

Monitoring the impact of the pandemic on SDG 4

SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee

14 January 2021

Manos Antoninis, Global Education Monitoring Report

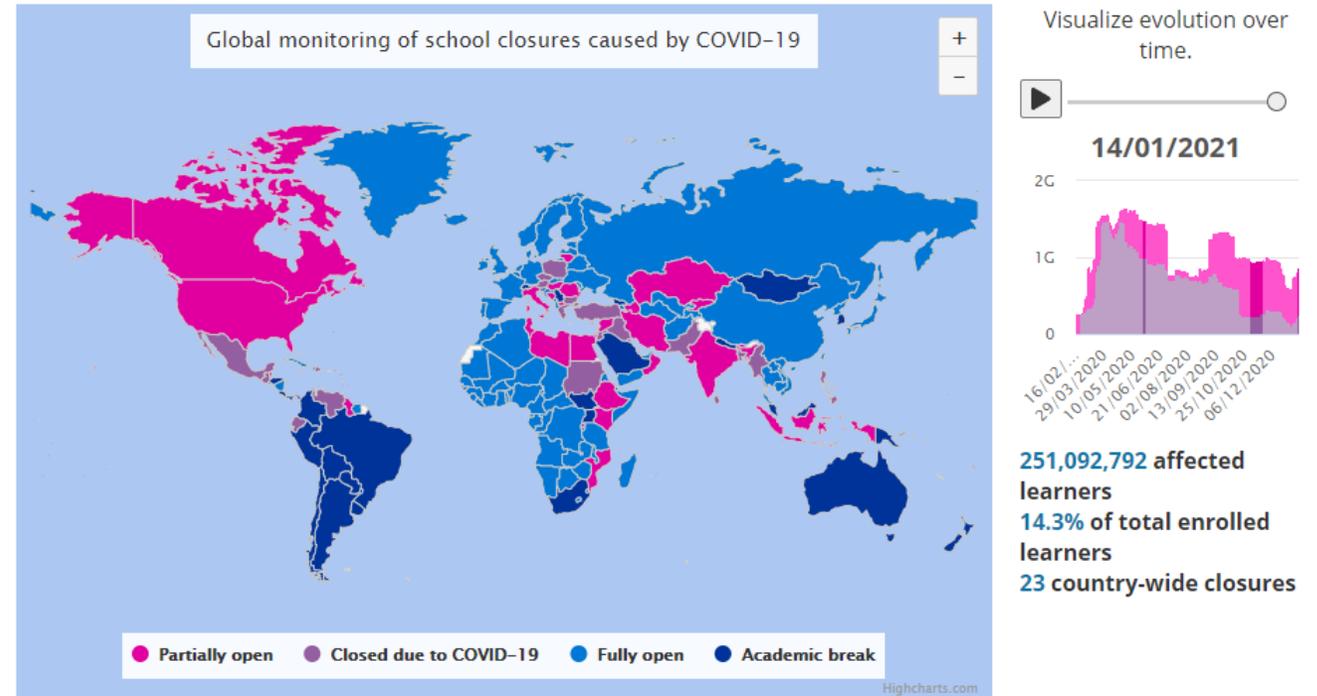
Impact of COVID-19 on education is complex

- ▶ Policy responses
- ▶ Access and equity
- ▶ Quality and learning
- ▶ Finance

+ data challenges

+ Other levels: early childhood, vocational education, student mobility etc.

