

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

MARCH
2022

GLOBAL AVERAGE

20 WEEKS FULLY
CLOSED

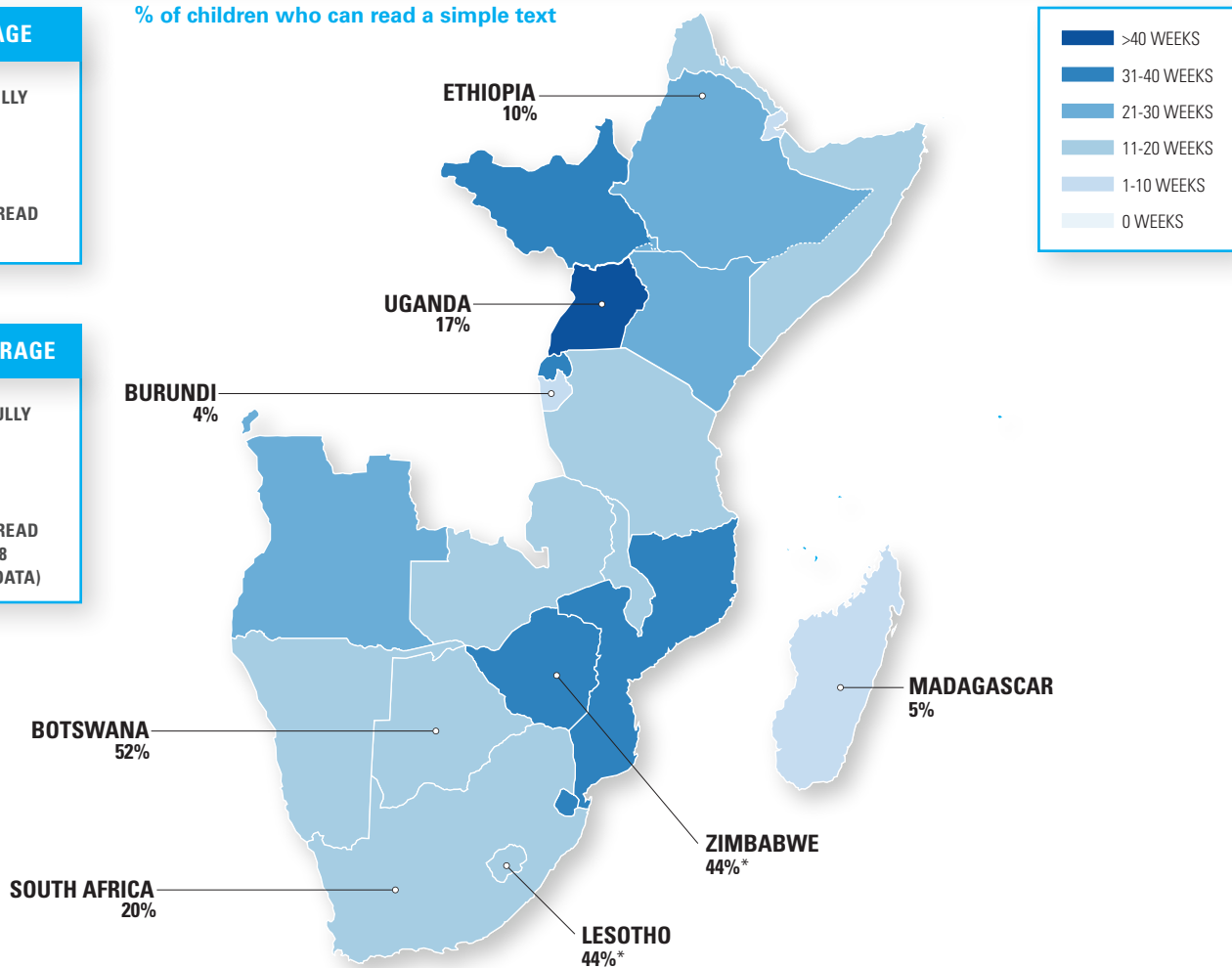
51%
OF CHILDREN CAN READ
A SIMPLE TEXT

REGIONAL AVERAGE

22 WEEKS FULLY
CLOSED

15%
OF CHILDREN CAN READ
A SIMPLE TEXT (IN 8
COUNTRIES WITH DATA)

% of children who can read a simple text



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 Eastern and Southern African region have been fully closed for 22 weeks, as of 28 February 2022, according to the [UNESCO Global Monitoring of School Closures](#). By the end of February 2022, about half of countries (10 of 22 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 Burundi to 92 weeks in Uganda. Schoolchildren in the region have lost 150 billion hours of [in-person learning](#).

