UNESCO
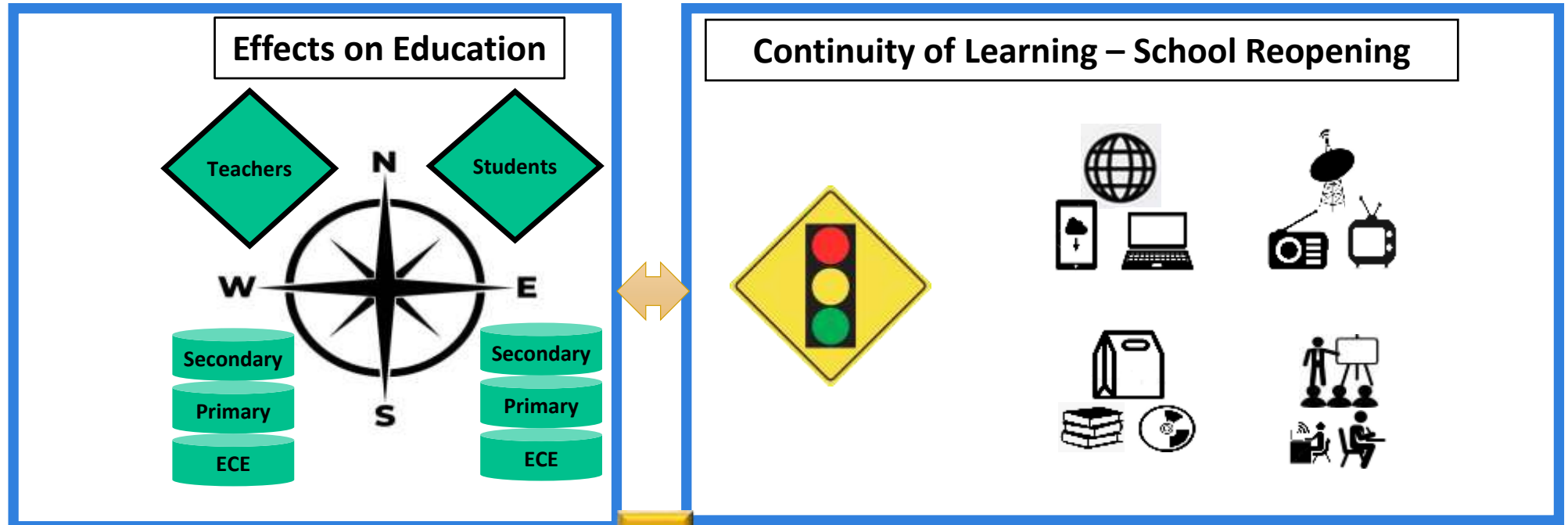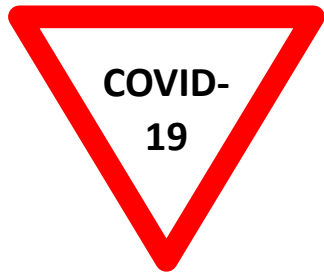Institute for Statistics

Launch of the Publication 'School Closures and Regional Policies to Mitigate Learning Losses: A Focus on the Asia-Pacific', 3 July 2021

Roshan Bajracharya, Regional Advisor, UIS-Asia Pacific
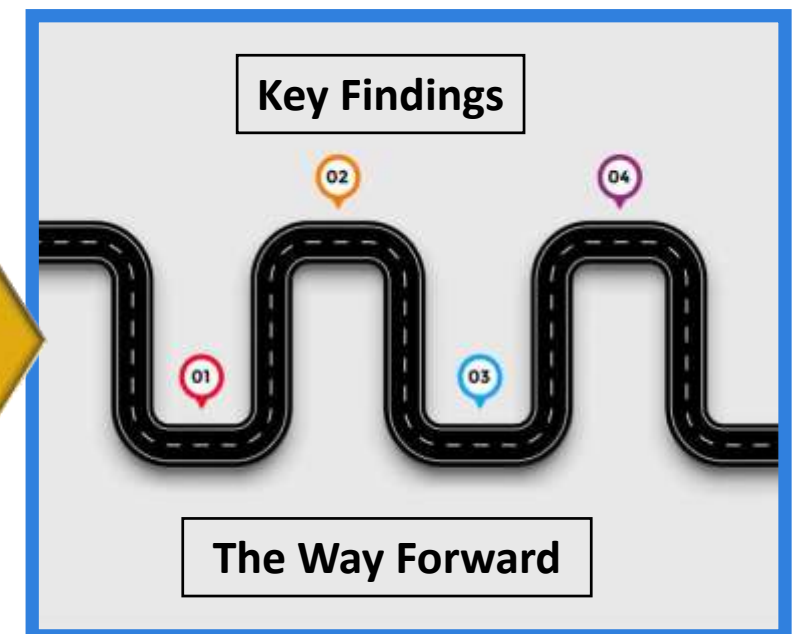
Nyi Nyi Thaung, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Bangkok