+ Big picture: distance learning as imperfect substitute and new reality



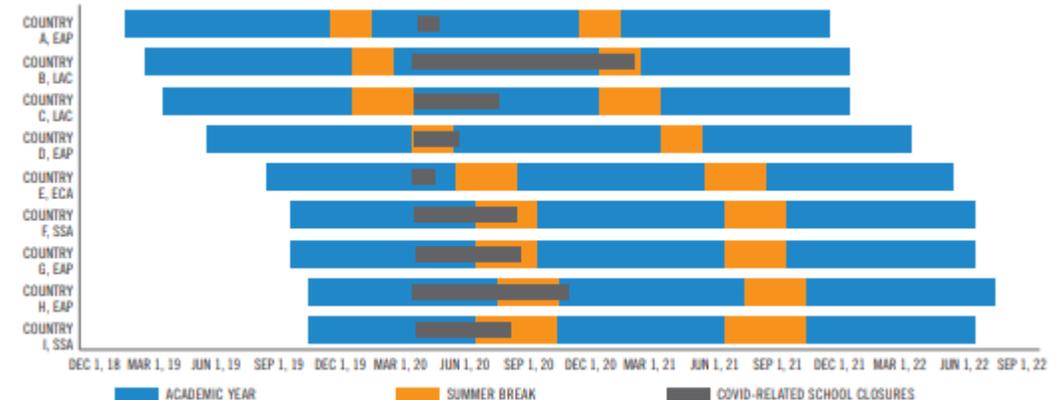
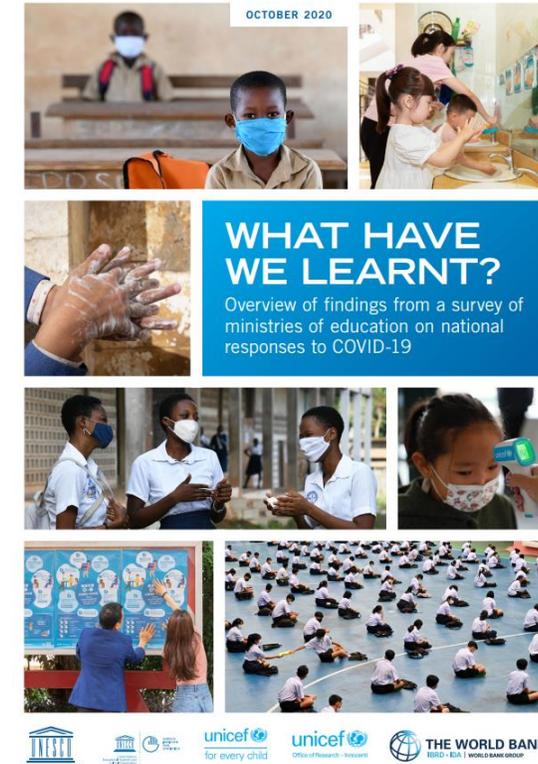
Policy responses

Joint UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank survey

- ▶ Round 1: May to mid-June 2020
- ▶ **Round 2: July to September 2020**
- ▶ Round 3: February 2021 (with OECD)

- School closures
- School calendar and curricula
- School reopening
- Distance education delivery
- Teachers and support personnel
- Learning, assessment, examinations
- Financing
- Decision making

To be used to monitor commitments made at Global Education Meeting



Policy responses

► Describes overall situation

e.g. duration of school closures (24% of instruction days), approaches to distance learning, learning loss mitigation

e.g. highest potential reach in Latin America and the Caribbean (91%), well above the global average (69%)

