What then are the critical barriers that continue to prevent children in the 6-13 age group from completing the elementary education<sup>84</sup> cycle of eight years of formal schooling? The profiles in the previous chapter,



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<sup>80</sup> Source: SES All India Time-series, MHRD.

<sup>81</sup> The data are for SRI-IMRB surveys for 2005 and 2009, respectively.

<sup>82</sup> As discussed in Section 2.3.1.

<sup>83</sup> See for example, studies like Ramachandran (ed.) (2004), and Reddy and Sinha (2010).

<sup>84</sup> The term 'lower secondary' is useful to facilitate intercountry comparability. In India, the terms used are: elementary education (grades 1-8), primary education (grades 1-5) and upper primary education (grades 6-8).

obtained from macro-level data, indicate three factors that stand out strongly – the economic, the locational and the social. Out-of-school children are predominantly from the lower economic quintiles. It will be important, therefore, to understand how and why poverty continues to be a barrier to education, despite a range of incentives to make access to schooling easier for disadvantaged groups.

The profile analysis indicates that the proportions of children in Dimension 2 and Dimension 3 are higher in relatively few states concentrated in the northern and eastern belts. Similarly, the frequency of the 'rural' location in the descriptive profiles going across different socio-economic categories raises questions about the nature of barriers to schooling specific to rural areas. In urban areas, 70 per cent of out-of-school children are in the poorest quintile, drawing attention to the economic barriers.

The profiles also show that certain social groups have a larger proportion of out-of-school children. In the case of girls, it is an outcome of the gendered nature of patriarchal societies, which is stronger in some regions. But why exactly is education attainment still low for certain socio-economic groups? There is a need to understand the barriers associated with poor school participation.

In the case of some highly disadvantaged groups, the available data sets do not generate adequate profiles – the case of children with special needs is one example. While trends in school participation of CWSN can be estimated from IMRB 2009 data, the very small proportion of CWSN identified point to the existence of basic problems of diagnosis and identification. Similarly, the number of street children or child labourers can be estimated through intensive survey at a microlevel, but it is much more difficult to have a realistic estimate at the state or national level.

The previous chapter also points out that nearly four-fifths of children in Dimension 2 are never enrolled, and that a significant proportion of them are likely to be enrolled later. So a major problem for these children is of not being admitted to grade 1 at the right age (6 years). Availability of free and universal preschooling facilities is of vital importance in this context and limited access to pre-primary education appears to be a barrier. Chapter 2 has focused separately on Early Childhood Education from the point of view of Dimension 1 (5 years), in order to highlight barriers to accessing education at the right age. In Dimension 3 less than half the children are never enrolled and the rest are dropouts from school. In this chapter the Report examined the barriers faced by out-of-school children in getting enrolled in school, as well as in remaining in school.

The discussion in this chapter draws on official data, large surveys, as well as focused case studies, both quantitative and qualitative. This combination of data was chosen to provide a more textured understanding of the barriers faced by disadvantaged groups as they enter the schooling system. The analyses have been developed along demand and supply parameters to separate home and community factors from those related to the school. However, the demarcation cannot be water-tight. For instance, barriers within the school could be rooted in the social hierarchy to which the teacher and students belong or the demand for schooling may be impacted by supply side factors – when a child loses interest and stops attending because of poor school quality. The chapter ends with a discussion of the governance and finance barriers that affects the smooth functioning of the school system.

## 3.2 Demand-Side Barriers

In this section, the Report first explores specific barriers to schooling on account of socio-cultural factors before the Report explores how the lack of financial resources impacts demand for schooling. It is important to remember that economic constraints dominate the lives of families from disadvantaged groups (Table 2.9). The SCs and the STs are over-represented in the BPL families in both rural and urban areas. Muslims in urban areas are acutely disadvantaged, while in rural areas they are disadvantaged but to a lesser degree (Table 2.8).

There is considerable inter-state variation in India in terms of socio-cultural norms as well as the extent of development experienced by disadvantaged groups. There is also diversity in gender norms, which cuts across social groups in India, as the table below indicates (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1 Diversity in gender norms in India**

| Development issue  | India | State with best indicator | State with worst indicator |
|--|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sex Ratio in 2011 (number of females per 1000 males)   | 940   | 1084 (Kerala)             | 618 (Daman & Diu)          |
| Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who have completed 12 or more years of schooling (2006) | 12.0  | 37.2 (Delhi)              | 4.9 (Bihar)                |
| Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who have money that they can decide how to use (2006)   | 44.6  | 60.3 (Karnataka)          | 19.5 (Mizoram)             |

Source: Government of India (2011b) for Sex Ratio, IIPS (2007) for other figures.

### 3.2.1 Socio-cultural factors: Gender

A higher proportion of girls were found to be out of school as compared to boys for both the age groups for rural areas (Figures 2.3 and 2.5). The proportion of out of school girls increased sharply in the older age group to 6.4 per cent as compared to 4.2 per cent in the younger age group. In contrast, in the urban areas there is no gender difference in Dimension 2, and in Dimension 3 it is the boys who have a slight disadvantage. But the reasons for non-participation are different for the two sexes.

#### 3.2.1.1 Female roles and responsibilities

The overarching norms of a patriarchal society define roles and responsibilities for the male and female. Schooling decisions, as noted in a host of research studies, are biased in favour of the male child – which stem from the belief that it is he who will be entrusted with earning responsibilities for the household and taking care of the parents in their old age.<sup>85</sup> The male role acts as a powerful incentive for substantial family investment in adequate education attainment.

The girl, on the other hand, is believed to be destined for marriage and care of her husband's household and family.<sup>86</sup> Thus, in Indian society, a girl is often considered to be *'parayadhan'* (wealth which belongs to others), since she is meant to be a source of wealth for her affinal home, believed to be her 'real home'. This is seen to contribute to under-investment in girls' education, as is the view that women's labour is important only in the domestic sphere, which does not require much schooling.<sup>87</sup> From an early age, girls are given household duties like cooking and sibling care – tasks that also prepare them for their future roles. A very significant percentage of out of school girls are the eldest female children in their families.<sup>88</sup> Often their schooling is sacrificed, so that the hard-pressed mother has adequate support and other children, especially boys, can go to school.

A study conducted in 2005 across 9 states reported how currently enrolled girls experienced barriers to completing the schooling cycle as reflected in irregular school attendance: one-third of those enrolled were reported to only attend occasionally (i.e. can be taken as dropouts), another third attended irregularly and were therefore at risk of dropping out, and only a third attended regularly.<sup>89</sup> In 2007-08, nearly 10 per cent of women in the 5-29 age group in both rural and urban areas cited 'attending to domestic chores' as a reason for dropping out of school.<sup>90</sup>

These perceptions of the female role act as a major barrier both for girls' enrolment and for the provision of continued support to them to enable them to complete their education. Studies have noted that weaker parental demand for girls' education, cuts across class, caste, religion, and location (urban and rural

<sup>85</sup> See, for example, Dreze and Sen (2002) which brings out the neglect of female education by the state as leading to a serious development deficit for the country.

<sup>86</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>87</sup> Bandopadhyay and Subramanian (2008).

<sup>88</sup> Ramachandran (2003).

<sup>89</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005) carefully focused on the attendance issue in school and household interviews. The study looks at urban and rural population in 11 districts across 9 states in the country identified on the basis of BPL (below poverty line) population, IMR (infant mortality rate) and female illiteracy rate (FLR) to explore factors working against universal elementary education.

<sup>90</sup> NSSO (2010).

areas, and across states).<sup>91</sup> In earlier times, this was manifest in more widespread resistance to girls' education.

Some turnaround in this attitude has been observed in recent times. While demand for girls' education has been increasing, it is derived partly from marriage market compulsions to bridge the gap between an educated groom and a less educated bride.<sup>92</sup> But this has a negative side as well. Investing too much in a girl's education may not only increase the dowry for a more educated groom, it may also divert scarce family resources.

Demand for girls' education has also increased because of education-employment linkages and the belief that an educated mother is better equipped to guide her children. These factors have been cited even by economically-disadvantaged parents as reasons to educate girls.<sup>93</sup>

### 3.2.1.2 Child marriage

For the older age group (11-13 years) child marriage is often a factor leading to drop out, especially in rural areas. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 fixed the minimum age of marriage for a male as 21 years, and for a female as 18 years. However, while any male over 18 who married a child was punishable under this Act, it did not render the marriage invalid. This Act has been replaced by The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 which gives the option to the concerned child to make a petition and get the marriage annulled. This may lead to an increase in the age of marriage in future.

The NFHS survey in 2005-06 found more than half the women in India are married before the legal minimum age of 18 years.<sup>94</sup> The states with the highest incidence of child marriage in the country are Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and



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<sup>91</sup> De et. al. (2005) looks at schooling for adolescents (11-18 years) in Delhi and in urban and rural areas in Rajasthan and West Bengal. The Delhi study found that when parents were discouraged by obstacles like failure, which raised the costs of schooling, girls were withdrawn from school, while boys were coaxed to continue.

<sup>92</sup> Bandopadhyay and Subramanian (2008).

<sup>93</sup> De et. al. (2011).

<sup>94</sup> IIPS (2007).

Karnataka.<sup>95</sup> Though no systematic study is available exploring the relationship between age of marriage and education participation of girls, all these states with the exception of Karnataka are the ones with a large proportion of children in Dimension 3.

### 3.2.2 Socio-cultural factors: Socially and economically disadvantaged communities

Social and economic factors together drive the education deprivation for certain groups in India: the SCs, the STs, and Muslims. As noted earlier, enrolment rates for these groups have risen, followed by a sharp reduction in the gap with more privileged groups, especially at the primary stage. The dropout rates are still high though the gaps between children of SC groups and others have declined substantially.<sup>96</sup>

Poverty levels are very high in these three groups. As per the IHDS survey conducted in 2005,<sup>97</sup> the incidence of poverty is highest among the STs (49.6 per cent), followed by the SCs (32.3 per cent), and then the Muslims (30.6 per cent). It has also been observed that in areas with a concentration of SC, ST or Muslim communities, civic services like electricity supply, water supply, etc. are poor. The provision of schooling facilities is also deficient.<sup>98</sup> The barriers that children from these communities are thus interlinked.

#### 3.2.2.1 The Scheduled Castes

The Scheduled Castes are economically vulnerable because they have limited or no access to land and depend mainly on wage labour.<sup>99</sup> Thus, their livelihoods are very insecure. In urban areas too, the livelihoods of most continue to come from low-paid, low-status and low-skilled jobs. As discussed in Section 1.1, SCs have traditionally been physically as well as socially segregated from the privileged “general castes” and OBCs, especially in the rural areas, and marginalised as a consequence. This group experiences all the demand-side barriers associated with uncertain livelihoods – migration, residence in slums, etc. – which has been discussed in the next section. In addition, many children from this community are first-generation learners, with the associated problems like lack of home support, and low educational aspirations.

#### 3.2.2.2 The Scheduled Tribes

The Scheduled Tribes, over 600 in number, mostly live in remote areas and in hilly and/or forested terrains, in what used to be largely self-sustaining societies. Today their rights to forest produce have been eroded and they have lost the food security and life patterns which went with it. In integrating with mainstream society they are pushed into casual work, construction, urban domestic work, etc.

Traditionally, tribal families work together as a family unit in cultivation and collection of forest produce. This in itself works against regularity in schooling. Since livelihoods are becoming increasingly scarce, families migrate, for some part of the year, to benefit from work opportunities elsewhere. This leads to temporary discontinuation of the children’s schooling, and subsequently their leaving school altogether. Adult males also migrate on their own, which may lead to physical and financial hardship on the family left behind.<sup>100</sup>

The language and cultural practices of ST communities are distinct from that of the mainstream society in the area, so the content of learning in mainstream schools may not be relevant to their context. The denotified tribes and nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, low literacy levels. Some are nomadic pastoralists, others entertainers, others offer services like thatching.<sup>101</sup> For schooling, an important alienating factor for the young child is the gap between his home language or dialect and language used in school. In addition, parents, immersed in a struggle for survival, may see little benefit from schooling.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>95</sup> UNICEF (2011).

<sup>96</sup> Planning Commission (2010 b).

<sup>97</sup> NCAER – IHDS (2010).

<sup>98</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005). See also Jha and Shahjahan (2010) for Muslims.

<sup>99</sup> Thorat (2009).

<sup>100</sup> Burra (2008).

<sup>101</sup> Veervadranayika et. al. (2011).

<sup>102</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

### 3.2.2.3 The Muslims

Among Muslims out of school shares are high for both boys and girls and in urban and rural areas (Section 2.3.5). More important, the proportion out of school in the 11 to 13 age group is significantly higher than in other religious groups, both among males and females. However, as the Sachar Committee Report points out, Muslims in India are not a homogeneous group, and significant regional differences exist. IMRB 2009 data also show large regional differences – the proportion of out of school among Muslims is very high (at 18 to 20 per cent) in the Hindi speaking north Indian states, while it is 3 per cent or lower in the southern states.

It is often thought that the need for religious education<sup>103</sup> in madrasas and makhtabs<sup>104</sup> acts as a barrier to Muslim children being enrolled in regular schools. However, evidence does not find that madrasas play a major role in the education of Muslim children.<sup>105</sup> An in-depth study of the Muslim community by the Sachar Committee showed that, contrary to common perception, Muslim parents are not averse to sending their children to mainstream schools.<sup>106</sup> The Report found that only 4-7 per cent of Muslim students were found to be studying exclusively in madrasas<sup>107</sup> and had opted for madrasas largely because of the lack of access to Urdu-medium schools and a lack of Urdu language teaching (and teachers) in non-Urdu medium government schools. All the rest were in mainstream government or private schools.

The SSA RTE framework document discusses how “the education of Muslim children continues to be a particularly neglected area in policy and programming”.<sup>108</sup> It refers to scattered bits of evidence that do exist, which indicate that the education of Muslim children is constrained by their experience of a lack of sensitivity in the schooling system to their socio-cultural realities. Discriminatory attitudes may be openly expressed, or exclusion may be more subtle, contributing to children dropping out of school.

Poverty is also an important reason for many Muslim children to be out of school.<sup>109</sup> Muslim children are reported to be doing wage work, whether as migrants or in the village. Girls are involved in household work and sibling care.<sup>110</sup> The Sachar Committee revealed that a part of Muslim poverty can be associated with the caste system, though Islam itself does not have social hierarchy based on caste. The Arzals (who share the OBC quota) can be compared to the Hindu SCs as they engage in similar low-status work.<sup>111</sup> As a group, who has been historically disadvantaged, they need special attention, much like the Hindu SCs.<sup>112</sup> Other Muslim groups with insecure livelihoods include skilled or semi skilled craftsmen who are experiencing a decline in demand for their trades.

Education and employment linkages appear to be weaker for Muslims than for the population as a whole. Only a low proportion of Muslims are employed in public institutions and governance structures. Less than 8 per cent of urban Muslims work in the formal sector as against more than 20 per cent among the population as a whole.<sup>113</sup> The high rate of unemployment, even among educated Muslim men, discourages parents from investing in their children’s schooling.<sup>114</sup> Instead, parents may send their boys

<sup>103</sup> Religious education in makhtabs or madrasas fosters the Muslim identity. Jha and Jhingran found that even children who regularly attend formal schools spend a few hours at the madrasa, before or after school (see Jha and Jhingran, 2005).

<sup>104</sup> The Koranic school or *Makhtabis* a place where Muslim children go to read and recite the Koran only. Koranic schools can function in the mosque, under a tree, in the house of the Koran teacher or under an open sky. The term madrasa is usually used for more organised institutions with classrooms and teachers for different levels of education (Azar (2003)).

<sup>105</sup> In some states, where the madrasas go up to secondary level and beyond, madrasas prepare boys for religious teaching. This is appreciated as an employment opportunity in a situation where employment opportunities are few.

<sup>106</sup> Government of India (2006a).

<sup>107</sup> The Sachar Committee Report uses two sources for Muslim enrolment in madrasas – the NCERT survey and the NCAER’s IHDS survey.

<sup>108</sup> Government of India (2013a).

<sup>109</sup> Jeffery et. al. (2007), Hasan and Menon (2005).

<sup>110</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

<sup>111</sup> Government of India (2006).

<sup>112</sup> As erstwhile ‘untouchable’ castes affected by a long tradition of discrimination and stigma, SCs benefit from affirmative action like incentives in schools, quotas in higher education and jobs. The Arzal sub-castes demand a similar status instead of being clubbed with the better-off artisan castes in the OBC category.

<sup>113</sup> Government of India (2006).

<sup>114</sup> Siddiqui (2010).

to apprentice with artisans, mechanics, etc. so that they can be self-employed.<sup>115</sup> The sense of alienation and insecurity arising from communal tensions has furthered ghettoisation,<sup>116</sup> leaving Muslims with reduced opportunities for development.

School drop-out rates have been found to be very high among Muslim girls.<sup>117</sup> Girls who are enrolled might be withdrawn when they attain puberty, or because of child marriage. As with other communities, Muslim girls find their parents invest more in their brothers' schooling than in theirs. Moreover, many parents are unwilling to send their girls to regular schools if they are coeducational or if they are schools without female teachers. Hasan and Menon (2004), in a major study on Muslim girls' education, point out that Muslim girls in north Indian villages are educationally much more disadvantaged than in other parts of India. These girls face various barriers including the deep-rooted patriarchal traditions in their local communities. The study found lack of female teachers, and transport facilities to be important barriers for girls' education, but indicated that poverty is the most crucial issue behind the poor educational status of Muslim girls.

The barriers to school participation of Muslim children, as identified in existing studies, are quite similar to those facing other disadvantaged groups, except that among Muslim parents there is a demand for Urdu medium schools, or at least the teaching of Urdu as a second language. More in-depth geographically focused studies are needed to understand why the proportions of Muslim children out of school are particularly high in certain states and districts.

### 3.2.3 Socio-cultural factors: Violence and sexual harassment in home and community

The global report on the impact of domestic violence on children indicates that between 27 and 69 million children are exposed to domestic violence in India.<sup>118</sup> This Report shows that such violence can adversely affect the development of children's brains and impair their cognitive and sensory growth. Primary school age children who have been exposed to domestic violence show poor concentration and focus in studies.

A study by Plan India in four Indian states identifies the home as the source of the most severe and cruel forms of punishment for children.<sup>119</sup> The survey reports that parents did not hesitate to accept that they punish their children physically and feel that they needed to discipline them. The forms of punishment range from kicking a child severely, inflicting burns on him/her, making the child starve, to assigning physically strenuous tasks. Both parents were found to mete out physical punishment regardless of gender. In spite of the fact that children seemed to take such cruelty in their stride, it appears to be likely that it would adversely affect their school participation and attendance.

Public spaces in India do not provide adequate security to women, and sexual harassment is likely to constrain school attendance for girls, especially adolescents.<sup>120</sup>

### 3.2.4 Economic factors

The negative association between poverty and educational achievement is fairly well-established,<sup>121</sup> i.e. households belonging to the lowest income quintiles are usually the ones with least educational attainment. States with high poverty have the largest proportion of out-of-school children: UP, Rajasthan, Bihar and Odisha and West Bengal. Again, locations associated with high poverty also have high incidence of out-of-school children – rural areas for example, and to some extent urban slums. Social groups disadvantaged by tradition, history or politics also tend to dominate among the poor as well as in having large numbers of children out of school and this is due to the cumulative disadvantages that they face.

#### 3.2.4.1 Costs of schooling

For long years now the Indian state has strived to decrease the cost of education. At present no fees are charged in government schools. Additionally different states have been providing many incentives to make elementary schooling more attractive and affordable for disadvantaged communities: scholarships,

<sup>115</sup> Government of India (2013a).

<sup>116</sup> Government of India (2006).

<sup>117</sup> Mandal (1997) and Sabiha Hussain (1990) cited in MWCD (2007).

<sup>118</sup> UNICEF (2006).

<sup>119</sup> Plan India (2006).

<sup>120</sup> Bandopadhyay and Subramanian (2008).

<sup>121</sup> NSSO (2010), NCAER-IHDS (2010).

**Table 3.2 Average annual household expenditure per student by type of institution and level of education, NSSO (2007-08)**

| Type of Institution | Expenditure at    |                         | Ratio of Expenditure at Upper Primary Level to Expenditure at Primary Level |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
|                     | Primary Level (₹) | Upper Primary Level (₹) |   |
| Government          | 473               | 1074                    | 2.3   |
| Local Body          | 521               | 976                     | 1.9   |
| Private Aided       | 3137              | 2915                    | 0.9   |
| Private Unaided     | 4175              | 5557                    | 1.3   |

Source: NSSO (2007-08).

subsidised books/stationery, mid-day meal, student concession in public transport, etc.<sup>122</sup> In some cases, residential schools have been provided in an attempt to bring down the costs of schooling further and provide a safe, supportive environment for children who may be living in remote communities, many of whom are first generation learners.

However, the 2009 SRI-IMRB survey indicated that poverty/economic constraints was the most frequently cited reason for children dropping out of school (27 per cent of respondents). This seems to reflect the fact that although government schools charge negligible fees, in reality, there are other costs of pursuing school education, which can act as a major barrier to school participation for children from poor families. These costs which include examination fees, books and stationery, uniform and private tuition, etc. have been analysed using NSSO data for 2007-08.<sup>123</sup>

Table 3.2 looks at household expenditure on schooling on the basis of NSSO data, at primary and upper primary stages, incurred in schools with different types of management. It indicates that costs of schooling are much higher than school fees. So while some costs are incurred even in government schools which have zero fees, costs incurred in private aided schools and private unaided schools are very high. While the lower financial costs of government and local body schools have indeed made schooling more affordable, it may be kept in mind that for poor families with two to three school-going children, the burden may still be heavy. Within the elementary education spectrum, the education expenditure varies substantially between primary and upper primary levels and it is worth noting that there is a considerable increase in per student expenditure in government schools at the upper primary stage, which may be a greater deterrent for parents compared to the lower costs at the primary stage.

Table 3.3 presents education expenditure at different levels of schooling, and includes expenditure for both government and private schools. Education expenditure is seen to vary substantially not only between primary and upper primary levels but also between rural and urban areas. The average annual

**Table 3.3 Average annual household expenditure per student by level of education in rural and urban areas – NSSO (2007-08)**

| Level of Education  | Expenditure (₹) in |             |                     | Ratio of Expenditure in Urban Areas to Expenditure in Rural Areas |
|---|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|---|
|   | Rural Areas        | Urban Areas | Rural + Urban Areas |   |
| Primary Level   | 826                | 3626        | 1413                | 4.4   |
| Upper Primary Level   | 1370               | 4264        | 2088                | 3.1   |
| Ratio of Expenditure at Upper Primary Level to Expenditure at Primary Level | 1.7                | 1.2         | 1.5                 |   |

Source: NSSO (2007-08).

<sup>122</sup> There are several central schemes like KGBV, NPEGEL, MDM, etc. along with schemes specific for individual states. KGBV, for instance, provides free education with free residential facilities, NPEGEL provides in-kind support through resources like learning materials, books, sports and musical equipment. Cash incentives like stipends or fee reimbursement are provided to SC/ST students in some states. There is also provision of bicycles, free school bags, notebooks, etc. for underprivileged students.

<sup>123</sup> NSSO (2010).



household expenditure on education per student in 2007-8 is reported to be ₹1413 for the primary level and ₹2088 for the upper primary level. The expenditure at upper primary level is nearly 1.5 times that at primary level. For rural areas, this ratio is steeper at 1.7, indicating this could be one of the reasons behind the high proportion of dropouts at the upper primary level.

### 3.2.4.2 Survival constraints of the poor: the issue of working children

Some experts believe that households will send a child to school if the perceived benefits of schooling are more than the costs – both direct and opportunity costs.<sup>124</sup> Others feel that children in poor families are involved in labour including paid labour, and their parents see little relevance in schooling in the face of livelihood constraints.<sup>125</sup>

In both the rural and urban milieu, earning opportunities for children combine with the demands on them to do household tasks leading to the detriment of their schooling. The manufacturing sector continues to employ children, as do small businesses. In spite of extensive campaigns to draw children into school, children can still be found working in shops, tea stalls, hotels, factories, as domestic help, etc. in the urban areas; in the rural context they do extensive paid and unpaid labour in farms, in grazing cattle and in non-farm work. There are also many children who spend long hours in household chores who are not counted as workers. Boys are more likely to get set into doing earning work very early and girls into doing sibling care/household work from a young age. The phenomenon of child labour is aggravated by the availability of economic opportunities for children, the limited scope of child labour laws, as well as a lack of direct linkages between education and earning opportunities.<sup>126</sup>

Census data show changes in the composition of child workers between 1991 and 2001. There was a sharp decline in the proportion of main workers (4.3 per cent to 2.3 per cent) but a corresponding increase in marginal workers.<sup>127</sup> As a result the child work participation rate was found to have decreased marginally from 5.5 per cent to 5 per cent. Regional differences were also observed – in the states in the south and west of India there was a decline in child work participation rates, while in the north and the eastern states there was an increasing trend. Census data also indicate that incidence of child labour in the agricultural sector, in animal husbandry, and in fishing declined from 42 per cent in 1991 to 20 per cent in 2001.<sup>128</sup> This essentially reflected a shift in the concentration of child workers from farm to non-farm sector activities. Around 48 per cent of child workers in 2001 were engaged in manufacturing activities, both household based and non-household based. The remaining 32 per cent of child workers were in activities in the services sector, including construction, trade and domestic services, mainly in the informal sector.

Poverty can lead to another type of barrier to schooling through its impact on children having access to insufficient nutrition. Such deprivation during the early years of a child's life is likely to impact his/her physical and mental development. School attendance of a child who does not get enough food and nutrition on a regular basis is also likely to suffer. Classroom hunger affects concentration and adversely impacts school participation.<sup>129</sup> In addition, malnutrition may make the child more susceptible to disease, and thus negatively impact regular attendance in school.

#### **Rural Poverty and Migration:**

A high proportion of rural inhabitants are poor. The poor have few assets; they are landless or have small unproductive holdings and own small animals if at all, rather than cattle. They are faced with livelihood insecurity and uncertainty particularly during certain seasons, and forced to depend on farm and non-farm labour opportunities.<sup>130</sup> To cope with food shortages, illness and other needs, some resort to borrowing at high rates of interest.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Dreze and Kingdon (2001).

<sup>125</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

<sup>126</sup> The lacunae in child labour policies will be discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>127</sup> Census defines main workers as one who have worked 6 months or more in previous 12 months. Marginal workers are those who have worked less than 6 months.

<sup>128</sup> This discussion draws from the NCPCR submission for the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan to the Planning commission.

<sup>129</sup> Josephine and Raju (2008), Dreze and Kingdon (2001), Levinger (1992).

<sup>130</sup> IIPS (2007), De et. al. (2010).

<sup>131</sup> Rana and Das (2004).

**Table 3.4 Engagement in work by children from BPL households**

| Kind of work                               | % of out-of-school children engaged in this work |       |       | % of in-school children engaged in this work |       |       | % of children engaged in this work |       |       |
|--|--|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|------------------------------------|-------|-------|
|  | Boys   | Girls | Total | Boys   | Girls | Total | Boys                               | Girls | Total |
| Wage work                                  | 57.8   | 11.7  | 33.8  | 0.4  | 0.0   | 0.2   | 20.2                               | 5.9   | 13.2  |
| Own work <sup>1</sup>                      | 10.3   | 25.7  | 18.2  | 7.5  | 6.9   | 7.5   | 8.5                                | 14.2  | 11.1  |
| Cattle grazing <sup>2</sup>                | 29.8   | 18.9  | 24.1  | 5.7  | 2.8   | 4.5   | 12.3                               | 8.6   | 10.6  |
| Household chores/sibling care <sup>3</sup> | 7.1  | 64.2  | 36.3  | 4.4  | 34.6  | 18.8  | 6.1                                | 47.8  | 25.5  |

Source: Table 3.21 (including notes), Jha and Jhingran (2005), p.95.

Notes: 1. Own work includes cultivation, forest collection for earning purposes, home based skilled work for earning purposes, etc. Children who reported working for more than 20 days in a year are included.

2. Cattle grazing refers to grazing of one's own cattle. Children for whom it is almost a year-round activity are included.

3. Children who are engaged in household chores/sibling care for more than three hours are included.

(It is common for children to do more than one type of work over the year. So the total is more than 100.)

Coping strategies include multiple occupations for the adults, depending on the availability of work locally, possibilities for migration, and the involvement of children in work activities of the family.<sup>132</sup> Children are intertwined with the uncertainties of such lives and their labour becomes part of the coping strategy of the family.

A time-use survey of paid and unpaid work among men, women and children, carried out in July 1998 - June 1999 by the Government of India revealed that while 67 per cent of the children in the 6-14 age group were engaged in educational activities, 17 per cent were engaged in purely economic activities and 16 per cent were in extended SNA (System of National Accounting) or in non-SNA activities.<sup>133</sup> The survey showed that children who participated in economic activities spent 21.5 hours a week (around three hours a day) on average on SNA work. Similar findings were reported by Jha and Jhingran (2005) from their household survey conducted in 11 disadvantaged districts. Table 3.4 shows the nature of work undertaken by children in BPL households in this survey.

As can be seen from Table 3.4, boys are more engaged in earning work and girls in sibling care and household responsibilities. A high proportion of boys who are out of school are engaged in wage work.<sup>134</sup> A substantial proportion of out-of-school boys also graze cattle. A high proportion of girls who are out of school were reported to be doing household chores. A substantial proportion were also involved in earning work, being engaged in "own work". Work is often seasonal in nature. Formal schools have fixed timings and a fixed school calendar. So even when work demands are for a few hours or for a few weeks, they can become a barrier to effective school participation if it clashes with school timings. Low proportion of boys in school reported doing work. A substantial proportion of girls in school reported doing household chores.

Migration is often a coping strategy for the poor, particularly in rural areas. The study conducted by Jha and Jhingran found that according to teachers, migration is a recurrent event on the household calendar of many children as their families migrate in times of scarcity.<sup>135</sup> They either migrate to agriculturally more productive areas, or to certain worksites like sugarcane fields, brick kilns or salt pans (rural-rural migration), or to urban areas (rural-urban migration). Around 25 per cent of the adults surveyed in the Jha-Jhingran study reported that they migrate and the percentage would be higher if young boys were included.<sup>136</sup> Those who migrate with other family members often work on piece-rates at brick kilns, stone quarries, orchards, sugarcane cutting, paddy or wheat harvesting, etc. Around 6 million children in the

<sup>132</sup> Rana and Das (2004), Jha and Jhingran (2005).

<sup>133</sup> This survey covered 18,628 households in rural and urban areas of six states: Haryana, MP, Gujarat, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya. Extended SNA activities include activities which are not strictly economic activities, but include activities such as household maintenance, management, care of siblings, the sick, the aged, and the disabled, and other household activities.

<sup>134</sup> See also Madan in Ramchandran (ed) (2004) who found in a village in Haryana that boys from an SC hamlet were sent as bonded labour to farms of upper caste families in the same village. This was known but not addressed by the school. Jandhyala has similar findings about young boys (both upper caste and SCs) being sent to farms of better-off families in the same village, this time in Andhra Pradesh.

<sup>135</sup> See Smita (2008) – an important study on migration.

<sup>136</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

age group 0-15 years migrate along with their parents.<sup>137</sup> These are predominantly nuclear families who take their children with them to the worksite, especially their girls (for reasons of safety) and their younger children.

While it is true that some migrants have been able to spend their migration earnings on education, the poorest migrants who migrate with their family are usually unable to educate their children.<sup>138</sup> In general, migration poses certain special risks for effective school participation. In cases where the adult men migrate, there is an increased burden of work on the family members left behind in the village. Children need to do more household work, and tend to drop out of school.<sup>139</sup>

It has been found that when the entire family migrates, the education of children is definitely disrupted, at least temporarily. In most cases of rural-rural migration – to sugarcane fields or factories, salt pans, brick kilns, etc. – the working conditions are extremely harsh and earlier there were hardly any facilities for children to study.<sup>140</sup> Instances have been observed where not only the women, but also the children were expected to work, each according to their age and ability, or rather to the extent that employers can extract work out of them.

*“Job assignments start from an early age. Four-year olds, for example, have been observed sorting coal and sieving coal dust. ‘Children work according to their strength,’ observed a parent at a Hyderabad kiln. Pointing to a four-year old carrying a brick, she added, ‘after some time she will start carrying two.’”* (Smita 2008)

The poor parents see this as an opportunity for the children to learn the work and many children become full-fledged workers by the time they enter their teens.<sup>141</sup>

The barriers to education faced by children from migrant families depend largely on the pattern of migration. Migration can mean being away to a work site for 7-8 months of the year, in which case the time spent in the village coincides with the children’s school calendar for only 3-4 months.<sup>142</sup> On the other hand, short periods of migration to prosperous villages in the vicinity allow children to remain enrolled in school, but with being able to attend irregularly. There are migrant families who move from site to site in search of work, retaining a tenuous link with their village. Children from such families may not even visit the same worksite again. So provision of schooling at worksites is not effective for this group of out-of-school children. Even recently undertaken field visits to Gujarat, Maharashtra and Odisha reveal that seasonal migration is still an important barrier to universalisation of elementary education. Many children remain nominally enrolled, learn little due to continuous interruptions in schooling and eventually drop out.<sup>143</sup>

Forced migration from areas affected by civil strife is also a major issue that affects children and their right to education. In these areas, families in large numbers are moved to neighboring areas or into camps, which render children extremely vulnerable to a host of deprivations, and expose them to danger and insecurity.<sup>144</sup>

With RTE, there are concerted efforts to bring all children into school, including migrant children, so it is expected that some efforts to deal with these challenges would have begun.

