

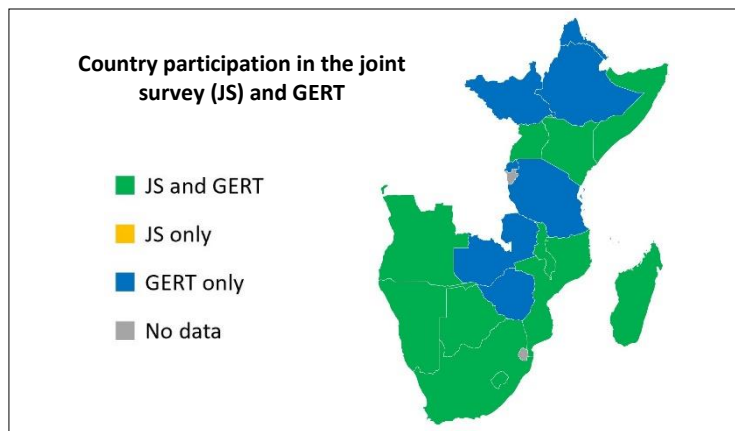
# Eastern and Southern Africa

Results from the 4<sup>th</sup> Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures and the Global Education Recovery Tracker

March 2023

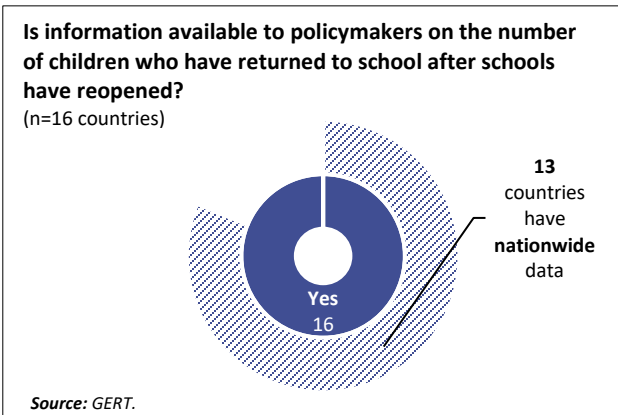
This brief presents regional findings from the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures ('joint survey'), administered between April to July 2022, and the Global Education Recovery Tracker ('GERT'), administered between May to July 2022. It examines how countries in the region have progressed in recovering and accelerating learning through the five key policy actions in the [RAPID framework](#). These findings are a follow-up to the 1<sup>st</sup> round of RAPID data collected in March 2022, available [here](#).

*Caution is advised in generalizing the results, as only a limited number of countries in the region are covered by the survey responses.*



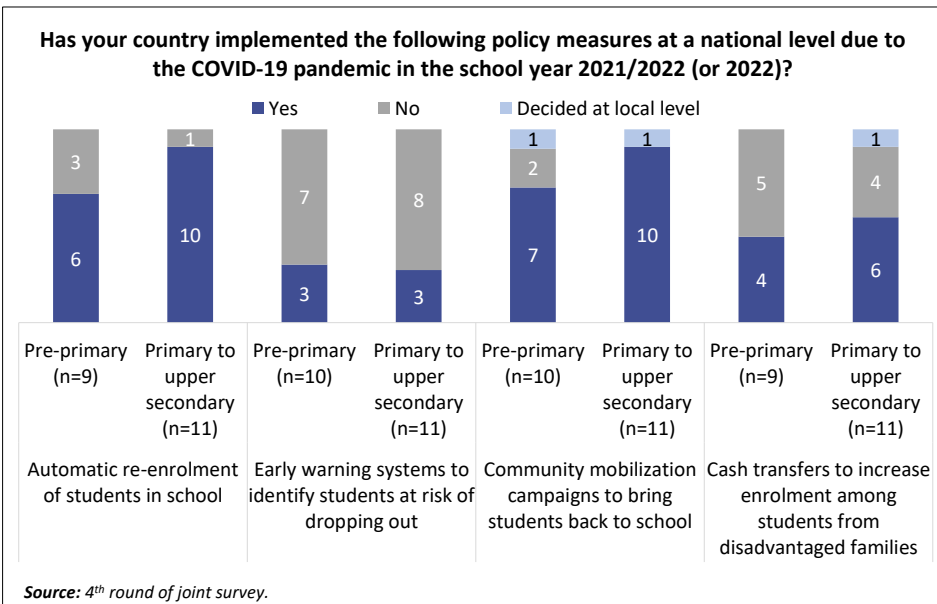
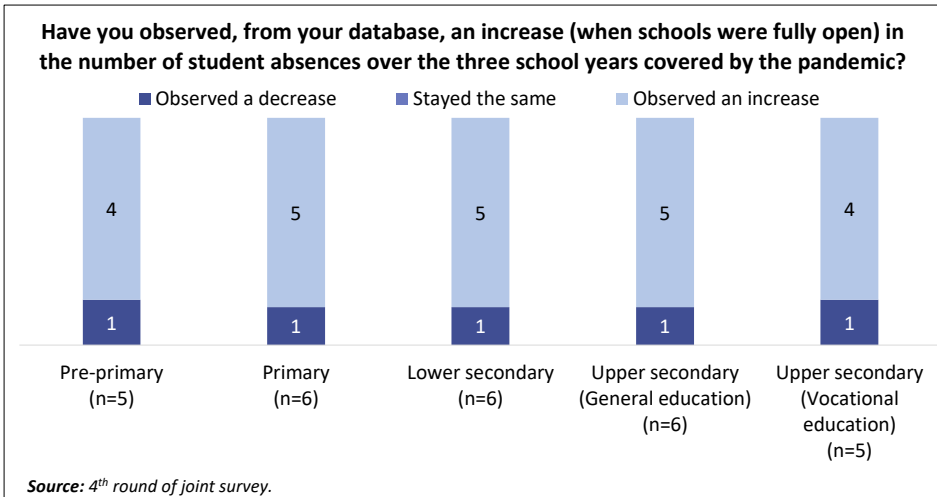
## REACH every child and keep them in school.

