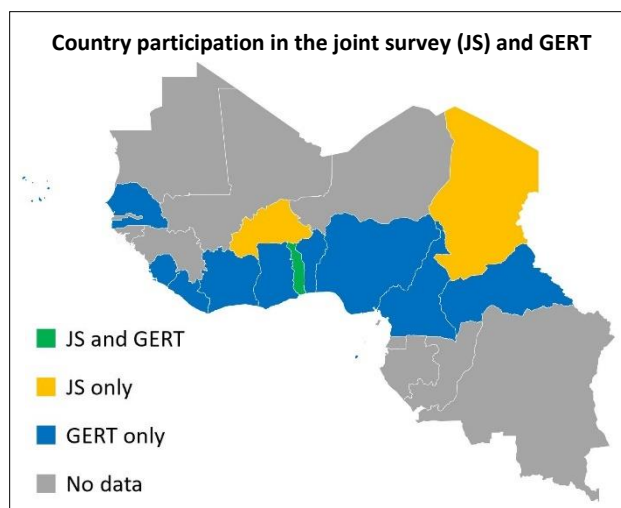


This brief presents regional findings from the Global Education Recovery Tracker ('GERT'), administered between May to July 2022. It examines how countries in the region have progressed in recovering and accelerating learning through the five key policy actions in the [RAPID framework](#). These findings are a follow-up to the 1st 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. This brief is based on responses primarily from the GERT survey, as the sample size of the region (n=3) in the 4th round of the Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures ('joint survey') was too small for any meaningful analysis.

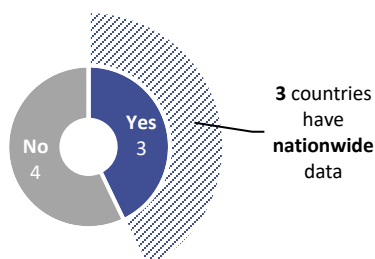


REACH every child and keep them in school.

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.

Is information available to policymakers on the number of children who have returned to school after schools have reopened?

(n=7 countries)



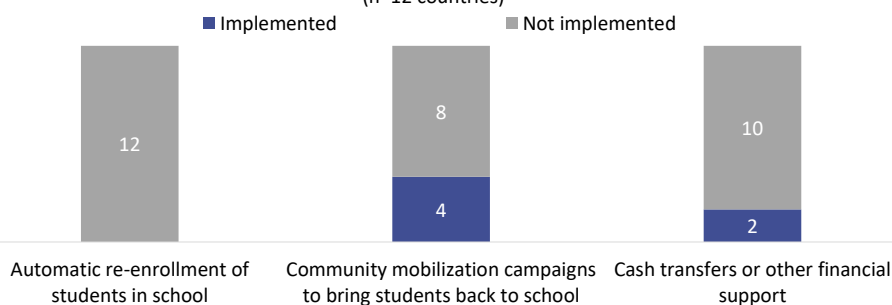
Source: GERT.

Of the 3 countries collecting information on the number of children who have returned to school, only 1 country can disaggregate the data by location (urban vs. rural) and 1 country by gender. GERT data show that 3 of 12 countries are using Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) data at school level to monitor student return.

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.

What measures were taken to bring students back to school after COVID-19-related interruptions in schooling?

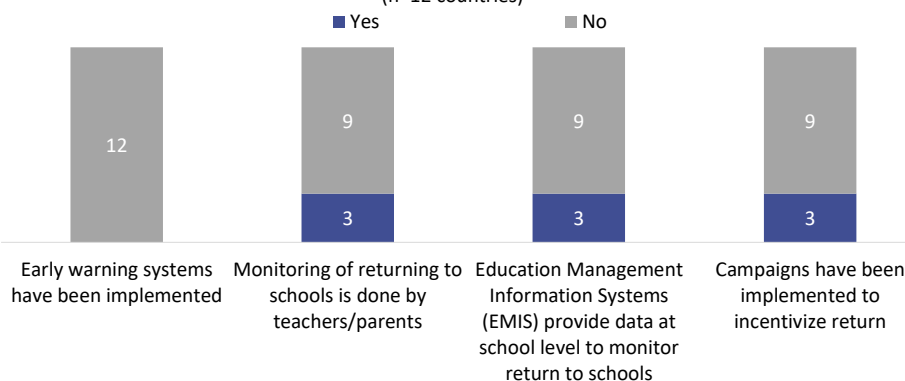
(n=12 countries)



Source: GERT.

Have any additional measures been taken to avoid students dropping out and/or incentivizing return to schools?

