# PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN INDIA

Private schools in India cater to 50% of India's children — they need an enabling environment to improve learning outcomes

The Private School Sector Operates at a Significant Scale

12 crore students in India attend private schools
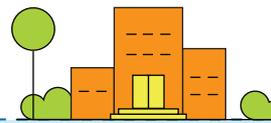
There are about **4.5 lakh** private schools across India

Majority of Private Schools are Unaided and Low-Fee
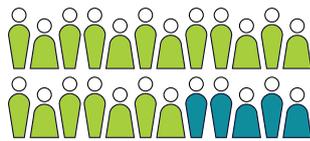
● Private Unaided   ● Aided

9 crore children (**75%** of all private school students) are enrolled in private unaided schools[1]

70% students pay less than ₹ 1000 per month in fees

45% pay less than ₹ 500 per month

Aggregate household spend on private schools is approximately ₹ **1.75 lakh crore**

Parents Prefer Private Schools, but Learning Outcomes Need Attention

73% parents believe their children will have better learning outcomes in private schools

100
80 **73%**
60
40
20
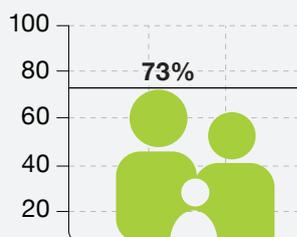
However,

60% ÷

of rural private school students in Class 5 **cannot** solve a simple division problem

35% 📖

of rural private school students in Class 5 **cannot** read a basic Class II level paragraph[2, 3]

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[1] Private Unaided Schools refers to those schools which do not rely on any support or financial aid from the government

[2] The Annual Status of Education Report 2018

[3] 77% of government school students in Class 5 cannot solve a simple division problem. 56% of government school students in Class 5 cannot read a basic Class II level paragraph. This gap between the performance of private and government school students reduces after adjusting for disadvantages in student backgrounds.

Bring Policy Focus on Learning in Private Schools

Private schools are required to meet input-related requirements but not mandated to measure and disclose learning outcomes in a standardised way

Over-regulation of Inputs and Entry

Input-focused regulations prescribing playgrounds, libraries, land, teacher salaries etc., do not fit the context of under-resourced private schools
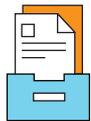
Licensing requirements are cumbersome. For e.g.: opening a private school in Delhi requires **125 documents** and involves **155 steps** within the Directorate of Education
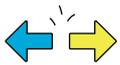
The dual role of the government as the education provider through public schools and regulator of private schools leads to conflict of interest

Not-for-profit mandate for education sector deters quality providers from entering or scaling up

Under-regulation of Learning Outcomes

60% schools not covered by Board Exams

No reliable indicator to measure learning

Parents choose schools based on proxies like **'English Medium'** or **'School Infrastructure'**

Consequently, schools invest in inputs observable by parents instead of learning outcomes

5 Reform Pillars to Improve Learning Outcomes in Private Schools

Create a universal learning indicator to help parents compare learning performance across schools and make informed decisions

Develop a pragmatic accreditation framework that factors in constraints of low fee schools and state capacity to implement while focussing on learning outcomes and child safety

Establish an independent regulatory agency for the private school sector

Review non-profit mandate and existing fee regulations to attract investment and enable easy access to credit for schools

Strengthen RTE Section 12(1)(c) which mandates 25% reservations for underprivileged children to ensure more robust targeting and fee reimbursements