Effects on Education

Teachers

Students

N
W — E
S

Secondary
Primary
ECE

Secondary
Primary
ECE

Continuity of Learning – School Reopening

COVID-19

SCHOOL CLOSURE

Quick Overview of the report

IMPACTS

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Mind the gap

Key Findings

02

04

01

03

The Way Forward
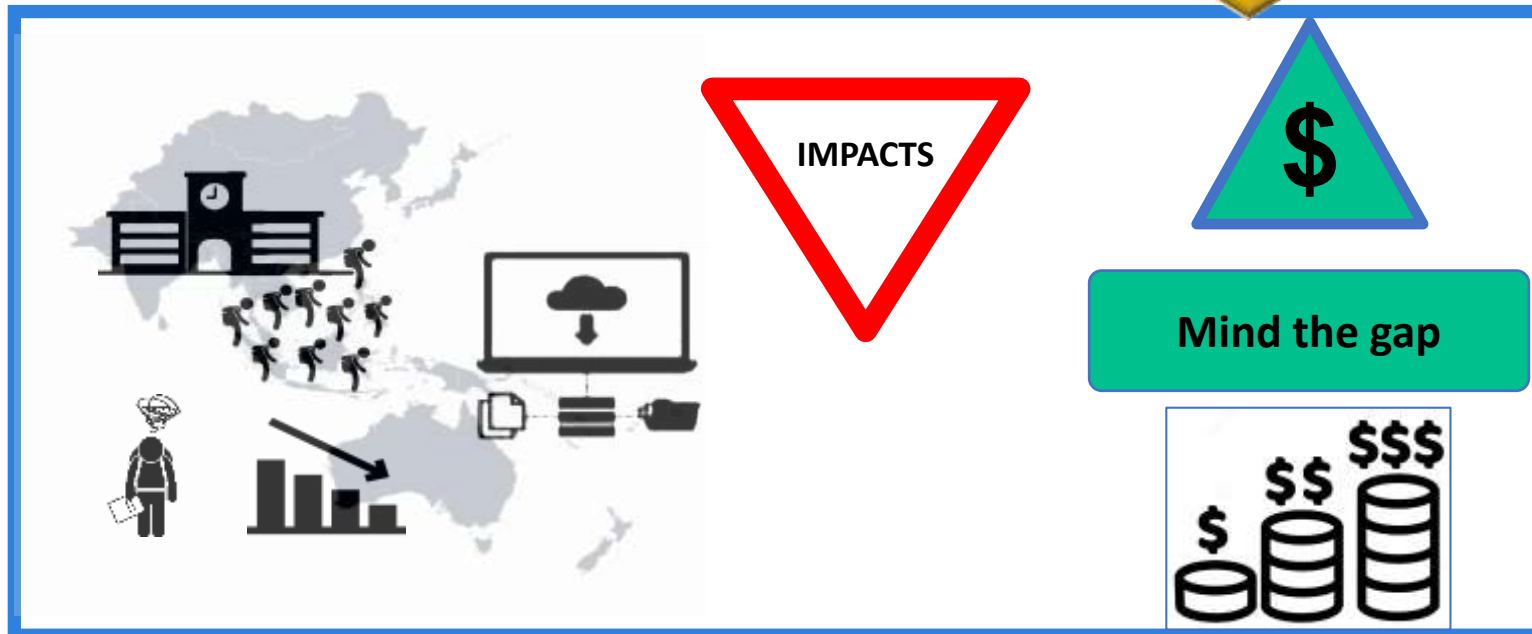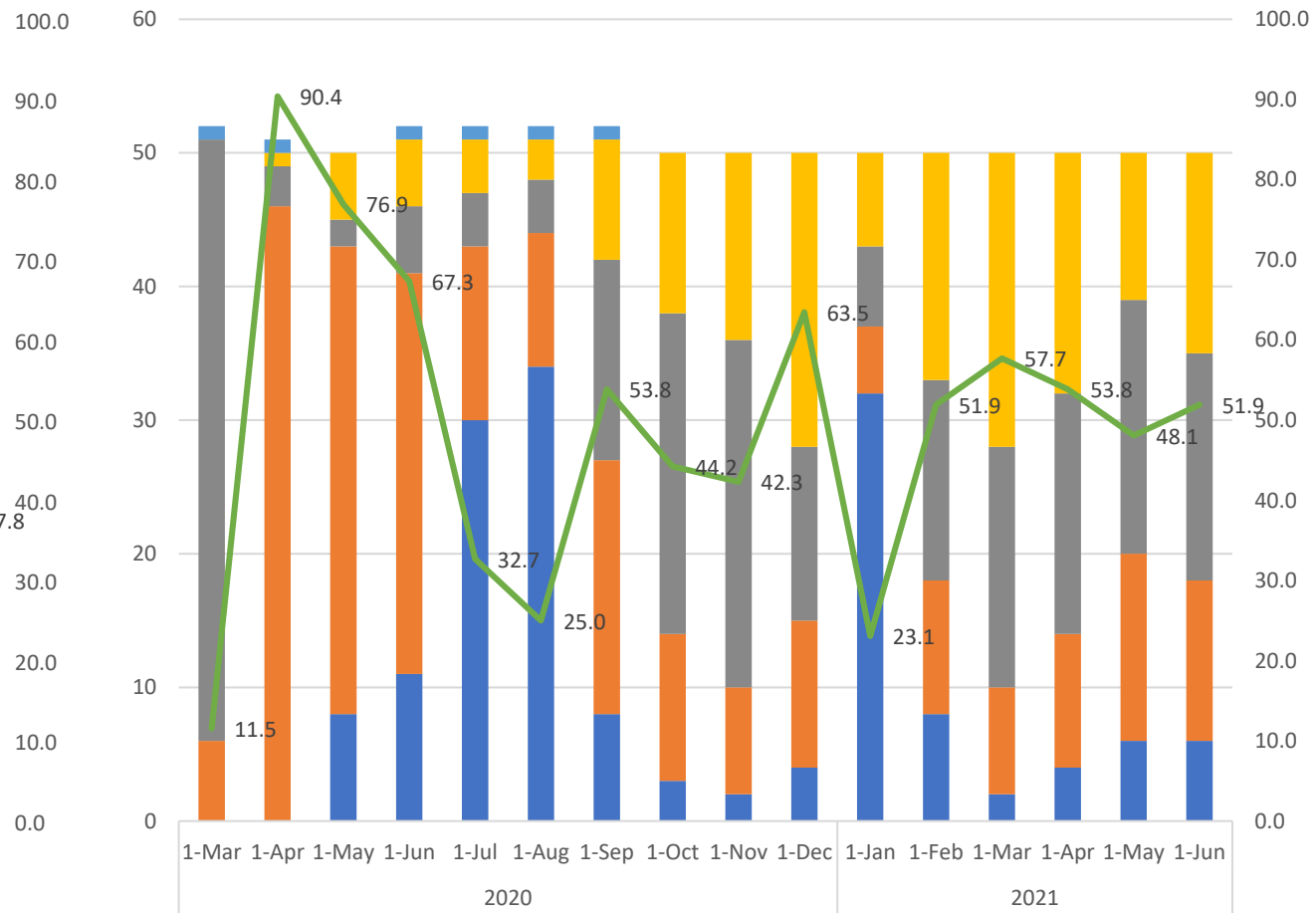
The global pandemic and school closures

Figure 1: Number/percentage of countries that closed their schools, worldwide (left) and Asia-Pacific (right).

