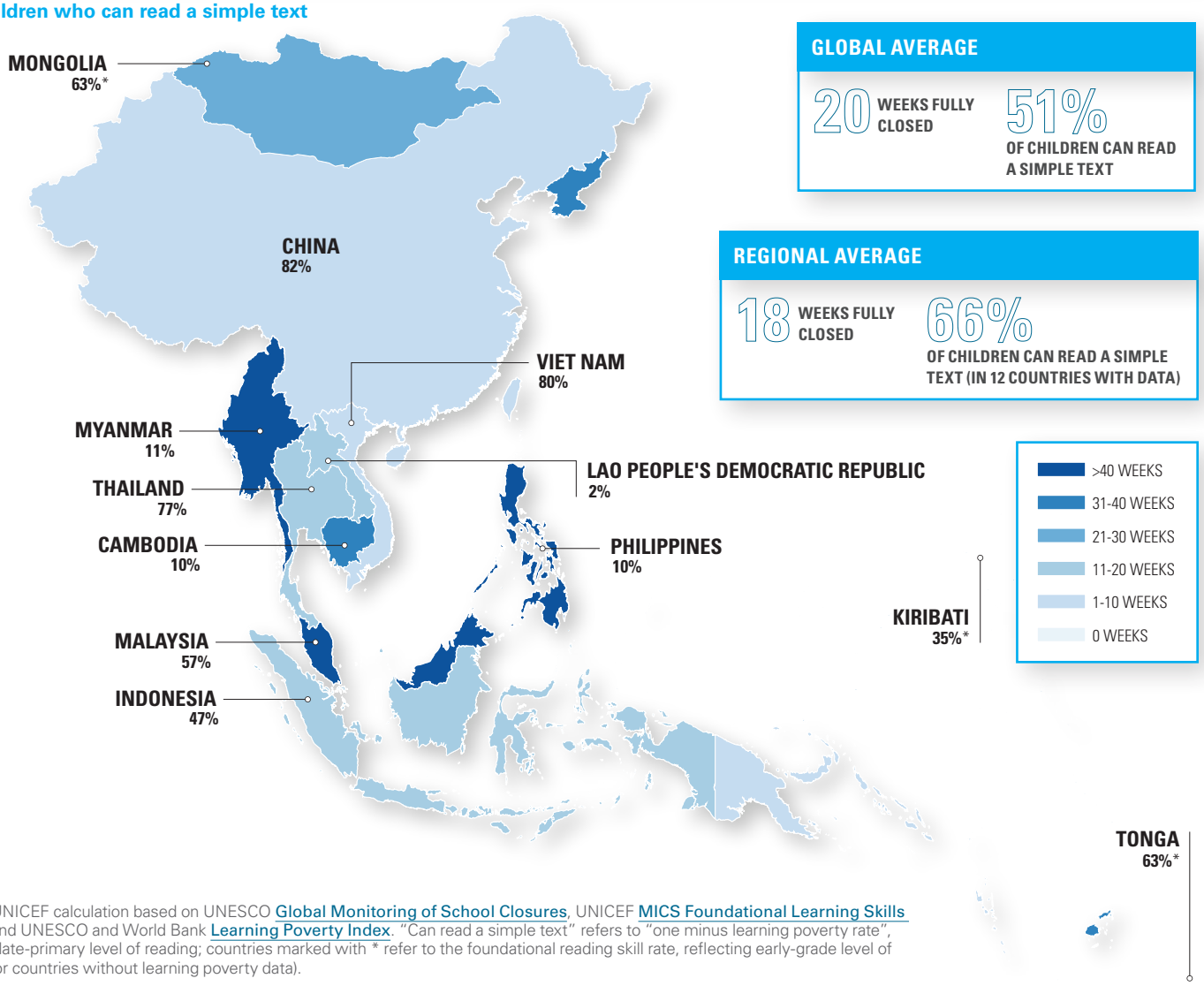
EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

