

TERMS OF REFERENCE

'ASSESSMENT OF STATE-WISE DROPOUT RATES AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION'

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The main goal of SSA is to achieve universalisation of elementary education for the children of the age 6 to below 14 years by the year 2010. It implies that all the children enter school at the age 6 (or age 5 for some states) and continue to remain in school, progressing from one grade to the next, at least upto the age of 14 years. Ideally, they should complete grade VIII successfully after 8 years of schooling, which means that no child should dropout from school and no child should repeat any grade. At present, considerable wastage occurs due to children repeating grades or dropping out from school before completing the full cycle of elementary education and even before completing primary education upto class V (or IV in some states). Since the inputs provided under SSA aim at reducing the wastage, it is important to monitor the progress made from year to year in reduction of repetition and dropout rates.

In a few States, **cohort studies** were undertaken, which required follow up of a cohort of children enrolled in grade I that entered school some 4 or 5 years ago and finding out who continued to remain in school and who dropped out. Some states conducted cohort study on a sample basis, while others like Tamil Nadu covered all schools and conducted the cohort study on cohorts of several successive years. The main shortcoming of this approach is that it provides information on dropout rate that is based on the enrolment data of class I which is 4 or 5 years old. If the dropout rate in class I has declined during the last 3 years, it will not be reflected in the cohort dropout rate derived from analysis of the data of cohort study. Also it does not show the year to year change in grade-wise and cohort dropout rates. Further, it requires follow up of a cohort for 4/5 years (for primary level) and for 8 years (for upper primary level) using old attendance registers. Even then, the retention or completion rate that one gets is for 5 years (in the case of primary level comprising classes I to V) and ignores those who take 6 or more years to complete grade V, unless an older cohort of 6 or 7 years ago is followed.

It is proposed to conduct a Survey in all 21 States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal to estimate the dropout rates. For that, data on enrolment, repeaters, new admissions, transfers between schools, lateral entry in different grades, etc. will have to be collected from a sample of schools in all these states.

2. PRECISE STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES FOR SURVEY

The objectives of the Survey will be:

- i) to provide estimates of grade-wise repetition and dropout rates for boys and girls and total students as well as transition rate from primary to upper primary for all the 21 major states of the country for the year 2006-07 based on the data of 2006-07 and 2007-08;
- ii) to provide estimates of cohort dropout rate, completion rate, transition rate and internal efficiency for boys, girls and total students as in objective (i) above;
- iii) to provide estimates of indicators given under objectives (i) and (ii) for SC, ST, OBC and Muslim children for all the states;
- iv) to provide a quick estimate of dropout rate based on analysis of the data of about 1/8 sub-sample of schools;
- v) to provide information on other indicators such as rates of transfer between schools, mainstreaming of children from AIE Centres/ schools and enrolment in private unrecognised schools; and

- vi) to make suggestions for follow up and implementation of a sample based data collection system for estimating indicators of internal efficiency on an annual basis.

3. AN OUTLINE OF THE TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT INCLUDING METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING DESIGN

In each state, stratified multi-stage sampling procedure will be adopted for selecting schools. The total sample will consist of about 8000 government schools in the country. From this sample, a sub-sample of 1000 schools should be so selected as to provide a quick estimate of the dropout rates. In this sub-sample, the needed data may be collected and analysed on a priority basis.

The data capture form for collecting data from schools will be a simple form in which information will be obtained on a number of enrolment related variables such as:

- class-wise enrolment and number of repeaters by gender and social class
- transfer from other schools, AIE centres, private schools, etc.
- lateral entry cases, that is, children who enter school in classes other than class I after studying at home or in private unrecognised schools.
- number of children who leave school (child tracking method will be followed to find out whether they have dropped out or have joined another school).
- number of children who are admitted in class I or other classes after 30th September.

The data capture form and the instructions for field investigators will be prepared centrally. Also the data analysis and reporting format will be designed centrally. Field investigators will be provided training in collection of data before starting the Survey.

In the normal Reconstructed Cohort Method, it is assumed that students in any grade either get promoted to the next grade or repeat the grade or dropout from school. In this case, cohort dropout rates and other indicators of internal efficiency will be calculated using a modified Reconstructed Cohort Method which will take care of late entrants, lateral entrants (students entering school directly in Class-II or a higher class) and transfers between government schools and private schools, AIE centres, etc.

4. DURATION AND TIME-SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF SURVEY

The Survey should be completed within 6 (six) months from the date of release of the first instalment, as per Service Agreement. The final report is to be submitted within the period of 26 weeks. The Time Schedule for various activities will be as under:

S.No.	Description of activities	Duration
1.	Preparation and testing of data capture forms; sampling of schools	4 weeks
2.	Training of field staff; data collection in sub-sample of 1000 schools	4 weeks
3.	Data collection in all sampled schools; preparation of data analysis plan and software; preparation and submission of report based on analysis of sub-sample data	8 weeks
4.	Data checking and data entry	3 weeks
5.	Data analysis and report preparation	7 weeks
	Total Duration	26 weeks