Reaching every child is the common denominator of education recovery. Ensuring that children return to school is essential not only for education but also to address social challenges such as early marriage, child labour and mental health.



Of the 16 countries collecting information on the number of children who have returned to school, 11 countries can disaggregate the data by location (urban vs. rural) and 11 countries by gender. GERT data show that 11 of 19 countries are using Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) data at school level to monitor student return. Based on the joint survey, the most common national-level policy measures implemented to encourage the return to school included automatic re-enrolment and community mobilization campaigns.

The re-enrolment challenge will likely become apparent in the medium term, as students who fall behind eventually do leave school. Therefore, countries must undertake preventive and targeted efforts now to reach and keep all children in school.



## ASSESS learning levels regularly.

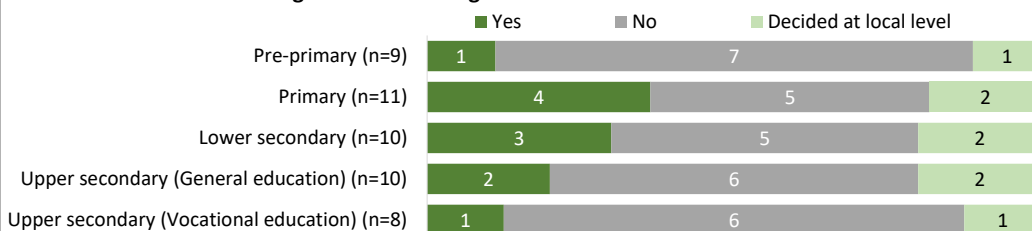
Understanding children's current learning levels, through both classroom- and system-level assessments, allows teachers and policymakers to make informed decisions about instructional approaches and other policy decisions needed to promote learning recovery.

In the GERT, 12 of 18 countries reported that data has been collected since March 2020 to measure learning outcomes. Of these countries, 5 countries can disaggregate the data by gender and 2 countries by age.

In the joint survey, 4 of 11 countries reported that studies have been undertaken to evaluate the impact of school closures on learning outcomes at the primary level.

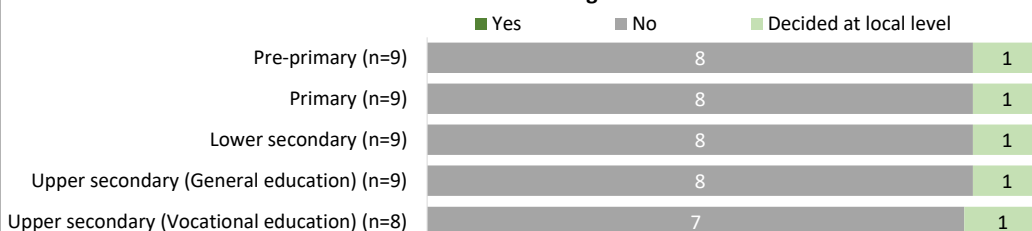
While the main priority for many countries remains assessing student learning outcomes, it is equally important to measure non-cognitive or social-emotional skills. In the joint survey, none of the countries with valid responses reported that studies have been undertaken to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on non-cognitive skills.

