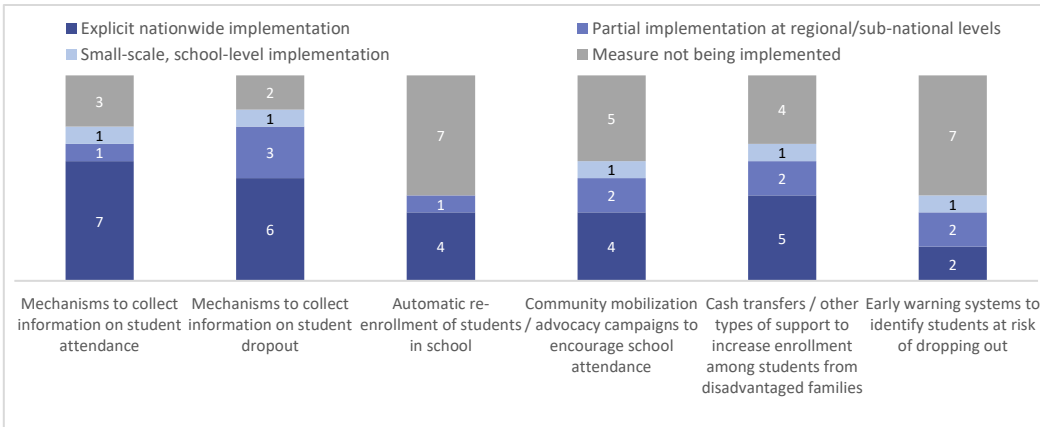


East Asia and the Pacific

Tracking Progress on Foundational Learning: Findings from the 2023 RAPID analysis
September 2023

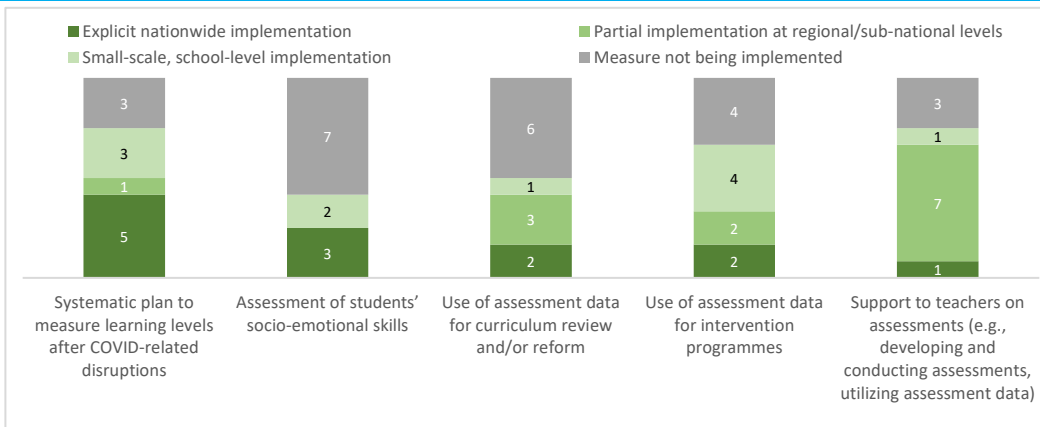
This brief presents regional results from the Foundational Learning Action Tracker, an initiative by UNICEF and the Hempel Foundation to monitor progress and foster knowledge sharing on achieving foundational learning for all children. The results reflect data from UNICEF's 2023 pulse survey with low- and middle-income countries and UNICEF's internal monitoring and reporting exercise with its country offices, organized around the [RAPID Framework](#). The Foundational Learning Action Tracker and global report are available [here](#), along with country scorecards for low- and middle-income countries endorsing the [Commitment to Action on Foundational Learning](#) as of September 2023.