MARCH 2022

% of children who can read a simple text



GLOBAL AVERAGE

20 WEEKS FULLY CLOSED

51% OF CHILDREN CAN READ A SIMPLE TEXT

REGIONAL AVERAGE

18 WEEKS FULLY CLOSED

66% OF CHILDREN CAN READ A SIMPLE TEXT (IN 12 COUNTRIES WITH DATA)

Source: UNICEF calculation based on UNESCO Global Monitoring of School Closures, UNICEF MICS Foundational Learning Skills Module and UNESCO and World Bank Learning Poverty Index. "Can read a simple text" refers to "one minus learning poverty rate", reflecting late-primary level of reading; countries marked with * refer to the foundational reading skill rate, reflecting early-grade level of reading (for countries without learning poverty data).

On average, schools in the East Asia and Pacific region have been fully closed for 18 weeks, as of 28 February 2022, according to the UNESCO Global Monitoring of School Closures. By the end of February 2022, nearly a third of countries in the region saw durations of full school closures beyond the global average of 20 weeks. The total duration of school closures (fully closed and partially closed) ranges from 0 weeks in Nauru to 87 weeks in Indonesia. Schoolchildren in the region have lost near 400 billion hours of in-person learning.

Pre-COVID, and among countries with available data, the proportion of children who can read a simple text ranged from 2 per cent in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to 82 per cent in China. **A growing body of evidence shows substantial losses and worsening inequalities in learning outcomes as a result of COVID-related school closures.** Under a pessimistic scenario, students in the region could lose an estimated 0.9 learning-adjusted years of schooling. In Indonesia, students are predicted to lose up to 11 points on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reading scale and 249 dollars in future individual earnings due to the four-month closure period from 24 March 2020 to the end of July 2020. In Cambodia, an analysis of the Grade 6 national learning assessment results supported by UNICEF revealed the proportion of low achievers who failed to meet the basic proficiency level increased from 34 per cent to 45 per cent in Khmer language and from 49 per cent to 74 per cent in math between 2016 and 2021. **School closures in the region have long-term implications for its learners:** current learners in East Asia and Pacific could stand to lose close to 6 trillion dollars in future earnings.

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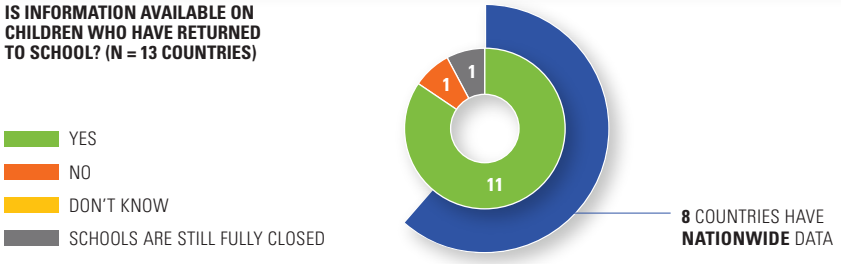
RESULTS FROM UNICEF'S PULSE SURVEY (MARCH 2022) ON MEASURES FOR LEARNING RECOVERY

REACH EVERY CHILD AND RETAIN THEM IN SCHOOL.

IS INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON CHILDREN WHO HAVE RETURNED TO SCHOOL? (N = 13 COUNTRIES)

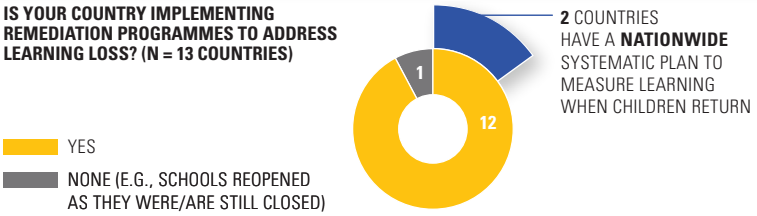


Malaysia has developed an early warning system for children at risk of dropping out, and the Ministry of Education tracks out-of-school children in collaboration with local authorities and community leaders. In **Thailand**, a nationwide initiative to identify children not returning or at risk of not returning is underway.

