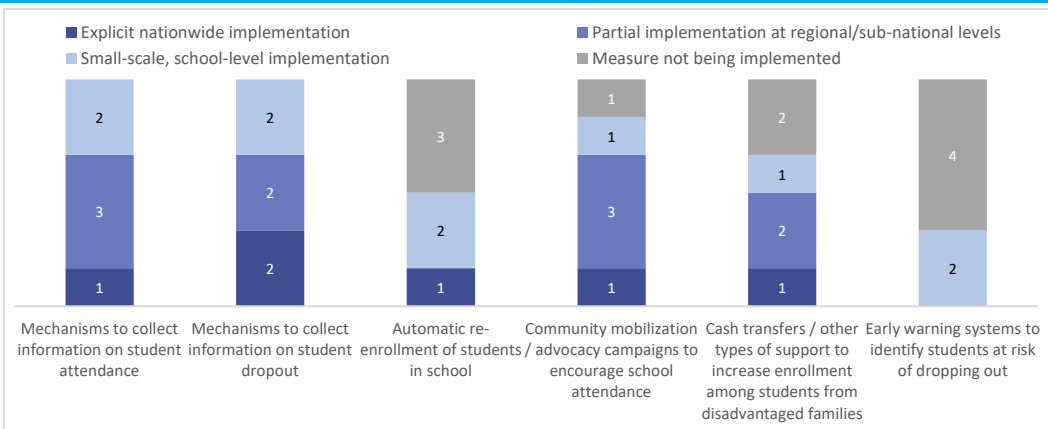


# Middle East and North Africa

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

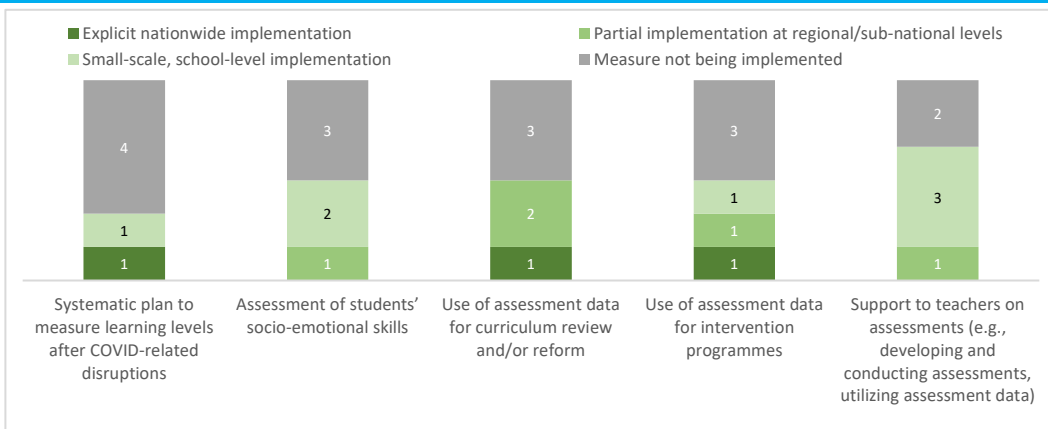
This brief presents regional results from the Foundational Learning Action Tracker, an initiative by UNICEF and the Hempel Foundation to monitor progress and foster knowledge sharing on achieving foundational learning for all children. The results reflect data from UNICEF's 2023 pulse survey with low- 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