### **Urban Poverty, Livelihood Uncertainties and Environment Risks:**

A strikingly high percentage of the urban children who are out of school are from the poorest quintile, as shown by the profiles in Chapter 2. Many poor families live in unauthorised slums on encroached land where living conditions are worse than those in authorised slums. A sizeable proportion of out-of-school

<sup>137</sup> Smita (2008).

<sup>138</sup> UNESCO-UNICEF (2011).

<sup>139</sup> Burra (undated), Jha and Jhingran (2005).

<sup>140</sup> Smita (2008).

<sup>141</sup> Smita (2008). Aide de Action (2009) study also finds that only 9 per cent of migrant children can access schools for migrant children.

<sup>142</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>143</sup> Srivastava and Dasgupta (2010).

<sup>144</sup> Protecting Children’s Rights in Areas of Civil Unrest, NCPCR website, <http://www.ncpcr.gov.in/Publication/Protection%20of%20Children%27s%20Rights%20in%20Areas%20of%20Civil%20Unrest.pdf>



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children live with their families in slums, but there are many who live on their own, on the streets, at railway stations, and are even more vulnerable.<sup>145</sup> For instance, a recent survey found around 37 thousand street children in Mumbai<sup>146</sup> in 2013 and another survey found around 50 thousand street children<sup>147</sup> in Delhi in 2010.<sup>148</sup> Poverty and hunger, and search for employment were the major factors that have made the children live on the streets. The Delhi survey found that the majority of street children are illiterate and that the number of boys is much greater than that of girls. Most work as porters, vendors, rag-pickers, helpers in eateries, scavengers or beggars. In small roadside eateries and shops, in particular, they work for very long hours and for meagre pay. They also suffer from poor nutrition, lack of hygiene, drug abuse, police harassment, etc. All these problems make this group particularly resistant to efforts to bring them in to school.

Urban livelihoods have their own insecurities with the majority on daily wages or low-paid skilled or unskilled contract jobs, self-employment, and piece-rate work. Children from such households tend to have low school participation. In addition to livelihood uncertainty, the threat of eviction for unauthorised slum dwellers adds to the problem.

Effective school participation of slum children is also hampered by the poor living conditions in the slum. Congestion of ill constructed, small, often *kuccha* low-roofed structures, density of population, lack of basic infrastructure such as a regular supply of clean water, electricity and sanitation facilities accentuate the burden of livelihood uncertainties and make for a poor quality of life. Boys are also under pressure to earn and may take up even hazardous activities due to lack of gainful employment. Moreover, idle loitering, alcoholism and gambling by adult men impact young boys negatively. Although, for girls living in urban slums, the usual barriers of household chores and sibling care are present, a lack of freedom to engage in activities encourages school participation. Girls may also work with mothers in domestic work outside the home apart from schooling<sup>149</sup> where they are exposed to the high schooling motivation in the households in which they work.<sup>150</sup>

### 3.3 Supply-Side Barriers

For children from disadvantaged backgrounds, remaining in school for eight years (as mandated) is not an easy task. As discussed, there are several barriers to schooling which arise from home and community factors. However, supply side factors may also play a major role in children dropping out from school. While a well functioning school may motivate parents and children to continue schooling despite several demand side barriers, a poorly functioning school or infrastructural deficiencies may lead to demotivation and apathy for parents and students, and have the opposite impact. These factors by themselves may keep children out of school or may aggravate the impact of other factors to push children out of school.

<sup>145</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

<sup>146</sup> TISS (2013) survey in Mumbai estimated 37,059 children to be living on the streets of Mumbai, accessed at [www.governancenow.com/news/regular-story/mumbai-s-street-kids-miss-out-welfare-doles](http://www.governancenow.com/news/regular-story/mumbai-s-street-kids-miss-out-welfare-doles)

<sup>147</sup> Here a child means a person below 18 years of age.

<sup>148</sup> IHD-Save the Children (2011) has identified around 50 thousand street children in Delhi. UNICEF has defined street children as street-living children who ran away from their families and who live alone on the streets; street-working children who spend most of their time on the street fending for themselves, but who return home on a regular basis and children from street families who live on the street with their families.

<sup>149</sup> De et. al. (2005).

<sup>150</sup> Jha and Jhingran (2005).

Schooling in India has made rapid progress. Access to schools at elementary level has improved remarkably over the last two decades, especially since the inception of SSA in 2000-01. School infrastructure facilities, too, have expanded, and there is improvement in the provision of functional classrooms, blackboards, drinking water, etc. However, there are very few areas where still access is an issue, especially at the upper primary stage of education and select groups of children including children with special needs. At times children from socially disadvantaged groups face issues of exclusion and discrimination in school which pose a barrier to school participation. There are also critical barriers related to teachers and the teaching process.

The factors are discussed in sequence groups for whom supply problems are of a unique nature are dealt with separately: children with special needs, for whom facilities are yet to be made available on a required scale, and children affected by civil strife, who often face the destruction of even those facilities that are available, and the loss of a peaceful environment for schooling and begin with the provisioning of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), which, notwithstanding rapid expansion, still pose some challenges for children from disadvantaged communities.

### 3.3.1 Access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Provision of ECCE has been shown to be crucial in developing the cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential of a child.<sup>151</sup> This is especially important for children who are first generation school-goers and children from other educationally vulnerable groups, since it would give them the sound foundation they need to continue through the school cycle and attain parity with children from more advantaged families. ECCE is also a critical input in freeing older girls from the care of siblings giving them a chance to attend school regularly.

The flagship government scheme for very young children, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), approaches the issue of child development holistically and comprises health, nutrition and education components for children below 6 years of age.<sup>152</sup> While health and nutrition inputs are important for the entire segment of 0-6 year old children, school readiness programmes which provide preschool education are usually aimed at the 3-6 age group. Both are provided through a vast network of Anganwadi centres.

Lack of healthcare and adequate nutrition can adversely affect children's concentration in class as well as the regularity of their attendance in school. Data from the nation-wide NFHS survey conducted in 2005-06 indicated the poor health and nutritional status of children in the 0-6 year category, as reflected in the infant mortality rate (IMR), the under five mortality rate, and the incidence of malnutrition.<sup>153</sup> However, the situation has improved in subsequent years.<sup>154</sup>

The education facilities provided in the Anganwadi centres have been the main source of preschool education in India. In 2011-12, close to 36 million children in the 3-5 age group accessed the preschool education (PSE)<sup>155</sup> component of the ICDS services (see Table 2.3). The same data source reveals that the number of children in this age group enrolled in the pre-primary stage of formal schools<sup>156</sup> was limited to 6.3 million. Based on these figures for enrolment in preschool facilities (in Anganwadis and formal schools), estimated GER for the 3-5 age group<sup>157</sup> is 57 per cent at the national level.

The ICDS programme has been continually expanded and strengthened since it was started in 1975. However, a 2011 evaluation<sup>158</sup> across 35 states found only half of the eligible children in sample households

<sup>151</sup> Das et. al. (2008), Kaul and Sankar (2009).

<sup>152</sup> The policy also has components for pregnant women and lactating mothers. ICDS scheme will be discussed in Chapter 4 in greater detail.

<sup>153</sup> Although declining over time, IMR was still high at 57 deaths and under 5 mortality rate at 74 deaths per 1000 live births in 2005-6 (IIPS, 2007). The effect of malnutrition is evident as almost half of the children under five years of age (48 per cent) are stunted and 43 per cent are underweight. The incidence of malnutrition is even more pronounced for children from marginalised communities (Sood, 2010).

<sup>154</sup> In 2011 IMR was 47 (Dreze and Sen, 2013).

<sup>155</sup> Also known as Early Childhood Education (ECE) component.

<sup>156</sup> Formal schools in India, till recently, have seldom included the pre-primary stage. The percentage of 3-5 year olds enrolled in pre-primary grades in formal schools was found to be very low in several studies – only 10 per cent according to NSSO 2007-08 and CREATE (2010), and less than 20 per cent in rural India according to ASER 2012.

<sup>157</sup> The ASER survey reports that in rural areas a higher proportion of 3 and 4 year olds attend preschool facilities compared to the 5 year olds (see Table 2.6).

<sup>158</sup> Planning Commission, 2011.

currently enrolled. Factors found to be constraining the scheme included the over-burdening of Anganwadi workers who were underpaid and mostly unskilled, and also a lack of adequate infrastructure in Anganwadi centres for delivering the designated services. These shortcomings would necessarily impact the PSE component of programme. A 2006 document reported the PSE component to be a relatively weak link in ICDS in some states due to systemic and infrastructural shortcomings.<sup>159</sup> A 2008 document also highlighted gaps in provision of these services.<sup>160</sup> Efforts have been made to plug these gaps over the years, and there is now a move towards universalisation of preschool education through the ICDS scheme (discussed in Chapter 4).

### 3.3.2 Access to schooling

Access to schooling is not only about providing physical access to schools, but also about facilitating equitable access to children from all social groups by addressing the additional barriers faced by children from socially disadvantaged groups. Issues to do with location of schools and type of schools are raised here but other critical issues for children from disadvantaged social groups are discussed in Section 3.3.7 which deals with issues of discrimination and exclusion.

Physical access to primary schooling in India has improved due to immense expansion, and yet for specific sections of the population, access to the upper primary stage still remains a barrier. In the rural areas, 99 per cent of the population now has a primary school within 1 km.<sup>161</sup> Considerable improvement in the provision of upper primary schooling facilities is also reflected in the decline in the ratio of schooling facilities at primary level to upper primary level from 3.7<sup>162</sup> in 1990-91 to 2.07<sup>163</sup> in 2009-10 (roughly one upper primary facility to two primary facilities). The ratio is higher, however, for West Bengal (4.68), Arunachal Pradesh (3.25) and Assam (3.14).

Although 'school too far away' has been cited as a reason by only 1.1 per cent of 6-17 year old males dropping out of school during the National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06), for 6-17 year old females this proportion was 5.8 per cent.<sup>164</sup> It is possible that the higher percentage for females reflects the security concerns for girls who would have to attend schools that are not located in their home village.



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The national-level school access figures mask differential access for different communities. The location of the school is a major barrier for some social groups, and for children in certain locations. For rural children from SC families, who live in segregated *tolas* (hamlets), going to school may involve walking some distance which can be problematic in the rainy season, as well as entering spaces dominated by upper castes. Where settlement pattern is scattered, and villages are small, providing separate schools for the very few children in each village is not feasible and in such areas physical access remains an issue. Access to school may be a problem for tribal children living in small habitations in remote, sparsely-populated areas, as their habitations may be far away from the school as noted for Madhya Pradesh

<sup>159</sup> Government of India (2006, b).

<sup>160</sup> [http://wcd.nic.in/icds-worldbank/ICDS\\_IV\\_Reform\\_Project\\_ECE\\_WrksHp\\_Report\\_Mainpart1.pdf](http://wcd.nic.in/icds-worldbank/ICDS_IV_Reform_Project_ECE_WrksHp_Report_Mainpart1.pdf)

<sup>161</sup> <http://education.nic.in/AR/AR2010-11/AR2010-11.pdf>

<sup>162</sup> The elementary education school structure in 1990-1 comprised 0.7 million schools, out of which 0.558 million were primary and 0.146 million were middle level schools (<http://www.education.nic.in/cd50years/y/3P/45/3P450501.htm>)

<sup>163</sup> DISE 2011-12 Flash Statistics. The data refer to government recognised schools.

<sup>164</sup> Source: IIPS (2007).

and Chhattisgarh.<sup>165</sup> Access may also be difficult due to the hilly and forested terrain, and may involve a trek across boulders, streams or *nullahs* (canals), as noted for tribal areas in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.<sup>166</sup> Busy highways, unguarded railway tracks, open drains can pose grave danger to school-going children, as reported by parents of young children in slums and roadside villages.<sup>167</sup>

In urban areas, slum children face the additional uncertainty of eviction by civic authorities and having to shift to a new location.<sup>168</sup> There are also problems with regard to school admission given the inability of parents to submit necessary proof of residence, even if they are in authorised/recognised squatter settlements and even more so, if the settlements are unauthorised. This leads parents to enrol their children in private schools where the admission process is more flexible, even if they can ill afford it.<sup>169</sup>

The 14<sup>th</sup> JRM has highlighted unavailability of land as a severe challenge in complying with RTE and SSA requirements, in terms of both building new schools and expanding existing ones.<sup>170</sup> The JRM has urged exploration of vertical expansion of school buildings to mitigate this problem.

### 3.3.3 School infrastructure

In quantitative terms, along with access to schooling, infrastructural facilities in schools have also improved substantially. SSA, from 2000-01 onwards, and other initiatives to meet MDGs in education, provided a boost to the provision of elementary education. They translated into the opening of new schools to reach more and more children, as well as committing resources for improvements in infrastructure so that children were retained in the education process. Table 3.5 shows the status of school infrastructure at present.

Classroom indicators are encouraging with all-India SCR at 30. There is, however, some variation across states. Some of the states with SCR higher than 30 are: Bihar (79) and West Bengal (41).<sup>171</sup> Table 3.5 also shows positive evidence of the availability of drinking water but shows a gap in the area of provision of electricity, girls' toilets, ramps, boundary wall and playground.

Provision of girls' toilets is extremely important to retain girl students in school, especially those in Dimension 3. As the Table 3.5 has mentioned, less than 75 per cent of schools providing elementary education have a girls' toilet. All the toilets are also not functional.<sup>172</sup> A 2011 study by ASER<sup>173</sup> similarly found that while most primary schools met several RTE norms, availability of a separate toilet for girls was

**Table 3.5 Infrastructural facilities for elementary schools\* in India, 2011-12**

| Infrastructural facility                 | All schools* |
|--|--------------|
| Average number of classrooms             | 4.7          |
| Average Student Classroom Ratio (SCR)    | 30.0         |
| PTR (Pupil Teacher Ratio)                | 30.0         |
| % schools with drinking water facilities | 94.5         |
| % schools with girls' toilet             | 72.2         |
| % schools with electricity               | 47.1         |
| % schools with ramp                      | 53.4         |
| % schools with boundary wall             | 58.2         |
| % schools with playground                | 56.1         |

\* Includes all schools with primary and/or upper primary schooling facilities (government, private recognised, and some private unrecognised schools) in 644 districts. Government schools account for 76 per cent of the total.

Source: DISE Flash Statistics 2011-12

<sup>165</sup> Govinda and Bandopadhyay (2010).

<sup>166</sup> Samson and De (2011) report on schooling in selected blocks in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh and Koraput, Odisha.

<sup>167</sup> Pratham Resource Centre (2005), Banerjee (2000), De et. al. (2005).

<sup>168</sup> Banerjee (2000).

<sup>169</sup> Pratham Resource Centre (2005), De et. al. (2005).

<sup>170</sup> JRM 14<sup>th</sup> (2011).

<sup>171</sup> DISE Flash Statistics 2011-12.

<sup>172</sup> DISE Flash Statistics 2011-12 indicates that 84.4 per cent of the girls' toilets are functional.

<sup>173</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011) reviews learning in primary schools by tracking 30,000 children across five states in 898 schools.

still scant, and even in schools where they were available, they were mostly locked. JRMs have also highlighted issues of adequacy and cleanliness of toilets and water supply in schools, especially in urban areas.<sup>174</sup>

For children with certain disabilities, absence of usable ramps in the school may make it difficult for them to attend school. Ramps may be needed to access the classroom or the toilet. However, just over half the schools were found to have any ramps. The fourteenth JRM has highlighted the need to improve the quality of ramps.<sup>175</sup>

The average figures for infrastructure facilities hide variations within. Broad state level variations can be seen from DISE (2011-12) data – while more than 90 per cent of schools have drinking water facilities at national level, the proportions of such schools are much lower in the north-eastern states. Again while 72 per cent of schools have separate girls' toilets, the proportions are around 50 per cent or lower in the Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Odisha, Assam, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir and several north eastern States. In some areas the schools attended by children of marginalised communities, especially from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been reported to have relatively poor infrastructure.<sup>176</sup>

### 3.3.4 Teachers

Teachers play a critical role in determining the quality of the child's experience in school, which includes how and what the child learns. The contribution of teachers may be inadequate for various reasons. There may be a shortage of teachers, or the teachers may lack necessary qualifications and/or professional teacher education, or they may need more academic support to teach the children in their charge. Inadequate teaching input (including on account of teacher absenteeism) has also been pointed out as a crucial gap in this area. These barriers to children's schooling will be discussed below.

The pupil teacher ratio (PTR) is indicative of the adequacy of teacher availability in a classroom. The all-India PTR (at elementary level) of 30 for all schools, as shown in Table 3.5, is adequate as per SSA norms. However, some states have very high PTRs: Bihar (59), Uttar Pradesh (44) and Jharkhand (40).



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<sup>174</sup> JRM 11<sup>th</sup> (2010).

<sup>175</sup> JRM 14<sup>th</sup> (2011).

<sup>176</sup> NCDHR-UNICEF (2008), Sedwal and Kamat (2008), National Focus Group (2005).



With RTE benchmarks for PTR as 1:30 for the primary stage and 1:35 for the upper primary stage, a shortage of 1.1 million teachers has been estimated with shortages concentrated in a few states as mentioned above.<sup>177</sup>

As observed in a study conducted in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in 36 villages and 88 schools, in optimal teacher deployment had led to widely varying PTR across schools.<sup>178</sup> Teacher shortage and teacher deployment issues have been blamed for low school participation of children in urban municipal schools as well.<sup>179</sup> There is a strong case for better deployment of teachers, whereby teachers assigned to areas with excess provision are relocated to under-served areas.

Lack of female teachers has been a barrier for schooling of girls, especially for older girls, and for girls from the Muslim community in particular. One positive aspect of the increase in teacher recruitment has been a rise in the share of female teachers. DISE data for 2011-12 shows that the average proportion of female teachers is 46.3 per cent, though state level variations range from 26.9 per cent in Tripura to 81.8 per cent in Chandigarh.

Inadequate teaching input can be a result of teacher absenteeism as also low levels of actual teaching activity among teachers who are present in school. Incidence of teacher absenteeism in government schools has been a critical finding of several studies.<sup>180</sup> Kremer et. al. (2004)<sup>181</sup> found widespread teacher absenteeism,<sup>182</sup> with much regional variation. The study found higher absence rates in low-income states, with a doubling of per capita income associated with 4.7 percentage points lower predicted absence. The PROBE Revisited study of 2006 found 22 per cent teachers<sup>183</sup> not in school in their sample survey of rural primary schools in 7 states. An SSA evaluation based on a survey across Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh in 2005-06 found evidence of teacher absenteeism though at a lower level of 17 per cent.<sup>184</sup> The *Inside Primary Schools* study<sup>185</sup> of 2011 reports 22 per cent teacher absence<sup>186</sup> for primary schools in 5 states.

A study in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal reported that teacher absenteeism was higher in remote and poorly developed areas.<sup>187</sup> A small study of schooling in 4 districts,<sup>188</sup> each at a considerable distance from the state capitals, found that schools in 3 of the 4 districts were closed quite often. Even when schools were opened, schooling hours were severely reduced because the schools opened late and closed early.

Looking specifically at levels of teaching activity, 28 per cent of the teachers were found not to be teaching at the time of the visit in the SSA evaluation. The PROBE Revisited study<sup>189</sup> and the Kremer et. al. study all found nearly half of the schools surveyed without any teaching activity at the time of visit on a given day. The studies indicate that teacher irregularity, coupled with the lack of teaching activity, act as significant barriers to children's schooling.

At the level of school administration and functioning, the role of the head teacher is crucial. If the head teachers could monitor effectively areas such as regularity of school functioning, teachers' attendance, teaching practices as well as inclusiveness for students in the classroom process school quality would

<sup>177</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013). The Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011) study mentions that overcrowded classrooms were not found during the survey and that irregular and poor attendance of children further reduces the effective PTR. However, it may be kept in mind that this study covered only one out of the four states with high PTR (Jharkhand).

<sup>178</sup> Govinda and Bandopadhyay (2010).

<sup>179</sup> Banerjee (2000).

<sup>180</sup> PROBE(1999); De et. al. (2011); Kremer et. al. (2004); Narayan and Mooij (2010), Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011), Majumdar and Mooij (2011). Traditionally, teacher surveys have not distinguished between teachers being on leave and being absent due to other reasons.

<sup>181</sup> Kremer et. al. (2004) surveyed 3700 primary schools in 20 Indian states, where three unannounced visits were made to each of the 3700 schools.

<sup>182</sup> The study found similar absence rates for permanent and contract teachers (around 25 per cent).

<sup>183</sup> The survey found para teachers more likely to be in school than regular teachers.

<sup>184</sup> SSA EdCIL (2009).

<sup>185</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).

<sup>186</sup> They also found para teachers to be more regular in attending school than regular teachers.

<sup>187</sup> Majumdar and Mooij (2011).

<sup>188</sup> Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Koraput (Odisha), Katihar (Bihar), and Sahibganj (Jharkhand). See Samson and De (2011).

<sup>189</sup> Similar levels of teaching activity were found in the PROBE survey of the same areas 10 years earlier. See De et. al. (1999).

improve. This has been an important constraint on two counts – first, large number of schools do not have head teacher,<sup>190</sup> and second, HTs may not have been given the leadership training required for them to lead effectively. With the implementation of the RTE Act, this situation is likely to improve.

It is usually assumed that teaching quality has a positive association with educational qualifications and professional teacher education. At present, across the country, 0.7 million teachers are untrained, and the majority of untrained teachers are in West Bengal, Bihar, UP, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Assam and other north eastern states.<sup>191</sup> The *Inside Primary Schools* study, however, has indicated that for primary level learners in India, qualification and training of teachers are not correlated with learning outcomes, which is why the content of training comes under scrutiny, particularly pre-service training. The completion of formal courses and training do not necessarily guarantee teaching skills.

A study by Ramachandran et. al. had noted that the existing in-service teacher-training courses are rarely need-based or related to children's learning outcomes, and are viewed as formalities to be completed rather than as means to improve classroom teaching practices.<sup>192</sup> The Majumdar and Mooij study found that teachers by and large felt that the in-service training was out of touch with the ground reality of resource crunch in schools, overcrowded classrooms and varying background of the children attending school.<sup>193</sup> However, an SSA study across 11 states had found teachers quite positive about in-service teacher training received in Block Resource Centres (BRC) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRC). But such trainings were reported to be less effective in areas such as taking care of the needs of CWSNs, or in doing multi-grade teaching such that student attendance improves.<sup>194</sup>

### 3.3.5 Teaching methods and curriculum

Effective teaching and interesting classroom transactions are essential for retaining students in school. However, the Bhattacharjea et. al. study found student absenteeism to be as high as 35 per cent in primary schools.<sup>195</sup> What is even more alarming is that disinterest in studies has been mentioned in large surveys as the single most important reason for dropping out of school.<sup>196</sup> Around 36 per cent of boys and 21 per cent of girls in the 6-17 age group cited it as the most important reason in the NFHS 3 survey, while 79 per cent (for both boys and girls) cited it as the main reason in the SRI-IMRB 2009 survey. It was also found to be the second most important reason for dropping out of school by NSSO.<sup>197</sup> These findings seem to indicate that teaching quality, pedagogy and curriculum need improvement to retain children in school.

Teaching practices in elementary schools have been commented on in many studies.<sup>198</sup> Just over half of the schools surveyed in the Bhattacharjea et. al. study had a timetable displayed in the school. Use of TLM was observed in only around 10 per cent of the classrooms, and only three or more of the six identified 'child friendly' practices were seen in less than 20 per cent of the 1706 classrooms observed.<sup>199</sup> The study found significant gaps in the ability of teachers to explain mistakes, and provide correct answers, and inadequate competence in devising problems on their own.

Other teaching practices that have come under scrutiny are: emphasis on rote learning and failure to view learning as relevant and useful for daily life, complete reliance on textbooks with no examples from day to day life used for teaching. Even though teachers may assess the weaknesses of students correctly, they may be unable or unwilling to use teaching methods which could help these students.<sup>200</sup> Another study based on field visits in Bihar and UP has found that teachers' competence at the primary level has

<sup>190</sup> According to DISE 2009-10 no headteachers were appointed in more than half the schools.

<sup>191</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013).

<sup>192</sup> Ramachandran et. al. (2008).

<sup>193</sup> Majumdar and Mooij (2011).

<sup>194</sup> SSA (2010) from <http://ssa.nic.in>

<sup>195</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).

<sup>196</sup> IIPS (2007), SRI-IMRB (2009).

<sup>197</sup> NSS (2010).

<sup>198</sup> De et. al. (2011), Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011) for primary schools.

<sup>199</sup> The child friendly practices under observation were: (i) students ask teachers questions, (ii) students' work displayed in classroom, (iii) teacher smiles/laughs/jokes with students, (iv) teacher uses local information to make context more relevant, (v) teacher gets children to work in small groups and (vi) teacher uses TLM other than textbook (ASER 2011).

<sup>200</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).

much scope for improvement in mathematics and in language.<sup>201</sup> Studies also point to the need for innovative teaching methods for diverse groups of children, street children, in particular. The sense of freedom and independence that is a part of these children's lives, being away from their families and answerable to no one, makes existing teaching methods particularly unsuitable for them.<sup>202</sup>

Teachers, on their part, have expressed helplessness in the face of various external factors, as a result of which they allegedly find it impossible to bring about radical

changes to their teaching practices. In several states, teachers have to work with outdated curriculum and pedagogy. The pressure of completing the syllabus and getting students to pass examinations is another factor brought up by teachers. Some teachers have felt that the activity-based play-way methods promoted by SSA are not suited for overcrowded classrooms and also come in the way of completing syllabi.<sup>203</sup> There has also been inadequate attention to qualitative indicators of the teaching-learning process until very recently. The system earlier in place had lost sight of the child's experience and the quality of learning as a goal to be pursued, and focused entirely on quantitative measurements.<sup>204</sup> Now there is a felt need to pay more attention to the qualitative aspects in the learning process so as to make teaching more effective, which has been done recently.

Devising age-appropriate curriculum and contextualising the same has been an ongoing struggle for a country as diverse as India. The Bhattacharjea et. al. study found a wide gulf between what the textbooks expect the students to do in a particular class and what the children can actually do.<sup>205</sup> Children are found to be at least two grades behind in terms of their understanding. But textbooks, designed at national and state levels, act as an anchor for teachers, particularly since the teacher is expected to complete the syllabus according to the textbook in the given academic year.<sup>206</sup> As per the RTE Act, the teaching methods have to change radically to provide child friendly and child centered education contributing to the all round development of children. The relevant policies will be discussed in Chapter 4.

### 3.3.6 Language

The language of instruction in school being different from a child's mother tongue can act as a major barrier to school participation, especially in the early years when the child needs to successfully make the transition from communicating at home to the learning process in school. India is a country of immense linguistic and cultural diversity and has 122 languages with 10,000 or more speakers. As against these 122 languages, only 22 languages are used as medium of instruction.<sup>207</sup> This implies that many children in this country are likely to face language related problems in schools. Children who suffer from a language-related learning disadvantage include children who speak a dialect of a regional language, children of migrants who live in a state with a different official language, and children whose language is not the state-selected medium of instruction at school (for instance, Santhali).<sup>208</sup>



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<sup>201</sup> Kingdon and Banerji (2009) cited in Kingdon et. al. (2013), Equity, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Teaching Services, DFID New Delhi.

<sup>202</sup> Banerjee (2000).

<sup>203</sup> Majumdar and Mooij (2011).

<sup>204</sup> International discourse about quality of education has been dominated by those who operate in the domains of policy, accountability and funding rather than people operating in the arena of practice. As a result, measurement of quality has been emphasised and 'indicators' have gained prominence (Alexander, 2008).

<sup>205</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).

<sup>206</sup> The use of other TLMs was found to be rare (Bhattacharjea et. al., 2011).

<sup>207</sup> Government of India (2001) accessed at [http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census\\_Data\\_2001/Census\\_Data\\_Online/Language/Statement1.htm](http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Language/Statement1.htm)

<sup>208</sup> Jhingran (2005).

In a study in four states,<sup>209</sup> it was found that for nearly a quarter of first graders, the language they are familiar with differs from the medium of instruction at school. In this context, the teacher's proficiency in the first language of the student is very important for the teaching learning process to be effective. Yet languages known by the teacher is not one of the factors that are usually taken into account when deciding on deployment. In the study discussed above, tribal children were found to be able to read only with a lot of effort, mostly word by word, even in Class 5.<sup>210</sup> A study on schooling in inter-state border areas, with a concentration of tribal population, found that some of the permanent teachers in the elementary schools had little knowledge of the local languages spoken by the children.<sup>211</sup> This could partly explain the large number of tribal children out of school, as observed in the section on profiles.

Home language being different from the medium of instruction at school has an adverse impact on student attendance as well.<sup>212</sup> In the *Inside Primary School* study, for children in grades 2 and 4, about half of the children whose home language was the same as the school language were present on all three visits of the ASER survey team, but attendance was much lower (25 - 31 per cent) for children for whom home and school languages were different. The study has shown how the latter group of children also had relatively poor learning outcomes.

For tribal children, not only can language become an issue, it is also important to look at the content of textbooks, since the tribal way of life is hardly reflected in dominant language textbooks and curricula.<sup>213</sup> The problem is compounded by the parents' lack of formal schooling among tribal communities. The government has made a concerted effort to resolve these issues with multi-lingual programmes, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

### 3.3.7 Violence and discrimination in schools

Corporal punishment is now prohibited in schools as per Section 17 of the RTE.<sup>214</sup> There are case studies which have found evidence of corporal punishment in schools and even of children dropping out as a result.<sup>215</sup> Students are punished by teachers for bunking,<sup>216</sup> for not doing homework, etc. A study by Plan India (2006) regarding impact of corporal punishment on school children was conducted in 41 schools across the four states of UP, Bihar, Rajasthan and AP. Corporal punishment was found to be common in all the schools despite a ban by the Supreme Court of India. The surveyors found sticks kept within the classroom or in the teachers' hands for beating the children. The common forms of punishment included hitting with hands or stick, pulling hair and ears, and making the children stand for a long time in various positions. Some severe forms that punishment took were kicking, tying children with ropes to a chair or pole after beating them, etc. No gender discrimination was found in giving out punishment. Most of the teachers interviewed for the study, barring some younger ones, felt such punishment was an indispensable part of disciplining students. They blamed large class-size and non-teaching duties for inadequate interaction with students within the classroom.

A study of upper primary and secondary schools in Delhi<sup>217</sup> found violence towards the children to be much more visible in boys' schools, where the teachers were primarily male, than in girls' schools, where the teachers were all female. In many schools, the fans were broken, and there were other signs that the school infrastructure was vandalised, reportedly by the boys studying in these schools.

The discrimination faced in school by children from certain groups may be subtle and less visible, or may be overt and take different forms such as verbal abuse or segregation. Case studies suggest that children from socially disadvantaged groups like the SCs, STs and minorities do experience hostility and harassment from their more privileged peers as well as teachers. This may impact their classroom participation adversely. Their exclusion from co-curricular and cultural activities is also common. Humiliations are not restricted to the classroom and sometimes social segregations are extended in the

<sup>209</sup> Jhingran (2005). The four states covered in the study were Assam, Gujarat, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.

<sup>210</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>211</sup> Samson and De (2011).

<sup>212</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).

<sup>213</sup> Mohanty, et. al. (undated) at <http://www.nmrc-jnu.org>

<sup>214</sup> The RTE is applicable to children of 6-14 years and the stipulation will not apply to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

<sup>215</sup> Plan India (2006), De et. al. (2005), Reddy and Sinha (2010).

<sup>216</sup> Bunking refers to the practice of leaving school within school hours without informing school authorities.

<sup>217</sup> De et. al. (2005).

areas of accessing drinking water and eating meals together at the school. The NCDHR-UNICEF study reported that *dalit* children are the ones usually selected by the teacher to sweep the classroom and also to fill buckets of water to be used in toilets, and to clean the toilets. Some *dalit* children also reported not being allowed to use the toilets at school.<sup>218</sup> Some children, especially *dalit* girls, reported facing harassment from upper caste children on the way to school, and hence avoided going to school on their own.<sup>219</sup> Such persistent exclusionary practices act as a powerful barrier to schooling for *dalit* children, often pushing them to drop out of school.

In the context of the negative experience of children from the minority community, a recent Government document makes the insightful comment that 'a large part of exclusion results from social distance caused by lack of knowledge and understanding about minority communities'.<sup>220</sup> This is also applicable to children from tribal communities, and the social distance between them and the mainstream.

### 3.4 Barriers for Special Groups

#### 3.4.1 Barriers for children with special needs

School participation is a major problem for Children with Special Needs (CWSN). The SRI-IMRB (2009) study on out-of-school children identified 1.53 million children in the 6-13 age group as physically or mentally challenged; a high proportion (38 per cent) of them was found to be out of school. A study conducted by the World Bank found that children with special needs rarely progress beyond primary school, and that educational attainment is poor across all levels of severity of disability.<sup>221</sup> Based on the 2002 NSS data, this study shows that for such children in the 5-18 age group, attendance at school does not go beyond 70 per cent for boys and 66 per cent for girls.

The discourse around the most appropriate way of educating children with special needs has changed over time in India, shifting towards a greater emphasis on inclusive education.<sup>222</sup> Although there is awareness at the national level about disability being a major barrier to school participation, and various



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<sup>218</sup> Nambissan (undated), NCDHR-UNICEF (2008).

