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Assessment and Learning Recovery Post-COVID-19: Regional and International Roadmaps and good practices

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Impact of COVID-19 on student achievement in Asia-Pacific



School closures in Asia-Pacific profoundly disrupted education and learning



The **EDUCATION** of more than **800 MILLION CHILDREN** in Asia has been **DISRUPTED** due to **SCHOOL CLOSURES** since the COVID-19 pandemic first made wide impact in Asia.

Source: UNESCO and UNICEF (2021) 'The State of the World's Education 2021: Learning to Recover: Accelerating Change to Enable Resilient Education for All' and 'The State of the World's Education 2020: Inclusion and Education for All: The Road Ahead'.

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In Asia-Pacific, an estimated **10.71 MILLION LEARNERS** are **AT RISK OF NOT RETURNING** to schools after reopening.

Source: UNESCO and UNICEF (2021) 'The State of the World's Education 2021: Learning to Recover: Accelerating Change to Enable Resilient Education for All' and 'The State of the World's Education 2020: Inclusion and Education for All: The Road Ahead'.

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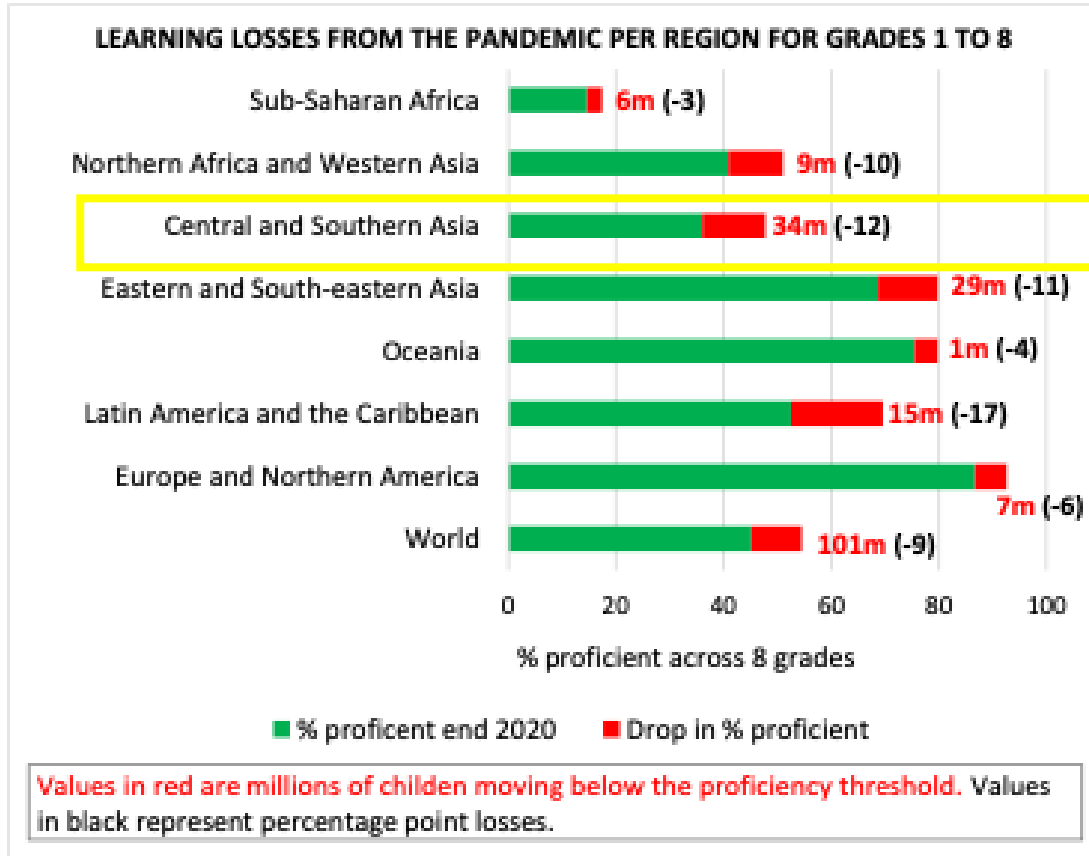
In South-East Asia, surveys with almost **7,000** young people found that **3 out of 4 FEMALE RESPONDENTS** reported **MENTAL HEALTH** issues such as stress and frustration caused by lockdowns.

Source: UNESCO and UNICEF (2021) 'The State of the World's Education 2021: Learning to Recover: Accelerating Change to Enable Resilient Education for All' and 'The State of the World's Education 2020: Inclusion and Education for All: The Road Ahead'.