Launch of the Publication 'School Closures and Regional Policies to Mitigate Learning Losses: A Focus on the Asia-Pacific', 3 August 2021
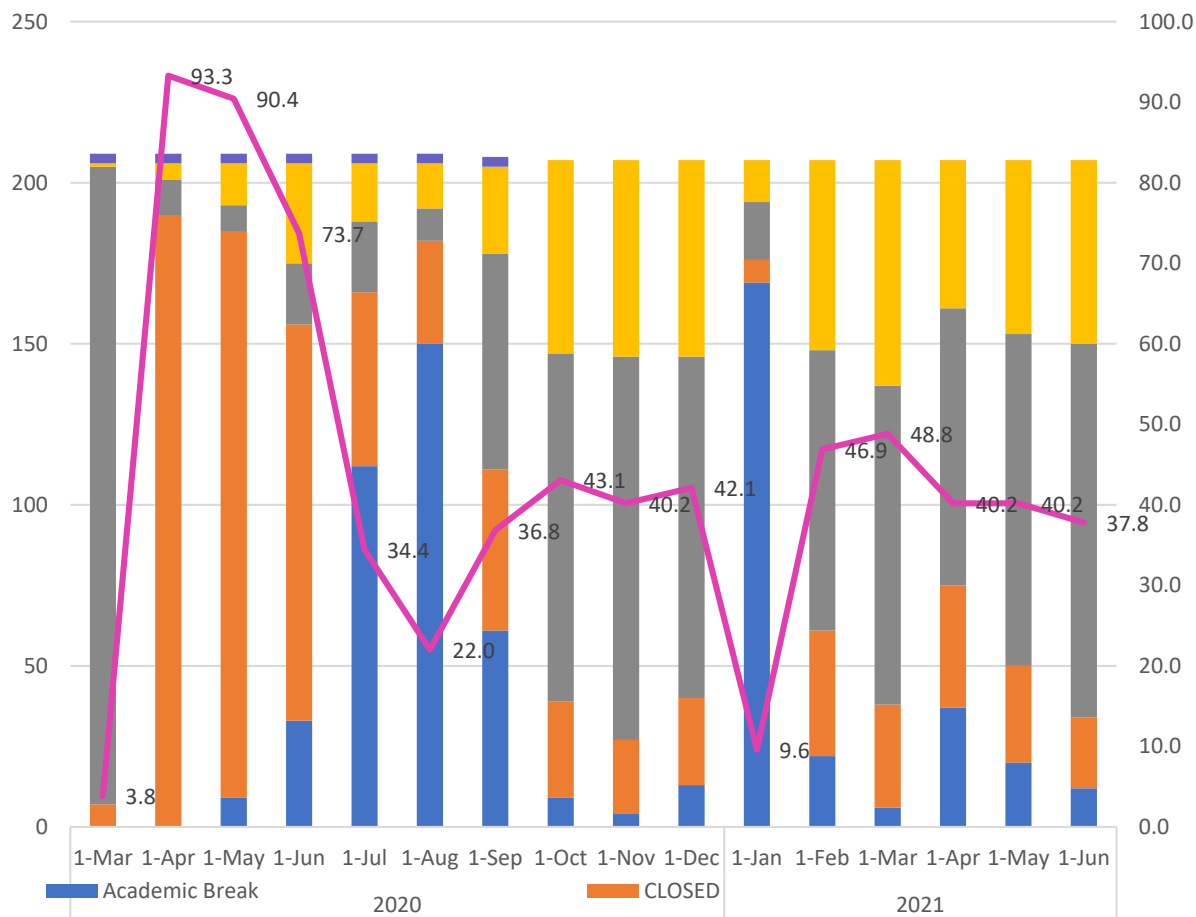
Global and Regional School Closure

