Launch of the Publication ‘School Closures and Regional Policies to Mitigate Learning Losses: A Focus on the Asia-Pacific’,
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The global pandemic and school closures
Figure 1: Number/percentage of countries that closed their schools, worldwide (left) and Asia-Pacific (right).
Schools Closed

- In April 2020, 95% of the schools around the world and 99% in the AP Region were closed.
- In June 2021, 43% of schools globally and 50% of schools in the AP region were closed.
Number and % of students affected due to school closure

- **Total Students**
  - Globally **1.6 billion**
  - AP region **850 millions**

- **April 2020**
  - Globally **95%**
  - AP Region **99%**

- **November 2020**
  - Globally **43%**
  - AP Region **57%** (biggest proportion is from **SW Asia 80%**)

- **Levels of education**
  - Students equally affected regardless of the levels of education.
  - **Pre-Primary schooling** has higher risks of sustaining (55% of students in the EAP and 58% in SWA attend private schools)
Estimated number of teachers affected by school closures, by subregion

Total numbers of teachers affected
- In April, 2020, 43 million (99% of the teachers from Pre-primary to Secondary)
- In November, 2020 23 million teachers (53%) were still not engaged in face-to-face direct teaching
- Many teachers, especially private school teachers lost their jobs
Continuity of Learning and School Re-opening
Remote learning during school closures

- Not all the delivery methods are equally effective
- Online learning platforms where available seems effective compared to other methods.
- The effectiveness of such methods varied between various sub regions
- In 2 out 3 countries where online platform is used, MoE are taking lead in developing and deploying contents for online platforms (68%)

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Support to the teachers for organizing remote learning

- In 1 in 10 counties teachers are not provided with additional support
- Only one third of the countries provided special training to the teachers
- Only 3 out 5 countries provided instruction to the teachers on remote learning
- Only 1 in 3 countries provided ICT tools and free connectivity to their teachers
Country strategies to mitigate student learning loss with schools re-opening

Numbers of Academic days lost in Asia pacific region (until September 2020)

- Central Asia: 54.1 days
- East Asia: 76.3 days
- Oceania: 45.4 days
- South and West Asia: 126.9 days
- South East Asia: 89.4 days
Country strategies to mitigate student learning loss with schools re-opening

Re-opening of schools

1/5th

- Countries in East and Southeast and Oceania considering to re-open fully in-person
- Countries in East and Southeast and Oceania re-open with blended model

25%, 36% and 18%

- of the countries will continue distance learning in Central and Southern Asia, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania, respectively.

Measures to mitigate student learning loss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which of the following measures to mitigate student learning loss were included in school re-opening plans?</th>
<th>Percentage of countries worldwide</th>
<th>Percentage of countries A-P region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revise/develop alternative academic calendars</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess learning levels when schools re-open</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial learning programmes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated learning programmes to integrate previously out-of-school children</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase class time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise policies on grade promotion/entry (may include waiving exams)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued use of blended learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one measure</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impacts of School Closure on Learning
Impact of school closures on dropout, learning and data collection

- **Risk of Dropout**
  - 6.7 million students in the region are at risk of dropping out of school, (highest dropouts expected at the secondary -4.2 million).
  - Estimated 4% increase in OOSC numbers in the region

- **Learning Loss**
  - 10 percentage points declines in Grade 3 age children cohort proficient in reading between 2019 and 2020, from 59% to 49%
  - Over 100 million additional students fall below the minimum proficiency due to the school closure

- **Disruption in data**
  - More than 80% of the Lower middle income and Low-income countries face moderate to severe education data disruption
Projected number of additional students completing education levels without minimum proficiency in reading, between 2020 to 2030

Implication to Resources

Summary of Findings and Wat Forwards
Implication on resources to achieve SDG 4
Key findings

• Millions of students and teachers affected due the pandemic- Pre-primary education could be in risk as more than 55% of the students are in private schools

• Many countries in the Asia-Pacific developed remote and distance learning options, especially the use of online platforms, to ensure ongoing learning. However, infrastructure is big challenge

• Most low income countries planned to re-open schools for face-to-face learning rather than adopting a hybrid model which is more popular in high income countries.

• Many schools had inadequate digital infrastructure and teacher capacity to deliver remote learning by ICT

• Teacher job security was negatively affected by school closures, especially in the private sector

• School feeding programmes stopped when schools closed

• Disruption in collecting and compiling education data.

• Effective remedial programmes are essential

• Increasing education finance gaps for low income and lower-middle income countries will impact their ability to achieve SDG 4.
• Strengthen data collection systems for effective monitoring of school re-opening plans. This approach should focus on safety, equity and inclusion.

• Monitoring and data systems should also collect data on online and distance learning programmes, their delivery and student achievement.

• National monitoring authorities should receive greater support to expand their capacity to enhance and develop data collection and compilation methodologies. These approaches could include the use of technical devices such as smart phones and tablets, as well as Internet-based innovations.

• Data collection guidelines and tools should be developed so countries can adjust practices and collect the most essential data for planning and policy strategies. This approach will advance the development of remedial and intervention programmes.

• Support should be provided for regional, subregional and national impact assessments, in coordination with national statistical organizations and ministries of education, so the true impact of COVID-19 on learning can be assessed.

The way forward (Focusing on Monitoring)
Thank you

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