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Learning loss and learning gaps

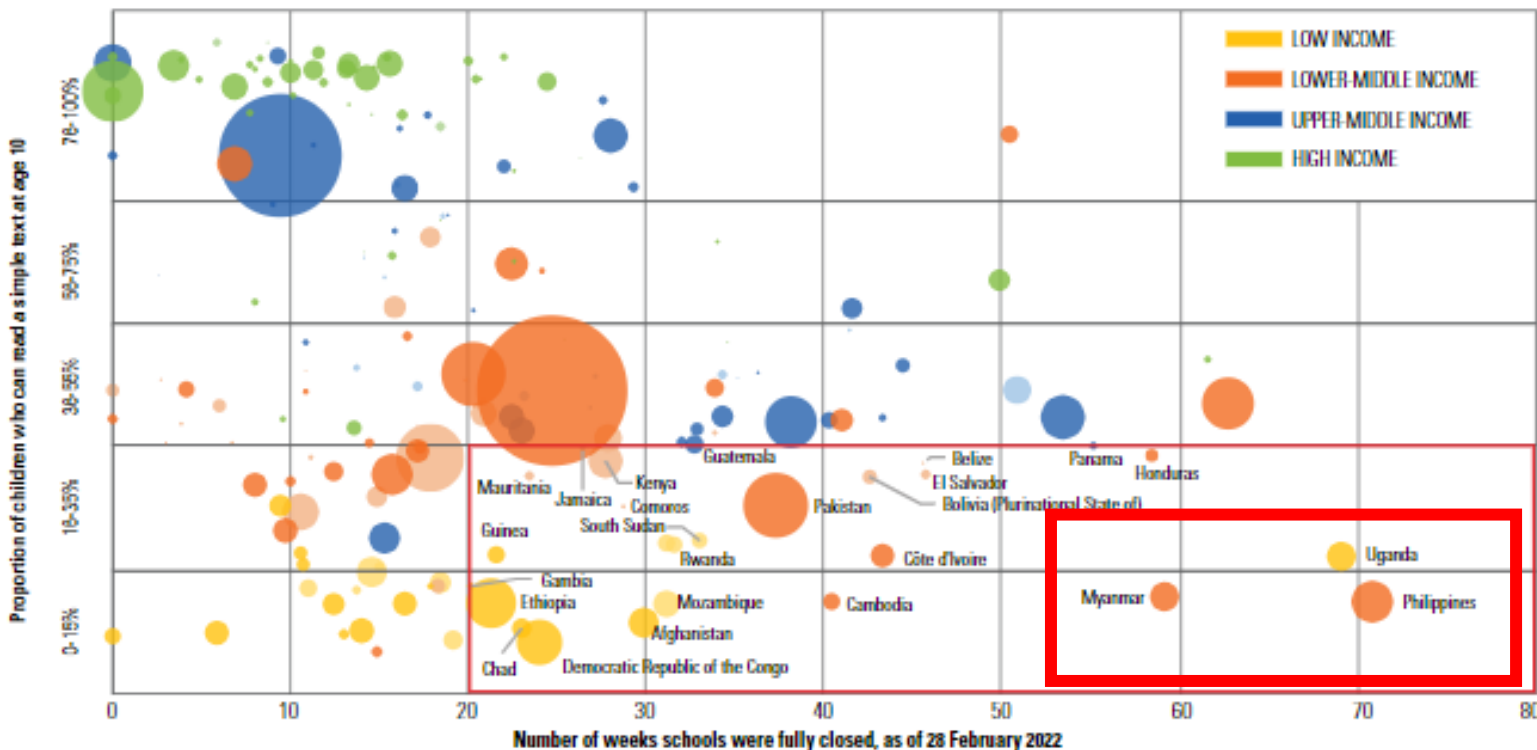


- Overall, **1.1 trillion hours of in-person learning** were lost in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Even before COVID-19, the region was facing a **learning crisis**. More than **50% of 10-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries were unable to read or comprehend a simple story**. Today that figure is estimated to be as high as 70%.
- In **Central and Southern Asia**, the number of primary and secondary-grade children that **fell below the minimum proficiency level increased to 34 million** (UIS data 2021)

Source: UIS(2021), <https://uis.unesco.org/en/blog/disruptions-schooling-and-need-recovery>