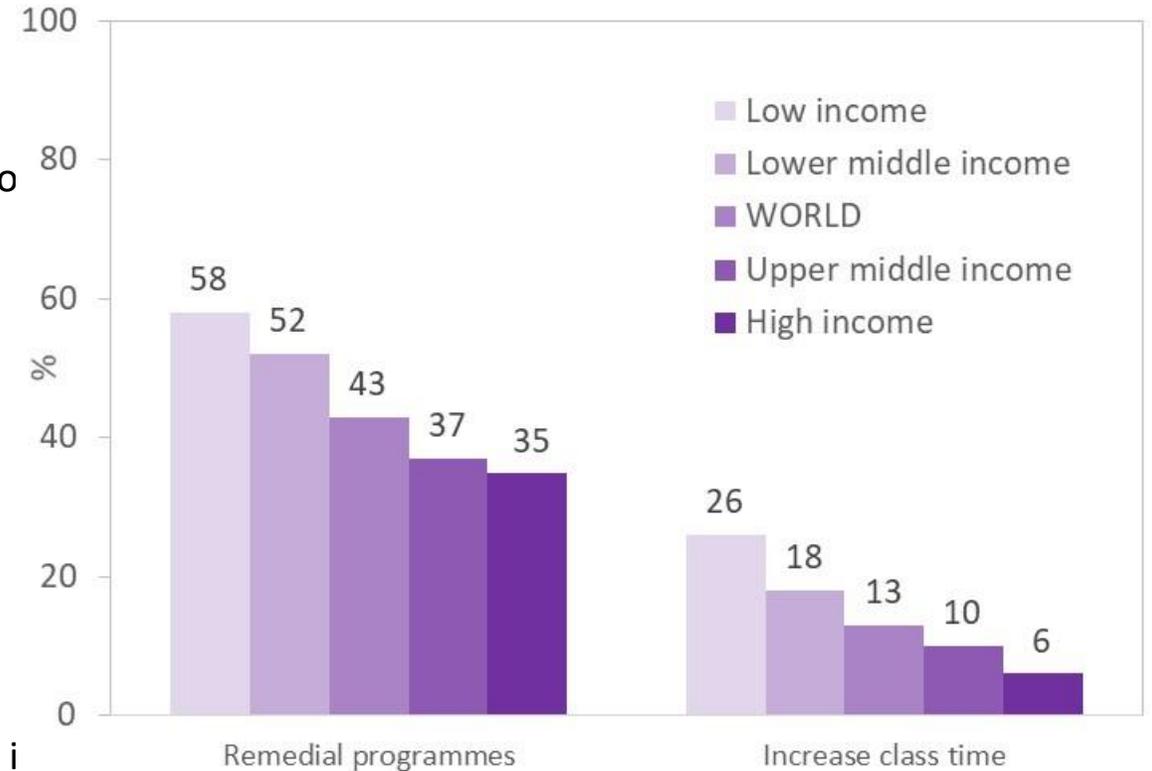
► Captures some support measures

● for students and parents

e.g. 60% subsidized internet; 46% subsidized devices

● for teachers

e.g. 26% to recruit new personnel for re-opening (18% in low- and 45% in high-income countries); 57% teaching content for remote learning (33% low- and 66% in high-income countries)



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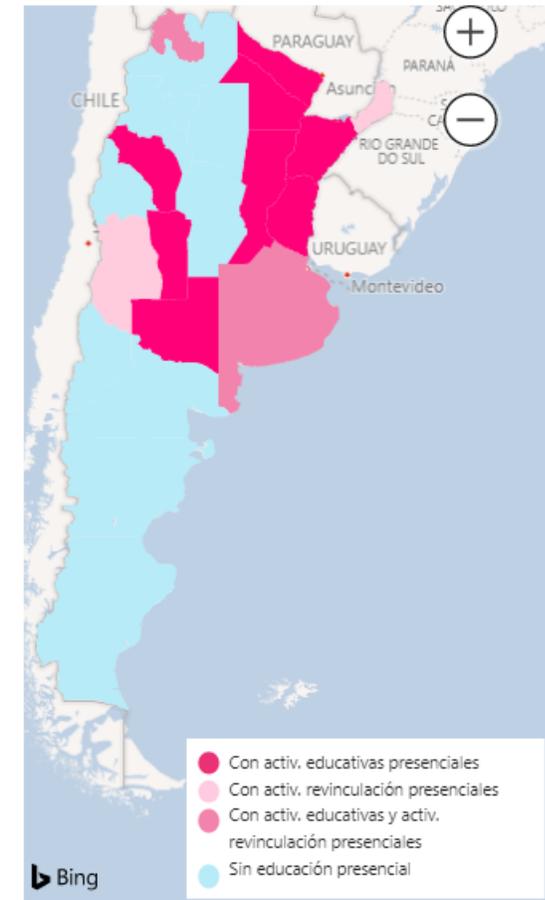
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but responses are inevitably general

Mapa de la vuelta a la educación presencial en Argentina

Pasar el cursor por el mapa para ver información por provincia. Hacer zoom para ver CABA.



