

Learning Poverty: What's New?

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What is Learning Poverty?

**THE SHARE OF CHILDREN WHO CANNOT READ
& UNDERSTAND A SIMPLE TEXT BY AGE 10**



Learning Poverty: A combined measure of **schooling** and **learning**, fully aligned with **SDG 4**

- **Schooling** is a **necessary yet not sufficient** condition for learning
- Contributes to the **socio-emotional** development of children above and beyond learning, in addition to children's **nutrition, safety** and **social cohesion**.
- School Deprivation component of Learning Poverty tied to **SDG indicator 4.1.4**
- **Learning** is critical to build human capital
- Reading is a crucial **gateway** to further schooling and learning
- Children who don't read by late primary find it **hard to catch up** later
- Literacy is highly **correlated with other cognitive skills**
- A target based on reading makes learning goals **concrete and compelling**: everybody understands it
- Learning Deprivation component of Learning Poverty tied to **SDG indicator 4.1.1**

What's new?

- New assessment data in 2019:



PASEC



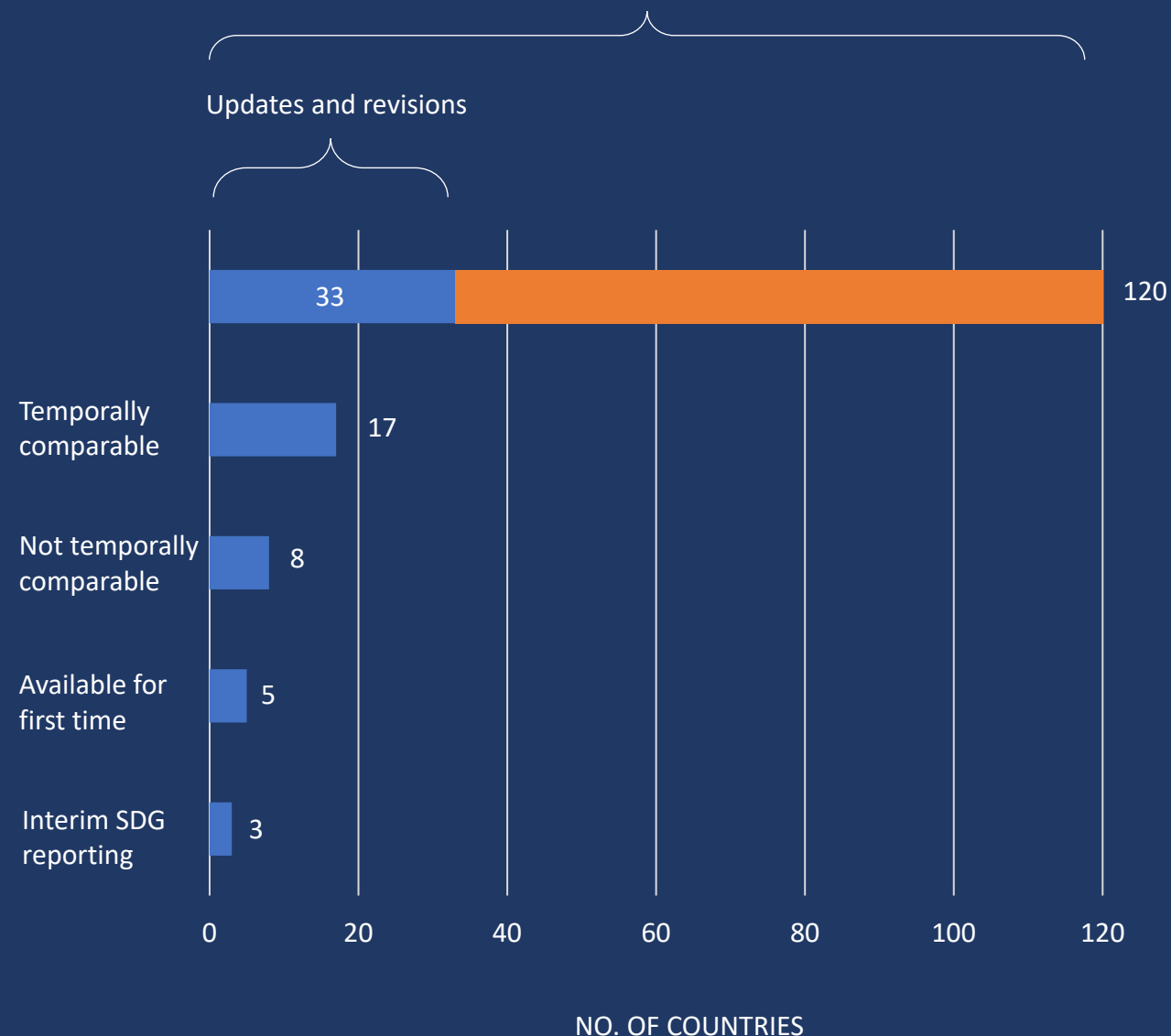
SEA-PLM



TIMSS

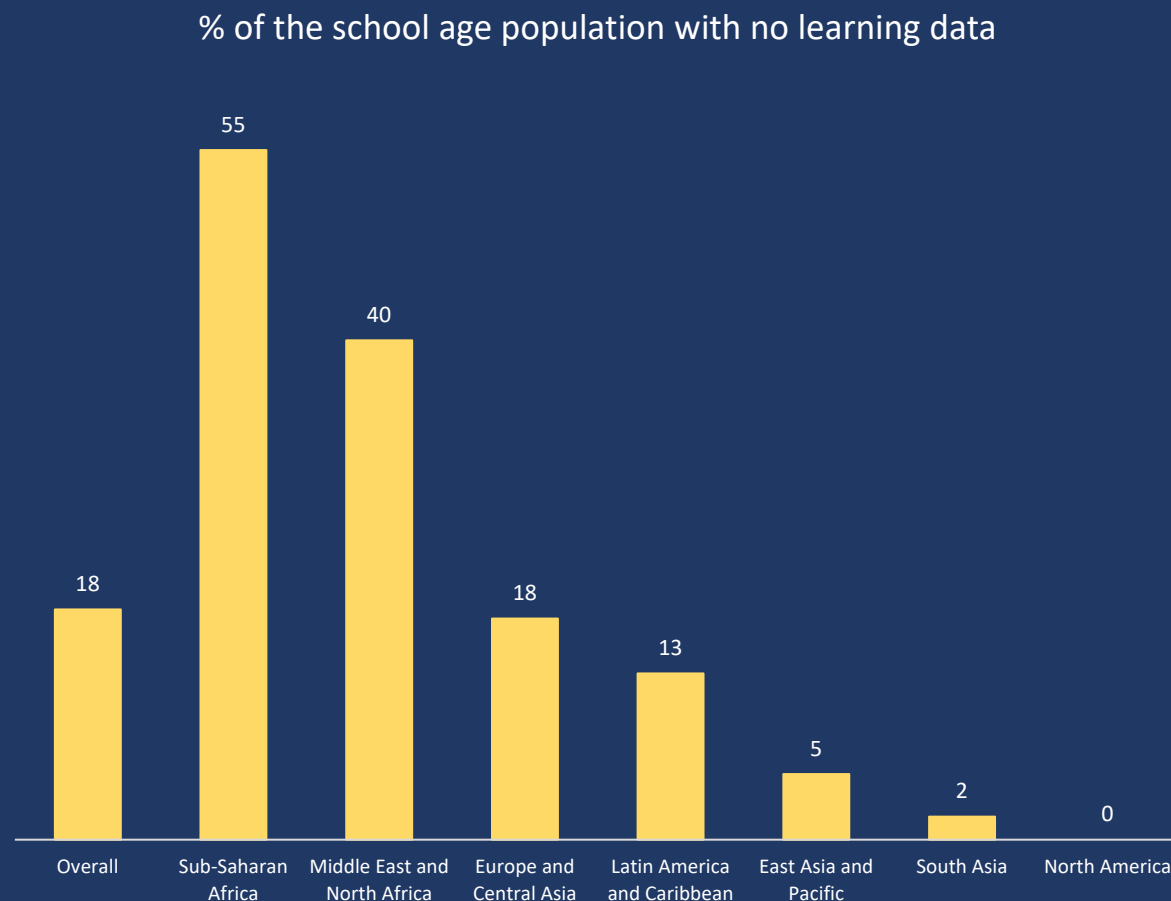
- Learning poverty estimates available for **120 countries**
- Learning poverty estimates updated or revised for **33 countries** -- only a little more than half are temporally comparable across assessment rounds
- Learning poverty estimates available for the first time for **5 countries** (Albania, Guinea, Lao PDR, Montenegro, Myanmar)
- The updated numbers are **pre-COVID** estimates of Learning Poverty; and no global update is being released