Learning loss and learning gaps

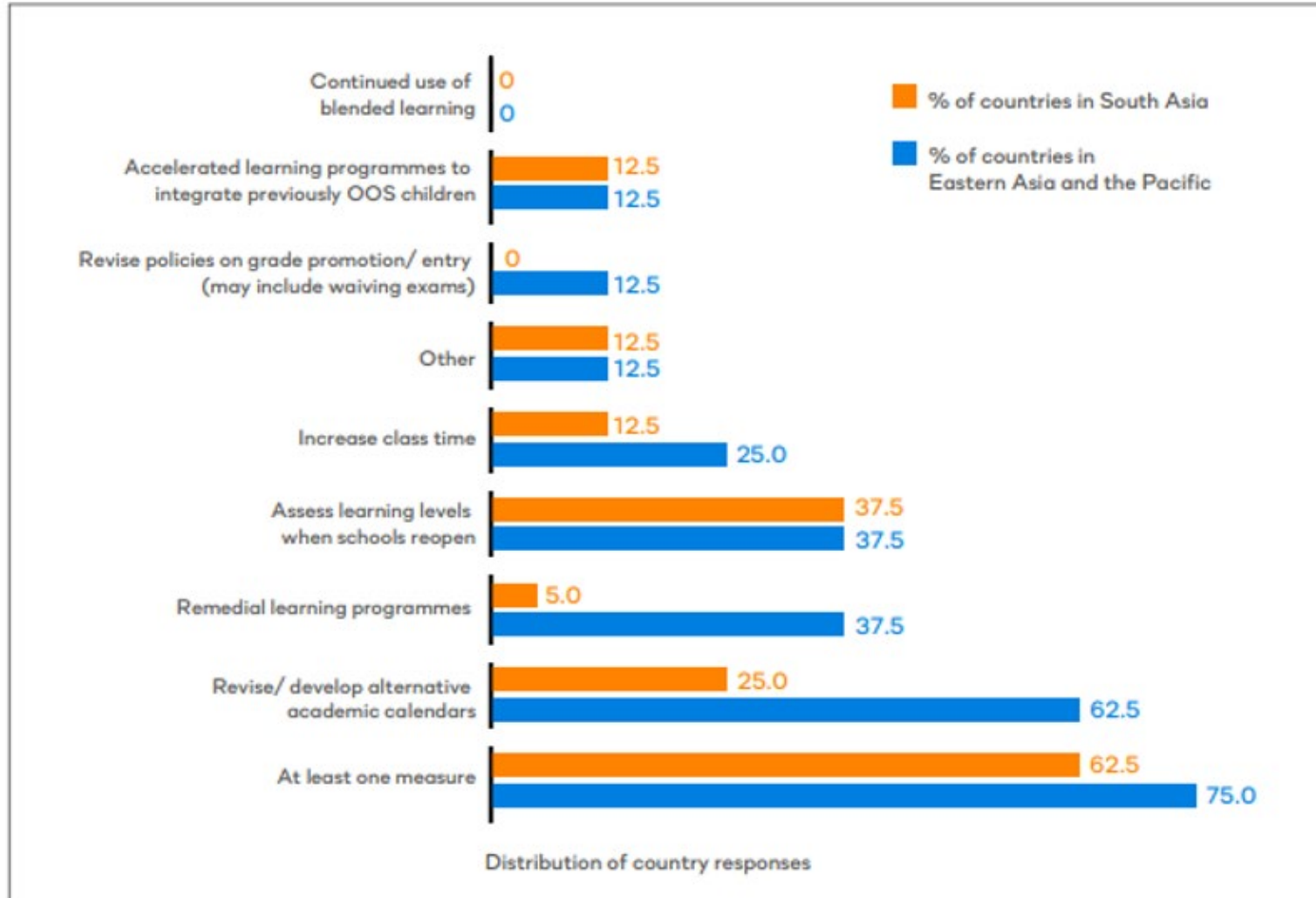
Proportion of children who can read a simple text and duration of school closures (as of February 2022)



- Prolonged school closures deepened pre-existing disparities and low learning outcomes in education
- Learning losses were **worst for the most vulnerable children.**
- Correlation between duration of school closure and low learning outcomes

Source: UNICEF, UNESCO and World Bank (2022), *Where are we on education recovery*

Measures to mitigate learning loss in Eastern Asia and the Pacific and South Asia



Source: UNESCO, UIS (2021), School closures and regional policies to mitigating learning loss due to COVID-19: A Focus on the Asia-Pacific

The role of assessments in addressing learning gaps



Large-scale learning assessments (LSA)

- LSA monitor learning at the system level and can be highly effective in raising awareness and informing policy. LSA can be used comparatively, serving benchmarking purposes.
- LSA can be helpful after a learning crisis to measure the impact on learning outcomes, but requires baseline data.
- In countries with data from earlier learning assessments, the impact of COVID-19 on learning outcomes can be measured more accurately.



Participation in large-scale learning assessments in Asia-Pacific

Country	International	Regional	National
Afghanistan			
Australia	✓		✓
Bangladesh			✓
Bhutan			✓
Cambodia	✓	✓	✓
Cook Islands		✓	✓
Fiji		✓	✓
India			✓
Indonesia	✓		✓
Kiribati		✓	✓
Kyrgyz Republic	✓	✓	✓
Lao PDR	✓	✓	✓
Maldives			✓
Marshall Islands		✓	✓
Malaysia	✓	✓	
FS Micronesia		✓	✓

Country	International	Regional	National
Mongolia	✓		✓
Myanmar		✓	
Nepal			✓
Pakistan	✓		✓
Papua New Guinea		✓	✓
Philippines	✓	✓	✓
Republic of Korea	✓		✓
Samoa		✓	✓
Singapore	✓		
Solomon Islands		✓	✓
Sri Lanka			✓
Tajikistan		✓	✓
Timor-Leste			✓
Tonga		✓	✓
Viet Nam	✓	✓	✓

Source: UNESCO. (Forthcoming). (Link to be available upon publication.)

1 in 5 students in Southeast Asia cannot read simple paragraphs by the end of primary



Percentage of Grade 5 students by reading level achieved in the 2019 SEA-PLM assessment