ASSESS LEARNING LEVELS.

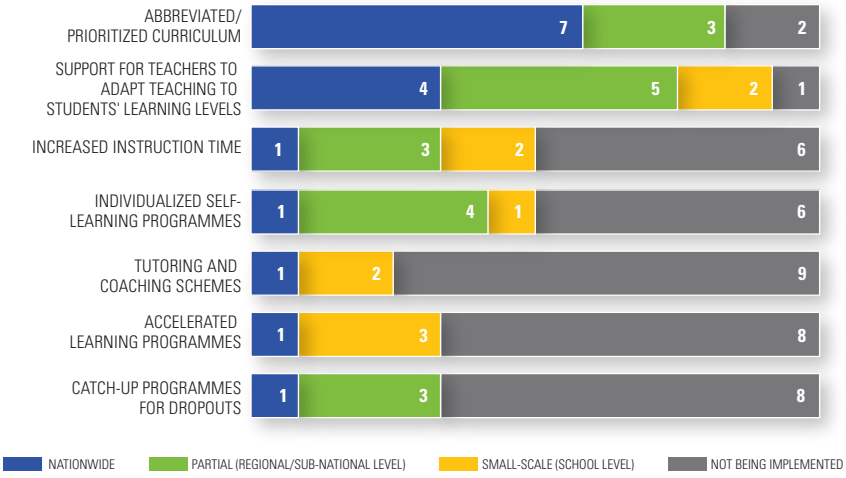
Papua New Guinea developed Booster Packs, which contained a set of diagnostic tests for teachers to assess students' learning levels. In **Mongolia**, the first classes upon school reopening were dedicated to formative assessments, the results of which informed the design of catch-up classes.

IS YOUR COUNTRY IMPLEMENTING REMEDIATION PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS LEARNING LOSS? (N = 13 COUNTRIES)



PRIORITIZE TEACHING THE FUNDAMENTALS, INCREASE CATCH-UP LEARNING AND PROGRESS BEYOND WHAT WAS LOST.

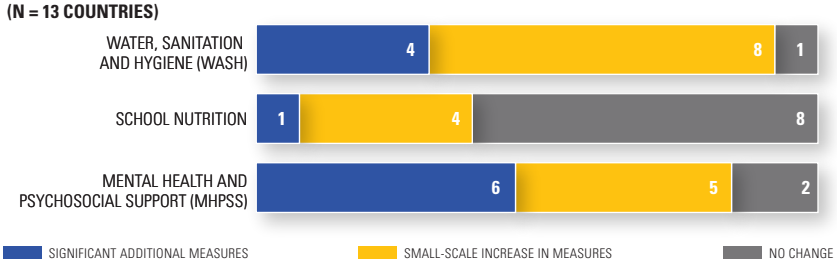
AMONG COUNTRIES WITH REMEDIATION PROGAMMES, WHICH MEASURES ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND AT WHAT SCALE? (N = 12 COUNTRIES)



In **Cambodia**, a remedial teaching package was developed for primary schools. In **Malaysia**, a digital community for teachers was established to support them in delivering blended learning after school reopening. In the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, teachers receive professional development on blended learning and digital skills.

Note: Data in graphs are based on UNICEF's Pulse Survey administered through UNICEF country offices and UNICEF National Committees between 3–11 March 2022. Unless hyperlinked, information on country examples is based on qualitative responses from the same survey. Caution is advised in generalizing the results represented in the figures, as only a limited number of countries in the region are covered by the survey responses.

DEVELOP PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SO EVERY CHILD IS READY TO LEARN.

In **China**, a daily monitoring system tracks teachers' and students' physical well-being. In **Thailand**, schools follow safe school operation guidelines developed as a partnership between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health and UNICEF.

HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL MEASURES BEEN TAKEN FOR IMPROVING STUDENT WELL-BEING IN SCHOOLS? (N = 13 COUNTRIES)