

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

MARCH
2022

% of children who can read a simple text

GLOBAL AVERAGE

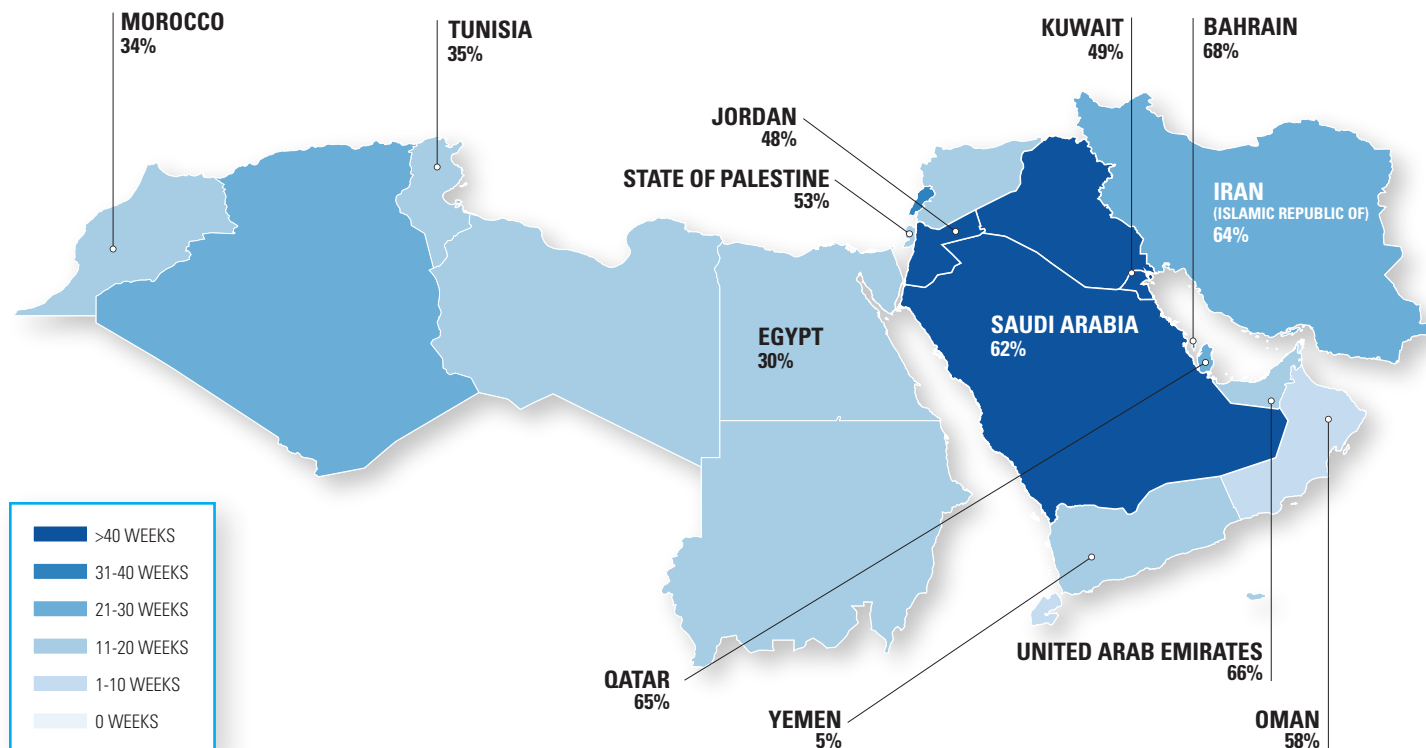
20 WEEKS FULLY
CLOSED

51%
OF CHILDREN CAN READ
A SIMPLE TEXT

REGIONAL AVERAGE

25 WEEKS FULLY
CLOSED

40%
OF CHILDREN CAN READ
A SIMPLE TEXT (IN 13
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 Middle East and North Africa region have been fully closed for 25 weeks, as of 28 February 2022, according to the [UNESCO Global Monitoring of School Closures](#). By the end of February 2022, nearly half 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 7 weeks in Djibouti to 81 weeks in Kuwait. Schoolchildren in the region have lost 100 billion hours of [in-person learning](#).