### Have there been studies undertaken in 2020/2021 or/and 2021/2022 to evaluate the impact of school closures on learning outcomes through standardized national or sub-national assessments?



Source: 4<sup>th</sup> round of joint survey.

### Have there been studies undertaken in 2020/2021 or/and 2021/2022 to evaluate the impact of school closures on non-cognitive skills?

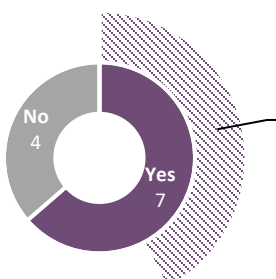


Source: 4<sup>th</sup> round of joint survey.

## PRIORITIZE teaching the fundamentals.

COVID-related education disruptions have pushed students behind their grade-appropriate learning levels. To effectively recover learning, countries will need to adjust the curriculum across and within subjects, as well as adjust teaching plans to prioritize foundational skills.

In the school year 2021/2022 (or 2022), did your country implement adjustments to the curriculum in any subject or grade at the national level for primary to upper secondary levels? (n=11 countries)



4 countries made curricular adjustments based on the results of student assessments undertaken in the context of school reopening

Source: 4<sup>th</sup> round of joint survey.

While only 3 of 9 countries reported implementing curricular adjustments at the pre-primary level in the school year 2021/2022, 7 of 11 countries reported implementing the same at the primary to upper secondary levels.

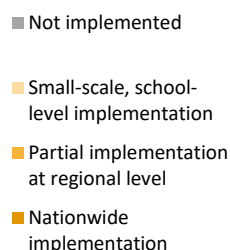
Among the 7 countries implementing curricular adjustments at the primary to upper secondary levels, 4 countries made such adjustments based on the results of student assessments.

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

To recover from learning losses, school systems must implement measures that increase the amount of learning within classrooms through more effective teaching practices and learner-focused recovery strategies, as well as ensure that adequate support is provided to teachers.

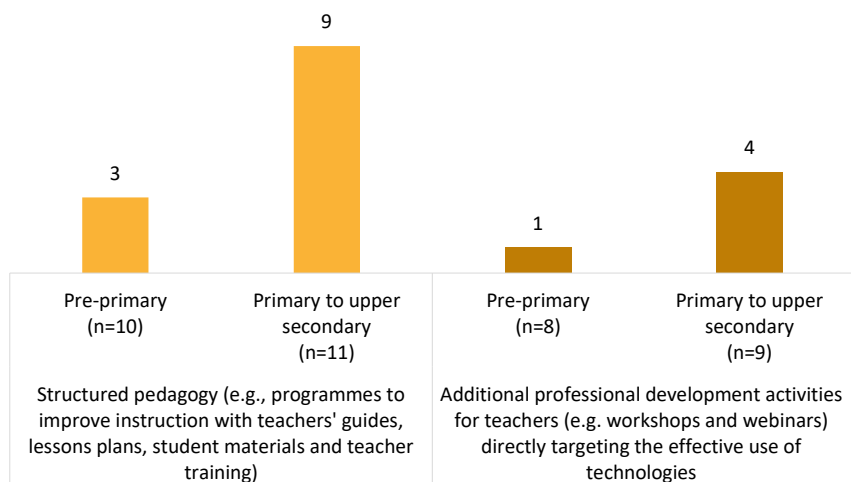
A variety of measures were implemented to increase the efficiency of instruction. In the GERT, 2 of 19 countries reported implementing nationwide measures to increase instructional time.

### As of today, which of the following remediation measures are being implemented and at what scale in your country? (n=19 countries)



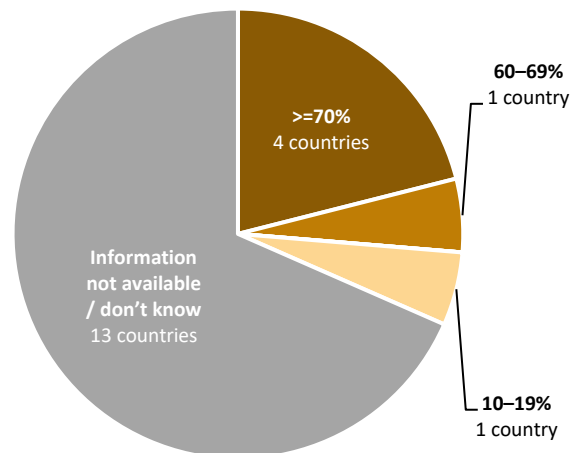
Source: GERT.