Global School Closure
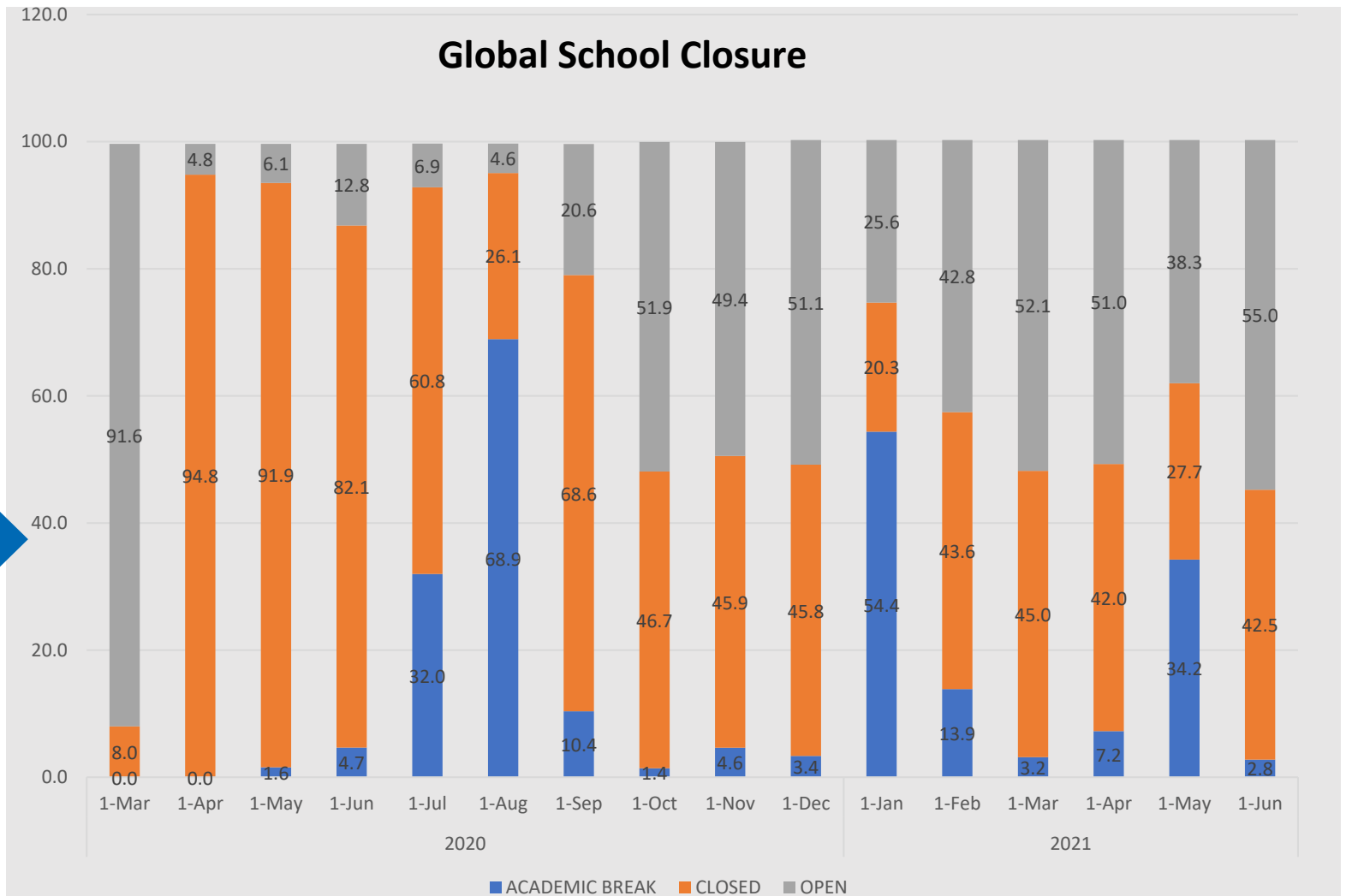
Schools Closed

- In April 2020, **95%** of the schools around world **99%** in AP Region

- In June 2021, **43%** of school globally and **50%** of the schools in AP region

Number and % of students affected due to school closure

Total Students
- Globally **1.6 billion**
- AP region **850 millions**

April 2020
- Globally **95%**
- Ap Region **99%**

November 2020
- Globally **43%**
- AP Region **57%** (biggest proportion is from **SW Asia 80%)**

Levels of education
- Students equally affected regardless of the levels of education.
- **Pre-Primary schooling** has higher risks of sustaining (55% of students in the EAP and 58% in SWA attend private schools)

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Estimated number of teachers affected by school closures, by subregion
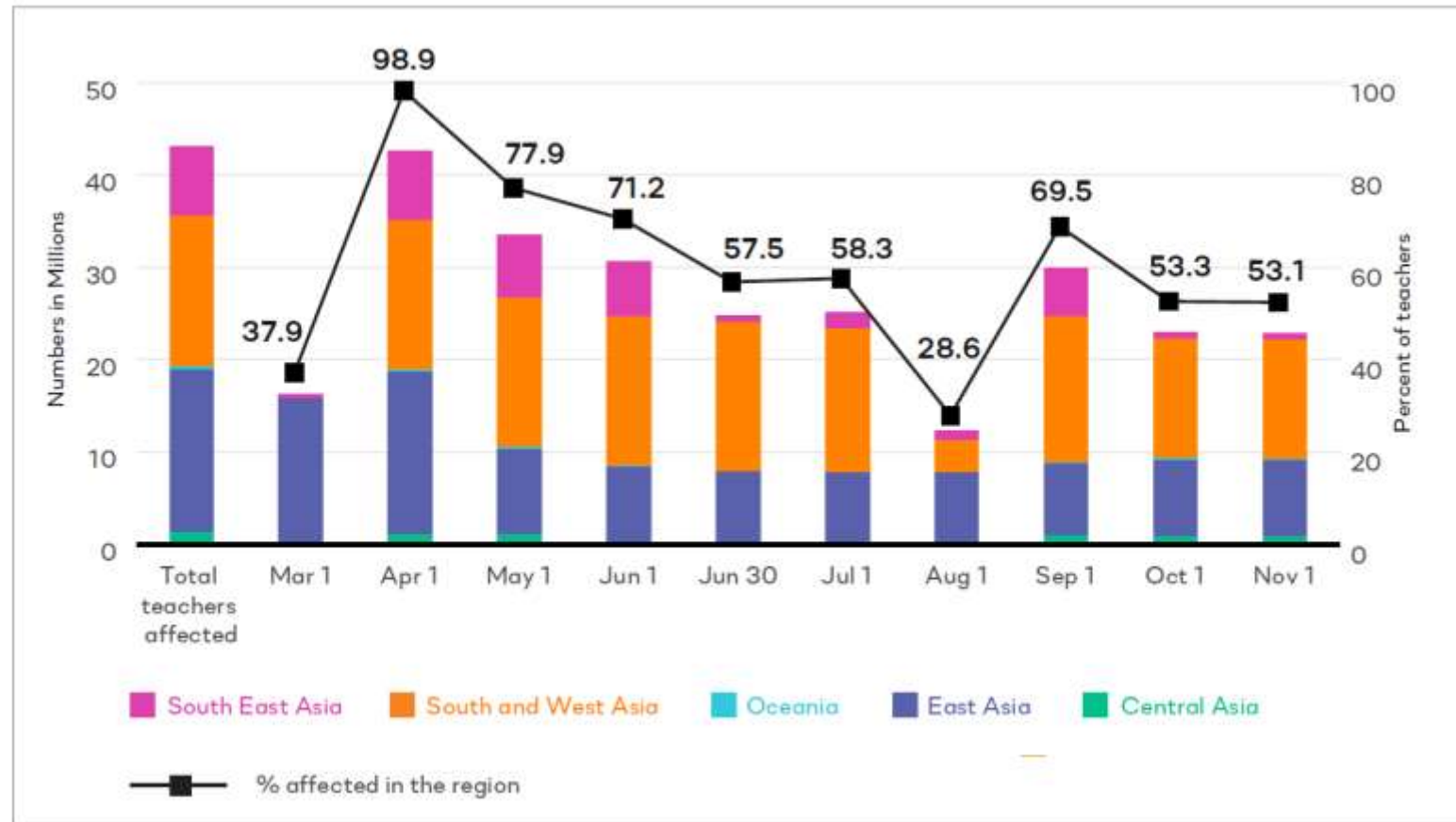
Total numbers of teachers affected
- In April, 2020, 43 million (99% of the teachers from Pre-primary to Secondary)
- In November, 2020 23 million teachers (53%) were still not engaged in face-to-face direct teaching
- Many teachers, especially private school teachers lost their jobs
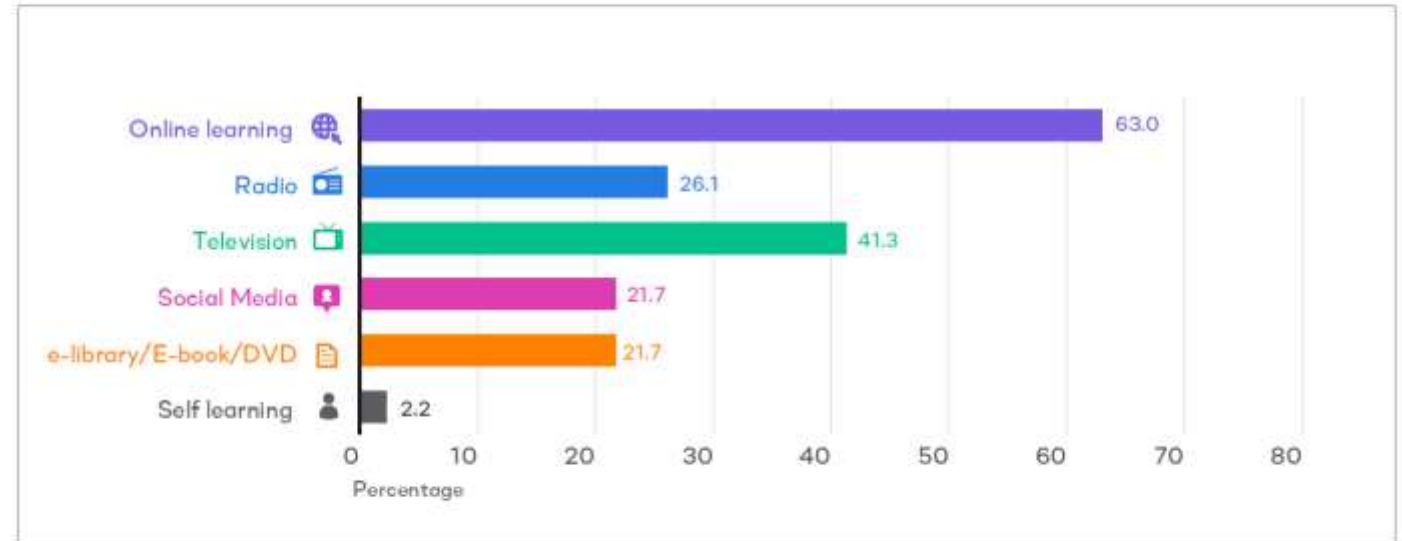
Continuity of Learning and School Re-opening