(n=12 countries)



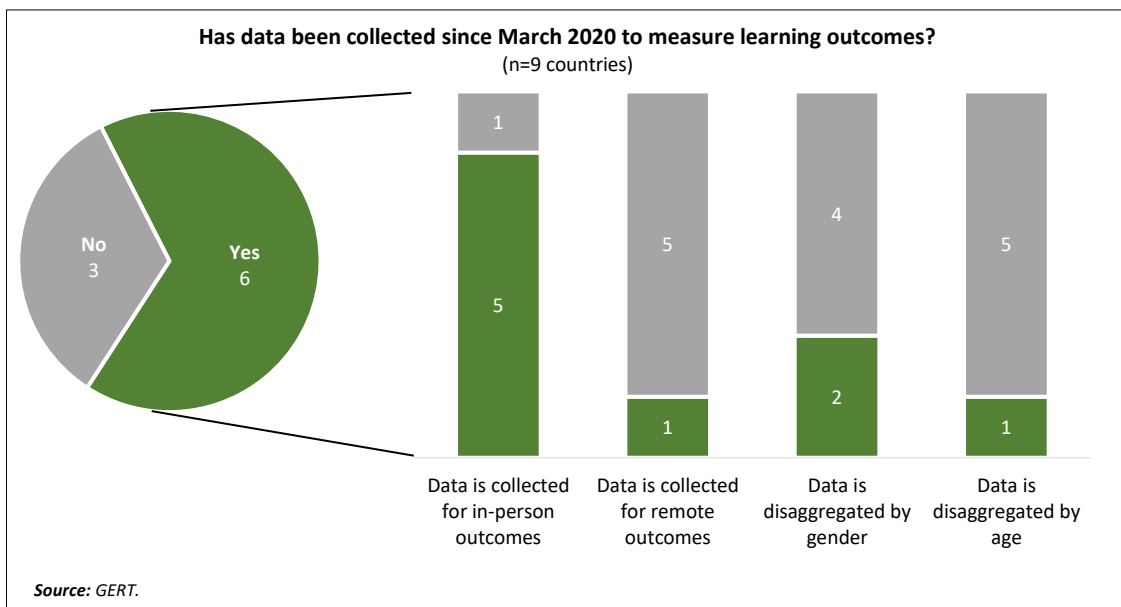
Source: GERT.

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.

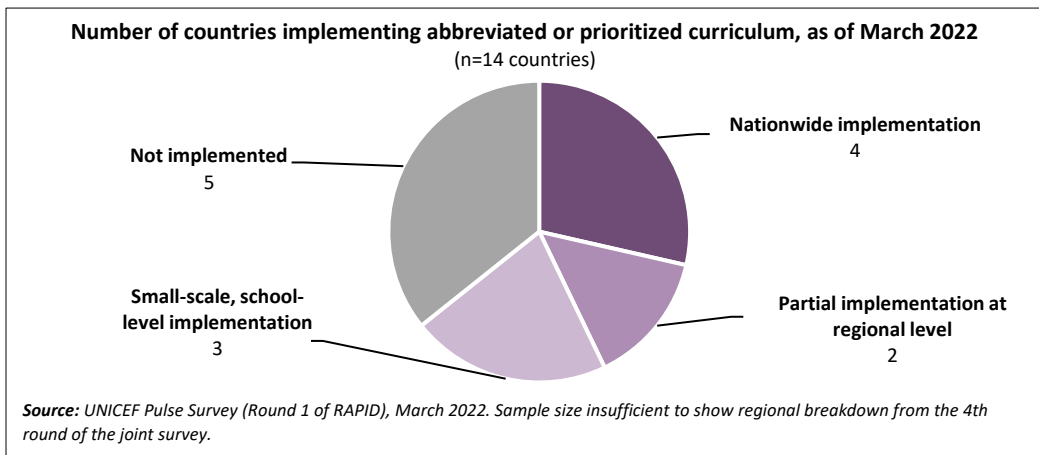
In the GERT, 6 of 9 countries with valid responses reported that data has been collected since March 2020 to measure learning outcomes. Of these countries, 2 countries can disaggregate the data by gender and 1 country by age.

Furthermore, in the GERT, 3 of 12 countries reported a systematic plan to measure learning at a national scale when children go back to school.



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.