Total Learning Poverty estimates



However, big gaps in learning data still exist

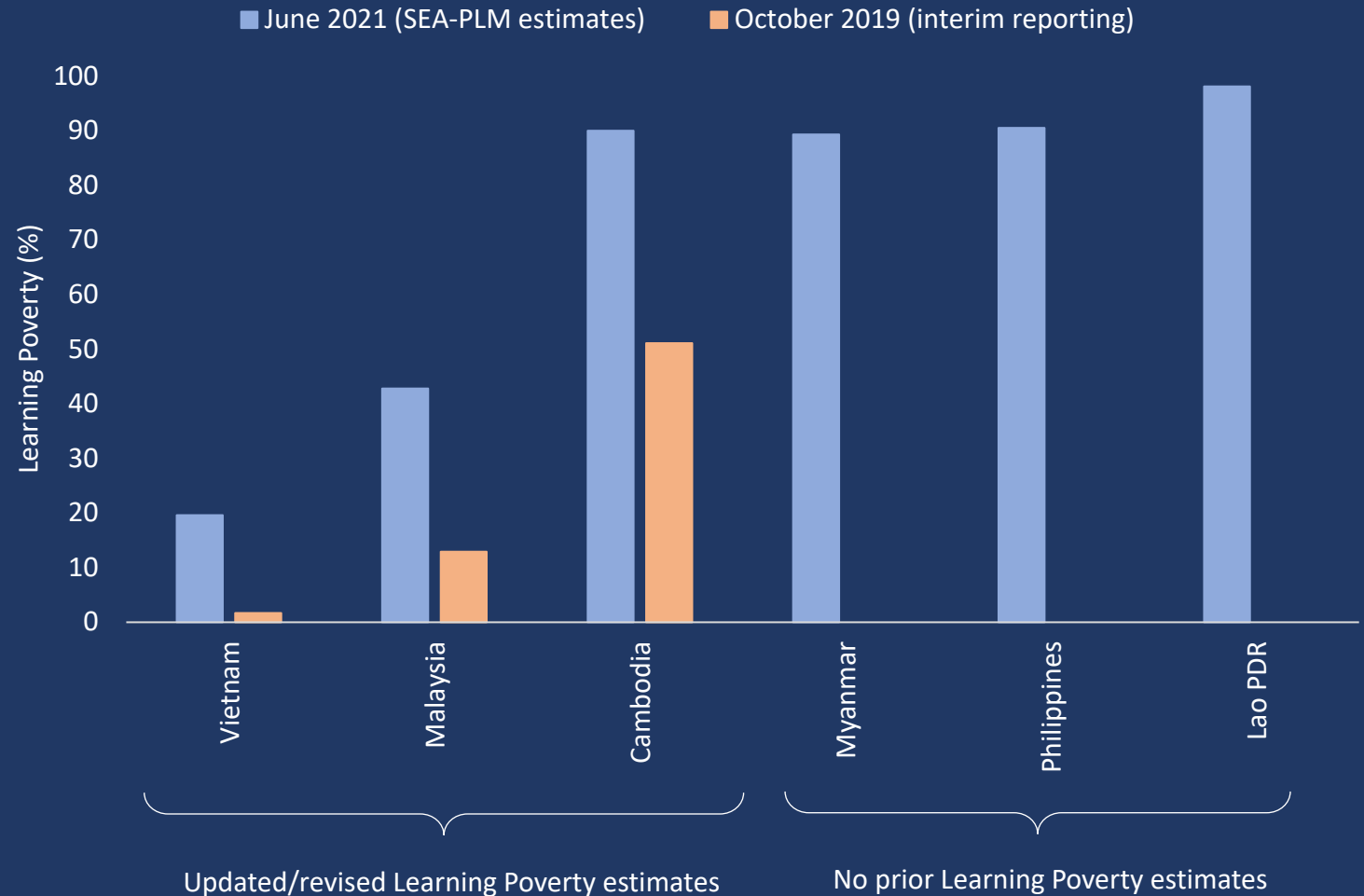
- Globally, **18%** of the school-age population has **no Learning Poverty data**
- No learning poverty data for **more than half** of the school-age population in **Sub-Saharan Africa**



Note that calculation is based on countries included in the reporting window for the estimation of global and regional aggregates.