Remote learning during school closures

Figure 10: Percentage of countries using remote education delivery methods during school closures (N=46)

Source: Based on documentation collected by UNESCO Bangkok in June 2020.

- Not all the delivery methods are equally effective

- Online learning platforms where available seems effective compared to other methods.

- The effectiveness of such methods varied between various sub region

- In 2 out 3 countries where online platform is used, MoE are taking lead in developing and deploying contents for online platforms (68%)

Support to the teachers for organizing remote learning

Support provided to teachers for remote teaching in the region (N=28)

Legend: Asia (Central and Southern), Asia (Eastern and South-eastern), Oceania, Asia pacific
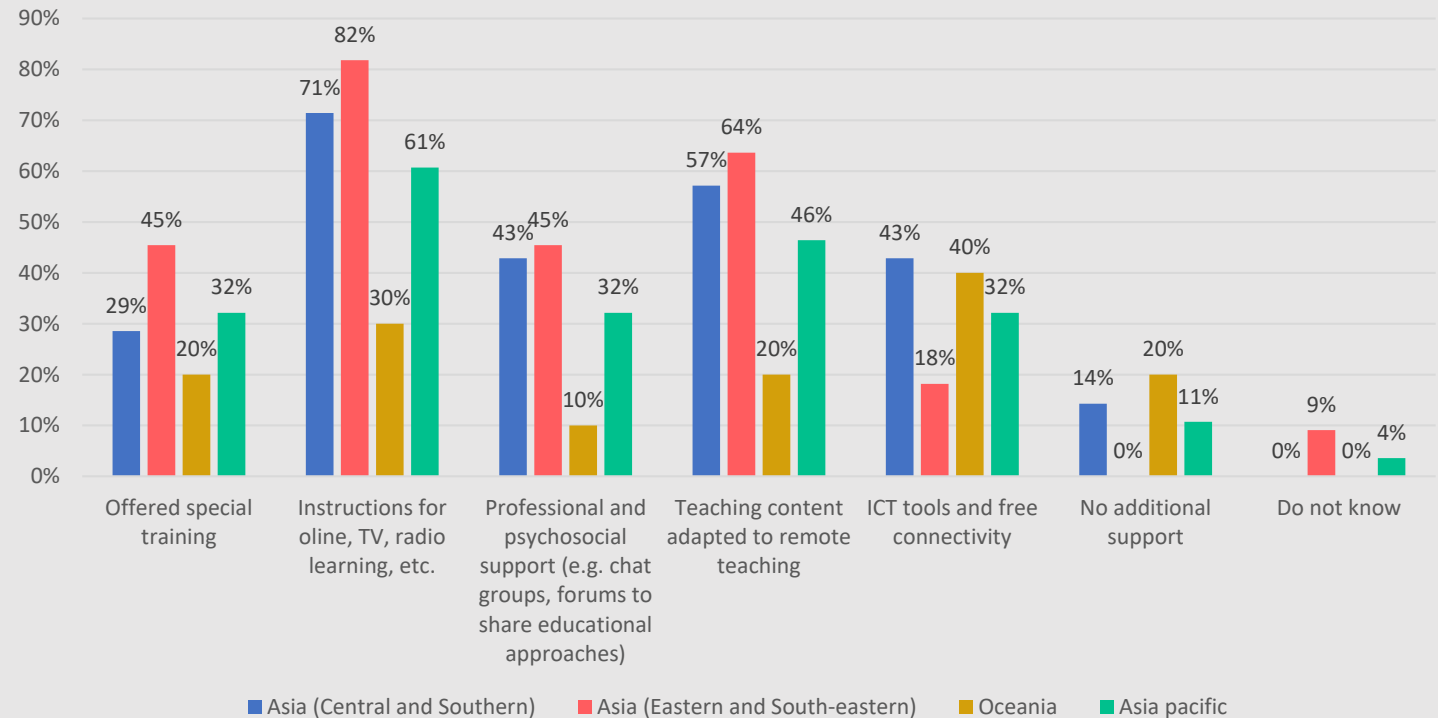
- In **1 in 10** counties teachers are not provided with additional support
- Only **one third** of the countries provided special training to the teachers
- Only **3 out 5** countries provided instruction to the teachers on remote learning
- Only **1 in 3** countries provided ICT tools and free connectivity