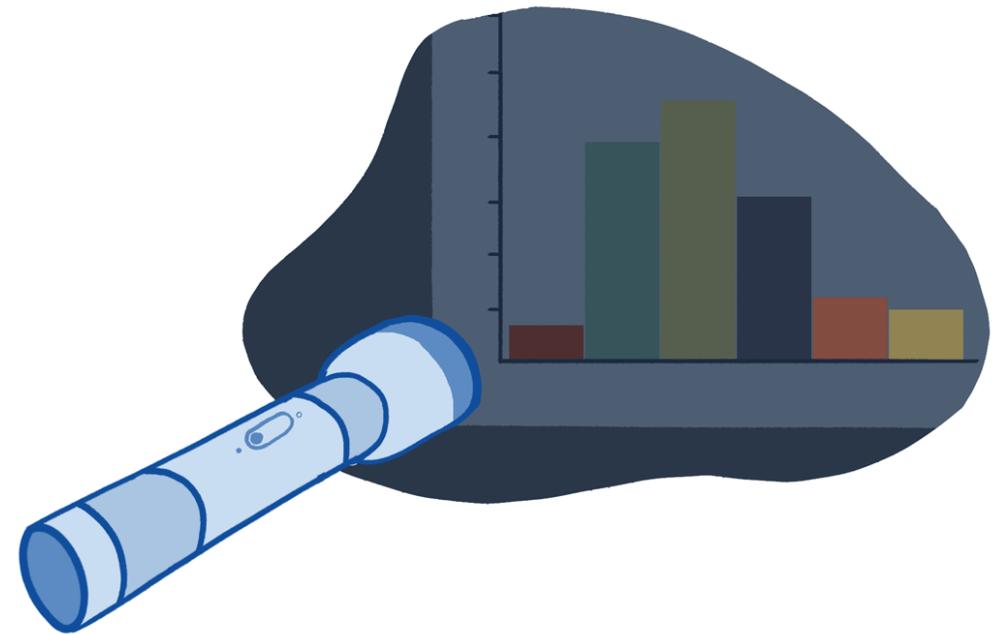
Access and equity

Inequality rising but hard to show by how much

Data collection systems challenged

Various sources of evidence, each with casting light to different aspects of the crisis

- ▶ Indirectly assessment of current situation using previously collected data
- ▶ Direct assessment of current situation
 - Administrative data from online systems
 - Subjective views
 - Phone surveys



Access and equity

Indirect assessments: students

Large disparities in access to:

▶ internet, incl. cost and speed

e.g. **bandwidth** per user was 21 kbit/s in least developed, 91 kbit/s in developing and 189 kbit/s in developed countries