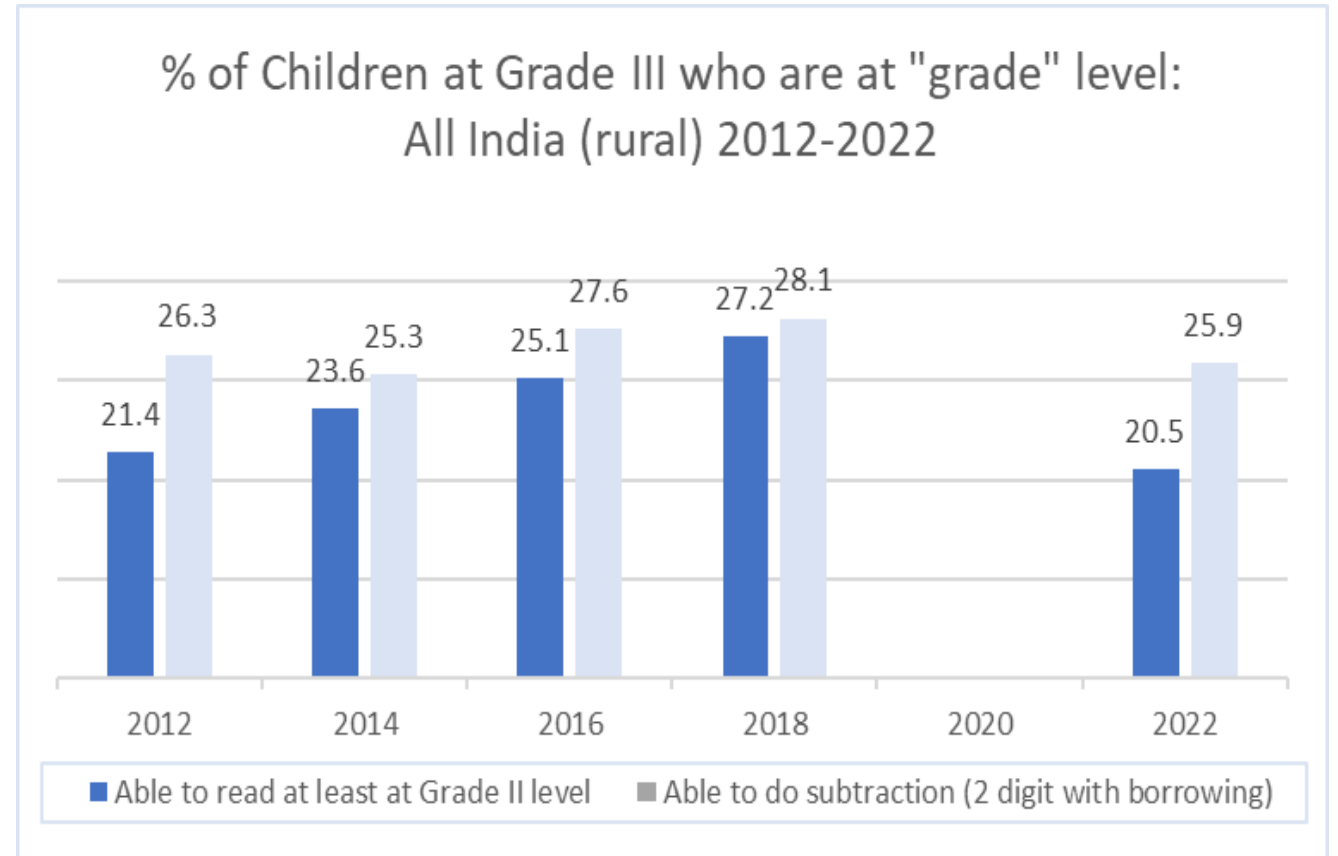
Source: UNICEF, SEAMEO (2020), SEA-PLM 2019 Main regional Report (<https://www.unicef.org/eap/reports/sea-plm-2019-main-regional-report>)

ASER 2022

- Pratham facilitated India's nationwide **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)** in every rural district in India since 2005.
- **ASER 2022** found that although students' overall enrollment increased during COVID-19, there was a **significant learning loss**.
- Literacy and numeracy skills across grades III, IV and V declined to below pre-pandemic levels.
- In Grade III, the percentage of children in government schools who can read at Grade II level decreased from 27.2 % in 2018 to 20.5 % in 2022.

Federal education policy:

- ✓ Focus on foundational literacy and numeracy skills
- ✓ Shift towards competency-based learning
- ✓ Transforming assessment for learning
- ✓ Teachers given more autonomy in pedagogies
- ✓ Continuous professional development in the above



Source: Pratham. (2022). Annual Status of Education Report: (<https://asercentre.org/aser-2022/>)

Effective assessment and teaching strategies for learning recovery



RAPID Learning Recovery Framework



- ✓ Reopen schools safely and keep them open
- ✓ Promote returning to the classroom through back-to-school campaigns
- ✓ Provide cash transfers
- ✓ Use early warning systems to identify at-risk students

- ✓ Assess learning losses at national/sub-national level
- ✓ Provide teachers with tools for classroom level measurement

- ✓ Adjust curriculum across and within subjects
- ✓ Prioritize numeracy, literacy, socioemotional skills
- ✓ Focus instruction on closing the gaps between desired and actual student learning in specific subjects

- ✓ Use approaches that align instruction with learning needs: targeted instruction; structured pedagogy; tutoring; self-guided learning
- ✓ Support teachers continuously; build practical pedagogical and digital skills
- ✓ Expand instructional time
- ✓ Enhance learning with technology

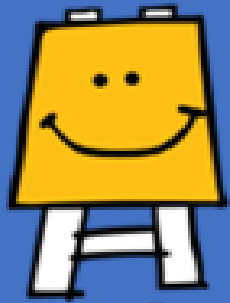
- ✓ Build teachers' capacity to support their students' wellbeing and identify students in need of specialized services
- ✓ Support teacher wellbeing and resilience
- ✓ Invest in students' safety, nutrition, and access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities

Diagnostic assessment as a tool for post-COVID recovery

Within the RAPID Framework, diagnostic assessment is used to **ASSESS** where learners are in their learning, in order to **PRIORITIZE** learning areas for **INCREASED** catch-up learning

- **Diagnostic assessment is VITAL in the context of learning loss**
- **Assesses learnings gaps AND learning losses**
- **Requires clarity on:**
 - Learning expectations (what the learner is expected to know and know-how by end of grade, cycle etc,)
 - Learning progression (How the learner reaches the level of expectations)
- **Class-level assessment vs large-scale assessment**
 - This form of assessment allows teachers to **identify learning gaps before a new teaching and learning unit, grade, cycle** so that they can **adapt their instruction and provide adequate support** to each student.

TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL IN INDIA



Pratham



Case study: Odu Karnataka -Teaching at the Right Level

Odu Karnataka is a Pratham-state government partnership in Karnataka, India since 2016

- Pratham collaborated with the state government to support the integration of TaRL in 52,000 schools across 34 cities, serving approximately 900,000 children
- A simple one-on-one assessment, testing children by learning level not by grade (ASER model of assessment)
- Based on results, children are organised by their current learning level, as opposed to their age and grade
- Each teacher teaches 1-2 groups
- Teachers use activities and materials that are appropriate for each group (focusing on the students' learning needs versus those prescribed by the curriculum of their grade).
- TaRL has demonstrated proven impact on children's learning outcomes and has been adapted to contexts outside India as well.

Example: A typical school						
Grade/Level	Beg	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
III	4	9	8	6	13	40
IV	3	6	6	8	18	41
V	3	6	6	8	20	43

Example: Session organized for TaRL					
Grade/Level	Beg	Letter	Word	Para	Story
III	4	9	8	6	13
IV	3	6	6	8	18
V	3	6	6	8	20
Total	31		42		51

Source: Pratham, (<https://www.pratham.org/about/teaching-at-the-right-level/>)

A big tree stood in a garden. It was alone and lonely. One day a bird came and sat on it. The bird held a seed in its beak. It dropped the seed near the tree. A small plant grew there. Soon there was another tree. The big tree was happy.

Rani likes her school. Her class is in a big room. Rani has a bag and a book. She also has a pen.

e	d	w
s	c	
g	h	z
i	q	

hand	star
bus	
cat	book
day	few
	old
sing	bold

Formative assessment



Tracking progress
 Similar assessments are used for tracking children's progress and formalizing grouping.



Flexible grouping

Big groups-small groups
 Children do activities in groups and also individually. Children progress quickly and move to the next level group.



Diagnostic assessment

Assessment
 Simple one-on-one assessment to **group children by learning level instead of by grade** of instruction