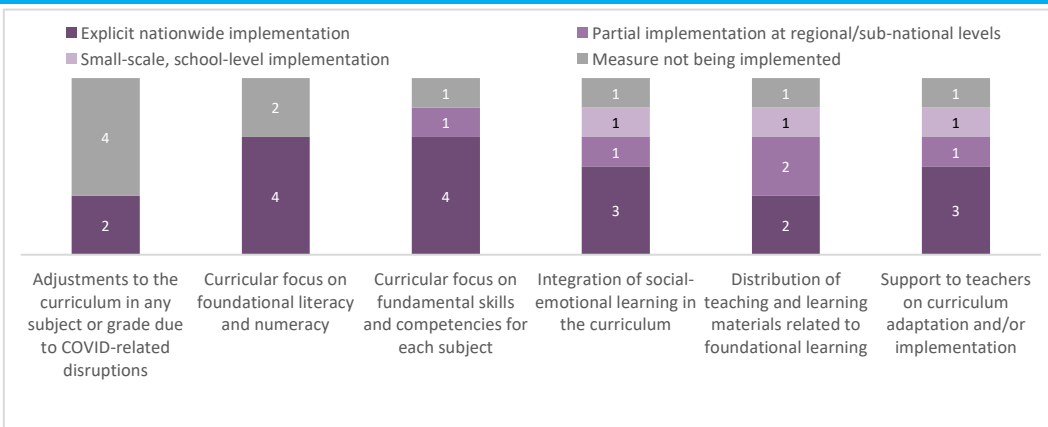
Among the six\* low- and middle-income countries responding to the survey, two countries reported that mechanisms to collect information on student dropout were being implemented on a nationwide scale. In contrast, none of the countries reported the same for early warning systems to identify students at risk of dropping out.

## Assess learning levels regularly



Encouragingly, half of the countries reported the use of assessment data for curriculum review and/or reform on a nationwide or sub-national scale. However, there is still room to improve the assessment of foundational skills, particularly socio-emotional skills: only three countries reported assessing socio-emotional skills on any scale.

## Prioritize teaching the fundamentals



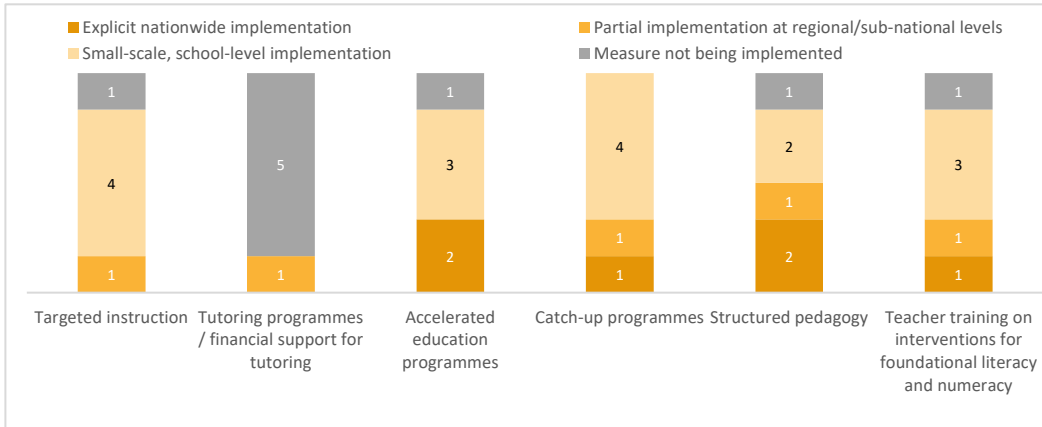
Four countries reported a nationwide curricular focus on foundational literacy and numeracy. Four countries also reported nationwide or sub-national integration of social-emotional learning in the curriculum. Social-emotional skills have been shown to be associated with a host of positive life outcomes,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

\*Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Responses from high-income countries (i.e., Kuwait) are not included in the regional brief and global report but are reflected in the Foundational Learning Action Tracker.