<sup>219</sup> NCDHR-UNICEF (2008).

<sup>220</sup> [http://www.opepa.in/website/Download/Framework\\_finalapproved.pdf](http://www.opepa.in/website/Download/Framework_finalapproved.pdf)

<sup>221</sup> World Bank (2007).

<sup>222</sup> India is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994), as a result of which it is committed to 'inclusive education'.

measures have been initiated by the government (discussed in Chapter 4), implementing them is a problem. Actualising inclusive education practices on the ground brings with it challenges that are not easy to overcome.

A primary challenge is early identification of children with special needs. DISE 2012-13 data states that out of nearly 200 million children enrolled in grades 1 to 8, only 2.3 million are special-needs children. Identification is dependent on the Anganwadi workers who support health, nutrition and immunisation of children up to 6 years of age, and may require them to receive technical training for better identification. The classification of disability is medical-centric in India, and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has listed them as locomotor, visual, hearing, speech and mental. So the barriers for different CWSNs are different and are reflected in different rates of school participation. While school participation rates are low for CWSN, it is more so among the children with multiple disabilities (60.6 per cent), mental disability (47 per cent) and speech disability (41.6 per cent).<sup>223</sup>

Other challenges include suitable interventions for school-readiness of CWSNs, providing adequate support to the CWSNs at school, sensitisation of regular teachers to problems faced by CWSNs, and the need for smooth coordination between the two ministries involved.<sup>224</sup> Some barriers persist arising from social attitudes to disability and paucity of suitable learning materials as well as human resources.<sup>225</sup>

In addition, School Management Committees (SMCs) and community members whose responsibility is to formulate inclusive School Development Plans need to be sensitised to the requirements of the CWSNs.<sup>226</sup> The area of mapping the provision of barrier-free facilities against the number of CWSNs in each school also needs further strengthening.

### 3.4.2 Barriers for children in areas affected by civil strife

As indicated in Chapter 2, there is inadequate data availability for areas affected by civil strife. However, what is known beyond doubt is that the schooling process for children is severely disrupted in such areas.

A large number of states in India have experienced spells of strife and violence. Some of these have been prolonged. These include the disturbances in the northern-most state of Jammu and Kashmir, and in the north-eastern states (Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya). Violence over a prolonged period of time is also part of life in the “red corridor” – Maoist-affected districts in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. Localised outbreaks of communal and caste related violence continue to occur in many states.

Such civil strife has an enormous impact on children’s school participation, particularly that of girls.<sup>227</sup> This is both directly through a lack of secure access to educational facilities, and indirectly through the effect on the child/family’s health and livelihoods. It is reported that in the backdrop of ongoing violence and insecurity, child and maternal morbidity as well as mortality due to poor access to healthcare have escalated. In Kashmir and the north-east, employment opportunities have been shrinking gradually as a result of the prolonged conflict.<sup>228</sup>

Civil strife affects school provisioning itself. There is evidence that educational institutions as well as students, teachers and academics are coming more and more under attack.<sup>229</sup> Nearly 300 schools have reportedly been blown up by Maoist rebels in India between 2006 and 2009; 640 educational buildings have been destroyed in Jammu and Kashmir since the beginning of the conflict in these two states.<sup>230</sup> In Dantewada and Bijapur, Naxals have destroyed many schools.<sup>231</sup> In the absence of quick repair-work by the government of damaged school buildings, in many cases the children end up with no school to go to.

<sup>223</sup> SRI-IMRB 2009

<sup>224</sup> Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Department of Education, MHRD.

<sup>225</sup> Singal (2005), JRM 14<sup>th</sup> (2011).

<sup>226</sup> JRM 14<sup>th</sup> (2011).

<sup>227</sup> Sometimes there are instructions imposing a dress code, by religious bodies, militants or separatist groups, further limiting girls’ education since violating such codes often invites violent reprisals like acid attacks, physical assault, threats etc.

<sup>228</sup> CEDAW (2006).

<sup>229</sup> CEDAW (2006). This is also true at a global level.

<sup>230</sup> UIS (2010).

<sup>231</sup> NCPCR website.

Security forces also take schools over for their own use. The duration of their stay can be a few days, but can also run into years.<sup>232</sup> Complete takeover of school-buildings by security forces has led to children's studies being discontinued as it is difficult for children to find alternatives. In Maoist-affected areas the presence of security forces in the school premises is also reported to have an intimidating effect on school children.<sup>233</sup> Girls are more likely to be the first to drop out in the event of partial occupation of schools by armed forces.

Civil strife also leads to displacement. As a result of ethnic violence over the years, a large number of people in the north-eastern states of Assam, Manipur and Tripura have been shifted into camps where inhuman living conditions have been observed.<sup>234</sup> The situation in Jammu and Kashmir has resulted in the displacement of thousands of people, many being shifted to temporary camps. In the last twenty years, around 40 thousand children have reportedly been orphaned. The enrolment for children living in such camps has been low at around 66 per cent, and even as low as 36 per cent in some camps. Large scale displacement of families has occurred in parts of Chhattisgarh and Odisha.<sup>235</sup> Communal violence in Gujarat has affected the education of Muslim children, especially girls, in the displaced families.<sup>236</sup> Some families which are unable to return home even after years and live in resettlement colonies, do not have easy access to schools.

While fleeing their homes, children are exposed to the physical danger of attacks, shelling, firing or landmines. They can get separated from their families. Some children are even recruited as child soldiers.<sup>237</sup> Apart from the physical dangers, these children are victims of long-term psychological impact, such as trauma, fear, insecurity, as a result of continued exposure to violence.

### 3.5 Governance and Finance Related Barriers

Supply side barriers often originate from or are aggravated by governance related problems and financial constraints. Public expenditure on education and its composition influences both school access and quality. The administrative and management systems in place make a major difference to school quality through their impact on school functioning. A situational analysis of these aspects will give an insight to why certain barriers persist in spite of government initiatives.

#### 3.5.1 Governance

School education had largely been under the state governments' jurisdiction prior to 1986. There were wide inter-state variations in terms of policies and their implementation with regard to teacher recruitment, teacher deployment, teacher training, teacher and student absenteeism, and accountability mechanisms. The situation was quite dismal, particularly in the educationally backward states, where the problems arose mostly from poor governance. Policymakers felt the need for more accountability as well as more support for teachers, if effective expansion of education to all corners of the country and to all segments of the population was to be achieved. A more decentralised education system was needed to attain this objective.

The decentralisation process that began with renewed vigour<sup>238</sup> in the early nineties was expected to strengthen the role of the PRI bodies and the local community. The schooling process and teachers would thus be more accountable, as a result of active involvement of community level bodies like Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), Village Education Committees (VEC), School Management Development Committees (SMDC) and urban local bodies. However, it was necessary to build the capacity of these bodies at the local level. An evaluation study across 14 states reports that the VEC, which was intended to knit together the village community, the parents, and school teachers towards effective functioning of the school, formed the weakest link in the organisational structure of the SSA in the states covered in

<sup>232</sup> Human Rights Watch (2009).

<sup>233</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>234</sup> NCPCR website (<http://ncpcr.gov.in>)

<sup>235</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>236</sup> CEDAW (2006).

<sup>237</sup> UNESCO (2010).

<sup>238</sup> The idea of democratic decentralisation or panchayati raj as an idea had been introduced in the 1950s and 1960s. But this idea came into its own only after 1992 and 1993 with the enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional amendments when local governance at rural and urban levels were ushered in.



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the study.<sup>239</sup> Training of VEC members was not effective. VEC members felt that functionaries from the state education department must make more frequent visits and guide them regularly on different issues. So these committees could not play the monitoring and supportive role that was expected from them.

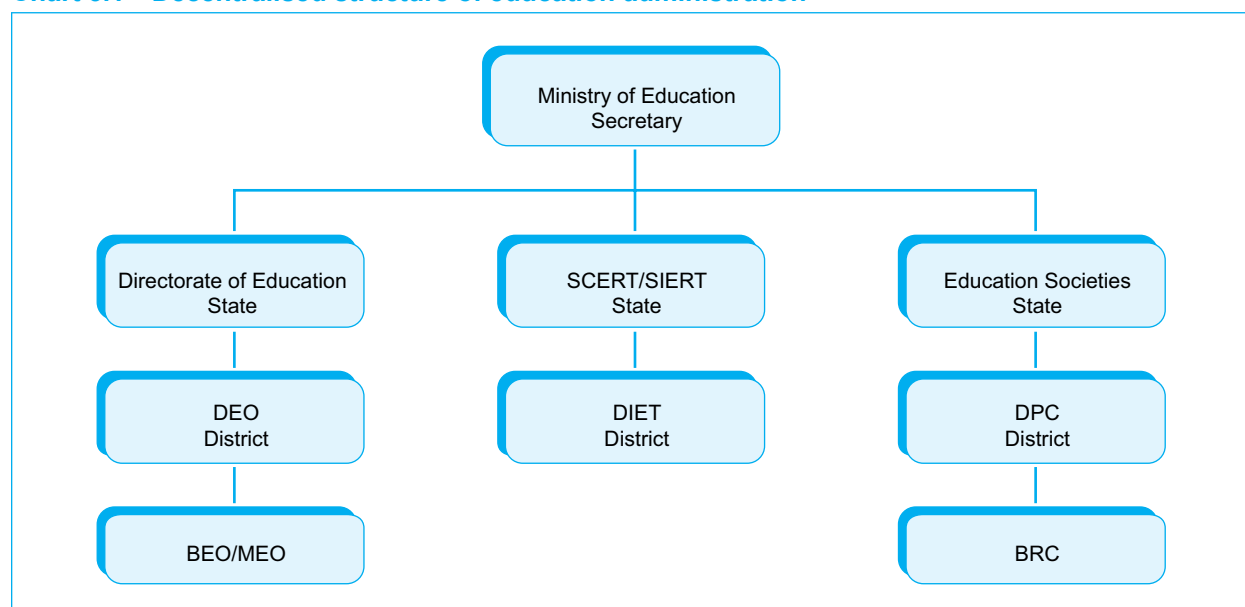
The administrative structure of the Education Ministry differs among states but there are some commonalities as well. Typically, a Secretary heads the Ministry of Education. Several departments are under it – broadly in three categories. They are departments with administrative or regulatory functions, those with academic functions, and those in charge of programme implementation. Initially they were monitored by state level officers but now each set has its own district and block level institutions: the details are given in Chart 3.1.

The National Council for Teacher Education provides the direction for teacher training issues, aided by DIETs in each district for providing in-service training for teachers of elementary schools, as mentioned earlier. NCERT and SCERTs were established to provide academic and logistical support for the same purpose at the national and state levels. Another important strand in the management structure is the 'project structure'. This started with the DPEP when programmes were administered through a registered education society at the state level and the entire project structure with newly established district and sub-district level offices functioned in parallel with the regular administrative structure of the state education system. In many states there is a convergence in the two departments at the district level where the DEO is also designated as the DPC. At block or mandal level are the BEOs who come under the DEO, and the BRC co-ordinators who come under the DPC. CRCs are at cluster level in several states and support the BRCs.<sup>240</sup> This management system has continued through SSA.

<sup>239</sup> The study was conducted in 2007-08 in 14 states (Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal) by EdCIL's Technical Support Group for SSA (SSA EdCIL (2010) in <http://ssa.nic.in>).

<sup>240</sup> The role of BRCs and CRCs has been described as 'In a nutshell, the role of BRC/CRC is a mixed set of academic, supervisory, managerial, networking and creative activities; it goes beyond routine monitoring and supervision work as it encompasses providing support to schools and teachers through teacher training and teacher mentoring for their professional growth, strengthening community school linkages, providing resource support and carrying out action research' (Nayana Tara et. al., 2010).



**Chart 3.1 Decentralised structure of education administration**

SCERT: State Council of Education, Research and Training  
 SIERT: State Institute of Education, Research and Training  
 DEO: District Education Officer  
 DIET: District Institute of Education and Training  
 DPC: District Project Coordinator  
 BEO/MEO: Block Education Officer/Mandal Education Officer  
 BRCC: Block Resource Centre Coordinator

Source: Based on Mukhopadhyaya et. al. (2009)

Although the SSA structures were established with distinct objectives, the lack of convergence with the existing education department structures at different levels led to a blurring of the roles played by various offices. This also led to multiple reporting structures with the same functionary having to report to various authorities. For instance, a fairly wide role had been envisaged for decentralised academic resource institutions like BRCs and CRCs. The evaluation study mentioned above<sup>241</sup> outlines their role in the education structure as a 'mixed set of academic, supervisory, managerial, networking and creative activities; it goes beyond routine monitoring and supervision work as it encompasses providing support to schools and teachers through teacher training and teacher mentoring for their professional growth, strengthening community school linkages, providing resource support and carrying out action research'.

The same report finds that across the 14 states studied, on average, the BRC coordinators and CRC coordinators spent half or more of their time in administrative and planning activities, followed by time for academic support, and not even 5 per cent of their time for community mobilisation efforts. As for visiting schools, the annual average number of visits for BRCCs and CRCCs varied considerably across states. More alarming was the fact that in some states, high proportions of schools were not visited at all.<sup>242</sup> BRC coordinators were also reportedly not providing enough guidance to CRC coordinators regarding their functions. The roles are not defined clearly, particularly in prioritising their different functions. However, a need has also been felt for deploying coordinators in BRCs/CRCs as well as in DIETs as faculty on a long-term basis rather than present short-term deputation of teachers, to improve their commitment to the work.<sup>243</sup>

The post-RTE era has seen a process of harmonisation of SSA and education department structures in the states. But for effective decentralisation of the management and academic support system, staffing and strengthening of management structures are needed at all levels (national, state, district, block and cluster) as also a review of the project management structure under SSA.

<sup>241</sup> SSA EdCIL (2010).

<sup>242</sup> The states with high share of schools without a single visit by BRCCs in a year were Mizoram (92 per cent of schools), Karnataka (55 per cent), and UP (40 per cent). The states with high share of schools without a visit by CRCCs were, surprisingly Kerala (76 per cent of schools) and Himachal Pradesh (48.9 per cent) (SSA EdCIL, 2010).

<sup>243</sup> Government of India (2013 a).

### 3.5.2 Finance

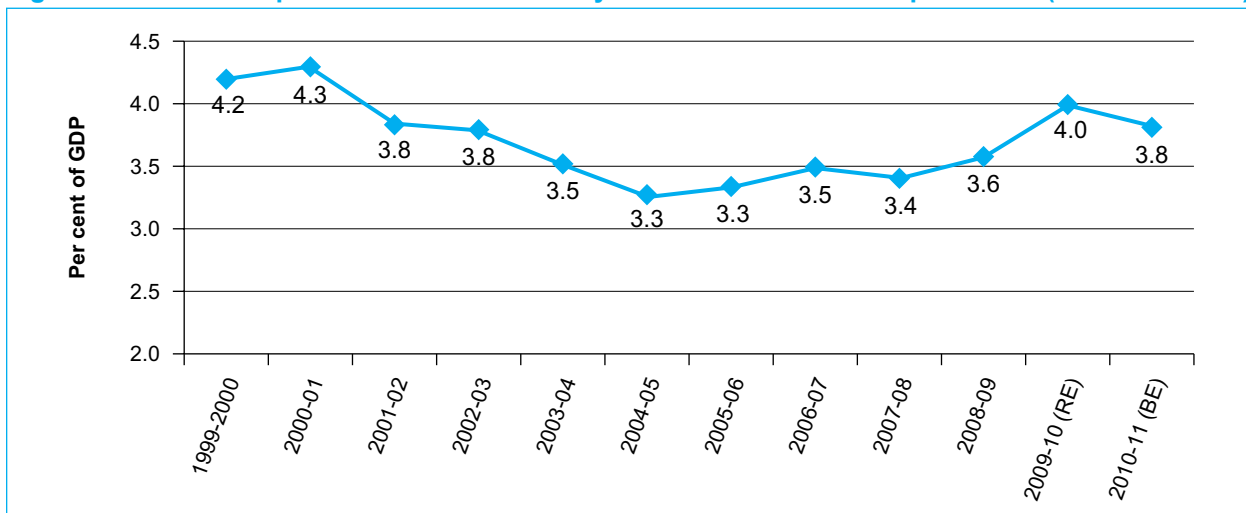
Public expenditure on education is a vital factor which impacts access and quality of school. The budgetary resources to education undergo a long process of transformation until they are converted to educational outcomes. The planned commitment on the government's part is translated into allocation of resources; these resources have to be utilised by the intended beneficiaries; the utilised resources must have linkages to improving educational outcomes.

At every step of this process there are potential barriers such as delay in sanctioning of funds, delay in release of funds, bottlenecks in implementation of schemes, etc. Also, considering the multiple stakeholders (multiple departments/ministries, different tiers of government, teachers, students, etc.), as well as inflation eroding the real value of funds, the barriers in this sector present a complicated picture. A major problem lies in the difficulties in tracing the flow of funds, particularly because of the multiple departments/ministries involved in the implementation of various schemes in the education sector.

At the stage when resources are committed, there are indications of inadequacy. All official assessments<sup>244</sup> have underscored the need to devote more resources to the education sector. Specifically, the campaign advocating the commitment of 6 per cent of GDP for developing the education sector has gained ground. But a continuing low priority has been attached to education as reflected in the aggregate public expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP, which hovered in the range of 3.0–4.3 per cent during 1990-91 to 2010-11, briefly touching 4.3 per cent in 2000-01. The trend of expenditure since 1999-2000 till 2010-11 has been shown in Figure 3.1.<sup>245</sup> Starting from 4.2 per cent in 1999-2000, by 2008-09 the indicator had declined to 3.6 per cent. Although the revised estimates for 2009-10 were higher at 4 per cent, the information for actual expenditure is not yet available, and may be revised downwards.

Within the education sector, however, with the focus on achieving UEE, the share of elementary education in total education expenditure has improved steadily from 46.3 per cent in 1990-91 to 52 per cent in 2008-09.<sup>246</sup> A study on public expenditure reveals that while expenditure (in constant prices) on elementary education rose steadily from 1992-93 to 1999-2000, it tended to stagnate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>247</sup> Also, much of the expenditure is recurring in nature, and the increase in expenditure in the late nineties partly reflects the changes in pay structure for teachers, recommended by the Fifth Pay Commission.<sup>248</sup>

**Figure 3.1 Public expenditure on education by education and other departments (states + centre)**



Source: [www.educationforallindia.com](http://www.educationforallindia.com)

Note: RE refers to Revised Estimates and BE refers to Budget Estimates.

<sup>244</sup> Starting from the Kothari Commission in 1966 to the Tapas Majumdar Committee in 1999, to the National Common Minimum Programme in 2004 and the CAGE Committee in 2006,

<sup>245</sup> The figures prior to 1999-2000 have not been shown in the graph.

<sup>246</sup> Government of India (various years, a).

<sup>247</sup> De and Endow (2008). This analysis has been done for the period 1990-91 to 2003-04.

<sup>248</sup> Jha and Parvati (2009).

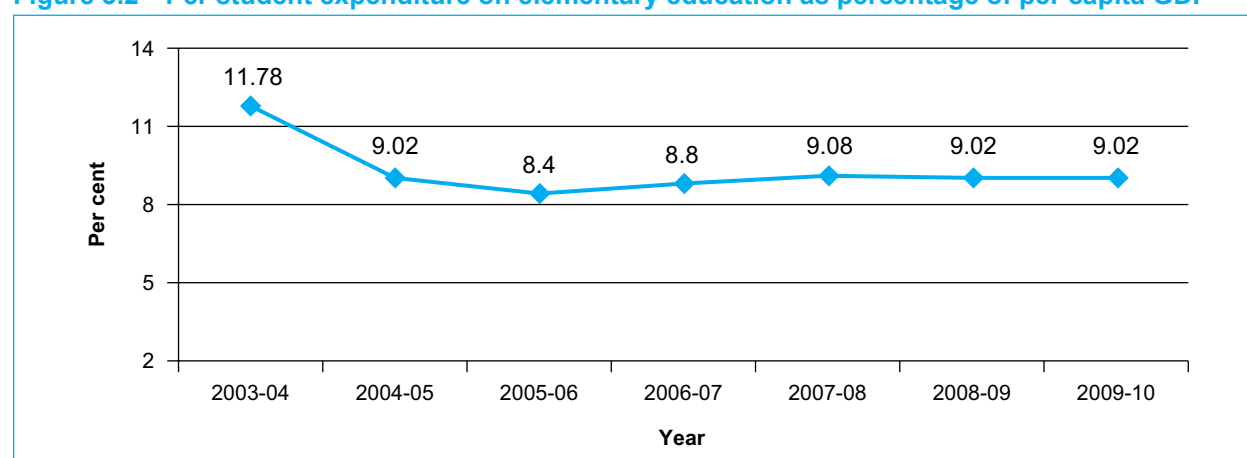
**Table 3.6 Per student expenditure on elementary education**

| Year    | Per Student Education Expenditure (₹) at Elementary Level | Per Student Education Expenditure (₹) at Elementary Level at constant prices* |
|---------|---|---|
| 1990-91 | 664.93  | 1390.19   |
| 1995-96 | 1274.82   | 1644.08   |
| 2000-01 | 2507.96   | 2422.68   |
| 2005-06 | 2768.80   | 2206.22   |
| 2008-09 | 4365.86   | 2969.97   |
| 2009-10 | 5048.93   | 3434.65   |

\*GDP deflator has been used at 47.83, 77.54, 103.52, 125.5 and 147 for the years 1991, 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2008 respectively ([www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)). The deflator for 2008 has been used for 2009-10 as well, due to lack of more recent data. SES time series data 2005-06/2007-08/2009-10 and Annual Budgeted Expenditure 2004-06/2006-09/2008-11.

In per student terms, the public expenditure on elementary education per student (at constant prices) has increased. It has more than doubled from close to ₹1400 in 1990-91 to nearly ₹3500 in 2009-10 (Table 3.6). This table, however, presents the national average and several states have a much lower per student expenditure. Moreover, if the per student elementary education expenditure as a percentage of per capita GDP is considered, it is found to have declined from nearly 12 per cent in 2003-04 to 9 per cent in the subsequent years (Fig. 3.2). Till 2009-10, it did not recover and hovered around 9 per cent.

The conversion of funds to improved educational outcomes faces multiple barriers at the implementation stage, such as during inter-sectoral allocation, utilisation of allocated funds, and implementation and monitoring of plans arising from coordination requirements between different tiers of government.<sup>249</sup> PAISA (Planning, Allocations and Expenditures, Institutions: Studies in Accountability), a project undertaken by Accountability Initiative and implemented with National Institute of Public Finance and Policy as well as ASER Centre, in its 2010<sup>250</sup> report gives a very important insight with regard to the efficiency of public expenditure, particularly at school level. It finds that between 2005-06 and 2010-11, the SSA budget has increased sharply from ₹71.5 billion to ₹150 billion, and that the share for the states lagging behind showed a sharp increase. However, these states have not been able to utilise the allocated funds – Bihar in particular was able to spend only 51 per cent of its allocation. The study suggests that a major reason for slow utilisation is the irregular fund flow. The schools receive the funds very late, nearly at the end of the financial year and are either not able to spend the funds allocated, or in order to spend it are unable to prioritise spending according to their needs. So even after the increase in SSA allocations, schools in several states still lack toilets and drinking water facilities.

**Figure 3.2 Per student expenditure on elementary education as percentage of per capita GDP**

Source: Calculation based on data calculated from Economic Survey 2010-11; SES time series data 2005-06/2007-08/2009-10 and Annual Budgeted Expenditure 2004-06/2006-09/2008-11.

<sup>249</sup> De and Endow (2008). The complex flow of funds between the three tiers of government, namely central, state and local bodies, comes in the way of efficient utilisation of resources.

<sup>250</sup> PAISA Report (2010) accessed at <http://www.accountabilityindia.in/article/state-report-cards/2226-paisa-report-2010-new>.

Similar findings have been reported from a study by National Coalition for Education in 2008.<sup>251</sup> This study shows that with regard to annual grants for construction, school maintenance, etc., delayed receipt of funds adversely affects utilisation of funds. It also points out that although sports ought to get a priority in schools for developing the potential of growing children, schools get practically no finance for sports.

The education sector has crucial barriers in the area of financial management as well, as several Joint Review Missions have reported. There is severe shortage of staff for financial management at the state, district and block levels.<sup>252</sup> There is also a need for capacity building via training, such as in the area of computerised accounting.

### 3.6 Analytical Summary

In this chapter, we have looked at the barriers that keep children out of school. The analysis is based on official data, large surveys, as well as focused case studies, both quantitative and qualitative. The discussions are largely based on the situation before RTE implementation. RTE is expected to ease the remaining barriers, but it is too early to assess its impact.

The analyses have been developed along demand and supply parameters to separate home and community factors from those related to the school. However, the demarcation cannot be water-tight. Supply-side barriers often originate from or are aggravated by governance-related problems and financial constraints – these issues are also discussed.

It is evident that many children face demand barriers that arise from factors related to the home and the community. Social background plays a role as seen from the finding that two-thirds of the out-of-school children were from socially disadvantaged communities such as Muslims, the STs and the SCs. Economic factors are important. The profiles of out-of-school children by expenditure quintile revealed that around 70 per cent of those out of school in rural areas belonged to the two lowest expenditure quintiles, while in urban areas a similar proportion belonged to the lowest quintile alone. Gender plays a role. Among out-of-school children in rural areas, girls were persistently found to be over-represented, in nearly all social groups and irrespective of their economic background.

Children who simultaneously face multiple levels of disadvantage have to overcome cumulative barriers to schooling. For example, a poor girl child from a Muslim or tribal family in a rural area may face among the most challenging demand-side barriers that would combine being located in a rural area, limited access to resources, socio-cultural norms inimical to schooling of girls, and experience some level of alienation from the language and culture of the school system. For a girl child from a poor SC family, language may be less of a barrier, but social discrimination may be more acute. In the urban milieu, slum children and street children, in addition to poverty-related barriers may suffer access problems, due to uncertainty of residence, and also feel a degree of alienation from the formal school system.

The challenge at present is not only to enrol all children in school, but to ensure that they attend school regularly and complete at least eight years of schooling. The previous chapter indicated that among the out-of-school children, many are dropouts. So the supply side barriers are important. Barriers in terms of school infrastructure and quality are relevant across population groups. But for the children from socially disadvantaged groups, and particularly those who are also economically deprived, the supply-side barriers to school participation add to the demand-side obstacles they face. These children are often concentrated in specific locations – backward districts and blocks, remote rural habitations, urban slums etc., where the supply barriers are even stronger.

Many of the demand barriers have their roots in socio-cultural factors that are resistant to change. With the rural areas becoming better connected and with the government vigorously pushing the agenda of universalisation of elementary education, enrolment has increased considerably, especially at the primary level. For older children, especially in rural families, the traditional norms of early entry into the world of work (for boys to contribute to family livelihoods, for girls to take on household chores/agricultural work),

<sup>251</sup> This study, named 'Eduwatch' Report, examined the state of elementary education in the Hindi-speaking states of UP, Bihar, Jharkhand and MP in comparison with the better performing state of Himachal Pradesh (NCE 2008).

<sup>252</sup> JRM 14<sup>th</sup> (2012).

hinder education. Norms of early marriage is an additional barrier faced by girls. In urban areas the barriers are less strong but boys tend to be more out of school in some socio-economic groups, possibly arising from more employment opportunities for children in the urban milieu and the limited scope of child labour laws.

The demand-side barriers for girls in rural areas are less important at the primary stage of schooling, but play a major role in keeping adolescent girls out of school. The supply-side problems arising from lack of all girls' upper primary schools in the immediate neighbourhood and limited number of female teachers add to these barriers.

Schooling costs, however, have lessened considerably. Schooling is still not effectively 'free', and poverty and related economic constraints are still cited as a major reason for staying out of school.<sup>253</sup> However, government schools are certainly within reach now for most children. Over the years while the government has sought to make elementary education more affordable by covering direct costs of schooling such as textbooks, problems related to teaching, maintenance of school facilities, and governance have adversely impacted school quality.

Earning opportunities for children, combined with the demands on them to do household tasks, lead to higher levels of indirect costs of schooling. This is an important barrier in both the rural and urban areas, though the extent of work participation by these children is underestimated from available surveys owing to limitations arising from definition of "child work and nature of their work". Poverty is one of the main drivers of this phenomenon. Other contributing factors include availability of earning opportunities for children, socio-cultural norms and lack of effective implementation of child labour laws.

Access to schooling is less of a barrier to school participation. National surveys indicate that the distance of school from a child's home is no longer an important reason for non-enrolment. Distance has ceased to be a major reason even for dropping out, although it is still fairly important for rural girls, particularly among older age groups. Access continues to be a barrier for some other groups of children such as children of migrant families, children from tribal communities who live in isolated and hilly terrains, street children, and children affected by civil strife.

Children from poor families, particularly those who are first-generation learners, need pre-primary education to acquire some level of school-readiness for primary schooling. Preschool facilities are provided by the government, but only a little more than half the target age group is enrolled. The quality of the facilities also needs to be improved. The removal of the residual barrier in this context may well contribute to retaining more children in school, as they acquire school-going habits early on, leading to higher attendance in primary school and beyond.

School infrastructure is one aspect of the government school system that has improved steadily over the reference period. But greater attention is necessary for its maintenance, particularly in schools which are accessed by marginalised communities and in more remote areas. In such schools dysfunctional facilities like broken floors in classrooms, broken taps/hand-pumps, and unusable or locked toilets remain, acting as barriers to regular school participation.



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One of the important barriers within schools continues to be the nature of classroom transactions. Teaching methods have been slow to change and schools can become an uninteresting/unattractive place for students. This has a demotivating effect on both parents

<sup>253</sup> 2009 SRI-IMRB study for out-of-school children.

and children. Several studies point out that many children cite lack of interest as a reason for dropping out of school. Classroom transactions are also impacted, as studies have shown, by low levels of teaching activity (partly on account of high teacher absenteeism in schools), in addition to other deficiencies in teaching methods and teacher capability. Most of the children from disadvantaged communities are first-generation learners, and they need extra attention and innovative methods of teaching to adapt schooling to their experience and context. This barrier is thus a complex combination of weaknesses in teacher recruitment policy, curricular needs of students from varying backgrounds, and governance issues, as well as factors such as lack of teacher motivation, non-teaching duties, and social distance between teacher and students.

Within the classroom, some children face discrimination and exclusion. *Dalit* children are sometimes shunned or humiliated by their upper caste peers and teachers. While the discrimination has been lessening, especially in urban areas, the pace of change is still very slow, especially in rural areas. Lack of sensitivity to the cultures of Muslim children and tribal children may push them to drop out. Medium of instruction also works as an exclusion factor. Limited comprehension, arising from the fact that tribal children do not speak the language used as medium of instruction at school, also places them at a higher risk of dropping out.

The barriers faced by vulnerable groups are immense. For children with special needs, major challenges remain by way of early identification of disability, sensitisation of teachers and students, provision of adequate resource support for inclusive education in schools, and, most important, incorporating the true spirit of inclusive education. Street children constitute another group who face major barriers in attending school. Uncertain livelihoods and living arrangements, pressures to earn at a young age, and violence within slums continue to impact school participation adversely in the case of slum children, especially boys. The ongoing civil strife in many parts of the country has resulted in disrupted schooling for many children. While the government is sensitive to this barrier to school participation, more effective action is needed.

Many of the barriers to school participation can be removed with better governance. Well-conceived programmes, such as schemes for disadvantaged children, have not always realised their full potential due to implementation problems. Decentralised planning and management have made the planning process more inclusive but the process is not yet complete. Decentralisation has led to multiplicity of players in the education sector as SSA officials, officials of the state education department, and local body members all have a role to play. The lack of full clarity about their roles hinders the efficacy of many government programmes. There is also need for capacity-building of local bodies such as SMCs for effective decentralisation. Further rationalisation of the structure of administration and governance bodies as well as their role is required.

While elementary education has received considerable financial resources with the advent of the SSA, the overall resource availability for the education sector is still far from adequate. Fiscal constraints on the central and state governments have compounded the problem. The mismatch between need and allocation and slow fund flow continue to be major obstacles in project implementation. Financial management also suffers from inadequate staffing and lack of capacity at state, district and sub-district levels.

## 4. Policies and Strategies

### 4.1 Introduction

When the Indian Constitution came into existence in 1950, one of its Directive Principles was to provide free and compulsory education for children up to 14 years of age within the next ten years. However, in the first few decades after independence, the education policy aimed at promoting a balanced growth of elementary, secondary and higher education rather than focusing primarily on elementary education. Education policy and governance underwent major changes during the Seventh Plan period (1985-90). In 1986, the National Policy on Education (NPE) was formulated and its Programme of Action was revised in 1992. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched with the aim of providing education for all and universalising elementary education 2001-02. The journey towards UEE culminated in the Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act of 2009.

The 2009 RTE Act is a landmark change in the Indian education system as it is not a policy direction nor a guiding principle for new schemes, but an enforceable law.<sup>254</sup> SSA continues to be the flagship programme for developing elementary education and is the main vehicle for implementing RTE. Some of the policy milestones since 1986 and their important features are given in Table 4.1.