**Number of countries that reported implementing national-level policy measures to support teachers in the school year 2021/2022 (or 2022)**



Source: 4<sup>th</sup> round of joint survey.

**What percentage of the teacher population is vaccinated? (n=19 countries)**



Source: GERT.

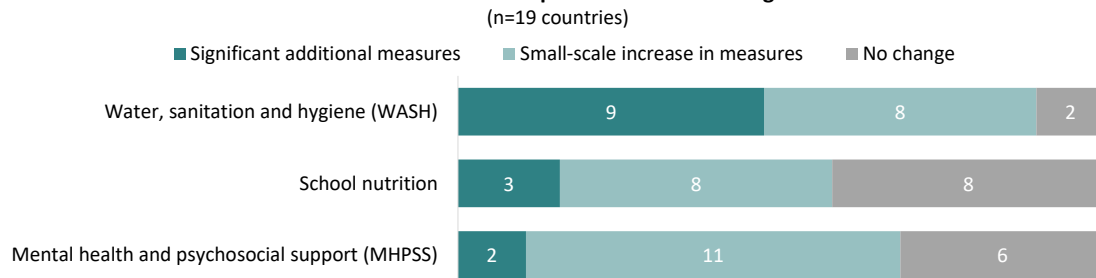
The evidence is overwhelming that structured pedagogy programmes – including supporting teachers with teachers’ guides and structured lesson plans – leads to improved learning outcomes. In the joint survey, 9 of 11 countries reported implementing measures on structured pedagogy at the primary to upper secondary levels in the school year 2021/2022.

Data from the joint survey also show that primary- and secondary-level teachers were further supported with professional development activities on the effective use of technologies in 4 of 9 countries. Additionally, in the GERT, 5 of 19 countries reported that more than 50 per cent of their teacher population is vaccinated, which will help manage teacher health and stress.

**DEVELOP psychosocial health and wellbeing.**

The impact of COVID-related school closures reaches far beyond lost learning, affecting children’s mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, physical health and nutrition. To support whole-child development, countries must ensure children have access to essential services in school.

**Have any additional measures been taken (compared to existing levels) for improving student wellbeing in schools after schools have reopened for the following facilities? (n=19 countries)**



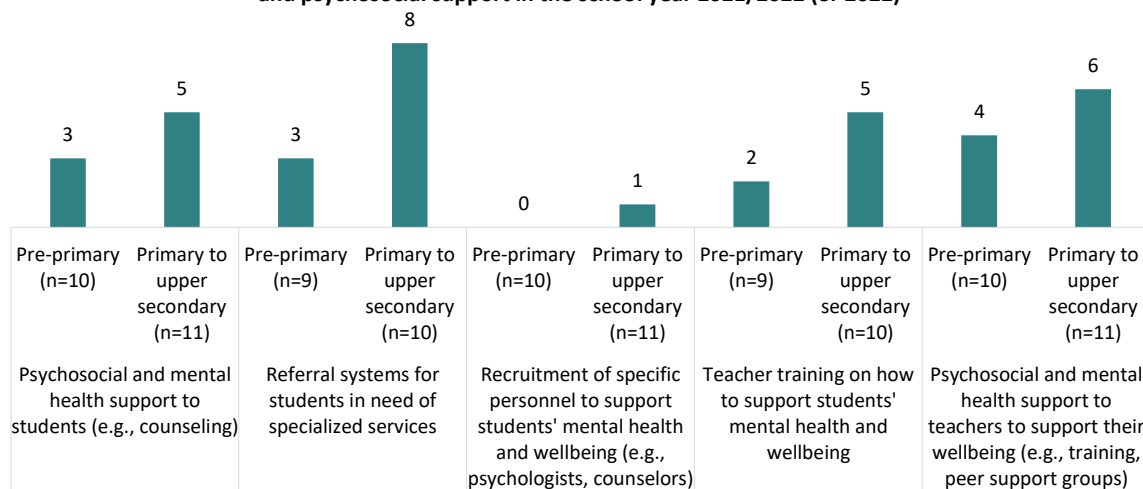
Source: GERT.

Among 19 respondent countries in the GERT, 9 countries reported taking significant additional measures for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, 3 countries reported the same for school nutrition services, and 2 countries for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.

Data from the joint survey show that in the school year 2021/2022, psychosocial and mental health support was provided to primary- and secondary-level students in 5 of 11 countries and to teachers in 6 of 11 countries.

Teacher training on how to support students’ mental health and wellbeing was provided to primary- and secondary-level teachers in 5 of 10 countries.

