Indicator 5. School Attendance Rates

The evaluation team must determine how many students are attending school and until which grade level they attend. Separate figures will be kept for girls and boys so that gender equity in education can be analysed.

Attendance figures can be gathered in two ways. First the evaluators can ask administrators at the schools visited to share attendance records with them or they can actually count the numbers of children present on the day of the visit. The latter is more time consuming but the former may be less accurate (due to poor record keeping or conscious manipulation of records). This protocol recommends that evaluators gather their own attendance data but the latter procedure may be preferred under certain circumstances.

TEAM MEMBERS (NUMBER AND SKILLS)
1. Social Scientist. One social scientist will be able to measure the number of children attending the local schools. The same person will also be able to interview the on-site administrators about attendnace rates. During the participatory sessions, this person (or whoever else is conducting the PRA) will be able to ask questions about attendance rates.

NECESSARY TOOLS AND/OR SUPPORT
1. This indicator requires no special tools.
2. In order to legitimise the school visits, the investigator must arrive with a representative of the local NGO or state department.

FREQUENCY OF USE
Data for this indicator will be gathered through periodic assessment campaigns (every three to five years).

TIME REQUIRED TO USE INDICATOR
A single school visit should take no more than two hours (both to count the students, and discuss the findings with the administrator). Total time requirements depend upon how many schools need to be visited.

SEQUENCE OF USE
This indicator can be executed at any time before the commencement of the participatory sessions. It is suggested that these measurements be taken in conjunction with measurements for *Use, Outsiders* and *Replication.* The reason for this is that all three indicators require touring the same areas, and covering the same ground twice can be time consuming and wasteful.

SAMPLING
Unless there is a very large number of schools, all schools in the treated areas of the watershed should be visited. If the watershed is too large, then only those schools that serve the selected villages should be surveyed.

PROCEDURES AND METHODS

1. In order to reduce the amount of work required, the social scientist should attempt to determine until apprximately what age most children in the area attend school. He can then restrict his survey based upon this information. For example, if informants report that most children attend till the eighth standard, then the social scientist does not need to visit any school that serves students only up to the sixth standard.
2. The social scientist will tour the watershed, visiting all schools in the treated areas. If there are too many schools in this area, survey only those schools that serve the villages selected for evaluation.
3. If possible, the social scientist should arrive unannounced.
4. He should request permission from the director/principal to count the number of students attending school on that particular day.
5. The social scientist should count the students, keeping separate records for each grade level and for the gender of the students.
6. After the data has been gathered, the social scientist should talk to the director/principal about the findings.
7. Finally, the findings should be discussed at the participatory sessions.

DATA MATRIXES AND QUESTIONNAIRES

SAMPLE DATA MATRIX

School Name: Location:
Principal   :   Date   :
Investigator :   Guide :

	Girls	Boys
Grade 1		
Grade 2		
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
....		

QUESTIONS FOR SHCOOL ADMINISTRATORS
1. [Show the administrator the counts taken.] Do you think these numbers represent your average attendance?
2. If not, what is different about today?
3. [Given that many administrators may claim that the current day's attendance is unusually low, the investigator must assess the administrator's explanation. Is it "highly believable", "believable", or "unlikely"? These ratings should be made in consultation with other local contacts such as NGO and state department staff.
4. How many students usually attend?
5. How this number changed over the last ___years?
6. How many students attend regularly? Seasonally? Irregularly?
7. Estimate the number or percentage of children in your school district that do not attend more than once per week?
8. Why don't they attend?
9. Under what conditions might they start to attend?
10. According to our count the ratio of boys to girls is___ to ___. Is this average?
11. Has this ratio changed in the last three years?
12. What would it take to get more girls to attend school?

QUESTIONS TO BE USED IN THE PARTICIPATORY SESSIONS
1. What percentage of the local children aged ___ attend school?
2. The local principal's estimate is that __ percent of the local students do not attend school. Do you agree with this estimate?
3. Why don't children go to school?
4. Under what conditions would they do so?
5. The principal's estimate is that there are __ more boys that girls attending school. Why is that so?
6. Under what conditions would more girls attend school?

DATA ANALYSIS
1. Calculate the ratio of boys to girls for each grade, each level (primary, middle, and high school) and as a whole.
2. If time series data is available, calculate the changing attendance rates.

FINAL PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS
1. The numeric data should be presented in a matrix (see below).
   * First, separate matrixes should be presented for each watershed, then a combined matrix should be presented to facilitate comparison.
   * In each matrix, present the number of students in each school, in each village, and the total.
   * Present ratios of boys to girls in each school, village, and the total.

SAMPLE DATA MATRIX
(this is for one watershed)

2. Follow up these matrixes with qualitative discussions of the data.

3. Make sure to include a ratio of the numbers of students attending, to an estimated number of
    students who are absent.
4. Then discuss responses given to issues addressed through the questionnaire.