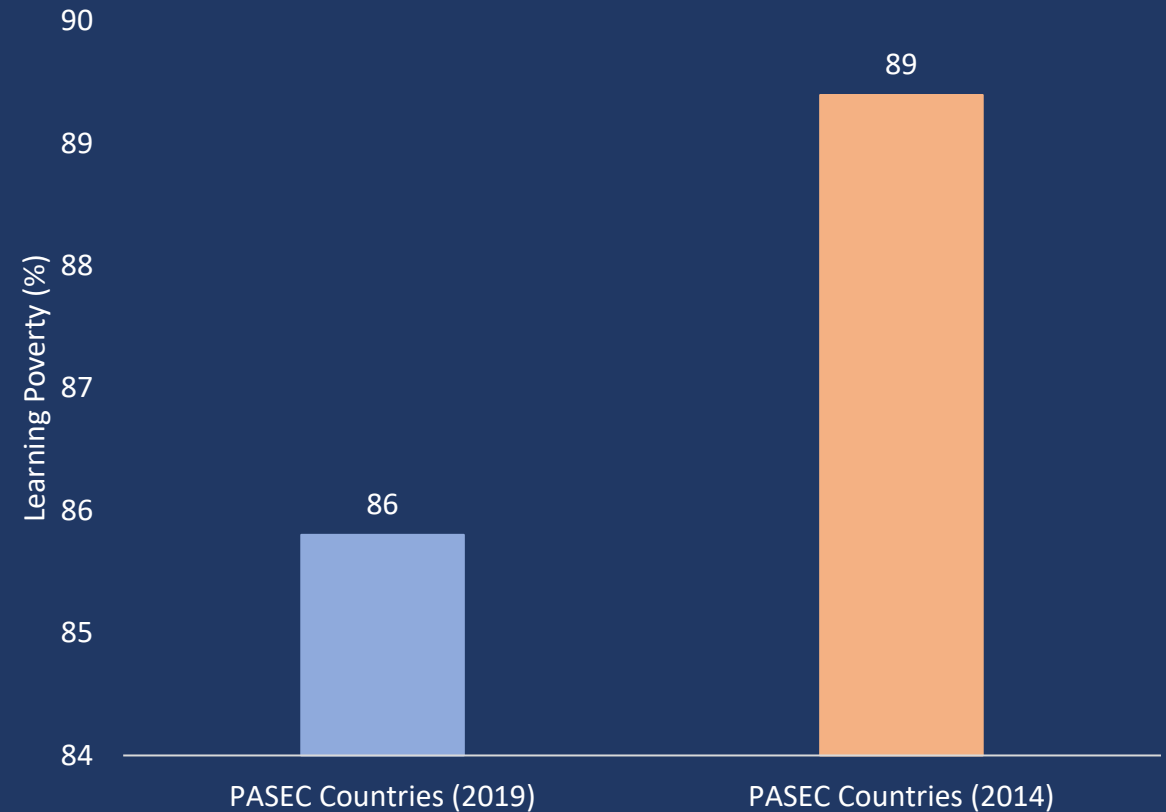
We need better data to understand the magnitude of the learning crisis

- New SEA-PLM data show that prior learning poverty estimates in several East Asian countries significantly **underestimated the magnitude** of the learning crisis
- Need **better data**, such as SEA-PLM, that are **aligned with SDG** minimum proficiency levels