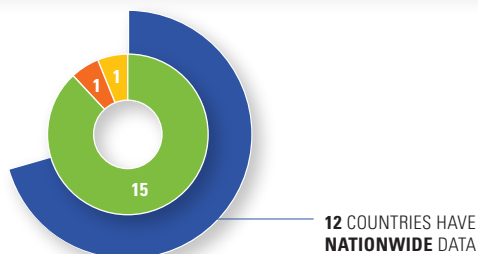
Pre-COVID, and among countries with available data, the proportion of children who can read a simple text ranged from 5 per cent in Yemen to 68 per cent in Bahrain. **A growing body of evidence shows**

substantial losses and worsening inequalities in learning outcomes as a result of COVID-related school closures.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, [under a pessimistic scenario](#): the number of children unable to read and understand a simple text (learning poor) could increase by 9 percentage points; children in the region could lose 1 learning-adjusted year of schooling; and the proportion of 15-year-old students performing below minimum proficiency in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) could increase by 12 percentage points. **School closures in the region have long-term implications for its learners:** current learners in the Middle East and North Africa could stand to lose near 1 trillion dollars in [future earnings](#).

REACH EVERY CHILD AND RETAIN THEM IN SCHOOL.

IS INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON CHILDREN WHO HAVE RETURNED TO SCHOOL? (N = 17 COUNTRIES)

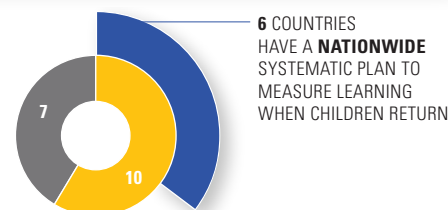
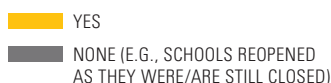


Information is collected through Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS), as cited in [Jordan](#), and children registration systems, as cited in [Tunisia](#). In [Djibouti](#), comprehensive EMIS data are reported through annual statistics publications.

ASSESS LEARNING LEVELS.

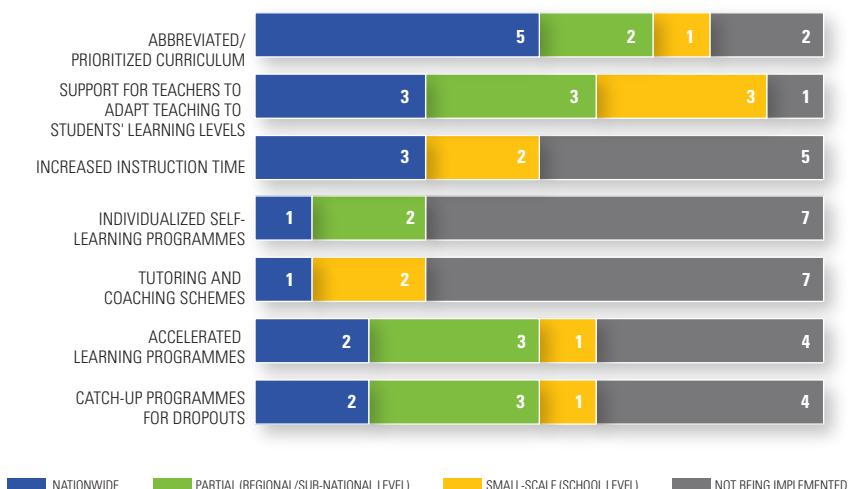
[Jordan](#) has developed its first national diagnostic assessment in math and Arabic for Grades 4–11, for which online teacher training has also been developed. The assessment has been distributed across 3,500 schools, including in refugee camps.

IS YOUR COUNTRY IMPLEMENTING REMEDIATION PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS LEARNING LOSS? (N = 17 COUNTRIES)



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

AMONG COUNTRIES WITH REMEDIATION PROGRAMMES, WHICH MEASURES ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND AT WHAT SCALE? (N = 10 COUNTRIES)



In the [State of Palestine](#), schools were opened a few weeks before the academic year started to provide time for catch-up. In [Egypt](#), a remediation programme targets children in public schools, refugee community schools and rural community schools. In [Jordan](#), a national [blended learning programme](#) supports learning recovery among students in Grades 4–6.

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 figure on the implementation and scale of remediation measures, as only a limited number of countries (those who responded to the survey and reported having remediation programmes) responded to this question.

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

In [Yemen](#), one day of awareness-raising on health and nutrition was added to the nationwide teacher training at the end of 2021. In [Oman](#), an MHPSS training programme was developed for social workers in schools. School sanitization and distribution of hygiene kits are practiced in several countries (e.g., [State of Palestine](#), [Syrian Arab Republic](#)).

HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL MEASURES BEEN TAKEN FOR IMPROVING STUDENT WELL-BEING IN SCHOOLS? (N = 17 COUNTRIES)