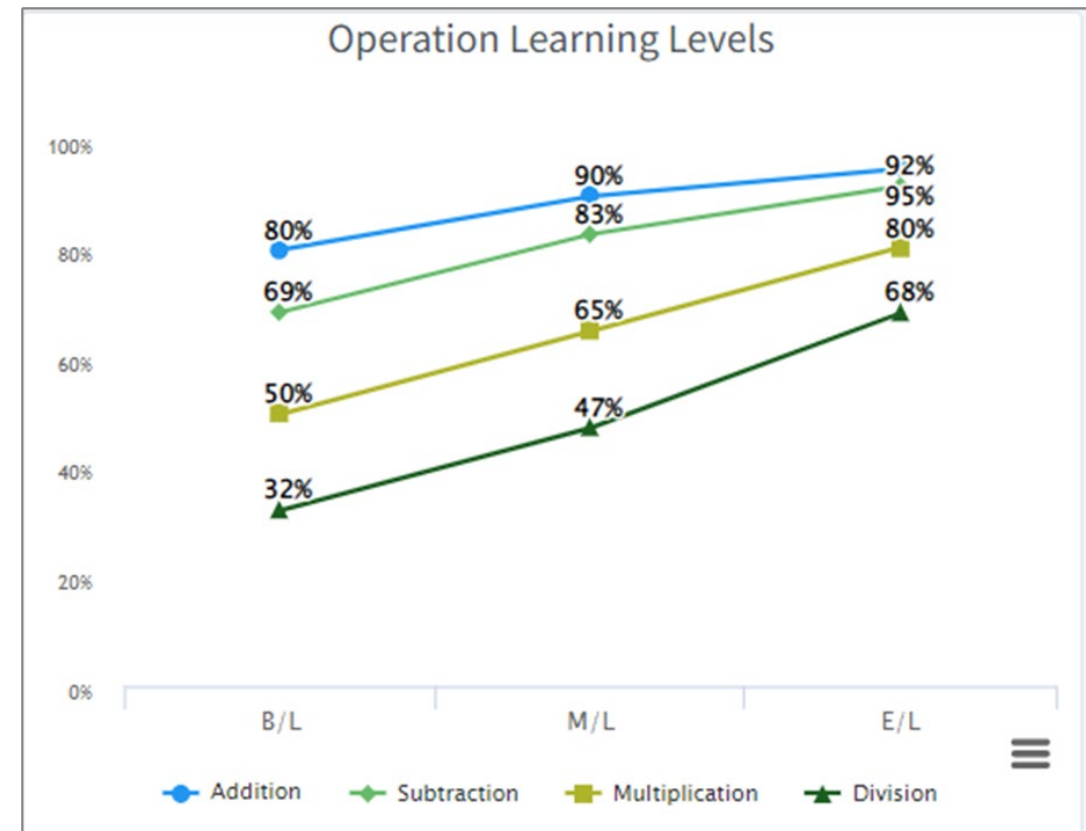
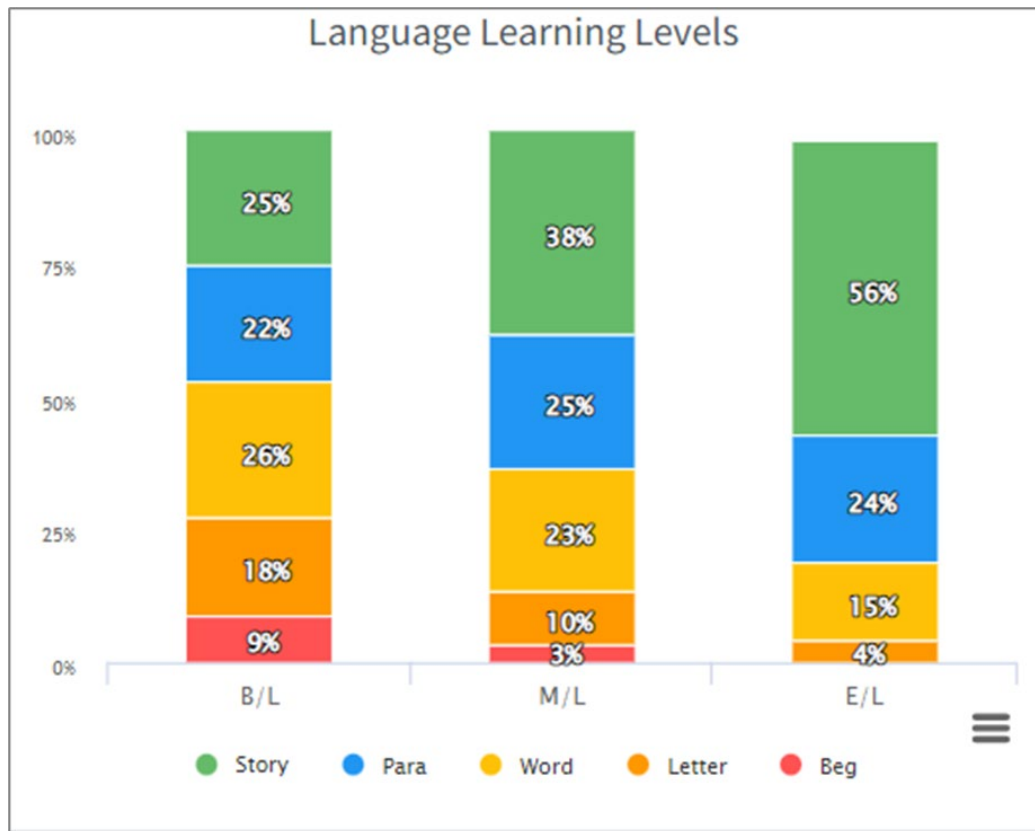


Appropriate activities & materials
 For each group, there are a set of activities and materials for reading and arithmetic that are appropriate for that group and enable children to progress.



Programme impact in Karnataka, India

- The program was implemented for **60 teaching days** with 45 min dedicated to language and math each.
- The data below represents data from **~37,400 schools** and **~878,000 children**.
- **31% improvement** in the ability to read a grade II level text and **36% improvement** in division



Other examples of diagnostic assessments for learning:

1. Progressive achievement tests (PATs) (developed by ACER)

- Used by over 60% of schools in Australia
- Designed for diagnostic assessment at school level, grades 1 - 10
- Adaptive – personalized test pathways determined by students responses (multiple choice and interactive questions- 40 min test)
- Results: Knowing where students are in their learning, in which areas they require support, developing individual and group learning goals, measuring progress from year to year.

Source: Australian Council for Educational Research www.acer.org

2. Standardized diagnostic assessment in early years, France

- Identifies learning needs at key transition points: start of grade 1, mid-way through grade 1 and start of grade 2.
- Identifies learning difficulties (two thresholds) to:
 - Support teachers in planning according to their learner's needs
 - Prevent and address learning difficulties

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse, France



Short-term programs which facilitate the re-entry and retention in formal education include:

- **Remedial programs** target learners who are attending formal education, but have more learning difficulties than their peers. The intervention is individualized and provided in the form of additional targeted support, concurrent with regular classes.
- **Catch-up programs** are short-term transitional programs for those children and adolescents who were actively attending school prior to an educational disruption. They enable catching up on missed content to facilitate their re-entry and continuity of formal education;
- **Re-integration or re-engagement programs** for recent drop-outs address broader support needs (beyond academic) in order to encourage and support their return to school.
- **Bridging programs** are short-term, targeted preparation courses which facilitate the integration of migrants into the formal education system by preparing them for the new educational context/system

Accelerated education programmes (AEP) target out-of-school or over-age adolescents and youth who either did not complete their education at a given educational level (primary or lower secondary) or are lagging several years behind their peers. They deliver the formal curriculum within a compressed period and provide certified competencies that are equivalent to formal education.