Against the backdrop of changes in education policy since the adoption of NPE in 1986, more recent programmes and schemes implemented to increase school participation and retention are examined in this chapter. Evaluations of these programmes, where available are presented, and gaps in implementation identified. As mentioned in earlier chapters that a significant number of children were



<sup>254</sup> Several educationists and political leaders had tried to push for RTE in the past (Gokhale put forward a bill in 1910, the Patel Act was put forward in 1917, Gandhi pushed for it in 1937, and Ambedkar tried to incorporate it into the Constitution of India). But each time it was turned down because of lack of resources. Now that it is a fundamental right, the resources will have to be generated and a transformation of the schooling scenario is expected.

still out of school in 2009, and they were concentrated in certain locations and in certain socio-economic groups. These children often face multiple barriers to school participation from their home situations. The problems are aggravated by inadequacies in education provision. For some of the vulnerable population groups such as children with special needs, or street children, the barriers to schooling are even more challenging. Strategies adopted to overcome these barriers are examined in the following section.

The next section (Section 4.2) focuses on programmes for early childhood education – a stage which impacts school participation significantly. In the section that follows (Section 4.3), programmes and schemes particularly targeted at excluded and at-risk profiles – girls, disadvantaged social groups, the very poor, and those with special needs – are examined. Section 4.4 looks at programmes aiming at improving physical access to schools and quality of schools. The final section (Section 4.5) focuses on changes in the governance and financing of the education sector to deal with barriers identified in the previous chapter.

**Table 4.1 Policy milestones for elementary education**

| Date                        | Policies/schemes   | Features  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1986                        | National Policy on Education (NPE)                             | Renewed emphasis on elementary education came with NPE.   |
| 1987                        | National Policy on Child Labour                                | The policy adopted a gradual & sequential approach for the rehabilitation of children working in hazardous and other occupations.   |
| 1988                        | National Child Labour Project (NCLP)                           | Under NCLP, special schools were set up for children doing 'child labour', with the intention of mainstreaming them at a later stage.   |
| 1987                        | Operation Blackboard (OB)                                      | As a part of implementation of NPE, the OB campaign was introduced to improve school quality through provision of more teachers and better infrastructure.  |
| 1987                        | Restructuring and Reorganisation of Teacher Education          | District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) were set up to provide in-service training for teachers.   |
| 1986                        | AP Primary Education Project                                   | These aided projects focused on improving school participation in backward districts and blocks. These projects targeted both demand and supply side barriers, and the later projects involved a simultaneous process of community mobilisation and micro planning. |
| 1987                        | Shiksha Karmi Project  |   |
| 1988                        | Mahila Samakhya  |   |
| 1990                        | Bihar Education Project  |   |
| 1991                        | UP Basic Education Project                                     |   |
| <b>Eighth Plan, 1992-97</b> |  |   |
| 1992                        | Programme of Action (POA)                                      | National Policy on Education was revised and POA was developed.   |
| 1992                        | Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan                                       | An aided project that focused on people's participation in the education planning process.  |
| 1993                        | Area-Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities | This programme focused on providing schools and necessary infrastructure in blocks with minority concentration.   |
|                             | Modernisation of <i>Madrasa</i> Education                      | Financial assistance was given to modernise madrasas into formal schools.   |
| 1995                        | District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)                    | Focused on providing quality primary education to all in specific districts. Expanded gradually in several phases to cover many districts, this became the first project implemented at a national level. This project received aid from multiple sources.          |
| 1995                        | Persons With Disability (PWD) Act                              | This Act makes it a statutory responsibility of the government to provide free education in an "appropriate environment" for all children with disabilities up to the age of 18 years.  |

Contd...



| Date                          | Policies/schemes   | Features   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| 1995                          | National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education   | While the policy was to introduce cooked midday meals in schools, initially “dry rations” were provided to all children enrolled in primary schools.   |
| <b>Ninth Plan, 1997-2002</b>  |  |  |
| 1999                          | Separate ministry for STs  | This allowed greater focus on the particular disadvantages faced by the Scheduled Tribes.  |
| 1999                          | Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS)   | Originated in Madhya Pradesh, it was designed to provide access to schools in small, remote habitations and to bring in out-of-school children to school.  |
| 1990s                         | Large-scale appointment of para-teachers in several states   | Following the success of the Shiksha Karmi programme, there was a shift in many states to recruit para teachers.   |
| 2001                          | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)  | An umbrella programme encompassing all programmes on elementary education, whose target was to universalise elementary education (8 years of schooling). SSA retained most of the DPEP goals, merged most other existing programmes on elementary education and extended coverage to all districts. It addressed issues of access, equity and quality in elementary education. |
| 2001                          | EGS/Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) Centres   | Non-formal Education Centres were modified and replaced by EGS/AIE Centres.  |
| <b>Tenth Plan, 2002-07</b>    |  |  |
| 2003                          | Andhra Pradesh Multi-Lingual Education pilot project   | Pilot project in multi-lingual teaching in primary grades in tribal areas in Andhra Pradesh.   |
| 2003                          | National Programme for Education for Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)  | Aim was to close the gender gap in school participation of SC/ST girls. Provides model cluster schools as resource centres and other incentives for girls in educationally backward blocks.  |
| 2004                          | Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)  | Set up residential schools at post-primary level for girls belonging to SC/ST/OBC/minorities in educationally backward blocks. Focus was on out of school girls. Later merged with SSA.  |
| 2004                          | Mid Day Meal (MDM) Scheme  | Provided for a hot cooked midday meal each day for all children in primary grades in government and aided schools. Later extended to all children studying in grades 1 to 8 in government and aided schools.   |
| 2005                          | National Curriculum Framework (NCF)  | A new curriculum framework was developed based on extensive consultations with educationists. Education was to be child-centred.   |
| 2007                          | Odisha Multi-Lingual Education pilot project   | Adapted the Andhra Pradesh MLE programme and piloted it in tribal-dominated areas in Odisha.   |
| <b>Eleventh Plan, 2007-12</b> |  |  |
| 2008                          | Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM) Infrastructure Development for Minority Institutions (IDMI) | Focused on school participation of deprived children in minority communities by providing support to enable madrasas to teach academic subjects taught in formal school.<br>IDMI focused on providing infrastructure support.  |
| 2009                          | Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE)   | This Act states that all children between 6 and 14 years have a right to free and compulsory education, and recommends provision of free preschooling for the 3-5 age group. SSA has been adapted to ensure that no child in the 6-14 age group remains out of school, and that they are all in age-appropriate grades.  |

Contd...

| Date                        | Policies/schemes             | Features   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Twelfth Plan 2012-17</b> |                              |  |
| 2013                        | National ECCE Policy         | This aims at provision of integrated services for holistic development of all children from the pre-natal period to six years of age, and emphasises early learning.   |
| 2013                        | National Policy for Children | This recognises the need for a long term, sustainable, multi-sectoral, integrated and inclusive approach for the overall and harmonious development and protection of children (person below 18 years). This policy makes rights of survival, health, nutrition, development, education, protection, and participation as the priority concerns. |

Note: Ministries other than Ministry of Human Resource Development – primarily Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Minority Affairs, and Ministry of Women and Child Development – also initiated national education-related schemes. These policies are focused largely on the older age group (11 to 14 years) and are in the form of providing scholarships and hostel facilities.

## 4.2 Strategies for Children in Dimension 1

In India, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), unlike the Right to Education, is not a right but a Constitutional provision. Article 45 of the Constitution states that: ‘*The State shall endeavour to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years.*’ But on the positive side, ECCE policies have adopted an integrated and holistic approach to a child’s development. Provision of ECCE services in the country are made by government, private as well as by non-governmental sources. In the public sector, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is the world’s largest programme imparting ECCE largely accessed by disadvantaged communities. However, as the earlier chapters have pointed out, a significant proportion of children start formal schooling without any preschool education.



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ICDS is a centrally sponsored and state administered programme and approaches the issue of child development holistically and comprises health, nutrition and education components for children below 6 years of age.<sup>255</sup> There are 7064 operational ICDS projects in the country as of June, 2013.<sup>256</sup> The services provided under ICDS through a network of community-level Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) are: supplementary nutrition (SN), non-formal preschool education (PSE), immunisation, health check-up, referral services as well as nutrition and health education (NHE).<sup>257</sup>

The education component in Anganwadis is targeted at children between 3 and 6 years. This early learning component contributes to the preparation of a child, in the 3-5 age group, for schooling. By providing a space where 3-5 year olds will be looked after, it increases the likelihood that older siblings of these young children can attend school. Because of its multiple foci, ICDS is expected to be instrumental in attaining MDGs relating to malnutrition and mortality rates,<sup>258</sup> which is expected to have a positive impact on school participation and on the learning of children. More recently SSA has aimed to boost the education component under ICDS for children in Dimension 1 by strengthening their linkage to primary

<sup>255</sup> The policy also has components for pregnant women and lactating mothers.

<sup>256</sup> <http://wcd.nic.in>

<sup>257</sup> IIPS (2007), Planning Commission (2011).

<sup>258</sup> Reduction in severe to moderate malnutrition among children (MDG-1) and reduction in IMR, CMR, MMR (MDGs 4, 5).

schools. In several states, ICDS centres have been relocated to primary school premises, school timings have been synchronised with those of ICDS centres to facilitate girls' participation, and play materials given to children.

The impact of preschool education in ICDS has been noticed in the higher school participation at primary level. A recent study on primary schools<sup>259</sup> found that nearly half the sample children in five states in the country had attended preschool programmes, and that the majority had availed of government facilities. Among children enrolled in the primary stage, attendance of those who had been to preschool was better than among those who had not attended pre-primary grades. The 2011 evaluation of ICDS by Planning Commission<sup>260</sup> also found a positive impact of ICDS on enrolment in primary schooling; the share of children in primary schools is 5 per cent higher in the case of ICDS beneficiaries compared to non-beneficiaries. There are state-level variations, with MP, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha showing a significantly high impact of ICDS on enrolment in primary schooling.

The impact on the learning achievements of these children was more limited. Various factors were indicated to be responsible for this arising from poor working conditions in AWCs and the limited capacity of the AWWs.<sup>261</sup>

The current National ECCE Policy, has a more comprehensive approach and refers to programmes and provisions for children from pre-natal to six years of age, and aims to provide '...inclusive, equitable and contextualised opportunities for promoting optimal development and active learning capacity of all children below 6 years of age'.<sup>262</sup> The new policy still considers the ICDS as the main provider of preschool education, but it is a departure from the past as, while covering developmental priorities for each sub-stage within the continuum of early childhood, it also emphasises the preschool education component for all children in 3-6 years age group. It aims to provide 'care (and) early stimulation/interaction needs for children below 3 years, and developmentally appropriate preschool education for 3 to 6 year olds with a more structured and planned school readiness component for 5 to 6 year olds'. Earlier there was no official framework to regulate ECCE programmes run by different organisations. This policy is now applicable to all early childhood care and education programmes/related services in public, private and voluntary sectors in all settings across regions, that are offered to children under 6 years of age.

Among the changes that are envisaged with implementation of the new policy is developing at the national level 'a Regulatory Framework for ECCE to ensure basic quality inputs and outcomes, across all service providers/sectors to be implemented by states, with appropriate customisation, in the next five years. A National Curriculum Framework for ECCE will also be developed.

### 4.3 Strategies to Support Children from Vulnerable Population Groups

The present section starts by discussing the evolution of strategies which have been used to mainstream all out-of-school children. This is followed by a discussion of schemes specific to tackling barriers for different excluded groups and how these have changed from the SSA era to the present.

#### 4.3.1 Schemes to mainstream OOSC

In the past, before education had become a justiciable right, the two main strategies adopted to include out-of-school children in Dimensions 2 and 3 were provision of incentives for enrolment and attendance in school, and the setting up non-formal education facilities. These were expected to counter some of the multiple barriers faced by the children out of school. The introduction of the RTE Act brought about a dramatic change in the role of the state. All children between 6-14 years are now entitled to at least eight years of formal education, and the



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<sup>259</sup> Bhattacharjee et. al. (2011).

<sup>260</sup> Planning Commission (2011).

<sup>261</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>262</sup> Government of India (2012 b).

onus of responsibility is on the state to ensure that this happens. National and State level bodies such as NCPCR and SCPCRs have been entrusted with the responsibility of protecting children's right to education.<sup>263</sup>

**Use of incentive schemes:**

The first policy strand is the use of incentive schemes attached to school enrolment and attendance in an attempt to make schooling more accessible and more attractive by decreasing the direct costs of schooling – an important issue for parents from disadvantaged groups. Two of the most important ways in which this reduction of school costs has been attempted is to reduce the fees for primary schooling to an almost negligible amount and to give free textbooks to every child. In addition, there are targeted incentives for girls, and for children belonging to the SC/ST/minority communities in the form of scholarships and uniforms. It is usually children from these groups who are more likely to be out of school due to cost constraints. With the implementation of the RTE Act, no fees are charged till grade VIII, and provisions such as free textbooks have become part of children's entitlements rather than incentives.

The cooked midday meal scheme (MDM) is another popular incentive scheme for children in both primary and upper primary schools. Following a Supreme Court directive in 2001, all states had to provide cooked meals to all primary school children. The meals were to be cooked preferably by a woman from a SC or ST community as part of a focus on eroding prejudices and nurturing a culture of social equality. The scheme was subsequently extended to all children enrolled in upper primary grades in 2008.<sup>264</sup>

The number of beneficiaries of the scheme increased to 105 million children by 2009-10.<sup>265</sup> While some feel that it is not possible to attribute an increase in enrolment, attendance and retention solely to MDM,<sup>266</sup> there are independent studies which trace an increase in enrolment, especially that of girls and students from SC/ST communities to the provision of cooked midday meals in schools.<sup>267</sup> Available evidence indicates that children from disadvantaged communities have benefited enormously from this scheme on many counts.<sup>268</sup> Provision of cooked MDMs in school has reportedly been successful in addressing classroom hunger in sample schools and created a platform for children of all social and economic backgrounds to take meals together, thereby promoting social equity.<sup>269</sup>

However, in several states, activities related to supervision and implementation of the scheme are reported to disrupt classroom teaching. Implementation of a successful MDM with little impact on effective teaching time can be a challenge.<sup>270</sup> It is also a mammoth task to ensure there is no shortfall in quantity or quality of food provided. The recent (July 2013) tragedy in Bihar in which some students in a school lost their lives by eating a contaminated midday meal has highlighted the need for a reliable system in place that will assure, on an ongoing basis, quantity and quality of the food served to children in schools.

**Non-formal education:**

The second policy strand relates to the centrally sponsored NFE programme which started as a pilot project in 1979-80 targeting all out-of-school children up to 14 years of age (children in Dimensions 2 and 3), especially girls, in ten educationally backward states. Within a few years it was extended to all OOSC in this age group including those hardest to reach: children of migratory workers at work sites, children belonging to nomadic tribes, street children, children in remote rural areas, children of sex workers, etc. For these hardest to reach and most vulnerable of children, the fixed structure and timing of formal school was thought of as a major barrier, and non-formal education was visualised as a flexible part-time course run by an instructor from the community (with possibly lower educational qualifications than a regular teacher and paid a small honorarium) who would enable the child to reach the age-appropriate level in two years.

<sup>263</sup> Government of India (2013 a).

<sup>264</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan accessed at [http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/12thplan/pdf/vol\\_3.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/12thplan/pdf/vol_3.pdf)

<sup>265</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>266</sup> CAG (2008).

<sup>267</sup> Dreze and Goyal (2003); Jain & Shah (2005).

<sup>268</sup> Planning Commission finds in a programme evaluation study in 2007 that about 40 per cent parents of the beneficiary children in some states belong to the OBC category, 23 per cent to SC category and 12 per cent to ST category (Planning Commission (2010a).

<sup>269</sup> POA (2010).

<sup>270</sup> CAG (2009); Planning Commission (2010a).

Another strategy employed to reach out to child labour was the provision of short term, usually residential, bridge courses or bridge camps run by NGOs to serve as a transition to formal schooling. MV Foundation pioneered this method as early as in 1987 in Andhra Pradesh. For MV Foundation, all out-of-school children were seen as potential child labour and they felt that full-time schooling rather than non-formal education was the solution.<sup>271</sup> In both cases the NFE centres were thought of as a way of mainstreaming the out-of-school children, but a very low proportion of children could be brought into formal schools through this method.

The NFE initiative was replaced in 2001 by the “Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS and AIE)” programme. The new scheme supported broadly three strategies: (a) setting up of schools in school-less habitations in response to the demand of the communities concerned (EGS schools), (b) interventions for mainstreaming ‘out of school’ children, namely bridge courses, back-to-school camps (AIE Centres), and (c) strategies for very specific, difficult groups of children who could not be mainstreamed.

AIE centres catered to children in difficult circumstances, those with no regular schooling experience or those whose schooling had been disrupted.<sup>272</sup> They prepared the out-of-school children to attend formal schools within a short period of 9 months to a year with four hours of instruction per day where the children were allowed to learn at their own pace. These bridge courses under AIE could be residential (RBC) or non-residential (NRBC). All EGS schools have been successfully upgraded into formal primary schools since then.<sup>273</sup>

### **Special Training for OOSC:**

Under the RTE Act, the requirement of all children in the 6-14 age group to attend formal schools and complete eight years of education has become non-negotiable. Following this shift, the approach towards mainstreaming out-of-school children has undergone a change. Special Training is the critical initiative under RTE which is used for mainstreaming out-of-school children.

The identified out-of-school children are not educated in non-formal education centres but enrolled in age-appropriate grades in government schools. They are then provided Special Training for a period varying from 3 months to 2 years, mostly in the school premises but occasionally in safe residential training centres. Rather than using the text books prescribed in formal schools, these children are taught with specially designed, age-appropriate learning materials. After completion of training, the children attend school in age-appropriate grades, and support continues to be extended to them, in case of need.

So the formal school system has been made the central entity to meet the challenges of mainstreaming the out-of-school children into age appropriate grades.<sup>274</sup> Clear guidelines have been provided to heads of schools for operationalising Special Training specifying that a maximum of 30 children can be taken in a parallel class; that SCERT would provide the curriculum; that the training would run parallel to school hours if space is available, and after school-hours otherwise; etc. The budget for residential and non-residential special training for the whole year has been specified.<sup>275</sup> The SMC should ensure that Special Training forms an essential part of the School Development Plan.

Teachers and education volunteers who are to impart Special Training to out-of-school children are themselves required to be trained. The nature of the training to be provided to them is being developed.<sup>276</sup> In some states such as West Bengal, education volunteers with experience in bridge courses are engaged and they work in close contact with regular teachers. In Uttar Pradesh, where training is to be given on-site, there is a 15 day preparatory training.

The success of this strategy depends largely on identification of the out-of-school children. This is the responsibility of the Local Authority (Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies) under the

<sup>271</sup> They have mainstreamed 50,000 children through residential bridge courses, and mobilised 600,000 child labourers out of work and into formal government schools (<http://www.mvfindia.in/>).

<sup>272</sup> These are street children, children from migrant families, children with special needs, children who have never been enrolled or dropped out of school.

<sup>273</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013).

<sup>274</sup> Minutes of National Level workshops on Special Training held in September, 2010 at New Delhi.

<sup>275</sup> [www.ssa.nic.in/alternative-schooling-old/Guidelines for Special Training.pdf](http://www.ssa.nic.in/alternative-schooling-old/Guidelines%20for%20Special%20Training.pdf)

<sup>276</sup> JRM 16<sup>th</sup> (2012).



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state governments. The never enrolleds and dropouts are to be identified by them in collaboration with headmasters/school teachers and the school SMCs, through a community level school mapping exercise.<sup>277</sup> While earlier there was no standard definition for an out of school child, recently a definition has been proposed by the MHRD as: 'A child between 6 to 14 years of age ...if he/she has never been enrolled in elementary school or if after enrolment has been absent from school without prior intimation for reasons of absence for a period of 45 days or more.'<sup>278</sup>

In urban areas the large number of street and slum children, working children, some of whom lead their life without adult supervision, and children who are without a permanent home address pose special challenges both for identification and special training. Several states have tried innovative schemes to address these issues. Jharkhand's Drop-in-Centres and Uttrakhand's Pahal are two such initiatives. Nearly 65 per cent of those identified and brought to the Drop-in-Centres in Jharkhand has been mainstreamed.<sup>279</sup> Pahal is a successful PPP model where the identified children are being mainstreamed in private schools. Lack of land and buildings, resources etc. for suitable premises for conducting Special Training have also been a constraint and options like sharing resources at the school level as well as use of vacant public building for such purposes are being explored.

#### 4.3.2 Schemes for out of school girls

More girls are out of school than boys in both the age groups in rural areas, and the proportion is higher in Dimension 3. Demand barriers arising from socio-cultural norms and poverty play a significant role in keeping these girls out of school. Supply barriers in terms of access and infrastructure have aggravated the problems. The government has adopted a two-pronged strategy: on the one hand, it is using advocacy, community mobilisation and incentives for creating awareness and generating demand for girls' education in disadvantaged communities and, on the other hand, it is deploying targeted interventions to make the schooling system responsive to the needs of girls and to improve their access and retention.

The discussion on barriers to schooling has shown child marriage to be a big obstacle for girls' education. This has been addressed on the policy front by the Government through a progressive legislation, namely the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) repealing the Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) of

<sup>277</sup> Guidelines for Running Special Training Courses for Out-of-school children from the Office of the UEE Mission, Delhi.

<sup>278</sup> [www.ssa.nic.in/alternative-schooling-old/Guidelines for Special Training.pdf](http://www.ssa.nic.in/alternative-schooling-old/Guidelines%20for%20Special%20Training.pdf)

<sup>279</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013)

1929.<sup>280</sup> The new law prohibits child marriages rather than only restraining them. However legal changes are not sufficient and changes in social norms are required at community level. Community mobilisation efforts include motivating parents and the community at large, enhancing the role of women and mothers in school related activities and in active participation in school committees, as well as strengthening the linkages between the school, the teachers and the communities. The Mahila Samakhya scheme has played a major role in this. NPEGEL (implemented by MHRD) and SABLA (implemented by Ministry of Women and Child Development) also endeavour to bring about a change in the social norms.

**Table 4.2 Schemes targeting out of school girls**

| Scheme  | Important features   |
|---|--|
| <b>Mahila Samakhya</b>  | It was launched by Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1988, with the primary objective of using education as a tool towards greater empowerment of rural women, especially those from socially and economically marginalised groups. The scheme seeks to go beyond literacy, to enable women to reflect on, and challenge, society's perceptions of the traditional female role. MS has been perceived to have positively impacted girls' enrolment and retention.  |
| <b>Provisions under SSA</b>   | Free uniforms and scholarships for girls from disadvantaged backgrounds.<br>Recruitment of more female teachers (at least 50 per cent of all teachers)<br>Separate toilets for girls   |
| <b>KGBV</b>   | The scheme was begun in 2004. It provides residential facilities which may take the form of schools with hostel (boarding) facilities for 50 or 100 girls, or it may provide only hostel facilities for 50 girls with the girls enrolled in an existing school. The scheme seeks to provide upper primary education to dropout girls in the 11+ age group predominantly from the SC, ST, OBC or minority communities (75 per cent), with 25 per cent from BPL (Below Poverty Level) households, in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBB). <sup>281</sup> In some areas, KGBVs have been extended to provide schooling till grade 10. Since 2007 the programme has been merged with SSA.  |
| <b>NPEGEL</b>   | NPEGEL was formulated for the education of underprivileged/disadvantaged girls from grade I to VIII as a separate and distinct gender component plan of SSA in EBBs. <sup>282</sup> Its strategies involve mobilisation of various stakeholders for girls' education, including the community, teachers, NGOs, etc. It also has a basket of components for out of school girls, overage girls, and girls with low attendance and low achievement rates. Need based incentives for girl students such as escorts, stationery, workbooks and uniforms are given under this scheme. The overall focus is on retention and quality education. It also provides funds for building a Model Cluster School (MCS) in every cluster <sup>283</sup> where the scheme is operational, such that the MCS acts as a resource hub for other schools across the cluster. |
| <b>Conditional Cash Transfers</b>   | Schemes involving conditional cash transfers have been introduced in Delhi and several other states since 2008. A long-term fixed deposit is made in a girl child's name soon after her birth, and additional amounts are deposited on her admission to school, and after she completes different stages of schooling. The entire amount is given to the girls once they complete 18 years of age.   |
| <b>SABLA, or Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)</b> | The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched this scheme in 2010. The scheme aims to empower adolescent girls aged 11-18 years through multiple strategies which include mainstreaming out of school adolescent girls into the educational process. The scheme was launched with the understanding that there is a high degree of correlation between education and the age of marriage, fertility management as well as family health.  |

<sup>280</sup> <http://wcd.nic.in/childact/draftmarrige.pdf>

<sup>281</sup> EBBs are blocks where the rural female literacy is less than the national average (46.13 per cent in 2001) and the gender gap is above the national average (21.59 per cent in 2001). Since 2008 the criteria for eligible blocks were revised to include additional 316 blocks with rural female literacy below 30 per cent, and 94 towns/cities which have minority concentration as well as female literacy below the national average (53.67 per cent in 2001).

<sup>282</sup> See [www.ssa.nic.in](http://www.ssa.nic.in)

<sup>283</sup> A cluster includes 5-10 villages, with each block having 8-10 clusters.

Mahila Samakhya (MS) is currently being implemented in ten states spread over 121 districts.<sup>284</sup> It is targeted at adult women, but it plays a critical role in bringing in greater gender and social equity in society at all levels. The strategy for implementing MS has been through mobilising and organising women into sanghas (collectives) so that these women can articulate and deal with the multiple problems they face with the support of other women. MS also builds the capacities and strengthens the abilities of these women to effectively participate in, and support, village-level educational processes.

The targeted provisions under SSA have also positively impacted girls' education leading to high growth in their enrolment. However the improvement has not been even in all places, and gaps in implementation need attention.<sup>285</sup>

The KGBV scheme, as mentioned, is an intervention to provide quality education at the upper primary stage for girls from marginalised communities who have dropped out of school because of access issues or on account of other problems. The government has carried out evaluations of the KGBV programme in 2007 and 2008 and more recently in 2013,<sup>286</sup> which have given mixed reviews.

The 2007 evaluation gave positive feedback about the functioning of KGBVs: The diverse curriculum at KGBVs, which includes dance, music, theatre, etc., and especially karate in a few schools, had captured the girls' interest.<sup>287</sup> The proportions of girls dropping out of KGBVs were low, and girls were eager to come back to school after the vacations. Parents were demanding that the hostel facilities be extended to grades 9 and 10, since otherwise the girls were likely to have to discontinue their studies after the upper primary level.

However, the evaluation in 2008 highlighted that many states were not adhering to basic schematic provisions of the intervention: in some states the KGBVs were being used as a hostel facility for enrolled girls rather than to bring in girls who were out of school. The evaluation also brought out infrastructural problems: States were facing difficulty in finding land on which to build the KGBV, or in finding suitable rented space. KGBVs in many states were also facing problems such as shortage of space, lack of clean water, and unavailability of toilets in the premises.



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<sup>284</sup> Government of India (2013 b).

<sup>285</sup> For more discussion on girls' toilets, see Section 4.4.1, and on recruitment of female teachers, see Section 4.4.2.

<sup>286</sup> [www.ssa.nic.in](http://www.ssa.nic.in)

<sup>287</sup> National Evaluation KGBV, February 2007 ([www.ssa.nic.in](http://www.ssa.nic.in)).



According to the 2013 review the initial momentum of the programme has not been sustained after 2009, and the scheme now faces additional problems. To begin with, no clear systems are in place to identify the targeted out of school girl in the 11+ age group. As a result while representation of focused groups are “fairly good”, the programme is not “reaching out to out of school girls”. Secondly, the flow of funds is uncertain as it is a part of the state SSA funds and allocation depends on the state SSA. While some states have allocated additional funds or accessed funds from the RMSA residential programme<sup>288</sup> to include girls studying in grades 9, 10 or higher, other states have extended the programme without making any additional allocation, resulting in poor facilities for girls in grades 6 to 10. Several KGBVs were not RTE compliant. Thirdly, a critical shortfall is that “specific issues that frame girls’ education and... the concerns surrounding the management of a residential programme for adolescent girls” have not been communicated to key officials. As a result basic requirements like ensuring the girls’ security, providing them adequate nutrition, and ensuring hygienic and sanitary living conditions have not been maintained. The evaluation recommended a major change in the management and implementation of this programme.<sup>289</sup>

According to a government evaluation of NPEGEL in 12 states in 2008,<sup>290</sup> NPEGEL has had some impact on girls’ education: In Chhattisgarh and Jammu and Kashmir, community mobilisation was done under the scheme and awareness spread about girls’ education and equity issues. Some states such as Haryana used effective strategies like involving local older women as escorts for girl students. Provision of cycles under NPEGEL has made an appreciable difference to girls’ attendance in school in Tripura and Chhattisgarh. But despite considerable outreach, the evaluation found that in many states, the aims and strategies of the scheme had not been clearly understood. The situation has not improved much – the 16<sup>th</sup> JRM noted in 2012 that the NPEGEL scheme has become ‘routinised’, and needs more contextual planning and implementation so that it becomes more relevant for girls’ empowerment.

The Conditional Cash Transfer scheme and most recently launched scheme targeting out of school adolescent girls (SABLA) are expected to increase girls’ enrolment and retention in school, but they are too recent to evaluate their impact.

### 4.3.3 Schemes for children belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

SC and ST communities are historically disadvantaged. Recognising the need to focus separately on these two marginalised communities, the government established the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 1999, and reconstituted the National Commission for SCs in 2004 under the banner of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.<sup>291</sup> The education departments of these Ministries attempt to supplement the efforts of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, and the State Governments/UT Administrations.

Many of the barriers emerge from issues related to their poverty and uncertain livelihoods. The provisions like the Special Component Plan for SCs, and Tribal Sub Plans as well as Integrated Tribal Development Plans for promoting the socio-economic development of these disadvantaged communities in a coordinated manner attempt to address these barriers. The state commitment to education of SC/ST children is also encompassed in special incentive schemes for these disadvantaged groups.

Scholarships, in particular, have been given to these children since the nineties. Universal schemes such as ECCE, removal of school fees, provision of free text books and cooked midday meals, all have a critical impact on the schooling of children from the SC/ST communities.

Other important provisions are girls’ and boys’ hostels for students from SC/ST groups, and lodging facilities in hostels for children of communities classified as ‘backward classes’. Ashram or residential schools for tribal children similarly may help in overcoming the difficulties of access to school for children who live in remote



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<sup>288</sup> A programme launched in 2009 to improve access to secondary education and its quality.

<sup>289</sup> National report: second national evaluation of KGBV programme of GOI, 2013 ([www.ssa.nic.in](http://www.ssa.nic.in))

<sup>290</sup> [www.ssa.nic.in](http://www.ssa.nic.in). See evaluation report on NPEGEL, 2008.

<sup>291</sup> Sedwal and Kamat (2008)

regions. They may also provide an 'educationally conducive' environment. Free uniforms are given to all children in hostel and residential schools as well as to selected children in regular schools. Scholarships and stipends to these children from SC/ST families are provided in many states.

For tribal children, the medium of instruction as well as culture and content of curriculum, are important barriers, especially in the early grades.<sup>292</sup> The government has tried to address this issue by preparing textbooks in tribal languages and recruiting local teachers, and also recognises the need to include tribal folklore and tribal experiences in textbooks and cautions against too much standardisation.<sup>293</sup>

Two pilot projects on Multi Lingual Education (MLE) have started in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. In AP the pilot was started in 2003, by the Tribal Welfare Department, in eight tribal languages. It is now being replicated in 2500 more schools.<sup>294</sup> In Odisha the MLE programme was started in 2006-07 in 10 languages – initially in 185 schools. Currently this programme is being implemented in 450 schools in Odisha.<sup>295</sup> The curriculum is theme-based and it follows the local calendar of the tribal communities.<sup>296</sup> Assam, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have initiated work on developing reading material for bridge courses.

The main idea in the MLE programmes is to strengthen competencies in the child's first language (mother tongue), and then slowly introduce the second language (state vernacular), starting with oral competencies followed by reading and writing skills. The second language becomes the medium of instruction at a later stage. The third language (English) is introduced in grade 4 and the fourth (Sanskrit) in grade 6. A study on the impact of Grade I textbooks in tribal languages in Andhra Pradesh, has found an increase in the students' interest, attendance, punctuality, retention, and learning competencies. Teacher acceptance was also higher.<sup>297</sup> According to the studies conducted by SSA in 2005-07, the MLE programme in Andhra Pradesh is reported to have a positive impact on student participation, attendance and punctuality, and on the basic competencies in literacy and numeracy.

The government's commitment to social equity has been reflected in improved access to elementary education for children from both SC and ST communities. Enrolment has expanded at primary as well as upper primary levels.<sup>298</sup> However, despite various policy measures, retention at school remains a major problem for these children, as reflected in the high dropout rates of ST children. Attention to classroom processes in tribal areas may have a positive impact.<sup>299</sup>

#### 4.3.4 Schemes for children from Muslim communities

As the chapter on profiles has indicated, Muslims have been identified as a religious group with a very high proportion of out-of-school children. Similar to the Scheduled Castes, a large proportion of the children from Muslim communities suffer from multiple barriers to school enrolment and retention arising from poverty as well as some level of social distance/alienation from the mainstream. Lack of access to Urdu language teaching plays a role in making government schools less attractive to Muslim parents.

A National Monitoring Committee on Minorities' Education (NMCME) was constituted in 2004 and five sub-committees were formed: (1) to oversee vocational education and skill development among minorities; (2) to oversee implementation of schemes for minorities; (3) mapping of educational requirements, region-wise, among minorities; (4) to oversee girls' education; and (5) for promotion of Urdu and simultaneously work towards increasing knowledge of English among minorities.<sup>300</sup>

<sup>292</sup> These barriers have been discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>293</sup> NCF (2005).