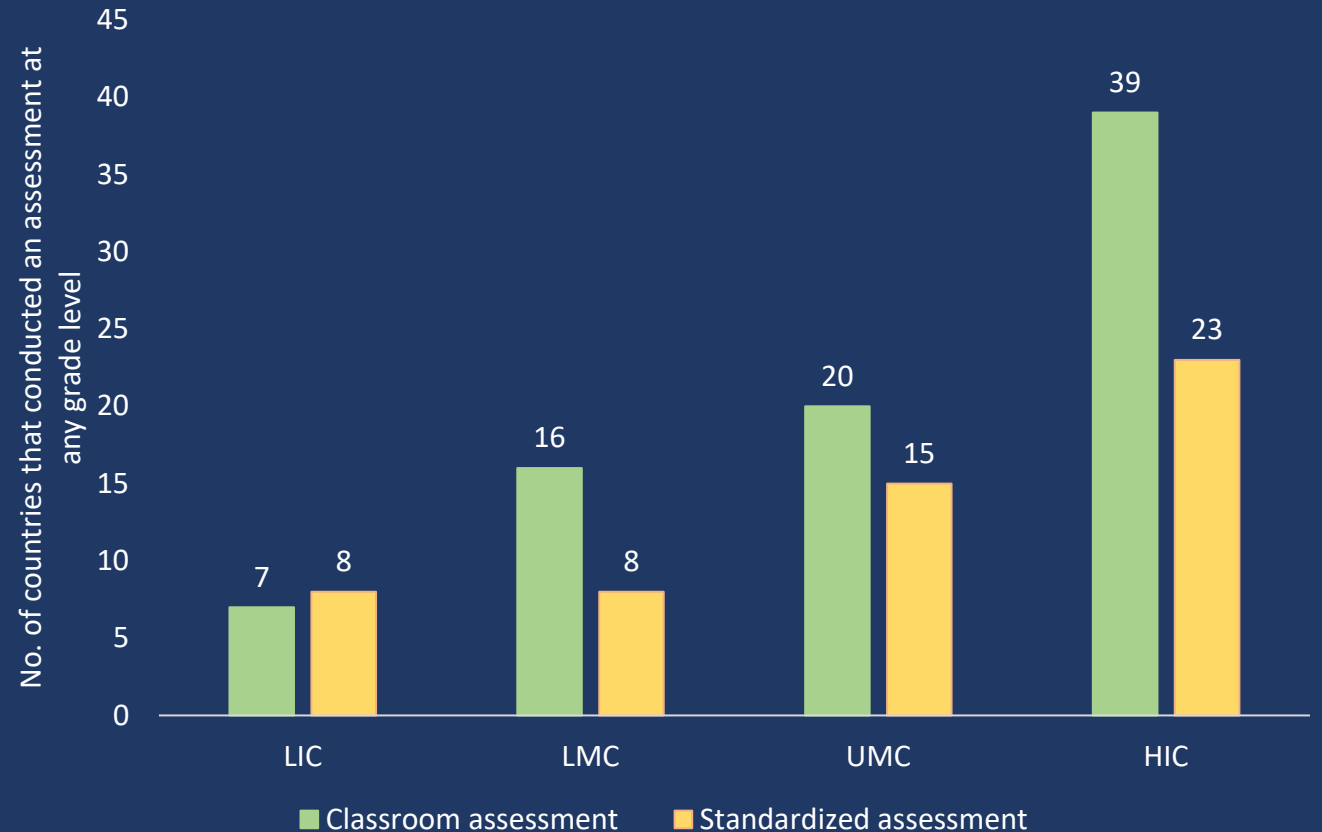
Need more frequent data to track progress on eliminating Learning Poverty

- Latest PASEC data show that several African countries were further off-track to meet the global goal of halving learning poverty by 2030 even before Covid-19
- Need for **more timely data** on learning to tackle the global learning crisis, and to **recover COVID-19 learning losses**



A stronger global effort is needed to measure **Covid-19 learning losses**

- Only **7 LICs** report conducting formative assessments to measure learning losses in 2020; only **8 LICs** conducted standardized assessments
- COVID-19 is likely to worsen Learning Poverty
- **Utilize data** to identify the extent of the crisis and design effective mitigation strategies



Source: Joint Survey, Wave 3. Survey question: "Have there been any steps taken to assess whether there have been learning losses as a result of COVID related school closure in 2020?"

For the latest learning
poverty country briefs,
see:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/country-learning-poverty-briefs>

THANK YOU

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