**Number of countries that reported implementing national-level policy measures related to mental health and psychosocial support in the school year 2021/2022 (or 2022)**



Source: 4<sup>th</sup> round of joint survey.

## Implementing the RAPID Framework: UNICEF examples in Eastern and Southern Africa

### R REACH every child and keep them in school.

- UNICEF Kenya is supporting enrolment drives for the identification, mobilization and (re) enrolment of 3,383 children (1,624 girls) who have not returned to school after reopening, including children with disabilities.
- UNICEF Madagascar is supporting the creation of students' 'Heures Creuses (All for School)' clubs in lower secondary schools in four regions to enable students to motivate their peers and reinforce school attendance, with 60 clubs already formed. To further support the return to school, student kids were provided to 222,525 students (50 per cent of whom are girls) in 925 primary schools and 250 secondary schools.
- UNICEF Tanzania held back-to-school activities in October, focusing on 23,088 out-of-school Congolese and [Burundi refugee children](#) (12,448 girls) impacted by COVID-19 school closures. They also supported updating school attendance reports and tracking school dropouts.

### A ASSESS learning levels regularly.

- UNICEF Angola is using a specially designed assessment tool to identify children's foundational learning levels in Portuguese and Mathematics to screen children who will join recovery learning classes. A total of 1,279 children in Grades 2, 4 and 6 in 17 primary schools from 7 municipalities have been screened to date.
- UNICEF South Sudan is supporting a national learning assessment focused on Early Grade Reading and Mathematics. This assessment will provide much needed data to inform learning recovery interventions.
- UNICEF Rwanda is training teachers in 200 schools to use formative assessment to identify students' learning levels.

### P PRIORITIZE teaching the fundamentals.

- UNICEF Angola's learning recovery initiative focused on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) in Portuguese and Mathematics has reached 7,202 students (3,446 girls) who are lagging behind and 3,306 out-of-school children (1,562 girls). The project is being used to inform the national FLN policy for all schools in Angola.
- UNICEF [South Africa](#) supported the development of over [600 educational videos](#) that aim to build children's foundational skills, reaching almost 1.9 million learners as of March 2022, as well as teacher training on early grade reading that have benefitted approximately 900 Grades 1–3 teachers.
- UNICEF Uganda is supporting the implementation of the Ministry of Education's [abridged curriculum](#) through the training of master trainers and 3,182 primary and secondary teachers from 2,217 primary schools and 1,102 secondary schools. Trained teachers are now teaching 580,937 learners (281,814 girls) to recover from learning loss and develop foundational skills and relevant competencies.

### I INCREASE the efficiency of instruction, including through catch-up learning.

- UNICEF Kenya is supporting Kenya's Institute of Curriculum Development in the development of early learning radio and television programmes to deliver remote learning for 10,000 pre-primary children and support 100 teachers. The lessons will be uploaded to Kenya's Education cloud and broadcast through the ECU TV channel.
- UNICEF [Mozambique](#) is supporting an accelerated learning programme, reaching 42,030 children (23,000 girls) in 30 schools, as well as 2,747 out-of-school children (1,274 girls). About a third of the children enrolled in the programme improved their literacy skills and about half improved their basic numeracy skills.
- UNICEF [Rwanda](#) supported 12,189 pre-primary children (6,230 girls) before their enrollment in Primary 1, and 13,703 upper primary children (8,976 girls) to participate in a two-month summer [remedial](#) catch-up COVID-19 programme. Results from the programme demonstrate improvements in learning.
- UNICEF Somalia is supporting a Teaching at the Right Level (TARL) programme, targeting 10,100 children (4,800 girls), as well as the review of the Alternative Basic Education and Primary Education curricula (Grades 1–3) to inform the design of the TARL pedagogic package and material in two districts.

### D DEVELOP psychosocial health and well being.

- UNICEF Angola is supporting 5,000 children, parents and primary caregivers with MHPSS, including 300 psychosocial classroom kits. Angola is also setting up psychosocial support clubs, which will include children in and out of school, to enable peer interaction and safe spaces for listening and emotional expression.
- UNICEF Burundi is supporting 6,300 children (3,213 girls) in 10 rural schools with WASH facilities to support COVID-19 safety protocols.
- To facilitate refugees' return to school, UNICEF [Ethiopia](#) helped prepare safe school reopening guidelines, which were translated into local languages and disseminated to 101 refugee schools (67 early childhood, 27 primary and 7 secondary) and those in host communities. To curb the spread of COVID-19, UNICEF provided 800 pedal operated hand washing stations in refugee and host community schools across nine regions.