<sup>294</sup> [www.nmrc-jnu.org](http://www.nmrc-jnu.org)

<sup>295</sup> Sources: [http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc\\_img/Andhra%20Pradesh-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf](http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc_img/Andhra%20Pradesh-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf). [http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc\\_img/Odisha-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf](http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc_img/Odisha-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf)

<sup>296</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013).

<sup>297</sup> Chandramouli et. al. (2005). The data was obtained from 39 schools (randomly chosen – 4-5 schools for each of the 8 tribal languages), 39 teachers – one from each school teaching the primers, 394 grade I pupils, and 77 parents.

<sup>298</sup> The GER figures for 2010-11 for SC children at grades 1-5 and grades 1-8 are 132 and 117.1 respectively and the corresponding figures for ST children are 137 and 119.7 respectively (Source: School Education Statistics, various years). The high GERs, however, indicate overage enrolment.

<sup>299</sup> Two programmes PUNADI and QUEST which focus on improving the achievement levels of tribal children at primary and upper primary level have been initiated by the Andhra Pradesh government in 2012. Its impact on retention need to be examined.

<sup>300</sup> [www.mhrd.gov.in/mino\\_NMCME](http://www.mhrd.gov.in/mino_NMCME)

In recognition of the additional problems faced by minority communities, a new Ministry of Minority Affairs was created in 2006. This attempts to address the demand barriers arising from lack of employment opportunities for the Muslim youth. Several schemes have been introduced to improve access of the minority communities to higher education, skill development and skilled employment.

In response to the recommendations of the Sachar committee, two important policy initiatives to draw in children from Muslim communities were introduced in the Eleventh Plan (2007-12). These are related to (1) modernisation of Madarsa education and (2) improving infrastructure of minority institutions. Teaching Urdu in schools, or having Urdu medium schools, has also been a policy initiative in this direction.

The first initiative is called the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM). This was introduced to bring about qualitative improvement in madrasas to enable children to attain the standards of the national education system in subjects taught in the formal school system.<sup>301</sup> In this way, children in madrasas would access mainstream education without their traditional religious education being disturbed. The SPQEM encourages the linkage of madrasas with National Institute for Open Schooling (NIOS), as accredited centres for providing formal education as this would enable the students to get certification for grades 5, 8, 10 and 12.<sup>302</sup>

The second initiative is the scheme for Infrastructure Development in Minority Institutions (IDMI). It aims to strengthen infrastructure in private aided/unaided minority schools/institutions to facilitate education and expand facilities for formal education for children of minority communities. It is expected to, inter alia, enhance the provision of educational facilities for girls, CWSN and those who are the most economically deprived amongst the minorities.<sup>303</sup>

The barrier of inadequate number of schools with Urdu as a medium of instruction was sought to be mitigated by Central assistance to State Governments for the appointment of Urdu language teachers on a normative basis in Block/Districts where there is a concentration of educationally backward minorities. Urdu language teaching has also been introduced in KGBVs in minority concentration areas.

In April 2008, a targeted incentive scheme was started for the minority communities, including Muslims, by the Ministry of Minority Affairs. This centrally sponsored scheme of Pre-matric Scholarships can be availed of by students enrolled in grades I to X, studying in a government or a private school.<sup>304</sup> Thirty per cent of the scholarships are earmarked for girls.

As a result of persistent efforts from the Government, there has been a significant increase in enrolment of Muslim children in recent years as Table 4.3 shows. Some states such as Assam and West Bengal

**Table 4.3 Increase in the proportion of Muslim enrolment, 2011-12** (per cent)

| States         | Proportion of Muslims in Total Enrolment |         |                     |         |
|----------------|--|---------|---------------------|---------|
|                | Primary Level                            |         | Upper-Primary Level |         |
|                | 2007-08                                  | 2011-12 | 2007-08             | 2011-12 |
| Assam          | 31.94                                    | 40.21   | 20.26               | 33.72   |
| West Bengal    | 28.13                                    | 32.22   | 18.91               | 28.78   |
| Bihar          | 11.27                                    | 15.2    | 8.22                | 13.23   |
| Gujarat        | 4.57                                     | 8.57    | 4.52                | 8.03    |
| Madhya Pradesh | 3.27                                     | 4.96    | 3.13                | 4.25    |
| Rajasthan      | 5.4                                      | 8.43    | 3.61                | 5.89    |
| Uttar Pradesh  | 9.34                                     | 10.18   | 7.34                | 8.1     |
| All States     | 10.49                                    | 13.31   | 8.54                | 11.65   |

Source: DISE 2011-12.

<sup>301</sup> SPQEM is actually a revised version of AIMMP (Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernisation Programme), introduced with the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.

<sup>302</sup> <http://mhrd.gov.in/qualityeducationmadarsa>

<sup>303</sup> The above two schemes have been transferred from the Department of Higher Education to the Department of School Education and Literacy.

<sup>304</sup> Eligible students are those who have secured not less than 50 per cent marks in the final exams of the previous year and the annual income of the parents/guardians from all sources does not exceed one hundred thousand rupees.

have shown considerable improvement, especially at the upper primary level. But, as seen from the profile of out-of-school children (Chapter 2), this remains a major challenge. Although the Muslim girls are impacted by the policies targeted at all out of school girls, further initiatives are needed at the community level. Greater sensitisation is also needed among teachers to understand what makes Muslim children feel alienated from the schooling system, and how retention and learning levels can be improved.

#### 4.3.5 Schemes for working children<sup>305</sup>

Child labour acts as a powerful barrier to education for children in economically-deprived households, irrespective of the communities they belong to. This is reflected in the relatively higher proportions of boys out of school in urban areas, boys who largely belong to very poor households. Traditional socio-cultural norms where adolescent children are drawn into adult activities have also been an important barrier. Changing social norms is a slow process and an important strategy is the implementation of well-formulated laws preventing child labour. The RTE Act can also play a critical role, at least in keeping children upto the age of 14 years in school.

A relatively narrow view of child labour was adopted in India under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Employment of children below the age of 14 in work deemed to be hazardous or beyond their age and strength was prohibited. Any other type of work was permitted. Since then there has been an increase in the number of hazardous processes listed in the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) 1986 Act from 18 to 57, and hazardous occupations from 7 to 13. Recently the Government of India also decided to include children working as domestic servants and those working in dhabas (roadside eateries) in the category of hazardous occupations.

In 2012, the government proposed an amendment to the existing 1986 Child Labour Act to the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act whereby the amendment seeks to prohibit employment of children below 14 years in all occupations except where the child helps his family after school hours. Employment of children from 14 to 18 years of age in hazardous occupations is also prohibited. Punishment for employing any child, or an adolescent in hazardous occupation has also increased.

India has neither ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (no.138), nor the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (no. 182).<sup>306</sup> At present there is no omnibus law on minimum age for entry into employment and the existing laws prescribe different minimum ages for different sectors. So ratifying Convention no. 138 is likely to be a long drawn-out process, as it requires the involvement of several ministries and the state governments. The position is similar with respect to Convention no. 182.

Under the *National Child Labour Project (NCLP)* 1988, a more direct approach was taken where special schools were begun in nine districts of high child labour concentration. Working children were provided with non-formal education along with vocational training, a stipend of ₹100 per month, supplementary nutrition, and regular health checkups. The aim was to prepare these children for joining regular mainstream schools. The Tenth Plan (2002-07) saw a greater focus on convergence of NCLP with other developmental schemes like SSA as well as on attaining qualitative changes.<sup>307</sup> The coverage of NCLP increased to 250 districts during the Tenth Plan. Those in the age group of 5 - 9 years were enrolled directly under SSA, while children in the older age group of 9 - 14 years were admitted to special schools under NCLP. Components of healthcare and vocational training were augmented. There were also special schemes for street children<sup>308</sup> and for working children in need of protection, run by different government bodies.

It is not surprising that there are a large number of children working in a range of activities and occupations including agriculture which do not fall under the definition of "hazardous occupations". Such work remains a barrier to their enrolment and regular attendance in school, as discussed earlier. There

<sup>305</sup> This section draws on website of the Ministry of Labour, [www.labour.nic.in](http://www.labour.nic.in)

<sup>306</sup> International Labor Organisation (2012), Annual Review under the follow up to the ILO 1998 declarations.

<sup>307</sup> The change in direction came about as following recommendations from evaluation done by independent bodies in coordination with VV Giri National Labour Institute in 2001.

<sup>308</sup> Planning Commission's Integrated Programme for Street Children which aims to prevent the destitution of children and engineer their withdrawal from streets, and the Scheme for Working Children in Need of Care and Protection by the Ministry of Women and Child Development providing non-formal education, vocational training to working children to facilitate their entry into mainstream education. <http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/regions/asro/newdelhi/ipecc/responses/india/national.htm>

are also many children who attend school and spend a good proportion of time at work. Many of these activities would be deemed neither remunerative nor hazardous, and hence are not captured in surveys focused on child labour.

For children in Dimensions 2 and 3, the Right to Education Act 2009 is likely to end the problem of the prohibition of selected type of work by children. At present all children have legal rights to education. This would ensure that all children who are out of school irrespective of their work status will now be admitted to formal schools and mainstreamed after receiving Special Training into age-appropriate grades.

Identifying working children is a major challenge which limits the impact of the available schemes. These children usually do not have regular employment throughout the year. A large proportion of these children may be working part-time or for certain months in the year, and attending school when they are free to do so. Community-level school mapping conducted annually is unlikely to identify these children who are enrolled but absent for long periods of time.

An important sub-group of working children is those who are migrant workers. They are also difficult to identify as out-of-school children, and often tend to slip out of the net of education. Several states such as Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, MP, have undertaken on-line tracking of such children so that they can be identified and mainstreamed and the development of such processes is still going on. Recent initiatives have resulted in identification of 0.178 million migration-affected children in 2012-13, out of whom 0.1 million have been placed in seasonal hostels and the rest have been sent to schools at the areas of in-migration.<sup>309</sup>

#### 4.3.6 Schemes for children with special needs

The journey to inclusive education has been a long one. The policy initiative, Integrated Education for Disabled Children, broke new ground in 1974 by suggesting that children with mild and moderate disabilities be enrolled in mainstream schools rather than in special schools for the disabled. The most important policy development in the nineties in this area was the enactment of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protections of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. Article 26 (a) of the Act makes it a statutory responsibility on the part of all three tiers of



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government to provide free education in an “appropriate environment” for all children with disabilities up to the age of 18 years.<sup>310</sup> India has also been a signatory to international declarations like the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) as well as the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action (2002) that emphasise the need for fundamental educational policy shifts to enable general schools to include children with disabilities.

Special-needs children constitute more than 12 per cent of all out-of-school children as identified through the SRI-IMRB 2009 survey. So without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. SSA has tried to ensure that every special-needs child is provided meaningful and quality education, by providing support for the inclusion of these children in general schools providing elementary education. There is a provision for the inclusive education component of ₹3000 per special-needs child per annum. District plans for children with special needs are formulated with one-third of this amount earmarked exclusively for engagement of resource teachers.

<sup>309</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>310</sup> World Bank (2007)

The RTE Act 2009 mandates that every special-needs child should be placed in neighbourhood schools, with necessary support services. The school preparedness of these children must be ensured by providing 'Special Training'.<sup>311</sup> The dual objective of embracing this model is to bring more children with special needs under the umbrella of SSA and to provide them appropriate need-based skills, be they vocational, functional literacy, or simply to handle the activities of daily living.<sup>312</sup> In order to help in mainstreaming special-needs children, the government now appoints two dedicated Resource Persons for inclusive education (IE) at the block level to provide support to a given number of schools. In addition regular teachers are being provided specific training on Inclusive Education for 3-6 days at present.<sup>313</sup>

In some states, there is a concerted effort to reach out to girls with special needs. Andhra Pradesh has assigned inclusive status to some KGBVs in the state by reserving twenty seats for such girls. These inclusive KGBVs are provided with female special educators.<sup>314</sup>

Recent government evaluations find that the SSA policy thrust on providing education to special-needs children has paid dividends.<sup>315</sup> From 1.46 million CWSN identified in 2003-04, the number in 2012-13 has gone up to 3.22 million. School enrolment of CWSN has gone up to 2.76 million in 2012-13, up by 136 per cent from 1.17 million CWSN in 2003-04.<sup>316</sup> There has been progress in provision of home-based care for children with severe disabilities as well.<sup>317</sup> However, in terms of numbers, the SRI-IMRB survey identified only 1.5 per cent of the child population as having special needs, which is low.<sup>318</sup> Some proportion of children with special needs appear to have slipped under the radar, and will need to be identified so they can be provided the facilities they require.

Resource persons, too, is an area where more people are required since only 36.87 per cent of the positions are filled. The training provided to regular teachers for the purpose of mainstreaming mildly-disabled children, nearly 80 per cent of CWSNs, is reported to be of too short a duration and inadequate. Inclusion of children with severe and profound disability (including multiple disabilities), given their general level of functioning and shortage of teachers and other resources, is still a cause for concern. For instance, assessment of children with mental retardation and providing them with appropriate teaching inputs has been pointed out as a major challenge in the Fifteenth JRM.<sup>319</sup>

Two additional forms of resource support are being provided to special-needs children through assistive devices (like hearing aids, braille books and wheelchairs) and barrier-free access in the form of ramp, railings and disabled-friendly toilets. Both of these aim to enhance the functional capacity/mobility of special-needs children to promote their easy access to the schools. From available administrative data it is seen that all schools are yet to be covered.

State policy initiatives for inclusive education must go beyond changing the physical infrastructure in schools, and increasing school enrolment of special-needs children. While these are important, attitudinal changes<sup>320</sup> are needed among community and officials (and teachers and other government functionaries). For example, it is widely believed that disability is predestined, a matter of individual fate, etc. This may affect both the demand for schooling (as also the child's experience in school). Such attitudes and beliefs need attention if inclusive education is to take place.

<sup>311</sup> This training may be residential, non-residential or even home based, as per their specific requirements. The existing non-formal and alternate schooling (including home-based education) options for special-needs children can be recast as 'Special Training'. The training may be in the areas of mobility training, training in Braille, sign language, postural training, etc.

<sup>312</sup> Overall, the interventions under SSA for inclusive education are identification of children with special needs; functional and formal assessment; appropriate educational placement; preparation of Individualised Educational Plans; provision of aids and appliances; teacher training; resource support; removal of architectural barriers; research; monitoring and evaluation; and a special focus on girls with special needs.

<sup>313</sup> Accessed from <http://www.ssa.nic.in>

<sup>314</sup> JRM 16<sup>th</sup> (2012).

<sup>315</sup> <http://www.ssa.nic.in>

<sup>316</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013).

<sup>317</sup> JRM 15<sup>th</sup> (2012).

<sup>318</sup> The Census (2001) had identified 2.1 per cent of child population in India as having some disability.

<sup>319</sup> JRM 15<sup>th</sup> (2012).

<sup>320</sup> Giffard-Lindsay (2007).

## 4.4 Strategies to Overcome Supply-Side Barriers

Supply-side barriers keep children out of school in various ways – children may not be enrolled or may be enrolled late due to access related problems. Poor school quality may be a major reason for dropping out. For disadvantaged population groups suffering from multiple demand-side barriers, supply-side barriers have an aggravating effect. Major policy changes have been brought in to overcome these barriers and are discussed in this section.

### 4.4.1 Access to schools

The main policy initiative to improve physical access has been to set up more primary and upper primary schools, and to upgrade primary schools to upper primary. Initially EGS schools were set up in large numbers in unserved habitations but over time they have been upgraded to formal schools.<sup>321</sup> With the advent of RTE in 2009, a number of benchmarks have been set up for the schools providing elementary education. These relate to school access, PTR, teacher quality and recruitment, pedagogy, school infrastructure, etc. SSA is still the main vehicle for attaining these benchmarks.

After a period of slow progress between the mid-eighties and the mid-nineties, there was a marked increase in school availability after the mid-nineties, reflecting the impact of the rapid expansion of schools in the successive phases of DPEP and SSA (Table 4.4).<sup>322</sup> Between 2005-06 and 2010-11, the growth has been low and even negative for primary schools, but much higher for upper primary schools. This reflects the shift in policy focus from five years to eight years of schooling and the upgradation of primary schools as well as the setting up of new upper primary schools. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the availability of upper primary schools still remains a barrier for some children.

**Table 4.4 Increase in the number of schools, 1985-86 to 2010-11**

|   | Number of schools |                       |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
|   | Primary schools   | Upper primary schools |
| 1985-86   | 528,872           | 134,846               |
| 1995-96   | 593,410           | 174,145               |
| 2005-06   | 772,568           | 288,493               |
| 2010-11   | 748,547           | 447,600               |
| Percentage increase between 1985-86 and 1995-96 | 12.2              | 29.1                  |
| Percentage increase between 1995-96 and 2005-06 | 30.2              | 65.7                  |
| Percentage increase between 2005-06 and 2010-11 | -3.1              | 55.2                  |

Source: Selected Education Statistics (2005-06), Tables of Statistics of School Education (2010-11)

Residential schools such as KGBVs for girls or Ashram schools for disadvantaged communities are particularly useful for children living in remote habitations or in sparsely populated areas. Support for transportation or escort facilities for children in remote and sparsely population habitations has also been recommended in the SSA-RTE framework and funded from the National Component of the SSA, to enable them to access schooling.

### 4.4.2 School infrastructure

The relevant programmes adopted in the past to improve school infrastructure include civil works carried out under the SSA, School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) relating construction and maintenance of drinking water facilities and toilets, and the latest RTE Act. The initiatives show a coordination of activities of different Ministries and Departments in improving infrastructure. Schools under SSA are envisaged as a composite unit comprising adequate numbers of classrooms, open spaces, water supply and sanitation facilities, electricity, with the school enclosed by a boundary wall. Provision of drinking water and toilet facilities have been prioritised to begin with. Both of these have a major impact on the retention of students.

<sup>321</sup> According to 18<sup>th</sup> JRM (2013), all EGS schools have been upgraded as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013.

<sup>322</sup> De et. al. (2011).



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RTE norms for school buildings<sup>323</sup> for primary and upper primary schools are – a classroom for every teacher, with the provision that there would be a minimum of two classrooms with a veranda in every primary school, and at least two teachers. It also provides for a room for an office-cum-store-cum room for the head-master in upper primary schools/sections. SSA has been adapted to be the vehicle which implements RTE.

The government launched the SSHE under the National Drinking Water Mission and Total Sanitation Campaign (2004) of the Ministry of Rural Development for providing water and toilet facilities in rural schools as well as to promote healthy behaviour among children. The SSA provided these facilities only to those urban schools which were not covered under this scheme.

Improved coordination among different departments has resulted in a noticeable improvement in infrastructure. The Student Classroom Ratio (SCR), an indicator of the adequacy of classrooms, showed a declining trend since 2002-03 indicating improvement. According to DISE (2011-12) data, the SCR for primary grades have come down to 30 for 2011-12, but a substantial proportion (37 per cent) of primary schools continues to have a ratio above this RTE-prescribed norm of 30 for the primary level. For upper primary level, too, 30 per cent schools still have a SCR above the norm of 35.<sup>324</sup>

Some infrastructural provisions, such as drinking water availability, have improved remarkably, with nearly 95 per cent of schools having this facility in 2011-12. Toilet facilities for boys are available in 81 per cent of schools, and for girls in 72 per cent of schools. However, just 66 per cent of boys' toilets and 85 per cent of girls' toilets are functional. For some other infrastructural provisions, though improving every year, the pace of change is slow. DISE data (2011-12) reported playgrounds and boundary walls in just above half of schools (56 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively).<sup>325</sup>

A 2011 study by ASER,<sup>326</sup> reviewing learning in primary schools, corroborates the improvement in infrastructure as it found that most schools met RTE norms for teacher classroom ratio, have drinking water facilities, at least one (common) toilet, and a collection of library books other than textbooks.

<sup>323</sup> These buildings are supposed to include toilets, drinking water facilities, a kitchen to prepare the MDM, and a playground.

<sup>324</sup> DISE Flash Statistics 2011-12.

<sup>325</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>326</sup> Bhattacharjea et. al. (2011).



But girls' toilets are often kept locked.<sup>327</sup> Other studies have found maintenance of drinking water facilities and provision of functional toilets as areas that are neglected.<sup>328</sup>

An important initiative, Building as Learning Aid (BaLA), has been taken up by SSA in some states.<sup>329</sup> At its core is the concept that the school architecture should be a resource in the teaching-learning process,<sup>330</sup> and can facilitate learning in an enjoyable manner. BaLA incorporates the ideas of activity-based learning, child-friendliness, and inclusive education for CWSN. There is also a push towards a new Whole School Development Plan (WSDP) approach '...which provides a comprehensive framework for using school infrastructure more holistically and integrating it with pedagogic reforms and equity issues.'<sup>331</sup>

While the overall infrastructure of schools has improved, the progress has been uneven. DISE data pertaining to rural areas bears evidence to state and district level variations in infrastructure.<sup>332</sup> Disadvantaged groups appear to be disproportionately bearing the brunt of this unevenness. The state of school buildings in SC concentration areas has been severely indicted in a survey report in 2008.<sup>333</sup> The ST dominated areas are also reported to have poor quality school infrastructure, with many schools being non-existent or 'only on paper', since physical verification is difficult in these remote areas.<sup>334</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Teacher recruitment

*'It is ...time to develop a medium term vision for what a teacher should be like (qualifications, training, induction into a cadre) so that disparate sets of teacher service conditions that now prevail within states can be addressed.'* (11<sup>th</sup> JRM, 2010)

Quality teaching input is a key factor for retaining children in schools. However, as the chapter on barriers to education has shown, in addition to teacher shortages there are problems in the processes of teacher recruitment and deployment, and teacher training.

Teacher shortage emerged as a major problem since the early nineties. The teacher recruitment and deployment policy is a state subject in India.<sup>335</sup> But the guidelines for recruitment of regular teachers are set by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). States attempted to solve the problem of teacher shortage, while facing a resource crunch, through the recruitment of contract or para-teachers. The eligibility conditions of these teachers varied across states, but they were usually locally recruited, on short term contracts, did not need to have the qualifications required of regular teachers, and would be relatively low paid. This policy was initially adopted as a short-term procedure.<sup>336</sup> It was expected to have a positive effect in reducing the barriers for out-of-school children.

The advantage of recruiting para-teachers as opposed to regular teachers has been a subject of debate. Arguments in favour include lower PTRs, reduced number of single-teacher schools, lower costs of providing elementary education, and increased accountability of teachers to the panchayats. Para-teachers have been found to show less absenteeism<sup>337</sup> and, in some cases, to be more hard-working than regular teachers.<sup>338</sup> It is suggested that this could be attributed to the contractual nature of their appointment in contrast to the permanent employment enjoyed by regular teachers, and the fact that they are more likely to be locally-based than regular teachers.

<sup>327</sup> Bhattacharjea (2011).

<sup>328</sup> PAISA report (2010).

<sup>329</sup> Delhi government and other states have started implementing it as part of their school renovation process.

<sup>330</sup> [ssa.nic.in/infrastructureprovisiondoc/annex-16.ppt](http://ssa.nic.in/infrastructureprovisiondoc/annex-16.ppt)

<sup>331</sup> JRM 15<sup>th</sup> (2012).

<sup>332</sup> NUEPA 2011-12.

<sup>333</sup> NCHDR UNICEF (2008).

<sup>334</sup> National Focus Group (2005).

<sup>335</sup> This is in contrast to education being a concurrent subject, i.e. under the jurisdiction of both the central government and the state governments.

<sup>336</sup> The genesis of para-teachers was in the Shiksha Karmi project in Rajasthan (Pandey (2006)).

<sup>337</sup> SSA EdCIL (2009), Kingdon and Sipahimalani-Rao (2010).

<sup>338</sup> SSA EdCIL (2009), PROBE (1999). It is suggested that this could be attributed to the contractual nature of their appointment in contrast to the permanent employment enjoyed by regular teachers, and the fact that they are more likely to be locally-based than regular teachers. Many head teachers feel that the upsurge in school enrolment could not have been achieved without para-teachers.

A major shortfall of recruiting para-teachers is that only a small proportion would have pre-service teacher training. In this context, the scheme is criticised for de-professionalising the teacher cadre, with a lowering of recruitment norms and pay scales. It is also expected that the cost benefits will not be sustained as the contract teachers will unionise and demand both to be regularised, and to be paid at par with regular teachers on the principle of equal pay for equal work.<sup>339</sup> The lack of adequate professional training would also leave the para-teachers ill-equipped to teach, and particularly children of first generation learners with little or no support at home.

RTE has brought a major change in recruitment policy. All teachers must meet minimum eligibility conditions. NCTE, in accordance with the requirements of the RTE Act, has laid down the minimum qualifications required by a teacher to be eligible for appointment to teach grades 1-8. This includes passing the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET); the Centre and the states may conduct their own tests for appointment to schools in their jurisdiction.<sup>340</sup> It is expected that TET will set a benchmark of teacher quality and ensure that all teachers possess the “essential aptitude and ability to meet the challenges of teaching”.<sup>341</sup> However, several states are facing difficulties in filling up the vacancies as only a small proportion of aspiring teachers have been able to pass even the state-level TET.

Teacher recruitment policies have also been guided by the need to recruit female teachers and for teachers from disadvantaged castes. As discussed earlier, the argument for recruiting female teachers in terms of the positive impact on enrolment and retention of female students at the elementary level is rooted in socio-cultural factors. Females are also expected to be better teachers, particularly for young children, because of their traditional role of being the major care-givers in the family. Several studies confirm this to some extent.<sup>342</sup> Table 4.5 shows that the proportion of female teachers has increased to around 43 per cent in primary and 44.5 per cent in upper primary schools, though there are high inter-state variations.

Recruitment of the local teachers has been useful in bringing in teachers from disadvantaged sections. During the period 1994-2003, 22 per cent of all new teacher appointments were from these communities and a large number of them were para-teachers.<sup>343</sup> These developments, of access to schooling improving in more remote areas and the recruitment of teachers from disadvantaged social groups, is expected to have a huge impact in reducing the number of out-of-school children.

Despite the government’s efforts to tackle teacher shortage, large numbers of vacancies exist in many states. According to DISE data for 2012-13, PTR in elementary grades varied from 10 in Sikkim and in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to 54 in Bihar. Wide variations exist between schools in the same district or block. There are also teacher surpluses in urban areas and teacher deficits in rural areas.<sup>344</sup> Rational deployment of teachers across schools and grades is as an area of crucial policy concern to improve retention of students.<sup>345</sup> Some states have attempted to bring in more transparency in teacher postings.<sup>346</sup>

**Table 4.5 Proportion of female teachers in primary and upper primary schools**

| Year    | Primary schools           |                                   | Upper primary schools     |                                   |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|         | Number of teachers ('000) | Proportion of female teachers (%) | Number of teachers ('000) | Proportion of female teachers (%) |
| 1985-86 | 1496                      | 26.9                              | 968                       | 31.5                              |
| 1995-96 | 1734                      | 32.2                              | 1182                      | 35.9                              |
| 2005-06 | 2184                      | 39.3                              | 1671                      | 40.3                              |
| 2010-11 | 2100                      | 43.2                              | 1887                      | 44.5                              |

Source: Selected Education Statistics, 2005-06, Tables of Statistics of School Education (2010-11).

<sup>339</sup> PROBE (1999).

<sup>340</sup> See Applicability (no. 10) in Guidelines for conductivity at Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), [www.ncte-india.org](http://www.ncte-india.org)

<sup>341</sup> RTE 2009 details in [www.education.nic.in](http://www.education.nic.in)

<sup>342</sup> Chudgar and Sankar (2008), Ramachandran et. al. (2005), Kremer et. al. (2005). Banerjee and Kremer (2002).

<sup>343</sup> Ramachandran et. al. (2005).

<sup>344</sup> Teachers are widely reported to opt for accessible postings and avoid the so called “punishment postings” in remote areas.

<sup>345</sup> JRM 11<sup>th</sup> (2010).

<sup>346</sup> For example, Karnataka achieves this by using a computer software package that helps teachers in opting for mutual transfers.

#### 4.4.4 Teacher training

In accordance with the recommendations of the NPE (1986), a decentralised teacher training system was put in place during the Eighth Plan (1992-97). This involved the establishment of Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education, Colleges of Teacher Education, and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs).<sup>347</sup>

With the enormous growth in school enrolment from the nineties onwards, there has been a huge growth in the demand for teachers.<sup>348</sup> This has led to the commercialisation of teacher training and the spawning of a wide range of teacher education institutions in the private sector, many of which are reported to be sub-standard. At the same time, as discussed in the previous section, teacher posts have increasingly been filled by recruits without teacher education qualifications. Some states are permitted to have their teacher recruits obtain teacher education qualifications through distance learning through the National Open University.

The RTE Act requires major changes in the functioning of the schooling system, and the responsibility of carrying these out, including ensuring that all children complete eight years of schooling is largely on the teachers. Professional teacher education in the country needs to be gear up for such a changed scenario. The Act also requires all teachers to have received certified teaching education, and those who have not acquired these qualifications, particularly the large number of contract teachers, are required to do so by 2015.

In 2009, the NCTE prepared the National Curriculum Framework of Teacher Education (NCFTE) based on the National Curriculum Framework, 2005 and the principles laid down in the RTE Act, 2009.<sup>349</sup> This new approach to teacher education recommends that student-teachers be provided opportunities for self-learning, reflection, assimilation and articulation of new ideas as well as opportunities to observe and engage with children. The NCFTE has made several recommendations regarding the approach and methodology of pre-service teacher training programmes, and the NCTE has developed 'model' syllabi for various teacher education courses.

The Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education, Colleges of Teacher Education, and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) all provide facilities for pre-service and in-service teacher training. Since the time of DPEP to current times, in-service training is also provided in Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs).<sup>350</sup> Since 2008, emphasis has been put on regular in-service training: a maximum of 10 days training is provided at BRC level and another 10 days specifically at cluster/school level. In the absence of sufficient trainers, a cascade model of training has usually been used.

As things stand today, the in-service training offered to teachers is for only 20 days in an academic year. Apart from being restricted to a very limited period of time, there are also other issues to be addressed. First, the existing institutes do not have sufficient capacity to provide in-service training to all teachers every year. An NCERT survey showed that from a sample of 770 resource persons who gave training, around 30 per cent had no professional qualifications.<sup>351</sup> Second, the modules are conceived at the state level and are not always need based.<sup>352</sup> Many teachers have assessed the content of training programmes as having little relevance to their daily teaching routine.<sup>353</sup> And third, there is no mechanism to monitor the impact of these trainings on classroom processes.<sup>354</sup> Several independent evaluations suggest that there has been little change in the teaching practices with the focus continuing to be on recitation, copying from the board or the textbook, and rote learning. The classrooms and the curriculum continue to be

<sup>347</sup> This was done through the centrally sponsored scheme of Restructuring and Reorganisation of Teacher Education.

<sup>348</sup> NCTE (2009).

<sup>349</sup> [http://mhrd.gov.in/TE\\_english\\_new](http://mhrd.gov.in/TE_english_new)

<sup>350</sup> The country was reported to have around 6600 BRCs and 70805 CRCs in 2010 (11<sup>th</sup> JRM 2010).

<sup>351</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>352</sup> Working Group on the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan

<sup>353</sup> An All India Primary Teachers Federation study in 2008 in Bihar and Tamil Nadu, found 28 per cent of teachers were of the view that training content was not at all relevant to their professional learning needs. (Ramachandran et. al. (2008)).

<sup>354</sup> However as DISE 2008-9 suggests, the data on in-service training, infrastructure and student assessments at school level gives scope to analyse impact of these inputs on learning outcomes.

teacher-based.<sup>355</sup> What is striking is that, among the components of SSA allocations, the share of training has declined from 5 per cent in 2005-06 to 3 per cent in 2009-10, reflecting the low priority attributed to it.<sup>356</sup> The assessment of training for regular teachers and para-teachers suffer from similar drawbacks – lack of efficacy in focusing on the actual training needs of the teachers, and training curricula not catering to the realities of the classroom such as multi-grade situations with large class sizes.<sup>357</sup> SSA supports training for inclusive education to meet the needs of children with disabilities, though a large number of teachers are still to be provided with training on inclusive education.<sup>358</sup>

#### 4.4.5 Teaching Methods and Curriculum

What is taught? How is it taught? Have the learners learnt? These are the three main questions that have proved to have a major impact on the success or failure of the schooling process. These are also seen to have an impact on regular attendance and retention. As a response to these questions, the 1986 NPE advocated a child-centred and activity-based process of learning. First generation learners were to be allowed to learn at their own pace with the help of remedial classes. The non-detention rule was to be retained and corporal punishment banned. These policies were expected to help in preventing school dropouts.

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) was a very important document for shaping the policy in the area of curriculum and teaching methods, among other education related matters. NCF, which highlighted the social context of education, proposed four guiding principles for curriculum development: (i) connecting knowledge to life outside the school, (ii) ensuring that learning shifts away from rote methods, (iii) enriching the curriculum so that it reaches beyond textbooks and (iv) making exams more flexible. NCF also highlighted the importance of child-centred pedagogy where the child would be an active participant in the construction of knowledge. It recommended systemic reforms which included examination reforms and reforms in the areas of teacher education and education management.<sup>359</sup>

RTE 2009 reiterates the approach of child-centric and child friendly education. One of the changes have been in the assessment system. A non-detention policy up to grade 8 was introduced and the Board examination in grade 8 after completion of elementary school has been removed in all states.