Reach every child and keep them in school



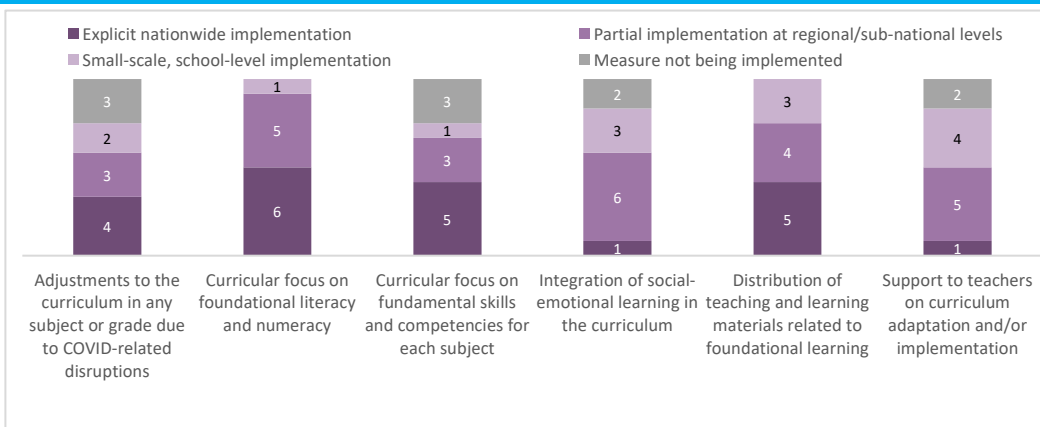
Among the 12* countries responding to the survey, at least half of the countries reported that mechanisms to collect information on student attendance and dropout were being implemented on a nationwide scale. In contrast, fewer than half of countries reported the implementation of measures such as automatic re-enrollment or early warning systems on any scale.

Assess learning levels regularly



Encouragingly, most countries reported providing support to teachers on assessments, such as developing assessments and utilizing assessment data, on a nationwide or sub-national scale. However, there is still room to improve the assessment of foundational skills, particularly socio-emotional skills: only five countries reported assessing socio-emotional skills on any scale.

Prioritize teaching the fundamentals



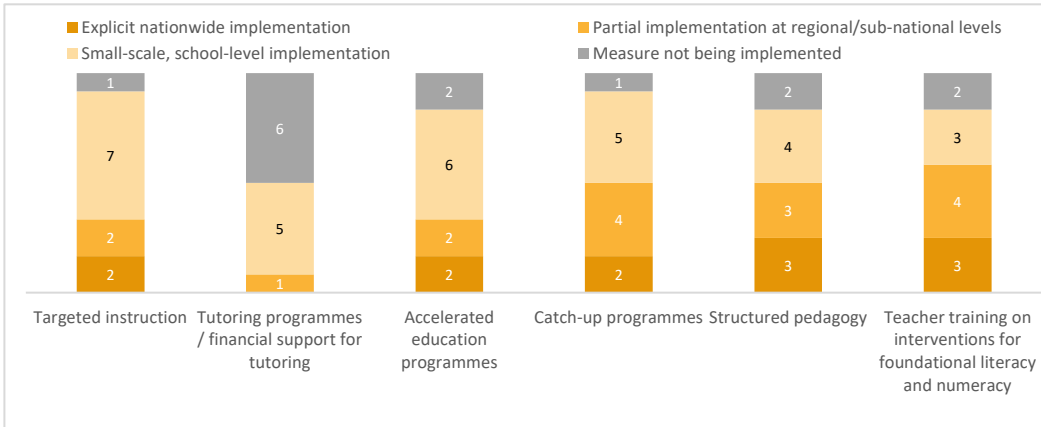
Nearly all countries reported nationwide or sub-national curricular focus on foundational literacy and numeracy. However, only a little over half reported nationwide or sub-national integration of social-emotional learning in the curriculum. Social-emotional skills have been shown to be associated with a host of positive life outcomes, and countries can consider integrating these skills into teaching plans and curricula.

*Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pacific Islands Multi-Country Office, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

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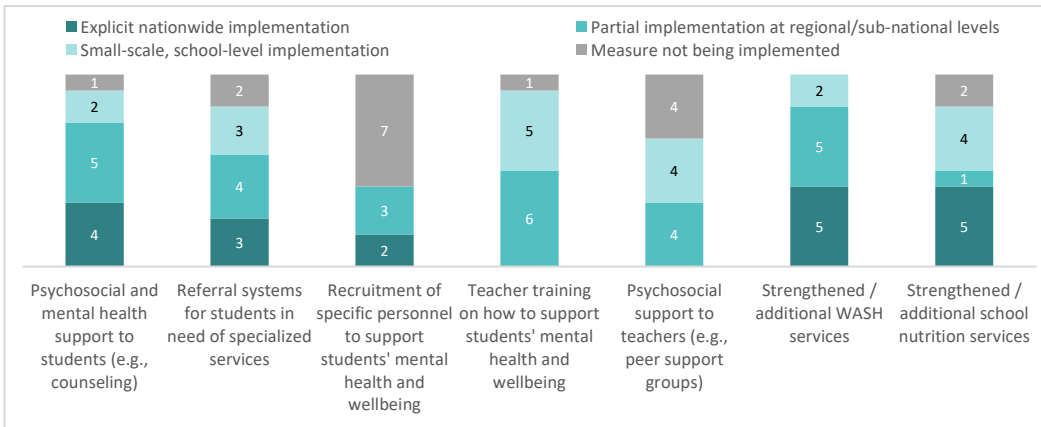
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Increase the efficiency of instruction, including through catch-up learning



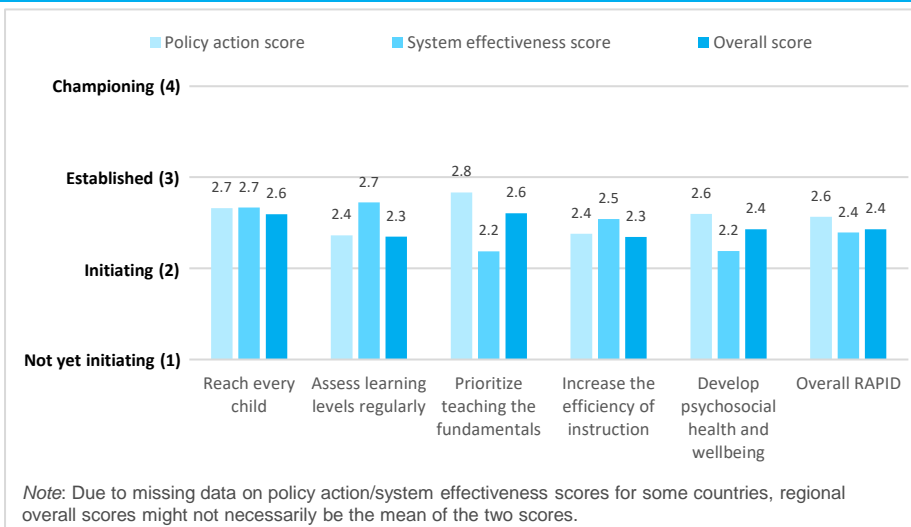
At least half of the respondent countries reported nationwide or sub-national implementation of measures such as catch-up programmes and teacher training on interventions for foundational literacy and numeracy. However, relatively fewer countries reported the same for targeted instruction, despite being one of the most cost-effective approaches to improve learning outcomes.

Develop psychosocial health and wellbeing



Essential services provided by schools can help ensure children are ready to learn. At least half of countries reported nationwide or sub-national implementation of strengthened water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and school nutrition services. Most countries also reported nationwide or sub-national measures to provide psychosocial and mental health support to students, but fewer reported providing the same to teachers.

Status of RAPID progress



To describe progress on the RAPID Framework, policy action scores based on data from the pulse survey were combined with system effectiveness scores based on data from UNICEF's internal monitoring and reporting exercise. This resulted in overall RAPID scores computed for a total of 14 countries in the region. Available data suggest that progress on the RAPID is still at the **Initiating** level. Regional average policy action scores were lowest for Assess and Increase, suggesting a need to reinforce implementation of relevant measures at scale for these components. Regional average system effectiveness scores were lowest for Prioritize and Develop, indicating a need to strengthen enabling environments to support, coordinate and sustain the implementation of measures for these components.

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How is the RAPID Framework being implemented?

To reach every child, in Viet Nam, the mother tongue-based bilingual education has been reactivated to help improve learning outcomes and social inclusion of ethnic minority children; its interventions include adaptations for children with disabilities, which has contributed to the amendment of Viet Nam’s Law on Persons with Disabilities to reflect inclusive learning. In the Pacific, a Regional Review of Inclusive Education, including profiles for 15 countries and territories (including Papua New Guinea), was launched in 2022, expanding the regional knowledge base on education policies, programmes and data collection mechanisms, with a special focus on learners with disabilities and out-of-school children.

