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Foreword

The main goal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is to achieve Universalisation of Elementary Education in the country by the year 2010. It implies that all children in the age group 6 to below 14 years get enrolled in a regular school or an alternative school system and they do not drop out from school before completing the full cycle of elementary education. Efforts are being made on various fronts to ensure that no child in this age group remains out of school. In order to assess the progress made in enrolment of children in schools, a quick survey was required to find out how many children in this age group were still out of school; what their composition was by gender, social class and rural / urban area; and among those who were out of school, how many were school dropouts and how many had never attended any school. For those who were in school, it was of interest to know how many were in government school and how many in private recognized or unrecognized schools or an Alternative school system such as centres established under Education Guarantee Scheme.

Social Rural Research Institute a unit of International Marketing Research Bureau (SRI-IMRB) was the agency selected for conducting the survey, covering all the states and UTs of the country. The sample was selected from the list of villages and urban blocks covered in the 61st round (2004-05) of National Sample Survey. In all, data was collected from 87,874 households across the country during July-October, 2005 to estimate state-wise number of out of school children.

This report contains the findings of the survey, which should be very useful in planning the strategies for bringing the remaining out-of-school children to school.

I am grateful to SRI-IMRB team for conducting the survey within a short time and providing the results in a pre-specified form. Also I am grateful to the members of Expert Group who helped in planning the survey and providing technical advice, in particular, Dr. N. S. Sastry, former Director General of NSSO, Dr. G.C. Manna, Director, NSSO and Dr. A. K. Srivastava, former Joint Director, Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (ICAR). I express my thanks to Dr. Sukumar Ray, Director General, NSSO (now retired) and Dr. K.V. Rao, Additional DG (Field Operations) and others in NSSO, who provided lists of villages and maps of urban sampling units selected for the 61st round of NSS for drawing samples of households.

Last but not the least, I thank the Research, Evaluation & Studies Unit Ed.CIL's, Technical Support Group for SSA and particularly, the consultants Dr. ABL Srivastava and Dr. R. R. Saxena, who throughout provided the needed technical assistance to SRI-IMRB in organization of the survey and production of various output tables.

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