

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Global Education Crisis: PAL Network Launches Urgent Campaign to Prioritize Data to Safeguard Foundational Learning for All Children**

**Nairobi** — In a bold move to address the alarming global foundational learning crisis, PAL Network has launched Phase 2 of its [SDG 4.1.1a campaign](#). This phase calls for decisive action in prioritizing the use of data to safeguard foundational literacy and numeracy. With a significant focus on the collection and use of data, the campaign urges stakeholders to join forces in addressing the learning crisis and ensuring quality education for every child.

**The initiative comes at a critical time, as recent data reveals a staggering statistic:** In mid to low-income countries, seven out of ten children are unable to read and understand a simple story by the age of ten. **In regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, this statistic escalates to nine out of ten.** These deficiencies in basic skills jeopardize individual futures and undermine broader economic and social progress. With only six years remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, PAL Network is calling for immediate and decisive action from national governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and citizens worldwide.

**Commitment to Foundational Learning - A Call to National Governments**

**PAL Network** acknowledges the critical need for the use of data to understand and address learning gaps effectively. The campaign's cornerstone is a three-pronged approach directed at national governments. PAL Network therefore urges national governments to invest in foundational literacy and numeracy through the following commitments:

1. **Measure Early:** Prioritize the collection and reporting of data on basic reading and math skills early in children's education. This will facilitate evidence-based interventions and significantly reduce the number of children unable to achieve minimum proficiency levels by age ten.
2. **Measure Well:** Establish robust reporting systems aligned with SDG 4.1.1a to examine trends in foundational learning and continuously refine educational strategies.
3. **Measure All:** Ensure that all children, regardless of background, including those with disabilities or in emergencies, receive the necessary support to achieve foundational learning outcomes.

Armando Ali, CEO of PAL Network, underscores the importance of this data-driven approach: "Accurate data on foundational learning is crucial for informed policy decisions. By endorsing the commitment to collecting and utilizing this data, national governments can drive meaningful changes in their education systems, ultimately benefiting the most vulnerable populations."

Positioning your country as a leader in education means showing a [commitment to improving foundational learning outcomes](#). By adopting these measures, nations can join the global effort to end the foundational learning crisis and ensure that every child has access to quality education.

### **Unified Advocacy: A Call to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)**

**The campaign doesn't stop at governmental action.** CSOs are invited to join in a unified advocacy effort to retain SDG 4.1.1a within the global education framework. By safeguarding this indicator, we ensure foundational learning remains a global priority. CSOs are encouraged to [sign the petition](#) addressed to the [UNESCO Institute of Statistics \(UIS\)](#), demonstrating the collective power of civil society in shaping global education policies. Your participation is vital in safeguarding space for foundational learning in the 2030 global agenda and beyond. Together, we can amplify our voices and push for the necessary actions to address the foundational learning crisis.

### **Citizen Participation: A Call to Concerned Citizens**

Concerned citizens are invited to become Champions for Foundational Learning by joining the [Data for Foundational Learning Campaign](#). Your voice matters in ensuring every child has access to quality education. [Sign the petition](#) to safeguard SDG 4.1.1a and support the use of data to resolve the learning crisis.

### **Join the Movement**

We invite all stakeholders to engage in this vital campaign by making a commitment to work collaboratively toward ensuring a secure and brighter future for our children. By advocating for the retention of SDG 4.1.1a and focusing on data-driven interventions, we can collectively work towards advancing equitable access to quality education and contribute to realizing sustainable development goals in the global south.

For more information, please contact:

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### **About PAL Network**

The People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network is a south-south partnership of 17 member organisations working to promote children's foundational learning across Africa, Asia, and America. PAL Network members conduct citizen-led assessments (CLAs) and learning intervention programmes (action) aimed at improving learning outcomes. The network focuses on assessing basic reading and numeracy skills to inform education policies and practices.

### **About SDG 4.1.1a**

SDG 4.1.1a is part of a global indicator framework that was designed to hold countries accountable on their commitments towards achieving the SDGs. This global indicator framework was designed by the Inter-agency and [Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators \(IAEG-SDGs\)](#), and was approved by the [United Nations \(UN\) Statistical Commission](#).

**Indicator 4.1.1a** focuses on the "**Proportion of children and young people at the end of the primary education cycle achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics, by sex.**" Essentially, this indicator measures the percentage of students who, at the end of primary education, meet or exceed a defined standard of proficiency in reading and mathematics.

The IAEG-SDGs is tasked with regularly reviewing indicators, with final decision-making on indicators resting with the UN Statistical Commission.