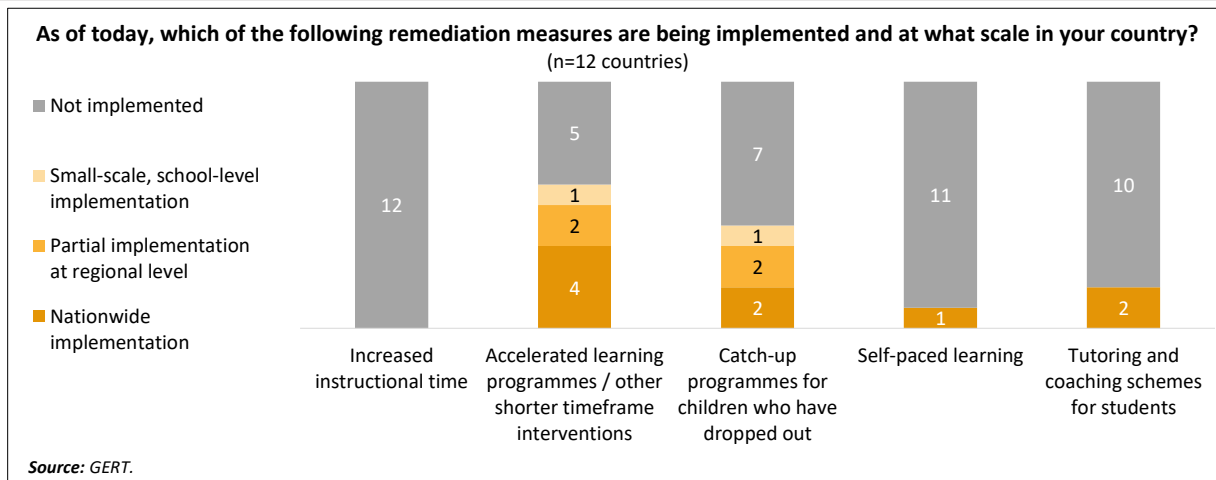


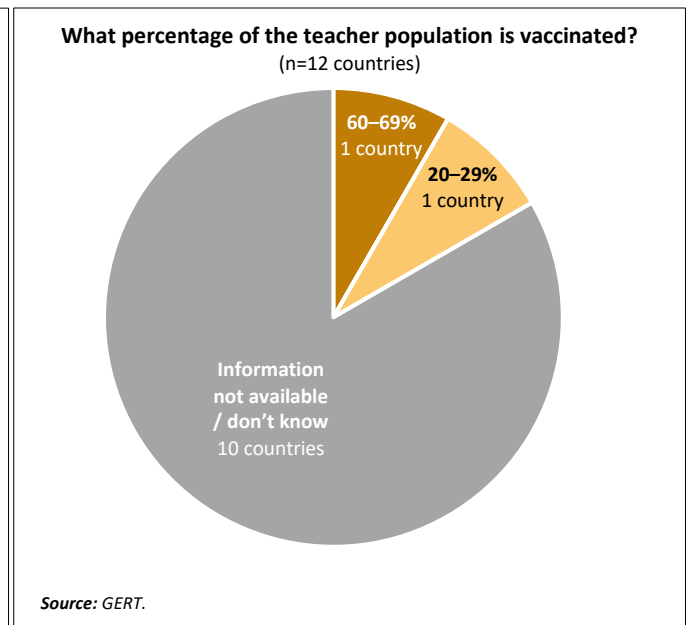
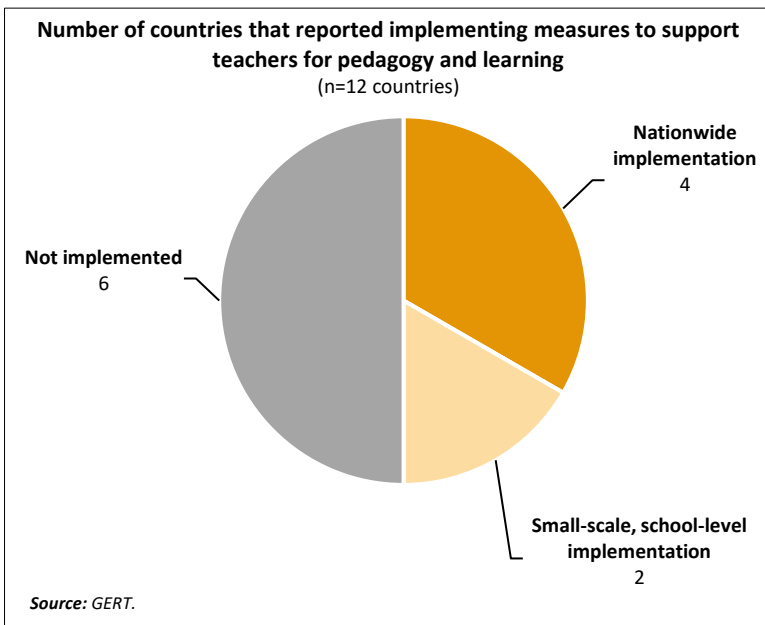
In March 2022, the first round of data on the RAPID was collected through UNICEF’s Pulse Survey. Results from this survey found that only 4 of 14 countries abbreviated or prioritized the curriculum at a national level, while 5 countries reported that this policy measure was not being implemented.