to their teachers

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Country strategies to mitigate student learning loss with schools re-opening

Numbers of Academic days lost in Asia pacific region (until September 2020)

Region	Days
Central Asia	54.1
East Asia	76.3
Oceania	45.4
South and West Asia	126.9
South East Asia	89.4
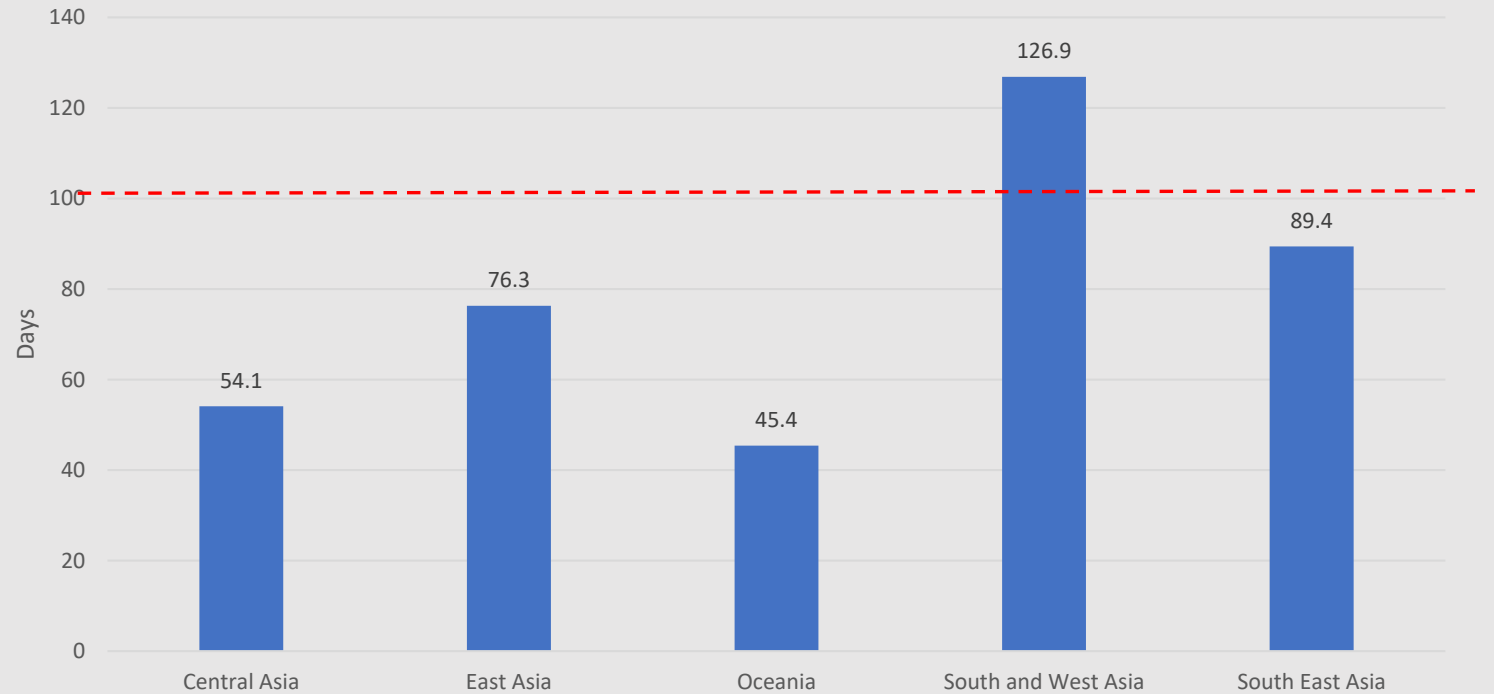
Country strategies to mitigate student learning loss with schools re-opening

Re-opening of schools

1/5th
- Countries in East and Southeast and Oceania considering to re- open fully in-person
- Countries in East and Southeast and Oceania re-open with blended model

25%, 36% and 18%
- of the countries will continue distance learning in Central and Southern Asia, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania, respectively.

Measures to mitigate student learning loss

Which of the following measures to mitigate student learning loss were included in school re-opening plans?	Percentage of countries worldwide	Percentage of countries A-P region
Revise/develop alternative academic calendars	39	46
Assess learning levels when schools re-open	35	42
Remedial learning programmes	44	52
Accelerated learning programmes to integrate previously out-of-school children	17	20
Increase class time	6	7
Revise policies on grade promotion/entry (may include waiving exams)	18	21
Continued use of blended learning	3	4
Other	3	4
At least one measure	63	75

Source: UIS (2020). Based on the UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank survey.

