

From India: Annual Status of Education Report 2005-2012 – Evidence & Experiences



World Bank Symposium Nov 7-8 2013 Washington DC

How ASER started

- In 2004 new government came to power at the centre.
- 2 % education cess was imposed for elementary education.
- Expenditure on elementary education rising each year.
- Lot of talk of “outlays to outcomes” by government but no annual publicly available information on “outcomes”.



The word ASER means “impact”.



ASER nuts and bolts

WHY:

Estimates of enrolment, reading and arithmetic generated at district level (India has 600 + districts)

Annual work plans for elementary education made at the district level.

2013 is the ninth year of this exercise

WHO:

In every district, a local organization or institution carries out ASER.

25,000 – 30,000 volunteers nationally

WHAT:

ASER is a household survey – to reach “all children”.
In each district 30 villages randomly selected.

In each village 20 households randomly selected.

In each household all children age 3-16 surveyed for schooling (or pre-schooling) status.

Children age 5 to 16 also assessed on basic reading and basic arithmetic. (Reading tasks in 20 languages).

Assessment done one-on-one.

Sample: between 600,000 to 700,000 children each year

WHEN

Each year ASER done in Sept-Nov period

Basic data available in mid January (so in the same school year)

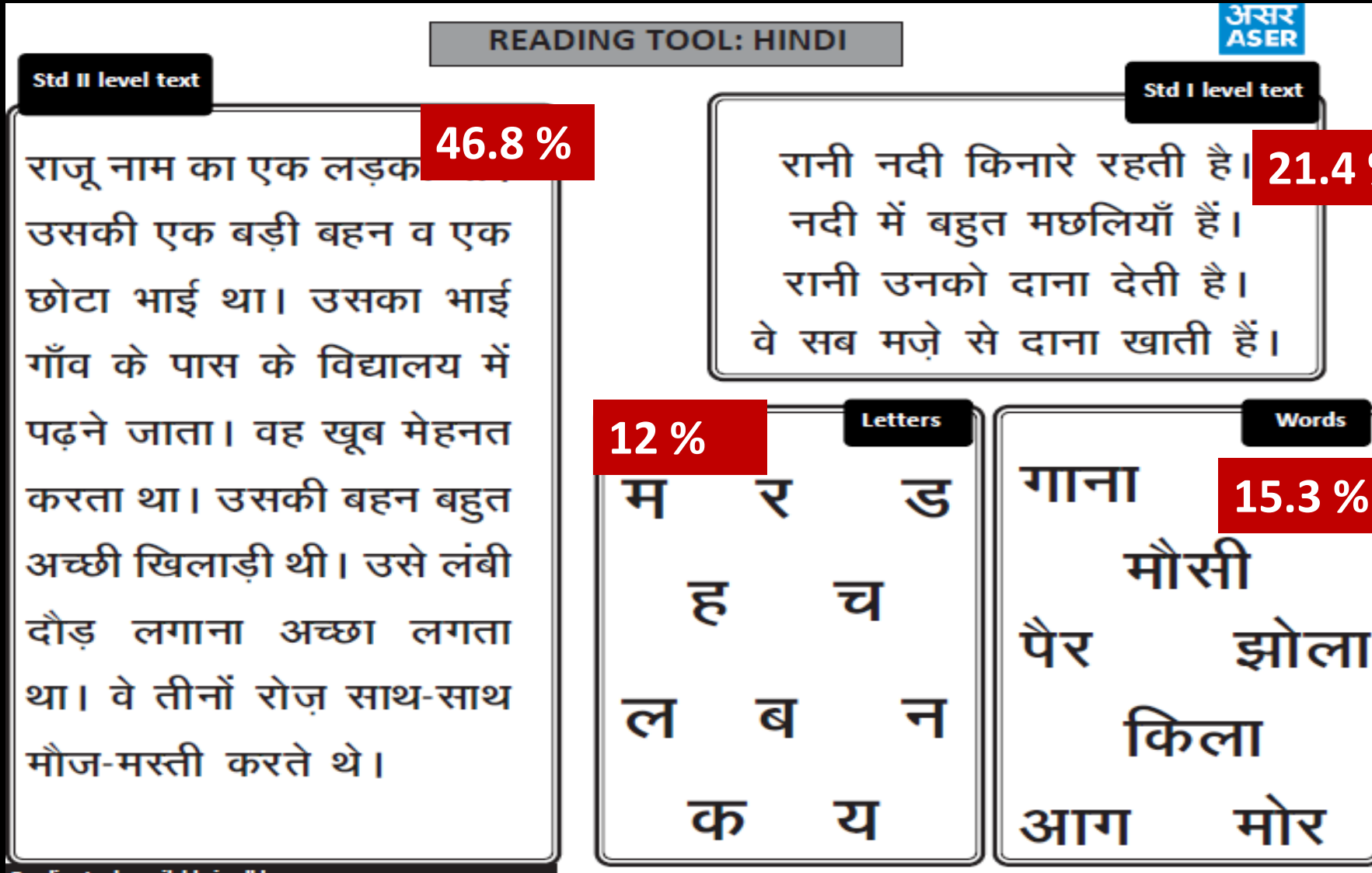
2013 is the ninth year of this exercise

HOW MUCH

Cost of ASER 2013 : approximately 1 million USD

Cost per child : less than 1.5 USD

ASER 2012 findings: India (rural)



Percentage of children in Grade 5 who can read at different levels

- The highest level of reading assessed in ASER is Grade 2 level.
- It is possible that children who can read at Grade 2 level can also read at higher levels.
- Hard to give even Grade 5 children pen and paper assessments

Looking back and looking ahead

**% Children in Grade 3, 4 & 5 who can read
Grade II level text : 2006 - 2012**



- Big gaps between “expected” / “desired levels and actual levels
- “Big stuck” – no major changes over time. If anything some indications of decline.
- Where do we want to be as a country by 2015, 2020?
- How are we going to get there?

Impact on national policy in India

National policy in Elementary Education – allocation & planning

By 2008, Annual Work Plan guidelines allowed a line item – for reading enhancement at district level. Focus on “reading” programs, reading materials etc became possible.

India’s 12th Plan document – December 2012

“Improve learning outcomes that are measured, monitored and reported independently at all levels of school education with a special focus on ensuring that all children master basic reading and numeracy skills by class 2 and skills of critical thinking, expression and problem solving by class 5”

Impact on practice – recent example

Total children tested =
~16,000 children
All students in Grade 3- 5
In 225 schools –
Jehanabad district in Bihar

AUGUST 2012

Story = 16.4%

Para = 14.4%

Word = 12.1 %

Letter = 22.7%

Beginner = 34.4%

Total = 100%

**GOAL : ALL CHILDREN
READING AT “STORY” LEVEL
BY END OF SCHOOL YEAR**

Assessment to action

ASER reading tool was used for assessment by all teachers in all schools in the program

Children grouped by level for instruction for 1.5 hours a day during the school day

Teachers assigned to groups rather than to grades

Appropriate activities and simple reading materials (not grade level textbooks) used daily.

Overall less than 100 days of instructional time at less than 2 hours a day

MARCH 2013

Story = 53.5%

Para = 18.8%

Word = 14%

Letter = 9.5%

Beginner = 4.2%

Total = 100%

RCT by JPAL on similar model in Haryana

**For 2013-14 state wide scale up of program:
All children in Grade 5 to be brought to Grade 2 level. Impact likely on 700,000 children.**



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