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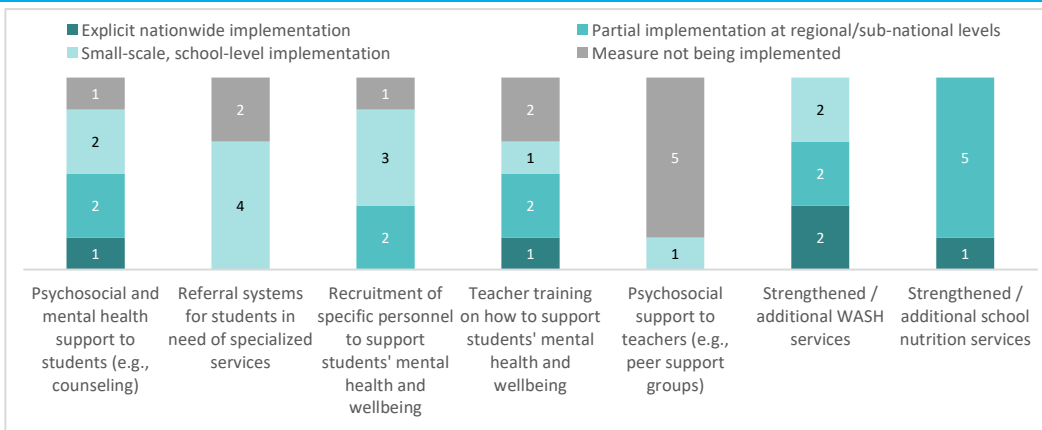
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## Increase the efficiency of instruction, including through catch-up learning



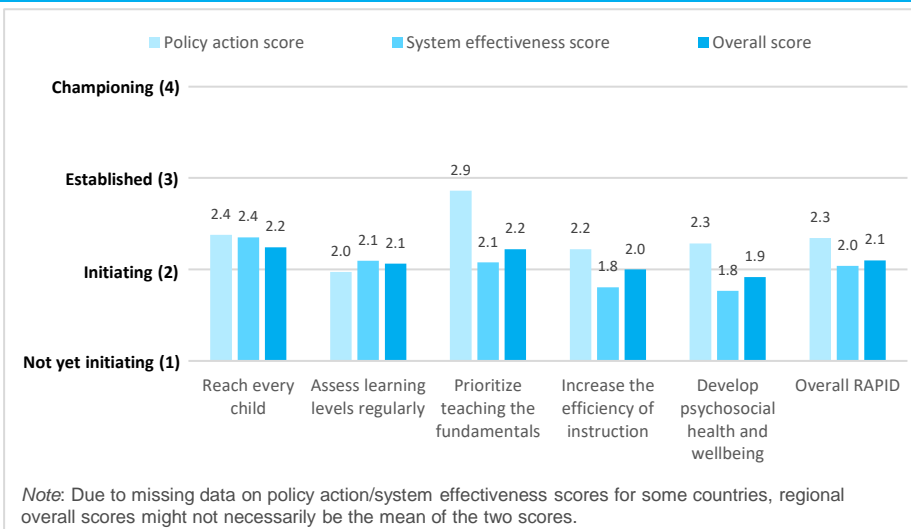
Half of the countries reported the implementation of structured pedagogy on a nationwide or subnational scale. However, only one country reported the same for targeted instruction, despite being one of the most cost-effective approaches to improve learning outcomes.

## Develop psychosocial health and wellbeing



Essential services provided by schools can help ensure children are ready to learn. All countries reported national or sub-national implementation of strengthened school nutrition services, and most reported the same for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Most countries also reported providing psychosocial and mental health support to students on a nationwide or sub-national scale, but none 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, suggesting a need to reinforce implementation of relevant measures at scale to assess learning levels regularly. Regional average system effectiveness scores were lowest for Increase 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 Algeria, the provision of education services for Sahrawi children in the Tindouf refugee camps are being supported through the procurement and distribution of basic school supplies for all schoolchildren, the training of teachers and other pedagogical staff, capacity building on education management information systems (EMIS), and the implementation of an accelerated education pilot programme for out-of-school children. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNICEF supported training 80 master teachers from 32 provinces to facilitate the national production of accessible digital content for children with disabilities. In Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, 'Back to Learning' campaigns to encourage school attendance are being implemented by Ministries of Education with support from UNICEF. In Jordan, the Ministry of Education is setting up a committee to deal with prevention and dropout, with support from Save the Children.