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Impacts of School Closure on Learning

Impact of school closures on dropout, learning and data collection

Risk of Dropout

- **6.7 million students** in the region are at risk of dropping out of school, (highest dropouts expected at the secondary -4.2 million).
- Estimated **4% increase** in OOSC numbers in the region

Learning Loss

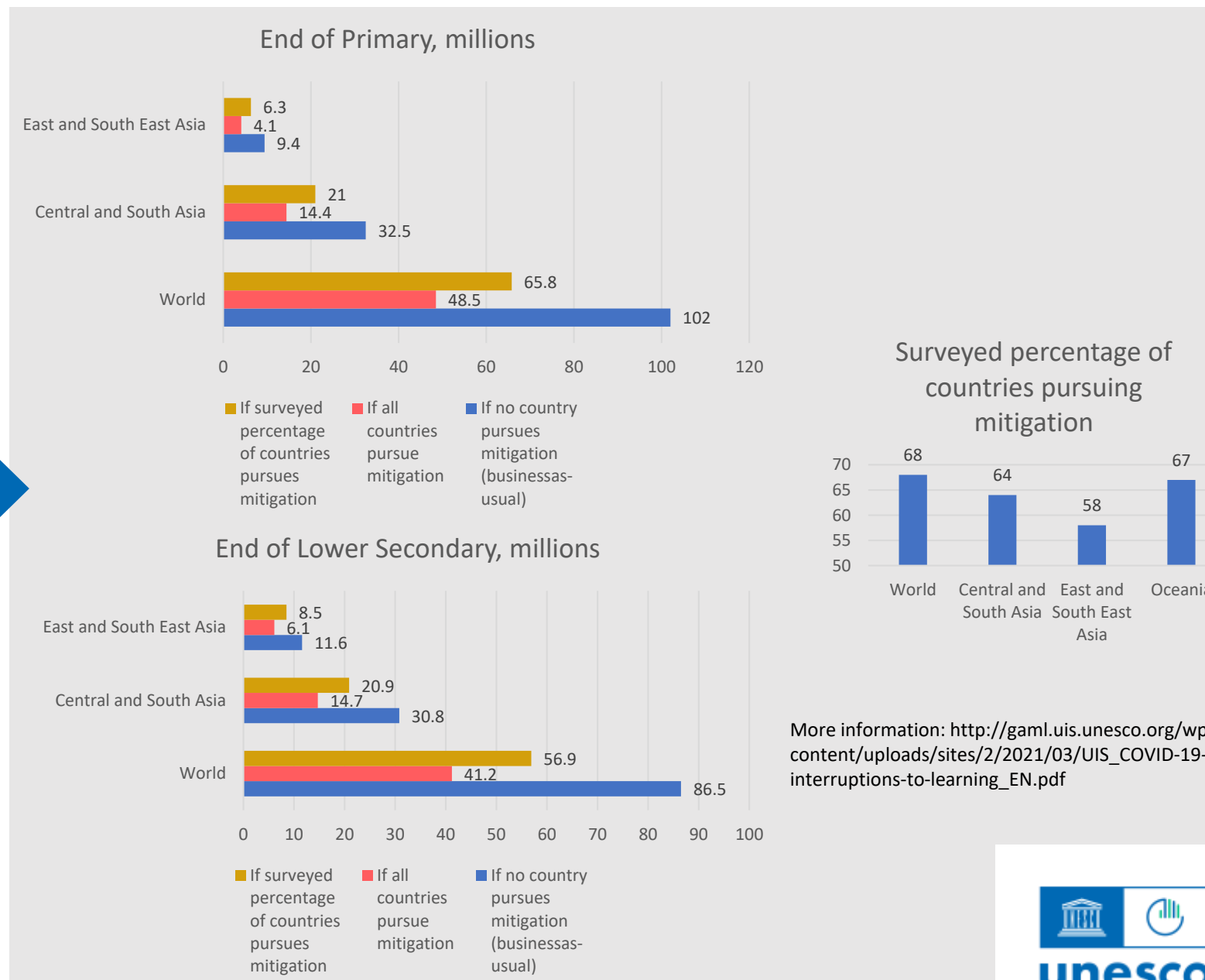- **10 percentage points declines** in Grade 3 age children cohort proficient in reading between 2019 and 2020, from 59% to 49%
- Over **100 million** additional students fall below the minimum proficiency due to the school closure

Disruption in data

- More than **80%** of the Lower middle income and Low-income countries face moderate to severe education data disruption

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Projected number of additional students completing education levels without minimum proficiency in reading, between 2020 to 2030

End of Primary, millions

- East and South East Asia: If surveyed percentage 6.3, If all countries 4.1, If no country 9.4
- Central and South Asia: If surveyed percentage 21, If all countries 14.4, If no country 32.5
- World: If surveyed percentage 65.8, If all countries 48.5, If no country 102

Legend:
- If surveyed percentage of countries pursues mitigation
- If all countries pursue mitigation
- If no country pursues mitigation (businessas-usual)

End of Lower Secondary, millions

- East and South East Asia: If surveyed percentage 8.5, If all countries 6.1, If no country 11.6
- Central and South Asia: If surveyed percentage 20.9, If all countries 14.7, If no country 30.8
- World: If surveyed percentage 56.9, If all countries 41.2, If no country 86.5

Legend:
- If surveyed percentage of countries pursues mitigation
- If all countries pursue mitigation
- If no country pursues mitigation (businessas-usual)

Surveyed percentage of countries pursuing mitigation

- World: 68
- Central and South Asia: 64
- East and South East Asia: 58
- Oceania: 67