To assess learning levels regularly, in Cambodia, national learning assessments have been administered for Grades 3, 6, 8 and 11, and [learning loss analysis](#) has been conducted with support from UNICEF. In Indonesia, the use of early grade student assessment data helped drive support from local governments to implement activities under the Early Grade Literacy programme, which seeks to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of disadvantaged children in Papua provinces. In Timor-Leste, a study was completed in 2022 to assess the extent of learning loss due to COVID-19-related school closures, with results informing decisions such as the distribution of children’s stories and activity books to all preschools and basic education schools to help mitigate the impact of learning losses.

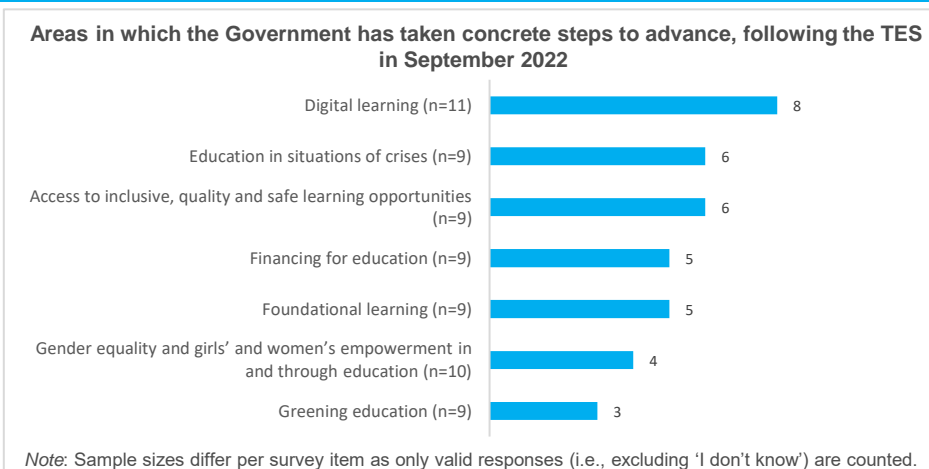
To prioritize teaching the fundamentals, in the Philippines, a new kindergarten to Grade 10 curriculum is being developed with a strong emphasis on foundational skills, in addition to an ongoing focus on foundational learning in teacher training programmes.

To increase the efficiency of instruction, In Malaysia, the implementation of the Early Grade Literacy programme was complemented by the provision of professional training of pre- and in-service teachers to improve their ability to provide tailored instruction as well as contextualized learning materials to promote a culture of reading within classrooms, schools and communities. In Thailand, UNICEF actively advocates for foundational literacy as part of the equity agenda and, alongside Government partners, supports initiatives like ‘a book a week’, early reading in early childhood development centres, and mobile libraries in remote areas. To enable high quality, flexible learning, UNICEF’s [Learning Passport](#) platform has been deployed in several countries, including [Timor-Leste](#), [Kiribati](#), [Myanmar](#), and the [Philippines](#); in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the [platform](#) allows teachers and principals across all 18 provinces to enhance their skills on supporting digital learning and provides more than 6,000 course lessons, from pre-primary to upper secondary levels and technical and vocational education and training.

To develop psychosocial health and wellbeing, in Cambodia, mental health and counseling systems have been introduced in schools as one of the components under the [Local Life Skills Education Programme](#). In Timor-Leste, UNICEF has provided a small grant for WASH and provided guidelines for schools to find a community-led solution to access water, with 139 schools accessing the grant in 2022.

Source: UNICEF 2023 Pulse Survey on RAPID Framework, UNICEF Country Office Annual Reports 2022.

Transforming Education Summit (TES) country follow-up



In addition to examining progress on RAPID implementation, the pulse survey asked questions regarding actions countries have taken following the Transforming Education Summit (TES) in September 2022. Five of 9 countries with valid responses identified foundational learning as an area in which governments have taken concrete steps to advance. The most frequently cited area in which governments are taking action was digital learning, while the least frequently cited was greening education.