▶ computers and smartphones

e.g. 45% had computer in Latin America

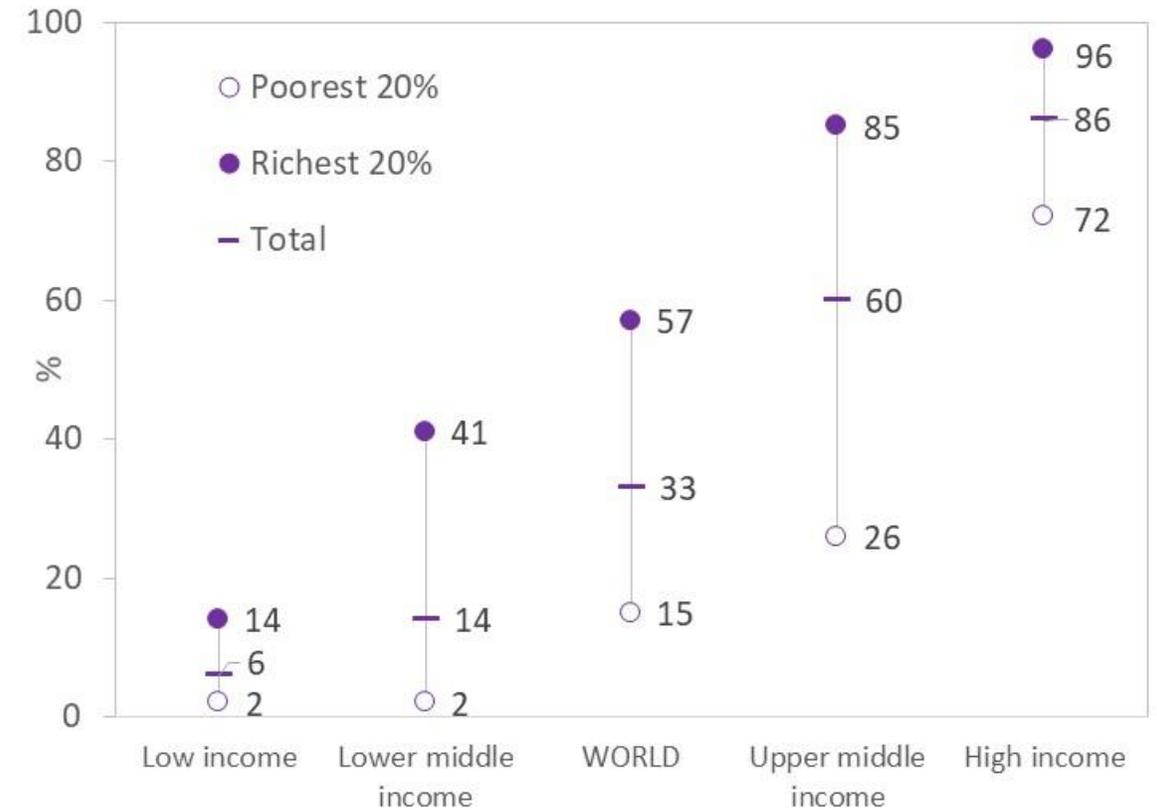
▶ radios and TVs among poorest 20%

e.g. **radio ownership**: Ethiopia 7% , D. R. Congo 8%, Madagascar 14%, Kenya 30%; no TVs

e.g. **TV ownership**: Nepal 5%, Yemen 10%, in Guatemala 13%, Pakistan 14% Cambodia 22%

▶ quiet room for studying

e.g. 30% of 15-year-olds don't have one in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand



Access and equity

Direct assessments: phone surveys

Substituting normal household surveys

► World Bank

= series of phone surveys substituting traditional surveys

- **Ecuador: disparity in time use – by poverty and sex**
- **Uganda: urban-rural differentials – and growing**
- Lao PDR: 55% enrolled before, 25% engaged in education during COVID (but 19% among ethnic minorities)
+ Series of studies, e.g. South Sudan, Zambia etc.

► Center for Global Development

e.g. among those with a TV, a mobile or both, 43% of rich households but 28% of poor households use technology for distance learning in Pakistan

► Young Lives project

e.g. among 19-year-olds, access to remote learning was 90% in Vietnam, 70% in Peru, 38% in India and 28% in Ethiopia - 14% if parents had no education