This was followed by the introduction of a Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) of the child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same. CCE attempts to break the stereotype in pedagogy and helps in improving a student's performance by identifying his/her learning difficulties at regular time intervals right from the beginning of the academic session and employing suitable remedial measures for enhancing his/her learning performance.<sup>360</sup> The incorporation of student feedback intended for continuously improving teachers' pedagogy is an extremely important component of this system.

Under SSA several states have undertaken other independent initiatives to improve teaching quality in elementary schools. Some of these are:

Children Language Improvement Programme (CLIP) and Children Learning Acceleration Programme for Sustainability (CLAPS), which were started in the year 2005-6, focused on children's basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP) built on the experience of these two programmes was launched in the year 2009-10, whereby teaching activities are competency based with a graded evaluation system in accordance with the National Curriculum Framework, 2005.<sup>361</sup> Initially piloted in 150 schools, the Learning Enhancement Activities in Rajasthan programme (LEHAR)<sup>362</sup> has now been introduced in 5,000 schools in the state by the Government of Rajasthan.

But studies have not provided any conclusive evidence regarding whether multi-grade classroom processes are better than mono-grade classrooms,<sup>363</sup> CLIP in Andhra Pradesh was appreciated and

<sup>355</sup> Kumar et. al. (2010); Sahoo (2008); De et. al. (2011).

<sup>356</sup> <http://ssa.nic.in/financial-management/allocation-expenditure>

<sup>357</sup> Pandey (2007).

<sup>358</sup> JRM 13<sup>th</sup> (2011).

<sup>359</sup> [www.pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=9606](http://www.pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=9606)

<sup>360</sup> [www.cbse.nic.in](http://www.cbse.nic.in)

<sup>361</sup> Source: <http://apteachers.yolasite.com/lep.php>

<sup>362</sup> <http://www.unicefpress.be/share/ING/India/progress%20report/ING%2520India%2520Rajasthan%2520juli2010.pdf>

<sup>363</sup> JRM 18<sup>th</sup> (2013).



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found to increase interaction and cooperation among different stakeholders.<sup>364</sup> Learning Enhancement Programmes for developing early reading and mathematical skills among children were conspicuous by their absence across states, according to the 16<sup>th</sup> JRM in 2012. Despite provision of funds for Reading Improvement Programmes to 34 states, the Mission found that only Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh took some initiatives.

One of the major initiatives in improving the teaching learning process has been the piloting and subsequent upscaling of Activity based Learning (ABL). Three states – Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu has expanded the programme to all government primary schools in their state while Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have introduced this methodology in more than 15000 primary schools. This initiative is also called Multi-Age Multi Level (MAML) learning where children of different ages are grouped together according to their grade levels in their classrooms. It is based on the pedagogy of graded learning materials, self-paced learning and frequent assessment by student and teacher. A study observing the implementation of ABL-ALM in Tamil Nadu found that it increased the engagement and participation of students.<sup>365</sup> Within a period of one year, a perceptible difference was observed by different stakeholders within the system.<sup>366</sup> A desk review commissioned by UNICEF finds that ABL serves as “one model of child-centred child-friendly education” that has potential in meeting national goals as laid out by RTE and NCF 2005.<sup>367</sup> In the current scenario in India where teachers in a large number of schools have to teach multi-grade, ABL method has the potential to meet the RTE objectives.

#### 4.4.6 Language Policy

The linguistic diversity in India has been discussed in Section 3.3.6. The diversity extends to states, districts and even blocks. Many children have the experience of being taught in a language other than their mother tongue. This is most difficult for them in their first year of schooling, and non-comprehension may cause them to drop out. In order to retain such children in school, there is a need for innovative programmes that tackle the language barrier.

<sup>364</sup> Reddy & Rao (2006) cited in Srivastava et. al. (2010).

<sup>365</sup> Pallavi and Ramaswami.

<sup>366</sup> De et. al. (2011).

<sup>367</sup> Brinkman, S.A. (2012)

The Indian government has made Constitutional provisions to address this important issue of language (article 350A). The NPE 1986 and the NCF 2005 further articulate the need for teaching in the child's mother tongue at the primary stage. The initiatives introduced in some states (Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka) since 1986 to help children study through a second language were largely ineffective due to a multitude of factors including lack of proper training for teachers.<sup>368</sup>

The policy of teaching in mother tongue is also implemented in schools located in border areas. Similarly Urdu medium schools have been set up in Muslim dominated areas. In 2003, the government of Andhra Pradesh started an experimental pilot project of multi-lingual education (MLE) in eight tribal languages and in Odisha, the MLE programme was started with 10 tribal groups in 2007. At the moment, the programme is run in more than 2500 schools in AP and 450 schools in Odisha.<sup>369</sup> In Chhattisgarh too, work has been started with seven groups.<sup>370</sup> This has been discussed in details in policies related to tribal children.

## 4.5 Policies to Overcome Barriers in Governance and Financing

Several supply related barriers arise from the overall school management system and on account of a shortage of resources. And implementation of well thought out policies depend critically on the larger institutional and management system. Policies to overcome these problems may not directly address the barriers which keep children out of school, but may have an indirect impact by enabling the education system in general and schools in particular to access more resources and to function better.

### 4.5.1 Governance related policies

The direction to policy-making is provided at the national level. As education is a concurrent subject the states have the flexibility to adapt and incorporate these directions. The administrative structure of the Education Ministry differs among states but there are some commonalities as well. As discussed in the previous chapter, the responsibility of the administration of elementary education is shared between SSA and the state education department.

For implementation of RTE, SSA remains the main vehicle but is being modified to address the new demands placed on the system. Not only is a convergence of the departmental and SSA structures needed, but a staffing and strengthening of management structures at national and various sub-national levels is required. Since the tasks necessitated by the RTE involve not only MHRD, but also various departments of the states (for providing school, infrastructure like drinking water and toilets, trained teachers, curriculum, MDM, etc.), and several other institutional players, there has to be co-ordination between different departments at the centre and in the states.<sup>371</sup>

As discussed in the earlier chapter,<sup>372</sup> apart from bringing in a more decentralised administrative structure, the government has also attempted to decentralise education management and put in place an accountability mechanism by involving the local government or the PRIs. Their involvement has been regarded as a means through which the community can be mobilised to bring children from excluded categories (like girls from marginalised communities), into school. There have been special interventions for urban deprived children by involving local bodies like the municipality corporation, ward committee, etc.

Other than the PRIs, the community was also expected to improve school functioning by participating in school management. Community-based management committees<sup>373</sup> had been set up in different states and its elected members trained to monitor school attendance as well as to help in enrolment drives. Almost all states have developed manuals, handbooks, and training materials for master trainers, and for members of these community organisations. Since the passing of the RTE Act, the multiple community-based structures have been replaced by school management committees, with major representation from

<sup>368</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>369</sup> Sources: [http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc\\_img/Andhra%20Pradesh-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf](http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc_img/Andhra%20Pradesh-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf). [http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc\\_img/Odisha-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf](http://www.nmrc-jnu.org/nmrc_img/Odisha-%20MLE%20status%20report.pdf)

<sup>370</sup> The issue has been discussed in detail in Section 4.3.3.

<sup>371</sup> Government of India (2013 a).

<sup>372</sup> Section 3.5.1

<sup>373</sup> Village Education Committees (VECs), School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Association (PTAs), and Mother Teacher Associations (MTAs).



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parents. SMCs are expected to prepare school development plans and provide continuous support and monitoring of school related activities. There is thus an urgent need for capacity-building of members of education committees.

The impact of existing trainings and awareness campaigns has been questioned by the findings of a study using randomised evaluation methods<sup>374</sup> which pointed out that “citizens face substantial constraints in participating to improve the public education system ...”. The study found that interventions to encourage community participation had no impact on community involvement in public schools, or on teacher effort or on learning outcomes in those schools.

An important development since the nineties has been the strengthening of the district based EMIS system – this has already been referred to in earlier chapters as DISE. Data from schools are collected annually and processed and presented as Report Cards within a year – these Report Cards are available for the schools as well as the districts and the states. These data have served as a useful monitoring tool at both micro and macro levels. At the school level they can in addition be used as a base for developing school development plans. There is great potential for using these data, and here too the need for training those involved in planning and monitoring is necessary.

#### 4.5.2 Education finance

At the national level, finance for the education sector comes not only from the Department of Education, but from other government departments as well. The major ministries involved are: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and Ministry of Minority Affairs. These ministries have allocated a significant amount on different programmes such as various incentive schemes like scholarships, boarding, coaching, etc. for vulnerable groups like girls, children from disadvantaged communities, working children, street children, etc. At the state level too there are several programmes, often with greater coverage and reach, which seek to reduce dropouts – for example, the various cash incentive programmes like the Laadli Lakshmi Yojana implemented by the Madhya Pradesh government.

<sup>374</sup> Banerjee et. al. (2008).

**Table 4.6 State-Level variations in expenditure indicators, 2009-10**

| State     | Per-student budgeted expenditure at elementary stage (₹) | Budgeted expenditure on education as a proportion of SDP (%) |
|-----------|--|--|
| Kerala    | 5691   | 2.66   |
| UP        | 2767   | 3.27   |
| Bihar     | 2585   | 4.73   |
| Rajasthan | 4169   | 3.46   |

Source: Calculated from Analysis of Budgeted Expenditures, 2009-10, MHRD, Statistics of school education, 2009-10, Directorate of Economics and Statistics of respective state governments; downloaded from [http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi\\_New/upload/State\\_wise\\_SD-P\\_2004-05\\_14mar12.pdf](http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi_New/upload/State_wise_SD-P_2004-05_14mar12.pdf)

The sources of revenue for the states include their share of taxes, as well as transfers from the centre. They have very limited scope to increase their own budgetary revenues. The recent focus on the elementary sector, which has been spearheaded by the central government, has used new sources of education finance like foreign aid and education cess. Since the early nineties India has accepted foreign aid for its school education – though the proportion has been quite low in relation to the total public expenditure.<sup>375</sup> Education cess for elementary education has been imposed in 2004 and is a surcharge of 2 per cent on income taxes. It has been very useful in financing SSA and the Mid-day Meal scheme.

Wide inter-state variations exist in public expenditure on education, as the states differ in their ability to generate resources from their own tax and non-tax sources. As stated in Table 4.6, states with large numbers out of school may spend a large proportion of SDP on education, but per student expenditure remains quite low. The transfers from the Centre have not been able to fill the gaps – the level of transfers has not been adequate. Additionally, a large gap remains between allocations and actual expenditures, particularly in these states.<sup>376</sup> So, in spite of large increases in expenditure at the elementary level, the most disadvantaged states are not necessarily able to meet their requirements.

An important change in financing policy has been the allocation process. Under SSA the financial allocations are determined on the basis of need based planning. With decentralisation, the School Development Plan is required to be made by the SMCs – and matching resources are allocated. However, as pointed out, the SMC members do not necessarily have the required capacity yet and plans are made at district level in several areas.

While increased resources have been allocated to elementary education over time, successive JRMs had pointed out to the problems which arise from delayed and slow release of funds. In response, a policy for streamlining the fund-flow was put in place by the government. This appears to have had a positive impact as 50 per cent of the AWPB of the Gol's share was found to have been released early in the first quarter. State plans are also being appraised in a more timely manner. However, more funds are required for RTE implementation.

Several Joint Review Missions have indicated the need to fill vacancies of financial management staff urgently and to give intensive training for capacity-building in this area. Despite regular monitoring by MHRD at the district level, many states show considerable vacancies among their financial management staff. Only Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh UT and Sikkim had zero vacancies at all levels. Block level staffing is slowly improving as following initiatives by MHRD, the states are now allowed to hire one block level accountant for every 50 schools.<sup>377</sup>

## 4.6 Analytical Summary

The policy response of the Indian government in the area of elementary education has been to address the gamut of the barriers to schooling through the successive five year plans. While some interventions have worked better than others, it would be fair to say that just as the barriers to school participation are

<sup>375</sup> In the year 2002-03, when foreign aid to education was at its peak, it consisted only 1.5 per cent of total public expenditure on education.

<sup>376</sup> Colclough et. al. (2010).

<sup>377</sup> JRM 16<sup>th</sup> (2012).



interlinked, so are the policy measures that address them. Improvement in indicators such as enrolment and gender parity is a result of a combination of several policies working in harmony.

With implementation of the RTE Act, the schooling situation is going through a process of change. While the study could benefit from the evaluations of main schemes under SSA, this was not available for changes introduced in the post-RTE years. However, it cannot be over-emphasised that the landscape for elementary education has undergone a basic transformation after RTE since the perspective for planning and implementation has changed from an incentive-based one to rights-based.

Major changes have occurred to the way in which the problem of 'out-of-school children' is tackled. As a strategy to draw out-of-school children into school, education centres like the EGS centres, AIE schools and bridge courses had been set up earlier. These centres had limited success in mainstreaming these children. After the enactment of the RTE Act, these centres have been discontinued. Out-of-school children are now identified by a school-mapping exercise in the community and the identified children are directly enrolled in mainstream schools in age-appropriate grades. These children then receive Special Training which can last from 3 months to 2 years, depending on their need, so they can be at par with others in their age-appropriate grade.

School participation of children from poor and marginalised communities such as girls in rural areas, the SCs, the STs and the Muslims is compounded by major demand-side barriers. An important plank for improving school participation has been via fee waivers and incentives, many of which have now become these children's entitlements. These have indeed made a difference in making costs of schooling less of a deterrent for children from disadvantaged households. Provision of a cooked midday meal has also proved to be a powerful incentive for children to come to school.

There are schemes targeted at socially disadvantaged groups, and they have produced mixed results. For older out of school girls from marginalised communities, the Indian government has introduced KGBVs which provide free residential facilities and schooling for out of school girls from target groups in the 11+ age group. Ashram schools for tribal children and hostel facilities for different disadvantaged groups have also been set up for children in remote areas. Parents have indicated a demand for these schools. However evaluations suggest that these have had varying degree of success, and their benefits are limited unless greater monitoring of quality can be ensured.

Difference in language and culture has been a major barrier for the education of children belonging to ST groups. Several state governments, specifically Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Chhattisgarh, have attempted to address this through the MLE strategy, on a pilot basis and Odisha has MLE policy in place. For Muslim children several schemes have been developed by focusing on areas with minority concentration. These include the modernising of madrasas, and expanding schooling infrastructure of institutions catering specifically to children from this community. But given that most Muslim children reportedly attend mainstream schools, the impact has been limited.

Several interventions for CWSNs have been introduced, which have showed improvement in enrolments. But here, too, the focus has been on physical provision of inputs like ramps, and a lot needs to be done on improving the overall schooling experience of these children, including useful teaching processes.

Whatever the specialised nature of policy for a target group, the focus has been more on expanding access and infrastructure, interventions which are easier to monitor, as well as require greater expenditure, rather than on processes that improve quality of teaching and learning outcomes. The demand side barriers arising from sociocultural norms are slow to change. Laws regarding age of marriage and child labour, if well formulated and strictly implemented, would go a long way to change the norms. However these laws are not in the jurisdiction of MHRD, and involve coordination between several ministries – so while the discussions are on, the required changes are yet to come.

The supply side initiatives have been initially focused on access and infrastructure. The schooling system has expanded rapidly within limited resources. As a result some of the programmes which have positively impacted access may have had a negative impact on school functioning and school quality. For example, policies on non-formal education centres, EGS centres, and para-teachers have led to the setting up of schools with poorer facilities for children in more remote and disadvantaged areas. These policies have been revised since then but the parallel tracks of different qualities of education provision in the government schooling sector still survive. Proper implementation of the RTE is likely to bring in more positive changes.

The earlier emphasis on quantitative expansion of schooling has now been supplemented by increased focus on quality indicators, such as teaching quality, relevant curriculum, learning outcomes, etc. and, in general, to what transpires inside the classroom. Retaining children successfully in schools is conditional on improvement in the classroom processes.

The emphasis is now on implementing programmes to improve the situation and on measuring and monitoring school quality indicators. There is a greater focus on improving the teacher's capacity to lead the changes inside the classroom by revising norms of teacher recruitment and revamping professional teacher education, and in-service training. In 2009 the National Curriculum Framework of Teacher Education (NCFTE) was formulated based on the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. All existing teachers, and those aspiring to be teachers, have to acquire teacher education qualifications. They are required to successfully take a Teacher Eligibility Test (TET). In-service training is being revised and made compulsory.

The classroom processes are changing too. Special programmes like ABL are implemented in several states to enable the children to learn through activities and at their own pace. ABL processes also encourage democratic participation of all children with no room for discrimination, helps participation of all children and in reducing the achievement gaps between gender and social groups. This pedagogical process is also a good potential for mainstreaming out-of-school children. The assessment system has been revamped and the recently introduced system of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) should also bring about a qualitative change in classroom processes. The curriculum has been revised and new textbooks developed in most states. Teachers are aware that children are not to be disciplined through punishment, violence, and that children should not experience discrimination on any count.

For better implementation of policies, decentralisation of education management has been initiated. But the block and cluster level officials have not been able to monitor teaching activities and project implementations to the desired extent due to various reasons. Primary among them are the range of work responsibilities and also the overlap with the state education management structures. Decentralisation of planning and monitoring is also initiated through the formation of school based education committees. The local bodies in urban and rural areas have been given the responsibility of supporting elementary schools. But the impact of the decentralisation processes on school quality and management has been limited because the members of these structures have not acquired the required capacity to carry out their tasks.

Bringing all children to school is a necessary step for achieving educational goals, but not sufficient. So while a lot has been achieved on the policy front, efforts should be made to continue the process and ensure that these children who are in school complete 8 years of education with the required learning outcomes. At present the focus is on children up to 14 years of age, and the majority of the schemes (including those following the RTE Act) are not applicable to older children, even when they are enrolled in lower grades. This gap should be addressed.

Schemes like special training and KGBV are targeted towards out-of-school children. Systems are being put in place to identify these children and bring them to school. However dropping out is often a slow process and not a one-off event, but so far no strategy is in place to identify the students who are at risk of dropping out. It is less costlier and more efficient process if students could be identified when they are at risk and provided the support required to retain them in school, rather than trying to bring back children who have already dropped out of the schooling system.

Demand-side barriers to school participation continue to be important – there are barriers from poverty and insecure livelihoods as well as from deeply entrenched socio-cultural practices that are slow to change. Many parents are unaware that, now, following the RTE, a child is entitled to at least eight years of schooling. Awareness regarding this right must be spread across the country with the help of dedicated campaigns and children should be encouraged to exercise this important right to education. Strict enforcement of legislation regarding age of marriage, and age of work could also bring about a change in social norms and campaigns against child marriage and child labour can influence community perceptions.

## 5. Conclusion and the Way Forward

The global initiative for out-of-school children aims to improve statistical information and analysis of education data, and examine the reasons for exclusion from schooling and relevant policies for this category of children across countries. The rationale is that with a more methodical approach to this problem of children out of school, education sector reforms will be easier to undertake to ensure that all children are in school and complete a full cycle of elementary education. It is with this objective that the present India report has set out to provide a profile of boys and girls, in the 6-13 age group, who are not in school, examine the barriers they face, and outline the policies in place to bring about change.

This study showed that in spite of remarkable progress a proportion of children in the 6 to 13 age group are not in school. In this concluding chapter, the profiles and barriers faced by out-of-school children in the 6 to 10 and 11 to 13 age groups, that is, children in Dimensions 2 and 3, are analysed separately. Key aspects of the present education policies and schemes are examined. It is seen that with progress in education participation, more accurate and detailed data is required to ensure that all children in the specified age group remain in school and complete eight years of education. The last section looks at the way forward in terms of data requirements.

### 5.1 Who are Out of School and Why?

The questions are sought to be answered on the basis of available data. Multiple sources of education-related data exist in India – compiled both by administrative sources as well as through household surveys. School education, a subject under the jurisdiction of the central and the state governments, is impacted by variations in school-related policies in different states. There is a lack of uniformity in norms across states, regarding the number of grades included in different stages of schooling, and the appropriate age of enrolment for each grade. This has been one problem area, complicating the aggregation and interpretation of data at the national level. So while it is possible to estimate the number and proportion of out-of-school children from administrative data under certain conditions, it has not been attempted in the study.

Household surveys are more commonly used to estimate out-of-school children as they collect details of children in school and out of school, their age and other background characteristics. In India, two types of surveys have been used in the past decade to estimate out-of-school children. The first type covers the annual household surveys that have been conducted under SSA and the state education departments to identify out-of-school children. While the primary reason for this exercise has been to motivate these children to enrol in school and attend regularly, they have also generated annual estimates of out-of-school children. The other type of survey used for this purpose refers to the large national-level sample surveys conducted by government and non-government organisations at different intervals.



Analysis of data sources indicates that the estimates from different household surveys are often very different. One of the main reasons is that the definitions of out-of-school children used vary across surveys. A major difference is the status of pre-primary education – while some surveys define out-of-school children as those of pre-primary age (i.e. age 5) not attending pre-primary, primary or upper primary grades, others may include those in the 6 to 13 age group attending pre-primary grades as out of school. The definitions may also vary by the schooling status accorded to children studying in non-formal education centres. A data source may consider all children studying in non-formal centres as out of school, another may consider all such children (enrolled in NFE centres) as in school, while a third one may have certain norms which need to be satisfied for the children in non-formal centres to be considered as in school. The definitions used to identify a dropout child in terms of shortfall in attendance also differ.

As household surveys are sample surveys – variations in estimates may arise from differences in the sample designs and the estimation methodologies. The proportion of out-of-school children is computed for different age groups, and the number of out-of-school children is estimated using these proportions with sampling weights as determined by the survey sample and projected population for the age groups. These issues are discussed in greater detail in the last section.

The estimation method used in this Report differs from the method outlined by the CMF of this global initiative. The CMF defines out-of-school children as those children in the 6-13 age group who are not enrolled in formal schools (or non-formal schools with education levels equivalent to ISCED 1 and 2) in grade 1 and above or who are enrolled but not attending. They have used UNPD population projections. In this Report, out-of-school children are estimated on the basis of SRI-IMRB data 2009, where the children attending pre-primary education in formal schools are not counted as out of school. Children enrolled in non-formal centres set up by the government are also considered in-school. The population projections used are not of the UNPD, but by the Register General of India. The estimate of out-of-school children in 2009 based on this data set and the given definition is 8.15 million.

To analyse the profile of out-of-school children, disaggregation by location, sex and caste was carried out for the SRI-IMRB data set. Other points of focus of the dataset were the schooling status among the children with special needs, and among the families below the poverty line (BPL). This was supplemented by analysis of NSSO 2007-08 data. Since the SRI-IMRB study lacked information regarding income or expenditure, disaggregation by economic categories was not possible. NSSO 2007-08 survey data was used for this purpose.

The profiles of out-of-school children and the barriers they face have been analysed for: (i) Dimension 2 which refers to the age group corresponding to the primary stage of schooling (6 to 10 years) and (ii) Dimension 3 which refers to the age group corresponding to the upper primary stage of schooling (11 to 13 years).

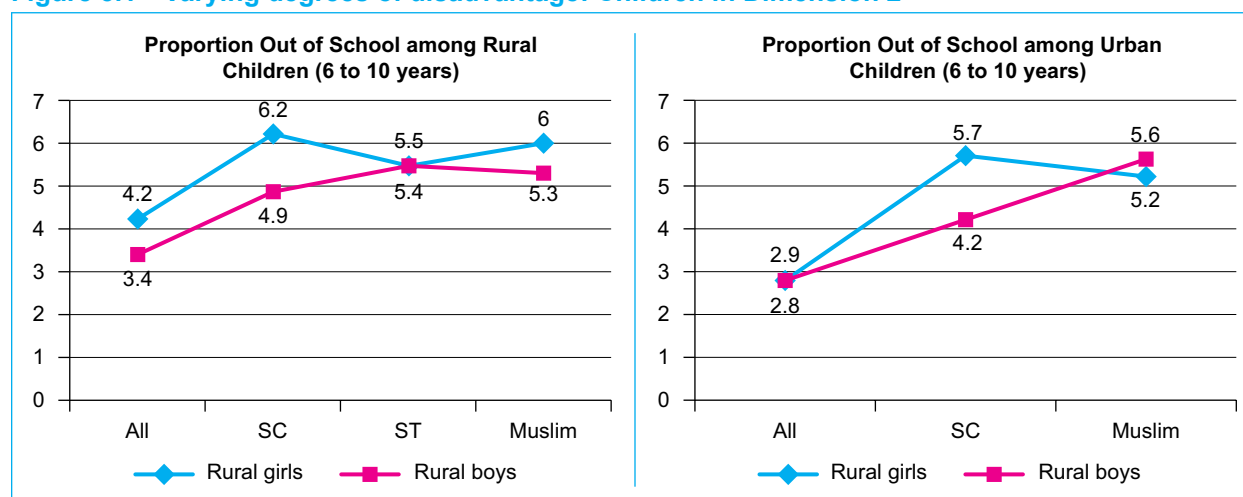
### 5.1.1 Children in Dimension 2

#### 5.1.1.1 Profile

Less than 4% of children in the 6 to 10 age group (Dimension 2) are found to be out of school, and in this dimension never being enrolled is the main problem. Estimates indicate that 80.9 per cent of the out-of-school children had never been enrolled, as against 19.1 per cent who had dropped out of school.

The profile of out-of-school children is analysed to identify who were more likely to be excluded from school. Around 66.4 per cent (Figure 2.9b) of the out-of-school children were accounted for by children from the Muslim, the ST, and the SC communities. These three social groups stand out as they constitute higher proportions of out-of-school children as compared to their proportions in the population.

Out-of-school children were predominantly rural. They were also predominantly in poor households. Around 72 per cent of those out of school in this age group in rural areas were found to belong to the lowest two expenditure quintiles. In the urban areas, a similar percentage was found to belong to the lowest quintile alone, indicating the even larger role of poverty in keeping these children out of school (Figure 2.13). Further analysis showed an overlap of the axes of poverty with disadvantaged social categories and the over-representation of these communities in the lower expenditure quintiles.

**Figure 5.1 Varying degrees of disadvantage: Children in Dimension 2**

Source: Unit data SRI-IMRB 2009

Girls were found to be more likely to be out of school than boys, reflecting the strong gender-based differences. Girls constitute nearly 50 per cent of the out-of-school children in Dimension 2, despite accounting for only 45 per cent of all children in the 6 to 10 age group. The bias is marked in rural areas for all expenditure quintiles, but is more mixed for the urban quintiles (Figs 2.7a and 2.7b).

Figure 5.1 is a set of graphs which is useful in understanding the overlapping of the multiple disadvantages faced by certain children. Each graph measures the proportions of boys and girls out of school for different social groups –for all children as well as for children from SC, ST, and Muslim groups. In the urban areas, the ST population has very little representation, so they have been left out of the analysis for urban areas.

The profiles of children out of school in rural areas indicate a hierarchy of disadvantages. A higher proportion of girls are out of school among all groups except the STs. While 4.2 per cent are out of school among all rural girls, it increases gradually for children from ST groups (5.4 per cent), Muslims (6 per cent), and finally SC groups (6.2 per cent). For rural boys, too, a hierarchy is observed, but with the highest share out of school among children from ST groups (5.4 per cent).

The graphs for urban areas show lower proportions out of school on average compared to the rural areas but the averages hide an out of school proportion of more than 5 per cent among girls from SC groups, as well as among boys and girls from Muslim families.

Out-of-school children were largely from economically disadvantaged groups. The proportions out of school were seen to be very high in the two lowest expenditure quintiles in rural areas and the lowest quintile in urban areas from the NSSO 2007-08 data.

Children in Dimension 2 are not only higher among specific social groups, they are also high in a few specific states – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, and the two north-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. A significant proportion of the children in Dimension 2 are the children with special needs, an important point often missed out in the usual socio-economic analysis.

### 5.1.1.2 Barriers

As mentioned earlier, the majority of out-of-school children in Dimension 2 have never been enrolled at school. One explanation for this may be that the age of admission to formal schools is not uniform – it is 5 years for grade 1 in several states and UTs, although 6 years is the formally accepted age of admission according to RTE. More importantly, parents do not always follow the state norms of admission – many children are seen to be enrolled in grade 1 at 7 and 8 years of age.<sup>378</sup> So, as mentioned earlier, a significant proportion of the “never enrolled” among the 6 to 10 year olds could be in reality those who are

<sup>378</sup> Age of children enrolled in grade 1 show variations from ages 5 years to 9 years, though the proportions are higher for 5 and 6 year olds.

enrolled late.<sup>379</sup> However this is still an important problem. While these children may be enrolled in school, there is a low probability that they will complete eight years of education by 14 years of age. The various barriers to schooling include those which delay enrolment.

Among the dropouts in the 6 to 10 age group, a larger proportion was seen to have dropped out after grade 1. These may be cases of nominal enrolment and discontinuation, or cases where the child is not able to adjust to the school system and so drops out.

Analysis by expenditure quintiles shows that poverty is a major barrier for these children both in urban and rural areas, and for both boys and girls (Tables 2b and 3b in Annexure 2). However, it plays out differently for each. For girls, especially in villages, marriage and motherhood are seen as the main goals for girls and as such they are considered to belong to their affinal rather than natal family. These norms influence parents' decisions of not enrolling their daughter or enrolling her late. For advantaged social groups and for better off families, education has a positive impact on the girl's marriage prospects. But for poor parents investing in a girl's education may appear to be a waste of scarce resources, although there are signs of changing attitudes, especially in urban areas. While direct costs of schooling have come down, indirect costs remain high for girls. Attending to household chores and taking care of siblings may be the more important reasons why girls in these families are not enrolled or enrolled late – a reflection of their enormous usefulness at home coupled with the ethos of undervaluation of their education.

The relatively high proportions out of school for rural girls from Muslim and SC groups bears evidence of the importance of demand-side barriers arising from socio-cultural norms and practices. In the urban areas, it appears that even with better access to schooling, and with schooling being more of a social norm, there are still barriers to education of SC girls, which may also have a socio-cultural basis. For the Muslim children, both girls and boys have more than 5 per cent out of school, which may be due to socio-cultural barriers or poverty related issues.

Although boys' education is valued more, as reflected in their lower share in the proportions of children out of school, some factors may obstruct their schooling as well, mainly in poor families. Even young boys are sometimes needed to help their parents in farming or, in urban self employed families, in home-based earning work. In rural areas, the work may be seasonal in nature or if the family migrates in search of livelihoods, young boys in the 6 to 10 age group may start working on site.<sup>380</sup> Young boys involved in work might attend school only irregularly and eventually drop out.

On the supply side, access to school is not seen to be a critical barrier any longer for the majority of the children of primary-school age. The SSA has given a huge boost to expanding the elementary schooling system in the country and primary schooling is now widely available. However children from socially disadvantaged communities often live in habitations outside the main village, while those from ST communities have to tackle hilly and difficult terrains to reach school. For these children access may be a factor leading to non-enrolment or delays in enrolment.

Besides, marginalised communities have to deal with additional barriers which limit their social access to schooling: the SC children reportedly face discrimination within and outside schools, particularly in rural areas, children from ST communities face alienation in terms of language and culture, children from Muslim families face the alienation of belonging to a religious minority and belonging to a different culture compared to the dominant community. This may lead to early dropouts.

Studies report that the quality of government schools (in both rural and urban milieus) needs to be improved in terms of infrastructure and maintenance and, more importantly, in terms of quality as well as regularity of teaching. This situation may well act as a deterrent to enrolment or lead to early dropouts.

In urban areas, particularly for street children and children living in slums, lack of documentary proof of residence remains a problem. Attempts have been made to simplify the process, but problems remain. Street children are often child workers who are difficult to draw into a regular school routine. In slum areas the overcrowding of schools, the violent environment within the slums, the pressures to earn, and the availability of earning opportunities may all lead to early dropouts among the boys.

<sup>379</sup> A significant proportion are also enrolled in pre-primary grades, who are defined as "out of school" in the present context.

<sup>380</sup> Even if not working, they will still miss the opportunity of being enrolled in their village school.

For children with disabilities and special needs access remains an important barrier. Physical infrastructure facilities like ramps at school have improved, but not in all schools, and not to all essential areas in the school. The absence of an inclusive classroom with specially trained teachers and little social sensitisation regarding the problems of special-needs children, add to the barriers to their school participation. Early identification of special-needs children remains largely in the domain of the ICDS programme, where Anganwadi workers are given the responsibility of identifying such children through house-to-house surveys. The low proportions of children with special needs identified indicates the need for improving the process.