AEPs for younger adolescents aim at facilitating their re-entry into formal general or vocational education.

AEPs are also provided to older adolescents or adults who wish to obtain their school certificate to access further education and/or training opportunities.

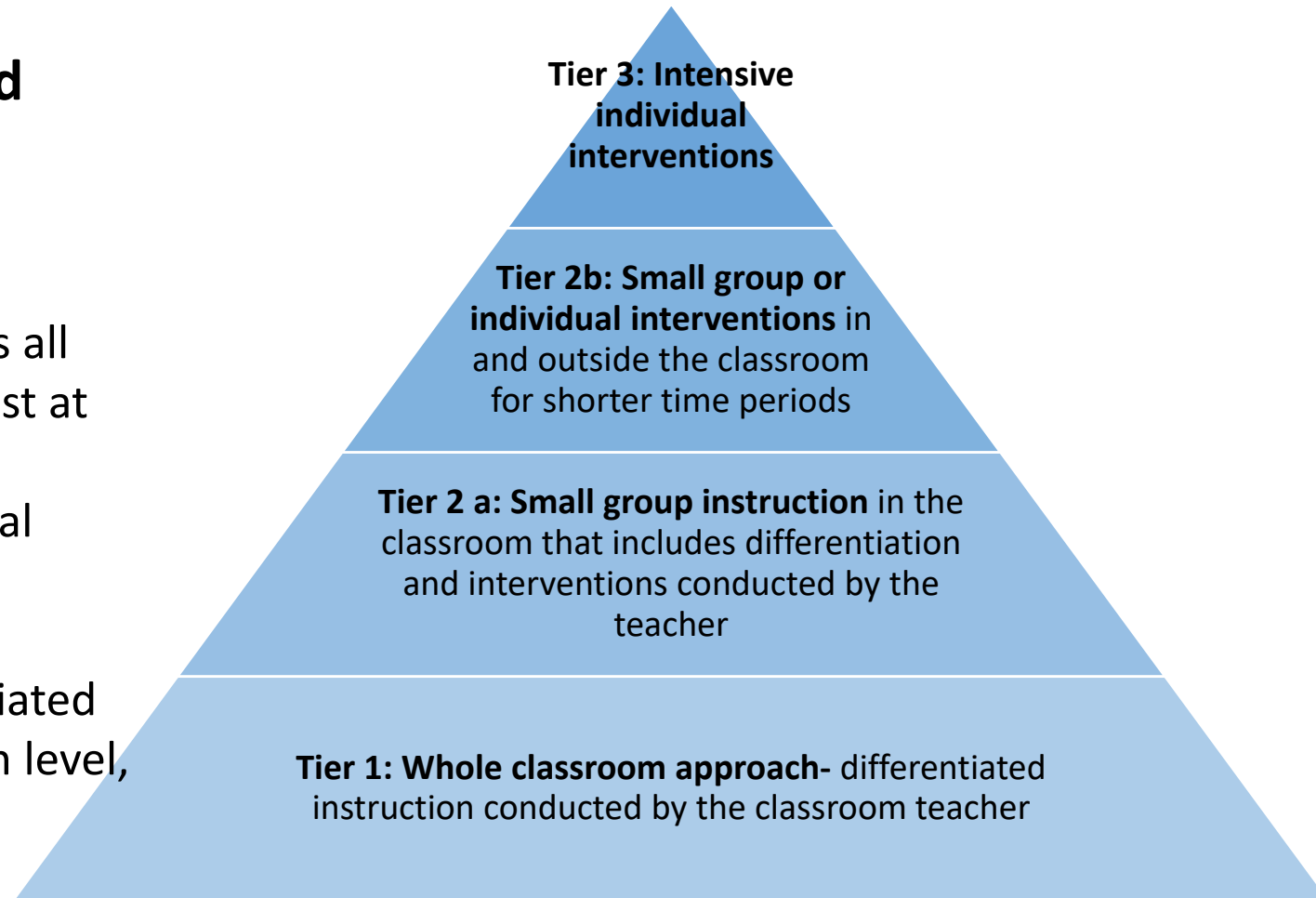
Deeper transformation of teaching and learning in the classroom – differentiated learning or learner-centered approach

Tiered approach:

Comprehensive approach which allows to address all learners needs with a stronger focus on those most at risk of not meeting learning expectations.

Sequentially increases the intensity of instructional interventions to meet learners' individual needs.

Based on diagnostic assessment results, differentiated instruction targets learning needs at a.) classroom level, b.) small groups facing similar difficulties and c.) individual level for students facing major difficulties in learning.



Source: Adapted from MDIRS (2019), <https://sites.google.com/a/mdirss.org/curriculum/response-to-intervention-rti>

Differentiated learning means tailoring teaching to the learner's needs.

