

International school surveys are a key component in measuring educational outcomes and progress toward established targets. School surveys in developing countries are especially important to understand if access, participation, facilities, and achievement are improving at the expected rates. There are challenges in these surveys and this presentation will look at the current survey environment and ways to improve sampling, data collection, analysis, and reporting.

RTI International has conducted school-based Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) in approximately 55 countries to date. This paper will focus on challenges of sample design and external factors faced by statisticians during the planning, implementation, and dissemination processes. Topics touched on include constraining factors (i.e. logistical, budgetary and timeline) and challenges during data collection and how these affect the sample design. Specifically, we discuss: frame issues; sampling schools versus sampling within schools; use of GIS; weighting challenges including availability of population benchmarks; sampling error estimation and using design effects; and effective data dissemination using techniques such as data visualization.

The paper focuses on three case studies to demonstrate how challenges faced during the planning and implementation of EGRAs were overcome resulting in high quality data and analysis for stakeholders.