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, none of the 12 countries with valid responses reported implementing nationwide measures to increase instructional time.

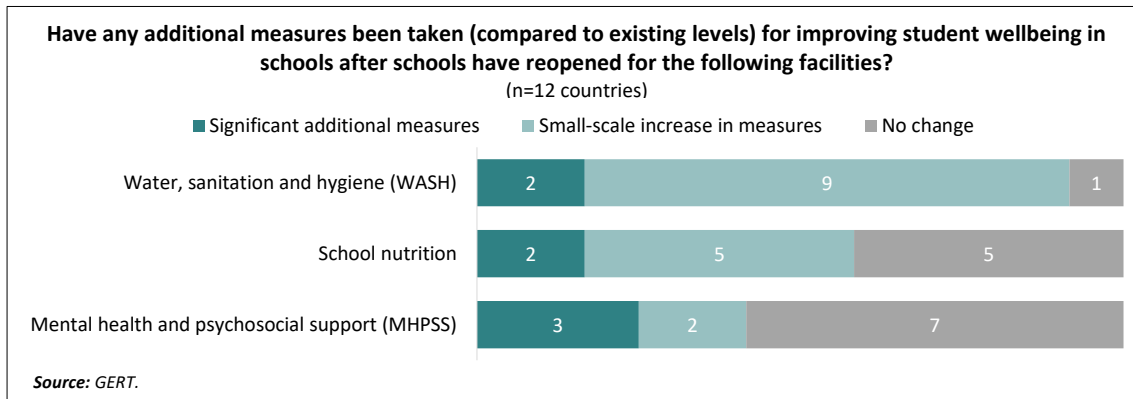




To increase the efficiency of instruction, it is critical that adequate support be provided to teachers. In the GERT, 4 of 12 countries reported implementing nationwide measures to support teachers for pedagogy and learning, while 6 countries reported that such measures were not being implemented. Additionally, in the GERT, 1 of 12 countries reported that more than 50 per cent of their teacher population is vaccinated, which will help manage teacher health and stress.

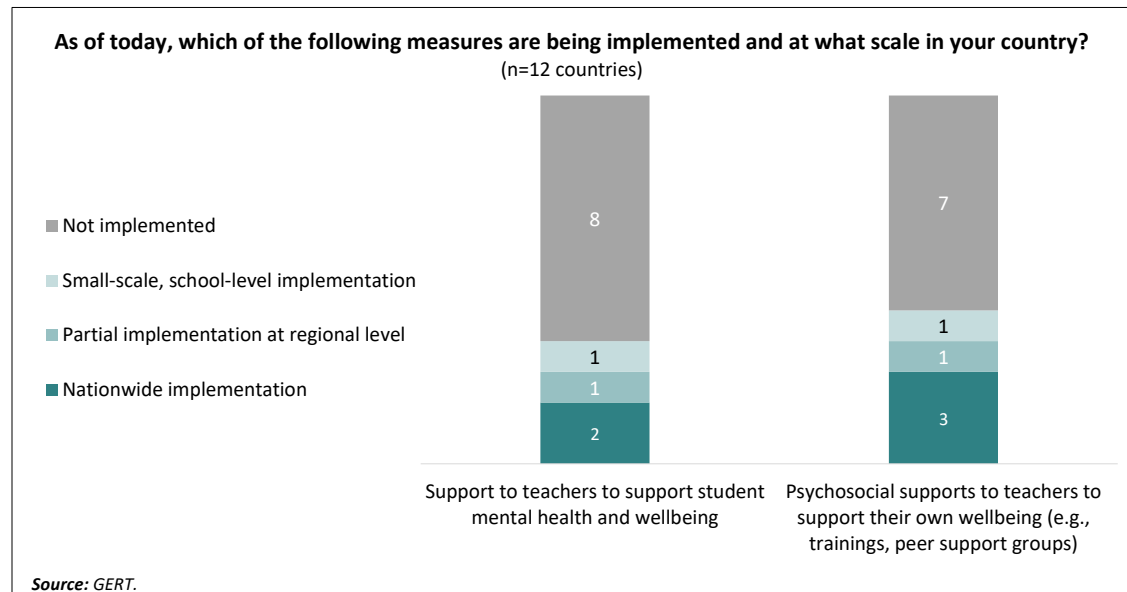
DEVELOP psychosocial health and wellbeing.