## 5.1.2 Children in Dimension 3

### 5.1.2.1 Profile

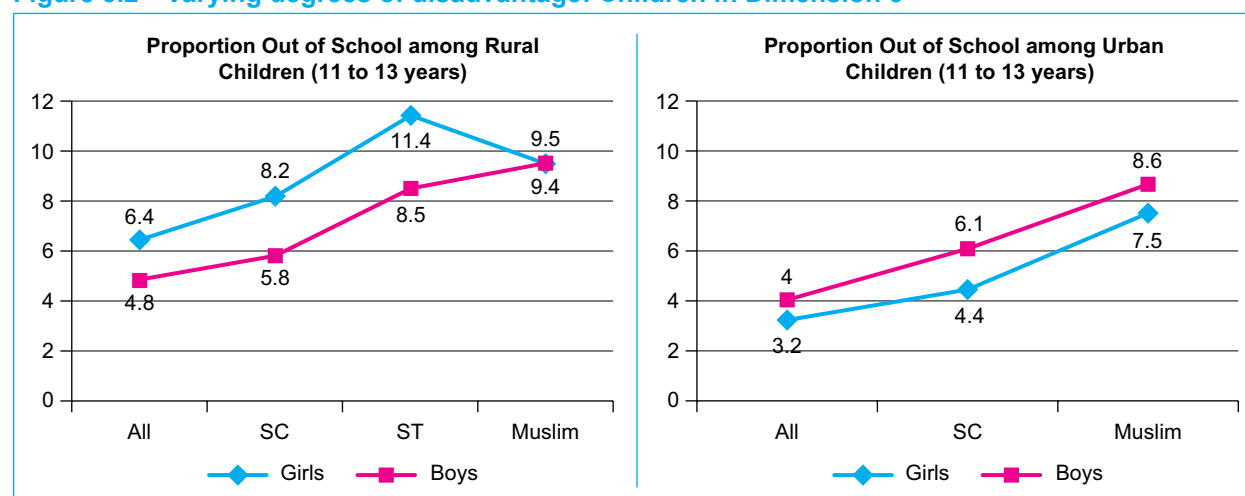
The SRI-IMRB (2009) data indicate that a slightly higher proportion of children are in Dimension 3 are out of school (5.2 per cent) compared to Dimension 2 (4 per cent). This is true for both males and females. Among the out-of-school children in this age group, nearly 60 per cent are dropouts and the rest have never been enrolled. The proportion never enrolled is higher among girls. DISE data suggests that dropout is low in primary grades, but high after grade 5, and after grade 7. Adjusted Net Attendance Rates show that less than two-thirds of 11 to 13 year olds are enrolled in age appropriate grades or above.

For this older age group, too, Muslims, STs and SCs are over-represented among out-of-school children, relative to their percentage shares in the population. The Muslims have a particularly high share – they constitute 12.7 per cent of this age group, but 22.9 per cent of the out-of-school children in this age group (Table 2.10b). The tribal children, too, constitute a high share (19.5 per cent) of out of school in this age group, although they comprise only 10.9 per cent of all 11-13 year old children. In the rural areas, the SC and the STs and in urban areas, the Muslims and SCs have higher than average shares of BPL families (Table 2.9), indicating that the out-of-school children are likely to be among those who suffer from the cumulative impact of poverty and disadvantaged social background.

Figure 5.2 shows that in rural areas the disadvantage is higher among girls than boys. The hierarchy of disadvantage is slightly different from that for Dimension 2, with shares of out of school girls highest among tribals (11.4 per cent), followed by Muslims (9.4 per cent) and SCs (8.2 per cent). While the school participation is higher among all rural boys, with the proportion out of school only 4.8 per cent vis-à-vis 6.4 per cent for all rural girls, the out of school proportions for the rural Muslim and ST boys are quite high at 9.4 per cent and 8.5 per cent.

In urban areas, the proportion of out-of-school children is much lower at 3.6 per cent compared to 5.5 per cent in rural areas. For girls, especially, the proportion out of school (3.2 per cent) is around half that of their rural counterparts. Rather than being gender-neutral as for Dimension 2, the share of out of school girls in urban areas is lower than that among boys for all social groups, i.e. the rural gender disadvantage is reversed here. Among the disadvantaged social groups, compared to the proportion out of school among all children (3.6 per cent), the proportion out of school is quite high among urban Muslim children (8.6 per cent for boys and 7.5 per cent for girls), followed by SC children (6.1 per cent for boys and 4.4 per cent for girls).

**Figure 5.2 Varying degrees of disadvantage: Children in Dimension 3**



Source: Unit data SRI-IMRB 2009.

The state-level variations (Table 4, Annexure 2) show that the proportion of children in Dimension 3 is higher in most states. Apart from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, West Bengal and Odisha too have a high proportion out of school. As Tables 28 (a to h) show, the proportion of out of school girls who are Muslims is quite high in several states. In Bihar and Uttar Pradesh this is high for Muslim boys as well. For SC children, wide gender gaps are seen in rural areas in many states. In rural areas the proportion of STs among the out-of-school children is very high – particularly among girls.

In this age group as well, the children with special needs consist of a significant proportion of out-of-school children. In higher grades, these children need more support, which is a difficult task for families suffering from social and economic disadvantage.

While the large majority of children in this age group are in school, around one fourth is overage – and still studying in primary grades. By the time the children are 14 years of age, only three-fourths have completed grade 5, and less than 40 per cent have completed grade 7. This is also the time when many children drop out – and these children who are overage for their grade are more vulnerable.

### 5.1.2.2 Barriers

The profiles indicate that boys and girls face a very different situation in urban and rural areas. Many of the socio-cultural factors mentioned in the earlier section<sup>381</sup> that adversely impact the demand for schooling for girls, are multiplied for older girls in rural areas. Parents, who are illiterate and poor, may not perceive much gain from continuing their daughters' education, or they may not be able to sustain their efforts to send them to school. Under any kind of financial strain, girls are the first to be taken out of school. As they grow older, girls in rural areas are more likely to be engaged in household chores and looking after younger sibling to free their parents for income generating work. Or they may be married and doing household chores in their husband's home. Even when they are not married, many social groups in rural areas are unwilling to send their daughters to attend schools when commuting is a problem or when there are other security concerns. This reflects in the relatively high proportions of 11-13 year old girls from all communities out of school in rural areas (Fig. 5.2).

For boys from poor families, both in rural and urban areas, it is possibly more the compulsion to start earning that keeps them away from school. Many adolescent boys also migrate to towns to pursue

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<sup>381</sup> Section 5.2.1.2



livelihood opportunities while those in the village find their studies disrupted by seasonal demand for work. So the issue of child labour becomes more critical for children in this age group. Parents often cannot see a clear linkage between education and quality of life since much of the employment in the informal sector does not require formal educational qualifications, but may require some period of apprenticeship. In urban areas, the work opportunities are also higher and so the indirect costs of sending boys to school become more than some parents can bear. The costs of schooling also increase in higher grades and this acts as a deterrent. The impact is seen in the high proportions of out of school among boys among the Muslim and ST families in rural areas, and among boys in all categories in urban areas (Fig. 5.2).

For children in Dimension 3, with a high share of dropouts, supply-side barriers impact school participation in a significant way. While access to schooling has improved remarkably over the last decade, the supply of upper primary facilities is still inadequate. Children in small and remote habitations, such as children from ST groups, continue to face an access problem at this stage. For girls, security concerns make it difficult for them to continue in the absence of neighbourhood schools. Two other important barriers for them are absence of separate toilets for girls and absence of female teachers.

For dropouts, other supply-side factors also act as barriers. In several national-level surveys, many children, particularly boys, have cited “lack of interest in studies” as a reason for discontinuing schooling. In spite of many changes being brought in, classroom transactions are often far from engaging. Considering that many of these children are first-generation learners, the quality of classroom activity becomes crucial to ensure their learning achievements and retention in school. The schooling experience of a child depends on several elements coming together. While child friendly curriculum and textbooks are important parts of it, this needs to be matched by the ability of the teacher to ensure engaging and inclusive classroom practices. The barriers that still exist are in the provision of adequate number of teachers, and in the areas of teaching methods and curriculum. Use of TLMs and generally making the classroom process an enjoyable experience are not reportedly easy to come by in the actual classrooms. Teachers by and large use traditional methods for teaching, and rote learning is emphasised.

## 5.2 Policies to Bring All Children to School

The Indian government’s pro-active and inclusive approach to universalising elementary education is reflected in its initiation of the SSA programme in 2001, and the passing of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2009. Acknowledging the various barriers relating to poverty, gender, social exclusion and language as well as the fact that for many disadvantaged communities these axes overlap, the government has put in place policies to tackle these barriers.

Some of the effective schemes have been those which have reduced costs of education and benefitted poor parents. These includes removal of school fees, free textbooks, free uniforms, scholarships, subsidised transport, and provision of cooked mid day meals. Access to schools has improved substantially due to opening of new schools and investing in school buildings, additional rooms, and facilities such as toilets and ramps.

While these have benefitted all children in school going age, the shift in planning focus from educationally backward states to educationally backward districts, and then to educationally backward blocks has benefitted children from more disadvantaged groups in rural areas.

The policies have been reflective and at present are addressing different dimensions of exclusion simultaneously. The focus has now narrowed down to bringing particular ‘hard to reach’ groups within the schooling process. Thus, targeted programmes are developed to address the problems of special groups like older girls in disadvantaged groups, migrant children, street children, some tribal children, children living in slums, etc.

Realising that demand-side barriers to schooling partly emerge from the socio-cultural norms for these groups, the government has promoted the involvement of the local community in its efforts. This includes motivating parents and the community at large through programmes involving community mobilisation and advocacy, enhancing the role of parents from disadvantaged communities in school committees like SMCs, as well as strengthening the linkages between the school, the teachers and the communities.



Other targeted schemes are provision of KGBVs – scheme launched in July 2004, for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minority communities. Girl students have also been provided with bicycles and escort facilities in some areas. To bring in the out-of-school children from Muslim communities, more schools are using Urdu as a medium of instruction or teaching Urdu as a language in minority concentration areas. Many Madrasas have been modernised so that alongside religious education, science, mathematics and other modern subjects are also taught. For tribal children the policy focus has now shifted towards revision of curriculum and textbooks to address the cultural alienation they face and towards introducing their mother tongue as language of instruction in the initial years. In spite of all these schemes, two-thirds of the out-of-school children are from these disadvantaged groups (SCs, STs and Muslims).

The policy towards out-of-school children has changed. The earlier schemes initially enrolled these children in non-formal schooling with flexible timing and attempted to mainstream them only after they had acquired required levels of learning. The progress in mainstreaming these children had been very limited. With enactment of the RTE act a direct approach is adopted towards solving the problem. Out-of-school children, once identified, are now enrolled in age-appropriate grades in mainstream government schools where, they are provided Special Training for a period varying from 3 months to 2 years to enable them to attain necessary education levels to participate in regular age-appropriate grades. Implementation of these policies are still in the process of evolving and it is too early to assess their merits or shortcomings. Their success depends largely on identify all out-of-school children and on the quality of the classroom transactions in the Special Training programme.

Many of the remaining out-of-school children are difficult to identify. These include working children, migrant children, children with disabilities, children affected by civil strife and street children. Identifying them through household surveys is a problem, particularly in urban areas. These children also require innovative ways of teaching to retain them in the confines of a school routine since they are very used to personal freedom as well as to earning. Migrant children are again a potentially large group, with variations in the type and length of the migration process they are a part of. Here too identification is a major problem, and then innovative policies are needed to bring and retain such children to school. The SSA has set up schools and residential facilities at source as well as destination sites of migration in several states to ensure schooling of their children but reportedly the schemes are not fully effective.

The children with disabilities and special needs are a very vulnerable group. Inclusive education policies have been introduced. Many strategies have been developed but the focus has been more on physical provision of inputs like ramps. Much needs to be done in terms of early identification, improving teaching quality, and on social sensitisation. This is one group where the proportion of children out of school remains very high.

Many changes have been brought about to reduce dropouts and improve the quality of teaching. RTE reiterates the approach of child-centric and child friendly education which was the basis of the National Curriculum Framework of 2005. One of the changes has been in the assessment system. While on the one hand a no detention policy up to grade 8 is in place, a system of comprehensive and continuous evaluation (CCE) of understanding of knowledge and its application has been introduced. This is also evolving and is yet to spread across all the schools.

Another major change which is being introduced at present is in teacher recruitment and teacher education policies. In the past two decades there had been an enormous expansion in enrolment which has given rise to a massive shortage of teachers. These have been largely filled up by para teachers or contract teachers through decentralised recruitment. Their qualification and experience norms were kept different from regular teachers. Recently there is a move towards setting a standard for teacher qualifications and ability. The pre-service teachers' training is being restructured on the basis of a new curricular framework. The approach to in-service teacher training has also undergone considerable revision, becoming more contextualised and needs-based. All aspirant teachers are expected to clear a recently introduced Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) which is expected to provide a benchmark for teacher quality. It is however too early to assess the impact of these changes on classroom processes.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India (MHRD) has played a major role in increasing expenditure on the elementary sector with assistance from additional resources generated through external aid and the education cess. State governments have also increased their expenditure on education. But finance remains a problem in many states resulting in shortages of teachers and infrastructure. Even when there are sufficient funds, programme implementation has been impacted by the low non-salary allocations, and the slow and irregular flow of funds. So there is a need to increase the level of expenditure as well as to alter its composition. The efficiency of the fund flow also suffers crucially from understaffing and lack of training, and needs to be addressed.

With policy focus shifting from state level to block and school levels, several steps have been taken to decentralise administration and management. The administrative structure has been decentralised and more responsibilities in the areas of teacher training and administration have been delegated to district and block level organisations. Decentralisation of education management has also been initiated through involving the school management committees and local government or the PRIs in school management. The policy initiatives are still evolving, as mentioned earlier. However implementation of the existing policies leaves much scope for improvement. The persistent teacher absenteeism in some states indicates governance deficits, as does the poor maintenance of government school facilities. The attempts at decentralisation have been successful to an extent. For the system to achieve its full potential, the problems of staff shortage and insufficient training at the block and cluster levels need to be addressed. It is also essential to improve the capacity of the local body members through regular training and support. The financing and governance problems partly arise from the overlapping jurisdiction of the different tiers of government in matters of finance as well as education administration. There is a need to rationalise and outline their roles and responsibilities in more detail.

In conclusion, the government has made great strides in providing access and enrolment to most children in the age group of 6-14 years, however, equitable targeted quality programmes are required to be implemented to reduce drop out and enhance learning achievements of all children.

### 5.3 Key Recommendations

The profiles and barriers identified in Dimensions 2 and 3, if matched against relevant programmes and schemes in place, point to some important issues which need additional attention.

First, a large proportion of the children in Dimension 2 are out of school because they are enrolled when they are 7 or 8 years old. Consequently these children are likely to be enrolled in school later, the

likelihood of their completing eight years of education by the age of 14 is low. This is not acknowledged as an important problem as the usual indicators used to monitor progress like the proportions of children out of school, or attendance rates, fail to capture this problem. While for the majority of children, the age of admission is 5 or 6 years, it is important to study the reasons why enrolment is delayed for some children.

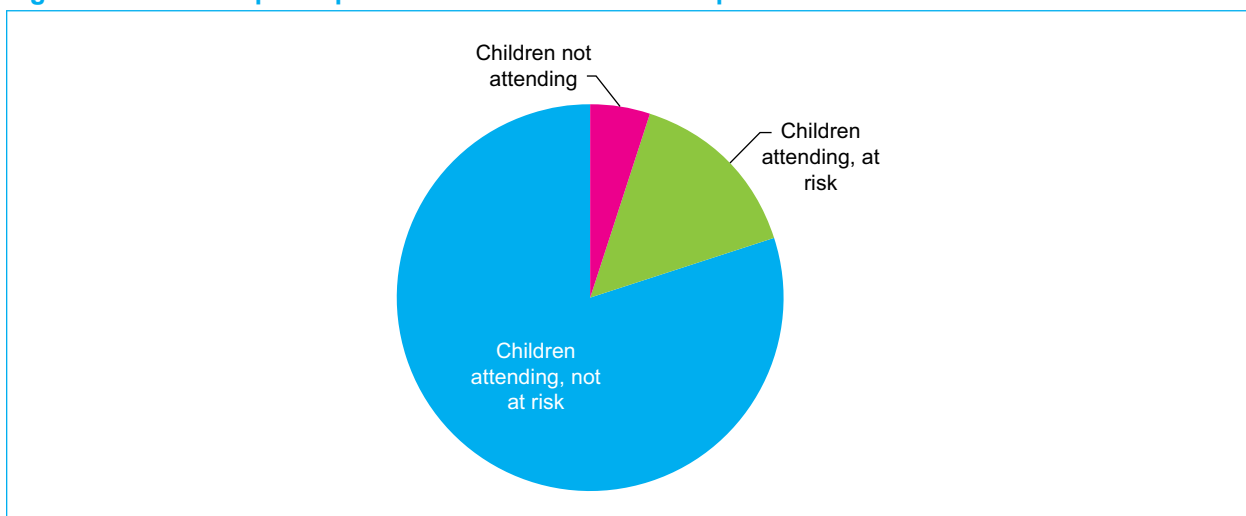
Second, while the policy towards mainstreaming children identified as out of school is quite clear, the policies to ensure that all children in the age group complete eight years of education are not so explicitly stated. So while Special Training is planned in a manner that the out-of-school children can study in age appropriate grades, no such programmes are in place for overage enrolled children. This too is largely the result of using primarily indicators which measure proportions and numbers in school and out of school. Enrolment statistics on the 11 to 13 year olds indicate that at least one third of the children are overage for their grades and need additional support to complete eight years of education.

Dropping out is not a one-off process. Different studies have clearly shown that dropping out may be a gradual process, often following a period of irregular attendance, and could be a result of declining motivation in the face of many barriers arising from illness, work pressure, low learning levels, or classroom processes. At any particular point of time, children in a given age group may be in one of the three areas marked in Figure 5.3. Available data sources identify a small proportion of children who are not attending school because they are never enrolled or dropouts as the ones who are out of school and the rest as children in school. They are not able to identify those children who are in school but at risk of dropping out. Tracking children’s attendance could help detect the cases of children who are at risk of dropping out. Also the size of these groups may change over the year depending on the child’s family circumstances and seasonal changes. The children at risk may remain in school till the age of 14 years and drop out later without completing eight years of education. They are not captured through household surveys which only focus on children between 6 to 13 years but is reflected in the high dropout rates calculated on the basis of DISE data or SES data. This means that the educational details of older children up to the age of 18 years not captured by all households surveys. These children are in Dimensions 4 and 5 according to CMF of the global initiative, and can be identified from children who are enrolled in primary and upper primary grades, irrespective of their age.

The present education goals require that these at-risk children should be retained in school beyond the age of 14, till they complete 8 years of education. It would be an easier task to learn about the barriers faced by the at-risk children at local level and develop strategies to keep them in school, rather than wait for them to drop out before trying to mainstream them. This is likely to be more cost-effective too.

Third, while the larger data sets point out that the children who have remained out of school are concentrated in specific population groups, smaller case studies have identified population groups like street children and migrant children who also have very high proportions of out-of-school children. A significant proportion of these children are not covered in the available datasets as they are difficult to identify through household surveys, and often the gravity of their problems remain understated. For example, the SRI-IMRB survey had endeavoured to collect schooling information on all children with

**Figure 5.3 School participation of children: Schematic presentation**



Note: The diagram is indicative and not to scale.

special needs in their sample areas. The data showed that they constitute more than 12 per cent of the out-of-school children. Similar surveys are required to focus on such difficult-to-reach groups such as migrant children, street children, children in areas of civil strife and child labourers. It is useful to conduct qualitative exploratory studies based on the data available on OOSC with the intention of designing comprehensive strategy.

All this adds to the need for robust data and indicators, as well as more focused analyses. With this concluding section, we come full circle back to where we started from – the need for reliable statistical information to guide planning and monitoring.

### 5.3.1 Multiple data sources

#### Why do we need education data?

A reliable and regular data source on children in school and out of school is useful as a tool for monitoring progress and programme implementation, and as a support for planning and policy formulation.

The data helps to assess what progress a country (and its constituent states) is making in providing education to all. It is also a diagnostic tool – indicators calculated at macro and meso levels can identify systemic problems and issues of concern. It can provide policy direction and is also useful to plan the overall resource requirements.

The more micro-level indicators serve as useful monitoring and accountability measures at school and habitation levels. It can also help to identify local issues of concern and to identify the target population groups for specific programmes and schemes. School and habitation level data can provide useful inputs for decentralised planning.

Reliable data also plays an important role in research and advocacy. For this it is important to have data which is representative and neutral.

#### Different data sources

It is difficult for any one or two data sources to meet all the different requirements. In India there are several sources, and, they usually highlight different issues. A major difference between data from household surveys and school surveys is that while the former focuses on children in a particular age group, the latter focuses on children enrolled in particular grades. The indicators based on these alternative sources should be considered together for diagnostic purposes. They may sometimes even be contradictory as seen from the dropout rates calculated from household and administrative data sources. So it is important to specify the definitions and methodology used and to interpret the data carefully.

Table 5.1 presents some important details of the data sets which are commonly used for analysis in India. It is seen that the findings from the two household surveys, and the two school surveys, are not exactly similar. They emphasise different aspects of the situation. Data from other sources highlight some additional problems which are not in the domain of these data sets – irregular attendance and low learning levels for a significant proportion of children in school and problems in school participation of some of the more vulnerable population groups.

**Table 5.1 Main findings from different sources of data**

| Data                          | Indicators   | Disaggregation   | Important findings   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>SRI-IMRB 2005 and 2009</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OOS proportion &amp; numbers</li> <li>• NE and DO proportions</li> <li>• Attendance rates and ANAR</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural – Urban</li> <li>• State</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Caste/Tribe/Religion</li> <li>• Population groups – disabled, BPL, slum children</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decline in proportion &amp; number OOS</li> <li>• D2 low in all population groups – high NE, low DO.</li> <li>• Proportion D3 higher than D2 – NE &amp; DO similar.</li> <li>• Proportion increases with multiple barriers</li> <li>• More girls OOSC in rural areas but impact reverse in urban areas.</li> <li>• High OOSC among CWSN, OOSC higher among BPL, but not among slum children</li> <li>• ANAR low in 11-13 age group</li> </ul> |

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| Data  | Indicators  | Disaggregation   | Important findings  |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>NSSO 2007-08 and 2009-10</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OOS proportions &amp; numbers</li> <li>NE and DO proportions</li> <li>Attendance rates and ANAR</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural – Urban</li> <li>State</li> <li>Gender</li> <li>Caste/Tribe/Religion</li> <li>Expenditure quintiles</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decline in proportion &amp; number OOS – but much higher than from SRI-IMRB.</li> <li>D2 less than D3. In D2 high NE, low DO. In D3, NE less than DO.</li> <li>Proportions of both D2 &amp; D3 increase with multiple barriers.</li> <li>More girls OOSC in rural areas, similar proportions for boys and girls in urban areas.</li> <li>OOSC very high in lowest expenditure quintile, particularly in urban areas.</li> <li>ANAR low in 11-13 age group – same as from SRI-IMRB survey.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SES – different years</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number enrolled</li> <li>Change in enrolment</li> <li>GER</li> <li>Dropout ratio (1 to 5, to 8 and to 10)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural – Urban</li> <li>State</li> <li>Gender</li> <li>Caste/Tribe</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in enrolment – more among girls, SC and ST.</li> <li>GER in 6 to 10 age group very high, 11 – 13 much lower.</li> <li>Dropout ratio very high – more in grades 6 to 8.</li> <li>Dropout ratio very high for ST</li> </ul>   |
| <b>DISE (UDISE) different years</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number enrolled</li> <li>Change in enrolment</li> <li>GER, NER</li> <li>Flow indicators - Promotion, dropout, repetition, transition, retention</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural – Urban</li> <li>State/district/block/school</li> <li>Gender</li> <li>Caste/Tribe/Religion</li> <li>Disabled</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in enrolment – more among girls, SC and ST.</li> <li>GER and NER high in 6-10 age group; much lower in 11-13 age group</li> <li>Low retention rate up to grade 8.</li> <li>Low transition rate between grades 5 and 6.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Other studies – qualitative and quantitative</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High proportions OOSC among the CWSN, street children, working children, homeless population, migrant population, areas affected with civil strife.</li> <li>High absenteeism in school.</li> <li>Children aged 14 years and higher enrolled in elementary stage.</li> <li>Low learning levels.</li> </ul> |  |   |

Note: D2 – Dimension 2. D3 – Dimension 3. NE – never enrolled. DO – Dropout.

### 5.3.2 Variations in estimates from different sources and its implications

In Chapter 2 it was pointed out that the estimates from different sources are not directly comparable due to differences in definitions, sample design and estimation methodology. Even with the same data source (SRI-IMRB 2009), alternative definitions and estimation methodology gives alternative estimates (Table 2.6a).

In this section the Report has conducted a more detailed exercise with household survey data for the same year from two different sources – SRI-IMRB in the year 2009 commissioned by MHRD, GoI, and the multi-purpose survey conducted by NSSO in the same year, commissioned by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GoI. These two surveys had a similar sampling frame. From each set of data the Report has made four estimates of the number of out-of-school children – using two different definitions of out-of-school children and two different sources of population projections. Estimates of out-of-school children can also be calculated from administrative data sources if information on school participation of all children in the 6 to 13 age group is available. At present such a data set is not easily available as DISE data had collected information on children in grades 1 to 8. The calculations made by UIS on the basis of data they could access from the Government of India, for the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 for comparisons, are presented here.

Definition 1 of out-of-school children is the one used by SRI-IMRB surveys – children in the 6 to 13 age group who do not attend any educational institutions, formal or non-formal, in pre-primary, grade 1 or

**Table 5.2 Estimates of out-of-school children in 6 to 13 age group from household surveys**

| Out-of-school children according to | SRI-IMRB 2009<br>Population projection RGI |                     | SRI-IMRB 2009<br>Population projection UNPD |                     |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|---------------------|
|                                     | Proportion (%)                             | Number (in million) | Proportion (%)                              | Number (in million) |
| <b>6 – 10 years</b>                 |  |                     |   |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 3.69                                       | 4.3                 | 3.69  | 4.5                 |
| Definition 2                        | 6.42                                       | 7.6                 | 6.42  | 7.8                 |
| <b>11 – 13 years</b>                |  |                     |   |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 5.23                                       | 3.8                 | 5.23  | 3.7                 |
| Definition 2                        | 5.64                                       | 4.1                 | 5.64  | 4.0                 |
| <b>6 – 13 Years</b>                 |  |                     |   |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 4.28                                       | 8.15                | 4.28  | 8.3                 |
| Definition 2                        | 6.17                                       | 11.7                | 6.17  | 11.9                |

| Out-of-school children according to | NSSO 2009-10<br>Population projection RGI |                     | NSSO 2009-10<br>Population projection UNPD |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|--|---------------------|
|                                     | Proportion (%)                            | Number (in million) | Proportion (%)                             | Number (in million) |
| <b>6 – 10 years</b>                 |   |                     |  |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 7.90                                      | 9.3                 | 7.90                                       | 9.6                 |
| Definition 2                        | 10.81                                     | 12.7                | 10.81                                      | 13.2                |
| <b>11 – 13 years</b>                |   |                     |  |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 8.03                                      | 5.9                 | 8.03                                       | 5.7                 |
| Definition 2                        | 8.34                                      | 6.1                 | 8.34                                       | 6.0                 |
| <b>6 – 13 years</b>                 |   |                     |  |                     |
| Definition 1                        | 7.95                                      | 15.2                | 7.95                                       | 15.4                |
| Definition 2                        | 9.92                                      | 18.9                | 9.92                                       | 19.2                |

Source: Projected population estimated from RGI projections (190.6 million in the 6 to 13 age group) and UNPD Population database 2012 revision (193.56 million in the 6 to 13 age group); attendance rates calculated from SRI-IMRB 2009 and NSSO 2009-10 data.

Definition 1: Out-of-school children are those who do not attend any educational institutions (formal and informal) in pre-primary or higher grades.

Definition 2: Out-of-school children are those who do not attend any formal education institutions in primary grades or above.

higher grades. Definition 2 is the one suggested by the CMF of the Global Initiative – children in the 6 to 13 age group who do not attend formal schools in grade 1 or higher grades (or equivalent education in non-formal centres). Similarly the first population projection is that used by RGI and the other by UNPD.

The alternate estimates of out-of-school children in Table 5.1 point out that even from the same data set, differences in definitions and estimation methodology lead to widely different estimates. The calculations are made at the national level. The table shows that with the change in definition of schools, the number of out-of-school children changes by 3 to 4 million within each data set. With changes in projected population, the estimated out-of-school children differ by 0.3 to 0.6 million within each data set.

More important it also focuses on the fact that even with similar definitions, sampling design and population projections used for estimation the proportion out of school varies by around 7 million between different data sets. This arises from differences in the definition of attendance and in the scope of the survey. The fact that the surveys were conducted at different times of the year, and that both covered parts of two academic years, may have added to the problem.

UIS have developed a methodology of calculating proportions of children enrolled and children out of school when enrolment from all schools by grade and age is available. Though this is an indirect way of estimating out of school children, as administrative data from schools are collected and compiled regularly, this provides a cost-effective process of monitoring progress. Age data of children enrolled in each grade, if collected, can be used to calculate the number of children enrolled in any particular age group. It is then possible to apply population projections for the age group to calculate the number of children who are out of school. The detailed methodology is given below.

**Table 5.3 Formula to calculate proportion of out-of-school children from administrative data**

| Age group             | Definition   | Formula   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| <b>6 to 10 years</b>  | 100 – [(number of children in primary grades + number of children in upper primary grades)/ estimated population of 6 -10 age group]   | 100 – ANER (6 – 10 age group)   |
| <b>11 to 13 years</b> | 100 – [(number of children in primary grades + number of children in upper primary grades + number of children in secondary grades)/estimated population of 11-13 age group] | 100 – ANER (11-13 age group) – proportion of children of 11 – 13 age group in primary grades. |

UIS have estimated the numbers and proportions of children out of school as given in Table 5.3, based on the UNPD population database and the enrolment data made available to them by the Indian government. The definitions take into account children enrolled in formal schools in primary grades and above, and so are closer to the definition 2 in household surveys. The table shows a higher number of out-of-school children than that estimated from either of the two household surveys for the year 2009. The number in the 6 to 10 age group was only 1.2 million in 2009, but nearly 21 million in the 11 to 13 age group.

**Table 5.4 Estimates of out-of-school children (6-13 age group) based on administrative data**

| Out-of-school children by age group | 2009                  |                            | 2010                  |                            | 2011                  |                            |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
|                                     | Proportion of OOS (%) | Number of OOS (in million) | Proportion of OOS (%) | Number of OOS (in million) | Proportion of OOS (%) | Number of OOS (in million) |
| 6 to 10 age group                   | 1.0                   | 1.2                        | 0.7                   | 0.8                        | 1.1                   | 1.3                        |
| 11 to 13 age group                  | 29.4                  | 20.9                       | 25.6                  | 18.3                       | 22.8                  | 16.4                       |
| 6 to 13 age group                   |                       | 22.1                       |                       | 19.1                       |                       | 17.7                       |

Source: UIS data 2012

## Implications

### 1. Different profile and policy implications

The number and proportions of out-of-school children vary widely depending on the source of data and estimation methodology. But the variation is not only in the magnitude of the problem, but also on the profile of the out-of-school children, and depending on the source that is used the policy implications will also change.

For example as Table 5.2 shows, according to SRI-IMRB 2009 data and definition 1 of OOSC children, the proportion in Dimension 2, 3.69 per cent, is lower than the proportion in Dimension 3, 5.23 per cent. If definition 2 of OOSC children is used, the same data shows 6.42 per cent in Dimension 2 and 5.64 per cent in Dimension 3. In the former case, Dimension 2 is quite small and priority should be on reducing Dimension 3, while in the second case the situation is reversed. It points out that nearly 3 per cent of children in the 6 to 10 age group are overage and studying in pre-primary grades and they are unlikely to complete 8 years of education by the age of 14. For that other policy measures need to be in place.

Estimates based on NSSO 2009 data using definition 1 show around 8 per cent are out of school in both Dimensions 2 and 3 – the proportions are higher and equally important for both the age group. Use of definition 2 (Table 5.2) shows that 10.8 per cent of 6 to 10 year old are out of school that is 3 per cent in the 6 to 10 age group are in pre-primary grades and there is an urgent need to support these children.

The UIS estimate based on administrative surveys on the other hand indicate that the problem of out-of-school children is almost solved in Dimension 2, but is very high in Dimension 3. So the need to bring back to school the children in Dimension 3 is of high priority.

Similar exercises aiming at estimating numbers out of school at state levels would also be useful. The large differences in the estimates derived from data collected through household surveys and administrative surveys around the same time underlines the need for a uniform definition and methodology for estimation. If a clearly specified harmonised definition is used by all data sources, it would make it easy to monitor progress using data from different sources.



## 2. Possibility of using administrative data sources for estimation

If age-grade details of enrolment data from grades 1 to 10 from all schools are collected it is possible to have reliable estimates of proportions and numbers of children out of school. However, when coverage is not complete (a likely scenario if children go to schools unrecognised by the education department), these are likely to be overestimates. In the future, in keeping with the requirements of the RTE act, all schools are expected to be recognised. Data from all schools from grades 1 to 12 are collected under UDISE, and this could provide a reliable and regular data source to estimate out-of-school children.

National-level household surveys require extensive time and resources. So it is not feasible to conduct them annually. So estimates based on these are available at larger intervals. Administrative sources, on the other hand, collect data from schools as a normal routine. It is possible to use estimates based on administrative data for regular monitoring, and validate it at regular intervals with data from national level household surveys.

### 5.3.3 Difficulties in identifying out-of-school children

In the context of the present government policy of admitting out-of-school children into schools in age appropriate grades, an out of school child is defined as: "A child 6-14 years of age who has never been enrolled in an elementary school, or if after enrolment has been absent from school, without prior intimation for reasons of absence, for a period of 45 days or more". Different surveys and data sources should use this as the common definition of out-of-school children during their surveys. This would ensure harmonisation of these data sources. The Report examines the problems usually faced during the data collection process.

- a. *Response bias*: With several laws in place like the RTE Act, child labour laws, and laws specifying minimum age of marriage, there is often a bias towards not reporting a child's details when he/she is not in school. This could be a reason why girls are under-represented in sample surveys.<sup>382</sup>

The respondents may not always have exact information about the age of a child and the school or grade they are enrolled in. When parents do not have the time or opportunity to visit their children's school or interact with the teachers this is more likely to happen. This is also more likely in joint families, where the respondent may not be the parent of the child.