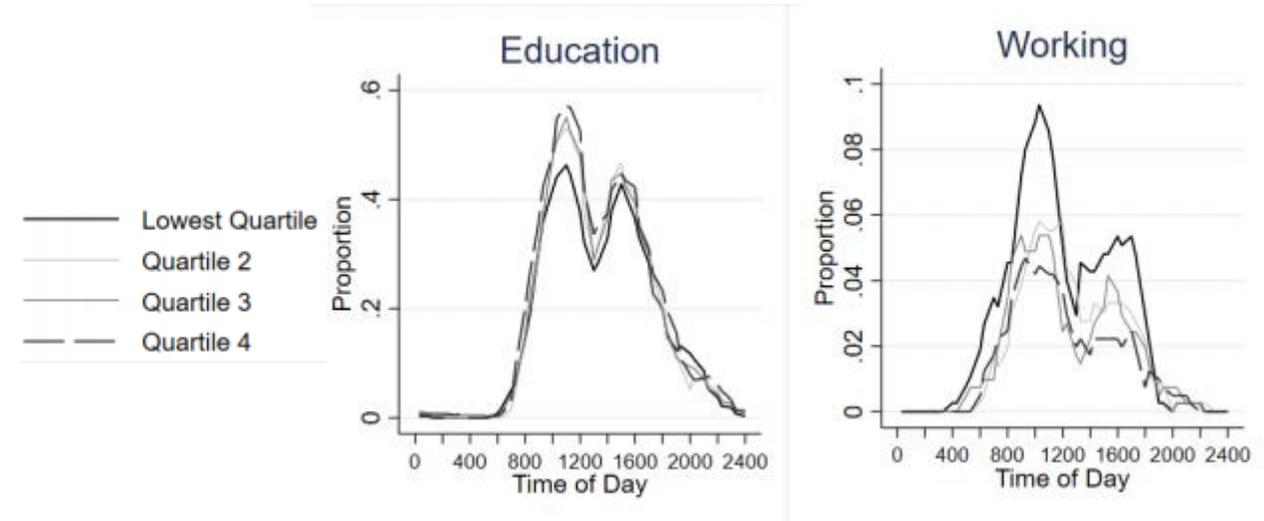
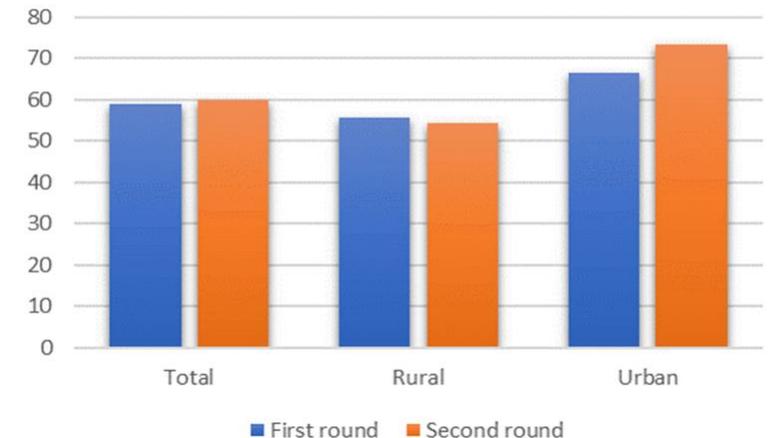


Figure 2. Share of households with at least one child (3-18) engaged in any education or learning activities (conditional on having at least one child) by survey round and rural/urban residence, (%)



Quality and learning

General issues

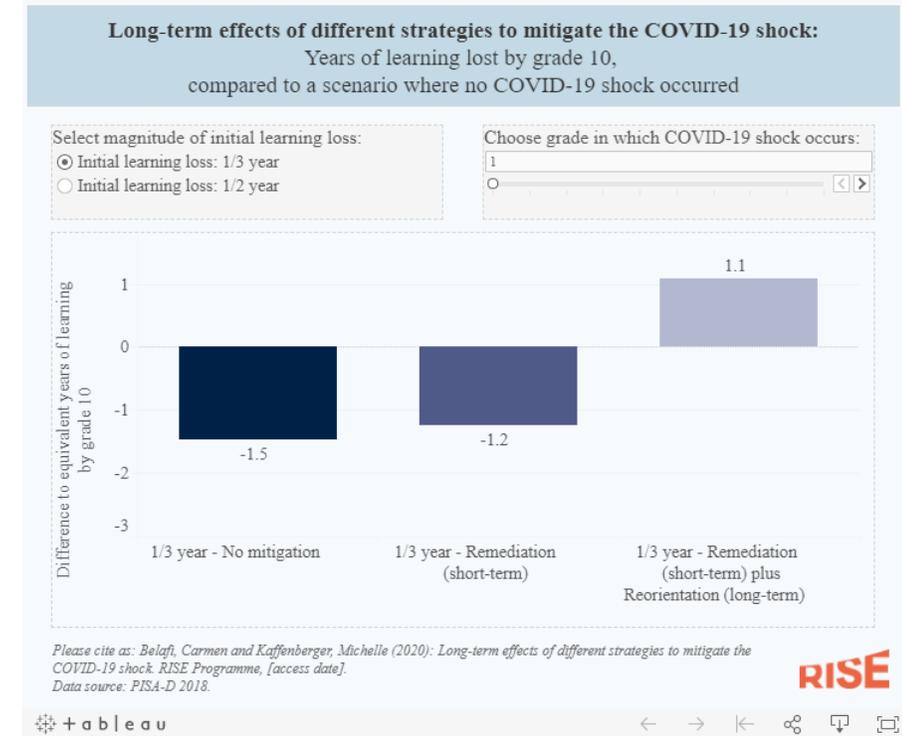
Long term impact:

= what is the nature of the information needed?
...so far, **projections** on scenarios, no real data

Quantify relationship between duration/nature of disruption and magnitude of learning losses

- ▶ Impact of distance learning mechanisms
- ▶ Effects of schools meals and income shocks
- ▶ Country capacity to monitor learning

Learning losses due to school closures could continue to accumulate after children return



A 3-month school closure could reduce long term learning by 1-year's worth of learning.

Quality learning

Direct assessments: opinion surveys

Surveys of teachers

► OECD

= 1370 responses from 59 countries

Compared to what students normally learn, how effective was the strategy of education continuity?

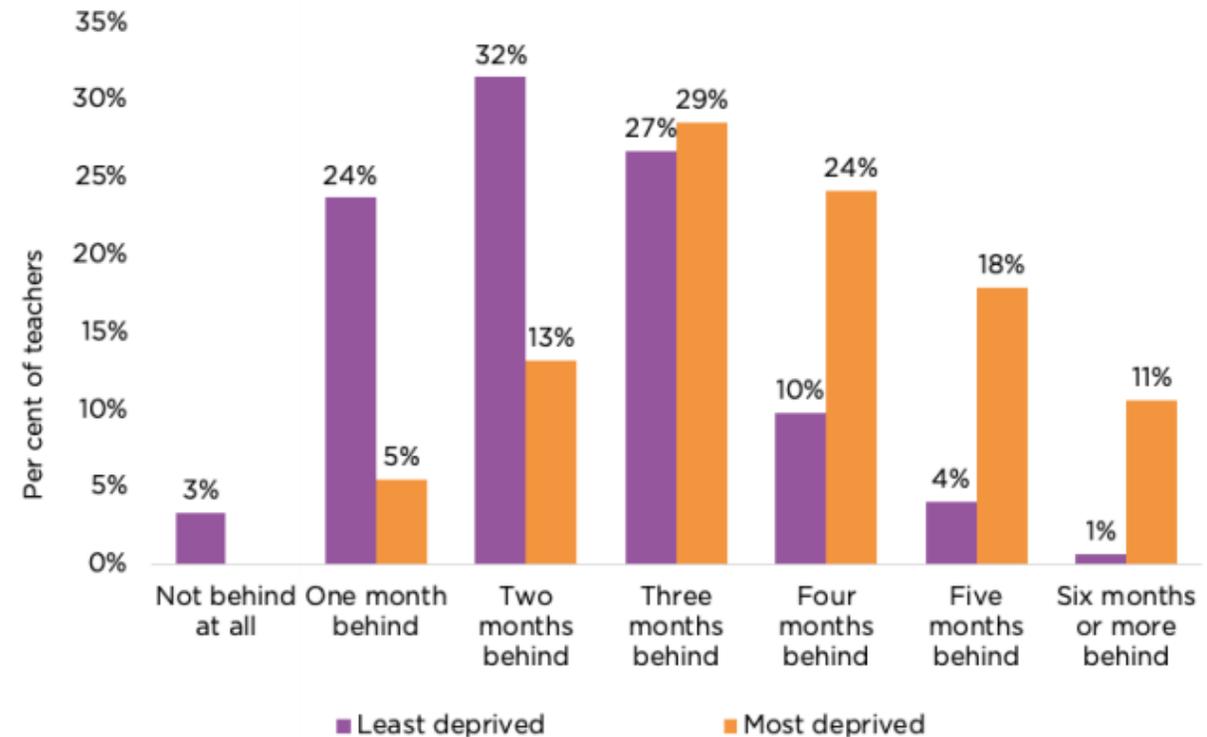
- Impossible to say (or no answer): 60%
- Learned but not much / less than in school: 36%
- Learned as much as in school: 4%