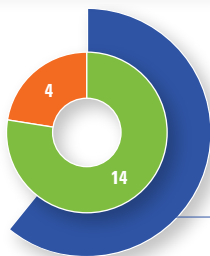
Pre-COVID, and among countries with available data, the proportion of children who can read a simple text ranged from 5 per cent in Madagascar to 52 per cent in Botswana. **A growing body of evidence shows substantial losses and worsening inequalities in learning**

outcomes as a result of COVID-related school closures.

In [Ethiopia](#), students learned only 30-40 per cent of what they normally would in math, with a widening gap between rural and urban students. In [Kenya](#), a study among primary-school children who maintained use of an online tutoring platform lost an equivalent of 3.5 months of learning in math, with larger losses for Grades 4 and 6 than Grade 8, and for students in "hardship areas" and rural schools. In [South Africa](#), Grade 2 students lost between 50-70 per cent of a year of learning and Grade 4 students lost between 62-81 per cent of a year of learning; among Grade 4 students, learning losses were 27 per cent higher for girls than boys. **School closures in the region have long-term implications for its learners:** current learners in Sub-Saharan Africa could stand to lose half a trillion dollars in [future earnings](#).

REACH EVERY CHILD AND RETAIN THEM IN SCHOOL.

IS INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON CHILDREN WHO HAVE RETURNED TO SCHOOL? (N = 18 COUNTRIES)



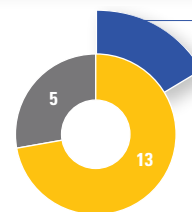
11 COUNTRIES HAVE NATIONWIDE DATA

Children's return to school is tracked through regular attendance monitoring, as cited in [Botswana](#) and [Zimbabwe](#). Such information is communicated via reporting channels from the school/local level to the regional/national level, as in the case of [Ethiopia](#), [Kenya](#) and [Namibia](#).

ASSESS LEARNING LEVELS.

[Burundi](#), [Kenya](#) and [Zambia](#) participated in the [COVID-19: Monitoring the Impacts on Learning Outcomes \(MILO\)](#), which aims to provide information on the impact of the pandemic on learning outcomes in six countries in Africa.

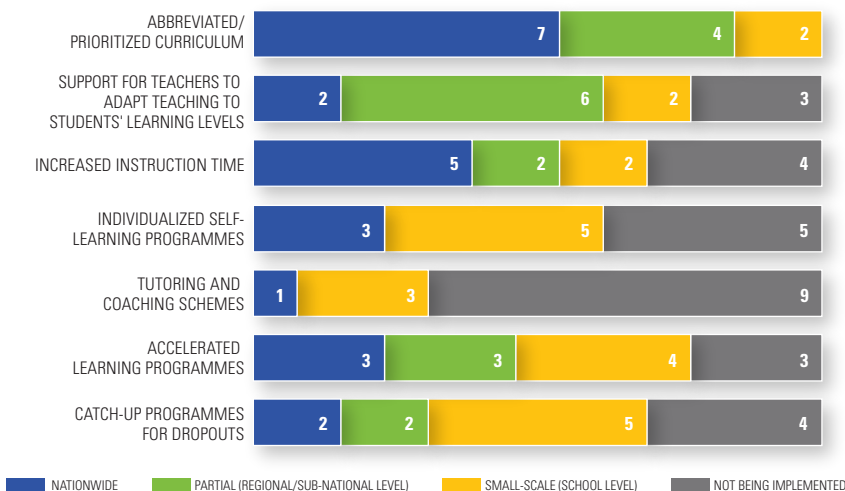
IS YOUR COUNTRY IMPLEMENTING REMEDIATION PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS LEARNING LOSS? (N = 18 COUNTRIES)



3 COUNTRIES HAVE A NATIONWIDE SYSTEMATIC PLAN TO MEASURE LEARNING WHEN CHILDREN RETURN

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 = 13 COUNTRIES)



[South Sudan](#) and [Uganda](#) have adapted a condensed curriculum focused on core content and subjects. In [Burundi](#), non-governmental organizations provide remediation courses to school returnees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable communities.

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 [Lesotho](#), teachers' capacity-building on MHPSS, gender-based violence and child safeguarding is ongoing. In [Namibia](#), counseling was provided to learners affected by the loss of parents, family members or teachers to COVID-19. In [Eritrea](#), schools are supported in safe reopening through the provision of guidelines, as well as posters and pamphlets on COVID-19 prevention.

HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL MEASURES BEEN TAKEN FOR IMPROVING STUDENT WELL-BEING IN SCHOOLS? (N = 18 COUNTRIES)