More information: http://gaml.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/03/UIS_COVID-19-interruptions-to-learning_EN.pdf
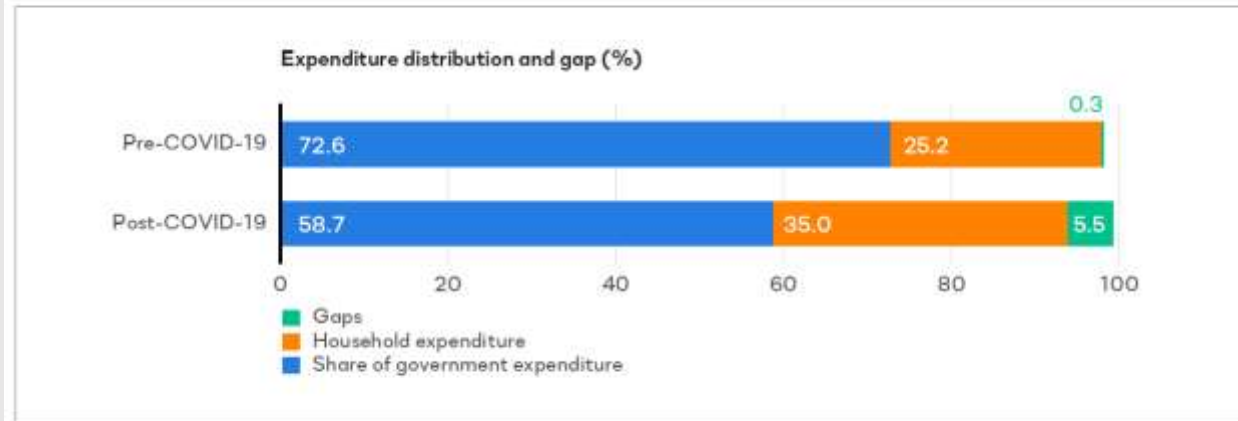
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Implication to Resources

Summary of Findings and Wat Forwards

Implication on resources to achieve SDG 4

Figure 27: Average annual percentage gap in education finance, pre- and post-COVID-19, Asia-Pacific

Expenditure distribution and gap (%)

Pre-COVID-19: 72.6 | 25.2 | 0.3
Post-COVID-19: 58.7 | 35.0 | 5.5

- Gaps
- Household expenditure
- Share of government expenditure

Source: Calculated using UNESCAP Economic and Social Projection Model (UNESCAP, 2019).
Note: Total percentage distribution is not equal to 100% because (a) total public costs exclude private pupils.

Figure 28: Average annual gap in education finance, pre-and post-COVID-19, by income level
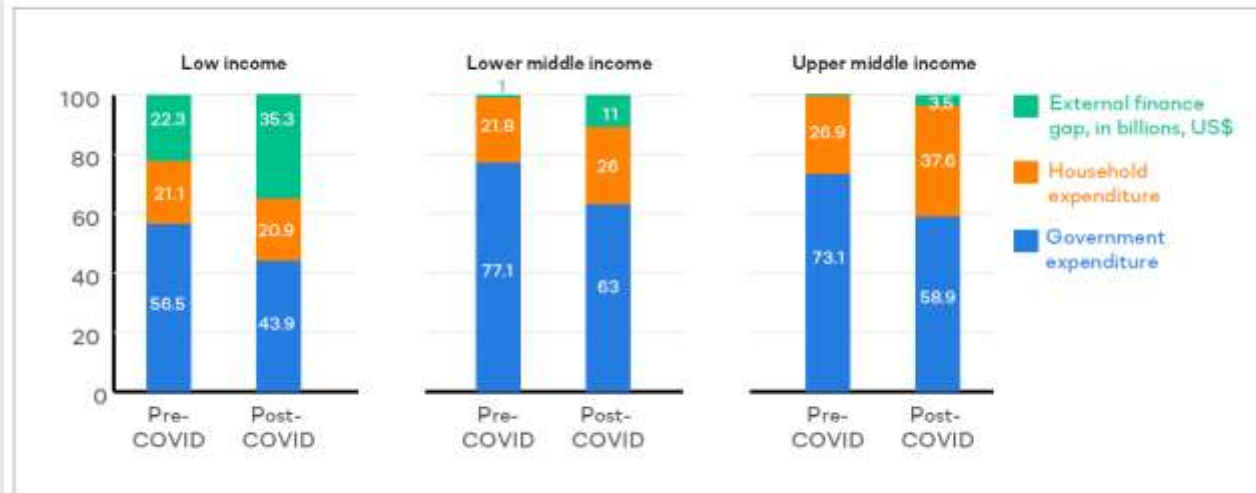
Low income
- Pre-COVID: 56.5 | 21.1 | 22.3
- Post-COVID: 43.9 | 20.9 | 35.3

Lower middle income
- Pre-COVID: 77.1 | 21.8 | 1
- Post-COVID: 63 | 26 | 11

Upper middle income
- Pre-COVID: 73.1 | 26.9
- Post-COVID: 58.9 | 37.6 | 3.5

- External finance gap, in billions, US$
- Household expenditure
- Government expenditure

Source: Calculated using UNESCAP Economic and Social Projection Model, (UNESCAP, 2019).

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Key findings

- Millions of students and teachers affected due the pandemic- **Pre-primary education could be in risk as more than 55% of the students are in private schools**

- Many countries in the Asia-Pacific developed remote and distance learning options, especially **the use of online platforms, to ensure ongoing learning. However, infrastructure is big challenge**

- Most low income countries planned to re-open schools for face-to-face learning rather than **adopting a hybrid model which is more popular in high income countries.**

- Many schools had inadequate digital infrastructure and teacher capacity to deliver remote **learning by ICT**

- **Teacher job security** was negatively affected by school closures, especially in the private sector

- **School feeding programmes** stopped when schools closed

- Disruption in collecting and **compiling education data**.

- **Effective remedial programmes are essential**

- Increasing education finance gaps for low income and lower-middle income countries will **impact their ability to achieve SDG 4.**

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The way forward (Focusing on Monitoring)

- Strengthen data collection systems for effective monitoring of school re-opening plans. This approach should focus on **safety, equity and inclusion**.

- Monitoring and data systems should also collect data on **online and distance learning programmes**, their delivery and student achievement.

- National monitoring authorities should receive greater support to **expand their capacity to enhance and develop data collection and compilation methodologies**. These approaches could include the use of technical devices such as smart phones and tablets, as well as Internet-based innovations.

- Data collection guidelines and tools should be developed so countries can adjust practices and collect the **most essential data for planning and policy strategies**. This approach will advance the development of remedial and intervention programmes.

- Support should be provided for **regional, subregional and national impact assessments,** in coordination with national statistical organizations and ministries of education, so the true impact of COVID-19 on learning can be assessed.

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Thank you

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