► NFER survey in 2200 English schools

e.g. three months behind in their studies after lockdown

e.g. learning gap between rich and poor pupils

grew by almost half (47%) between March and July



Quality and learning

Indirect assessments: teachers

Data on system and teacher preparedness:

- ▶ In 11 countries, including Germany, the Republic of Korea and Uruguay, at most 1 in 4 grade 8 students reported using ICTs weekly, in or outside school, to work online with other students, and at most 1 in 3 used it to write and edit documents
- ▶ Head teachers reported only 5 in 10 teachers had the technical and pedagogical skills to integrate digital devices in instruction in the Netherlands and just 3 in 10 in Japan



Financing

Still difficult to tell...

- ▶ Education not a major part of stimulus packages
COVID-19 response funding up to mid-September add up to US\$20.4 trillion, mostly provided by governments (59%) and multilateral donors (36%).
Education receives just US\$19.2 billion, or 0.09%
- ▶ Evidence on budget impact just emerging
... but serious concerns given multiple priorities and recession, e.g. Guatemala
- ▶ Targeted measures relatively lacking
e.g. few measures on disadvantaged groups
 - adaptation of support programmes to students with disabilities
 - adaptation of school feeding through direct cash transfers or home deliveries

Policy Paper

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September 2020

Act now: Reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the cost of achieving SDG 4

There is a US\$148 billion annual financing gap in low- and lower-middle-income countries to achieve SDG 4 from now until 2030. Additional costs due to COVID-19 related school closures risk increasing this financing gap by up to one-third, or US\$30 to US\$45 billion. But investing now in remedial and re-enrolment programmes could reduce this additional cost by as much as 75%.

COVID-19 has transformed the world, and with it, the education landscape in every country. Public health research continues to chart virus transmission channels and infection mortality rates. However, contagion is not the only uncertainty. The societal and economic impacts of restrictions must also be reckoned with. Choosing which activities should be authorized presents serious moral dilemmas. In spite of the risks, there is a growing consensus that education is one activity that must resume. But if schools are to be reopened safely and effectively, there will be considerable financial and organizational costs.

These new costs come at a moment when education systems in low- and middle-income countries were already facing a growing financing gap. Slow progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) means that the annual costs are rising, if the goal is still to be achieved by 2030. COVID-19 adds even more expense to the SDG ambition – but if governments act quickly and invest wisely, they can still avert the worst of the damage.

This paper outlines the costs of achieving SDG 4 as assumed in 2015, as well as the revised costs projected before the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020. It also explains the drivers that will increase costs now that COVID-19 has become a global reality and the steps that must be taken to mitigate the pandemic's effects

on learners. It demonstrates how, by spending more now, governments can prevent the worst education outcomes of this crisis, thereby lessening later costs as well as securing a better future for the learners of the COVID-19 generation.

THE COST OF ACHIEVING SDG 4, AS ESTIMATED IN 2015, WAS HIGH

In 2015, the Global Education Monitoring Report team estimated that the cost of achieving the headline SDG 4 targets, that is, ensuring universal pre-primary, primary and secondary education by 2030 in low- and lower-middle-income countries, would cost a cumulative US\$5.1 trillion, equivalent to about US\$340 billion per year in 2015–2030. This cost was about 2.3 times higher than the annual total cost in 2012, reflecting a combination both of greater numbers of students (e.g. five times more students in pre-primary and upper secondary education in low-income countries) and higher per-student costs, which were mostly the result of falling pupil/teacher ratios in pre-primary and higher teacher salaries at pre-primary and primary levels. In relative terms, the total cost would increase from 3.5% to 6.3% of GDP between 2012 and 2030. The increase was steeper in low-income countries where it would triple both in volume (from US\$14 billion in 2012 to an average of US\$50 billion in 2015–2030) and as a percentage of GDP (UNESCO, 2015).



Monitoring the impact of the pandemic on SDG 4

Work in progress