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.



Among 12 respondent countries in the GERT, 2 countries reported taking significant additional measures for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, 2 countries reported the same for school nutrition services, and 3 countries for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.

In the GERT, 2 of 12 countries reported implementing nationwide measures to support teachers in addressing student mental health and wellbeing, while 3 of 12 countries reported implementing nationwide measures to provide psychosocial support to address teacher wellbeing.



Implementing the RAPID Framework: UNICEF examples in West and Central Africa

R REACH every child and keep them in school.

- UNICEF [Burkina Faso](#) is working with the Ministry of National Education, Literacy and National Languages to campaign for girls' return to school, including raising awareness through back-to-school campaigns, providing scholarships, meals and learning supplies to the most vulnerable girls, protecting against gender-based violence, and more. Additionally, UNICEF Burkina Faso is spearheading studies on the effectiveness of girls' education incentives, enrolment and re-enrolment of internally displaced children disaggregated by gender and disability, and the impact of life skills education modules for in-school and out-of-school adolescents.
- UNICEF Central African Republic has found community dialogues with 11,872 parents and community members of 15 schools successful in raising awareness on the importance of education and engaging the community in supporting the schools with education recovery.
- UNICEF Congo is conducting a study with the Ministry of Education on 26,000 primary school-aged children nationally (3.4 per cent of primary school-aged children) to identify out-of-school children and the factors preventing them from attending school after COVID-19 reopening.

A ASSESS learning levels regularly.

- UNICEF [Nigeria](#) utilized [U-Report](#), a social platform created by UNICEF and available via SMS, Facebook and Twitter, in online and offline modes for remote learning assessment to understand the learning levels of children during school closures. By September 2021, 8,010 children aged 6–11 years (3,924 girls) responded to the learning assessment using U-Report.
- UNICEF West and Central Regional Office (WCARO) have continued efforts to support early childhood education, including by providing technical and financial support to develop [early learning assessment](#) tools to help countries assess children's cognitive, language, socio-emotional and motor skills. As of October 2021, a total of 13 countries (Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, São Tomé & Príncipe, Senegal, Togo) have conducted early learning assessments that have evaluated the readiness of children to transition to primary school.

P PRIORITIZE teaching the fundamentals.

- UNICEF [Nigeria](#) is supporting volunteer-led community-based learning hubs which provide in-person lessons in early grade reading and math. The hubs are often led by parents and offer a range of flexible options, including non-formal courses as well as bridging programmes to bring children back into the formal education system. They have provided over 540,000 primary-aged children with in-person learning opportunities.

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

- UNICEF Chad is supporting the production of 12 audio and video teacher training modules, and a virtual classroom for training teachers. To date, two in-service paper-based and audio and video teacher training modules on evaluation and remediation techniques as well as on distance education have been devised. Thirty trainers were trained in evaluation and remediation techniques in August 2022 and, in turn, trained 300 teachers.
- UNICEF Congo is providing four-month catch-up classes in French, mathematics, and life skills for 10,287 children (5,349 girls) aged 6–14 years. At least 90 per cent of these children will integrate into second-chance school centers in the next school year. Tutoring courses are being organized for 3,100 students (1,566 girls).
- UNICEF [Sierra Leone](#) and the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Teaching Service Commission initiated an early grade teacher training programme to improve literacy and numeracy among children in Grades 1–3, helping more than 600,000 students acquire these foundational skills. As of July 2022, about 39 per cent of all early grade teachers in the country have been trained in foundational literacy and numeracy.

D DEVELOP psychosocial health and well being.

- UNICEF Cameroon is ensuring that 20,000 children are attending schools with a teacher trained in psychosocial support. Six thousand children are receiving MHPSS and 2,000 children have been supported with comprehensive case management and referral services.
- UNICEF Congo is providing community-based MHPSS messaging to 5,000 vulnerable students (2,000 girls), 180 teachers and administrative school staff, 120 parents, and 120 community leaders. Congo is also liaising with MHPSS services around support for schools. Ninety-nine local actors, including 22 health workers, 17 social workers, and 60 community workers received training on MHPSS in schools and communities.