**To assess learning levels regularly**, in Jordan, nationwide assessments supported by UNICEF and sample-based assessments supported by USAID were conducted for Grades 4 to 11 in mathematics and Arabic, with results from both studies informing intervention planning. In Libya, UNICEF launched a partnership with the curriculum department to assess life skills in the Libyan curriculum, as a first step to developing a life skills framework for Libyan children.

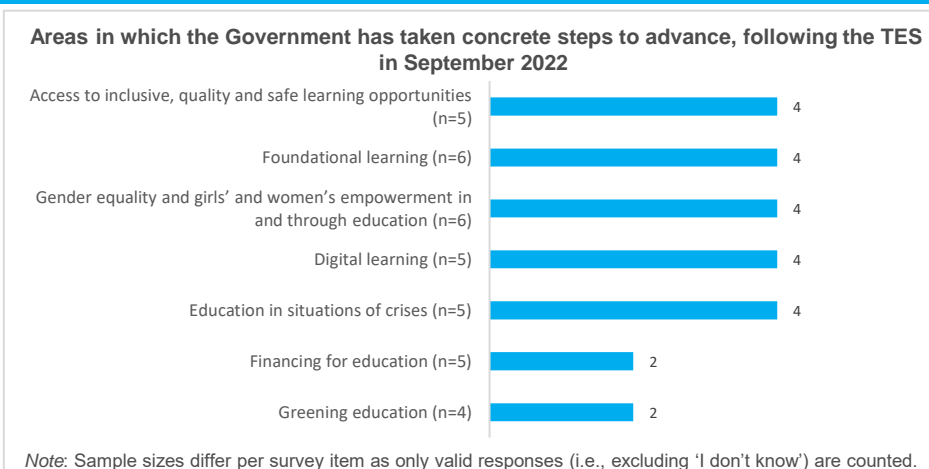
**To prioritize teaching the fundamentals**, the [Life Skills and Citizenship Education \(LSCE\)](#) initiative in MENA aims to support countries of the region to improve learning and better invest such learning in individual, social and economic development. In Iraq, UNICEF supported the development and finalization of the LSCE curriculum with a component on socio-emotional learning and contributed to the mainstreaming of LSCE in the formal curriculum for Grades 1 to 9 in the Kurdistan region.

**To increase the efficiency of instruction**, in Egypt, a [Learning Recovery Programme](#) has been implemented to equip teachers with strategies and techniques to identify learning gaps and remedy them inside the classroom, with teachers trained to accelerate learning to make up for the years lost to the pandemic in addition to the lessons students need to keep up with in the current grade. In Jordan, learning support programmes are being delivered in [Makani](#) centres, which began in 2015 to respond to the urgent needs of children in the country during the Syrian refugee crisis and has since evolved into a comprehensive response for all vulnerable children, regardless of nationality. Learning outcomes are being regularly measured and show promising results, and these programmes are currently under consideration for the school system. In Tunisia, UNICEF has supported strengthening teachers' pre-service training system, leading to the development and distribution of 8,000 educational kits to all pre-service training institutes.

**To develop psychosocial health and wellbeing**, nutrition and school feeding programmes are supported by the World Food Programme in several countries, including Iraq and Jordan. In Morocco, the mobilization and training of school heads in three subnational regions focused on WASH, including the development of action plans to reduce dropout, school-based campaigns in highly prone areas, hygiene awareness, and the rehabilitation of WASH facilities.

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

## 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. Four of 6 countries with valid responses identified foundational learning as an area in which governments have taken concrete steps to advance. Only 2 of 5 countries with valid responses cited financing for education and only 2 of 4 countries with valid responses cited greening education as areas in which governments are taking action to advance.