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<sup>382</sup> The proportions of girls among all 6 to 13 year olds, from both NSSO and SRI-IMRB surveys, are only around 46 per cent, considerably lower than the proportion in census data.

- b. *Migrant children*: A child who migrates out of the village for a few months every year may be in school when in his/her source village, and out of school when in the destination village. In these cases if the survey is done when the child is in the source village and in school, he/she will not be identified as out of school. Without a system of monitoring attendance over the year it is unlikely that these children will be identified as out of school at any point of time.
- c. *Street children*: Household surveys are unlikely to cover homeless population or children who do not live with their family. To ensure coverage of these children, special survey strategies need to be developed.
- d. *Attendance status*: If out-of-school children are defined on the basis of enrolment, identifying the not enrolled is not difficult. But when definition is based on attendance criteria, as proposed, the situation is more complicated. Respondents are often not aware of the exact number of days the child has been absent from school.
- e. Usually household surveys in the states are conducted by officials or functionaries of the school system and at times all the households are not visited by them and this leads to under-reporting the number of OOSC.
- f. Closer coordination between Education and Labour departments to work effectively in coordination on the issue of main streaming working children.

#### 5.3.4 Data Recommendations

It is important to have uniform definitions and methodology to identify and estimate out-of-school children. The definition proposed on the SSA in the context of Special Training for out-of-school children is a useful starting point. The following recommendations are made on the premise that this definition (or a similar one) will be accepted by all state governments in identifying out-of-school children.

For India, the education goal for children in the 6 to 13 age group is to ensure that they all complete 8 years of schooling with the required learning levels. The recommendations in this section are made with this broader goal in mind and are based on the learnings from this study.



### ***Need for multiple indicators of schooling***

As discussed, while the number of out-of-school children in the 6 to 13 age group has declined sharply, many children above 14 years drop out before completing 8 years of schooling. Under the present indicators which measure progress, this aspect does not receive the attention that is required. So the focus of policy should shift from bringing all children into school, to all children completing eight years of education. To study the problems in retention, and for planning and policy, it is necessary to collect data to calculate indicators like ANAR/ANER and grade completion by age.

More information should be collected on in-school children such as their age, learning levels, mother tongue, special needs if any, all of which may influence a child's likelihood of dropping out. This will help in identifying children at risk of dropping out, noting reasons why they are at risk, and planning on the basis of this information.

### ***Need to harmonise definitions and methodologies***

Indicators from different data sources may provide contradictory results, unless the definitions are harmonised. Several alternative scenarios have been presented in Table 5.2. The definition and methodology chosen should be clearly stated when estimating the number or proportions out of school. This would help in reconciling the differences in estimates, if any.

### ***Need to monitor attendance***

Identifying out-of-school children through an annual exercise of community mapping as schooling status may change over the year depending on the regularity of a child's attendance in school.

The mapping needs to be complemented by school teachers and SMC members monitoring each enrolled child's attendance in school. If teachers identify students with irregular attendance, or continued absenteeism for more than a pre-specified number of days and inform the SMC members, it may be possible to bring the child back to school before he/she drops out of the system. This could serve as an alarm system alerting the SMC members and parents when a child may be on the verge of dropping out.

### ***Provide support to stakeholders in using of education data***

Updated data on enrolment and attendance are a useful tool at both macro and micro levels for planning, monitoring and implementation. They can be used in the making of school development plans. Local communities can also use them to monitor the implementation of RTE. So data from both school and household surveys need to be maintained at state/district/block/school levels and made easily accessible.

At present DISE report cards are available at different levels but their use is quite limited at school and habitation levels, and even in some cases at block levels. The SMC members, teachers and other stakeholders need to be trained to understand the potential use of the Report Cards and how to use it for planning and monitoring activities.

### ***Recommendations for data collected through Household Surveys***

*Clear definitions:* The definition of out-of-school children should be clearly defined and incorporated in the questionnaire for data collection. So in addition to questions about school and grade enrolled, the respondent should be asked whether the child has been going to school regularly, and when did he/she last go to school.

*Training to identify CWSN:* Special efforts are required to collect information on children from vulnerable population groups. While many schemes are in position to ensure inclusive education, not all children with special needs have been identified. Anganwadi workers are already trained to do so, and during community mapping to identify out-of-school children, AWWs could be asked to train those responsible for the survey or to accompany them during house visits.

*Strategies for identifying out-of-school children among those who migrate/those who work:* Estimating out-of-school children among migrant populations is also difficult. At the time of the survey, the children may be in the village and enrolled in school, but they may be out of school at a later period. Or at the time of the survey, they may have migrated with their families; their houses may be locked and no information about them can be collected. Close monitoring of children from these families may be necessary. Similar strategies may be necessary to identify out of school working children, particularly those involved in seasonal work or part time work.



*Data on children up to 18 years:* The high dropout rate between grades 1 to 8 is not detected in household survey data on children from 6 to 14 years of age, primarily because the age group is not an exact match of the age of children in elementary grades. So during household surveys, education-related data on older children (up to 18 years) needs to be collected.

**Recommendations for data collected through School Surveys**

DISE data collects information on children in grades 1 to 8. Now under UDISE, data on grades 1 to 12 are collected. This is a useful step, as the age-grade norms in different states are not fixed, and children below 14 years may be enrolled in grade 9 or above. So enrolment data on all children enrolled in these grades should be collected along with details on age, address, and grade enrolled in the previous year.

Enrolment data from all schools – government and private – should be collected. Collecting information from private unaided schools has been difficult in the past, particularly if they were not recognised by state education authorities. All schools are required to satisfy certain quality norms and be recognised under the RTE rules. This should make data collection from schools easier.

Care needs to be taken that no child is double counted through this process. It is found that some children are enrolled in more than one school simultaneously – by choice, or by not informing the school authorities before leaving the school and taking admission in another.<sup>383</sup>

Numbers enrolled in a school may change over the year. The school teachers should be given clear instructions about identifying a child who has not attended school continuously for 45 days, and finding out the reasons for their absence by developing and utilising standard record keeping register at all schools. This child may have discontinued schooling altogether, may have taken admission in another school, may have migrated, or may be absent due to reasons like illness, family crisis, seasonal work, or even festivals or family functions. Depending on the reasons of continued absence the child’s name should be struck off the enrolment register or the child brought back to school. Based on this enrolment and age data, an alternate estimate of out-of-school children can be calculated.

<sup>383</sup> States like Rajasthan have assigned an identity number to each child when enrolled in grade 1. Any child who seeks admission to any school in a higher grade has to refer to this identity number. This process has helped the state identify cases of double enrolment. Other states have also made efforts to reduce double enrolment.

## Annexure 1. Data Inventory

| Data Source and Current Data Administrator   | Periodicity of Data Source                                       | Definition of OOSC  | Level of Disaggregation  | Data collection process and Coverage   | Advantages  | Limitation  |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Statistics of School Education (2010-11)</b><br>Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), GOI. | Annual (3 to 4 years lag between collection and release of data) | No definition. Have used ISCED framework in data presentation. GERs are calculated. Ref date 30 September.              | State; Sex; School Type; School Management; Grade; SC & ST   | No survey. State education departments collect data from pre-primary grades to grade 12 in all recognised schools, & colleges & send it to MHRD. Data from pre-primary schools, and open schools are also presented. Calculates GERs and Dropout rates by gender and by SC/ST. | Enrolment data from pre-primary to grade 12 is available in one place. Presents enrolment in formal schools, pre-primary schools, and open schools.   | The data collected by the state departments is not always updated. When data was missing data from DISE, and/ or SEMIS (Secondary Education Management Education System) is used. In some cases gender-wise or caste-wise breakup is not collected but estimated. |
| <b>8<sup>th</sup> All India School Educational Survey (2009)</b><br>by NCERT under MHRD                | 8 completed rounds at a gap of 7 to 9 years.                     | No definition or estimate of OOSC. Selected tables have been published. In earlier surveys GER and NER were calculated. | Area (Rural/ Urban, State); Age; Sex; School Type; School Management; SC/ST; Minority Community; Disability type; Language of instruction. | Information collected from grades 1 to 12 in all recognised schools. Data from pre-primary schools, EGS centres, non-formal education centres, institutes for religious education, and unrecognised schools are collected and presented separately.                            | Only data source where information on all educational facilities – formal non-formal, and general and religious – is collected through survey. It is the only administrative source which looks at access to school – availability of schooling facilities and distance from all habitations are collected. | Data available after a long time lag – provisional results of the Eighth Survey, were made available after 4 years.   |

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| Data Source and Current Data Administrator   | Periodicity of Data Source   | Definition of OOSC   | Level of Disaggregation  | Data collection process and Coverage   | Advantages  | Limitation   |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>DISE NUEPA</b></p> <p>School report cards available online. Unit level data is available free on request to NUEPA.</p> <p>Recently merged with EMIS of secondary educated and maintained as UDISE</p>            | Annual   | No definition or estimate of out of school children. GER and NER calculated on basis of population projections. Reference date for age 30 September.   | Area (Rural/ Urban, State, district, block, cluster and school level); Age; Sex; School Type; School Management; Grade; SC/ST/OBC/Muslims; Children with disability. | Information collected from pre-primary grades to grade 8 from all recognised schools. Some states have started collecting data from unrecognised schools since 2009-10, and in the current year all states are collecting it. Presently data on children enrolled in grades 9 to 12 is also collected. | It has reduced the time lag and is made available within a year. It is the only source where age and grade matrix is given. It provides useful report cards even at the school level and is a useful planning tool.   | Data from recognised schools from all states and unrecognised schools from some states are collected. The data quality varies from state to state. Not all schools report age and grade matrix, Earlier some states where grade 8 is not part of elementary school, could not provide complete enrolment in grade 8. It may then underestimate GER and NER . |
| <p><b>NSS (2007-08) National Statistical Organisation, Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation.</b></p> <p>Unit level data are available on CD-ROMS from the DDG, Computer Centre, M/O Statistics and PI</p> | Socio economic surveys every year-education is the focus once in every 10 years. Data on school participation also available from employment rounds, every 5 years | Children who were not attending any formal educational institution at primary level (including EGS) or higher at the time of survey are considered not attending. But no reference period defining requirement for attendance If child not attending because of illness, vacation or waiting for results, then to be considered in school. | Area (Rural/ Urban, State level); Age; Sex; Expenditure quintiles and deciles; Caste; Religion; School Type; School Management.                                      | A stratified multi-stage design was adopted for the 64 <sup>th</sup> round survey. Information on school participation of all children between 5 to 29 years collected – information on participation at pre-primary level and above in recognised and unrecognised schools collected.                 | The survey also collected particulars of the private expenditure on education for those who are currently attending at primary level and above and details about the incentives received. Particulars of currently not attending persons including reasons of non-attendance were also collected. | These education rounds are conducted once in every decade, and the data from 5-yearly employment rounds gives some information. But annual data is not collected so not very useful to monitor progress. Did not cover Leh and Kargil districts of J&K and interior villages of Nagaland, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.                                     |

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| Data Source and Current Data Administrator   | Periodicity of Data Source                       | Definition of OOSC  | Level of Disaggregation   | Data collection process and Coverage                                       | Advantages  | Limitation  |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p><b>NFHS-3 (2005-06)</b><br/> <b>Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI.</b><br/>           Data available from the website <a href="http://www.measuredhs.com/">http://www.measuredhs.com/</a> free of cost</p>   | 3 rounds - approximately at 6 to 7 years gap     | Any child who did not attend school or college at primary level or above at any time in 2005-06 school year is considered as an out of school child. Reference date for age is 1 April.   | Area (Rural/ Urban, State and district level); Age; Sex; Caste; Religion; School Type; School Management; Wealth Quintile; Child at Work.                     | A multi-stage random sampling design was adopted for the household survey. | Its main advantage is in the rigorous data collection process and quick processing of data, and ease of access to data.   | This survey is an All-India level Household Survey. The main focus of the survey is family health status and education is a background characteristic of the household. So very limited information on school participation and education institutions is available.  |
| <p><b>All India Survey of out-of-school children.</b><br/>           Commissioned by EdCIL with support from the MHRD, GOI.<br/>           SRI – IMRB International was entrusted with the survey and analysis.<br/>           Report available at <a href="http://ssa.nic.in/page_portletlinks?foldername=research-studies">http://ssa.nic.in/page_portletlinks?foldername=research-studies</a>, unit data not easily accessed.</p> | Two identical surveys conducted in 2005 and 2009 | <p>A child is out of school if not enrolled or enrolled but absent for more than two months from formal government and private schools, madrasas imparting general education, Sanskrit Pathshalas EGS centres, AIE centres, nursery or kindergarten in any school.</p> <p>A child attending only religious education grades, Aganwadis or enrolled in correspondence course, is out of school.</p> <p>Reference date for age 1 January.</p> | Area (Rural/Urban, State and district level)<br>Age Sex<br>SC/ST/ Muslim<br>School Type<br>School Management<br>Disability type<br>BPL category<br>Slum area. | A three-stage stratified sample design was adopted for this survey.        | <p>Very useful as focused on out-of-school children and used attendance and not enrolment criterion to identify out-of-school children.</p> <p>Detailed information on school participation of disabled children, children in BPL families and children living in slum areas collected.</p> <p>Reasons for never enrolled and dropout children collected.</p> | The survey does not cover: (a) Leh (Ladhak) and Kargil districts of Jammu & Kashmir (b) interior villages of Nagaland situated beyond five kms of the bus route, and (c) villages in Andaman and Nicobar Islands which remain inaccessible throughout the year. Sample in smaller states and UTs are small and estimates may not be reliable. |

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| Data Source and Current Data Administrator   | Periodicity of Data Source   | Definition of OOSC  | Level of Disaggregation  | Data collection process and Coverage  | Advantages   | Limitation   |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Child Census Surveys By certain state governments. Data available at the state SSA websites.</b></p>   | <p>Odisha started in 2005. A few other states started in 2010-11. They are updated annually.</p> | <p>A child is 'out of school' if not enrolled or absent continuously for 30 days in any formal (including EGS and AIE schools) in pre-primary, grade 1 or above. Reference date for age 30 September.</p> | <p>Area (Rural/ Urban, State, district, block, village level); Age; Sex; Caste; Religion; School type; School management; Disability; Mother Tongue.</p> | <p>Odisha initiated the process and other states like Rajasthan and Uttarakhand have also started it. A database of all the children of 0-14 years, consisting of their name, age, sex, caste, educational status, the reasons for being out of school and other indicators is built and loaded on a state database server.</p> | <p>As they are updated annually and available freely at their website they can be used as a tool for child tracking.</p>   | <p>Efforts are made to have complete error-free coverage. And many discrepancies with the Village Education Registers have been identified. But the data collection process is not error-free yet.</p> |
| <p><b>India Human Development Survey 2004-5</b></p> <p>National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), India and the University of Maryland, USA.</p> <p>Data available at ICPSR Study 22626.</p> | <p>Irregular. Repeated after a gap of 11-12 years.</p>   | <p>Out-of-school children includes those who have never attended and those who have attended earlier but currently not enrolled in any formal schools, EGS, madaras, and open schools.</p>                | <p>Area (urban/ rural, state level); Age; Sex; MPCE quintiles; Caste; Religion; School type; School management.</p>                                      | <p>Multi stage stratified random sample used. Part of the sample is a same as earlier survey in 1993. Sample also selected from states/districts not covered earlier. All states covered</p>  | <p>Generates a panel data set and is very useful for analysing changes. Has useful information such as absenteeism, failures, repetitions, knowledge of English, cost of schooling, school incentives.</p> | <p>Doesn't cover Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep</p>  |

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| Data Source and Current Data Administrator   | Periodicity of Data Source | Definition of OOSC   | Level of Disaggregation   | Data collection process and Coverage   | Advantages   | Limitation   |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| <b>ASER Resource Centre</b><br>Data can be accessed by using data query system on <a href="http://www.aser-centre.org">www.aser-centre.org</a> | Annual                     | Children in the age group 5-16 years who are not enrolled in school (includes govt/pvt/madrasa/EGS/AIE). | Age<br>Sex<br>State<br>School type<br>School management<br>Parent's education | ASER uses a two stage random sampling design in all districts. It's a survey in rural areas. | Data is collected annually in November and December in all states. Low lag - report available in February. Data available on 3-4 year old children and in preschool education. Annual data collection on learning achievements is helpful for policy-makers and researchers. | The database is huge and is collected by many organisations working at the field level in a short span of time. Hence the quality of data varies. It is confined to rural areas and does not cover all districts though coverage is increasing every year. |

## Annexure 2. Tables

**Table 1a Percentage of children of 5 years of age in pre-primary or primary education, by sex and other characteristics, 2009** (per cent)

|                      | Not attending school | Attending formal pre-primary | Attending primary and above | Attending either pre-primary or primary |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Male</b>          |                      |                              |                             |   |
| <b>Residence</b>     |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Urban                | 6.5                  | 37.0                         | 56.6                        | 93.5                                    |
| Rural                | 13.1                 | 18.1                         | 68.8                        | 86.9                                    |
| <b>Religion</b>      |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Muslims              | 15.2                 | 29.2                         | 55.6                        | 84.8                                    |
| Non-Muslims          | 11.5                 | 20.2                         | 68.4                        | 88.5                                    |
| <b>Social Groups</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| SC                   | 16.3                 | 21.7                         | 62.0                        | 83.7                                    |
| ST                   | 11.6                 | 19.6                         | 68.8                        | 88.4                                    |
| OBC                  | 12.2                 | 18.5                         | 69.3                        | 87.8                                    |
| Others               | 8.3                  | 26.2                         | 65.6                        | 91.8                                    |
| <b>Female</b>        |                      |                              |                             |   |
| <b>Residence</b>     |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Urban                | 10.8                 | 32.0                         | 57.2                        | 89.2                                    |
| Rural                | 13.3                 | 17.6                         | 69.1                        | 86.7                                    |
| <b>Religion</b>      |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Muslims              | 14.8                 | 30.4                         | 54.8                        | 85.2                                    |
| Non-Muslims          | 12.6                 | 18.3                         | 69.1                        | 87.4                                    |
| <b>Social Groups</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| SC                   | 16.6                 | 15.4                         | 68.0                        | 83.4                                    |
| ST                   | 9.2                  | 16.3                         | 74.5                        | 90.8                                    |
| OBC                  | 14.6                 | 19.2                         | 66.2                        | 85.4                                    |
| Others               | 8.9                  | 26.1                         | 65.0                        | 91.1                                    |

Source: Calculated from IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 1b Percentage of children of age 5 years in pre-primary or primary education, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08** (per cent)

|                              | Not attending school | Attending formal pre-primary | Attending primary and above | Attending either pre-primary or primary |
|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Male</b>                  |                      |                              |                             |   |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Rural</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Poorest                      | 53.3                 | 9.1                          | 37.6                        | 46.7                                    |
| Second                       | 47.1                 | 9.0                          | 44.0                        | 52.9                                    |
| Middle                       | 42.3                 | 12.3                         | 45.4                        | 57.7                                    |
| Fourth                       | 29.4                 | 14.5                         | 56.2                        | 70.6                                    |
| Richest                      | 23.3                 | 24.9                         | 51.8                        | 76.7                                    |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Urban</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Poorest                      | 35.8                 | 12.6                         | 51.6                        | 64.2                                    |
| Second                       | 20.5                 | 30.7                         | 48.8                        | 79.5                                    |
| Middle                       | 15.2                 | 30.2                         | 54.6                        | 84.8                                    |
| Fourth                       | 13.4                 | 31.3                         | 55.4                        | 86.7                                    |
| Richest                      | 8.5                  | 32.8                         | 58.7                        | 91.5                                    |
| <b>Female</b>                |                      |                              |                             |   |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Rural</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Poorest                      | 57.9                 | 8.2                          | 33.9                        | 42.1                                    |
| Second                       | 44.9                 | 10.0                         | 45.2                        | 55.1                                    |
| Middle                       | 41.4                 | 7.5                          | 51.0                        | 58.6                                    |
| Fourth                       | 30.2                 | 12.8                         | 57.1                        | 69.8                                    |
| Richest                      | 22.1                 | 22.6                         | 55.3                        | 77.9                                    |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Urban</b> |                      |                              |                             |   |
| Poorest                      | 38.6                 | 14.3                         | 47.1                        | 61.4                                    |
| Second                       | 26.5                 | 26.5                         | 47.1                        | 73.6                                    |
| Middle                       | 14.4                 | 27.6                         | 58.0                        | 85.6                                    |
| Fourth                       | 17.8                 | 30.6                         | 51.5                        | 82.2                                    |
| Richest                      | 16.9                 | 31.0                         | 52.1                        | 83.1                                    |

Note: MPCE – Monthly per capita expenditure  
Source: Calculated from NSSO unit level data (2007-08)

**Table 2a Percentage of 6 to 10 year old children out of school, by age, sex and other characteristics, 2009** (per cent)

|                     | Male       | Female     | Total      |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Age</b>          |            |            |            |
| 6                   | 5.9        | 6.4        | 6.2        |
| 7                   | 2.8        | 3.5        | 3.1        |
| 8                   | 3.1        | 4.0        | 3.5        |
| 9                   | 1.9        | 2.3        | 2.1        |
| 10                  | 3.0        | 3.5        | 3.2        |
| <b>Residence</b>    |            |            |            |
| Rural               | 3.4        | 4.2        | 3.8        |
| Urban               | 2.8        | 2.9        | 2.8        |
| <b>Religion</b>     |            |            |            |
| Muslims             | 5.4        | 5.8        | 5.6        |
| Non-Muslims         | 3.0        | 3.7        | 3.3        |
| <b>Social Group</b> |            |            |            |
| SC                  | 4.8        | 6.3        | 5.5        |
| ST                  | 5.2        | 5.3        | 5.2        |
| OBC                 | 3.1        | 3.8        | 3.4        |
| Others              | 1.9        | 2.0        | 2.0        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>3.3</b> | <b>4.0</b> | <b>3.6</b> |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 2b Percentage of 6 to 10 year old children out of school, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08** (per cent)

|                              | Male | Female | Total |
|------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Rural</b> |      |        |       |
| Poorest                      | 16.3 | 19.8   | 18.0  |
| Second                       | 12.7 | 14.7   | 13.6  |
| Middle                       | 8.9  | 11.0   | 9.8   |
| Fourth                       | 7.6  | 8.7    | 8.1   |
| Richest                      | 5.0  | 6.5    | 5.7   |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Urban</b> |      |        |       |
| Poorest                      | 16.9 | 16.5   | 16.7  |
| Second                       | 6.6  | 8.3    | 7.4   |
| Middle                       | 5.5  | 4.2    | 4.9   |
| Fourth                       | 2.9  | 2.9    | 2.9   |
| Richest                      | 3.8  | 1.0    | 2.6   |

Source: Calculated from NSSO unit level data (2007-08)

**Table 3a Percentage of 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by age, sex and other characteristics, 2009**

(per cent)

|                     | Male       | Female     | Total      |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Age</b>          |            |            |            |
| 11                  | 3.2        | 3.6        | 3.4        |
| 12                  | 5.3        | 6.2        | 5.7        |
| 13                  | 5.3        | 7.6        | 6.3        |
| <b>Residence</b>    |            |            |            |
| Rural               | 4.8        | 6.4        | 5.5        |
| Urban               | 4.0        | 3.2        | 3.6        |
| <b>Religion</b>     |            |            |            |
| Muslims             | 9.2        | 9.0        | 9.1        |
| Non-Muslims         | 4.1        | 5.4        | 4.6        |
| <b>Social Group</b> |            |            |            |
| SC                  | 5.8        | 8.0        | 6.8        |
| ST                  | 8.1        | 10.7       | 9.3        |
| OBC                 | 4.2        | 5.7        | 4.9        |
| Others              | 3.3        | 3.0        | 3.2        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>4.7</b> | <b>5.9</b> | <b>5.2</b> |

Source: IMRB unit level data 2009

**Table 3b Percentage of 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by sector and income quintiles, 2007-08**

(per cent)

|                              | Male | Female | Total |
|------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Rural</b> |      |        |       |
| Poorest                      | 19.3 | 25.9   | 22.4  |
| Second                       | 13.1 | 19.1   | 16.0  |
| Middle                       | 11.0 | 16.4   | 13.6  |
| Fourth                       | 6.6  | 12.7   | 9.3   |
| Richest                      | 3.1  | 6.6    | 4.6   |
| <b>MPCE quintiles: Urban</b> |      |        |       |
| Poorest                      | 20.5 | 22.8   | 21.6  |
| Second                       | 7.8  | 8.1    | 7.9   |
| Middle                       | 2.0  | 5.7    | 3.7   |
| Fourth                       | 3.4  | 3.3    | 3.3   |
| Richest                      | 0.4  | 1.0    | 0.7   |

Source: Calculated from NSSO unit level data (2007-08)

**Table 4 Percentage of 6 to 10 year old and 11 to 13 year old children out of school, by state, 2009**

|                      | 6 to 10 year old |        |     | 11 to 13 year old |        |      |
|----------------------|------------------|--------|-----|-------------------|--------|------|
|                      | Male             | Female | All | Male              | Female | All  |
| Jammu and Kashmir    | 1.0              | 0.1    | 0.6 | 0.1               | 0.6    | 0.3  |
| Himachal Pradesh     | 0.4              | 0.1    | 0.3 | 0.2               | 0.2    | 0.2  |
| Punjab               | 0.1              | 0.0    | 0.0 | 0.0               | 0.1    | 0.0  |
| Chandigarh           | 2.1              | 1.6    | 1.9 | 0.0               | 0.0    | 0.0  |
| Uttaranchal          | 2.0              | 3.7    | 2.8 | 5.1               | 4.3    | 4.7  |
| Haryana              | 2.2              | 3.2    | 2.6 | 2.5               | 3.0    | 2.7  |
| Delhi                | 4.2              | 4.1    | 4.1 | 6.8               | 5.8    | 6.3  |
| Rajasthan            | 4.4              | 10.3   | 6.8 | 7.3               | 16.4   | 11.0 |
| Uttar Pradesh        | 6.2              | 6.9    | 6.5 | 7.5               | 8.6    | 8.0  |
| Bihar                | 6.1              | 7.7    | 6.9 | 6.5               | 10.7   | 8.5  |
| Sikkim               | 1.1              | 0.5    | 0.8 | 0.9               | 0.0    | 0.5  |
| Arunachal Pradesh    | 9.4              | 8.5    | 9.0 | 7.1               | 8.4    | 7.6  |
| Nagaland             | 1.1              | 2.3    | 1.7 | 3.0               | 4.3    | 3.6  |
| Manipur              | 1.5              | 4.3    | 2.8 | 3.3               | 4.3    | 3.7  |
| Mizoram              | 5.2              | 3.1    | 4.3 | 2.9               | 6.6    | 4.6  |
| Tripura              | 1.5              | 1.9    | 1.7 | 1.7               | 0.5    | 1.1  |
| Meghalaya            | 2.1              | 2.0    | 2.0 | 2.8               | 3.8    | 3.2  |
| Assam                | 3.3              | 3.4    | 3.4 | 3.2               | 5.0    | 4.1  |
| West Bengal          | 4.3              | 3.7    | 4.0 | 7.0               | 6.5    | 6.7  |
| Jharkhand            | 2.9              | 1.0    | 2.1 | 3.1               | 2.6    | 2.9  |
| Odisha               | 3.8              | 4.9    | 4.3 | 10.7              | 10.1   | 10.4 |
| Chhattisgarh         | 1.6              | 1.9    | 1.7 | 1.6               | 4.1    | 2.6  |
| Madhya Pradesh       | 2.0              | 2.2    | 2.1 | 2.7               | 2.9    | 2.8  |
| Gujarat              | 1.2              | 1.2    | 1.2 | 2.5               | 2.2    | 2.4  |
| Daman & Diu          | 0.3              | 0.0    | 0.2 | 0.0               | 0.0    | 0.0  |
| Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 0.1              | 2.9    | 1.4 | 0.0               | 2.6    | 1.1  |
| Maharashtra          | 0.6              | 0.6    | 0.6 | 1.5               | 1.5    | 1.5  |
| Andhra Pradesh       | 1.0              | 0.8    | 0.9 | 1.6               | 1.8    | 1.7  |
| Karnataka            | 1.4              | 0.8    | 1.1 | 1.6               | 1.7    | 1.6  |
| Goa                  | 0.0              | 0.0    | 0.0 | 0.0               | 0.0    | 0.0  |
| Lakshadweep          | 0.0              | 0.0    | 0.0 | 0.0               | 0.0    | 0.0  |
| Kerala               | 0.5              | 0.3    | 0.4 | 0.3               | 0.1    | 0.2  |
| Tamil Nadu           | 0.6              | 0.2    | 0.4 | 0.8               | 1.1    | 1.0  |
| Pondicherry          | 0.0              | 1.0    | 0.5 | 0.4               | 1.0    | 0.6  |
| Andaman & Nicobar    | 0.0              | 0.0    | 0.0 | 0.0               | 0.0    | 0.0  |
| Total                | 3.3              | 4.0    | 3.6 | 4.7               | 5.9    | 5.2  |

Source: IMRB unit level data 2009

**Table 5a Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Bihar, 2009**

|               | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|---------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|               | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|               | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>SC</b>     | 11.9  | 15.5   | 3.1   | 7.1    | 8.5  | 19.7   | 4.8   | 0.9    |
| <b>Muslim</b> | 9.3   | 8.7    | 14.7  | 12.4   | 14.4   | 11.1   | 16.3  | 28.0   |
| <b>All</b>    | 6.3   | 7.9    | 3.7   | 4.0    | 6.8  | 11.0   | 4.5   | 6.5    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 5b Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Uttar Pradesh, 2009**

|               | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|---------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|               | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|               | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>SC</b>     | 6.7   | 7.1    | 9.5   | 21.2   | 9.0  | 11.0   | 16.1  | 6.3    |
| <b>Muslim</b> | 12.1  | 15.8   | 13.5  | 8.7    | 21.1   | 22.6   | 17.9  | 16.9   |
| <b>All</b>    | 6.0   | 6.7    | 7.9   | 8.3    | 7.0  | 8.9    | 10.7  | 7.3    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 5c Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Rajasthan, 2009**

|               | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|---------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|               | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|               | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>ST</b>     | 10.8  | 12.3   | 2.3   | 16.4   | 24.0   | 38.8   | 7.5   | 44.8   |
| <b>SC</b>     | 3.6   | 12.3   | 3.8   | 3.1    | 8.2  | 15.5   | 8.7   | 9.2    |
| <b>Muslim</b> | 5.6   | 6.3    | 1.3   | 3.7    | 11.3   | 22.1   | 3.1   | 0.6    |
| <b>All</b>    | 4.7   | 11.2   | 1.6   | 2.4    | 7.7  | 18.1   | 3.5   | 3.6    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 5d Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Odisha, 2009**

|            | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|            | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|            | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>ST</b>  | 10.4  | 12.6   | 8.0   | 12.9   | 23.0   | 26.0   | 0.0   | 9.0    |
| <b>SC</b>  | 1.4   | 2.1    | 1.3   | 3.2    | 10.9   | 7.8    | 6.6   | 6.3    |
| <b>OBC</b> | 0.4   | 0.5    | 5.6   | 2.9    | 4.8  | 1.4    | 3.0   | 4.8    |
| <b>All</b> | 3.9   | 5.0    | 2.5   | 2.7    | 11.3   | 10.5   | 3.0   | 4.5    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 5e Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in West Bengal, 2009**

|               | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|---------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|               | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|               | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>ST</b>     | 7.9   | 2.8    | 2.0   | 5.3    | 2.2  | 6.5    | 0.0   | 14.5   |
| <b>SC</b>     | 5.8   | 6.4    | 6.4   | 5.9    | 8.6  | 12.0   | 6.3   | 11.3   |
| <b>OBC</b>    | 1.9   | 2.3    | 2.6   | 2.5    | 3.5  | 9.1    | 1.8   | 0.0    |
| <b>Muslim</b> | 4.5   | 3.0    | 9.2   | 9.6    | 12.6   | 7.6    | 12.8  | 7.2    |
| <b>All</b>    | 4.1   | 3.5    | 5.1   | 4.8    | 7.3  | 7.0    | 5.9   | 4.8    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009

**Table 5f Percentage of children who are out of school in different categories and age groups in Gujarat, 2009**

|               | Proportion of 6-10 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        | Proportion of 11-13 years old children who are out of school |        |       |        |
|---------------|---|--------|-------|--------|--|--------|-------|--------|
|               | Rural   |        | Urban |        | Rural  |        | Urban |        |
|               | Male  | Female | Male  | Female | Male   | Female | Male  | Female |
| <b>ST</b>     | 2.9   | 1.2    | 12.1  | 0.0    | 5.2  | 9.3    | 21.7  | 9.1    |
| <b>SC</b>     | 0.0   | 1.3    | 1.4   | 1.9    | 1.0  | 1.5    | 10.0  | 1.5    |
| <b>OBC</b>    | 1.0   | 1.1    | 2.5   | 0.9    | 2.6  | 2.3    | 0.7   | 1.1    |
| <b>Muslim</b> | 0.7   | 0.9    | 4.1   | 3.8    | 0.0  | 4.0    | 5.3   | 4.6    |
| <b>All</b>    | 0.8   | 0.9    | 2.6   | 2.0    | 2.1  | 2.4    | 3.9   | 1.4    |

Source: IMRB unit level data, 2009



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United Nations Children's Fund  
India Country Office  
UNICEF House  
73, Lodi Estate  
New Delhi 110003  
Telephone: +91 11 24690401

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