Differentiated learning can take various forms and is often categorized in four main categories:

- **Differentiated Content:** Learning content is not taught to all students at the same time at the same pace. (scaffolding approach)
- **Differentiated Process:** Pedagogy is flexible and adapts to learners' needs.
- **Differentiated Learning Environment:** Varying the way the class is organized
- **Differentiated Products:** Allowing student to produce different outputs to show their learning.

UNESCO's work in supporting quality learning



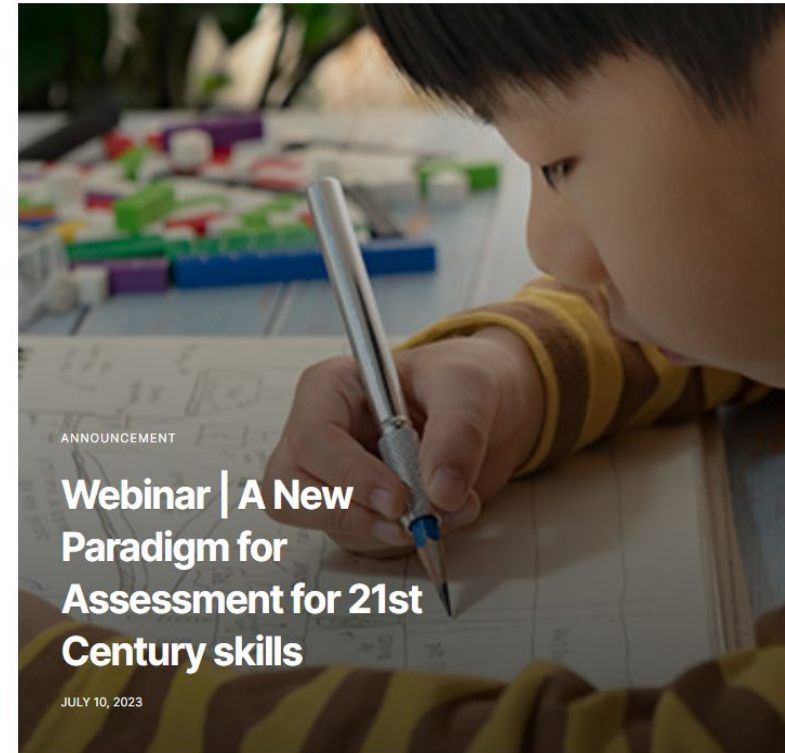
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Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok
(UNESCO Bangkok)

- UNESCO serves as the Secretariat of the **Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)**
- NEQMAP is a platform for the exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise on the monitoring of educational quality in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The network **focuses on student learning assessment as a key tool for monitoring education quality**, while acknowledging the importance of maintaining strong linkages with other enablers of learning in classrooms including curriculum and pedagogy.



NEQMAP KNOWLEDGE PORTAL



NEWS AND EVENTS



NCERT gets ETS on board for establishing India's first national assessment regulator 'PARAKH'

The NCERT has partnered with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) which conducts TOEFL and GRE tests, for setting up India's first national assessment regulator – PARAKH. The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) notified "PARAKH" last month.



A unique approach to designing robust, calculation-based online assessments

Designing open-book, online assessments for subjects relying on calculation poses a challenge to educators. Amit Navin Jinabhai presents a model he has successfully applied to minimise student collusion.

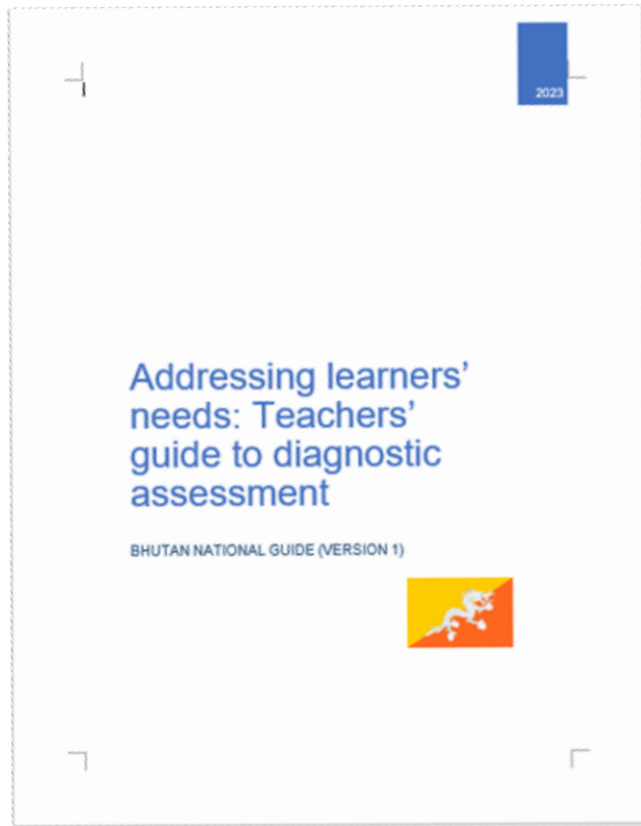


Challenges to teacher wellbeing

Recent PILNA study reveals that teachers in the Pacific Islands are experiencing challenges to their mental health and wellbeing.

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Addressing learning gaps: building teachers' capacity in assessment for learning and learner-centered pedagogies in Asia and Pacific



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