Rukmini Banerji: Pratham - India. UIS-UNESCO Paris – February 8 2024

The story begins in late 1990s-early 2000s

Every child in school.

- Children "left out" were visible.
- Problem clearly understood by governments & parents
- International and national goals.
- Concerted action to achieve the goal.

Every child learning?

- Children "left behind" more invisible.
- Problem as yet not clearly understood or articulated.

SAMPLE

BASIC ASER READING TOOL: HINDI

Std. II level text

रामपुर में कुछ ज़मीन ख़ाली थी। वहाँ कुछ नहीं उगता था। वहाँ कोई खेलने नहीं जाता था। एक दिन कुछ लोग आये। उन्होंने गाँव के लोगों को बुलाया। सबने मिलकर तय किया कि यहाँ बग़ीचा बनाया जाये। खाद मंगाकर हर तरह के पौधे लगाये गये। सही समय पर पानी दिया गया। आज वहाँ एक सुंदर बग़ीचा है। इसलिए वहाँ सब खेलने जाते हैं।

Std. I level text

बग़ीचे में एक पेड़ है।
पेड़ पर एक तोता रहता है।
तोते का रंग हरा है।
वह लाल टमाटर खाता है।

Letters

न   र   च
म   स
प   ग   द
ल   थ

बच्चे से कोई भी 5 अक्षर पढ़ने को कहें।
कम से कम 4 सही होने चाहिये।

Common simple words

आग   सोच
ताला
गिर   पैसा
देश
पानी   बूढ़ा

बच्चे से कोई भी 5 शब्द पढ़ने को कहें।
कम से कम 4 सही होने चाहिये।

The assessment tool is used one-on-one with each child.

It is progressive. The child is marked at the highest level s/he can read comfortably.

Used to understand the child's current level of reading.

Same tool is used for children aged 5 to 16.

The reading tool is available in 20+ Indian languages.

Similar tool is used to assess basic arithmetic.

Village Report Cards
Hamlet by hamlet

Three questions:
- Is the child in school?
- Can the child read simple text?
- Can s/he do basic arithmetic?

Learning from the ground: Assessment to action at the local level

ENGAGE to ASSESS

- Generate curiosity
- Encourage participation
- Engage via simple activities
- Use basic tools & methods
- Generate your **own** data

UNDERSTAND PROBLEM

- Digest and discuss information as it is being generated close to the ground
- Move from anecdote or personal experience to aggregate picture

MOVE FROM DATA TO ACTION

- Once the problem is understood, what can be done?
- What can teachers do? What can parents do?
- Local strategies, common goals, collective involvement

From village level action to nation-wide assessment of learning

WHY: Several reasons:

- International (MDG) goals and national priorities focussed on ensuring access
- Schooling levels were high; many countries were moving towards universal enrollment
- However learning levels were low & needed to be understood & made more visible
- In India, government had begun to speak about "outcomes" rather than "outlays" & a new education "cess" had been introduced.

WHAT: Tool is very simple to understand and use. Aimed at understanding of the problem.

HOW: Household survey – to capture representative sample of children (enrolled in different kinds of school and children out of school). Also designed to be transparent and inclusive. Every one in the community was able to see what was going on and thus to understand the problem.

WHO/WHERE: A district is the unit of planning and implementation in the Indian education system. ASER data collection done by a local organization or institution in the district so that there are always people with first hand experience of the "problem" who can speak about the data and the experience and push for "solution".

असर
ASER

The word **"ASER"** stands for **Annual Status of Education Repor**t in English.

But असर means "impact" in several Indian languages

Citizen led Assessments – A Global South to South initiative
All are household surveys, assessing basic reading & arithmetic one-on-one

In India

| ASER 2005 | Every year every rural district in India between 2006 to 2014 | ASER 2014 | ASER 2016 | ASER 2018 | Covid | ASER 2022 |

ASER is a household survey with representative samples of children at district level. All rural districts in the country. Assessing basic reading & arithmetic. One-on-one assessment. Sample size between 500,000 to 700,000 each year

In other countries of the Global South

ASER Pakistan :
2012-2021
- 8 national assessments
- 250,000-300,000 children each

Uwezo in East Africa:
2010-2021:
Kenya: 7 national assessments
Uganda & Tanzania: 6 each

ICAN 1 district in 13 countries
International Common Assessment of Numeracy
ICAN is an open-source, robust and easy-to-use assessment tool, available in 11 languages, that offers international comparability of results aligned to SDG 4.1.1

India's New Education Policy 2020 & focus on Foundational Literacy & Numeracy

2.2. Attaining foundational literacy and numeracy for all children will thus become an urgent national mission, with immediate measures to be taken on many fronts and with clear goals that will be attained in the short term (including that every student will attain foundational literacy and numeracy by Grade 3). The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. The rest of this Policy will become relevant for our students only if this most basic learning requirement (i.e., reading, writing, and arithmetic at the foundational level) is first achieved. To this end, a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) on priority. Accordingly, all State/UT governments will immediately prepare an implementation plan for attaining universal foundational literacy and numeracy in all primary schools, identifying stage-wise targets and goals to be achieved by 2025, and closely tracking and monitoring progress of the same.

(National Education Policy 2020, p.8)

India's New Education Policy 2020 & focus on Foundational Literacy & Numeracy

Government of India's assessment initiatives on FLN in last few years
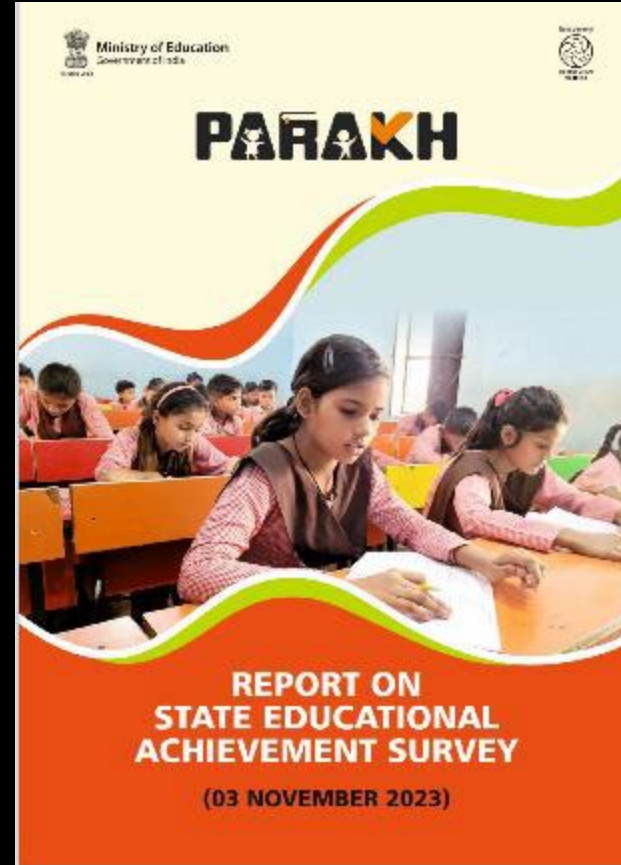**School based assessments on FLN or with FLN component**

Foundational Learning Study (FLS) 2022

Grade 3 students assessed one-on-one

20 languages

Close to 86,000 students assessed

State Educational Achievement Surveys 2023

Grade 3, 6 and 9
Language and Maths

Over 11 million children

FLN component assessed for all the selected grades

Wide consultations carried out in the design of these assessments.
Experts in India & other countries & international experts consulted.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy is the first and most urgent goal for all school systems.

Without basic reading and arithmetic, children cannot move forward successfully in education or in life.

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